Focus on China

China, pride of the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century missionary enterprise, has been “out of focus” among Christians in much of the Western world for over thirty years. The time of isolation is now over, and the longed-for possibility of renewed associations between Western and Chinese Christians has become reality. What form and direction should such associations take? That question was often and wistfully raised by conciliar Protestants, Roman Catholics, and conservative evangelicals throughout the period of alienation. On this much they are all agreed: the mistakes of the past must not be repeated.

Donald MacInnis contends that the attitude of missionaries expelled from China in 1948 was parochial, institutional, and subjective—that neither they nor their mission agencies had considered in any depth the issues of social justice smoldering beneath the surface of a civil war in that land. Most of their contemporaries in North American churches were surely no less parochial. But, as MacInnis notes, recent events have finally enabled Americans to see the Chinese people as warm human beings rather than Marxist robots.

Not missionaries as such, but business people, diplomats, teachers, and tourists from the West are once again welcome in China. Should some of these assume a missionary role, however covertly? Richard P. Madsen issues a somber word of caution: “I would argue,” he says, “that if missionaries follow the new economic and political trade routes leading from the West into China, they will again be perceived as part of the problems that the new relationship with the West will bring, rather than as solutions to those problems.”

The China Program Committee of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. insists that in all future relationships we shall need to recognize that the Chinese church is in a “post-denominational” as well as a “post-missionary” situation. How to be at the same time truly Chinese and truly Christian is much more crucial to them now than are the denominational issues that still concern us in the West.

Present and future are never unrelated to the past, and there were great figures and mighty prophets in the earlier missionary enterprise in China. Two of them are here introduced in the International Bulletin’s legacy series: Karl Ludvig Reichelt (1877–1952) and John R. Mott (1865–1955). Reichelt’s uniqueness “did not consist in his ideas about Buddhist-Christian relations ... but in his ability to transform the academic abstractions about missionary attitudes into a concrete ‘special work’ among Buddhist devotees.” Mott, a missionary statesman, never lived in China. Yet he probably had greater influence than any other foreigner on the emergence of China’s Student Christian Movement and early efforts toward the kind of Christian unity that Chinese Christians find to be of such overriding importance today.

A bonus in this issue is the article by Samuel Wilson, summarizing trends in North American Protestant ministries overseas from data in the recently published twelfth edition of Mission Handbook.

Donald MacInnis

Y. T. Wu, a Chinese YMCA leader who served as general secretary of the Protestant Three-Self Patriotic Movement until his death in 1979, wrote this in 1948: "Why do I say that the situation of the Chinese Church is tragic? Because China is today face to face with the greatest change in its history, and in this period of great change the Christian Church, besides the negative reactions of feeling sorry for itself and trying to escape reality, has nothing to say or do."1

Y. T. Wu was speaking of the Chinese church, but he might as well have included the missionaries, for new missionaries appointed to China as late as 1948 were not briefed on the social justice issues that smoldered beneath the surface of the civil war, which by that time had engulfed most of China. Neither mission board executives nor missionaries on the field discussed these issues in depth. There was no big problem, it seemed; these disturbances would eventually go away as others had before.2

I. Church, Mission, and the Chinese Revolution

Documentary evidence for this detached and naive attitude, which abstracted church and mission policy and practice from the sociopolitical realities of contemporary China, is the thirty-page report, Lessons to Be Learned from the Experiences of Christian Missions in China, issued in 1951 by the China Committee of the Division of Foreign Missions, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. (NCCUSA).3 This report summarizes the replies of 152 American missionaries recently returned from China, responding to three questions: (1) What lessons have you learned from a missionary experience in China which would be suggestive of what should not be repeated in other missionary fields? (2) What lessons have you learned which, in your opinion, should be incorporated in mission work in other fields? (3) Were you to get back into China soon for missionary work, what changes would you want to effect in your life and work?

The answers to these questions, summarized in the report, discuss missionary qualities, preparation, attitude, living conditions, methods, strategy; and mission finances, policies, authority, organization, and relations to the national church. Nowhere do these missionaries, recently living in the midst of the greatest revolutionary upheaval in modern history, refer to that cataclysmic event, or to the social forces that brought it about; nor do they point to the need to understand and relate to such events in the future. Their concerns are parochial, institutional, introverted, subjective, focused on themselves, the mission, the church, and the institution they served.

Only in the concluding “Message to Mission Boards” does the report even indirectly allude to the Chinese revolution—and then with no analysis of the social justice issues that had convulsed the nation for more than thirty years.

Firmly trusting in Jesus Christ as Lord of Life, we believe that His followers should radically deepen their knowledge of His way, their commitment to His will, while looking squarely into the systems of thought and society which contend for the minds and lives of mankind. ... In China we dallied, and the end of an age has come. A new age has begun. What will be done elsewhere?

II. Religion and Ideology in China Today: The Secular Challenge

For China’s secularized society today, religion is not a threat; it is simply irrelevant. I was asked during a recent visit to China if any educated Americans still held to religious beliefs. My questioner, a middle-aged man guiding us through the Shanghai Industrial Exhibition, was stunned when I replied that many educated Americans, including many in our group of eighteen that day, continued to believe and practice religion. He said that the study of scientific materialism, taught throughout China, demonstrates the fallacious and superstitious basis for all religions. “The people and the people alone are the motive force in making history.”4

A visitor is told repeatedly that the national constitution guarantees freedom of religious belief to all citizens of China. Vice Chairman Deng Xiaoping’s recent comment, “I couldn’t care less about people’s religious belief as long as they observe the law and work hard,”5 echoes Mao Zedong’s often-cited reference to religious policy in On Coalition Government (1945): “All religions are permitted ... in accordance with the principle of freedom of religious belief. All believers ... enjoy the protection of the people’s government so long as they are abiding by its laws. Everyone is free to believe or not to believe; neither compulsion nor discrimination is permitted.”6

The reopening of Christian churches, Buddhist temples, and Muslim mosques in China in 1979–80 has brought great encouragement to believers inside and outside China. Yet the official Marxist view of religion has not changed, as can be seen from an article by Ren Jiyu, director of the Institute for Study of World Religions in Beijing (Peking): “Therefore we can say religious theology on the one hand and science and revolution on the other cannot tolerate each other, just as religious theology on the one hand and social progress and historical development on the other cannot tolerate each other.” For these reasons, “the abolition of ... religious authority has become an important responsibility ... in the democratic revolution.”7

Marxism and Religion—Nonantagonistic Contradiction

If a man with Ren’s official stature can speak of abolishing religious authority, then how explain the recent easing of restrictions on religious practice? There are at least four ways to search for an answer.

First, what is meant by abolishing religious authority? Since the institutional structures of organized Christianity, Buddhism, and Islam in China are now being reconstituted with official ap-
The exorable processes of history, not the heavy hand of government, will accomplish this goal.

Second, with the opening of institutes and centers for the study of religion, and the convening of conferences where scholarly papers on religion are discussed, it appears that a basis for understanding of religious phenomena, a Marxist science of religion, is being sought. Official statements and documents make it clear that "all religions are the vain and erroneous responses of man to his feelings of impotence and fear in the face of natural and social forces."

Yet the principle of mutual antagonism between religion and the democratic revolution does not necessarily imply a deliberate policy of eradicating religion, utilizing the results of research in the science of religion to that end. Believing that the persistence of religious belief and practice in the midst of socialist revolution is a nonantagonistic contradiction, and, as historical determinists, that religion will wither away in the course of history, the Chinese Marxists are pragmatists, recognizing the realities of an actual, not ideal world. Hence the post-Gang-of-Four liberalization of religious policy, which recognizes the indefinite interim existence of religious belief and practice. The study of religious phenomena (science of religion) is just one of many scholarly disciplines needed to enhance understanding of the total social context for socialist nationbuilding.

A third reason for the current religious policy is tactical, implied in Deng Xiaoping's blunt remark cited above. China's two major concerns for the immediate future are national security in the face of the Soviet threat, and the goal of national development known as the Four Modernizations. The goal of four modernizations by the year 2000 was announced by Zhou Enlai as early as the Fourth People's Congress in 1974. In support of the four modernizations there was a call for the "positive development of religious study."

An example: an American friend reports that many of the teachers he met at the Foreign Languages Institute in Tianjin were Christians. His explanation: they had been educated in mission schools with high standards of English. Now, with English language a top national priority, they are needed.

Another tactical reason for the new religious policy is international relations. During the past thirty years numerous Buddhist, Muslim, and Christian delegations have traveled abroad. The first Christians to travel to this country in that entire period were among the ten religious delegates to the Third World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP III) at Princeton University in the fall of 1979. It can be assumed that the decision to send a delegation to WCRP III, including Christians, Buddhists, and Muslims, was based, in part at least, on tactical reasons: the conference included high-ranking religious leaders from many Third World countries.

Fourth, the new policy reflects both ethical and conceptual concerns. An editorial in People's Daily in March 1979 suggests the possibility of constructive contending among world-views. "In regard to the broad masses, religion is a problem of worldview."

This reflects Zhou Enlai's attitude, when speaking to a group of religious leaders in 1950:

So we are going to go on letting you teach, trying to convert the people. After all we both believe that truth will prevail. We think your beliefs untrue and false, therefore if we are right, the people will reject them, and your church will decay. If you are right, then the people will believe you, but as we are sure that you are wrong, we are prepared for that risk . . . .
This attitude toward intellectual dialogue on religious questions may well explain the proliferation of institutes, centers, and conferences on religious studies, including the Center for Religious Studies at the University of Nanjing, which is staffed by Christians.

Marxist-Maoist thought views religion as a reflection of the moral pain and alienation of human society under social and economic oppression during the primitive, feudal, and capitalist stages of human history. Ren Jiuy, in a 1979 issue of Philosophical Studies, notes that “in Europe during the Middle Ages the anti-feudal revolutionary forces mostly came out in the form of religious movements.” He calls for an end to “forbidden zones” of inquiry in China today, and a frank examination of the progressive function of religion in social history. “The question whether religion has a progressive part to play in social history has not been brought out for open discussion.”

**Christian Missions and Cultural Imperialism**

Extensive recent studies by Chinese scholars of the Taiping Revolution acknowledge the role of religion in arousing the revolutionaries, in organizing the Taiping movement and defining its radical ethics. The authors of a recent short history published in Shanghai note with approval that “Hung’s identification with religion enabled him to use Christian tenets to claim that he was sent by Heaven on a mission. This was his preparation for the revolutionary cause of ‘killing evil to protect the righteous’ and of ‘wiping out injustice among men.’”

Paradoxically, the aim of the religious tract Good Words for Exhorting the Age, compiled by a convert of Robert Morrison and studied by Hung Hsiu-ch’uan,

was to paralyze the people’s will to rebel against the system under which the world was ruled by the exploiting classes. By preaching that people should revere some so-called “creator” or “the only true God,” and teaching that “real happiness exists not on earth but only in Heaven,” and that people should love their enemies, such books attempted to induce people to seek their happiness in the next world, not in this one.

This ten-volume History of Modern China series, first printed in 1976, will be widely read inside China; the first printing totaled five million copies. In addition foreign language editions are available overseas. Missionaries come off badly, pictured invariably in willing collusion with the foreign invaders, their motives being to use any means to infiltrate China and to impose cultural imperialism under a religious guise. To the extent that truth can be found here, and for their authentic reflection of long-standing Chinese resentments and perceptions, these historical studies must be taken seriously by those concerned for Christian mission in today’s world.

Evidently this official view of mission history still prevails. A short article in Beijing Review (Dec. 21, 1979), titled “Origin of Religions in China,” had this to say of the missionaries:

But it was only in the last hundred years that Christianity was introduced into China in a big way. After the Opium War in 1840 many Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox Eastern Church missionaries played a despicable role serving imperialist and colonialist aggression against China. That provoked continuous resistance from the Chinese people against the imperialist missionaries, the most famous one being the Yi He Tuan (Boxer) Movement in 1900.

According to an American, recently returned after a period of teaching in China, old clichés typical of Gang-of-Four-period films are carried on in new films. In a spy film released last year the enemy agent was traced to a Catholic church, where the hero bursts in on a religious service in progress, rips off the priest’s liturgical robes, and reveals a pistol hidden underneath.

**A Chinese-Christian Identity**

But inevitably, it seems the identity question for Chinese Christians is being resolved, both at grassroots levels and at the national, institutional level.

A young Chinese Christian who came to Hong Kong in 1976, and occasionally returns to her home village, was interviewed in 1978. She described the group worship services that took place regularly in the homes of her village all through the Cultural Revolution; then she responded to a question as follows:

**QUESTION:** As a Christian living in a socialist land, how do you relate your faith to love for your country?

**ANSWER:** Well, I’m Chinese and of course I love my country. I am not a member of the Party but I support my nation. We have a saying in our Church, “Love country, love the Lord and love peace.” I see no contradiction in this, do you?

Christians at all levels have participated in socialist nation building, including the injustices and suffering of the Cultural Revolution. Of first importance is the question of identity—as Chinese and as Christians. Zhao Fusan, a leading Chinese Christian, said this to an American group in New York City in 1979:

“For the past 30 years we have sought to prove our identity as Chinese as well as Christians—to enable all to realize that Christians are an integral part of the Chinese people. . . . The cultural revolution cost both Christians and the country as a whole very dearly, but as a result. . . . we can say now that this is a Christian Church in China, imbedded in Chinese soil.”

In summary, it appears that the present Chinese leadership adheres to a Marxist view of religion but sees the value of more fully activating the constitutional guarantee of freedom of religious belief and engaging in dialogue with religious scholars. This value is seen for tactical reasons both domestically and in foreign relations, for better understanding of the science of religion, and for enriching dialogue and understanding on conceptual and ethical questions. But the dialogue, until now at least, has been limited to Chinese participants only. As for China’s Christians and other religious believers, there is an emerging sense of identity coinciding with China’s emergence as a world power and the rejection of ultra-leftist policies. Under the mandatory United Front policy, new Chinese forms of ecumenical (inter-religious) relationships and dialogue are developing at national, provincial, and local levels.


The past thirty years have seen significant changes in attitudes among Americans. Among those changes is the shift from cold-war hostility toward all forms of communism, including Chinese, to a more pragmatic approach that can endorse normalization of relations with the People’s Republic of China, and can see the Chinese people as warm and human rather than as Marxist robots. At the same time that Americans have gone through the trauma of the cold-war period, including the Korean War, McCarthyism, the China Lobby, the containment policies of Dulles and Rusk, and the agonies of the Vietnam War, attitudes toward foreign involvements have changed, affecting support for both government aid
projects and overseas mission programs alike. Accompanying the "new narcissism" is a desire to withdraw from imposing American programs and policies abroad, a disavowal of "manifest destiny," and a loss of assurance and conviction in conventional beliefs, both secular and religious.

During this same period important changes have taken place within the American churches and their mission outreach. The most significant for the purposes of this paper is the shift in balance of growth, vigor, and numbers among Protestant groups from the mainline historical churches to the conservative-evangelical. On the mission fields this means that a majority of missionaries and overseas mission programs alike. Accompanying the most significant for the purposes of this paper is the shift in balance of growth, vigor, and numbers among Protestant groups from the mainline historical churches to the conservative-evangelical. On the mission fields this means that a majority of missionaries and overseas mission programs were at work there, less than ten of them from the historical churches related to ecumenical organizations.

Another major development has been the spectacular growth and spread of Chinese Christian congregations and projects in North America and elsewhere. The Love China '75 assembly in Manila drew 500 persons, the Chinese Congress on World Evangelism in Hong Kong (1976) drew 1600, and the international assembly planned for 1981, climaxing a period of intensive research and organizing activity through 26 regional committees worldwide, will mobilize Chinese Christians for a new period of planned expansion. The Chinese Churches Research Center, the Chinese Graduate School of Theology, the Christian Study Center and the proliferation of Chinese Christian literature, broadcasting and Bible translation projects in Hong Kong—all demonstrate that the Chinese churches outside China are coming of age, with their own leadership and financial support.

As for maintaining a concern for China through this period, the ecumenical churches began earlier and maintained a more systematic and sustained effort, both at national leadership levels and at the grassroots. The China Committee of the Division of Foreign Missions (later the Division of Overseas Ministries), NCCUSA, functioned through the 1950s and 1960s. In 1966 the China Program was inaugurated with a fulltime director. China Bulletin (later called China Notes) was published without break from 1947 to the present. The China Panel, a monthly seminar at the Interchurch Center in New York City, has functioned regularly since 1967. The China Program sponsored major conferences on China as early as 1967, and collaborated in organizing the Bastad and Louvain colloquia in 1974, and in publishing the proceedings.

Within a period of nine years, the member denominations cooperating through the NCCUSA and the Friendship Press adopted China as a major study theme three times, in 1969, 1974, and 1978, publishing numerous study materials and promoting the study at parish level across the nation. Christians were influential in other China-concern programs, such as those of the American Friends Service Committee, the League of Women Voters, and the National Committee on U.S.–China Relations (whose founder and first director was a Quaker, the late Cecil Thomas).

A series of conferences and assemblies on China began in North America, proliferated in Europe, and established a precedent for ecumenical cooperation, particularly between the ecumenical Protestants and the Roman Catholics. Moreover, at the initiative of certain conservative-evangelical leaders, two China consultations were held in New York City in 1970 and 1973 involving staff persons from both Protestant sectors. The Evangelical China Committee was formed, but due to inadequate funding it never had a fulltime staff and program. A China Prayer Bulletin and other occasional publications were produced, and a number of consultations were convened, the most significant being those held on the west coast and east coast in the spring of 1979.

Organized Roman Catholic interest in China has occurred largely in Europe, centered in SEDOS (the coordinating agency for mission societies), Pro Mundi Vita, and the Catholics in Europe Concerned about China (CECC). Catholics have cooperated with Protestants in a number of consultations in Europe and several in the United States, including those at Buck Hill Falls (1967), Yale University (January 1975), Drew University (May 1975), Chicago Consortium of Theological Seminaries (1976, 1977, 1979), and Notre Dame University (1977). Catholic mission agencies in North America, convened by the U.S. Catholic Mission Council, met for two days in December 1979 at Maryknoll to hear three prepared papers and to discuss issues centered on China concerns.

A major criticism of most of these activities is that they do not reach the broad membership of the churches. In many cases the same church leaders, sinologists, and theologians have met in different settings to discuss the same issues.

Another criticism is that they have involved few ethnic Chinese and no Chinese from the churches inside China (although they have been invited). In a minority report to the Notre Dame conferees, ten Chinese participants said (in part): "We consider an urgent priority the need of thinking out theology in Chinese terms, in the context of the whole Chinese experience, past and present. This requires an in-depth knowledge of the spiritual roots of Chinese culture, as well as a continual effort to understand the implications of the Chinese revolution."22

A basic question is "For whom?" Are these high-level meetings convened for the purpose of dialogue among a small group of specialists? If so, for what ultimate end? Or are they somehow meant to benefit our various constituencies—the North American Christians? the mission board decision-makers? the theologians? Or do we take a long-range view, in the province of God, that the immediate results of whatever we do are not important, but that each project and program is another small increment in our "vocation" to/from China and the Chinese?

Finally, there is the problem of information and sources, the scarcity of data, the lack of reporting and interpretation by Chinese religious scholars from the field, the presumptuous nature of our arm's-length attempts to interpret the situation inside China, and our various and conflicting partisan viewpoints.
We are polarized along at least five axes:

1. Theological: conflicting concepts of salvation, of God’s action inside and outside the church, biblical interpretation, evangelism.
2. Ecclesiological: various concepts of the role of the church and its institutional structure.
3. Missiological: disagreement on the definition of “mission” in situations where foreign missionaries are not welcome.
4. Ethic: the paucity of authentic Chinese input for our understanding of Christian theology and message, Christianity in China’s historical context, and Christianity’s role in post-liberation China.
5. Political: conflicting theological/biblical and sociopolitical interpretations of China’s revolutionary experience.

IV. The Future*

According to all reports from friends in China, and from recent visitors, the vitality of the Christian communities in China—sus-

*Two national church meetings in 1980 marked a watershed in the history of the Christian churches in China. From May 22–30, the first National Synod of the Chinese Catholic Church (Catholic Patriotic Association) in eighteen years was held in Beijing. That synod elected new leadership, revised the association’s constitution, and made plans for reopening churches, monasteries, and a theological seminary. Religious publications, not seen since the early 1960s, will be issued once more.

The Third National Meeting of the Protestant Three-Self Patriotic Movement was held in Nanjing October 6–14. The meeting elected a new National Christian Council headed by Bishop Ding Guangxun, concurrently director of the Center for Religious Studies and vice president of Nanjing University. Plans were announced for reopening the Protestant theological seminary for training clergy, for again publishing Christian journals, and for issuing a new printing of the Chinese Bible.

Notes

2. Experience of this writer and other friends interviewed.
3. Available from East Asia Department, Division of Overseas Ministries, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.
12. IDOC, Bulletin no. 12, p. 17.
15. The Taiping Revolution, History of Modern China Series (Shanghai: Renmin Chuban She [People’s Publishing House], 1976), p. 16.
16. Ibid., p. 18.
Discipleship and Domination: Mission, Power, and the Christian Encounter with China

Richard P. Madsen

The Chinese revolution has been one of the most important events of the modern era. It has profoundly transformed the conditions of life of a quarter of the world’s population and fundamentally altered the balance of international power relationships which constitute the framework for our modern world system. This vast transformation in the flow of history has forced thoughtful people around the world to reexamine old assumptions about the dynamics of society and the processes of history. Insofar as Christian thinking about the meaning of the Christian faith is—or must be—influenced by a reading of the “signs of the times,” the Chinese revolution inevitably challenges Christians to reexamine the nature of their responsibilities in the modern world.

In this paper I wish to suggest how the Chinese revolution might challenge us to reexamine our understanding of the meaning of Christian mission by making us more critically aware of the ways in which the processes of Christian mission have been entangled with the dynamics of worldly power relationships. And I wish to suggest some practical implications of this reexamination for the way in which foreign Christian communities should carry on their future encounters with China.

I

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time” (Matthew 28:18–20, JERUSALEM BIBLE).

This command to make disciples of all nations is one of the most fundamental elements of the Christian calling. It would be impossible to deny this command and still be a faithful Christian. Yet different currents within the Christian tradition have led to different understandings of what it means to make disciples of all nations and how this task should be carried out. Thus—to put a complicated matter in the broadest, simplest terms—the Protestant tradition has emphasized the paramount importance of leading individuals to make a personal faith commitment to Christ as Lord; and the Catholic tradition has emphasized the importance of building up the structures of the visible church. Some strands of the Protestant tradition have emphasized the need to lead individuals to make an explicit expression of trust in the message of God’s forgiveness and salvation given in the Bible. Other strands have emphasized the need to encourage individuals to commit themselves morally to caring for the welfare of their neighbors and have deemed the breadth and depth of that moral commitment to be more important than explicit affirmation of faith in Jesus. Some strands of the Catholic tradition have emphasized the size of the visible church, the quantity of its members. Other strands have emphasized the quality of the church’s relations with the rest of the world: the authenticity of the church’s witness, the depth and breadth of its caring for the sufferings of humankind. One’s stance toward these various differences within the Christian tradition will help to determine the way in which one thinks about the implications of the Chinese revolution for an understanding of Christian mission.

Most of us can agree on the basic facts of the history of the Chinese revolution and the fate of religion within the revolution. The Chinese communists fomented vast, violent class struggles to overturn China’s traditional social and political order and to create a powerful new government apparatus—a “modern” state structure, which could both control the Chinese population more tightly than the traditional Chinese state and compete more effectively in the modern international arena with the world’s great industrialized powers. The communists considered religion—both traditional Chinese religion and Western-imported Christian religion—to be not a help but a hindrance to their project of carrying on class struggle and building up a modern state apparatus. They therefore severely restricted the public practice of religion and under certain circumstances tried to eliminate it entirely. And they used their new power in the international arena to eliminate the importation of Western religion to China.

The facts are clear enough. But those of us who emphasize different strands of the Christian tradition will interpret these facts in different ways. For Christians who believe that the essence of their mission is to bring as many people in the world as possible to an explicit profession of personal belief in Christ and for Christians who believe that their mission is to expand the size of the visible church as much as possible, the Chinese revolution will be an unmitigated disaster, because it has restricted the preaching of Christ and constricted the boundaries of the visible church. For those Christians who believe that their mission is to deepen the general ability of humans to care for one another and/or to make the visible church into a more authentic witness of concern for the sufferings of the world, the Chinese revolution will inspire a more complicated set of ambivalent reactions. Such Christians will be heartened by the way in which the Chinese revolution has broken down class structures that, in the early twentieth century, kept vast numbers of Chinese in conditions of desperate poverty and inhibited the development of an economic system efficient enough to feed and clothe China’s expanding population. But they will be worried at the amount of violence involved in this destruction of traditional class structures and concerned about the ability of China’s powerful state apparatus to crush those who stand in its way. Such Christians will be interested in trying to understand the complex interrelationship between good and bad aspects of the Chinese revolution and in finding ways to encourage the good and mitigate the effects of the bad. They will be more concerned with trying to accomplish this task than with finding ways quickly to make new Christian converts among the Chinese. The quality of their encounter with the Chinese will be much more important.
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converted to explicit acceptance of Christ in God's own way and
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the implications of the Chinese revolution for my understanding
the questions I have asked and the answers I have received about
worldly power.

The connection between Christian missionary activity and the
political domination of China by the West was especially obvious
in the nineteenth century. Western imperialist powers forced the
Chinese government to allow missionaries to work in China, and
Western gunboats protected the "rights" of missionaries on Chi­
inese soil. Western missionaries encouraged the Western military
aggression that opened the doors to China for them. By and large
they did not reflect on the moral questions raised by that aggres­sion. What was important for them was that that aggression was
giving them the chance to make converts within the Middle King­
dom.

But by being so narrowly focused on the making of converts as
to be blind to the political context in which evangelization was
carried out, the missionaries helped to sow the seeds of the de­
struction of their work. The Western military aggression helped to
destroy the foundations of the Chinese state, making a revolution
almost inevitable. The very forces that brought the missionaries
into China helped to set in motion a chain of events that would
force them out.

By the early twentieth century, the connection of Western
missionaries with Western imperialists was less obvious than in
the nineteenth. The doors of China did not have to be kicked open
by military force; they simply needed to be propped open by a
wide variety of economic and political ties with the West. Those
ties in general contributed to the prosperity of Western businesses
and governments while tending to keep China poor, weak, and poli­
tically disorganized. Western missionaries traveled to China in
large numbers, mostly oblivious to and uncritical of the interna­
tional political and economic forces that made their easy access to
China possible. Preoccupied with making converts, they had for
the most part no systematic remedies to offer to overcome the hor­
rrible poverty and suffering occasioned at least in significant part
by the imperialist power politics that had helped them get to Chi­
a in the first place.

If Western imperialism had not so thoroughly undermined
China's traditional sociopolitical order, China might not have had
to undergo such a violent revolution to gain power and respect­
ability in the modern world. And if missionaries had refused to co­
operate with Western imperialism, there might have been fewer
Chinese converts made, but Chinese patriots might have come to
hate the Christian churches less.

If the Christian imagination is preoccupied with the task
of making converts for Christ, then awareness of the sociopolitical
circumstances that make it possible to seek after converts tends to
recede into the background. On the other hand, if the quality of
Christian witness preoccupies the Christian imagination, then at­
ten tion tends to be focused on such issues as the nature of the
church's sociopolitical involvements, while concern for the quan­tity of converts tends to recede into the background. For Christians
concerned with the quality of Christian witness, the antichurch
activities of the Chinese revolutionaries, coupled with the commit­
ments of those revolutionaries to build an orderly society with a
relatively egalitarian distribution of wealth, provide an important
set of revelations about the entanglement of modern Christian
mission with the power relationships of this world, and they pro­
vide a clear challenge for the church to disentangle itself from
those relationships. The accusations that Chinese communists lev­el against missionary involvement with imperialism provide a
stimulus to look for the subtle ways in which missionary activity
may have profited from and even supported the imperialist cause
without the missionaries being aware of it. Understanding of the
turmoil that Western imperialism brought to China can lead to a
greater willingness to look at the beam in the Western eye before
dwelling on the mote in the eye of the Chinese revolutionary—in
other words, an unwillingness facilely to criticize the excesses of
the Chinese revolution until one has come to terms with the evils
of Western imperialism that led to the revolutionary excesses.
Such an examination of conscience can lead Western Christians to
search for a new understanding of what it may mean to carry out
the Christian mission with the Chinese (or for that matter with
any Third World people)—an understanding of the ways in which
the process of mission can be divorced from the exercise of power.

It was toward such an understanding of mission that the par­
"The very forces that brought the mission­
aries into China helped to set in motion a
chain of events that would force them
out."

participants in the ecumenical colloquium held in Louvain in 1974

attitude of those revolutionaries toward Christianity provide us
with an important opportunity to think about the ways in which
modern missionary work has become tangled in webs of worldly
power and to wonder about how that power might affect the ex­
ercise of the Christian mission.

The connection between Christian missionary activity and the
political domination of China by the West was especially obvious
in the nineteenth century. Western imperialist powers forced the
Chinese government to allow missionaries to work in China, and
Western gunboats protected the "rights" of missionaries on Chi­
inese soil. Western missionaries encouraged the Western military
aggression that opened the doors to China for them. By and large
they did not reflect on the moral questions raised by that aggress­sion. What was important for them was that that aggression was

For Christ did not send me to baptise, but to preach the Good News,
and not to preach that in the terms of philosophy in which the cru­
cifixion of Christ cannot be expressed. The language of the cross
may be illogical to those who are not on the way to salvation, but
those of us who are on the way see it as God's power to save (1 Co­
rinthians 1:17–18, JERUSALEM BIBLE).

When St. Paul speaks of the process of evangelization, he
speaks of weak people "in fear and trembling" preaching the mes­sage that God's wisdom and power are made manifest in the
human foolishness and futility of the cross. St. Paul and his fellow
Christian evangelists were indeed poor and weak and vulnerable
to persecution. It was precisely through that poverty, weak­ness,
and vulnerability that the strength of their message was manifest­ed. But in the subsequent history of Christian missions, the
preaching of the gospel often went hand in hand with the exercise
of political power. The victory of the Chinese communists and the

The very forces that brought the missionaries into China helped to set in motion a chain of events that would force them out.
olution deepened and made more radical our convictions about the
meeting were prone to believe that the quality of the church's wit­
ness was more important than the quantity of its converts or the
delity to the foolishness of the cross. Most of us present at that
vert the Chinese to Christianity.
ese people rather than seeking ways quickly and directly to con­
our previous relationship with China, and. that the new China
dal to learn from China, that all of us had much to repent of for
was a sense in that meeting that .Western Christians had a great
groped as they pondered the lessons of the "new China." There
failed to see in Christianity a solution to their problems of mean-
ing. For large numbers of patriotic Chinese, Christianity was seen
part of the problems that China faced rather than as a hope for a
solution to those problems.

Christianity was seen as part of the Western imperialist ex-
expansion, which China needed so desperately to overcome. I would
argue that if missionaries follow the new economic and political
trade routes leading from the West into China, they will again be
perceived as part of the problems that the new relationship with
the West will bring, rather than as solutions to those problems.

"I would urge . . . that Western Christians not take advantage of the present opening of China to the West to push themselves into China along the paths of international power."

The mission of the nineteen and early twentieth centuries will re-
peal itself.

China's new problems will arise from the fact that the levers
of world economic power are located in banks and business cen-
tered in New York, London, Paris, Zurich; and the levers of world
political power are located in Washington. In seeking new tech-
ology and new investment capital, China will have to play by the
rules of an economic game controlled by the West. Those rules are
designed not primarily to help China but to allow Western busi-
ness to make a profit. China will have to use its ties with the West
to further its own economic development while not letting those
ties unduly disrupt its social economy. It will be a difficult balanc-
ing act, although China will have more chance of retaining its bal-
ance than in the past. Moreover, in seeking its own political
security China will have to satisfy the needs of powerful Western
nations without losing its own political balance. These balancing
acts will create strains within China. Indeed, one can already see
the strains. Involvement with the Western-dominated world eco-
nomic system is leading to an emphasis on technology-intensive
enterprises centered in the cities, with the result being increasing
inequalities between city and countryside and increasing unem-
ployment for unskilled workers in the cities. The need to play in-
ternational power politics is demanding a kind of pragmatism that
contrasts sharply with the old revolutionary idealism and may
produce a general atmosphere of cynicism within China.

If missionaries use the new economic and political power re-
lationships that China has contracted with the West to infiltrate
China solely for the purpose of making converts to their beliefs
and without any effort at understanding and addressing the vast
problems that the new power relationships are causing, will not
exposure to the Christian faith be widely seen as one of the liabil-
ities of contact with the West rather than as a redeeming message?
Will not the Chinese see in Western Christianity the same kinds
of attitudes that caused them to reject Christianity en masse in the
past hundred years?

I would urge, therefore, that Western Christians not take ad-
vantage of the present opening of China to the West to push
themselves into China along the paths of international power.
April, 1981
To develop this kind of relationship, I would urge, first of all, that Western Christians practice the art of listening to the Chinese. I would urge that they learn to hear about the full range of human problems—the whole tangled complex of fears, angers, worries, hopes, and joys—which the Chinese face as they struggle to make their history. This kind of “holistic” listening would set the China concerns of Western churches apart from those of Western business enterprises and political institutions. Commitments to profit-making and to power-brokering tend to focus the interests of business and politicians onto only a few of the dimensions of China’s reality: onto matters relating to investment opportunities or to political stability. If Christian commitments led foreigners to be interested in the Chinese as whole persons, then the Chinese might indeed come to perceive the Western churches to be committed to higher, more important values than other Western institutions.

I would urge, furthermore, that Western Christians develop the freedom to respect totally the personal autonomy of the Chinese. All aspects of their relationships with the Chinese should be totally open and aboveboard. They should develop no secret strategies toward the Chinese, make no attempts to force themselves into any sort of relationship with the Chinese that the Chinese would not want. This would clearly distinguish the churches from businesses and governments. The latter thrive on secret plans and get their way through tough negotiations. Business and governments have interests to achieve in China and they have to manipulate and pressure Chinese to accomplish their interests. The churches should have no interests other than that of manifesting profound respect for the best interests of the Chinese. The powerlessness engendered by such uncompromising respect would reveal the power of the gospel more clearly than any aggressive missionary strategy.

If Western Christians listen with deep respect to the whole range of human concerns manifested in China, they will eventually find the opportunity to enter into genuine dialogue with the Chinese about the meaning and purpose of life in the modern world. If they listen sincerely to Chinese concerns about the arrogance and greed engendered by Western capitalism, for instance, they may have something credible to say about violations of human rights in China. An open and free dialogue about matters of mutual moral concern will lead Western Christians to enrich themselves through an appropriation of the richest insights of the Chinese tradition and it may lead the Chinese to appreciate the wisdom and spiritual power contained in the most important strands of our Christian tradition.

Respectful listening and open dialogue should be the approach taken not only with secular Chinese but also with the Christian communities remaining in China. Chinese Christians have wrought out a variety of ways of understanding and bearing witness to their faith under difficult circumstances. The main service that Western Christians can provide for them is to respect their decisions, listen to their understanding of the faith, and thus gain the right to enter into open, caring dialogue with them. No attempts should be made to control their expression of the faith. Where bonds with the Western churches have been broken—e.g., through the break between the Vatican and the Patriotic Catholic Association—the Western churches should attempt to heal the breaks through a process of reconciliation based on genuine dialogue. They should not attempt to bring the Chinese churches into line through any kind of unilateral imposition of authority. The reasons for this are not simply pragmatic, namely, that the unilateral imposition of authority would not work. The reasons should be founded on the realization that true authority is based on service. Only if Christian authorities are committed to serving the people will their witness to Christ’s message of reconciliation and love have any meaning.

In a memorandum written for the Maryknoll Fathers, I once summed up my suggested approach to a Christian encounter with the “new China” as an approach that involved “doing nothing.” I meant the idea in the Taoist sense of an active passivity, an openness to mystery, an achievement of strength through humility. “Doing nothing” in this sense requires a great deal of work and much discipline. It may involve doing much needed research on China, reaching out to the Chinese, even going to China. But it requires the discipline of refraining from making hasty judgments, of refraining from pushing oneself forward, of refraining from exercising power, of refraining from seeking results. The immediate, visible result of this “doing nothing” will probably be—nothing. It will probably result in few or no converts, no great breakthroughs, nothing for the newspapers. But in God’s good time, it may lead to a vital, respected, visible witness to the power of the Resurrection—strength made perfect in weakness—within China’s history.
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Mutuality: Prerequisite for Dialogue

China Program Committee, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

Introduction

This is a “working paper” stating the general consensus of the China Program Committee to date on some at least of the most crucial questions related to relations between American and Chinese Christians. We have invited Christians from China to visit the United States, and they came. Although they came as individuals, not representing this or that organization in China, all of them belong to the Chinese Protestant Three-Self Patriotic Movement.

A relationship has indeed been established thereby between a segment of the Protestant churches in America and in China. It is hoped that this relationship will be broadened when it is brought into the larger world Christian community. How that relationship will further develop in the near future, however, will depend upon political events within our two countries and the world as well as coming meetings and upon our ability to listen and to hear one another. The following will try to include much of what the Chinese visitors themselves have said to us.

“What does it mean to be both Chinese and Christian?”

As a result of the 30 years of estrangement it is not easy for American and Chinese Christians to come to understand each other. Both of our societies have changed considerably during that period of history. For both groups there is something of a new beginning here. We confess that our knowledge of China and the Chinese people is limited, fraught with prejudices and very much bound to our American culture. The same is perhaps no less true of the understanding by Chinese Christians of America and the American people. Together, we must, under the Lordship of Christ, speak to one another out of the integrity of our dealing with our respective historical situations.

Creative speaking requires first creative listening. It is in the biblical conviction that God intends to unite us all according to his will and purpose in Jesus Christ that we proceed in faith. May God grant that we have the ears to hear as well as the lips to speak.

Anti-Imperialism and Chinese Selfhood

During the month of September, 1979, four Christians from the People’s Republic of China visited the United States. They came at the invitation of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. and as members of a larger ten-person delegation, which included Buddhists and Muslims, to the World Conference on Religion and Peace, held in Princeton, New Jersey (August 28 to September 7, 1979).

Everywhere they went the Chinese Christians aimed to bring understanding and friendship. Friendship, as one of them said, is more than just smiling and being nice to one another. It must be based on some understanding of truth. Their central message to American Christians, therefore, emphasized essentially two things: (1) the selfhood of the Chinese people and (2) the selfhood of the Chinese church.

For these Chinese Christians these two selfhoods are inter-related. Chinese selfhood is the historical product of more than a century of the struggle of Chinese people for nationalism against foreign domination and exploitation. It is also part of the answer to the question of Chinese Christians, “What does it mean to be both Chinese and Christian?” For so long Chinese who became Christians were seen by other Chinese as being “denationalized,” no longer 100% Chinese in aspiration, loyalty and motivation. We learned from our visitors that Chinese Christians now consider themselves in possession of both their Chinese selfhood and their Christian selfhood.

Protestant Christianity from the West was introduced to China in the early 19th century. It was brought there as part of a global strategy to win the world for Jesus Christ. While goals differed, Manifest Destiny assumptions and sense of cultural superiority of the Protestant missionaries initially had much in common with those of their business, governmental and military compatriots. At the same time however, the missionary intent developed until it sought to establish a truly indigenous Chinese church which would be self-supporting, self-administering and self-propagating. With the founding of the Chinese church it was hoped that in time that church would grow from a dependent relationship with the churches in the West to one of independence and eventually to a state where both could relate to each other in interdependence.

The process of church maturity was slow. The Chinese church found it difficult to break from a dependent relationship, while the foreign missionaries were reluctant to “let go.” Historical events soon hastened the process considerably. The Chinese Communist revolution and its victory in 1949 catapulted the Chinese church into a state of independence and shaped the answer to the perplexing identity question of Chinese Christians.

Today, in hindsight and with the growing nationalism in countries of Asia and elsewhere after World War II, Americans are gradually coming to appreciate the meaning and necessity of the selfhood of the other peoples of the world. Though they were prone to forget their own revolutionary beginnings, Americans were soon reminded of it by the turbulence that swept their own society in the 1960s.

The decade of domestic civil rights movements, racial, moral and sexual revolutions has also helped to impress upon the majority of Americans the meaning of the power and dignity of peoples—their selfhood. The American debacle in Vietnam in the mid-1970s began to chasten the U.S. expansionist impulse of over a hundred years. Today a segment of the churches in the West verbally affirm solidarity with the poor and oppressed peoples of the world. Their theology and missiology offer an understanding of peoples’ struggle in developing countries for national independence and selfhood and their participation in development in all
spheres of national life.

We American Christians now can offer radical analyses and sharp critiques of our own business and governmental systems which work against holistic development of peoples in the Third World. Here one should be reminded of the fact that some of the earliest critics of Western imperialism in China were indeed some of the missionaries themselves. William E. Macklin, a Disciples missionary who went to China in 1886 was, according to the late M. Searle Bates, a lifelong enemy of Standard Oil, because of what he considered to be economic imperialism in the old China. Unfortunately, people like Macklin were isolated cases who apparently did not constitute an effective force against the economic forces that held sway in China and in the West.

A great deal more (than this short paper allows) can be said of the positive contributions of the Protestant missionary movement to China in bringing people to faith in Jesus Christ, building the Christian Church there, meeting the unending human and social needs and in aiding China’s entry into the modern world. Much of this history has yet to be written, and its interpretation will undoubtedly reveal the “divergence between the American people and the Chinese Communist Party.”

According to the visiting Chinese Christians, their own participation in the hopes, aspirations and struggles of all the Chinese people under Communism meant concretely for them participation in the Chinese Protestant Three-Self Patriotic Movement. Negatively, the movement had an anti-imperialistic stance. Positively, it worked for the selfhood of the Chinese church and the Chinese people. As K. H. Ting said when he was in New York, Chinese Christians came to realize the love and compassion of Jesus more profoundly when they identified with the weak, the poor and hungry, and those who for generations have been alienated, dehumanized, marginalized and badly sinned against by unjust social, economic and political systems.

... [It] is only as Chinese Christians shed off our aloofness and get close to our own people that we come to know how much they have been sinned against and a Christian compassion grows in us. This compassion becomes our common language with them. And as we return to the New Testament bringing with us this understanding of the agelong plight of our people, we seem to understand Christ’s sympathy with the sinned against better and are moved by his love more deeply. ... we listen to the Chinese revolutionaries who point out how our people have suffered under and are still bearing the consequences of the oppression of imperialism, bureaucratic capitalism and feudalism, commonly called the three mountains. There is an area where Christians and the rest of the Chinese have come to see eye to eye. (Presented at Riverside Church, New York, Sept. 9, 1979.)

The Three-Self Movement cooperated with the government and worked through the political process provided by the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). Both the Three-Self Movement and the CPPCC were the only avenues open to direct Christian participation in nation-building in China since liberation. There was no other option except that of non-participation which could easily be regarded as counter-revolutionary.

Our visitors said that through their participation in nation-building many Christians found themselves in key positions of leadership in the new China’s drive towards independence and selfhood. When the Cultural Revolution came in 1966, however, many of those in leadership positions had to face the consequences of being once associated with things bourgeois and foreign. Many were intellectuals who had connections with Western countries, and they suffered just as much as (if not more than) other people in a similar position. Through this suffering, they also earned for themselves the right to be regarded as an integral part of their own people. Thus in new China it was through political struggle that Christianity took a major step towards “indigenization.”

In its November, 1979 letter to the four Christian visitors the Governing Board of the National Council of Churches affirms the participation of Chinese Christians in the political arena of the CPPCC “to effect governmental policies and practices for the welfare of all your people.” This affirmation includes their participation in the last 30 years to bring about a more complete independence and selfhood of the Chinese church, even though much of it was done in the name of anti-imperialism against the West and the churches in the West. It is an affirmation of their integrity and the authenticity of their struggle under Communism, however bitter medicine accusations of imperialism have often been for American Christians to take.

The affirmation does not attempt to judge the righteousness or the wrongness of that struggle. It only acknowledges its necessity. Without their affirmation of the independence and selfhood of the Chinese church on its own terms, it may not be possible to take the next step in exploring further how Chinese Christians and Christians in the rest of the world are related to one another and interdependent. We believe that such exploration is imperative, if we all claim to be part of one another in the same body of Christ, the sign and sacrament for the unity of all humankind.

We are grateful to God for the new relationship which is given in Jesus Christ. We believe that we need to explore our relationship and interdependence as part of the new mission challenging Christians in China and the rest of the world. With all Christians we need to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to all peoples. Chinese and American Christians can do this by first sharing faith with faith from within each of our respective situations.

We believe that, important as they are, independence and selfhood are not entities which can exist in and of themselves. They exist for the purpose of dynamic interdependence and creative participation in and for the good of the entire human family. Though we each have our own integrity as members of the body of Christ, we believe that Chinese Christians and Christians in all parts of the world are nevertheless subject to the same head who is Jesus Christ, the Lord and Judge of all systems and nations. Thus one of our constituent members concludes:

We hope and pray that people in both China and the United States will be open and responsive to the new possibilities for relationships and understanding. As Christians we seek to walk in humility, with open minds, fulfilling the ministry of reconciliation, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. We believe that God will open up new paths to follow in our relationship with the Chinese people, which will allow us to work for a more just and humane world.

After their month-long stay in the United States the Christians from China acknowledged the fact that they have much to learn from Christians of other countries, and that they are ready to engage in more international Christian contacts that are beneficial. These contacts, K. H. Ting was quick to add, must not be made in any way that denies what the Chinese people have stood and worked for in the last 30 years. Therefore, for them, it is cru-
religious freedom in China: No. 147 which makes it a criminal offense to interfere with the religious freedom of people. Another article, No. 165, prohibits the use of religion and sorcery to exploit people.

The government says that the policy of religious freedom has always been characteristic of Communism in China, and that anti-religion was an exaggerated policy only of the ultra-leftists, represented by the "gang of four." The Chinese Constitution of 1954, Article No. 46, originally guaranteed religious freedom to the people. Under the ultra-leftists, that article was changed so that the 1975 Constitution includes the freedom of non-believing in religion and the right to propagate atheism. Therefore, a united front of religious people in the CPPCC at the last National People's Congress (June, 1979) asked that the original version of the article on religious freedom in the 1953 Constitution be restored so that the freedom to propagate, as well as to believe, is implied. Furthermore, the Congress passed two criminal codes which will strengthen religious freedom in China: No. 147 which makes it a criminal offense, subject to up to two years imprisonment, for local cadres to interfere with the religious freedom of people. Another article, No. 165, prohibits the use of religion and sorcery to exploit people.

2. Religion is part of being human.

Though Communism has no place for religion in its scheme of things, Mao Zedong himself never strongly opposed religion. He firmly believed that religion will simply become obsolete when socialism is established in China and that the people will voluntarily abandon religion. After 30 years of Communist rule, however, the religious dimension of life in China is not only not dead, but apparently is very vital. The recent opening of churches, mosques, temples and other places of worship attended by massive crowds of people seems to testify to the fact that part of being human is to be religious. The Communists themselves have officially admitted that "real life is much more complicated than the defined concepts," thus leaving the door wide open for the dimension of unpredictability, surprise and mystery in life. This "religious" dimension has wide implications for all the people in China, not just the small percentage of those who participate in religious activities. We need to remind ourselves that religion in its institutionalized form did not have such status even in traditional Chinese society.

In the late 19th century when China was seeking to strengthen itself through defense and modernization, it looked to the West for science and technology as "utility" (yung) but wanted to keep its Confucian ethic as the "substance" (ni) of Chinese selfhood.
Though publicly unasked, the question of Chinese identity is apparently still a live one in China today. What then, might be the new “substance” which undergirds Chinese humanity today? This perennial religious-philosophical question has much to do with Chinese identity, selfhood and dignity. The answer will be found in the present “rich brew” of traditional Chinese religion (Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, etc.), Christianity, Western Liberalism, and Marxism, Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought seen in the present-day struggle of the Chinese people in their modernizing efforts for physical and national survival. Should visitors be privileged to work with the Chinese people again, a listening and dialogic posture that takes seriously the revolution of the last 30 years would be a fundamental requisite towards mutual understanding. These 30 years in turn must be seen in the larger context of Chinese religion and culture extending far back into Chinese antiquity. With understanding and appreciation for what the Chinese people have experienced and are now experiencing, visitors to China will find what they themselves might have to say is more readily listened to and received. Thus dialogue requires empathy.

3. Religion in China must be seen in its present-day reality.

There seems to be a contradiction when Christians in China say (from a Marxist-Maoist critique of society) that “religion and politics are inseparable” while at the same time insisting that religion is a “private affair.” In present-day China religion can apparently thrive, but within the religious sphere, narrowly defined, as can be gleaned from two recent articles which appeared in the People’s Daily.

a) “Religion and Feudal Superstition” (March 15, 1979) makes a distinction between religion and superstition. Religion is that which is rational with a body of teaching or doctrines, ritual or worship, and other forms of institutionalized activities. Superstition, on the other hand, is that which is irrational with little in the way of formal structure except a general zeal and fanaticism which have a tendency towards erratic behavior. Superstition seeks to control through magic and apparently is a real problem in China today. It can be also an expression of social unrest.

Popular Taoism and some of the “secret societies” in China, for example, could easily fit the category of superstition. Both Sun Yat-sen in the Republican revolution and Mao Zedong in the Communist made use of the secret societies which were symptomatic of the injustices of Chinese society and a potential source of peasant rebellion. After the success of the Communist revolution, however, Mao renounced his association with the secret societies and even took measures to suppress them.

b) “To Comprehensively Implement Religious Freedom” (October 17, 1979). This article emphasizes religious freedom as the essential policy of the Chinese government towards religion. It makes the point that many religious activities which the government regards as “counter-revolutionary” are not so because of their being religious, but because of their political nature. Religious freedom in China must be understood in the context of the new orthodoxy which claims that “only socialism can save China and only Marxism, Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought can unite the Chinese people.” Here we can recall the severe sentencing of the wall-poster dissident, Wei Jingsheng to 15 years imprisonment in Peking in October, 1979 which gained world-wide attention. He was alleged to have violated the four basic principles upon which the Communist government is founded: i) the socialist road, ii) the dictatorship of the proletariat, iii) the leadership of the Party and iv) Marxism, Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought. Chinese state orthodoxy sets the parameters. Once it was Confucianism; today it is Marxism, Leninism and Mao Thought, however interpreted. In the coming years, it is quite foreseeable that the collective freedom of the people from want and threat from China’s enemies will take precedence over the individual freedom of the person.

The above two articles should be seen in light of China’s overriding concern for national security and public order as it seeks to upgrade its national economy and the defense of the nation through the four modernizations. Though it may be premature to do so at this particular juncture of history, Christians outside of China are anxious to explore with Chinese Christians some of the implications of Christian faith in a socialist society. Chinese Christians, undoubtedly, would want to know from Christians in the West the same implications of Christian faith in a capitalist society. A common agenda for dialogue which can be mutually agreed upon by Chinese Christians and Christians outside of China can be instrumental to international understanding, world peace and justice.

The Problem of Inclusivity and Diversity

The Protestant churches in China are in the process of re-establishing a national church organization so that they might proceed with many pressing institutional needs such as the building of Christian communities, the theological formation and training of a new generation of leaders, the distribution of Bibles and other Christian literature, and the establishing of new relationships with regional and international Christian bodies outside of the People’s Republic.

As the Chinese visitors have stated, it is too early to say what form the national church organization in China will take. It may be of a much wider scope than what the Three-Self Patriotic Movement has been. The new organization will have to include many different groups of Christians—those who work with the government and those who have little direct contact with it. According to K. H. Ting, the national church organization will be inclusive of both the Three-Self Christians and the house-church Christians simply because there has been a great deal of overlapping and interpenetration between these two groupings.

Perhaps the death of Y. T. Wu, a driving force behind the Three-Self Movement for over 30 years on September 17, 1979, marks the fruition of a firmly-established Chinese Christian self- hood which stands on its own in the international arena.

As the Chinese visitors further stated, a fundamental question seems to be not so much whether Christians in China belong to either the Three-Self type or the house-church type, but how best Christians can continue to work together for the common good of the Christian community and of all the Chinese people. The China Program Committee affirms the Christians in the People’s Republic of China and respects their integrity. The visitors from China assured us that there is a great deal of diversity among the Three-Self Christians who include former Church of Christ in China Christians as well as Little Flock Christians. The degree of diversity and inclusivity to be found in the new national organization is a question which, at this stage of history, seems to be quite open-ended. Christians in a denominationally pluralistic America, however, need to exercise unusual restraint so that their attitudes and action will not contribute to the fragmentation and polarization of the Chinese church. Therefore we believe that by their own...
manifestation of unity in Christ, Christians from outside of China can be supportive of the unity of Chinese Christians.

One of the things we heard loud and clear from our Chinese visitors is that the Chinese church is in a "post-denominational" as well as a post-missionary situation. They say they can no longer think of the Chinese church as being fragmented into different denominations and comity agreements in China as in the past. Yet every denomination in the United States seems to be faced with the question in one form or another from its members about the possibility of resuming "mission work" in the newly re-opened China. Whether the new relationship with Chinese Christians can be deepened or not, much constituency education is needed in our denominations regarding that new relationship. The denominational representatives in the China Program Committee of the National Council of Churches are not anticipating any revival of the denominational missionary enterprise as it was before 1949. We seek to work ecumenically with one another, with Chinese Christians in China and with all Christians. Together with Chinese and all Christians, we need to explore that which is yet to be.

We are persistently and carefully exploring with Christians in China some concrete ways through which we can build and strengthen the new relationship that has been established. Through ecumenical educational agencies such as the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia (UBCHEA) and the Foundation for Theological Education in South East Asia (FTESEA) we are trying to respond to some of the articulated needs of Chinese Christians themselves for library materials, teachers of English, faculty training and relationship with Chinese visiting scholars in this country, and future academic exchanges. However small and modest these beginnings, they will be the practical ways in which a new relationship of mutuality will be realized. Also churches in Asia that are related to the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) are exploring with care and sensitivity with Chinese Christians the new patterns of relationship that will in turn evolve into a new understanding of the mission of God in and through the churches. The World Council of Churches (WCC) is interested in expressing ecumenical relations with the Chinese church, but its General Secretary recognizes that the initiative is now largely in the hands of Chinese Christians (see Philip Potter's address at the Interchurch Center, New York, January, 1980).

Concluding Remarks

In this short paper we have tried to affirm the achievement of Christians in China for their own identity in light of Chinese independence and selfhood in the historical context of the Chinese Communist Revolution.

That revolution is seen as a culmination of a more than century-long drive for Chinese selfhood amidst foreign penetration, domination and exploitation of which our country, the United States, played a significant part. Chinese Christian reaction in the last 30 years to the missionary enterprise from Western countries has to be understood, theoretically and politically, as the quest of a people for national meaning, purpose and destiny. Obviously, this quest did not just begin in 1949. The Chinese revolution, as we have said, is a century-long struggle of all the Chinese people, not just Christians. The Communist victory in 1949 was only the culmination of that century-long effort.

What Chinese Christians told us about the importance of Chinese selfhood seems to make sense because of the Authenticity of their involvement in the life and destiny of their people. It also makes sense in our understanding of peoplehood in the Old and New Testaments and from our own experience of the present-day struggle of Asian Christians for selfhood in countries (Indonesia, Philippines, South Korea and Taiwan) that are related to us. Together Chinese Christians and other Christians need to explore their respective selfhoods within the larger humanity. We need to recognize that however right it seems, affirming Chinese Christians in the development of all spheres of life in the new China is still problematic for the many American Christians still holding cold war thought patterns. It requires us to acknowledge the chauvinism of a past altruistic missionary era when we assumed that the nations of the world—even China with thousands of years of history, culture and religion—were lost unless they were won to the Christ of our understanding. (Even as late as 1922, we published a book on The Christian Occupation of China.)

Affirming the authentic participation of Chinese Christians in the Chinese revolution means changing our understanding of the missionary task of outreach of the church. It requires a radical shift (metanoia) in our stance from a going and telling to one of listening and sharing. It requires "That in developing the future of our relationship with China and the Chinese people, we listen patiently instead of taking our own immediate initiatives in this new period and that we rely on the Chinese Christians to help us in defining the future relationship between ourselves and China." It requires understanding of the past for what it was and more humility in present-day witnessing to the gospel. The revolution in China has taught us much and will continue to do so. Historical events since 1949 have changed both Chinese and Americans. We Americans have been chastened by our own domestic revolutions since the 1960s, and by our involvement in and the loss of a tragic war in Asia (1975) from which we are still reaping the consequences.

It seems natural for American Christians to want to share the gospel (along with material aid) with a country that openly admits that it is "backward" and expresses its needs. At its best, however, Christian giving is reciprocal. Evangelism is a two way process. As is often said, "in evangelizing others we ourselves are evangelized."

Like our own, the situation in China is complex, and full of contradictions and ambiguities. There is so little that we really know for sure about the situation. However, we know that there are people of integrity and goodwill there, and we have met some of them. Do we believe that God works in that situation? Are we bent and tuned to listen and to hear—from people in China? In Asia? In the rest of the world? Are people in China ready to listen to us? There are still questions we need to keep asking ourselves, and them. In faith we move towards a mutual search, trusting that together we will discover Jesus Christ anew in our different situations.

Generally speaking, the statements on China of the denominations related to the China Program indicate that while we cannot say, "Lo here and lo there," we can nevertheless acknowledge God's hand in the Chinese revolution and the authentic involvement of Chinese Christians in that struggle for national independence and selfhood. It is always in retrospect that we acknowledge the presence of God in the midst of our different situations. In faith we trust in God's guidance now and in the future. "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 on earth" (Eph. 1:9–10).

After 30 years perhaps Christians in China and America can begin to explore what it means to be obedient to Jesus Christ anew in the larger context of the world Christian community. Together, with all Christians and all people of good will we need to explore what it means to work interdependently for peace with justice in the world to the mutual good of all peoples. What the next 30 years hold for the new relationship between Chinese and American Christians will largely be dependent on the foundation of understanding, mutual respect and affirmation that we lay today.

Notes

3. John K. Fairbank, "The Impact of Christian Missions in the New China," Christianity and Crisis, June 27, 1966. Some of the essays of the late professor, M. Searle Bates, covering the Christian effort in China, 1900–50, are only now being organized for publication by the Asia and the Pacific Office, DOM/NCCC/USA.

The Legacy of Karl Ludvig Reichelt

Notto R. Theile

One of the famous pictures of Karl Ludvig Reichelt (1877–1952) shows him on his beloved mountain, Tao Fong Shan, outside Hong Kong, ready to begin one of his numerous travels: a small, rather corpulent man in dark suit, flat felt hat, and with a pilgrim’s walking stick in his hand. Several other walking sticks, brought back from his travels, were placed around the desk in his office. Through many decades of missionary work Reichelt traveled to all the famous Buddhist temples and pilgrimage centers, not only in central China, but even to the borders of Tibet and Mongolia, to Taiwan and Japan, to Malaya, Burma, Thailand, Indochina, and Ceylon (Sri Lanka). Reichelt was a Christian pilgrim. Let us keep in mind the image of the missionary pilgrim in order to hold together some of the central concerns in his life as a missionary.

Reichelt’s life was a pilgrimage with many dimensions. It was a pilgrimage into Buddhism. He was observing, seeking, and listening in order to discover the Buddhist insight into the Way, the Logos, the Tao. At the same time it was a lifelong inner pilgrimage, a continuous effort to penetrate to the sources of his own Christian faith. He was challenged by his unprotected encounter with Buddhist brothers, and guided by the vision of the Christ he had seen partially in the pietistic Christianity of his childhood and discovered more fully as the cosmic Christ, working in the lives of all people. Finally, it was a pilgrimage into the lives of his Buddhist friends and brothers. He entered their lives with the consciousness of being on holy ground, wanting to share with them the Way that was his life, the Tao who had become human in Christ and was the undiscovered guide of their lives.

Reichelt’s missionary work is not conceivable without his pilgrim spirit. And his pilgrimage loses its meaning if it is not seen as a part of his missionary concern.

I. The Life of K. L. Reichelt

Reichelt was born on September 1, 1877, in the parish of Barbu, near Arendal, a small city on the south coast of Norway. The home was characterized by “godliness with contentment.” His father died when he was a baby, but his mother was a remarkable personality who opened the home for visiting preachers and house meetings. Thus Reichelt grew up in an atmosphere of warmth, somewhat strict, revivalist Pietism. Later, when he had discovered the limitations of his childhood Pietism, he recalled the atmosphere of the numerous meetings in homes and “prayer houses”:

In these meetings I also met God, but mostly the God of Sinai. The atmosphere was serious and gloomy, or onesidedly emotional. Everything was accompanied by an inexpressible oppressive feeling. I realized that this was not the totality of God. Mighty aspects of the idea of God were not revealed under the roof of the prayer house.1

Notto R. Theli, born in Hong Kong where his father was Reichelt’s closest colleague, has been a missionary in Japan since 1969. A specialist in Buddhist studies, he currently serves in Kyoto as Associate Director of the National Christian Council for the Study of Japanese Religions.

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His teachers, however, introduced him to other dimensions of Christian faith, and also helped him to clarify his missionary calling. In addition to such influences, Reichelt often referred to the quiet beauty and grandeur of the surrounding mountains, which gave him an overwhelming experience of divine presence. In this way his childhood Christianity was “consecrated and gradually elevated to a higher level.” In spite of his somewhat negative evaluation of the pietistic tradition there is no doubt that throughout his life it remained one of the vital elements of his faith.

Entering the Teachers’ Training College in Notodden in 1895, he encountered a more open, broadminded Christianity, which combined a sound faith with a deep appreciation of humanity, nature, national traditions, and the culture of the people. Such attitudes certainly helped him later when he had to meet other cultures and learn to appreciate the national and religious traditions of another people.

In 1897 he entered the Missionary Training College of the Norwegian Missionary Society in Stavanger. He was ordained in 1903 and sent to China the same year. After language studies he was sent to Ninghsiang in Hunan where he worked until 1911, when he returned to Norway. In this period he made his first stumbling contact with the Buddhist world during an unforgettable visit to the famous Weishan monastery in 1905.

I got a glimpse of a peculiar and exclusive world, permeated with deep religious mysticism, a world full of superstition and despair, but also wondrously rich in points of contact and sacred religious material. There arose in my soul an inexorable urge to be enabled to reach just these circles with the eternal gospel of life.\(^3\)

Reichelt realized, however, that his effort to tell the monks about Christ was in vain. They belonged to a world he did not know, and true communication was impossible. According to Reichelt this challenge determined his future course. He decided to devote his life to a “special work” among the Buddhists, and to prepare himself “through studies and observations, through friendly contact with Buddhist monks and learned Buddhist lay people.” The years between 1905 and 1922, when he finally started his “special work,” can be seen as a period of preparation.

When he returned to Norway in 1911 he had already a considerable knowledge about Chinese religions. His lectures during his furlough were published in 1913 under the title, Kinas Religioner (The Religions of China), later translated as Religion in Chinese Garment.

During the second period in China (1911–20) he was assigned to the newly established Lutheran Theological Seminary in Shekou, where he taught the New Testament and wrote several commentaries in Chinese. But he was also able to deepen his study of Chinese Buddhism and to make valuable contacts. In the vacations he traveled to monasteries and temples in several provinces, and engaged in the study of the extensive Buddhist and Taoist literature he had collected. The quality of his studies can be seen in the book he published in 1922, Fra Østens Religiøse Liv (Religious Life in the East), translated as Truth and Tradition in Chinese Buddhism. The book was based on lectures at Scandinavian universities during his furlough in 1920–22. In spite of inaccuracies and a rather onesided “Christian interpretation” of Buddhism, it demonstrated Reichelt’s firsthand knowledge of Buddhist piety and thought.

In the summer of 1919 he also “providentially” met the Buddhist monk Kwantu, a deep religious spirit, with whom he made the outlines for the long-held cherished “special work” for Buddhist monks. The plans were accepted by the Norwegian mission board, which released Reichelt for the work. The mission promised to pay his salary and to serve as the home base for the work, and additional support was supposed to come from interested groups and individuals in the Scandinavian countries.

Returning in 1922, this time to Nanking, Reichelt began to realize his dream, which had matured for more than fifteen years: a Christian community, organized as a sort of monastery, and serving as a “Brother Home” for religious seekers, notably for wandering Buddhist monks. The monks usually stayed for a couple of days, but could extend their stay if they wanted to continue the study of Christianity. Every year an average of one thousand monks visited the Brother Home in Nanking. Here they could encounter Christianity in an atmosphere adapted to their own traditions, and talk about religious problems with Christians who were familiar with their religion and, moreover, regarded them as spiritual brothers, and “friends in the Way,” or “friends in Tao.” The place became famous not only in religious circles in China, but was also favorably reported in Japan by no less a person than D. T. Suzuki.\(^4\)

Because of practical difficulties with finance and support in Scandinavia, and because of theological controversies, Reichelt’s work was separated from the Norwegian Missionary Society and established as an independent missionary society in 1926, under the name Christian Mission to Buddhists.

Meanwhile the work in Nanking continued until 1927 when the so-called Nanking incident put an end to it. Looking for a more stable location for the work, Reichelt and his colleagues finally decided on a beautiful mountain in the New Territories of Hong Kong, and called it Tao Fong Shan, “The Mountain of the Logos [Tao] Spirit.” Beginning in 1931 a beautiful institute was built in traditional Chinese Buddhist architecture: an octagonal church in the center surrounded by guest hall, pilgrims’ hall, school, library, and other houses. The years before the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong in 1941 became the classical decade in Reichelt’s life, the time when the “dream was realized.”\(^5\) Tao Fong Shan became known all over China and attracted monks from all provinces. At one time monks from more than fifteen different provinces were present. Reichelt himself claimed that Tao Fong Shan had become a center of religion in south China.\(^6\) Apart from the activities at Tao Fong Shan, Reichelt continued his travels, and also established branch institutes in Nanking, Hangchow, Shanghai, Tali, and Omei, where former Buddhists, trained at Tao Fong Shan, tried to propagate his ideas.

The war with Japan and the occupation of Hong Kong in 1941 effectively put an end to the contact with Buddhist communities. Reichelt had health problems, but managed to complete the three volumes, Fromhetstyper og Helligdommer i Østasia (Men of Religion and Sanctuaries in the Far East), the outcome of his lifelong pilgrimage into the Buddhist world. He returned to Norway after the war and retired. However, in 1951 he came back to Tao Fong Shan where he died on March 13, 1952.

Reichelt married Anna Gerhardsen in 1905. Because of the political instability in the Far East and the special character of the work, she stayed for long periods in Norway, separated from her husband. It was not until after 1934 that she could be permanently with her husband and maintain a normal family life, either in Hong Kong or in Norway. When he returned to complete his “last mission” and died in Hong Kong in 1952, his wife remained in Norway. Thus it certainly involved great sacrifice on both sides to enable Reichelt to realize his vision. Their son, Gerhard Reichelt, also served as missionary for several periods.

With the death of Karl Ludvig Reichelt an epoch in the Christian Mission to Buddhists was over. The war and the Chinese revolution had created major changes in the political and religious situation. Reichelt’s work was continued in various forms, adapted to new circumstances. However, it did not and could not function as in the golden days before the war.
II. The Challenge from Buddhism

The simple outline of K. L. Reichelt’s life has indicated some of the aspects of his work that made him a unique missionary. Was he merely a shooting star that flashed over the firmament of Christian missions and then vanished without leaving any trace? A closer examination is necessary in order to see the lasting value of his work and vision.

Christian Mission to Buddhists

In his encounter with the Buddhist world, Reichelt discovered the great truth that God had been in China before the missionaries, preparing the way for the gospel of Christ through glimpses of truth and points of contact. This was certainly unfamiliar to Norwegian missionary communities, but the ideas were not conceived by Reichelt himself.

Similar ideas were actually advocated in various forms in large sections of Protestant circles of his time. In some cases it was an expression of a characteristic nineteenth-century optimistic belief in spiritual progress combined with an emphasis on Christianity as the highest peak of religious development. A spirit permeated the World’s Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893, which the leading Christian participants regarded as an expression of the fact that “the world moves, and on the whole moves Christward.” Similar trends were dominant in the great missionary conferences in Edinburgh in 1910 and Jerusalem in 1928. In India, China, and Japan there were numerous exponents of different sorts of fulfillment theologies. A typical representative from the missionary community in China was Timothy Richard, who advocated that Mahayana faith was “an Asiatic form” of the Christian gospel.

Contemporary scholarship also tended to emphasize the influence of Eastern Christianity on Mahayana Buddhism.

Reichelt’s uniqueness thus did not consist in his ideas about Buddhist-Christian relations, which he shared with many others, but in his ability to transform the academic abstractions about missionary attitudes into a concrete “special work” among Buddhist devotees. The ideas about historical and ideological relationships between the two religions furnished him with a strategy for Buddhist mission, which he moreover managed to realize in a way that drew positive attention even from the Buddhist world. That was a remarkable contribution.

Reichelt’s mission, which had the somewhat offensive name Christian Mission to Buddhists, was in China called the East Asia Christian Tao Yu Hui (Association of Friends in the Way). It was a thoroughly Christian community, but based upon a generous vision of God’s work among all people who are seeking the truth. The Buddhists were not accustomed to such generosity from Christians and responded positively:

The main reason for this success is the fact that all people who come there are met with as Tao-yu . . . that is, as friends in religion . . . The Christians acknowledge the fact that in spite of all differences there exists a strong and precious common platform, on which all enlightened and sincere religious people can meet and communicate.

We shall see in some detail how Reichelt tried to overcome the religious and cultural barriers that separated Buddhists and Christians. The community life of the Brother Home was adapted to the traditions of Buddhist monasteries, following a rhythm of worship, study, and work. The meals were vegetarian. The Buddhist students and novices, often introduced by their Buddhist masters, lived in close fellowship with the Christian missionaries.

Reichelt regarded worship as the heartbeat of the community. The worship generally followed Lutheran traditions, but he also used what he regarded as the sacred material in Buddhism, prepared by God. The altar and the interior showed Buddhist influence. Incense was used until criticism forced him to abandon the practice. Beside the altar in the chapel there was, among biblical quotations, an inscription borrowed from the Pure Land tradition, expressing how the Great Vow guides mercifully across to the Other Shore. The Great Vow is the vow of Amida Buddha, but as

"Reichelt tried to overcome the religious and cultural barriers that separated Buddhists and Christians."

Reichelt regarded the idea about Amida’s grace as a Christian influence, he used Pure Land Buddhism as an important guide toward Christ. For him nothing but the cross was the real Great Vow, which encompassed the longings of Buddhist faith.

The liturgy was full of Buddhist expressions. It included a prayer taken almost directly from a Buddhist liturgy expressing the vow to reach the Pure Land (Heaven), as well as a threefold dedication to the Trinity, very similar to Buddhist patterns: “I take refuge in . . . .” One example of Reichelt’s boldness is found in a hymn to Christ included in the book of liturgy. Christ is there worshiped as “the Great Tao without beginning and end” (the eternal Word of God), and “the original face of all sentient beings” (the idea of image Dei). He is the enlightened, the “thathagata [Buddha] of the West who came to the world,” and “realized the Pure Land on earth.” Christ is “constantly turning the great wheel of the Dharma,” and is “teaching all according to their capacities.” He is “saving all the people straying in the six paths of existence,” and is “universally present in the one billion worlds” (the universe). Those familiar with Buddhism will immediately recognize the Buddhist background of the expressions. However, in the whole context of Christian worship the expressions changed character and became means of Christian worship. Christ’s sacrificial death and atonement were central elements. There was never any doubt about the uniqueness of Christ, the One in whom the “Great Original Tao” had become man, “the great shepherd who draws people who love the Tao in all religions and gathers them to one flock.”

It is difficult to know what impact the worship made on the thousands of monks who came to Reichelt’s institutes in Nanking and Hong Kong and other places. An indication is given in D. T. Suzuki’s notes about the work where he referred to the worship with its “refined, religious atmosphere indigenous to the religious soul of China.” Anyway it was an example of a bold and unique effort to create an indigenous liturgy.

Also in Reichelt’s teaching, preaching, and dialogues we see a similar combination of Christ-centered faith and radical openness to other faiths. His piety seemed to pave the way for what we now might call a “sharing of spirituality.” One of his colleagues who traveled with him has described his exceptional ability to establish contact with all sorts of people. Again and again he was invited to preach in temples and religious associations. In many cases some of the monks in a temple had already visited the Brother Home, or the rumor about the Christian “Master” had reached the temple in advance. He was met as a brother, and shared with deep conviction his Christian Way as a friend in the Way.

Buddhist Studies

We have already referred to Reichelt’s extensive studies of Bud-
There is no doubt about Reichelt’s deep knowledge of Chinese Buddhism. However, modern scholarship may tend to emphasize the limitations of his studies due to numerous inaccuracies in his writings. His missionary concern never seemed to weaken his sympathy toward Buddhism, but sometimes distorted the perspective. He tended to read too many Christian ideas into Buddhist piety. It is characteristic that he often translated Buddha with “God” and Amida with “the All-Father.” Whenever it seemed possible, he was likely to interpret similarities in doctrine or piety as a Christian influence. His evaluation of different types of Buddhism was characterized by a somewhat arbitrary judgment: “It is characteristic that he often translated Buddha with ‘God’ and Amida with ‘the All-Father.’”

On the other hand, Reichelt’s missionary concern and his intuitive and sympathetic approach enabled him to convey some of the religious life behind the outward forms. His studies were often based on firsthand observations and offered new and fresh insights. Actually, his description of Buddhist piety has promoted a sympathetic understanding of Buddhism in Scandinavia, which a more objective analysis hardly could do. The second volume of his last work about holy men and sanctuaries in the Far East is totally devoted to a description of the spiritual pilgrimage of one Buddhist monk, and is a unique document.

Buddhist Influence?

Reichelt’s effort to adapt his method to Buddhist traditions gained him many critics. He was accused of syncretism, and Tao Fong Shan was once described as a place where “one came in order to study Christianity, and was offered Buddhism instead.” This was certainly a narrowminded or malicious interpretation.

On the other hand, it would be unnatural if several decades of intimate contact with Buddhist communities did not influence his understanding of Christianity. He was convinced that every generation, every culture, civilization, and religion that came in touch with the doctrine of Christ, would reveal “new colors and rays in the brilliant light emanating from God.” So Buddhism would naturally add new insights to Christian piety.

A recent study about Reichelt purported to demonstrate that his basic thinking was permeated with Buddhism, and that notably the philosophy of sunyata (emptiness) was a key to understanding Reichelt. I think the conclusion is misleading, but the question about Buddhist influence is still valid. Numerous expressions and ideas about God, Christ, salvation, enlightenment, meditation, inner life, and so forth may indicate Buddhist influence. The problem is that his expressions are not only close to Buddhist terminology but are also familiar in Christianity, including Pietism and liberal theology, mystical traditions, and notably the Gospel of St. John. The problem needs further research. But ultimately it is a question of Reichelt’s basic theological standpoint.

III. Reichelt’s Theology: Christ-Centered and Christ-Open

As a missionary pilgrim Reichelt was engaged in a continuous struggle for theological clarification. What we have said about Buddhist influence would be misleading if we did not see how his theological world was centered in one point: the cosmic Christ.

The Johannine Approach

Reichelt often preferred to talk about his work as the “Johannine approach.” His central creed was the Prologue of John with its proclamation about the Logos, the eternal truth incarnated in Christ. He found further support of his approach in the idea about logos spermatikos, characteristically developed by Justin Martyr and others. That is, the eternal Logos is spread in non-Christian religions and philosophies as grains of seed; whatever is true originates from the eternal Logos, Christ.

This was further deepened in the encounter with Chinese spirituality where the concept of Tao ingeniously expressed the implications of the Logos-idea. Tao means Way, that is, the spiritual Way of humankind, the eternal truth. For a Buddhist, Tao was synonymous with the Dharma, the Buddhist law of life. With his profound faith in Christ as the incarnation of the eternal Logos or Tao, Reichelt was convinced that, ultimately, Christ would not be an offense or a stranger to the truth-seeking spirits of the East. He was the center they had been seeking all the time, the One who had been drawing them toward truth. It is characteristic that he wrote about one of those who had met Christ “from within,” stating that his encounter with Christ was an “encounter with a friend. A deep joy of recognition filled his soul.” The true seekers would re-cognize Christ as the Tao they had been searching for all the time.

Christianity and Religion

The vision of Christ as the hidden center of Reichelt’s missionary pilgrimage had implications for his view about the relation between Christianity and other faiths. This was developed in one of his great speeches, with the title “Christ—the Center of Religion.” He described how the religions of humankind were like silver ore in the mountain. It might be impure and mixed with slag and stone. But further search would uncover veins of silver gradually leading down to the pure silver ore, the center and telos of religion, Christ. From this perspective it was difficult to express the essential difference between the general and the special revelation. Silver is silver even when it is mixed and impure, and is essentially identical with the pure silver in the center.

As Reichelt’s language was symbolic and lacked precision he was inevitably attacked, especially in Norway where the front against liberal theology was strengthened in the 1920s. However, Reichelt’s theology was rather conservative. He was pre-Barthian, but not liberal. It simply did not occur to him that his view on other religions could reduce the uniqueness of Christ. His whole thinking was so Christ-centered that the Barthian wave did not impress him. The antiliberal reaction was irrelevant for his thinking.

Under guidance from friends and colleagues he agreed to change his expressions and to emphasize the essential difference between general revelation and the revelation in Christ. This was certainly not an intellectual sacrifice, for he was himself totally aware of the limitations of other religions and was untiring in his emphasis of the uniqueness of Christ. However, it meant that he had to accept a theological model that was not his own and re-

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spend to questions that did not arise in his theological world. He was not interested in the lines of demarcation between Christianity and other faiths, but was concerned about the center, where Christ, the eternal Logos, was drawing all people to himself. The Barthian reaction and the numerous attacks from orthodox circles did not do justice to his Christ-centered theology. Symbolically expressed, Reichelt was seeking the center of the circle, and was not so much concerned about drawing the periphery of the circle. He was Christ-centered and therefore Christ-open. He was both pre-Barthian and post-Barthian.

Reichelt is rightly celebrated as one of the greatest Norwegian missionaries, one of the few whose vision and work appealed far beyond the narrow borders of Norwegian missionary circles. Hendrik Kraemer, one of the most outspoken critics of Reichelt’s theological ideas about Buddhism and Christianity, still maintained a deep admiration for the “great missionary” Reichelt, and recognized his plea for an understanding of the religious situation of Buddhism having to do with God.24

Notes

1. Quoted from Filip Riiusager, Forventning og Opfyldelse (Expectation and Fulfillment), pp. 12-13. See the bibliography for further bibliographical material.
2. We regret that in the present article we are not able to use the modern transcription of Chinese names and words.
3. The incident is reported several times in Reichelt’s writings. Quoted from Den Kristne Misjon blant Kinas Buddhister (Oslo: Buddhimisjones Forlag, 1926), pp.3-4.
5. The title of the publication in connection with the 25th anniversary was, Dømmen som Blev Virkelighed (The Dream That Was Realized), (Copenhagen: Gads Forlag, 1947).
6. See the monthly of the mission, Den Kristne Buddhismiission 12, no. 5 (May 1957): 73.
11. There is no indication whether this was written by Reichelt himself or by his Chinese co-workers. The liturgy and the hymns were probably the result of close cooperation. We have used the Chinese text, and have not been able to compare it with translations. See also articles in The Chinese Recorder, mentioned in the bibliography.
15. Ibid., pp. 6, 134, 145-46, 155-57, 163. etc.
16. Ibid., pp. 134, 172, etc.
17. Ibid., p. 31.
18. N. N. Thelle, Fra Bøggynelsen til Nu, p. 95.
20. H. Eilert, Boundlessness.
22. Ibid., pp. 7-8. Cf. also Reichelt’s favorite expression, “the inner well­spring of religion.”

A Reichelt Bibliography

Among Reichelt’s Main Works

Books in Chinese on New Testament Scriptures include an introduction to the New Testament, and commentaries on John, Galatians, Mark, James, etc.


Fra Kristuslivets Helligdom (From the Sanctuary of Christlife). Copenhagen: Gads Forlag, 1931.


Bibliographies

Myklebust, O. G. “Selected Bibliography,” appendix to Sverre Holth, Karl Ludvig Reichelt and Tao Fong Shan (see below).


Studies about Reichelt


Holth, Sverre. Karl Ludvig Reichelt and Tao Fong Shan. Hong Kong: Tao Fong
The Legacy of John R. Mott

C. Howard Hopkins

John R. Mott, 1865–1955, was the leading Protestant ecumenical and missionary statesman of the world during the first half of the twentieth century. He was not only the figure around whom much thought and action toward comity and ecumenism tended to revolve, but may rightly be called the “father” of the World Council of Churches.

The Man and His Career

Born in southern New York State a few weeks after the close of the Civil War, Mott was raised in what came to be the prosperous corn belt of northeastern Iowa. He and his three sisters grew up in an advantaged, warm, small-town, devout Methodist home. He attended Upper Iowa University, a Methodist school not far from home, as a preparatory and college student, transferring to Cornell University as a sophomore. As president of the Cornell University Christian Association, he built it into the largest and most active student YMCA—a preparation for his career. Upon graduation in 1888 he took a one-year assignment as traveling secretary with the Inter-collegiate YMCA. He was an immediate success: as evangelist to and organizer of students, charisma emerged at once, people had never met sent contributions, he early revealed an uncanny faculty to appraise men whom he drew into the movement as leaders, and such were his administrative and diplomatic gifts that the student groups grew by leaps and bounds. What he would do after that first year really never came up. The organization and growth of the Student Volunteer Movement (SVM) was the most dramatic development of these early professional years.

In 1891 Mott married Leila Ada White, a graduate of Wooster College, then teaching English. The two became a remarkable team, traveling the world together; Leila Mott was her husband’s critic, editor, and even secretary when needed. Their family of two boys and two girls grew up in Montclair, New Jersey, whence Mott commuted to his New York office; all of them made distinguished contributions to the medical/socially oriented professions.

The climax of every year for Mott and his family was the summer in “the Canadian woods” northeast of Montreal, where Mott threw off his official personality, dressed in old clothes, read aloud, played and clowned with the children, fished, swam, and luxuriated in leisure and companionship.

The formation of the World’s Student Christian Federation (WSCF) in 1895 was Mott’s most creative achievement. He then moved onto the world scene by journeying around the globe, accompanied by Leila, to expand and consolidate the federation. This twenty-month tour established his reputation as a missionary statesman, since the prime targets for federation membership were the students of the mission colleges. Mott had already, somewhat inadvertently, become the leading American YMCA advocate of the expansion of that organization to foreign countries and soon after his return that YMCA portfolio was added to his duties as head of the student department. In 1901–2 he made another world tour for the SVM, WSFC, YMCA, and missions, and in 1903 went again to Australia and New Zealand. He went to Europe every year, occasionally twice or three times, staying from two weeks to nine months.

From the very beginning of his secretariaship, Mott cultivated the executives of the mission boards; he was present at the founding in 1893 of what became the Foreign Missions Conference of North America and was a force in it for more than half a century. This brought him into a strategic position, together with J. H. Oldham, in the planning and leadership of the epochal Edinburgh missionary conference of 1910; he was responsible for its being a working conference, chaired its Commission I and the full conference itself, and played a large part in securing representatives of the younger churches and encouraging them to express themselves. His chairmanship was the high point of his career up to that time, and he was the logical choice to head the conference’s Continuation Committee. He took the conference message to churches around the world in 1912–13.

Plans for a world missions body were frustrated by World War I, but throughout it Mott kept in close touch with Oldham, and the two with missions authorities, including the Germans. Mott made several trips to Europe during the conflict; when the Continuation Committee could no longer function, he, Oldham, and others formed an Emergency Committee that rendered heroic service on behalf of German and other orphaned missions and...

C. Howard Hopkins, emeritus Professor of History at Rider College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, has also taught at Mount Hermon School, Stockton Junior College, and Bangor Theological Seminary. His latest book, John R. Mott, was published in 1980 by the Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
made significant representations to the peace conferees at Versailles in 1919.

In the meantime Mott had become general secretary of the YMCA of the United States. When America entered the war, he offered President Woodrow Wilson (a warm personal friend who had begged him to become American minister to China in 1913) the services of the associations for functions comparable to the present-day USO. In 1917 Wilson appointed Mott to the Root Mission to Russia; he became its best reporter to the president and appears to have been Wilson's most trusted adviser on Russia, to the extent that earlier evaluations of the Root Mission and of Wilson's policies toward Bolshevik Russia must be reviewed by historians. Although this was a secular and diplomatic assignment, characteristic of most of the activities with which Mott was preoccupied during the war, he used the Root Mission to extend the ecumenical network to the Russian Orthodox Church, conferring for hours with its high procurator and inviting the Orthodox to the services of the associations for functions comparable to the present-day USO. In 1917 Wilson appointed Mott to the Root Mission to Russia; he became its best reporter to the president and appears to have been Wilson's most trusted adviser on Russia, to the extent that earlier evaluations of the Root Mission and of Wilson's policies toward Bolshevik Russia must be reviewed by historians. Although this was a secular and diplomatic assignment, characteristic of most of the activities with which Mott was preoccupied during the war, he used the Root Mission to extend the ecumenical network to the Russian Orthodox Church, conferring for hours with its high procurator and inviting the Orthodox to participate in a Faith and Order conference.

In 1920 Mott relinquished the leadership of the Student Volunteer Movement and of the World's Student Christian Federation, although he continued to attend and address the SVM quadrennial conferences and remained on as chairman of the federation until 1928. The International Missionary Council, of which he was chairman, came into being in 1921. In 1926 he took on the presidency of the World's Alliance of YMCA's, which he converted from a Geneva club to a world body with an aggressive purpose and program; he devoted his remarkable continuing energies to these last two for two more decades. In 1946 Mott shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Emily Greene Balch. He died in 1955, a few months short of ninety years, and was buried in the Washington Cathedral.

The Sources of Mott's Ecumenism

John Mott's ideal of a community transcending denomination, race, nation, and geography was formed in his youth. The home background in Methodism, his first boyhood conversion under a Quaker Bible teacher/YMCA evangelist, the profound influence of Dwight L. Moody, the biographies of evangelists—Wesley, Matthew Simpson, William Taylor, Charles G. Finney—all emphasized the evangelical tendency to disregard denominational and confessional lines. But the unique and cardinal influence in this direction was that of perfectionist Holiness, a movement then largely within Methodism, which was to result in controversy and schism. Unaware of these trends, Mott pursued the "second blessing" or "entire sanctification" promised by Holiness, achieving it his first winter in Ithaca, having joined a warm Methodist congregation that fostered his Holiness bent. The periodicals he read—they had been on the family reading table back in Iowa—stressed "unity in diversity" and spoke of the universal Christian church. Holiness was the base for Mott's mature thought on race, ecumenism, and the social gospel.

At least four other factors molded Mott's viewpoint: the Bible, the practice of prayer, his continent-wide and world-circling travel among the colleges and universities, and his preparation for this by extensive reading. Probably the most repeated phrase in his vocabulary was "that we may fulfil the prayer of our Lord 'that they all may be one.'" Their Bibles "became new in the Land" to the Motts, on horseback in the Holy Land in 1895, conscious of history and deeply moved by an unseen presence. Mott not only prayed, he practiced the presence of God in his daily life, believing that whatever he was able to accomplish was due to prayer. In spite of the popular image of him as the great religious entrepreneur, many remember him chiefly as a man of prayer. Unlike other contemporary evangelists, as he traveled the world he read voraciously for background not only in current affairs but in history and culture; as a result Mott grew from a somewhat provincial American into a citizen of the world and as such was welcomed on campuses from Berkeley to Oxford to Sydney.

An evangelical liberal, he early embraced the social gospel—a favorite phrase was "the whole gospel"—and was in the forefront of those who grasped its relevance to missions. He wrote more than a dozen books, most of them concerned with missions and the ecumenical outreach, all of which were widely read and some translated into several foreign languages. His output of pamphlets, articles, reports, and forewords to others' books was limitless. Although they are no longer read, they reflect concern for living issues that reveal their author as a contemporary to any age.

The Young Men's Christian Association as Fellowship and Power Base

The YMCA of the late nineteenth century was aggressively evangelical and evangelistic. As an undergraduate, Mott came increasingly into a dynamic relationship to this laymen's organization and he made it, rather than a denomination, the vehicle of his drive toward Christian unity. For a time at Cornell he worked at a frenzied pace to fit himself for the pastoral ministry, but consistently put off the Greek course required by theological seminaries. Through the "Y" Mott met and came into intimate partnership with Dwight L. Moody. He made the Paris Basis of the YMCA, the model ecumenical statement of modern times, his own. The fraternal aspect of the associations had great appeal: in it at the age of twenty-three he already worked with men of power and influence, and as his own leadership grew he in turn attracted many to it. Nor did he limit himself or its outreach to Protestants. Against considerable opposition he not only approved but urged the recruitment of Roman Catholic members to YMCA's in Catholic countries and the same with the Orthodox; this policy also applied to the selection and training of secretaries. Mott would have been delighted with the spirit of Vatican Council II, but such rapport was impossible in his time.

The YMCA, to which Mott gave himself, served a worldwide community of students and an urban clientele in the major cities at home and abroad; it was a fellowship of activists motivated by the desire, as the Paris Basis put it, to be Christ's disciples "in their faith and in their life." Some of Mott's colleagues deplored his "YMCA mind"—lay rather than clerical or ecclesiastical stance—and he was perhaps a bit unappreciative of the role of women in the ecumenical movement, in spite of his own marriage partnership and the generosity of several women who made his key projects possible.

The Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions

As one of the "Mount Hermon Hundred" Volunteers of 1886, Mott contributed significantly to the plans laid that summer for the spread of the missionary challenge among the colleges of Canada and the United States. One of his first assignments upon becoming college secretary two years later was the chairmanship of the joint YM-YWCA committee charged with domesticating this explosive movement into the intercollegiate organizations: it became the missionary department of the student YM-YWCAs, and for three decades Mott inspired, funded, and directed it, making it coeducational in spite of the male chauvinism of the YMCA leadership. He did not invent its motto, "The evangelization of the
world in this generation,” but he made it his own. The SVM be­
came the dynamic of the intercollegiate bodies; Mott invented and
administered its great “Quadrennial” conventions and lived to count 20,000 Volunteers sent to the fields of the world, numbers
of whom confessed that “he changed my life.”

Not satisfied that the movement be solely a sending agency, he organized SVMs in most foreign countries, both to focus youthful attention on missions and to enlist converts to work in their own nations; he also encouraged SVM alumni on the field to guide their nationals at work and to enthrone Volunteers back home. Thus rising generations of young Christians, who would make up a substantial segment of the “younger” churches as they moved into positions of leadership, were made aware of the uni­versality of both church and mission.

The World’s Student Christian Federation

The WSCF embodies Mott’s dream of a union of the Christian stu­
dents of all nations. It was characteristic of him that he should go to them to enlist them in the cause. Although he described that ep­ochal first tour in a book called Strategic Points in the World’s Conquest (the points were the colleges), the constituent members of the new world fellowship were equals; from the beginning the Asian movements and their representatives played strategic roles. This was another lay movement that included women. Its motto, “That they all may be one,” became an ecumenical rallying cry. The places Mott chose for its meetings demonstrated his sense of tim­ing and of history: the 1907 conference in Tokyo was the first inter­national body ever to meet in Japan, and possibly in Asia. In 1911 Mott took the federation to Constantinople, heart of the Or­thodox world, where it was blessed by the ecumenical patriarch. Miraculously, rather than being destroyed by World War I, it ex­panded to render welfare services to thousands of students in uni­form; there is at least one instance of a soldier’s calling out, “Does anyone know John Mott?” as a means of establishing fellowship.

Approaching the Orthodox Churches

It was at first the fellowship of the YMCA into which Mott in­vited the leaders of Orthodox churches. This is an almost forgot­ten saga that began in 1897 when he met the great Russian Ortho­dox missionary bishop, Nikolai, in Tokyo. The two men were instinctively drawn to one another. Thus began for Mott a lifelong love affair with Orthodoxy, enhanced by the music of the church and by its central emphasis upon the Resurrection, which was also the cardinal point of Mott’s faith. In 1911 Mott visited al­most every Orthodox bishop, archbishop, and patriarch between Vienna and Jerusalem, and in the 1920s repeated this gesture sev­eral times; on more than one occasion the ecclesiastics he assem­bled had never met one another.

The International Missionary Council

As he began to lose touch with the post-World War I student gen­eration, Mott gradually shifted his major thrust from the student

world to missions and the parent YMCAs. After much prayer and
diplomacy directed toward reconciliation with the Germans by Mott, Oldham, and their colleagues, the International Missionary Council (IMC) was organized in 1921. As its chairman and symbol, Mott circled the Pacific in preparation for its Jerusalem conference of 1928, then took that conference’s message around the world the next year. He played a somewhat less significant role at Madras—
Tambaram a decade later. He was an important agent in the for­mation of some thirty national councils of churches in as many countries. A last bit of advice to colleagues in the IMC was to be­ware lest it be swallowed too soon by the World Council of Churches.

The World Council of Churches

Mott took part in each of the movements that culminated in the WCC; his influence in them was pervasive. He had known Bishop Charles Brent of Faith and Order several years before Edinburgh 1910, which was the immediate source of Brent’s inspiration. On his 1911 tour of Eastern Europe and the Near East, Mott sought to bring the Orthodox into that fellowship. He went to its Lausanne Conference of 1927 but was forced to leave because of illness. On the Life and Work side, his lifelong friendship with Archbishop Nathan Söderblom began in 1891 when the two young men were spontaneously attracted to one another at the Northfield (Massa­chusetts) student conference; over the years they kept in touch and met many times.

During the preparatory conference for Oxford 1937, at West­field College, Pastor Marc Boegner of France, William Temple, William Adams Brown, H.-L. Henriod, and Willem A. Visser ‘t Hooft met in Mott’s room each morning for prayer. Boegner de­clared that Mott’s influence on the conference was “tremendous.” The jibe that ecumenical meetings of the period seemed to be WSCF alumni gatherings was literally true. During the organizing phases of the World Council, Mott was one of six provisional presidents, then became honorary president upon its formal establish­ment, a symbolic recognition.

The Legacy

Mott’s major contributions are implicit in the foregoing, and I shall not attempt to enumerate them. If Kenneth Scott Latourette’s statement that “the ecumenical movement was in large part the outgrowth of the missionary movement” is true, Mott’s legacy, as Hans-Ruedi Weber said of the Asian churches’ debt to Mott, is “incalculable.” It varies with country or organization, and may be measured not only in the cooperative bodies he fostered, but in the fact that he encouraged, nourished, and regarded as equals the ris­ing lay and clerical leaders of churches and Christian bodies every­where. This was apparent as early as the first world trip of 1895–
1897.

Mott was unique. He is remembered as evangelist, man of prayer, leader, advocate of comity, builder of organizations, friend, chief, chairman, speaker, coach, executive, author, editor, fund raiser, traveler. His influence lives not only in world bodies such as the WCC and the World’s Alliance of YMCAs, but in the pro­found effect he exerted upon individuals of several generations who volunteered their contributions to the evangelization, the bet­terment, the unity of the world in their time.

In old age Mott was given standing ovations by tens of thou­sands of young people in post-World War II Germany, because, as Bishop Hans Lilje put it, they were convinced that “he loves us.” Soichi Saito, a Japanese colleague, called Mott “father of the young people of the world.” Although the two organizations that were the chief objects of his early labor and love—the SVM and the
WSCF—no longer exist as he knew them, his instinct for students and young people was sound. He chose his associates with insight and trusted them to build indigenous entities to serve their own place and time. There would of course have been an ecumenical movement without Mott, but as J.H. Oldham once remarked, it would have been a very different thing.

Perhaps the unique feature of his genius was an unusual combination of spiritual insight and leadership with hardheaded administrative ability. A hero to thousands, he was also trusted by businessmen and philanthropists, and was sought out for his organizational acumen. Yet to him the directing of organizations was secondary, really only a means to the main business of evangelism, mission, the ecumenical thrust. Asked to say a word at what proved to be his last public appearance, he declared, “while life lasts, I am an evangelist.”

Selected Bibliography

From the beginning of his responsibility for the Student Volunteer Movement, Mott worked to make its library and collection of resource materials the most comprehensive available. The materials collected by Charles H. Fahs, whom Mott had trained for the job, on the world tour with Mott in 1912–13, became the nucleus for the Missionary Research Library (MRL), established with Rockefeller funding in 1914, under Fahs’s lifelong direction. Mott’s belief in the value of research was further realized during the 1920s through the Institute of Social and Religious Research, and in the 1930s by the Department of Social and Industrial Research of the International Missionary Council.

Well before the close of his active career, Mott gave his comprehensive archives of the WSCF to the Yale University Divinity School Library. He later added his personal papers; the residual files retained at his death also went to Yale, thanks to the concern of the librarian, Raymond P. Morris. During my research for his biography, personal and family materials were added, as were copies of his massive correspondence related to each of the organizations he served—the IMC from originals at the MRL, World YMCA and later WSCF at Geneva. The Library of the American YMCA at 291 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10007, is the only large Mott archive of which I am aware whose materials are not duplicated in the Yale Collection.

Materials Written by Mott


Materials Written about Mott


April, 1981
Current Trends in North American Protestant Ministries Overseas

Samuel Wilson

Once every three to five years, the publication of the Mission Handbook: North American Protestant Ministries Overseas by the Missions Advanced Research and Communication Center (MARC) affords a unique opportunity for assessing mission activity of North American sending constituencies. From the twelfth edition of the Mission Handbook, published at the beginning of 1981, trends in recent history become identifiable on the basis of the only hard data in existence built on reports from sending agencies.

What are the data saying to us currently? What is significant, and what is significantly different from the most recent flow of history? It is significant that measured by either the standard of income or the number of personnel, the "traditional mission sending systems" continue to show strength and growth.

For the 714 agencies listed, income has for the first time topped $1 billion and stands at $1,148,169,321. A word of caution is in order here, since direct comparability to previous data may not be appropriate. The questionnaire for the collection of data this time was slightly modified, with the potential that the total income figure is inflated to a minor degree. Regardless, the most conservative construction that can possibly be made of the data would put income for overseas ministries in excess of $928 million. To stay even with inflation that figure would have had to reach around $905 million. Thus, by any measure, there has been real growth, even after correction for inflation; the best estimate surpasses $1 billion and indicates substantial growth.

It is significant that the number of North Americans serving overseas has increased. In 1976 MARC identified 31,186 full-time and 5764 short-term personnel for a total of 36,950 reported overseas. Agency reports in the 1979 data indicate 35,861 career personnel and 5764 short-termers (adjusted to 8581 if, as in the past, the short-termers are factored into a full-term equivalency). This results in an adjusted figure of total personnel overseas of 44,442. Personnel sending is clearly up.

The four-year period was also marked by an unusual surge in the number of new agencies. MARC had in 1976 (11th edition, p. 47) predicted that 110 new agencies would come into existence in the decade of the 1970s. Thirty-three were identified in the first half of the decade. A dramatic upswing is in progress, which has surpassed the previously most prolific decade (over 100 formed in the 1950s). A total of 123 new agencies were founded during the decade of the 1970s. The categories into which the new agencies fall appear to be specialized evangelism, specialty ministries, and humanitarian activities, in that order.

What are the components of these general trends? Where has the growth (or decline) occurred? Three past highlights for understanding mission sending have grown out of the publication of the Mission Handbook. It was in the November 23, 1960, issue of the Occasional Bulletin from the Missionary Research Library, that Frank W. Price and Clara E. Orr documented the trend that had then culminated in numerical superiority in mission sending for the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association (EFMA) and the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association (IFMA) over the Division of Overseas Ministries of the National Council of Churches (DOM).

In the Occasional Bulletin of January 1969, David M. Stowe, then executive director of the DOM, on the occasion of the publication of the eighth edition of the Mission Handbook, followed the trends in growth, commenting on the strength of the missionary sending system and the continued shift from ecumenical agencies toward conservative and fundamentalist ones.

Edward R. Dayton, editor of the eleventh edition of the Mission Handbook (1976), traced the trends through another eight years and called attention to the emergence and importance of the unaffiliated agencies, the apparent static state of the EFMA/IFMA and the continued decline of the DOM-related agencies. Dayton summarized those trends in the April 1977 Occasional Bulletin of Missionary Research. In terms of personnel, the most recent analysis shows a continued dramatic upsurge (45 percent increase) of unaffiliated groups, a breaking out of the holding position by the EFMA (30 percent increase in personnel, 89 percent increase in income), slight increase for the IFMA (6 percent increase in personnel), and a continued decline (22 percent decrease) of the conciliar groups (DOM).

Where has the personnel growth taken place? The EFMA missions have shown healthy growth with a 30 percent increase, but this does not offer a full explanation of the total growth. Unaffiliated mission agencies now comprise over half of the career personnel overseas, with the income of those agencies more than doubled.

An increase of almost 1000 regular career personnel missionaries is accounted for by only three agencies in the "unaffiliated" ranks, although these are clearly evangelical or fundamentalist by any reasonable classification. They are the New Tribes Mission, from 1000 to 5000 (400 percent), and Teen Missions, from 748 to 1800. In all, 17,633 short-termers were reported.

"Unaffiliated mission agencies now comprise over half of the career personnel overseas.

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The growth in numbers of short-termers has been nothing short of spectacular. One difference emerges from the previous two periods: the numerical growth of short-termers in this most recent epoch has not been detrimental to the career personnel totals, as it seemed to be in the early 1970s.

The by now expected but still startling facts of mission sending continue to be true. Fully half of the missionaries are sent by only 18 agencies; two-thirds are sent by 42 agencies (10 percent of those with any overseas personnel); 20 agencies receive 50 percent of the total income. Even for those 476 agencies that send missionaries, the median number of full-time overseas personnel is only 33.8. Thus a very few agencies do the lion’s share of mission sending.

No overseas personnel are listed by 239 agencies. They include such contributions to North American mission sending as small service agencies providing furlough housing and supporting services, consulting and research, information, and so forth. An increasing number are dedicated to humanitarian concerns.

When one analyzes the trends in combination, some interesting features surface. Take, for example the DOM trend toward decline in overseas personnel and the trend toward increased dollar commitment to relief, development, and humanitarian concerns. In the distribution of personnel, DOM agencies declined by 22 percent in personnel but increased from $137.4 million in income to $146.1 million in 1979, an increase of 6 percent. Of the some thirty-one agencies affiliated to the DOM, 69 percent (2185) of the DOM overseas personnel are involved with agencies whose stated primary tasks include relief or development without mention of evangelism, church planting, and/or extension. The agencies that major in relief and development far outweigh, in both absolute gross numbers of dollars and percentage increases, those that include evangelism. Major increases have occurred for Church World Service in income (75 percent increase to $41,170,000) and personnel (62 percent to 42) and for the United Methodist Committee on Relief, with its income increase (61 percent to $12,100,000) and personnel growth (389 percent to 650).

Two DOM affiliates, United Methodist Committee on Relief and United Methodist World Division of the Board of Global Ministries, report a combined 72 percent increase to 1588 persons, up from 921 in 1976. The major growth shift relating to personnel in the DOM is thus related to humanitarian concerns but is not directly related to church planting or evangelism. This may be only the visible tip of a growing iceberg not fully seen in the data. Resources are increasingly being more heavily committed by many agencies to career locations other than church planting. This is true to a lesser degree of nonconciliar agencies.

One current trend of interest in mission today escapes the research. Since data were collected from mission agencies per se, there is no means of identifying and quantifying so-called tentmaking ministries where personnel are engaged in secular (i.e., nonagency) job relations, unless they happen to be by board policy (e.g., the North Africa Mission). Even these are not identifiable in the data as reported.

Observers will give conflicting interpretations to the data above. The clear summary leaves no doubt of the health and flexibility of mission sending from North America. One may debate the directions that ought to be taken. The facts remain that more career personnel are being sent, income is growing, short-termers are making an ever-increasing contribution, and churches in the United States and Canada are responding to evangelistic and humanitarian concern in the Christian world mission.
Selected Research Journals on Christianity in China

Donald MacInnis

Introduction

In recent years a number of research centers, Protestant and Catholic, focusing on religion in contemporary China have been established. Most of them publish a journal, bulletin, or newsletter. These centers, located in North America, Europe, and Hong Kong, are largely supported by the churches and staffed by church-related research scholars.

I. North America

1. China Notes is published quarterly by the China Program of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. China Notes, and its predecessor China Bulletin, have been published without break since the late 1940s. China Notes, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y., U.S.A. 10115.

2. China and Ourselves is published by the Canada China Programme of the Canadian Council of Churches; a quarterly, in its fourth year of publication. China and Ourselves, Suite 201, 40 St. Clair East, Toronto, Canada M4T 1M9.

3. Occasional special issues of church publications are devoted to China, such as Maryknoll magazine (July 1980). Maryknoll magazine, Maryknoll, N.Y., U.S.A. 10545.

4. IDOC International Series, Bulletin no. 12, December 1979, is an entire issue of documentation, primarily from Chinese sources, on religion in China.

II. Europe

5. China Study Project Bulletin and China Study Project Documentation are produced by the China Study Project of the British Council of Churches, 6 Ashley Gardens, Rusthall, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, England TN4 8TY. This quarterly publication contains the most extensive original source materials on religion in China, taken from New China News Agency, Xinhua Weekly, Summary of BBC Broadcasts: Far East, and other sources.

6. China Bulletin is produced by the Centre for Chinese Studies, the Pontifical Urban University, Via Urbano, VIII–16, Rome 00165, Italy. Now in its second year of publication, this bulletin contains news of the Catholic Church in China, and other relevant items of interest from a variety of sources.

7. CECC Newsletter (Catholics in Europe Concerned about China) is published by Pro Mundi Vita, Rue da la Limite 6; B–1030 Brussels, Belgium. Like the China Bulletin (Rome), this periodical contains news items about the church in China, particularly the Catholic Church, together with other items, such as reports of Christian visitors to China, meetings and seminars, and other publications.

8. Information Letter, the Marxism and China Study Project of the Lutheran World Federation, has been published regularly for a decade. Contains articles by scholars, and reprints of papers on religion from inside China. Information Letter, Lutheran World Federation, Department of Studies, P.O. Box 66, Route de Ferney 150, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland.

III. Hong Kong

9. Ching Feng is a scholarly quarterly journal on religion in China published by the Christian Study Center, Tao Fong Shan, Shatin, N.T., Hong Kong. Ching Feng is in its twenty-third year of publication.

10. Mimeographed translations of documents on religion from the Chinese press are available from the China study group at the Christian Study Center, Tao Fong Shan, Shatin, N.T., Hong Kong.

11. China Talk is a bulletin produced by the China Liaison Office of the Board of Global Ministries, United Methodist Church, at 2 Man Wan Rd., C–17, Kowloon, Hong Kong. Articles by the staff deal with current events in China, including religion.

12. China and the Church Today is produced by the Chinese Church Research Center of the China Graduate School of Theology, 5 Devon Road, Kowloon Tong, Hong Kong. The Church in China Interview Project of this center produces verbatim interviews with Chinese Christians from China.

13. China News Analysis is a weekly analysis of developments in China, including religion, published since 1953 by a Catholic scholar and staff, drawing on broadcasts and publications from China. China News Analysis, G.P.O. 3225, Hong Kong.
Fifteen Theses About China, the Church, and Christian Mission Today

Donald MacInnis

The Church in China

1. Because the Church in China began to emerge from a period of institutional repression only in the past two years, and is still being reconstituted at local and national levels, we do not yet have an understanding of its true and whole situation. Because the Church is still in this process, the churches outside China must recognize the burdens placed on leadership and the tenuous nature, at this date, of the new and restored structures and programs.

2. The true history of what happened in previous years, particularly during the Cultural Revolution period, is only now being revealed. No one on the outside can draw generalized conclusions or pass judgments on persons or groups within the Chinese Church.

3. The experience of the church and mission in many countries of the Third World, and the statements of national Christians there, should lead us to take seriously the Chinese perception that Christian missions were (and are) somehow linked with Western economic and political power and exploitation.

4. The people of China have constitutional guarantees of freedom of religious belief, reinforced by the new legal code; but like many other countries, there is no constitutional separation of church and state. While recognizing the role of the government through the Religious Affairs Bureau, we acknowledge as well the independence and authenticity of the Church in its organization and actions; the Church, not the government, re-opens churches, consecrates bishops, ordains priests, appoints and pays pastors, elects committees and administers its programs.

Western Churches and Christian Mission Today

5. Christians from every nation and tradition have a common Christian concern for all people, including the Chinese, that all might experience the fullness of life as promised and revealed by Jesus Christ.

6. Because they have a clear sense of their own identity as Chinese and as Christians through the experience of the past three decades, and because of the extraordinary vitality of the local church manifested in many places in recent years, the Church in China must be seen as self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating and best able to carry on the Christian apostolate to their own people.

7. Conventional forms of mission outreach to China are no longer possible. Christian relationships with China can only be established bilaterally, church-to-church on a peer basis, and only at the invitation of the Chinese church.

8. Our relationships should be those of humble service and sharing, open and honest, free of ulterior strategies or illegal activities (such as smuggling Bibles)—worthy though the ends of those activities may be.

9. We must recognize the problem of disproportion between the Church in China and the churches in the West. While China has nearly one billion people, the Chinese Church is small in numbers and leadership and limited in material resources. We must not overwhelm them with thoughtless generosity, nor jeopardize their hard-won identity, autonomy, and self-reliance.

10. We must be sensitive to the process of reconciliation and healing between the grass-roots Christian groups, both Catholic and Protestant, and the institutional churches, doing nothing to exacerbate the heritage of tensions.

11. Comity, a largely geographical concept of cooperation among churches and mission societies in pre-Liberation China, should be expanded to mean cooperation and sharing in any and all relationships with the churches and people of China.

Research and Reflection

12. To know the role of the Church and the Gospel in China today, we must seek to understand the social, political and cultural context within which the Church functions and the Gospel finds relevance. Research and reflection are essential to lead us to deeper understanding, respect and fellowship, and to avoid mistakes based on error and misjudgment of China's true situation.

13. A critical approach (in the positive sense) to the study of the history of Christian missions in China, taking into full account the critique of that history by Chinese Christians, does not mean to negate the dedication, authenticity and worth of the apostolate of earlier missionaries.

Theology, Christian Self-Understanding, and Salvation History

14. The history of the Church, beginning with the New Testament, manifests a spontaneous vitality that generates evolution and change, a corollary of authentic, dynamic growth. The Chinese Church today, quite different from the Church thirty years ago, illustrates this principle.

15. Because of its separation from the world Church for many years, and because of the age of many of its members, the Chinese Church conserves old forms, liturgies, practices; yet much is new. Because of its experience, the Chinese Church has much of value to share with Christians elsewhere. Salvation history—God's action for all his children—is dynamic, not static; our response in faith as Christians must be dynamic as well.
Religious pluralism, if we understand its theological implications, is a challenge to Christian self-righteousness. It confronts us with the unavoidable problem of how to confess Christ’s lordship in a religiously plural world. The list of contributors represents rich theological orientations. The reader is invited to consider diverse, well thought out views. I welcome the publication and strongly recommend it as a stimulating theological book written for both lay people and theological students.”

Kosuke Koyama,
Union Theological Seminary, N.Y.

“It will be difficult to find a more relevant problem for the missiological discussion today than ‘Christ’s Lordship and Religious Pluralism.’ It is not only the traditional problem of Christian missionary outreach among people of other religious persuasions. It is the reality of those people coming to live now in so called ‘Western Christian nations.’ Religious pluralism is becoming a fact of life for all Christians. Clarity in our witness to Jesus Christ in daily normal human relations is becoming the issue and the responsibility of every Christian. This is not a missiological debate for experts; this is an attempt to clarify our style of Christian living among neighbors of all persuasions. Fundamental reading for all concerned with pastoral care of the Christian community.”

Emilio Castro, World Council of Churches, Geneva.

This book is itself a very informative mirror of theological pluralism. It shows in a provocative way how far Christian theology can go today in interpreting a problem which is relevant not only for people of other faiths—two-thirds of humanity—but also for our own Christian self-understanding.”

Walbert Buhlmann, author of The Coming of the Third Church
Book Reviews

China, American Catholicism, and the Missionary.

Most recent published research on the history of American Catholic missions in China has focused on Protestant mission work. In 1980 two books on Catholic mission history in China were published: Eric Hanson's Catholic Politics in China and Korea (Orbis Books), and Thomas Breslin's China, American Catholicism, and the Missionary—which resembles Paul Varg's Missionaries, Chinese and Diplomats (1958) in its critical, iconoclastic approach.

Reduced from a much longer Ph.D. dissertation, Breslin's book suffers from the space limitation imposed by the publisher: with only 116 pages of narrative, the author was forced to cut short any number of fascinating sections which deserve detailed and anecdotal treatment. One wishes for more background information, more details of the life and work of American missionaries and their Chinese colleagues and parishioners, more verbatim selections taken from oral history interviews, diaries and letters. As with other published works on China missions, there is a shortage of information about the Chinese who formed the church: Who were the church members, from what classes were they drawn, how were they recruited, trained and nourished in the faith? The author's western sources are extensive, but no Chinese language sources are cited.

A second problem, perhaps linked to the first, is the tendency for generalization supported by inadequate documentation—often single quotations taken from a missionary's correspondence or diary. One of these is the author's charge, used twice in this volume, that China was a "dumping ground" for surplus American religious aspirants, enthusiasts, mavericks, misfits and disturbed personnel. If there was truth for this allegation it is not demonstrated in the text or footnotes. To substantiate this serious charge one needs more than footnote reference to unquoted correspondence between two or three missionary priests.

The term "rice Christian" is widely known and often used to abuse the work of Christian missions everywhere. There is no adequate discussion of the phenomenon here, simply a single quotation from one missionary that "many Catholics entered the Church simply for the sake of protection, temporal goods or financial assistance."

How many, and at what time and place, under what historical duress? Did the pattern vary over time? How many "real" Christians were there?

Again, "The basic strategy of the Roman Catholic Church in China was to attract socially marginal Chinese ..." Where is that strategy enunciated by church leadership? There was a "failure to draw persons from the Chinese mainstream." What is meant by "mainstream"? Catholic missions worked primarily with rural villagers who composed nearly 90 percent of the population. Would they not, therefore, constitute the true mainstream?

The author writes of the "destruction of a battered Church" by 1950 and the "failure of American Catholic missions." He does not define success or failure by either his own or the church's standards, or what he means by destruction. If he means the non-survival of Chinese Catholics as a body of believers, then recent reports from many visitors who have returned to their home towns and villages disprove the charges, for it is clear that Catholics at the local level have sustained the faith and the community with great vigor.

The main problem in writing mission history is to avoid celebrative hagiography on the one hand, and adopting an excessively "critical" stance on the other. While this volume does provide a brief but comprehensive overview of the history of American Catholic missions in China, its predominant stress on faults rather than virtues of the missionaries mars its objectivity.

—Donald MacInnis

Religion in China.

Like Breslin's book (above), Robert Orr's Religion in China is short, only 144 pages; yet his is more a standard overview of religion in China, with over half the book devoted to the history of Christianity in China, primarily that history which followed the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. Having made that choice, he presents scholarly, compact chapters on the history of Christian missions in China, the theory and practice of religion under the Communist government, and two chapters on Protestantism and Catholicism in China since 1949. While there is considerable overlap with books previously published (Francis Jones, Richard Bush, M. Searle Bates, Michael Chu, Donald MacInnis and others) these chapters update information on the church in China since those books were published.

In six short chapters Part Two deals with Chinese religions, Islam and Judaism in China past and present. While numerous scholarly volumes on each of these religions are available in English, the author provides a service for the neophyte reader: these clearly-written summaries provide accurate introductions to these religions, together with overviews of their present status. One sub-chapter, for example, is titled "Whatever Happened to Confucius?"

Part Three, in less than eight pages, raises some unanswered questions, all of them apposite. Perhaps the most poignant question is, "Can all human problems really be solved by the reordering of human society? Or is there a fundamental human nature... in need of help from beyond human resources?" (p. 134).

—Donald MacInnis

Donald MacInnis is Director of the Maryknoll in China History Project, and Coordinator for China Research at the Maryknoll Mission Society, Maryknoll, New York.
Catholic Politics in China and Korea.


This book fills a gap of long standing by providing a framework of political analysis for understanding the work of the Catholic Church in China, Taiwan, and Korea. As the second in the American Society of Missiology Series, this work will be of help to church historians, political scientists, and mission administrators in understanding the role of the churches in the Chinese milieu, which has been for both Catholics and Protestants a major testing ground for the theory and practice of mission in the modern world.

Eric O. Hanson is well qualified to write such a study, for he has a doctorate in political science from Stanford University, has studied at Fu Jen University and the National Taiwan University, and is now Assistant Professor of Political Science in the University of California at Santa Clara.

Hanson begins with a brief historical survey of the coming of Catholicism to China and Korea from the 16th century to the present. He stresses that the older China possessed a continental outlook which held to its own economic, political, and cultural sufficiency, while in the 19th and 20th centuries there has been a maritime milieu in which transnational institutions like business firms and churches established bases in maritime port areas from which to launch movements for change in the Chinese hinterland.

The author has two fundamental theses which underlie his analyses. The first is that the policies of governments in China and Korea toward religions throughout the centuries have had similar elements, whether the governments have been those of Imperial China, or of the Kuomintang, or of the People's Republic of China, or of anti-Communist regimes in South Korea. All such governments have sought to deal with religions (including Catholicism) by seeking to penetrate, to regulate, and to control them. Such governments could never tolerate heterodox religions of peasant sectarianism, and when such religions have arisen—even among Catholics—governments have tried to destroy them by persecution. A second thesis is that governments in China and Korea have objected to the Catholic Church primarily because of its transnational nature, which makes it difficult to be co-opted for nationalist ends.

The writer carefully analyzes the confrontations of the Catholic Church with the People's Republic of China, particularly in Shanghai from 1949 to 1960, and contrasts these events with the relative prosperity of Catholics in the Kuomintang's Taiwan, and with the tensions that Catholics have shared with Protestants under South Korean anti-communist governments. He concludes with recommendations for future Catholic political policies in China and Korea.

Although there are limitations in his analysis—methodological, ecumenical, and theological—Hanson has provided materials which are basic to any understanding of Catholicism in China and Korea.

—James M. Phillips

James M. Phillips is a Visiting Professor at San Francisco Theological Seminary, and Director for North America of the Pacific Basin Theological Network. He served in mission work in Korea, 1949-52, and in Japan, 1959-75.

Coming Home—to China.


Creighton Lacy believes “that the Maoist version of socialism has been good for the Chinese people, and will continue to be.” But he is convinced “that Chinese civilization is the more enduring reality” (p. 152). These somewhat general and not entirely surprising conclusions are drawn as the result of a three weeks' visit to China in the spring of 1977. Lacy's report has one great advantage over those of a hundred other accounts that have appeared recently: he grew up in Shanghai and spent some three years (1947-50) as a young missionary elsewhere in China. He writes therefore from a perspective that most others lack, and one purpose of his book is clearly to add some grays to the blacks and whites that characterize most reports from China.

One chapter, for example, is devoted to the correction of some popular misconceptions that have developed because of the tendency to think that social evils in China were corrected only with liberation. Extraterritoriality (the Unequal Treaties) was terminated not in 1949 but in 1943. Footbinding was gone by the 1930s. There still is purely decorative art, without a politically didactic purpose, produced in China—but handicrafts are generally not as good as in Old China. The finding of dead bodies was not an everyday affair on old Shanghai's streets; the author had grown up there and had never seen one. China is not egalitarian; there is considered material incentives (and in fact Mao was not proponent of absolute egalitarianism).

Other chapters comment on other aspects of Chinese life and politics against the background of a great deal of reading as well as the author's personal experience. This latter intrudes at times rather than helps. The average reader will not likely be interested in details about the house in Shanghai where the Lacy family lived, and can hardly be expected to share the nostalgia of an "old China hand." But this very attachment to the land and people has made it possible to perceive what many other reporters have not.

The chapter on religion in modern

Arne Sovik is on the staff of the Lutheran World Federation and has directed that organization's China Study for several years. He grew up and was a missionary in China.
China seemed to this reviewer to lack the form and clarity of argument. The author "sought in vain for evidence of significant religious life in China." "Organized religion" plays no role. The traditional institutional evidences were gone; there was little or no evidence in conversations with Chinese that religion played any part in their thinking. But there still are Christians in China. (There was one in fact rather puzzling conversation with a young man who claimed to be Christian.) In the end: "if there is religion in China today, it is the wisdom of Mao Tse-tung together with the way of life that has been developed in response to it." But is this ultimately satisfactory, this religion of nontranscendence?

Does, one asks, the rapid fading of Mao's image suggest an answer?

—Arne Sovik

Church and China: Towards Reconciliation.


The author is a Roman Catholic missionary, scholar, and writer. A former missionary to China, he is now co-director of the Chicago Institute of Theology and Culture. Four considerations contribute to the reliability of the book: (1) the author is eminently qualified to write such a book, (2) he visited China again in 1979 and so writes from personal experience and observation, (3) he quotes extensively from official and semiofficial sources—Beijing Review and People's Daily and (4) he met with Chinese Protestant leaders when they visited the United States in 1979.

The book is divided into two parts. Part One deals with recent changes in Chinese life and thought. Part Two deals with the developing rapprochement between the Communist government and the Christian church—both Protestant and Catholic.

Naturally, the author is primarily concerned with the fate of the Roman Catholic Church in China. He is cautiously optimistic regarding the future. He believes that the government is sincere in its present attempt to implement Article 46 of the 1978 Constitution, which guarantees freedom of religion. At the same time he notes that "little has changed since the fall of the Gang of Four" (p. 84). The remolding of believers "goes on with unabated vigor" (p. 84). He advocates 3 p's—extreme prudence in judging, extreme proficiency in learning, and extreme patience in planning (p. 146).

It is common knowledge that the Protestants in China fared better than the Catholics. The Protestant denominations joined the Three Self Patriotic Movement with little or no protest. Not so the Catholics. Eighty percent of all Catholic priests remained "loyal to Rome" (p. 121). For this they were severely punished.

The Catholic Church in China has several major problems. The first is the Vatican's adamant refusal to recognize the Patriotic Catholic Church, which was forced to declare its independence of Rome. Second, the Vatican continues to maintain diplomatic relations with Taiwan, which, of course, is totally unacceptable to the People's Republic of China.

Even if these two problems could be solved by some ingenious compromise—which is not impossible—there would still remain the deep cleavage between those Catholics who remained "loyal to Rome" and those who left Rome to join the Patriotic Catholic Church. Hundreds of the former are still in prison or obliged to engage in "productive" work. How will they regard their brethren who "compromised the gospel" and joined a "schismatic" church?

—J. Herbert Kane

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April, 1981

J. Herbert Kane, former missionary to China under the China Inland Mission, 1935-50, is Professor of Missions, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois.
The author writes on the history of missions as an interloper from a "human standpoint." He does not go into theological interpretations. His functional and descriptive view of the missionary enterprise, nevertheless, illuminates a period of history for us.

Rabe covers two decades before and two decades after the Boxer Rebellion (1900) in China. It was a period of rising Chinese nationalism and antiforeignism, fraught with wars and revolutions—a war was lost to Japan in 1895, Sun Yat-sen started the Republican Revolution of 1911, World War I and the May 4th Movement of 1919 soon followed. Yet, as this study indicates, there was little sensitivity at the American home base to these cataclysmic happenings in China.

Instead, it was preoccupied with raising, through cooperating voluntary associations, the financial support for the ambitious foreign missionary enterprise that had mushroomed by the turn of the century. Almost a hundred years after the founding of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) in 1810, networks of interdenominational agencies such as the Student Volunteer Movement, the Missionary Education Movement, the Laymen's Missionary Movement, the Foreign Missionary Conference of North America and its continuation committee, the World Missionary Conference of 1910, which later became the International Missionary Council, had developed.

Essentially a lay movement, these networks emphasized not unity, but cooperation of like-minded groups to achieve their mission of conquest of the world for Jesus Christ. They did not dwell on theology or ecclesiology. Their organizational model was one of effectiveness and efficiency in money-raising, which they borrowed from the business world. Like the growing business corporations, they too developed bureaucracies and staffed them with professionals who, with techniques of advertisement and promotion, sold the noblest of foreign missions to their constituencies.

According to Rabe, these interdenominational and denominational mission organizations judiciously steered clear of political issues that might divide their supporters while they themselves sought to fuse "evangelical hope with fuzzy geopolitical and racial theories." Giant statesmen like John R. Mott, Sherwood Eddy, Robert E. Speer, and Samuel Capen were the symbols of an elite in American Protestantism whose vision of the world was based on a homogenized culture of Christianity. They represented a generation whose faith was in progress and in the kingdom of God that would come, if people made its coming their daily business. Their optimism, however, was shattered by World War I.

The author suggests that spontaneity was lost when the missionary movement became an enterprise with its bureaucratic structures. The original impulse was swallowed up in unwieldy organization. Although Valentin H. Rabe does not spell out for us the implications that this study might have for the church, his mentor, John K. Fairbank, does in the few lines in the Foreword. The self-image of Americans portrayed by the Protestant missionary enterprise of this period, says Fairbank, still colors American relations with the new China, especially in America’s national defense and capacity for warfare. This book offers a sobering lesson to American Christians whose chauvinism lends support to many of the expansionist assumptions of their business and governmental compatriots.

—Franklin J. Woo

Franklin J. Woo, China Program Director, Division of Overseas Ministries of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., was for sixteen years a United Presbyterian missionary in Hong Kong, first as a student worker and later as chaplain of Chung Chi College of the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

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China and the West: Society and Culture 1815-1937.


Jerome Ch’èn, the well-know Professor of History at York University, Toronto, has written a must-read "general book" which analyzes China’s modern transformation resulting from its contact with the West. Drawing upon extensive primary sources, the author explains the "agents" of change, and charts China’s agonizing quest to overcome self-perceived inferiority.

Westerners saw nineteenth-century Chinese, whom they humiliated by a series of "unequal treaties," as a "depraved race governed by a despotic and corrupt ruling class" (p. 45). Western merchants and diplomats, ensconced in such enclaves of modernization as Shanghai, remained
disdainfully aloof from the Chinese. The missionaries, however, sought to change China by promoting Christianity along with modern Western education, medicine, and institutional reform. They were joined in this effort by thousands of westernized Chinese.

From the 1860s to the mid-1890s, the Chinese tried to graft Western technology onto Confucianism. But China's defeat by Japan in 1895 convinced many that China could save itself from imperialist domination only by abandoning Confucianism as well as the Manchus in favor of a modern republic dedicated to “Mr. Science” and “Mr. Democracy.”

The failure of constitutional government following the Revolution of 1911 and the warlord chaos of the 1920s brought the Kuomintang dictatorship to power on a wave of anti-imperialist nationalism. The western-educated Kuomintang elite endeavored to superimpose urban modernization but did nothing to alleviate rural suffering. Nor did it succeed in such attempts to fuse Chinese and Western cultures as the New Life Movement. These included the emancipation of women, attacks on the tyranny of the traditional family system, and the growing political activism of students and workers.

The youthful communists understood these iconoclastic elements. Repudiating missionary-inspired reformism, they looked to a different source of ideas—Soviet Marxism-Leninism—and linked it, through party discipline, to activist urban forces and massive rural discontent. In the wake of the Kuomintang's refusal to fight Japan following its invasion of China in 1937, the communists solidified these elements under the banner of nationalism. In so doing they created an effective revolutionary ideology and organization which brought them to power a dozen years later.

Professor Ch'en's book is very timely. By pointing out China's difficulties in evolving a new set of values following the disintegration of Confucianism, he gives us a valuable framework within which to consider the post-Mao phase of the Sino-Western encounter: China's present search for material power in the Four Modernizations campaign.

—P. Richard Bohr

James G. Endicott: Rebel Out of China.


Stephen Endicott's "Rebel Out of China" is a biography of his father, James Endicott, "preacher, missionary, relief worker, reformer, revolutionary" who during the 1950s and 1960s became, after 22 years as a United Church of Christ missionary in China, the most influential Canadian voice supporting Mao and the Chinese Communists, and during the same years was a highly controversial chairman of the Canadian Peace Movement urging nuclear disar-
mament. The book, over 400 pages, is carefully researched (the author is a historian and Asia specialist), reads like a historical novel, and captures the excitement, danger and revolutionary changes that overwhelmed the Chinese people from the collapse of the Manchu dynasty at the beginning of the century until the death of Mao and Chou En-lai in the 1970s. It is the story of a man, born in China, educated at the University of Toronto, whose whole life was identified with the struggles of the Chinese people.

During the war against Japan, when Endicott served in China with the United States military intelligence, he became convinced that the Nationalist Party under President Chiang would not survive the storms of Chinese peasant unrest. He knew personally President and Madame Chiang, having worked with them in the New Life Movement, an attempt in the 1940s to revitalize the sagging moral fiber of the Nationalist party leadership. His resigned, convinced that the Chiang government could not be saved. His “revolutionary” career began in a simple act in 1946 when he opposed government pressure on the students at West China Union University where he taught English and ethics. When the administration and the missionaries would not take a stand, he resigned from the university and the mission board. Within a few months he was editing in Shanghai, at Chou En-lai’s suggestion, a clandestine newsletter supporting the Chinese communist cause. Although a controversial person within the missionary community in China, it was not until he returned to Canada that he began to understand what controversy really could be. He became a national public figure, a hero to some and “public enemy Number One” to others, including those in the government, because of his support of Sino-Soviet policies. This came to a head during the Korean war in 1952 when he visited China and returned to Canada supporting China’s charges of “germ warfare” against the United States. There was even talk within Canadian government circles of charging him with treason.

At some point in his life Jim Endicott was misunderstood and criticized by almost everyone with whom he worked—his church, the mission board that sent him, the Canadian people, both friends and foes, the Chinese Communists (when he appeared to be too supportive of Russia) and the Russians (when after receiving the Stalin Peace Prize he resigned in 1971 from the World Council of Peace.) This merely points out, as the book makes so clear, that he was “his own man,” a man whose personal integrity, compassion, and commitments came from deep within himself, nourished by his understanding of Scripture, the ethical traditions of the church as he understood them, the influence of his father, and his vision of the kingdom of God. You do not have to agree with all that he said or did to recognize him as a man of superior quality whose life deserves our attention and study.

—Tracey K. Jones Jr.

Tracey K. Jones, Jr., Visiting Professor of Missions at The Theological School of Drew University, Madison, New Jersey, served as a missionary in China and Singapore, and was formerly General Secretary of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries.
The New Lottie Moon Story.


For nine decades Southern Baptists have observed the first days of December as a week of prayer for foreign missions. This prayer emphasis is linked to the suffering that bears her name—the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions, which to date has resulted in nearly $500 million for gospel witness outside the United States of America. This woman, Charlotte Diggs Moon, a cultured daughter of antebellum Virginia, served forty years in north China. She became a legend in her time and, according to this biographer, Catherine B. Allen, is the most famous of all Southern Baptists, past or present.

Though Lottie Moon herself would probably have disdained fame, she was unique in her time and a forceful mission strategist in her own right. She functioned purposefully through China's chaotic entry into the twentieth century. Appointed in 1873, she served until her death in 1912, with marked impact on her own denomination's struggles to establish mission policy and stable mission financing.

Allen's considered view is that Lottie Moon bartered her own privacy for a more adequate mission support base from her denomination. During two years of research in Baptist archives and interviews with all known persons of firsthand contact with Lottie Moon, or family connection, Allen updated a biography written more than fifty years ago.

On the basis of Allen's research about her subject's family and upbringing, it should be no surprise that Lottie Moon was involved in education during much of her time in China. But evangelistic witness in the interior, more than education, put her into mission outreach and mission policymaking. She struggled with pastoral subsidy. She battled identification problems—dress, church property ownership, and a divisive self-support policy struggle—all of which kept the Baptist mission in turmoil. More than once Lottie Moon functioned as peace-

Sixteen Outstanding Books on China and Christianity

The editors of the International Bulletin of Missionary Research, in consultation with several scholars in this field, have selected the following books for special recognition of their contribution to mission studies in relation to China. We have limited our selection to books in English published since 1965. We commend the authors, editors, and publishers represented here for their efforts to provide the scholarly literature that is vital to the ongoing work of the Christian world mission.

Thomas A. Breslin.

China, American Catholicism, and the Missionary.

Richard C. Bush.

Religion in Communist China.

Michael Chu, S.J., ed.


Paul A. Cohen.


Ralph R. Covell.


John K. Fairbank, ed.

The Missionary Enterprise in China and America.

Shirley S. Garrett.


Claude Geffré and Joseph Spaé, eds.

China as a Challenge to the Church.

Creighton Lacy.

Coming Home—To China.

Lutheran World Federation/Pro Mundi Vita.

Christianity and the New China.

Jessie G. Lutz.


Donald Macnissi.

Religious Policy and Practice in Communist China: A Documentary History.

Wallace C. Mertoin.

Adventure in Unity. The Church of Christ in China.

Robert G. Orr.

Religion in China.

Valentin H. Rabe.


James D. Whitehead, Yu-ming Shaw, N.J. Giradot, eds.

China and Christianity: Historical and Future Encounters.
Protestantism in Changing Taiwan. A Call to Creative Response.


Over the past thirty years Taiwan has had a higher concentration of missionaries than most countries of comparable size. From about 1950 to 1958, Protestant and Catholic churches, undoubtedly influenced by the tremendous influx of outside personnel, experienced great growth. From 1958 until the present (this book takes us through 1975) there has been, at best, little or no growth, and, in most cases, a steady decline. The author of this book, a Free Methodist missionary, who has lived and worked in Taiwan since 1960, gives her analysis of Taiwan's church malaise and challenges her colleagues to develop a strategy that would bring renewed health and vigor.

The early chapters give an excellent brief historical survey of Christianity in Taiwan and an analysis of the dynamic economic, cultural, and political change of the last decade. The growth or, more frequently, non-growth, patterns of twelve Christian groups are examined. Throughout the book, Raber suggests reasons for early receptivity to the gospel and the more recent resistance. A variety of missiological solutions are presented, with particular emphasis placed on churches planting daughter churches, lay training, and the adaptation of strategy, methods, and theology to the Chinese milieu.

The author is long on analysis and short on solutions. Even, however, with her extensive analysis there are many undocumented assumptions, such as that the Billy Graham Crusade of 1975 would produce significant growth, that there is indeed a spiritual vacuum in the lives of most of the urbanized young people, that Buddhism is not a key obstacle to church growth, and so forth. Much more hard-nosed sociological study must be made to substantiate the latter two generalities and others like them.

The remedies suggested have several weaknesses. First, they reflect usual church-growth clichés about concentrating on the masses, making bold plans, thinking positively, and the like. Second, they are a rather haphazard imposition on the Taiwan scene of a potpourri of anthropological and methodological models that are not proved to have any direct relationship to church growth in that country. Third, they do not represent a serious interaction with present-day Chinese culture. Most of the proposed solutions could fit for nearly any area in the world. What are the specific keys that are uniquely needed in Taiwan?

Perhaps the best hope for analysis and solutions is Dorothy Raber's recommendation for the Taiwan Church Growth Society that it 'descend from the level of speaking in broad generalities and start grappling with the growth problems of individual levels.'

—Ralph R. Covell

Ralph R. Covell, Academic Dean and Professor of World Missions at Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary, Denver, Colorado, was formerly a missionary in China (1946–51) and Taiwan (1952–66).

Christianity and Animism in Taiwan.


In recent years, the issues generally discussed in relation to the church's mission have been those most characteristic of our time—secularism, materialism, and political, scientific, and technological revolution. Interest has also been evident in the encounter between Christianity and the great world religions. But a third area of concern has not received the consideration that it deserves, namely, the relationship between Christianity and folk religion or animism. Despite the radical changes that modernization has brought about in ancient societies, in many of them their folk religious traditions are still very much alive and remain potent influences in their confrontation with the church's mission.

Thus it is a matter of special interest that Alan Gates has written a book dealing directly with this issue in one particular setting, Taiwan. Although of major value to those engaged
Noteworthy

In 1980 the National Committee of the Chinese Protestant Three-Self Patriotic Movement (169 Yuan Ming Yuan Road, Shanghai, People's Republic of China) reactivated the publication of their periodical TIANFENG. Contents of the first issue included the following:

- Editorial regarding the reactivated magazine
- Open Letter to All Christian Brothers and Sisters (March 1, 1980)
- Reports of opened churches (what the first Christmas and Easter were like)
- Remembrance and Tribute to Y.T. Wu
  "Rest in Peace, our beloved Mr. Wu!"
  "In Memory of Old Mr. Wu"
  "A Life that goes on—In memory of our father"
  (by Y.T. Wu's two sons)
- News of Nanking Theological Seminary
- Two Sermons: "Forgetting the Past, and Moving into the Future"
  "Life is Beautiful Poetry"
- Devotional Thoughts: "Lillies of the Valley"
  short meditations
  short religious articles
- Two articles about history: "Seeking Truth from Facts"
- International guests to China: Homer Jack, E.H. Johnson and family, Kentaro Shiosuki of the Japan Y.M.C.A.
- How to Study the Bible (19 pages), by K.H. Ting

The Third Chinese National Christian Conference was held in Nanking, October 6–13, 1980. (The first meeting was held in Peking in July 1954; the second was in Shanghai in January 1961.) At this meeting the new China Christian Council was created with the following officers elected:

Chairperson: K.H. TING.

Vice Chairpersons: KIANG Wen-han, WU Kao-tzu (English name: George K.Y. WU), CHENG Chien-yeh, SHIH Ju-chang (Phoebe SHIH), TANG Ma-tai (Matthew TONG), TSENG Yu-shan (ZENG You-san), TSAI Wen-hao (Peter TSAI), YEN Chai-le, and CHIANG Pei-feng.

General Secretary: CHENG Chieh-yeh.

The National Committee of the Chinese Protestant Three-Self Patriotic Movement continues as a parallel body with the following elected officers:

Honorary Chairperson: WU Yi-fang.

Chairperson: K.H. TING.

Vice Chairperson: TENG Yu-chih (Cora DENG), WANG Shen-yin, LIU Liang-mo, LI Shou-pao, SUN Peng-hsi, LO Kuan-tsong, ZHAO Fusan, TANG Shou-lin, CHI Ching-tsai, and HSIUNG Chen-peier.

General Secretary: SHEN Te-jung (SHEN Derong).

—Information taken from the People's Daily, November 1, 1980
Kosuke Koyama, who is now professor of ecumenics and world Christianity at Union Theological Seminary in New York, is no stranger to us. As in his previous books, such as *Water buffalo Theology*, *50 Meditations*, and *No Handle on the Cross*, Koyama attempts to relate his life experience in Japan and Southeast Asia to various theological themes. As described in the preface, "This small book is a collection of biblical reflections by one who is seeking the source of healing from the wounds, the festering sores, inflicted by the destructive power of idolatry. As he felt this way the image of the 'Three Mile an Hour God' who invites us in the direction of depth rather than distance has been pressed upon him." The central theme of this book seems then to be the love of God, which becomes the source of healing from the wounds inflicted upon people by the idolatry of the emperor worship in Japan during the 1930-45 period. "God walks 'slowly' because he is love. If he is not love he would have gone much faster. Love has its speed. It is an inner speed. It is a spiritual speed. It is a different kind of speed from the technological speed to which we are accustomed. It is 'slow' yet it is lord over all other speeds since it is the speed of love. It goes on in the depth of our life, whether we notice or not, whether we are currently hit by storm or not, at three miles an hour" (p. 7).

One may wish that this central idea of love had been the focus of Kosuke Koyama's theological and biblical reflections in the book. On the contrary, the book deals with every possible topic of human situations such as time, rest, communications, and the like. Therefore, the title of this book can easily mislead readers. It is best understood as "45 Meditations," a companion volume to his *50 Meditations*. Although the book suffers from lack of depth and unity in thought, it is filled with delightful personal experiences, fresh insights, and vivid imagery from the common phenomena of East Asia to convey the Christian faith. I wish that Koyama would take time, however, to bring bits of his insights together and present a unified, systematic treatise on a specific topic in depth.

—Jung Young Lee

Jung Young Lee is Professor of Religious Studies at the University of North Dakota. His most recent book is *The Theology of Change: A Christian Concept of God in an Eastern Perspective* (Orbis Books, 1979).
Marcos and Martial Law in the Philippines.


On September 21, 1972 President Ferdinand E. Marcos declared a state of martial law in the Republic of the Philippines. He justified these emergency measures on two grounds: the national security was threatened by several insurgent movements, and necessary social and economic reforms could not be achieved except through the exercise of "constitutional authoritarianism."

Over the past eight years, as martial law hardened into a way of life in the Philippines, the continuing debate over its justification has centered on the second of Marcos’s two reasons: Are the restrictions of civil liberties a necessary trade-off in a desperately poor country for the development of a more prosperous and equitable society? In the present volume, five political scientists, two Filipinos and three Americans, examine this question with considerable sophistication and objectivity than is normally found in the propaganda of Marcos’s critics and apologists. Their collective verdict is that the Marcos martial-law regime has not accomplished significant and lasting reforms but has chiefly consolidated its own power and enriched its friends.

In the most comprehensive of the five essays, José V. Abueva of the United Nations University contrasts the ideological of the Marcos New Society with its actual performance. Sympathetic to the stated ideals of the New Society and realistic about the crippling flaws of traditional politics in the Philippines, Abueva nonetheless concludes that martial law has not democratized wealth and power in the Philippines but has only contracted them more severely. Roland V. del Carmen of Sam Houston State University examines the legalisms by which Marcos, still the constitutional lawyer, has sought to legitimize his regime. Benedict J. Kerkvliet of the University of Hawaii considers the centerpiece of the proclaimed Marcos social revolution: land reform. He finds the Marcos program irrelevant to the vast majority of Philippine workers and peasants and frustrated even in its narrower objectives by the inherent defects of elitist planning. David Rosenberg of Middlebury College, who has edited the volume, reviews the tight control the Marcos regime has exercised over the media, and Robert Stauffer of the University of Hawaii describes changes in the political economy as a kind of refeudalization, that is, a shift in the centers of wealth and power rather than a wider redistribution. All of the authors cite liberally from church-related sources, which have been among the most persistent critics of the Marcos New Society.

While Marcos officially ended the state of martial law on January 17, 1981—shortly before the visit of the Pope to the Philippines—his one-man rule appears secure.

—Joseph A. O’Hare, S.J.

The Intra-Religious Dialogue.


The author of this short work, Raymond (or Raimundo) Panikkar, is increasingly—and rightly—becoming one of the recognized intellectual leaders in the Christian movement toward intercommunity dialogue. He is eminently qualified for the task: by up-bringing, by temperament, by intellect, and by experience. Son of a Hindu father (of a brilliant Indian family) and a Spanish Roman Catholic mother, he was brought up a Catholic and is an ordained priest. He has lived a good part of his life (and continues to live usually a good part of each year) in India, chiefly Banaras; he is culturally in many ways a continental European (writing as readily in German and Italian as in his native Spanish or his adopted English). He is unusually sensitive, and unusually erudite (how many can match his three doctorates—in chemistry, philosophy, theology); and has an exceptionally nimble mind. He has become an academic (University of California at Santa Barbara, in their Religious Studies Department) and a prolific writer (this is his 26th book). He has concerned himself with the encounter, ever more pressing and pressed, between and among religious communities—especially between Christian and Hindu, of course, and more recently Buddhist. He writes primarily for Christians, to incite us—or “at least,” as he himself puts it, some among us (cf. p. 93)—to take the issues involved in the encounter with the seriousness and the spiritual sensitivity and depth that he himself feels. He personally is not half-Indian and

Wilfred Cantwell Smith, a Canadian and an ordained minister of the United Church of Canada, served a six-year term in Lahore, India (now Pakistan), teaching Islamic history in Forman Christian College; his subsequent life also has been as a teacher: in the Divinity Faculty of McGill University, Montreal, where he was also director of the Institute of Islamic Studies; in the Divinity Faculty of Harvard University, where he was also for a time director of the Center for the Study of World Religions; currently he is serving as Chairman, The Study of Religion at Harvard, to develop a new program in that field in arts and sciences at Harvard.
The International Student Consultation on Frontier Missions (ISCFM) was held concurrently with the World Consultation on Frontier Missions (WCFM), October 26–November 2, 1980, Edinburgh, Scotland, with the aim of considering how best to motivate students worldwide for the task of reaching those people currently beyond the reach of the Gospel (the Hidden Peoples). The ISCFM often meshed with the WCFM. Each day began with prayer and Bible study. Papers on Frontier Missions vision, structures and personnel were presented daily and discussed. The evening sessions focused on large unreached blocks—specifically animist, Muslim, Hindu and Chinese peoples. The resulting education, fellowship and prayer added strength and perspective to the strategy sessions.

The ISCFM meetings were intense. Although 26 countries were represented, the consultation was very sensitive in its deliberations, realizing that if caution were not exercised, an imbalance of western attitudes might prevail. The consultation was best described by the delegate who likened it to the birth of a baby. There were many painful contractions as each area of concern was discussed, argued and prayed over, and agreed upon. Finally, in peace and unity, the following statement was proffered for at the end in a brief chapter just to give some comparative perspectives rather than being covered fully, as the first two are. Within each of these


It is both a strength and a weakness in the book that it finds its connecting thread in the great conferences that have been held, starting with Edinburgh in 1910 and coming up to the Pan African Christian Leadership Assembly in 1976. This is a strength in that the conferences provide clear points of focus where mission theology is expressed in a way that is acceptable to a large group. It is a weakness in that conferences are not usually the places where the most careful and creative thought is carried on. There is usually something said to satisfy everyone and there is not time to work through fine points, but only to throw in some ringing rhetoric. The book, it should be said, does deal with some of the major mission writers and thinkers outside the conference structures, but it concentrates primarily on what was said at the conferences.

The author is an Australian Methodist missionary on the faculty of Rarongo Theological Seminary on New Britain island, an institution noted for its creativeness in theological education. The appearance of a work like this suggests the continuing high quality of that institution. Not many books that originate as doctoral dissertations—as this one did at Southern Methodist University—make as useful a contribution to knowledge.

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 Ministry of Development in Evangelical Perspective.


The symposium recorded in this book explores the “biblical meaning of development” as one response to the call from the Lausanne Covenant for the unity of evangelism and social action. The participants are mission executives, development agency leaders, and scholars associated with IFMA/EFMA or the WEF (Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association, Evangelical Foreign Missions Association, World Evangelical Fellowship). The participants all endorse orthodox Christian doctrine and care deeply about people in need. The answer to their question of how to live out this dual commitment is illuminated but not resolved in this volume.

Ronald Sider and Vernon Wiebe offer a strong biblical apologetic for social concern. George Peters provides an excellent historical overview of the church and development in the Third World. John Robinson clarifies some philosophical issues and Wade Coggins outlines some practical administrative problems in development assistance. Wayne G. Bragg, Director of the Human Needs and Global Resources (HNGR) Program at Wheaton College, served for fifteen years in Central America, the Caribbean, and Brazil in student work under the auspices of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. Marilyn Carlstrom, Assistant to the Director, HNGR Program at Wheaton College, has worked in Alaska and Haiti.

Wayne G. Bragg

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seas, let alone the lifestyle of the entire Western church, although there are occasional murmurings to the effect that "Christ never commanded us to identify with the poor." No one asks how the principles of development should inform the decision-making, fund-raising, technology, or salary structures of Western mission agencies. Conspicuous by its absence is an examination of development as a carrier of Western values and specifically as potential neocolonialism.

Helpful suggestions do crop up throughout the book. Bong Ro urges that others imitate the example of twenty students at the Christian Training Center in Malaysia who support themselves by farming. He also commends EFICOR, the relief and development arm of the Evangelical Fellowship of India, for not paying inflated salaries to foreign staff members, challenges Japan to help the rest of Asia, and alerts people to the problems of working with corrupt bureaucracies. Lastra cautions Christians against selling out entirely to either Marxist or capitalist ideology, and proposes that churches organize teams of professionals to develop local community resources. Several mention the need for cultural sensitivity and partnership between Western and Third World churches. Carl Henry highlights the doctrine of Christian vocation as the perennial response to the needs of society, and concludes the book by reminding Christians of their calling not only to protest the evils of the world, but more importantly, to affirm the good in the world.

While this small volume cannot be considered a watershed document, it is at least a step in the right direction by contemporary evangelicals. Whether these spokesmen—and they are all men—express a groundswell of concern among North American evangelicals or merely form a marginal coterie remains to be seen. Will evangelicals dedicate resources to the development of people as they have to evangelism, church growth, and relief aid in the past? If so, further serious study is needed so that these efforts will not reproduce the weaknesses of either traditional missions or secular development agencies.

—Wayne G. Bragg and Marilyn Carlstrom

Women and World Religions.


Dr. Carmody, with her husband, made an around-the-world trip to study world religions and the status of women some three years before this book was published. Professor of religion at Wichita State University in Kansas, she has produced from her study trip a volume that appears to be a college course text. It surveys primal religions (which she prefers to call archaic rather than primal or primitive), Hinduism, Buddhism, Shintoism, and Taoism, as well as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The book is introduced by a theory of religion and an explanation of the links that this author sees between religion and the consciousness and status of women. The final chapter of the book is entitled "Theological Reflections," although it does not deal with theology in the more usual sense of the word. The approach of the book is one that many people would call history of religions. Almost entirely descriptive, it details the experience of women in the traditions, the writings, and the legislation concerning them, and the social and ritual roles that they may or may not play.

The book draws together a great deal of information that is not readily available. This is a great advantage. It also allows for a wider perspective in which to consider specific problems of women in a particular tradition and at a particular time. This is a substantial second advantage.

The disadvantages appear to be two. Because of the limited length of the book and the number of traditions covered, the material offered must of course be quite selective and must be offered more or less out of context. This means that some distortion is inevitable. The second disadvantage would seem to be the frankly feminist, advocacy stance of the book. The necessary selection tends to favor negative and irritating details. Out of context these tend to further distortion.

The book will certainly arouse anger in women who read it. A course might be extremely negative if taught on the basis of this book alone and the impact might be one of frustration or depression. Balanced by other readings that point out the encouragement, the spirituality, the dignity and status, and the hope that are offered to women in their religious traditions, this can be a very helpful book.

—Monika K. Hellwig


This small book is the latest in the Newberry Library series of bibliographies on the history of Native Americans. It reflects the growing interest in Indian history and especially mission history on the part of general historians. There are 211 items listed and annotated. Five titles are recommended for the beginner, and they with fifteen others form a basic library. It is not likely that ten theological seminary libraries in the whole country possess these. It is to be hoped that they will try to acquire them and then add to them. An important bibliographical essay guides the neophyte through the literature.


This second volume in Harold W. Turner's important series follows a first volume on Black Africa. Such religious movements, including separatist or independent churches, are a global phenomenon. This volume covers the United States, Canada, Greenland, and Mexico. There are 1607 items listed and
annotated. There are very useful indices of authors and sources; films, records, and tapes; and main movements and Indian individuals. The compiler includes much material rather peripheral to the subject and items on revolts in general, such as Pope and the Pueblo Revolt against the Spaniards, which scarcely qualify as new religious movements even though religion may have been one ingredient. Many entries are anthropological and historical-background studies. The sections on "Theory" and "General" provide theoretical and contextual understanding of the particular movements. Turner has scarcely left a stone unturned, and he has produced a monumental resource for scholars and missiologists in particular. Mission scholars concerned with evangelism, communication of the gospel, and indigenization on other continents have seen similar new religious movements as a key to understanding religious concerns and questions of the tribal peoples (and also of high cultures) and as giving illumination on the indigenization of Christianity. Strangely there is very little awareness of such movements in North America on the part of either missionaries or missiological scholars. Turner's scholarship has done the spadework in bibliography and has made the task of acquaintanceship much simpler for us.

—R. Pierce Beaver

R. Pierce Beaver, professor emeritus at the University of Chicago Divinity School and former director of the Missionary Research Library, was the founding editor of the Occasional Bulletin of Missionary Research. He is now retired at Green Valley, Arizona.

The Iglesia ni Kristo: Its Christology and Ecclesiology.


The Iglesia ni Kristo (or, as it prefers, Iglesia ni Kristo) is a large, vigorously growing, vehemently anti-Roman Catholic independent church (or sect, depending on one's point of view) in the Philippines. Since its founding in late 1913, the Iglesia's aggressive, polemical style of propagating its beliefs has often produced sharp counterattacks by Catholic defenders. Happily, in today's more ecumenical climate the tone of the Catholic/Iglesia exchanges is changing—at least on the Catholic side. Dr. Elesterio's stated purpose is to examine Iglesia doctrine from the standpoint of ecumenical theology, and he is to be commended for his fairness and objectivity.

Although this book is primarily a doctrinal study, the author includes a rather complete, and generally accurate, account of the founding and growth of the Iglesia. Unfortunately, some historical errors have crept into the text. For example, he repeats the Iglesia's mistaken identification of the Mission Cristiana of the Disciples of Christ (with whom the founder had historical connections) with the Christian and Missionary Alliance denomination. He helpfully describes Iglesia growth from a very small, humble beginning to the present, when it is found and is growing in almost every province in the Philippines as well as spreading among Filipino immigrant communities in other countries. In commenting on this growth, Dr. Elesterio's statement that "the new sect appealed only to the illiterate and the ignorant" may mask the fact that Iglesia

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Ph.D. Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila Univ., 1980.

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"Swami Sivananda and the Divine Life Society: An Illustration of Revitalization Movements."

Mitra, Kana.
"Catholicism-Hinduism: A Vedantic Investigation of Raimundo Panikkar's Attempt at Bridgebuilding."

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Nicholson, Wayne Isaac.
"Toward a Theology of Comparative Religion: A Study in the Thought of Hendrik Kraemer and Wilfred Cantwell Smith."
Ph.D. Louisville, Ky.: Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1979.

Tano, Rodrigo.
"Theology in the Philippine Setting: A Case Study in the Contextualization of Theology."

Wedemann, Walter.
"History of Protestant Missions to Brazil, 1850-1914."
Ph.D. Louisville, Ky.: Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1977.

growth is a remarkable story of a very successful strategy of propagation of a notable nationalistic religious movement.

Chapters 3 to 6 focus on Iglesia doctrinal teachings on the Person of Christ and the church. The Iglesia believes that the Scriptures teach that Jesus Christ was true man, savior, mediator, son of God, but not deity. Its ecclesiology is a uniquely Philippine adaptation of Restorationist theology, as it attempts to show that the true church disappeared from the earth after the death of the apostles only to reappear in the Philippines through God’s special messenger, Felix Manalo, the Iglesia’s founder.

In the closing chapter, Dr. Elesterio seeks to determine if any common ground exists between the Iglesia ni Cristo and the major branches of Christianity by using the Apostles’ Creed as a paradigm. He concludes that Iglesia teaching diverges too drastically from the historic Christian faith for any fruitful dialogue to take place. He also points out that Iglesia leaders are not really interested in ecumenical conversations. A better starting point may have been belief in the supreme authority of Holy Scripture, rather than the Apostles’ Creed, yet even beginning there might not really open up the way for fruitful dialogue with Iglesia leaders who continue to hold to the authority of Manalo’s own interpretations of Scripture.

We are indebted to the author for collecting so much valuable material on the Iglesia ni Cristo in the book’s extensive appendices (73 pages), including an important, though possibly dated, “interior constitution” of the church.

—A. Leonard Tuggy


How the Other Third Lives . . .


The editors of How the Other Third Lives . . . have responded to the developing interest in exploring literature other than Western. The sources of the literature are Asia, Latin America, and Africa. White has traveled extensively in Korea, in the Philippines, and in the United States. Quigley is executive editor of Orbis Books.

The theme of this book is oppression of one group of human beings by another, and this is actualized through a personal offering of poems, short stories, essays, novella, and journals representing national literature from emerging nations. The interest in Eastern literature, especially for the theme of oppression, comes from the observation that Western literature is many times isolated and limited in perspective.

Among other experiences, the book speaks to and about those who have gone abroad and return home with hope, fear, and confusion. While injustice is the underlying theme of this collection, despair is not the main plot. Throughout the book love, pride, hope, and all the elements of humanity are woven within the threads of oppression. The scars of broken humanity are explored through holistic literature. The hope of this volume is further to enable people to see themselves in the sufferings and triumphs of all their fellows.

Some of the entries are more striking and message-bearing than others: the bitterness and despair of being black in a society based on the assumption of white supremacy, and the capturing of one’s self-dignity in a society ignorant of women’s liberation. Eastern literature can be rich in wisdom as seen through the story of a woman with a special grasp on life and time. The agony and ecstasy of patience and waiting are seen through the life of a Chinese woman and of a Filipino man. That no person is free if even one brother or sister is enslaved sums up the promises and problems of freedom.

The real-life struggle of human suffering and sacrifice as depicted in the journals provides by far the strongest portrayal of the death/resurrection aspect of oppression and freedom found in the book. These journals provide a challenge to both the institutional church and the individual Christian.

Valuable as literature and documents of social and cultural history, How the Other Third Lives . . . for the most part provides a timely message for the world community.

—Katherine Cairone, R.S.M.

Katherine Cairone, R.S.M., teaches at Notre Dame High School, Lawrenceville, New Jersey.
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Editors Gerald H. Anderson and Thomas F. Stransky participated in the World Council of Churches’ World Conference on Mission and Evangelism at Melbourne, Australia (May 1980) and in the Lausanne Committee’s Consultation on World Evangelization at Pattaya, Thailand (June 1980). They have also co-edited Christ’s Lordship and Religious Pluralism (Maryknoll, N.Y. Orbis Books, 1981).

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