Apostolic, Catholic, and Evangelical

Those engaged in the Christian world mission want their contributions to be judged on the basis of what is "apostolic, catholic, and evangelical." This given runs through our current issue like a bright thread.

In the lead article—which originated with the inauguration of the Overseas Ministries Study Center's new facilities in New Haven, Connecticut—Bishop Lesslie Newbigin warns the churches of the western world that the call to mission cannot be forgotten or marginalized without "forfeit[ing] the right to the titles catholic and apostolic." "The truth is," Newbigin continues, "that the gospel escapes domestication, retains the proper strangeness, its power to question us, only when we are faithful to its universal, supra-national, supra-cultural nature. . . . In this sense the foreign missionary is an enduring necessity in the life of the universal church."

Paul Garrett brings a new light and challenge to the perception that the Orthodox churches are not "missionary." In his view, the missional intention of the Orthodox churches in North America was repeatedly thwarted by the accidents of history and the hostility of WASP culture. The recent union of the Evangelical Orthodox Church—rooted in an evangelical para-church movement—with the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, is viewed as evidence of the undying power of an apostolic tradition.

At the other end of the North American spectrum stands the Pentecostal community. Gary McGee demonstrates the wider impact of the Azusa Street Revival of 1906-1909: not signs and wonders, not just another American denomination, but a worldwide missionary movement that outstrips all others in the twentieth century. That movement, which accounts for one out of every four Protestants in the world today, sees as its special contribution a return to apostolic power and evangelical fervency.

Equally interesting reading is found in our "Legacy" series. Eric Sharpe sketches the "evangelical catholicity" of Nathan Soderblom. Our gift to the world, Soderblom wrote, "is not our dogmatics or our church organization. . . . but the gift is Christ."

In "My Pilgrimage in Mission" we hear from Eugene Nida, whose lifetime of service in linguistics and Bible translation has contributed to the catholicity of the people of God on a very direct and immediate level.

All these elements must come together—apostolic faithfulness, catholic vision, and evangelical commitment—if we are to realize our calling and destiny in Jesus Christ. As Newbigin asserts, "In the end we shall know who Jesus is as he really is, when every tongue shall confess him in all the accents of human culture. That is why . . . the study of the issues raised in cross-cultural ministry is important for us all."

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The Enduring Validity of Cross-Cultural Mission

Lesslie Newbigin

After sixty-five years in Ventnor, New Jersey, the Overseas Ministries Study Center—publisher of this journal—relocated to New Haven, Connecticut, in September 1987. Bishop Lesslie Newbigin gave this address at the service of dedication and inauguration of the new Center on October 5, 1987. Bishop Newbigin, a contributing editor, was for many years a missionary and bishop of the Church of South India in Madras. He is now retired in Birmingham, England, where he taught for several years on the faculty of Selly Oak Colleges.

It is a great honor to be invited to share in this event, an event that is significant for all of us, from whatever part of the world we come, who are committed to the Christian world mission. My first duty is to recognize the dedicated and imaginative leadership that has made the Overseas Ministries Study Center a source of strength for that mission in all its many forms of outreach, and which has now prompted this very significant move to New Haven and the launching of the Center on a new stage of its life.

Perhaps my only real qualification for being invited to address you is that I happen to come from overseas. I do not mean by that to endorse what was once described as the missionary mythology of salt water, the idea that crossing a stretch of salt water was the necessary condition for being a missionary. When I am asked to state my employment I usually answer "missionary" and can do that without endorsing the salt-water myth, but it is not unimportant that the first word in the title of this Center is the word "Overseas."

When the family of William Howard Doane founded the Center in 1922, it was for those who were then called—without embarrassment—"foreign missionaries" and who needed a period of rest from their labors in foreign parts. The Center has followed a general trend in replacing the words "foreign missions" with "overseas ministries." I do not quarrel with that, though I do sometimes reflect upon the significance of the change. It was made, I suppose, because the old term was felt to have about it a hint of arrogance. It suggested images of the old pith helmet and the white man's burden. We are very eager to be disinfected of that old but clinging aroma. A missionary in training told me the other day that what he was getting was "hairshirt missiology," so eager were his mentors to repent of the sins of our missionary predecessors.

We speak now of "overseas ministries" or—more comprehensively—of cross-cultural mission and ministry. It is to the study of the issues involved in these cross-cultural ministries that this Center is dedicated. I want to affirm my conviction of the great importance of such studies, and therefore of this Center, for the life of the church. Whatever may or may not have been the sins of our missionary predecessors (and of course it is much more relaxing to repent of one's parents' sins that of one's own), the commission to disciple all the nations stands at the center of the church's mandate, and a church that forgets this, or marginalizes it, forfeits the right to the titles "catholic" and "apostolic."

If there was a danger of arrogance in the call for the evangelization of the world in that generation, there is a greater danger of timidity and compromise when we lower our sights and allow the gospel to be domesticated within our culture, and the churches to become merely the domestic chaplains to the nation. I am not impressed by those who thank God that we are not like the missionaries of the nineteenth century—which the beloved Yale historian Kenneth Scott Latourette called "the Great Century"—the century that made it possible for us to talk today of the world church. Of course it is true that there were elements of arrogance in the missionaries of that century, but that was just because in the preceding centuries Christianity had become so much domesticated within Western culture that when we carried the gospel overseas it sometimes looked like part of our colonial baggage.

The truth is that the gospel escapes domestication, retains its proper strangeness, its power to question us, only when we are faithful to its universal, supranational, supracultural nature—faithful not just in words but in action, not just in theological statement but in missionary practice in taking the gospel across the cultural frontiers. The affirmation that Jesus is Lumen Gentium, the light of the nations, is in danger of being mere words unless its value is being tested in actual encounters of the gospel with all the nations, so that the gospel comes back to us in the idiom of other cultures with power to question our understanding of it. In this sense the foreign missionary is an enduring necessity in the life of the universal church, but, of course, the missionary journeys have to be multidirectional and not—as in the former period—only from west to east and from north to south. I speak with some feeling because it is my privilege to work in Birmingham alongside a missionary sent to us by the Church of North India and I know that England needs the witness of a Christian from India at least as much as India needs missionaries from the West.

A Center like this, where the issues of cross-cultural mission are being explored, has an importance greater than what have traditionally been called "foreign missions." Its presence here—alongside the great centers of learning and teaching that are now its neighbors—will be a reminder of the universality of the gospel, of the enduring validity of the call to make disciples of all nations. And that reminder is needed, for there are many voices in our culture that question that universality and the validity of that call. The contemporary embarrassment about the missionary movement of the previous century is not, as we like to think, evidence that we have become more humble. It is, I fear, much
International Bulletin of Missionary Research


Published quarterly in January, April, July, and October by the

Overseas Ministries Study Center
490 Prospect Street, New Haven, Connecticut 06511, U.S.A.
Telephone: (203) 624-6672

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Books for review and correspondence regarding editorial matters should be addressed to the editors. Manuscripts unaccompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope (or international postal cards) will not be returned.

Subscriptions: $14.00 for one year, $26 for two years, and $37 for three years, postpaid worldwide. Foreign subscribers should send payment by check in local currency equivalent to U.S. dollar amount. Individual copies are $5.00; bulk rates upon request. Correspondence regarding subscriptions and address changes should be sent to: International Bulletin of Missionary Research, Circulation Department, P.O. Box 1308-E, Fort Lee, New Jersey 07024-9958, U.S.A.

Advertising:
Ruth E. Taylor
11 Graffam Road, South Portland, Maine 04106, U.S.A.
Telephone: (207) 799-4387

Articles appearing in this journal are abstracted and indexed in:

Bibliografia Missionaria
Christian Periodical Index
Guide to Social Science and Religion in Periodical Literature
Missionalia
Religion and Theological Abstracts
Religion Index One: Periodicals

Opinions expressed in the International Bulletin are those of the authors and not necessarily of the Overseas Ministries Study Center.

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Second-class postage paid at New Haven, Connecticut.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to International Bulletin of Missionary Research, P.O. Box 1308-E, Fort Lee, New Jersey 07024.
ISSN 0272-6122

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more clearly evidence of a shift in belief. It is evidence that we are less ready to affirm the uniqueness, the centrality, the decisiveness of Jesus Christ as universal Lord and Savior, the Way by following whom the world is to find its true goal, the Truth by which every other claim to truth is to be tested, the Life in whom alone life in its fullness is to be found.

Since the publication of the lecture by C. P. Snow with the title "The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution," the phrase that he coined has become very common, at least in my own country. We speak of the two cultures, and the phrase corresponds to a familiar reality. Our university campuses are divided into the faculties of science, on the one hand, and arts and humanities, on the other. Theology, of course, belongs to the latter category. Theology is not about objective facts: for that you enroll as a student of science. Theology, like the rest of the matters studied in the other half of the university, is not about facts: it is about things in which our subjectivity is involved—about values where personal choice is of the essence of the matter. The physicist-priest W. G. Pollard, in commenting on this, says that these two cultures are not really comparable entities. The scientific culture is in the prime of its power—vigorous, coherent, convinced that it is dealing with reality and gaining a more and more full understanding of it. In the world of science there are, of course, differences of opinion, disputes, controversies, and rival schools of thought. But all these are understood to be about what is really the case, so that one expects to convince one's opponent of his error. One works on the assumption that eventually agreement will be reached. One does not accept pluralism (the coexistence of mutually contradictory accounts of what is the case) as a good thing. It is something to be overcome.

By contrast, says Pollard, the other culture is not a coherent culture at all. What goes on in the faculties of arts and humanities is the fragmented remains of what was once a coherent culture, but is so no more. Here one abandons the hope of finding truth on which all will agree. Here pluralism is accepted as normal. What remains is not a culture comparable with the scientific culture. It is, in Pollard's words, "an ever-changing variety of remnants of what was once a universal culture in the western world." And of course it is to this that theology belongs. Statements about the universal scope of Christ's saving work are not taken to be statements of objective fact, of what is actually the case. They are statements in story form of certain kinds of religious experience. They may be properly included in a syllabus for the comparative study of religions. Or they may be contributed to a dialogue in which different types of religious experience are shared. But they are not to be announced as factual truth, truth absolutely and for all.

It was not always so. Pollard speaks of the remnants of what was once a universal culture, though it was geographically limited to the Western world. Theological statements about Christ and his nature and work were part of a coherent understanding of reality, of how things really are. This was itself the result of sustained intellectual effort of a rigor comparable to what we now see in the scientific culture. Dr. Frances Young, in her recent inaugural lecture as professor of theology in the University of Birmingham, reminded her academic audience of the immense intellectual energies that went into the effort of the early church fathers to formulate the truth of the gospel in the thought world of the age in which they lived. That age was, like ours, one of relativism and syncretism in matters religious. Its intellectual atmosphere is tartly described in a famous phrase of Gibbon when he said that in that age all religions were for the people equally true, for the philosophers equally false, and for the government equally useful. Professor Young contrasts the intellectual vigor
with which the great theologians of the early centuries resisted this easygoing and seductive relativism with the contemporary drift toward utilitarianism and relativism. The latter he describes as “the modern version of the fall of Sophia, a breakdown of confidence in human powers of knowing, a failure of nerve easily compounded by disillusionment with the exploitative hybris of modern science and technology.”

Alan Bloom, in his much discussed book The Closing of the American Mind, has traced the origins of this breakdown. At least for me it was both illuminating and alarming to see the shadowy figure of Nietzsche behind what seemed to be our innocent and even laudable preference for talking about “values,” “commitments,” and “lifestyles,” rather than for talking about right and wrong, truth and error. Nietzsche, says Bloom, was the first to recognize that, on the basis of modern critical thought, it is strictly impossible to speak of truth and error, of right and wrong, and to draw the conclusion that the only thing left is the will to power. This nihilism, has says Bloom, been domesticated in our culture in the soft-sounding language of “values.” We ask of a statement not “Is it true?” but “Are you sincere?” We speak not of right behavior but of authenticity. But nihilism will not permanently accept his comfortable domestication. Moral chaos must be the end of this road. And it will not be checked by appeals to tradition, to natural law, or to older “values.” Only the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, only the living word of the Creator can bring light out of darkness, order out of chaos.

Western culture was once a coherent whole with the Christian vision at its center. It has disintegrated. If we seek now, as we must, a coherent vision for the human race as a whole, it

“Relativism in the sphere of religion . . . is not a recipe for human unity but exactly the opposite.”

cannot be on the basis of a tried relativism that gives up the struggle for truth. Nor can it be by pretending that the scientific half of our Western culture can provide coherence for the life of the world. We are at present busy exporting our science and technology to every corner of the world in the name of “development” and “modernization.” But we also know that if all the six billion of the world’s people succeed in achieving the kind of “development” we have achieved, the planet would become uninhabitable. There is an absurd irony in the fact that we are busy exporting our scientific culture to every corner of the world without any compunction about arrogance, but we think that humility requires us to refrain from offering to the rest of the world the vision of its true goal, which is given in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Relativism in the sphere of religion—the belief that religious experience is a matter in which objective truth is not involved but one in which (in contrast to the world of science) “everyone should have a faith of one’s own”—is not a recipe for human unity but exactly the opposite. To be human is to be a part of a story, and to be fully human as God intends is to be part of the true story and to understand its beginning and its ending. The true story is one of which the central clues are given in the Bible, and the hinge of the story on which all its meaning turns is the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. That is the message with which we are entrusted, and we owe it to all people to share it. If this is denied, if it is said that every people must have its own story, then human unity is an illusion and we can forget it.

I do not believe it is an illusion. I believe the word of Jesus when he said that being lifted up on the cross he would draw all people to himself. I believe it because the cross is the place where the sin that divides us from one another is dealt with and put away. But I believe that the truth is credible only when the witness born to it is marked not by the peculiarities of one culture, but by the rich variety of all human cultures. We learn to understand what it means to say that Jesus is the King and Head of the whole human race only as we learn to hear that confession from the many races that make up the human family. In the end we shall know who Jesus is as he really is, when every tongue shall confess him in all the accents of human culture. That is why this Center for the study of the issues raised in cross-cultural ministry is important for us all.

We have already, in the ecumenical fellowship of churches, a first foretaste of that many tongues witness. We owe the existence of this worldwide family to the missionary faithfulness of our forebears. Today and henceforth all missionary witness must be, and must be seen to be, part of the witness of this worldwide, many cultured fellowship. Every culturally conditioned expression of the Christian witness must be under the critique of this ecumenical witness. The one Christ is known as he is confessed in many cultures. But we must reject the relativism that is sometimes wrongly called “the larger ecumenism.” I am not referring to the fact, for which I thank God, that we are now much more open to people of other faiths, willing to learn from them, to share with them, to learn to live together in our one planet. I am referring to the fact that it is sometimes suggested that as the churches have come together to form one fellowship across their doctrinal differences, so—by a natural extension—the great world religions must move toward a fellowship of world faiths and that this latter movement would be a natural extension of the former.

In fact, such a move would not be an enlargement but a reversal of the ecumenical movement. That movement was not born out of a lazy relativism. It was born through the missionary experience of the nineteenth century, when Christians, divided by centuries of European history, found themselves a tiny minority in the midst of the great ancient religious systems of Asia. In this new situation perspectives changed. The issue “Christ or no-Christ” loomed so large that the issues dividing Christians from one another seemed small. They did not disappear. The long theological wrestlings of Faith and Order are witness to the seriousness with which they were treated. But—real though they were—they were relativized by a new realization of the absolute supremacy of Jesus Christ. The separated Christian confessions would never have accepted membership in the World Council of Churches without its firm Christological basis—Jesus Christ, God and Savior—a phrase later put into its proper trinitarian and biblical frame. It was only because the absoluteness of Jesus’ Lordship was acknowledged that the confessional positions could be relativized.

What is proposed in the so-called larger ecumenism is the reversal of this. It is a proposal to relativize the name of Jesus in favor of some other absolute. We have to ask: What is that absolute in relation to which the name of Jesus is relativized? Is it “religion in general”? Then where—in the medley of beliefs and practices that flourish under the name of religion—is the criterion of truth? Let it be brought out for scrutiny. Or is it, perhaps, “human unity”? But if so, unity on whose terms? André Dumas has correctly pointed out that all proposals for human unity that do not explicitly state the center around which unity is con-
ceived to happen have as their hidden center the interests of the proposer. We have a familiar word for this. "Imperialism" is the word we normally use to designate programs for human unity originated by others than ourselves. The center that God has provided for the unity of the human race is the place where all human imperialisms are humbled, where God is made nothing in order that we might be made one. It is an illusion to suppose that we can find something more absolute than what God has done in Jesus Christ. It is an illusion to suppose that we can find something larger, greater, more inclusive than Jesus Christ. It is a disastrous error to set universalism against the concrete particularity of what God has done for the whole creation in Jesus Christ. It is only through the specificity of a particular historic revelation that we can be bound together in common history, for particularity is the stuff of history, and we shall not find meaning for our life by trying to escape from history.

Orthodoxy in America: A Missiological Survey

Paul D. Garrett

E astern Orthodoxy has existed in North America for nearly two centuries, but cannot be said to have at any time exerted a presence there. The reasons for this are clear enough: taken in toto Orthodoxy is numerically insignificant, and when practically divided into over a dozen "jurisdictions," each absorbed over most of this century in cultural self-preservation and often at odds politically with at least one other group, it naturally appears as a smorgasbord of Old World esoterica and exotica—a typocast it might decry but does very little to shed.

At the risk of a certain haziness and of sketching the weight of events a bit, I propose to focus on demonstrating how the unkendestiny suffered by most of the traditional "Orthodox world" in the twentieth century represents a diversion of the American church from its original, missionary destiny. We must, therefore, look first to the beginnings.

Orthodox Christians bucked the general tide of migration and mission in America by wading ashore in the Pacific Northwest, then spending well over a century in establishing themselves in the urban centers of population along the Eastern seaboard and the industrial Midwest with which they are now identified. More surprisingly, their first contacts were exclusively missionary in nature, even though they were borne on the wings of Russian imperialism. The jump across the Aleutian waters; under his less pious successors, all attempts at restoring the faltering mission were obstructed until that charter was the outfitting of three mission stations: at Sitka, the colonial capital; in Kodiak, still the chief factory town; and in Unalaska, the forsaken, backwater settlement that formed the hub of the Aleutian waters; under his less pious successors, all attempts at restoring the faltering mission were obstructed until that charter was the outfitting of three mission stations: at Sitka, the colonial capital; in Kodiak, still the chief factory town; and in Unalaska, the forsaken, backwater settlement that formed the hub of the fur-hunting enterprises. The individual recruited for this pastorate was destined to transfigure the American Mission and place an indelible stamp on Orthodox missionary work everywhere.

Russia's eighteenth-century interests in Alaska were primarily capitalistic, partially geopolitical, and only marginally concerned with migration or permanent settlement. The jump across the Pacific occurred in 1728, over a century after the press into Siberia had begun, and the experience of that grand march eastward predisposed the authorities toward using the Christian gospel as a means of pacifying the Native inhabitants. This continued in the New World, but only for a while and to a very partial extent. At all times there existed in Alaska laity of goodwill who, out of care for the souls of Native Americans, did their best to share their faith. When Gregory Shelikhov (1747–95), who founded the town of Kodiak in 1784, petitioned to have an official ecclesiastical mission mounted to America, his rhetoric may have been excessive, but it rang with a genuine zeal, and the arrival of ten monks in 1794 marked more the sealing of a decades-old grassroots movement than a radically new beginning.

This populist substratum soon proved vital to the survival of nascent Christianity in the region, for after nominally baptizing 6,740 souls during its first years on the job, the Kodiak Mission succumbed to local jealousies and intrigues, lost its leading figures, and within three years existed on paper alone. Its only lasting fruits were the personal legacy of the humble monk Herman, its "least brother," who in 1970 would be exalted as America's first Orthodox saint.

Establishing a church on Kodiak Island helped gain for Shelikhov's Russian-American Company a lucrative charter to hunt the Aleutian waters; under his less pious successors, all attempts at restoring the faltering mission were obstructed until that charter lapsed in 1819, and the company again felt obliged to court the church's favor. The price the church demanded for cooperation was the outfitting of three mission stations at Sitka, the colonial capital; in Kodiak, still the chief factory town; and in Unalaska, the forsaken, backwater settlement that formed the hub of the fur-hunting enterprises. The individual recruited for this pastorate was destined to transfigure the American Mission and place an indelible stamp on Orthodox missionary work everywhere.

In the ten years that Father John Veniaminov (1797–1879) spent in the central Alutian chain, he embodied—with immense energy and patience—what James J. Stamoolis has called the "incarnational approach" to mission. Compelled by love for his flock (and an incurable natural curiosity), he observed, appreciated, and absorbed the Native American culture and language. Then, utilizing the talents of tribal leaders (most notably Ivan Pan'kov and the Creole priest Iakov Netsvetov), he translated the gospel and catechism into the local dialect, then dared pen the first original composition in Fox Aleut, The Indication of the Pathway.

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April 1988
in order to formulate principles for missionary work. In 1838 he
departed for Russia to present his findings to the Holy Synod:
A Review of the Orthodox Church in the Russian Settlements in America,
together with My Opinions as to How Their Condition Might Be Im-
proved.

In 1840 Providence again smiled on the fledgling American
church—though at the price of its greatest worker’s tears. When
his young wife died, Father Veniaminov became eligible to serve
as a bishop, since by Orthodox canon law bishops must be un-
married. As the first incumbent of the new diocese created to
serve the entire North Pacific region, Bishop Innocent (as he was
renamed following monastic tonsure) could ensure in practice that
all he had recommended would be put into practice in every
mission station founded: workers would strive to master the local
tongues, teach the people systematically, thoroughly, and self-
lessly, never stooping to an appeal to ulterior motives in an effort
to gain converts. Gone were the days of massive, formal baptisms
without follow-up that had characterized (and trivialized) the work
of the Kodiak Mission (and much of the Siberian work before it).
Though funding and staffing would never prove sufficient to the
task, though some individual workers would prove deficient,
though the physical demands of Alaska would remain daunting at
best—under St. Innocent’s direction and later, and wholly in-
spired by his lofty spirit and example, the church in Alaska took
root in the good soil of the gospel.

This rooting was soon to endure sore testing. By the mid-
nineteenth century events showed clearly that America, not Rus-
sia, would be master of Alaska. From deep in Siberia where his
missionary toils had drawn him, Innocent viewed the politically
unpopular sale of the territory as “one of the ways of Prov-
ience whereby Orthodoxy will penetrate the United States (where
even now people have begun to pay serious attention to it).” He
recommended moving the see south to San Francisco, appointing
a bishop and clergy fluent in English, training and ordaining con-
verts to the priesthood, translating the service books, and cele-
brating the services in English. When the treaty was signed in
1867, however, the new order that entered Alaska put this grand
vision at least temporarily “on ice.”

The early decades of Yankee rule will forever remain a blot
on the history both of the Republic and of Christian missionary
efforts. Federal apathy conspired with local opportunism to de-
stroy civil order; the Native Americans were stripped of their
rights and xenophobia grew so virulent that most of the remaining
Russians fled home rather than accept the dubious privilege of
American citizenship mandated for anyone who remained two
years. Most of the clergy joined the exodus, and hard on their
heels came an energetic Presbyterian missionary fresh from In-
ian Territory.

The Russians realized that selling Alaska would leave their
church as one among many in a thoroughly pluralistic society.
They were prepared to accept the challenge of working on equal
terms with the newcomers. The Rev. Sheldon Jackson’s tactic,
however, was not to open new mission fields inland where the
Orthodox had never penetrated, but precisely to concentrate on
suppressing Native American culture with its veneer of Orthodox
Christianity in the established villages. Moreover, invested with
a “secular” appointment as United States Commissioner of
Education for the region, Jackson was in a position virtually to
partition the former Russian Alaska among Presbyterian, Baptist,
and Methodist churches, and to clothe their pastors in the added
power and prestige of local office as sheriffs, judges, and school-
teachers. Forty years of horror stories document this dark period,
whose sole bright lights were the practical lessons in American
civics it gave the church prior to moving southward, and a limited
impetus toward upgrading its educational programs in answer to
the challenge. Despite uneven odds, and largely due to the pat-
terns of ethnic lay leadership established at first contact and fos-
tered by St. Innocent and his co-workers, most of the peoples of
coastal Alaska managed to preserve intact their Orthodox faith.

Matters were made worse by the Russian church’s inability
down through the 1880s to provide stable episcopal leadership
for its struggling American branch. Finally, on the verge of aban-
donning the mission entirely, St. Petersburg dispatched Bishop
Vladimir Sokolovskii (1852-1933) to San Francisco. There he
ordered that the clergy preach in English, commissioned the first
translations of liturgical books into English (utilizing the talents
of Nicholas Orloff of the Russian Embassy in London—a move
that helped determine the direction of “liturgical English” to
the present day), and ordained the first American-born Orthodox
priest (albeit the son of Serbian immigrants). From Father Sebasti-
"ian Dabovich’s pen—and a handful of others’—a smattering of
English-language tracts began to appear as, in the face of per-
sistent Russophobia, the mission sought to present Orthodox
around the San Francisco Bay Area. Meanwhile, in the heart of
the Midwest, a truly decisive process was beginning that would
radically alter the face of Orthodoxy on the North American con-
tinent—and again roll over the tender flower of missionary spiri

In 1891 a community of “Uniate“ Rusyn” immigrants in
Minneapolis, Minnesota, petitioned to join the Russian church.
As a matter of background, Uniates are Christians mainly from
the Carpathian Mountains separating Catholic Hungary and Pol-
and from Orthodox Russia and the Ukraine; following the coun-
cils of Brest-Litovsk (1595) and Uzhhorod (1649), they accepted
union with the pope in exchange for guarantees that they could
retain the fullness of their Eastern Rite. Like other immigrants to
America, these people sought the solace of religion as they had
practiced it in the Old Country, but were denied it by the local
Latin-Rite hierarchy. Again, a few words of background are re-
quired. The Catholic bishops were at that moment caught up in
defending the principle of church unity against German immi-
igrants’ demands for cultural and linguistic autonomy—the so-called
Americanist Controversy. To Archbishop John Ireland, the con-
servatives’ leader, the married Greek-Catholic priest who ap-
peared from Prevos with his credentials embodied an expansion
of the threat. Forbidden to exercise his ministry, an irate Father
Alexis G. Toth (1853-1909) turned to Bishop Vladimir as the re-
presentative of the ancestral faith from which, he came increasingly
to believe, his people has been dishonestly and tragically torn.

For the Russian church in America (still in the 1890s the only
organized Orthodox body in North America) “mission” nar-
orred in focus over the next few decades to reclaiming the Un-
iates, a crusade that would ultimately net some 400,000 souls.
Bishop Vladimir was recalled in 1891, and his successor, Nicholas
Ziorov (1851-98), carefully recruited an entourage of talented cler-
cics to address the needs of writing, debating, and bearing fearless
witness in the face of calumny, litigation, and frequent physical
violence. To their credit, they rarely returned evil for evil, but
conducted themselves uprightly, adhering to the spiritual and
theological issues at hand. Under Nicholas’s successor, Tikhon
Bellavin (1865-1923, reigned in America 1898-1907), the see was
transferred to New York in order to be nearer the center of the
work, and the basic institutions of permanency—seminary, mon-
astery, and newspaper—were established.
Because the objects of “mission” had fled a situation in Hungary where their language and culture were demeaned (when not banned outright), the Russian Mission was unable (if still willing) to insist on the use of an English vernacular. Had further adverse events not intervened, however, it is doubtful that the Uniate preoccupation would long have diverted the Orthodox from their broader missionary goals. The Rusyns, no less than peoples of other faiths, would have fallen into the familiar patterns of the second generation rebelling against the foreign tongue and ways of the first, anglicizing their church, and passing on to the third generation their spiritual treasures in a form that could be spread—whether from a spirit of pure nostalgia (a “return to roots”) or out of higher purpose.

In this regard, it is noteworthy that Tikhon’s era produced the most famous document of English-speaking Orthodoxy, Isabel F. Hapgood’s Service Book (1906), and several notable “WASP” converts (most notably Father Irvine). Under Tikhon’s successor, Platon Rozhdestvenskii (1866–1934, first administration in America, 1907–14), Orthodox outreach to American culture peaked, marked by the popular performances of the New York City Cathedral Choir sponsored by Charles Crane, numerous contributions to Silas Bee’s istic Con st ructive Quarterly, and what would later come to be termed “ecumenical” enterprises. The editorial in the first issue of the Russian American Orthodox Messenger makes clear the lofty concerns of the official church. “In a heterodox sea [we] are a small drop—but this drop is a bearer of Truth,” Father Hotovitzky declared, compelled “just because of the conditions of life” to try “to give birth to close relations” with all. “Guarding this precious and sacred thing [Orthodoxy] inviolable, but making our neighbors’ participants of—this is the goal which must inspire our printed word.”

The journal was to “give everyone the possibility, through long inner work of mind and heart, to enter into a full and true philosophy of the orthodox Christian . . . Then Orthodox will doubtlessly inspire in them that vital power and depth of Christian temperament which has always been inherent in the true Church!”

Lamentably this was not to be. The first of several “wars to end all wars” in Europe left in its wake the Balkan peoples increasingly fragmented, the Russian church resplendent in new-martyrs’ blood but organizationally prostrate beneath the Bolsheviks’ boots, and restrictive immigration quotas clamped in place in the United States, guaranteeing that Orthodoxy’s native constituency in America would remain forever marginal. In 1914 this situation could not have been foreseen. Immigrants were arriving in ever growing numbers from across Eastern Europe and the Levant, swelling beyond the point where the expediency of Orthodox Christians of all backgrounds banding together (and naturally using English as their common language) could withstand the centrifugal force of ethnocentrism. Nationally distinct communities came to dot the continent everywhere except the South, where Platon’s successor, Archbishop Evdokim Meshcherskii (1869–1935) in 1917 saw the possibility of establishing a pan-Orthodox missionary diocese.

Although the parallel history of denominations like the Lutherans would seem to indicate that something in the American condition predisposes ecclesiastical bodies to ethnic divisiveness, there was no absolute necessity for parochial nationalism to lead to today’s profoundly fractured Orthodoxy. As early as 1905 Archbishop Tikhon proposed formation of an “Orthodox Church in America,” hierarchically one while ethnically diverse. He presided at the highly symbolic consecration of the first Orthodox bishop on American soil, a Syrian Arab, Raphael Hawaweeny (1860–1915), himself an energetic circuit rider between Orthodox communities—Syrian, Greek, and Slavic alike—and a translator of Liturgical books into Arabic. (His whole life’s work, in fact, closely parallels that of St. Innocent.) Serbs, Greeks, and Romanians were the first slated to receive episcopal leadership under the plan, and the Serbian candidate, Mardarije Uskoković, found himself stranded in Europe en route to consecration when the guns of August opened fire in 1914. As Russian leadership disintegrated under withering Bolshevik pressure, each ethnic group retreated, becoming engrossed in the struggle to organize its own communities. Though the particulars and timings differed for each group, the paths they took look today remarkably alike. Crises were overcome and very real successes in many cases enjoyed, but Orthodoxy emerged as isolated strands rather than a mighty, plaited rope.

One last event in this transitional period bears mention before we cross the watershed in the history of Orthodoxy in America. In 1928, Bishop Raphael’s successor in the Syrian Diocese, Afti-
ruary 8, 1922, reflects the Innocent/Tikhon view:

I saw firsthand [there] the greater and most important part of the Church in the diaspora, and understood how much the name of Orthodoxy would be exalted, especially in the United States of America, if the more than two million Orthodox inhabitants would be organized into a single church administration as an American Orthodox Church.

To Meletios’s mind, this organization presupposed leadership of the Ecumenical throne—a contention instantly challenged by the Russians despite their disarray. Meletios invoked Canon 32 of the Council of Chalcedon, which in the fifth century assigned to Constantinople jurisdiction over the “barbarians” (a remarkably unmissionary expression!). The point proved moot, however, for no national group at that point was prepared to accept anyone’s hegemony, and over the years exceptions to this rule have been limited and few.

In the immediate post-WWII years, divisiveness remained—and indeed intensified as the spread of communism across Eastern Europe splintered new immigrant groups along political lines in the tragic pattern of the Russians decades before, forcing many an Orthodox community to squander precious resources and inordinate amounts of time and passion in persuading erring compatriots out of “jurisdictions” deemed canonically illegitimate. (The most blatant example is seen in the Romanian Patriarchate, which legally incorporated its loyal faction as the “Missionary Diocese”). But the Orthodox had learned by bitter experience during World War II that disunity is disability. By 1960 the corporate leadership, led by Archbishop Jakovos and Anthony Bashir, saw the wisdom of forming a Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA) as a possible precursor to a territorial synod. Though itself never a resounding success, SCOBA’s specific service arms, the Orthodox Christian Education Commission (OCEC) and the Campus Commission, have made valuable and lasting contributions. St. Vladimir’s Seminary grew increasingly pan-Orthodox, English-speaking, and “mission-motivated” as converts came to form a greater percentage of the student body and later the faculty.

With appeals to pan-Orthodox assemblies falling on deaf ears, and with the “Russian problem” in America particularly acute, the Moscow Patriarchate in 1970 took what it saw as the first logical step toward solving the total problem. Claiming both moral and canonical right through priority in planting Orthodoxy in the New World, Moscow granted autocephaly (the right to complete self-government) to the Orthodox church in America. The unilateral nature of the move, however, only intensified Greek-Russian rivalries and crushed cooperation. Time seems to be healing some wounds, but we are still too close to the events to view them with objectivity.

We must dare, nonetheless, to move even closer to our own day, and consider a topic that clearly belongs not to the sphere of history but of “current events.” Over the years an ever increasing trickle of seekers has discovered Eastern Orthodoxy. While this has most often been a matter of individual commitment (and not particularly the result of any outreach by the Orthodox themselves), a few communities have embraced the faith corporately (the New Skete Monastery; St. Theodore of Tarsus Parish in Kansas City, Missouri), only to find institutional Orthodoxy unable to “digest” them properly—or, more crucially, to benefit from their experiences.

The fall of 1986 witnessed another such conversion, by far the largest to date and potentially the most important. Metropolitan Philip Saliba of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America has accepted the petition of the Evangelical Orthodox Church, 2,500 strong, led by Bishop Peter Gillquist. Ending decades of intense, meticulous, and often painful searching for the roots of historical Christianity, which they found lacking in the “para-church” evangelical background from which they emerged, they stand poised to enter canonical Orthodoxy. By their background; by the course of their studies which so precisely fulfilled Father Hotovitzky’s prediction of some eighty years earlier that a “long inner work of mind and heart, to enter into a full and true philosophy of the Orthodox Christian” would doubtlessly “inspire in them that vital power and depth of Christian temperament which has always been inherent in the true Church”; and by the zeal for the Lord, which alone sustained them in their long journey, they can speak to mainline America, from within, of the unique Truth that they have been called to “come and see.” Wisely used, they may prove to be the “small bell,” which St. Innocent predicted even earlier that God’s Providence could use to turn the hearts of many. American Orthodoxy as a whole may yet realize the missionary destiny that for 200 years has lain beyond its grasp.

Notes

1. Often referred to as “Ruthenians” in Roman Catholic literature.
2. Since this article was written, the Evangelical Orthodox Church has been incorporated into the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America as the Antiochian Evangelical Orthodox Mission (AEOM), its self-proclaimed and ordained bishops and other clergy ordained to the priesthood, and some 2,000 members of the faithful accepted into the Orthodox Church through the sacrament of chrismation. Their saga is told in an article by Fathers Peter Gillquist and Gordon Walker, “Arrowhead Springs to Antioch: Odyssey to Orthodoxy,” The Word 31 no. 8 (October 1987): 5–11; and in a videocassette presentation, “Welcome Home: A Journey to Antioch.”

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The Azusa Street Revival and Twentieth-Century Missions

Gary B. McGee

Spiritual awakenings and missionary zeal have long been associated on the American religious scene. Whether one refers to the Haystack Prayer Meeting, which led to the formation of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (1810), or to the Mount Hermon Conference and the later establishment of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions (1888), spiritual renewals have triggered fresh attempts to fulfill the Great Commission.

To these awakenings should be added the Azusa Street Revival of 1906–9, in Los Angeles, California. Sparking one of the greatest spiritual awakenings of the twentieth century, its long-range impact has resulted in millions at home and overseas entering the ranks of the Christian church. Oddly enough, it has been largely overlooked by most historians of the expansion of Christianity. Notwithstanding, J. Herbert Kane, a prominent evangelical missions scholar, has appropriately described this movement as “the most vital force in world Christianity. Both here in North America and throughout the world the Pentecostal churches are outstripping all others as far as numerical growth is concerned.” In view of the spectacular number of Pentecostal Christians overseas, now numbering in the tens of millions, an assessment of the impact of the Azusa Street Revival, sometimes referred to as “the American Jerusalem,” on world missions is appropriate in order to understand its distinctives and contributions.

Doctrinal considerations weighed heavily in the events that led to the revival. Concern for world evangelism in “the last days” before the premillennial coming of the Lord spurred many evangelical Christians to pray ardently for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit to empower believers for proclaiming the gospel. Holiness-oriented Christians, maintaining that another definite work of grace in the believer’s life followed salvation (and for some, after an additional experience of sanctification), looked for a mighty “baptism in the Holy Spirit” to provide revolutionary apostolic power for Christian witness.

Many viewed the Welsh Revival of 1904–5 and others that followed as the beginning of this outpouring of the Spirit. For some, the essential sign of the baptism in the Holy Spirit had become evident in January 1901 during a revival at the Bethel Bible School in Topeka, Kansas. The leader, Charles F. Parham, identified speaking in tongues as the initial evidence for this baptism. To Parham and his students, the prophecy of Joel (2:28–29) had been realized in their midst just as the disciples had experienced the power of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. This event, though covered by several newspapers in the region, went largely unnoticed by the larger segment of the American population. Parham and his followers took their message to other cities in Kansas and Missouri. By 1905 he began to find more success and acceptance in Houston, Texas.

The American Jerusalem

William J. Seymour, a black Holiness preacher and a student of Parham (a white man) in Houston, carried the new message to Los Angeles and became one of the key leaders in the Pentecostal revival, which occurred in a former African Methodist Episcopal Church on Azusa Street. The revival proceeded non-stop for three years. Blacks and whites worshiped together. Reports circulating from the revival noted that men, women, and children received the Pentecostal baptism and spoke in other tongues. Singing, shouting, speaking in tongues, healings, deliverances, and expectancy of Christ’s imminent return characterized the services. News of the revival traveled across the United States as the leaders of the revival published thousands of copies of the Apostolic Faith (a newspaper distributed occasionally between September 1906 and May 1908). From coast to coast, expectant believers avidly read the testimonies and teachings in the pages of this and similar periodicals.

Since others have chronicled the events at Azusa Street, our purpose is to examine the revival’s impact on world missions. Three important points need to be considered in this regard.

First, the participants at Azusa Street (Seymour, Florence Crawford, A. G. Garr, et al.) considered their new-found tongues to be the languages of the world. Hence one writer in the Apostolic Faith reported that “God has solved the missionary problem, sending out new-tongued missionaries.” Previously, Parham had interpreted tongues in the same manner and this view gained currency among many early Pentecostals. W. F. Carothers, the field representative for the Apostolic Faith Movement from Zion City, Illinois, wrote cautiously circa 1906:

Just what part the gift of tongues is to fill in the evangelization of heathen countries is matter [sic] for faith as yet. It scarcely seems from the evidence at hand to have had much to do with foreign mission work in New Testament times, and yet, in view of the apparent utility of the gift in that sphere and of the wonderful missionary spirit that comes with Pentecost, we are expecting the gift to be copiously used in the foreign field. We shall soon know.6

Before 1908, however, it had become apparent to most that speaking in tongues did not equip people to preach in other languages. Instead they interpreted the phenomenon as being intercession and voicing the praises of God in other languages. In spite of differences about the meaning of the Pentecostal baptism in these early years, all agreed that it brought the empowering of the Holy Spirit for Christian witness.

Second, those who attended the revival services believed that the apostolic “signs and wonders” that had characterized the advance of the early Christians in the book of Acts had been restored in the last days. The gifts of the Spirit, including tongues, interpretations, prophecies, and divine healings were given to aid in the advancement of the gospel. This pneumatological emphasis, while rejected by many, constituted a unique posture toward the Christian world mission. Reliance was to be upon the Spirit, not the mechanical formulations of mission strategists. Such a wholesale return to the apostolic pattern of first-century Christianity was without parallel on the missionary landscape in the early decades of this century.

Third, the enthusiasm for world evangelization spawned a diaspora of new missionaries even though the leaders of the revival did not organize a missionary society. The urgency of the

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hour, reluctance to rely on the support of a human agency, na-
iveté about conditions overseas, and the desire to be completely
directed by the Spirit may have been the causes that discouraged
the establishment of a mission agency.

Many individuals, recently equipped with the power of the
Holy Spirit and a new language, left Los Angeles and traveled
overseas on “faith” (without pledged support). Significantly,
anyone—men and women, clergy and laity, blacks and whites—
could be called for this service.13 Those who went often returned
disillusioned from their attempted missionary work. Some, how-
ever, such as the A. G. Garrr, who traveled first to India and
then to China, remained abroad, learning the language and cul-
ture of the people whom they wished to evangelize.14 Neverthe-
less, the initial dispersion of missionaries from Azusa Street is
significant for demonstrating the concern for world evangelism
and the leveling effect of the revival.

The real impact of the Azusa Street Revival on missions came
through others whom it influenced. Although he never visited the
revival, Thomas B. Barratt learned of the happenings there through
correspondence and received his Pentecostal baptism in New York
City. Henceforth, Barratt returned to England, Switzerland, and
other European countries. Pentecostal missionaries from these countries
soon traveled overseas.15

Other personalities touched by the revival included Cecil
Polhill, founder of the Pentecostal Missionary Union in Great
Britain (1909);16 Minnie T. Draper, Allan A. Swift, and Christian
J. Lucas, founders of the South and Central African Pentecostal
Mission (1910);17 William F. P. Burton and James Salter, founders
of the Congo Evangelistic Mission (1915), now the Zaire Evan-
gelistic Mission;18 Willis C. Hoover, father of the Methodist Pen-
tecostal Church in Chile (1910);19 Daniel Berg, Gunnar Vingren,
Luigi Francescon, Nels Nelson, and Samuel Nystrom, mission-
aries to Brazil (1910 and after);20 G. R. Polman, organizer of the
Pentecostal Mission Alliance in the Netherlands (1920);21 Charles
Hamilton Pridgeon, director of the Evangelization Society of the
Pittsburgh Bible Institute (1920);22 and Paul B. Peterson, founder
of the Russian and Eastern European Mission (1927).23 While his-
torian Vinson Synan proposes that “directly or indirectly, prac-
tically all the Pentecostal groups in existence can trace their lineage
to the Azusa Mission,” contemporary indigenous revivals did
occur overseas without its tutelage.24

The revival sparked Pentecostal awakenings among other
believers across the country concerned about fulfilling the Great
Commission in the last days. Among other places, significant
revivals occurred in Indianapolis, Indiana; Alliance, Ohio; Roches-
ter and Nyack, New York; Dunn, North Carolina; Portland, Or-
egon; and Toronto, Canada.

The Azusa Street Revival, though never directly resulting in
the founding of an organization or mission society, had long-term
effects on existing organizations and new ones that developed
later. Holiness bodies from the southeast such as the Pentecostal
Holiness Church (1898),25 the Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn.;
1886),26 and the Church of God in Christ (1897) adopted the new
Pentecostal theology after their leaders were influenced by the
events in Los Angeles.

Many independent Pentecostals across the nation, touched
by the Los Angeles revival (either through personal participation,
hearing of it from someone who had attended, or by the printed
page), eventually organized to achieve their goals more effi-
ciently, including the goal of world evangelism.

The first “missionary manifesto” among independent Pen-
tecostals calling for the establishment of a missionary society
surfaced in 1908 at the Pentecostal Camp Meeting in Alliance,
Ohio, under the direction of Levi R. Lupton, a Holiness Quaker
who experienced the Pentecostal baptism in December 1906. While
those in attendance had no interest in establishing another ec-
clesiastical organization, they asserted that “such an affiliation
of Pentecostal Missions is desirable as will preserve and increase
the tender sweet bond of love and fellowship now existing and
guard against abuse of legitimate liberty.”27 In the following year
(1909), the Pentecostal Missionary Union in the United States
of America was formed, with headquarters in Alliance. This effort,
however, collapsed a year later.28 Nevertheless, whether through
their own initiative or with the encouragement of this agency,
over 185 Pentecostals had traveled overseas to engage in mis-
sionary evangelism by 1910.

Later successful denominational ventures resulted from the
founding and foreign-missions enterprises of the Pentecostal As-
ssemblies of Canada (1919),29 Pentecostal Church of God (1919),
International Church of the Foursquare Gospel (1923), Open Bible
Standard Churches (1935),30 and Elim Fellowship (1947).31 The
largest and most successful endeavor in Pentecostal foreign mis-
ions has been that of the General Council of the Assemblies
of God, organized at Hot Springs, Arkansas, in 1914.32 In addition,
independent and para-church ministries (among others, Christ
for the Nations,33 Youth with a Mission,34 Last Days Ministries,
and Jimmy Swaggart Ministries) have also figured prominently
through the years.

Pentecostal Missions Mature

In the years following the Azusa Street Revival and the growth
of Pentecostal denominations and independent mission agencies,
the efforts to fulfill the Great Commission before the imminent
return of Christ have steadily increased.35 Indeed, this future
expectation has continued to spur zeal for overseas evangelism.

Reasons for success have included, but are not limited to,
the following factors. The first and foremost pattern of Pentecostal
missions has been the belief that New Testament Christianity can
be restored and that the same signs and wonders that followed
the apostolic proclamation of the gospel can be expected today.
In this vein, Pentecostal periodicals have reported thousands of
miraculous happenings (healings, deliverances, exorcisms) as-
associated with missionary evangelism. Undoubtedly the emphasis
on the supernatural has proved to be one of the key elements.36
It is particularly in this arena that Pentecostal missions must be
viewed as a distinctive thrust in the Christian world mission of
the twentieth century.

It is also important to realize that while Pentecostals have
sought for signs and wonders in evangelism, they have left some
related theological issues unresolved. For example, questions about
the sovereignty of God and the role of signs and wonders in
evangelism and local congregations await further study and ar-
ticulation.37 Even the modern-day manifestations of the gifts of
the Spirit, particularly the interpretation of tongues and the use
of the word of knowledge, produces disagreement among ad-
vocates.38

Spiritual manifestations not specifically referred to in the New
Testament or mentioned as gifts of the Spirit have also stirred
discussion. Such experiences include “slain in the Spirit” (fall-
ing under the power of the Spirit)39 and certain perspectives on
exorcism.38 The available literature on these subjects has often
been largely based on personal experience and lacking in exa-
getical precision. More research needs to be done on these phe-
nomena and their theological foundations.

The second factor in growth is the gradual emergence over the
past eighty years of the articulation of a Pentecostal missiology
to guide the missionary enterprise. Though early Pentecostal missionaries often adopted paternalistic approaches, the trend has been toward fostering indigenous churches. In 1921, for example, the Assemblies of God formally committed itself to planting self-governing, self-propagating, and self-supporting churches abroad; this view of foreign missions had been present since the earliest years of the organization. 59

The orientation to the indigenous-church strategy probably stemmed in part from the experience of independent Pentecostals who had often been expelled from their former denominations and hence viewed ecclesiastical structure with mistrust. Other influences included the writings of Roland Allen (as well as other advocates of indigenous principles) and their observation of largely independent congregations in the book of Acts evangelizing their own vicinities. Generally, Pentecostal mission agencies have followed the indigenous pattern. 60 This strategy later preserved the fruits of their overseas evangelism in the postcolonial period.

Pentecostals have excelled as missionary practitioners over the years, but have produced few theorists to weld their theology to missiology. The most notable Pentecostal authority on foreign missions has been Melvin L. Hodges (1909–88), former missionary to Central America and field director for Latin America and the West Indies for the Assemblies of God. His best-known book, The Indigenous Church, advocated the application of indigenous principles while at the same time emphasizing that the New Testament church could be established only with the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit. Hodges reveals a clear dependence on the writings of Allen. His fullest exposition of a Pentecostal missiology came with the publication of A Theology of the Church and Its Mission (Springfield, Mo.: Gospel Publishing House, 1977).

Paul A. Pomerville’s The Third Force in Missions (1985), represents another significant milestone in the Pentecostal understanding of Christian mission. In his opinion, the role of the Holy Spirit in evangelical missions has been victimized by the rationalistic orientation of Protestant scholasticism, which “represents the theological roots of the silence of the Spirit in western missions. The neglect and hemming in of the Spirit is part and parcel of that theological tradition.” 61 This bold critique argues that Pentecostalism represents a biblical corrective to the teaching of the kingdom of God held by many.

The third factor prompting growth during the past eighty years has been the leveling influence of Pentecostalism. The minimizing of the clergy/laitity barrier grew from the belief that the Pentecostal baptism equips every believer for Christian witness.

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The third factor prompting growth during the past eighty years has been the leveling influence of Pentecostalism. The minimizing of the clergy/laitity barrier grew from the belief that the Pentecostal baptism equips every believer for Christian witness. Maynard L. Ketcham, a missionary to Bengal, India, taught in a primitive Bible institute and wrote in 1945: “We are not seeking to make polished preachers who will work for a salary. But we are seeking to properly indoctrinate converts who have a call to minister to their fellow men. We want the lay members of all our churches to be in a position to effectually witness—so that each church will be a growing church.” 62 Therefore, it is not by accident that a Pentecostal organization, the Assemblies of God, has led all other mission agencies in sponsoring overseas theological institutions designed to train national workers. Creative approaches to training have also included the Brazilian Extension School of Theology, the International Correspondence Institute headquartered in Brussels, Belgium, and the Christian Training Network based in Miami, Florida.

In addition, Pentecostals have not apologized for the fact that their faith, emphasis on the manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit, and enthusiastic worship have often appealed to the poor rather than to the middle and upper classes, particularly in the third world.

Missionary education, the fourth reason for growth, has progressed from a lack of missiological training, based on an unhealthy suspicion held by some that education might dampen the power of the Spirit in one’s ministry, to the development of programs in Bible institutes and colleges providing instruction to prospective missionaries. Finally it has advanced to the level of graduate missiological training provided at such institutions as the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary (1973), California Theological Seminary (1983), CBN University (1977), Church of God School of Theology (1975), and Oral Roberts University (1965). For continuing education, the Assemblies of God has sponsored an annual School of Missions since 1959 for veteran missionaries and a Pre-Field Orientation for new recruits. These developments in training reflect the growing sophistication of Pentecostal mission agencies.

The fifth factor in growth is that the successful pursuit of their objective to evangelize the world has required Pentecostals to take a pragmatic attitude toward organizational development. As their overseas efforts grew, administrative personnel and policies increased. The introduction of strategic planning (overseas theological training, evangelistic crusades, coordinated activities with national church organizations) demonstrated the need for teamwork over individual initiatives.

Despite these changes, Pentecostals have insisted that the key to success in overseas evangelism and in building the indigenous church has been dependence on the “leading” and dynamic power of the Holy Spirit. This perspective represents the heart of Pentecostal expansion, although maintaining the balance between human planning and individual direction by the Spirit has sometimes been difficult and generated tensions between agency boards and personnel. 63

A Distinctive Movement

Although having considerable theological affinity with other conservative Christians, Pentecostalism has proclaimed a distinctive pneumatology. With the close of the “Great Century” in Christian missions in 1914, the concomitant emergence of the Pentecostal missionary expansion resulting from the Azusa Street Revival has represented a fresh and distinctive thrust in mission activities of worldwide significance, which must not be relegated to the periphery of evangelical mission efforts. 64 Its pneumatological emphasis, coupled with the successful application of indigenous-church principles, has challenged other Christians to reassess their own missiological perspectives.

The history of Pentecostalism cannot be properly understood apart from its vision for overseas evangelism. While not without mistakes and failures in the past eighty years, Pentecostal mission efforts have nevertheless raced to catch up with the strategy of the Spirit: “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses...to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8, N.I.V.).
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Another important discovery has been the fact that outstanding ministries are always accomplished and carried out by outstanding people. I must confess that I have been both shocked and disappointed a number of times when well-intentioned church leaders have come to me and asked if we could find a place for a young man or a young woman who was regarded as not being adequate for work in the United States, but who might possibly do a good piece of work in the foreign field. Working within one’s own language and culture is so much easier than working meaningfully in another culture. If someone is inadequate for an effective ministry at home, he or she will certainly not have much of a chance abroad.

It is not strange that a translator in India has done a remarkable piece of work on the Bengali Scriptures, for he himself has been a first-rate journalist and an accomplished writer. A missionary builder in the Camerouns has done outstanding work, but this is not strange, for he himself was for many years a highly qualified builder in the United States. Some years ago in the Sudan, we met a remarkable translator of the Dinka Scriptures, who very much impressed us with his intellectual acumen, his understanding of people, and his capacity for communication; only later did we learn that he had already had a distinguished career as an eye surgeon.

In the area of Ixmiquilpan in Mexico, I met Venancio Hernandez, an Otomi Indian, who has given outstanding leadership to the development of more than thirty churches, has transformed the economic and social structure of the Christian communities, and has inspired an entirely new way of life for thousands of people. On any scale of importance, certainly Venancio rates high.

Perhaps we have made administrative mistakes creating jobs and then looking for people to fill them. Most outstanding creative work has been done by outstanding persons who have discovered opportunities and filled the needs. When the Bible Society of the Netherlands appointed Hendrik Kraemer to Indonesia, they confessed that they did not know how best to provide a job description for him, and therefore they simply “turned him loose” to do whatever he thought he could do best. And he certainly made a most impressive contribution to the life of the church in Indonesia and to our understanding of missions.

Another discovery in this personal pilgrimage of missions has been the realization that it is not what we do for people, but what we do together with people, that really counts. Frequently our best-intentioned paternalism robs people of the feeling of accomplishment. Too often we are tempted to build churches, and then try to fill them. Our sympathies sometimes lead us to spoon-feed people; and because we wish to feel needed, we refuse to wean our spiritual children. There is always a time in life when young people need to leave home. And in the case of missionaries, perhaps there is also a time when the spiritual parent needs to leave the country.

Local people can always do far more than what we outsiders tend to think. In the Philippines, the Iglesia ni Cristo is a strictly indigenous movement that has built far more impressive cathedrals and churches than even the Roman Catholic Church. A number of aspects of this movement can be criticized, but it certainly is a prime example of what local people can do in terms of organization and material accomplishment.

Perhaps our failures have been largely in the area of paternalism, our narrow views of the mission enterprise, and an inadequate understanding of our own motivations. Our tendency to paternalize has perhaps been our greatest sin, for we almost instinctively carry with us all of our own cultural trappings. One missionary in Zaire, for example, insisted on translating Robert’s Rules of Order even before he had translated any of the Scriptures into the language of a formerly unevangelized tribe of people. He firmly believed that there could not be an indigenous church unless people understood parliamentary procedures. A missionary in South America thought he could best draw crowds to evangelistic services by hiring bands to play rock music. This worked well in Chicago, but it was a complete failure in South America. Similarly the use of cowboy bands from Texas as special attractions for revival meetings in Japan proved a disaster, for they alienated far more than they ever attracted to the gospel.

Perhaps we can best recognize our mistakes by realizing that some of the most vital churches at the present time are those in which there is little or no missionary participation, as, for example, in the Pentecostal Methodist churches in Chile, in the Portales Church in Mexico City, and in many of the separatist churches in Africa, where the most significant growth in the Christian community in this century has occurred.

Perhaps even our own study of theory and practice in missions has been too one-sided. The various factors that enter into any significant growth of the church abroad are extremely complex, and there are simply no easy formulas for success. Even the emphasis upon cultural anthropology has too often resulted in people thinking of anthropology as being an instrument by which one can manipulate people by getting them to do what they would normally not want to do. On the contrary, the principal value of anthropology is to change ourselves—not to remake others.

People can be different from us and still be Christians. An Enga in New Guinea can have feathers in his nose and still love Jesus; Presbyterians in the Camerouns can dance in church to the glory of God; and a Mennonite bishop in Alaska can cross himself before reading the Scriptures in a Russian Orthodox church.

But is it possible that our most crucial failure in the study of missions is the tendency to overlook the spiritual dimension? Too often we concentrate on organization, tactics, structures, and programs; and too seldom do we speak of personal devotion, selfless living, spiritual openness, and holy behavior.

I remember so well a conversation with an outstanding Protestant church leader in Cuba, who for many years had been a professor of theology in a Roman Catholic seminary in Spain. I once asked him how it was possible for him to change from being a Roman Catholic theologian to being such a warmhearted evangelist. He then explained how for some years in Spain he had had a humble Protestant pastor as a close friend. They often had long conversations about Christianity, and in the end, my friend said, “I beat him in theology, but he won me by his holiness.”

It has been so easy to misunderstand our own motivations in missions. Too many people have assumed that by agricultural programs, the building of hospitals, and the establishing of schools, people could be won to the cause of Christ. In reality, however, these projects can prove to be only a subtle form of bribery. We do not engage in agriculture, medicine, and education to win people to Christ; we do this because Christ has won us to himself, and out of compassion for those for whom Christ also died, we

“We do not engage in agriculture, medicine, and education to win people to Christ; we do this because Christ has won us to himself.”
share with others.

During recent experiences in China, Althea and I have been very much impressed with the attitudes of Chinese Christians and non-Christians toward the missionary movement, in which prior to 1949 tremendous investments were made in medical help, education, and social services. What seems to have impressed the Chinese people has not been primarily these humanitarian services, but the godly, sacrificial lives of individual Christian missionaries. Both Christians and non-Christians have gone out of their way to mention how deeply impressed they have been with the personal qualities of certain missionaries.

Our most significant discovery has been the recognition that in general the missionary enterprise has accomplished a magnificent task. No other humanitarian undertaking even comes close to equal what the missionaries have done in relieving physical suffering, educating deprived persons, mediating in social conflicts, and demonstrating the meaning of a new life made possible by the power of God. The proclamation of the good news by word and by life has made a difference, in fact, a tremendous difference in the lives of millions of people. Not only in concrete results but also in widespread goodwill, missions have contributed far more than all the government programs put together. Political initiatives come and go, but missionaries have stayed on, often to pick up the pieces of well-intentioned government projects that have collapsed from administrative indecision or calculated neglect. Even when people have rejected the claims of the gospel, they have usually been deeply impressed by the sincere witness of the Lord’s dedicated servants. The world has not been won to Christ, but the lives of millions of people have been enriched and transformed through the extraordinary dedication of the selfless thousands of missionaries, beginning with the apostles themselves. Never has the world been so blessed by so few.

The Legacy of Nathan Söderblom

Eric J. Sharpe

Among the 370 students present at Dwight L. Moody’s Northfield Summer School in June-July 1890 were two who later would be acknowledged as world Christian leaders. Slightly the older of the two was John R. Mott, then in his second year as assistant secretary of the YMCA College Department. The younger was one of a handful of overseas visitors to the Summer School, a slightly built, fair-haired student from Sweden, twenty-four years old and in the midst of his first intoxicating venture outside his own country. His name was Nathan Söderblom. Both became recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize, Söderblom in 1930 and Mott in 1946. But they were by no means identical or even similar personalities. Coming as they did from different countries, speaking different languages (Söderblom several, Mott only one), educated differently, moving in different spheres and nurtured in different theological traditions, it would be a mistake to judge either in terms of the other. Söderblom was a Lutheran and not a Methodist, Swedish and not American or British. Most of all; perhaps, he was a scholar—not in parentheses, but fundamentally. Unlike Mott, he was never really a world traveler; apart from two visits to the United States and one to Turkey, he never left Europe. Almost a century on from Northfield 1890, Söderblom remains relatively little known, other than in silhouette, outside his own country. No complete biography of Söderblom has ever been written, even in Swedish, let alone in any world language.1 He does, however, have two entirely separate reputations: one as a scholar, chiefly in what is variously called comparative religion, the history of religions, or Religionswissenschaft; the other as an ecumenical pioneer. His missionary thought, on the other hand, has attracted relatively little attention.2 Söderblom was never a missionary in the commonly accepted sense of the word. However, the missionary component may be seen as throwing a bridge between comparative religion and ecumenical theology in his own work. There is therefore ample reason to recall his heritage as a missionary theologian.

Lars Olof Jonathan (Nathan) Söderblom was born on January 15, 1866, in the Swedish country parish of Trönö, the eldest son of the Rev. Jonas Söderblom (1823–1901) and his Danish wife, Sophie (née Blume). Jonas Söderblom came from a long line of independent farmers, his wife from a family of Copenhagen burghers (her father was a medical doctor). From his father, Nathan inherited a high—indeed at times almost a superhuman—level of discipline and a capacity for sustained hard work. From his mother came an expansiveness, a love of company, a highly developed sense of humor and considerable musical talents. In the 1840s the province of Hälsingland had been swept by a wave of Pietist revivalism, and Jonas Söderblom had been deeply affected by its message, emerging from a severe crisis of faith with a profound sense of the one thing needful in life, the proclamation of the Christian message in the strictest and most uncompromising terms. Jonas was in no sense a liberal, and in later years was profoundly disturbed that his eldest son might be on the way to becoming a “freethinker.”

The facts of Nathan Söderblom’s career may be rapidly summarized. After secondary education in the coastal town of Hudiksvall, he entered the University of Uppsala in 1883, graduating in Arts in 1886 and in Theology in 1892. Ordained into the ministry of the Church of Sweden in 1893, he served for a year as a hospital chaplain in Uppsala before being appointed in 1894 as pastor to the Swedish Legation in Paris, with subsidiary duties as pastor to seamen in the ports of Calais and Dunkirk. Also in 1894 he married Anna Forsell (1870–1955). Between 1896 and 1914 they had twelve children, four daughters (one of whom died in infancy) and eight sons. All three daughters, incidentally, married future bishops in the Church of Sweden: only one of the sons entered the ministry, and then only in later life.

While in Paris, Söderblom studied under Auguste Sabatier in the Protestant Faculty of the Sorbonne, obtaining his doctorate.
in 1901 with a dissertation in the field of comparative eschatology. As a student in Uppsala in the 1890s he had become a sincere, though not an uncritical disciple of Albrecht Ritschl, at a time when, in the eyes of the orthodox, “Ritschlian” and “heretic” were practically synonymous terms. In later years he was to leave Ritschl behind, but the reputation he had acquired was to plague him for the remainder of his career, as a professor in Uppsala from 1901 to 1914 (from 1912 to 1914 he worked chiefly in Leipzig, while retaining his Uppsala chair), and as archbishop of Uppsala from 1914 to his death at the relatively early age of sixty-five on July 12, 1931.

Söderblom attended many conferences, chiefly in connection with the “scientific” study of religion (Stockholm 1897, Paris 1900, Basel 1904, Oxford 1908), the international student move-

ment (Northfield 1890, Amsterdam 1891, Constantinople 1911), and the emergent ecumenical enterprise (Stockholm 1925, Lausanne 1927). Only once was he on the point of attending an international missionary conference—Jerusalem 1928—but poor health prevented his traveling, though he submitted a paper, printed in the report. In 1910 he was formally outside the missionary circle, and therefore could not attend the Edinburgh conference.

Returning now to Söderblom’s early years, his Pietist home had received many missionaries “on deputation,” and overseas missions was a matter of great concern in the circles in which his father moved. In his first year as a student he was enthused by a public lecture given in Uppsala by the Norwegian missionary Lars Skrefsrud, on the subject of “Heathenism and Christianity”—a subject that in later years was never far from Soderblom’s concerns. A few months later, in February 1884, there was founded in Uppsala the Student Missionary Association (Studentmissionssföreningen), of which he very soon became a member, and which did a great deal to determine the course of his later career. The association brought together two complementary impulses: evangelistic enthusiasm in the style of the Student Volunteer Movement, and assiduous study of world religions and cultures on the pattern of German Missionswissenschaft, with the latter, perhaps, holding the upper hand. It was in the pages of the association’s journal that Söderblom first appeared in print. From 1888 to 1892 he served as its editor.

In the summer of 1890 Söderblom received an invitation to represent Sweden at the Northfield Student Conference of which we have previously spoken, and was thrown headlong into the expansive world of the international student missionary movement. At this time he began to sense that mission and Christian unity were to be the great concerns of his life, writing in his diary: “Lord, give me humility and wisdom to serve the great cause of the free unity of Thy Church.” The word “free” was important: neither then nor later did Söderblom have any feeling for any manner of unity among Christians other than that which is determined by an act of free will in obedience to that which is divinely revealed.

Over the next few years, though his faith remained solidly evangelical (indeed, surprisingly orthodox), Söderblom’s intellectual position moved more and more in a liberal direction. He and his closest friends were devouring the writings of Wellhausen, Harnack, Ritschl, and other “liberal Protestants” of the period, and entering more and more into conflict with the powerful conservative element in the Swedish theological and ecclesiastical establishment. Of his contemporaries, Samuel Fries—a brilliant Old Testament scholar—suffered more than Söderblom from the odium theologica that resulted. But Söderblom was not unaffected. Although Söderblom won a position that Fries was never to achieve, there was always an element in Scandinavia that was never able fully to trust him.

At no point in his career would Söderblom seem ever to have contemplated becoming an overseas missionary; of the members of the Student Missionary Association in the Uppsala of the 1880s, only two served overseas: Erik Folke in China and Ernst Heuman in India. His contribution was to be that of the scholar and pastor. The techniques of historical investigation he learned from Harnack, and from the no less erudite but less well known Harald Hjärne in Uppsala, and it was to a historical problem—that of the influence of Iran on the thought-world of the Bible—that he initially devoted himself. But comparative religion is a limitless field, and in the 1890s, at first in Uppsala and later in Paris, he became drawn into first one, and then another, of its interconnected mansions.

What had this to do with his view of the Christian mission? On the face of it, little enough. But in a period in which the claims of Christianity to uniqueness in the world of religion were being challenged in an altogether new way, and in which “history” was being called to the witness stand both for and against the Christian claims, a vast exercise in ground-clearing was necessary, an exercise that few were qualified to undertake. Partly it was a historical question: Had the Judeo-Christian tradition always been unique as a revelation of God? Partly it was contemporary: What had Christianity to offer to Asia and Africa that Asia and Africa did not already possess? Were religions in bondage to cultures, or were they not? Was the answer to be found in a boundless relativism, or in a dogmatic exclusivism? That we are still struggling with these questions today is at the very least a sign of their importance. But to Söderblom’s generation they were very largely new questions: On the answers given to them depended much more than scholarly reputation and academic preference.

Söderblom’s contention was that without a knowledge of, and a feeling for history, the theologian is reduced to bare and unsupported assertion. The science of religion does not so much underpin by altogether new bodies of evidence. In the person of Jesus Christ, and in his message of the kingdom of God, there is something altogether new and unique in the world of religion, and that “something” could be demonstrated through the findings of “scientific” history, without recourse to dogmatic special pleading.

The missionary implications of this were, he believed, obvious. His own task he saw as being primarily that of the historian. However, he was enough of a Hegelian to see world history as one history, one progressive record, in which earlier and later phases were organically connected. In the manner of his time, he drew a distinction between “general” and “special” revelation (the former brought to completion in the latter), and between “natural” and “prophetic” types of religion.
Throughout his career, he was notably disinclined to superimpose theory upon fact. A key word in all his writing is verklighet, "reality," not in a metaphysical but in a phenomenological sense. The scholar's calling and duty is first of all to investigate what is actually there, observably there in the world of religion, past and present; only then can interpretations be attempted and conclusions drawn.

Söderblom never wrote, nor did he ever contemplate writing, a large work on the theology or the praxis of the Christian mission. He did, on the other hand, publish a number of essays and lectures on missionary subjects in a sequence extending over a period of more than forty years. The first of these, dating back to 1889, was on the life and work of Ansarg, the first known missionary to Sweden, and the second on the missionary revival among American students; during his student years Söderblom also contributed surveys of modern missionary literature to the Student Missionary Association's Communications. In the 1890s and early 1900s he was for the most part engaged with historical and social issues, and published little in the overseas missionary area. But after his return to Uppsala from Paris in 1901 he became a regular contributor to the Swedish missionary debate.

On February 28, 1904, for instance, Söderblom delivered the closing address to the twentieth-anniversary gathering of the Student Missionary Association, pointing out that, the world over, peoples and cultures were on the move and that a struggle for spiritual supremacy was developing between a "Christian" and a "Buddhist" set of principles (Marxist influence had not yet made its presence felt). New qualities were called for.

One condition of mastering the situation is a deep, genuine insight. Whoever would help people must possess as the most important condition, alongside profound and sincere love for them, true insight. As far as is humanly possible, we must understand them. . . . We need people who know Eastern culture in depth.  

The point seems a fairly obvious one. But in 1904 it was not obvious at all—at least not among pious but superficially informed "friends of missions." Zeal is one thing. Zeal without understanding is dangerous. Söderblom was in effect pleading for an alliance and a sharing of expertise between mission and comparative religion, or rather (for a sharing of expertise there had always been), for a more conscious and deliberate pooling of resources between the two. Two years later, in an address on "Mission and the History of Civilization," he was making the same point; and again in a 1915 article, in which he wrote that "the future will show a closer connexion between missions and the now more generally recognized science of religion." Probably the science of religion would be able to stand on its own feet, but mission would have "an increasingly imperative need" of the expertise that only comparative religion could provide.

Söderblom’s 1906 lecture was very much a programmatical statement, containing most of the points on which his mature missionary theology was based. Missions do not exist merely in order to transmit the habits and values of a certain type of culture, nor merely to secure numerical accessions to Christianity. There have been heroic missionaries, but it is wrong to concentrate only on missionary heroism. Mission involves a certain measure of compassion, but while not altogether bad, the compassion motive may lead to the painting of the non-Christian world as altogether corrupt, which it certainly is not. What, then, has the Christian world to give? "The gift is not our dogmatics or our church organization—they can make those up for themselves—but the gift is Christ."  

At present, we simply do not know what a Japanese or Chinese or Indian or African Christianity will look like: "We can scarcely discern even the most general outlines of these edifices." But we must not force non-European Christians into European-style churches: to do so would be to render them homeless.

Söderblom was too honest not to acknowledge a certain overlap and community of interest between Protestant missions and colonial politics. However, he thought Sweden fortunately free of such entanglements, for which reason Swedish missions were in a position to concentrate on the essential issues, that of helping to bring about "a free acceptance of Christ in the lives of individuals and communities, inward re-creation, independent . . .

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**Personalia**

One of the most influential missionary statesmen in the post-1945 era, Charles Wesley Ranson, died on January 23, 1988, in Lakeville, Connecticut. He was 84 years old.

A missionary of the Methodist Church in Ireland, Ranson went to Madras, India in 1928. He was secretary of the National Christian Council of India, Burma and Ceylon, 1942-45; research secretary of the International Missionary Council, 1946-47; general secretary of the IMC, 1948-58; then director of the Theological Education Fund of the World Council of Churches, 1958-64. During 1964-68 Ranson was dean and professor at Drew University Theological School, and taught at Hartford Seminary, 1968-71. When he retired in 1975, he was pastor of the Congregational Church in Salisbury, Connecticut. His book The Christian Minister in India (1946) was considered a classic study. His autobiography A Missionary Pilgrimage was published by Eerdmans a few weeks after his death.

The pioneering missiologist of the Assemblies of God, Melvin L. Hodges, died February 25, 1988, in Springfield, Missouri. He was 74 years old. After missionary service in Central America, Hodges served as field director for Latin America and the West Indies for twenty years until his retirement in 1973. He then taught missions at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary in Springfield until 1985. He expounded indigenous-church principles and a Pentecostal perspective on missions in his books The Indigenous Church (1953) and A Theology of the Church and Its Mission (1977).

James A. Cogswell, associate general secretary for overseas ministries of the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. since 1984, has announced that he will retire by November 1988. Cogswell, 65, served in Japan for thirteen years, then six years as area secretary for Asia and six years as director of World Service and World Hunger for the Presbyterian Church in the United States.
by no means brought to an end the mutual suspicions that had as he admired Germany, he detested war even more passionately. Wilson had sent a commission to Russia to establish a relationship virtually impossible task, theologians and church leaders being among their respective countries’ most energetic propagandists. It would be useless to deny that Söderblom’s own natural sympathies lay very much on the German side in the conflict. But much as he admired Germany, he detested war even more passionately.

Söderblom’s peace initiatives were to culminate in the Stockholm Life and Work Conference of 1925—the end of hostilities had by no means brought to an end the mutual suspicions that had poisoned international Christian relations in the war years. In 1917, on the heels of the Russian Revolution, President Woodrow Wilson had sent a commission to Russia to establish a relationship with the new government, and one of the members of that commission had been John R. Mott. Previously regarded as a model of Christian internationalism, Mott was abruptly disowned by the Germans, who withdrew formally from the Edinburgh Continuation Committee. The future of the ecumenical movement required that a new leader be found; and in the event it was Söderblom, trusted by the Germans while still having cordial relations with the British, the Americans, and the French, who more and more assumed the role of mediator. That, however, is the side of his work that is best known, and we have no need to discuss it further here.

On the outbreak of war, most German missionaries at work in British territories were either expelled or interned, creating an acute crisis on many mission fields, nowhere more so than in South India, in an area shared between the Leipzig Mission and the Church of Sweden. Emergency measures were undertaken by the board chaired by Söderblom. The Swedes had to assume responsibility for the whole of the field, despite the lack of money and personnel (added to which, the British were even suspicious of those Swedish missionaries who had been trained in Leipzig). The outcome was the creation, in January 1919, of the independent Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church, with a Swede, Ernst Heuman, as its first bishop.

Söderblom had always had a profound interest in India, and a no less deep concern with the question of the nature of religious experience on the individual level, culminating in “mysticism.” So it was that in the immediate postwar years, alongside his efforts to repair the damage done by the war, he became fascinated by the witness and personality of Sadhu Sundar Singh (1889–1929). In 1921 he lectured on the Sadhu, and in the following year published his lecture, both in Swedish and in English.

In 1922 the Sadhu visited Sweden in the course of his second world tour, and spent some time with Söderblom. Söderblom’s book Sundar Singh’s budskap (The Message of Sundar Singh, 1923), as well as translating some Sundar Singh material into Swedish and giving an account of his visit to Uppsala, concluded with an interesting comparison between “modern India’s three great men,” Gandhi, Tagore, and Sundar Singh. At this stage Söderblom was, as were so many others, disposed to see the Sadhu as precisely the spiritual leader, Indian and Christian in equal measure, the circumstances demanded. Later in the 1920s, when the Sadhu’s credentials were called in question, Söderblom was one of those who sprang to his defense. That for various reasons the Sadhu’s promise remained unfulfilled is not the question: rather, that in him Söderblom saw (for a time at least) a living illustration of what the integration of East and West might mean for the future of the church in India.

Moving briefly from India to China, during the 1920s Söderblom was deeply concerned to establish a modern Lutheran presence in the Middle Kingdom. In 1920 he was approached by the Norwegian missionary Karl Ludvig Reichelt, who was seeking support for a mission to the Chinese Buddhist monastic community. On Söderblom’s invitation, Reichelt visited Uppsala in the spring of 1921 and lectured on his proposed mission, and on Mahayana Buddhism. Thereafter Söderblom was one of his strongest advocates, ensuring continued support for “Reichelt’s mission” from the Swedish board.

Another Chinese initiative in which Söderblom was very much involved concerned the setting up in 1923 of a Lutheran college at Tao Hwa Lun (Hunan), with Söderblom’s former international secretary, Knut B. Westman, as its first principal. Both ventures, however, were to suffer greatly from the ravages of civil war later in the 1920s. Reichelt soldiered on, finally settling in Hong Kong. Westman returned to Sweden, to become in 1929 Uppsala’s first professor of missionary and church history.

Söderblom’s definitive breakthrough as an international Christian leader came in 1925, with his Stockholm Life and Work Conference. Shortly thereafter, Söderblom addressed the Scandinavian Missionary Conference, also meeting in Stockholm, on the subject of “Mission as a Herald of Peace.”

“What is the task of missionaries,” Söderblom asked, “if not to be messengers of joy, proclaiming peace and making peace?” Before the war, he pointed out, it had been common to lay emphasis on the usefulness of mission to the great colonial powers. Scandinavians, however, had never been seriously tempted to use missions in this way, for which reason they now found themselves occupying a position unique among Protestants. The Life and Work Conference had been a unique manifestation of what might be achieved by a nation uninvolved in power constellations, and carrying out mission, not as an adjunct of politics, but solely for the sake of the gospel. “Mission,” he concluded, “is proof that the foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of men.” The Stockholm conference would not have been necessary had not the nations to whom the mission had been chiefly entrusted in the past proceeded with such obviously and disastrously mixed motives. Missionaries are not to be colonial agents in disguise; they are to be “nothing more and nothing less than insignificant heralds”—heralds of peace and reconciliation, not envy and division.

Three years later Söderblom returned to the missionary theme in a paper prepared for the Jerusalem International Missionary Conference of 1928. There is much in this paper, “The Historic Christian Fellowship,” that has a prophetic ring. Söderblom set his face against that “ecclesiastical imperialism” that would treat the churches of what today we call the “third world” as “insignificant colonies of the confessions and institutions of western Christendom.” Looking into the future, he foresaw a time when “the Christian faith and the whole historic Christian fellowship will have centres in India and the Far East just as important for the Lord’s Church, its life and its future, as the old centres.” On the issue of Christian unity, he was happy to allow that the unity of the future would include “very marked differences of Life and Work, Faith and Order.” What holds Christians of different backgrounds and temperaments together is not their interpretation, but the reality, of what God has done in history and human experience. The Christian church as it actually exists is plagued and rendered powerless by its egocentricity, its timidity, its disunity, and its “ridiculously and scandalously inefficient life.” In the West, Christians had learned to acquiesce in all this. But where mission is concerned, “the curse of disruption” had often rendered the church powerless. Union was
needed—but not union at any price, not a careless sinking of differences brought about as much by theological sloth as by commitment to a larger vision. Söderblom frequently used the term "evangelical Catholicity" to describe that vision—of a concentration on a common source of revelation, strength, and inspiration, and not a tacit agreement to eliminate everything in the tradition that might give offense: "It would be ungodly to sacrifice anything essential in our faith and our divine heritage for the cause of unity." And what better way to distinguish essentials from nonessentials than through the missionary outlook?

To Nathan Söderblom, as to many of the pioneers of the ecumenical movement, the cause of unity and the cause of mission were not two causes, but one. His intellectual liberalism notwithstanding, in all theological essentials he was solidly Lutheran and could be deeply suspicious of ecumenical experiments (for instance, those of his contemporary Rudolf Otto) that passed beyond the revelation of God in Christ into the regions of a vague "evangelical Catholicity" to describe that vision—of a concentration on a common source of revelation, strength, and inspiration, and not a tacit agreement to eliminate everything in the tradition that might give offense: "It would be ungodly to sacrifice anything essential in our faith and our divine heritage for the cause of unity." And what better way to distinguish essentials from nonessentials than through the missionary outlook? To Nathan Söderblom, as to many of the pioneers of the ecumenical movement, the cause of unity and the cause of mission were not two causes, but one. His intellectual liberalism notwithstanding, in all theological essentials he was solidly Lutheran and could be deeply suspicious of ecumenical experiments (for instance, those of his contemporary Rudolf Otto) that passed beyond the revelation of God in Christ into the regions of a vague "evangelical Catholicity" to describe that vision—of a concentration on a common source of revelation, strength, and inspiration, and not a tacit agreement to eliminate everything in the tradition that might give offense: "It would be ungodly to sacrifice anything essential in our faith and our divine heritage for the cause of unity." And what better way to distinguish essentials from nonessentials than through the missionary outlook?

In 1930 Söderblom was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, chiefly for the work of which his 1925 Stockholm conference had been the great symbol—reconciliation among the nations. Alone among Nobel prize winners, he had actually known the enigmatic Alfred Nobel—indeed he had conducted Nobel's funeral in 1897. In the spring of 1931, though in a precarious state of health, he went to deliver the first of what should have been two courses of Gifford Lectures in Scotland. For a few happy days he was able once more to "play professor," lecturing on "Basal Forms of Personal Religion" (afterward published as The Living God). Shortly after his return to Uppsala he had to undergo emergency surgery for an intestinal obstruction. He survived the surgery, but his heart proved too weak to withstand the strain, and he died on July 12, 1931, at the age of sixty-five. By royal permission he was buried in Uppsala Cathedral. The text on his grave was one he had often quoted:

So likewise ye, when ye shall have done well those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done [in Swedish, only done] that which was our duty to do [Luke 17:10, K.J.V.].

In the course of the 1906 address from which we have previously quoted, Söderblom said: "Mission means that the struggle between the great types of human civilization, between the great powers of spiritual culture, must be as deep, as concerned with [matters of] principle, as many-sided as possible." In his own case, he brought together precisely that combination of qualities needed to analyze that "struggle" as it presented itself in his day. One may have profound commitment without analytical expertise, and of course vice versa—and that is in large measure the situation in which we find ourselves today. One fears that the legacy of Söderblom and his generation, and his capacity to hold together the study of religion on the highest level of professional competence and the deepest sense of having held on by the living God, is one that today is, while not unknown, at least uncommon. But that surely is ample reason why it should be recalled. Much has happened since 1931 to alter the terms of the struggle: the "great powers" of our day are by no means what they were in his. But that we are in increasing need of his type of mission—analytical and devoted—would seem to go without saying.

The final word, however, I give to Söderblom's disciple and only recent biographer, Bengt Sundkler:

Nathan Söderblom points the way. He was an archbishop—and thus a representative, responsible church leader. At the same time he was a free spirit and therefore creative. In this regard there is a striking resemblance between him and [Pope] John XXIII. The example of both points to a fundamental problem for the Church and ecumenism: to combine free creativity with responsibility for institutions. But of course this is not only a problem for church leaders. It is a responsibility for all of us.

Notes

References are to works by Söderblom, unless otherwise stated.

1. Incomparably the best account in English is Bengt Sundkler, Nathan Söderblom: His Life and Work (London: Lutterworth, 1968).


4. La Vie future d'après le Mazdéisme (Paris: Leroux, 1901).

5. See below, notes 38–43.


8. For Söderblom's personal account, see Anna Söderblom, ed., Sommarminnen (Stockholm: SKDB, 1941), pp. 10–103.


10. Fries never obtained a permanent academic post, and died early, in 1914, the vicar of a Stockholm city church.

11. Mimmi Folke, Erik Folke (Stockholm: Svenska Missionens i Kina Förlag, 1941); Gunnar Brundin, Ernst Heuman: Biskop av Tranquebar (Stockholm: SKDB, 1926).

12. Stated most clearly in Uppenbarelsereligion (Uppsala: Schultz, 1903, and later editions).


15. Ibid., p. 79.


April 1988
21. Ibid., p. 20.
20. Ibid., p. 5.
23. Ibid., p. 16.
22. Ibid., p. 6.

Of the various accounts in Swedish, the best is by Sigfrid Estborn, Från Taberg till Tranquebar: Biskop David Bexell (Stockholm: Hugo Gebers Forlag, 1922), pp. 11-52; pp. 491-99.


29. Heuman had been a fellow member with Soderblom of the Student Missionary Association in Uppsala. See note 11, above.


31. Sundar Singh episode is greatly in need of fresh investigation in the light of what has been learned since the 1920s about the nature of visionary and ecstatic experience.

32. See Sharpe, Karl Ludvig Reichelt: Missionary, Scholar and Pilgrim (Hong Kong: Tao Fong Shan, 1984), pp. 68ff.

33. See Sharpe, Karl Ludvig Reichelt: Missionary, Scholar and Pilgrim (Hong Kong: Tao Fong Shan, 1984), pp. 68ff.

36. Ibid., p. 58.
37. Ibid., p. 64.
38. Ibid., p. 58.

40. Ibid., p. 136.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid., p. 139.
43. Ibid., p. 150.
44. Ibid., p. 151.
45. Ibid., p. 153.
46. See Sundkler, Nathan Soderblom (1968), pp. 422f.
47. This aspect has seldom been recorded in print. But see Sundkler, “Nathan Soderblom—A Complex Personality,” in Sharpe and Hultgard, eds., Nathan Soderblom (1984), p. 10.
49. The Living God: Basal Forms of Personal Religion (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1933; reprinted 1939). A later paper back reprint (Boston: Beacon Press, 1962) on the front cover replaces “Basal” with “Basic,” and adds the absurd words: “Ten faces of religion—from witchcraft to revelation.” However, the remainder of the book actually is a reprint. The planned second series of lectures was of course never delivered, though part exists in note form.

Bibliography

Works by Söderblom in English Having Reference to Mission

Söderblom wrote relatively little in English. There is a full, though still incomplete, bibliography of his vast output in Nils Karlström, ed., Nathan Söderblom in Memoriam (Stockholm: SKDB, 1931), pp. 391-451.


1933a The Living God: Basal Forms of Personal Religion London: Oxford Univ. Press.

Works about Söderblom in English

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Book Reviews

Liberation Theology: The Essential Facts about the Revolutionary Movement in Latin America and Beyond.


This book may be the best introduction to Latin American theology of liberation available today. We have some monographic interpretations, such as Robert McAfee Brown’s books on the subject, and the initial critical introduction by the Protestant theologian from Latin America, José Miguez Bonino, thirteen years ago, entitled Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975). There are also some “evangelical” responses, and some others that are more polemical, apologetic, and even ideological reactions. The introduction by Leonardo and Clovis Boff is good in terms of describing method and content of theology of liberation, but nothing as informative and illustrative as Berryman’s book.

The author, a former priest, now married, living with his wife and three daughters in Philadelphia, spent eight years in a barrio in Panama (1965–73) and has served as Central American representative of the American Friends Service Committee. Berryman is conversant with the different streams of theologies of liberation in the United States, as reflected in his many reviews and articles in Commonweal, America, and National Catholic Reporter, and he has published two important contemporary books on Central America: The Religious Roots of Rebellion and Inside Central America.

Berryman wants to go “beyond the clichés” and to make intelligible the movement to a general public, drawing on twenty years of his own experience. He describes liberation theology as (1) an interpretation of Christian faith out of the suffering, struggle, and hope of the poor; (2) a critique of society and the ideologies sustaining it; (3) a critique of the activity of the church and of Christians from the angle of the poor. It is also a biblical theology, out of experience with the Bible as a “mirror” of life: “They understand the Bible in terms of their experience and reinterpret that experience in terms of biblical symbols” (p. 60).

Berryman does it very well, providing the historical background, exemplifying the points, identifying the trends and their representatives, analyzing the grounds of critics of liberation theology (including the famous “instruction” written by Cardinal Ratzinger from the Vatican on Leonardo Boff’s work) while dealing with the social and ecclesial matrix of this theologizing, the reading of the Bible by the poor, the basic ecclesial communities, the pastoral approach and the theological method, human rights, the moving context of liberation theology, and the relationships among faith, politics, and ideology. He deals with objections in a critical way and discusses points of contact with theologies of liberation (black, feminist, Chicano) in the United States.

Berryman raises questions about the future of this type of theology, but in his own evaluation the issues of liberation theologies will not go away, and they may well represent a shift “as significant as the Protestant Reformation, which began as a revolt against corrupt practices in the Roman Church, and quickly became a new Bible-based theology and a new model of church” (p. 6).

One limitation of this work is that it deals only with Roman Catholic theology of liberation. Even though Protestant contributions may be only like “a footnote,” still there needs to be written a book on Protestant theologizing during the past two decades in Latin America. Another important omission in Berryman’s work is the roots of liberation theology in spirituality, as is eloquently shown in Gustavo Gutiérrez’s recent works We Drink from Our Own Wells, and On Job: God-talk and the Suffering of the Innocent.

—Mortimer Arias


C. Peter Wagner is professor of church growth at the School of World Mission, Fuller Theological Seminary. The present book is at least his tenth on church growth over the past ten years. Strategies is a blend of evangelical theology, applied social science, Madison Avenue, and common sense. Assuming and defending the position that it is the responsibility of the church to reproduce itself wherever research shows that the “soil” is ready, Wagner lays out steps to the systematic and efficient planning and implementation of that task. He draws analogies and support from the Bible, uses data from church growth around the world, and emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit, but his perspective is task-oriented Western pragmatism.

As such, the book is well done. It is clear, direct, thoughtful, program-

William A. Smalley is an anthropological linguist, formerly translation coordinator for the United Bible Societies in the Asia-Pacific region, and now working independently as a researcher and writer.
matics. It neatly delineates opposing positions and briefly supports the ones Wagner holds. Issues are presented in broad principle, including the meaning and significance of strategy, how to lay out a strategy, how to get the kind of information you need to devise strategy and carry it out. Points are illustrated from studies of church growth.

At the same time, the book is not only very Western, but also geared to a cognitive style, which likes ideas and processes to be confined to neat compartments and logical steps. This is not a book for dreamers but for their assistants, not for innovators but for implementers, not for prophets but for scribes; not for poets but for writers of advertising copy. Which is not to imply that any kind of person should be excluded from developing a strategy of church growth, but simply that significant strategy at the highest level also requires intellectual and spiritual synthesis. Of how to achieve such synthesis, Strategies gives little hint.

—William A. Smalley

The Politics of Compassion.


Newspaper headlines and evening television news can dull our compassion. Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer’s book can challenge us with fresh perspectives. In a style both disturbing and consoling, The Politics of Compassion presents a profound analysis of the meaning of Christian compassion in concrete application to the problems of world hunger, Central America, and the arms race.

This book is particularly helpful in offering a consistent biblical perspective on social issues. The author develops what he calls “the logic of the majorities,” a biblical logic of sufficiency for the poor by which “the integrity of economic systems and priorities can be measured by assessing our relationship to the poor and their well-being” (p. 35). The unfolding of this logic provides a foundation, for example, for the recent U.S. Catholic Bishops’ Pastoral Letter on Economics. Nelson-Pallmeyer goes further than the U.S. Catholic bishops, however, suggesting that the biblical perspective directly challenges the capitalist system as hostile to biblical values and thus fatally flawed.

About Central America and the arms race, The Politics of Compassion is similarly straightforward in confronting United States policies from a biblical perspective. I found especially effective the author’s contrasting lists of biblical values and contemporary policies. He is clear and concise, while not succumbing to a fundamentalist reading that would strain the credibility of his arguments.

Nelson-Pallmeyer, currently living in Managua, Nicaragua, and working with a Lutheran educational project, acknowledges in the introduction that his book “was written for the non-poor by a non-poor person” (p. 4). Much of his social analysis and theological reflection is not new. But it is extremely well organized and passionately presented. For this reason it can serve very effectively to make the meaning of compassion—as old as the parable of the Good Samaritan—come alive in the contemporary context. His concluding remarks on “hope and compassionate action” are enough in themselves to recommend the book highly.

—Peter J. Henriot, S. J.

God the Evangelist: How the Holy Spirit Works to Bring Men and Women to Faith.


Rethinking Evangelism: A Theological Approach.


Reading these books together is at once gratifying and thought-provoking. It is encouraging to see evangelism being addressed with this level of seriousness by both evangelicals and mainline theologians, even to note their considerable agreement, yet sobering to contemplate the differences that remain.

In a way it is unfair to compare these books. David Wells, who is a professor of theology at Gordon-Conwell, is partially reporting on a conference on the work of the Holy Spirit in Evangelism held in Oslo, Norway, in 1985 by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization and the World Evangelical Fellowship. Ben Johnson, professor of evangelism at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia, is writing a handbook for pastors and lay leaders of mainline churches. Still, within these limitations the books are comparable. Johnson is addressing churches facing a declining membership and a confusion about the nature and urgency of evangelism; Wells is addressing a worldwide fellowship of churches active in evangelism, but confused about the role of the Holy Spirit in the spread of the gospel. The one must address ambivalent feelings about the task of evangelism (twentieth-century clergy received a “postcritical, non-imperialistic, neo-orthodox theology that contradicts the traditional methodology they have experienced,” p. 19, Wells); the other has to deal with imbalance in understanding the Spirit’s work (“Confusion about the Holy Spirit has produced confusion about Christian faith,” p. 2, Johnson).

Wells, then, is less concerned to define evangelism than to develop its biblical and historical basis, especially
with reference to the role of the Holy Spirit. After placing the discussion in a world-mission perspective, he underlines the role of the Spirit in making the gospel effective both in the early church and in subsequent church history, and in delivering people today from spiritual and cultural "powers."

Johnson makes more effort to provide a theology of evangelism, with an acknowledged influence of Tillich and neo-orthodox theology. The role of the church is to re-present Christ to the world. Evangelism begins in this "community where Christ has chosen to live" (p. 76), and is the work of the whole body, a dimension of all its activities (Johnson and Wells alike stress the centrality of the church in evangelism). But evangelism, Johnson avers, is a part of the larger mission of the church, "the total expression of Christ's concern for the world" (p. 78), which includes the total life and work of the church.

In both studies there is a welcome emphasis on the context of evangelism: in Wells it is a worldwide context (though he has helpful things to say about modern technological culture); in Johnson it is an American middle-class setting (his starting point is the estrangement people feel in modern urban life). Both want a more comprehensive witness: Wells notes that "we cannot choose to have personal piety apart from social piety" (p. 87); Johnson develops a helpful model that allows for both nurtured and dramatic conversion (see p. 102).

There is clearly a difference of theological emphasis. Wells, for example, wants to tie evangelism more strongly to the historical work of Christ; Johnson tempers this emphasis with an appreciation of the more general work of God in the world today. But still more striking is the difference in style of the two. Wells's book is laced with calls to recommitment and praise (and the appendices add practical notes of the role of Bible studies and worship in evangelism); Johnson must address more deep-seated issues and rebuild theological motivation for evangelism. Both are valuable and important studies, and illustrate the dual challenge the church faces today: to awaken churches to evangelism as well as to encourage churches already active.

—William A. Dyrness

Conflict and Context:
Hermeneutics in the Americas.


This controversial book is the product (almost transcript) of the significant conference in Tlayacapan, Mexico (1983), sponsored by the Inter-Varsity-related Theological Students Fellowship (TSF) and its sister organization, the Latin America Theological Fraternity. Editor Mark Lau Branson was then general secretary of the TSF (now dean of the Fellowship Bible Institute in San Francisco), and C. René Padilla is general secretary of the Fraternity and pastor of La Lucilla Baptist Church in Buenos Aires. Viewpoints represented in the work are those of evangelical professors from a wide variety of institutions: dispensationalist, Southern as well as Conservative Baptist, West­minister, Trinity, and Gordon-Conwell seminaries, and so forth.

For many, undoubtedly, the surprise will be the extent to which the historic conservative evangelical theological package is being radically restructured (even in some strict inerrantist circles) under the impact of third­world and liberation theologies, which stress class conflict, the pervasive character of oppression in human society, God's option for the poor and other oppressed groups (women, blacks, immigrants, indigenous peoples, abandoned children, etc.). Obviously, significant differences of viewpoint are expressed—in eloquent and at times heated debate—but overall the replacement of the "five fundamentals" with liberationist perspectives is rather overwhelming. Those members of the evangelical public that draw their views and emphases of professors from "sound" institutions, as expanded in this volume (the professors may not be typical of their institutions). Perhaps the major theological insight in the book is contained in the first word of the title—"conflict"—because conflict is predominant in the historical context of most biblical books. This makes it difficult for middle-class readers to get a handle on the teaching, which is commonly spiritualized in Platonic fashion in order to make it seem more comfortably relevant to the concerns in affluent suburbia. José Miguez Bonino once commented that the major heresy of first-world theology is not believing in class conflict.

Both the general papers and the study groups on biblical texts, as reported in this work, provide many insights. However, in a technological society dominated by specialists, one fears that the interdisciplinary challenge of such a book may be overlooked.

—Thomas D. Hanks


Emissaries is an around-the-world and seventy-five-year chronological tour of the YWCA (Young Women's Christian Association). It is the story of YWCA secretaries who worked alongside women missionaries but with a slightly different purpose and focus. Though funded and commissioned like missionaries, they were termed "secretaries" and sought to distinguish themselves from missionaries. Evangelism was not their primary mission, and as such they concentrated more openly on initiating social change. Yet the testimony of Ada Grabill spoke for many, when she declared that her "sole motive in China is to show Christ" (p. 3). Unlike their missionary sisters, who were often under the au
Authority and watchful eye of male mission leaders, the women of the YWCA could aspire themselves to one day hold leadership positions.

The women themselves are the most fascinating aspect of the book. They served sacrificially but, like their missionary counterparts, were not immune to controversy and scandal. Agnes Hill, the first YWCA secretary to go abroad, created a stir in India when, in 1910, it was reported that she had "gone off into the tongues movement." According to a witness, she was "prostrate on the floor, groaning and writhing... and speaking in a delirium of exaltation" (p. 50). She was part of the worldwide Pentecostal revival, and YWCA officials cautiously examined other foreign secretaries, fearing the "enthusiasm" might spread.

Other women stand out for their faith and courage. Grace Coppock left her home in Nebraska to sail alone to China—the lone woman and the only passenger on a freighter headed for Shanghai. Ruth Paxon conducted evangelistic meetings in various cities throughout China, with the cooperation of more than 700 secondary schools. The inquirers were so numerous, she could not deal with them all. Caroline Smith was involved in feminists meetings, socialists groups, and labor rallies in Mexico City.

Nancy Boyd writes a highly readable and well-documented book that should be in the libraries of all church historians and students of the foreign missionary movement. Boyd has also written *Three Victorian Women Who Changed Their World* and is on the board of the International Division of the YWCA.

—Ruth A. Tucker
The Lost Empire: The Story of the Jesuits in Ethiopia, 1555–1634.


This is an interesting account of nearly one hundred years of Jesuit mission in Ethiopia. The principal actor in the drama is a young Spanish Jesuit, Pedro Paez, whose missionary achievement rivals that of Matteo Ricci in China. Paez sailed from northern India to Massawa. Disguised as an Armenian merchant, he made his way to the Ethiopian emperor’s court. His mission concentrated on the court, nobles, and persons of influence.

Paez mastered the language, developed appreciation for the culture, and was sensitive to the customs and beliefs of Ethiopian Orthodox Christians loyal to the Alexandrian faith. He was very aware of unique Ethiopian traditions and ways in which they differed from Roman Catholicism—monophysite doctrine, length and celebration of Lent, feasts and fasts, the Eucharist, baptismal customs, circumcision, Jewish influence on rules for Sabbath observance, circumsion, Jewish influence on rules for cleanliness or uncleanness and food regulations. He was critical of loose morals on the part of the clergy and of ways in which primal religious customs impacted daily life. Yet Paez looked for what he could commend and had genuine admiration for certain traditions. Rather than proselytize, he used his diplomatic skills. Instead of direct confrontation he engaged people in discussion with the hope that the respective merits of Ethiopian and Roman Christianity would become apparent. Paez understood the pride of the Ethiopian church, which had preserved itself for eleven hundred years against threats from hostile primal groupings and Muslims, and how the church had become identified with Ethiopian nationality. Paez was admired by emperors for his integrity and lack of interference in the lives of people. When two of the emperors indicated their intention to become Roman Catholic, Paez impressed upon them the need for caution in their public statements.

Unfortunately the folly and arrogance of Paez’s successor, Alfonso Mendes, nearly eradicated Paez’s success. Mendes did not show appreciation for the good qualities of Ethiopian Orthodoxy. He wanted the emperor to declare publicly his conversion to Catholicism and to force Catholicism on all the provinces. He increased the Jesuit presence. He reordained priests, reconsecrated churches, installed Roman altars, rebaptized the faithful, rearranged fasts and festivals, and forbade circumcision. When opposition increased he recommended concessions, but it was too late. By 1633 the persecution of Catholics and the exclusion of foreigners sealed off Ethiopia from the West for the next century and a half.

The Jesuit experience provides many lessons for contemporary missionology—the need to respect cultures, the shape of communication, the importance of learning as well as teaching, the role of patience and diplomacy, the encumbrance of political alliances, the strength of indigenous religious nationalism, and the vulnerability of foreigners. These are the dynamics that provide fascinating reading even for one not well acquainted with the specifics of Ethiopian history. Philip Caraman, a Jesuit presently located in Rome and contributing to an encyclopedia of Jesuit history, has done an excellent job.

—Calvin E. Shenk

The Third Force in Missions: A Pentecostal Contribution to Contemporary Mission Theology.


Pentecostalism has become an important factor in the contextualization of Christianity in the third world and in overcoming the colonialism associated with missions. Its theology contributes to freedom from Western domination. Pomerville has made a masterful attempt to identify factors supporting this transformation.

Pomerville goes to the heart of the issue by identifying the rationalistic base of evangelicalism’s “Western scholastic theology” coming out of a Western worldview (p. 24). Pentecostals moved from this excessive word-and concept-centered approach by adding the experimental in a dynamic incarnation of the Word communicated nonverbally through deeds. Mission changes from just telling by including doing, and theology incorporates the practical in a move away from the scholastic science of Protestantism (p. 67). Mission moves from just the obedience of a command to include an inner motivation of the Holy Spirit (p. 70).

Pomerville makes the kingdom of God central. He sees in it a tension between a Great-Commission mandate and the cultural mandate of conciliar theologies. He concludes that “Pentecost confirms that the Kingdom equals the proclamation of the gospel” (p. 150): “Pentecostals do not have a concern for social issues” (p. 151).

While Pomerville does an excellent job of identifying issues, his conclusions betray a faulty understanding of Pentecostalism. Since the Assemblies of God is “the largest of the American Pentecostal bodies,” he considers it “as a microcosm of the Pentecostal Movement as a whole” (p. 168). Mission work becomes those activities carried out by a mission board, and evaluations can be based there. Pentecostalism is a renewal movement within evangelicalism, “differing little from the rest of evangelicalism in matters of basic Christian belief” (p. 4). For him the Charismatic movement is “Neo-Pentecostalism.”

This narrow perspective manifests itself in Pomerville’s bibliography. Missing are studies by social scientists such as Lalive d’Epiney’s Haven of the Masses, Willems’s Followers of the New Faith, and Gerlack and Hines’s People, Power, Change: Movements of Social Transformation, which reject his assertion that Pentecostals are unconcerned...
Black and African Theologies: Siblings or Distant Cousins?


During the 1970s a potentially explosive dialogue, largely unnoticed by the white religious press, developed between Afro-American and African Christians over the relevance of liberation theology for their respective situations. Josiah U. Young, who teaches religion at Colgate University, has written the first detailed analysis of that conversation in this second volume of the Orbis series: the Bishop Henry McNeal Turner Studies in North American Black Religion. It deserves wide reading both here and abroad because Young has exposed the little-understood problems of and possibilities for an enduring alliance between religious scholars in the North American diaspora and their counterparts in black Africa—with crucial implications for the future of third-world ecumenism.

The author's revisitation of the more than 200-year-relationship between black churches in Africa and the New World, and the antecedents of black theological thought on opposite sides of the Atlantic, provides a necessary backdrop for auditing the dialogue as it climaxed in the late 1970s between scholars like John Mbiti, Des- mond Tutu, E. W. Fashole-Luke, Harry Sawyer, Burgess Carr, and Allan Boesak in Africa, and James Cone, Major Jones, J. D. Roberts, Cecil Cone, Jacqueline Grant, and Charles Long in the United States. Young sees the basic problem as the difference between that seeks the indigenization of Christianity in cultures still impregnated by African traditional religions, and those of black theology in the United States and South Africa, which would demonstrate that the gospel is commensurate with black liberation.

After examining the arguments and hopes and fears on both sides, Young guardedly concludes that the two theologies are indeed siblings when their kinship produces grounds upon which they can stand together, but until then they must be considered "distant cousins" who almost reached the kissing stage and drew back. Obviously the genealogical metaphors are too inflexible to carry the complex realities he wants to probe. It soon becomes evident that he has on his hands the awkward argument that under certain conditions cousins can really become sibs.

It is somewhat disappointing, but understandable, that the final chapter evades the critical question of the method and substance of the Pan-African theology envisioned. But Young makes clear his commitment to future collaboration between black American and African theologies on the basis of a common concern for the poor and oppressed, whether in the slums of Lagos and Nairobi or Mississippi and the South Bronx.

Most readers will be enlightened by this first effort of a brilliant young black theologian and will agree with him that the theological and ecclesial enterprise he proposes, for all its difficulties, would be well worth the effort.

—Gayraud Wilmore

Gayraud Wilmore is Dean and Professor of Afro-American Religious Studies at New York Theological Seminary, New York City. He is the author of Black Religion and Black Radicalism: An Interpretation of the Religious History of Afro-American People.

CHALLENGES FOR THE CHURCH

God the Evangelist

How the Holy Spirit Works to Bring Men and Women to Faith

David Lyon

In a society that emphasizes forecasting, planning, and management, is there still room for prayer, reliance on God, and good stewardship? In this book Lyon argues that by developing a clear picture of the social world, Christians can understand both its challenges and its opportunities, and can determine for themselves what the place of religion should be in today's world.

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"Black Education in the South" would have been a more descriptive title of this book, since it deals primarily with black education and not with Christianity. Nevertheless, the book is an important contribution about a period of American history not yet fully understood.

The author has documented the fact that in spite of the lofty ideals and goals about equality of the American Missionary Association (AMA) and its opposition to racial prejudice, the AMA was guilty of considerable paternalism toward blacks. Although the AMA’s contributions to black education were unparalleled, its missionaries suffered from the failure of “correlating the right to be free with the right to be different” (p. 14).

In spite of the shortcomings of some AMA missionaries, AMA’s commitment to black education was unquestionable. This was evidenced when Congregational Church leaders sought AMA’s involvement in establishing churches along with schools. While AMA was successful in establishing numerous schools for blacks, it failed in its limited attempts to establish viable congregations. This failure may have resulted from several factors. Education did not exist for blacks prior to the 1860s, but the black church did exist. There was also a reluctance of AMA leaders to depart from their primary focus, which was education. A more basic reason may have been that “The church represented for blacks not only their religion, but also their independence. Only in the church did they have autonomy. Only in the black church did they meet with no white interference” (p. 158).

Some persons may ignore this book because of its title; however, it is essential reading for anyone desirous of understanding the origins of black education in the south. The book is also important for persons interested in world mission and who want better to understand the American attitude out of which the “foreign” missionary enterprise of the 1860s developed.

—J. Oscar McCloud

Orbis Books is to be commended for its first publication featuring the voices of Melanesians and Australian Aborigines as they struggle to understand and act on the meaning of Christian faith in the dynamic arena of the Southwest Pacific. Gary Trompf, head of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Papua New Guinea, has done a splendid job in bringing theological, cultural, and geographic balance to this collection of essays, the majority of which emanated from a conference in Brisbane in 1981.

Trompf opens with an introduction mapping the terrain geographically and historically and gives us an intellectual framework into which can be put the twenty authors’ contributions to the field of black theology. We are then given a smorgasbord of perspectives, organized into the following five “courses” with the “meat” coming in the fourth part: (I) Introduction, (II) Christianity versus Tradition? (III) The Impact of Indigenous Tradition on Emergent Black Theologies, (IV) Theological Horizons and Adjustments, (V) Politics, Tradition, and Christianity.

The issues addressed in these essays include the fulfillment of traditional culture in Christianity, confronting a lingering colonial influence and neo-colonial ideologies, applying Christian faith to felt needs, the meaning of contemporary religious movements, the role of ancestors and other spirits, sacredness of land and community, healing and spiritual power, indigenous forms of worship, women in ministry, the “foreignness” of Christianity, problems of nominal faith and practice, facing the impact of modernization on Pacific communities, concretizing the kingdom of God in Melanesian contexts, struggles for independence in Irian Jaya and New Caledonia, and the mixing of Christianity and politics Melanesian style.

John Kadiba suggests that “The task of searching for a systematic Melanesian theology has not even begun in Melanesia.” But, he adds with encouragement, “We have started to think theologically, at least in a limited way” (p. 139). And this is precisely the value of these essays, for we see unfolding before us theology in the making. Some readers will be profoundly moved by the depth of spiritual insight found here, but others will be angered with the laxity in which some “heretical” ideas or practices are baptized as “Christian.” In place of systematic rigor we find spontaneity and freshness of approach, but I believe in every case that we see an authentic struggle to take seriously both the concrete situation and the claims of Christ as these Christian sisters and brothers grapple with important issues.

This book is a winner, and so it is with a hearty endorsement that I recommend it to all students of missionology and especially to those with interests in the South Pacific.

—Darrell Whiteman
All for Jesus: God at Work in the Christian and Missionary Alliance over One Hundred Years.


The pseudo-sophisticated may pick up this book, note its title, All for Jesus, and then put it down, feeling that here is just another bit of mission hagiography clothed in the evangelical piety of a generation ago. But when one reflects on the sheer statistical significance of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA) celebrating this year (1987) its centennial, as well as the widespread impression that it is a very mature and well-led operation, one should conclude that this book must be a serious study. Which indeed it is!

Since I am personally indebted to the Alliance for shaping the missionary concern of my wife, Alice, I am particularly grateful for the opportunity to produce this review. I hold this movement in highest esteem.

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God’s New Envos: A Bold Strategy for Penetrating “Closed Countries.”


The director of Food for the Hungry, Tetsunao Yamamori, sees a vital role for “tentmaker, non-professional ministries” in “closed or restricted access countries” replacing professional missionaries who are not accorded visas. He focuses on people involved in relief, refugee, and development ministries. He offers his own particular definition of the relation of such social ministries to evangelism: they are symbiotic—functionally separated and yet related.

This book still remains within the orbit of the Western missionary culture in two-thirds-world countries. The place of professional missionaries as missionary heroes has been taken by Western development workers. One case study focuses on the area of India with the highest percentage of Christians and on the work of a Western development worker. No consideration is given to the work and witness of well-founded and effective Christian churches and organizations in the area, or their own outstanding leaders.

The planned 1989 Lausanne Conference will focus partly on such tentmaker ministries. In addressing the relationship between their social ministries and evangelism, no account has been taken of the CRESR statement on Evangelism and Social Responsibility and the Wheaton 1983 statement on Transformation. With a doctorate in sociology, the author yet does not discuss the social or cultural dimensions of poverty, or the addressing of the gospel to groups and cultures who produce oppression that produces refugees. This book signals that some evangelicals seem determined to reinvent the wheel on evangelism and social action.

Yamamori’s tentmakers are really lay people enrolled in the ranks of clergy but under cover of secular employment. The new requirement of tentmakers needs a biblical exposition of lay ministry as important in its own right, to empower all lay persons in the body of Christ for mission.

How would evangelicals react to a book that unashamedly promoted the importation of Islamic fundamentalist clergy into the United States or Europe, under the guise of “guest workers” in industry, for the purpose of converting the indigenous population? To avoid offense in the target group, such a book would have to demonstrate that such people shared the best aspirations of the indigenous population. This book fails to present that case. Thus I worry as to the reaction it might promote among governments and leaders in such “restricted-access” countries against the Christian churches there if they believe that the government’s expressed desires are to be flouted in devious ways with no obvious benefit to their own people.

—Chris Sugden
Toward a Jewish Theology of Justice and Peace.


Marc Ellis is a Jewish faculty member at Maryknoll directing the Institute for Justice and Peace. He joins the growing number of writers influenced by the Holocaust and its implications for theology. He has been considering the Christian theology of liberation during his time at a Catholic seminary and his assessments of the various liberation theologies and Jewish responses is interesting.

To begin, Ellis reviews what is now well-trodden ground—the traumatic effect of the Holocaust on Jewish thinking. He quotes extensively from Jewish writers who have written on this subject. His chapter on Jewish Renewal Movements is typical of liberal American Judaism, which would not necessarily appeal to segments of the Jewish community worldwide. On liberation theology Ellis explores its roots in the exodus story and its dependence on the biblical account of God’s dealings with the Jewish people. The actual personal experiences of those who suffer under hard-line tyrannies today match those suffered by Jews in Europe. He points out, however, that in spite of this debt to the Jewish origins of liberation concepts, this theology gives little place to the Jews as a people, who still have a covenant with God and a continuing witness to make to the world.

Jews, accustomed to historic powerlessness, now find a powerful State of Israel using methods that would previously have been condemned by most Jews. The realization that Jews when given power can misuse it as something of a shock to many. Ellis tries to come to terms with this and appeals for “an emerging Jewish theology of liberation which will mean a revival of the prophetic and the pursuit of liberation.” This would mean a change of attitude in Israel.

—Walter Barker

Walter Barker is an ordained Anglican minister and served as a missionary in Egypt. For fifteen years he was director of The Church’s Ministry among the Jews, and is now Minister-at-Large.

Pastoral Counseling across Cultures.


David Augsburger has competently and courageously tackled pastoral counseling’s central problem in Pastoral Counseling across Cultures. In addition to engaging the complex problems of counseling across cultural frames, Augsburger explicitly exposes the ethnocentric character of much, if not all, parish and professional pastoral counseling as taught and practiced in the West. And, beyond this helpful critique of Western modes of pastoral counseling, Augsburger provides a theoretical framework that generates
suggestions concerning possible solutions to the cultural encapsulation of pastoral counseling in the West. Hence the value of this book far exceeds the topic that the title suggests, and it should be read by any and every pastor who counsels, in whatever context in whatever culture.

The central problem that afflicts and contaminates both parish and professional pastoral counseling in Western cultures, and the compelling reason why such counseling is not easily or effectively usable across cultural frames, is the cultural encapsulation of pastoral counseling as it is taught and learned in seminaries and training institutes in the West. Augsburger brings a global transcultural perspective to bear on the problem. And, as Clinebell aptly notes in the Foreword, “Such a perspective . . . can expand our cultural horizons and enable us [pastoral counselors] to take another step toward fuller liberation from the unconscious ethnocentrism that makes us captive to our culture-bound socialization and values” (p. 7).

Augsburger states the problem with characteristic candor on p. 18. He writes, “One who knows but one culture knows no culture.” He sees very clearly that culture is an environment of the self, and that the self is originally developed as a self-in-culture. In the language of systems theory he continues, “. . . the culturally encapsulated counselor is fused to the culture of origin, with no distinct boundary between self and society.” But, “The culturally effective counselor has differentiated a self from the culture of origin with sufficient perceiving, thinking, feeling, and reflecting freedom to recognize when values, views, assumptions, and preferences rise from an alternate life experience” (p. 23).

Although Augsburger is clear about the pervasive and insidious nature of the problem of ethnocentrism for pastoral counselors, he readily acknowledges the difficulties involved in resolving it, and notes that “the most we [pastoral counselors] can achieve is a deepened awareness of our ethnocentrism and some appreciable degree of liberation from our unconscious and conscious programming toward cultural superiority” (p. 24).

The theological dimensions of the volume are both helpful and essential to Augsburger’s treatment of the topic. Theological reflections provide both substance and frame for each chapter theme. Chapter themes include discussions of cultural variability in terms of feelings (anxiety, shame, and guilt), values and worldviews, comparisons of the unique and universal, moral development and the sense of control, individualistic and communal themes, alternative ways of understanding and treating demonic possession, cultural determinants and variations in defining what is mentally healthy and what is pathological, and the presentation of ten universal metaphors for counseling and therapy from a cross-cultural perspective.

Reading the book was for this reviewer an intense and instructive experience. The pages are packed with an interesting mix of story, theory, and case vignettes. Each chapter begins with a story from a different cultural context. The stories are a constant reminder to the reader of the multicultural world in which we live and provide examples of some of the ways others
have of looking at things that make sense to them, but are strikingly different from our own. In this way Augsburger keeps the reader reminded of the context in which the book is set. Any pastoral counselor, missionary or not, who reads this book with care will benefit. Guaranteed! —John E. Hinkle, Jr.


John Philip of nineteenth-century South Africa is representative of evangelicals to whom the gospel has bearing on all of life and society, and who are committed to achieving racial and social justice for all peoples. Not only was John Philip a controversial figure in his time, he continues to be a "bogy man" to white apartheid leadership, when threatened by prophetic voices in South Africa that contend for equal rights and common recognition for all peoples in representative government in that land.

John Philip arrived in the Cape on the eve of the arrival of the British settlers (1820) and the Great Trek of the Dutch-Afrikaners into the interior away from British rule (1838 onward). The author, Andrew Ross, who ministered in Malawi for eight years before returning to Scotland, corrects a view that it was the Afrikaner who was the root of the injustices in South Africa at the time. He shows that John Philip's controversies were largely due to the British settlers, who were propagating a new philosophy of progress and civilization as belonging only to the white races, with the blacks and browns the dependencies of this so-called law of nature.

John Philip opposed a form of imperial expansionism that started a long history of 150 years of progressive developmentalism, perpetuating black dependency on white leadership, and resisting black participation in legislative and judicial decision-making in South Africa. In this John Philip clashed with fellow missionaries, with white settlers, and with British officials. His representation to British parliamentarians that led to the 1828 Ordinance giving to the Hottentots equality with other peoples in the Cape was short-lived. But he persisted in fighting for a free press, opposing much of the native policies, and fighting for the right of black peoples to have their own land tenure.

John Philip died a tired and sad man, and the question is still asked why his efforts were not more successful. Though John Philip is dead his faith still speaks, and whenever the character and spirit of this "Elijah of South Africa" confronts contemporary political leadership in that country, one hears the retort, "Don't do a Philip on us!" Evangelical faith should take heart from this book of reflective propheticism for our time, and address the socioethical issues affecting all peoples in any given society.

—John N. Jonsson


Christianity has been known by China for nearly 1,400 years. Yet, until quite recently, it has always been known as a "foreign religion." Why? In spite of massive, heroic, and sacrificial attempts by missionaries of many persuasions, the number of adherents has been quite small. Why? Ralph Covell, academic dean and professor of world missions at Denver Conservative Baptist Seminary, editor of Missiology, and former missionary in China (1946–51) and Taiwan (1955–66), probes the long years of history for answers to these questions in this authoritative and fascinating book on the relationships between Christ and culture in China.

The purpose of the book is to analyze the different attempts to bring the Christian faith and Chinese culture together in order to help the Christian church understand the Chinese mind and Chinese society. In successive chapters the efforts of the Nestorians, the Jesuits, the early Protestant missionaries, Taiping "Christians," and Chinese theologians are evaluated. Attempts to relate Christianity to the mystical Dao of Buddhism, the ethics of the Confucian elite, the ancestral rites of the populace, and the revolution of Mao Zedong are appraised.

G. Thompson Brown is China Liaison for the Division of International Mission, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and Associate Professor of World Christianity, Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Georgia. He was a missionary to Korea from 1952 to 1967.

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Covell’s conclusion is that, with the possible exception of the present, all efforts failed. But is this too negative an assessment of the pre-1949 missionary effort? Certain­ly Covell’s main point must stand: the identification of Chris­tianity with the “Gospel of Power” following the Opium wars, and the inability of the foreigners to contextual­ize the gospel meant that the biblical message seldom was perceived by the masses to meet their deepest needs. Herein lies the significance of the Three­Self Movement in China today. Under the providence of God, present circumstances have made it possible for a message and a community, free from the stigma of foreignness, to come into being. This is the reason for the un­precedented receptivity given to the gospel in China today.

—G. Thompson Brown

Kontextuelle Fundamentaltheologie.


Studies in fundamental theology today do not aim to defend the Christian faith and the church against the attacks of adversaries, as earlier theolog­a apol­ogetica used to do. Instead they seek to show the meaning of Christian faith in the context of present situations. Fundamental theology prepares the ground on which more specialized di­visions of theology can build. There­fore fundamental theology is the starting point in theological studies. At least three important works in funda­mental theology have been published recently by Catholic theologians in German. Two of them are by Heinrich Fries and Max Seckler. The book by Hans Waldenfels is noteworthy from a missiological perspective because the world religions and their positions are part of the context he considers.

The author is well prepared for his task. As a Jesuit he studied theology in Japan, and he has written a book on the “absolute nothingness” of the Kyoto School. As a professor of fundamental theology at the University of Bonn, Waldenfels now also teaches regarding the non-Christian religions.

This book is obviously the result of a series of lectures and is written for students of theology. The style is clear, not too speculative, and the material is presented in a didactic way. While it is written for students of Catholic the­ology (the results of Vatican Council II are frequently mentioned and the specific problems of Catholic theology are treated), a basic Christian viewpoint—common to all the churches—is fostered.

The difficult themes of fundamen­tal theology are treated in five sections: (1) theology and its context; (2) the foundation: “God Speaks”; (3) the way: “Through Jesus Christ, Our Lord”; (4) the place: “In the Community of the Church”; (5) understand­ing: “In the Light of the Gospel.” Questions presented by the world religions and by modern think­ ing are prevalent in the book, but some pages deal explicitly with the relations between Christianity and other reli­

Fritz Kollbrunner, a priest of the Bethlehem Mis­sion Society, is Lecturer in Missiology on the Theological Faculty at Lucerne, Switzerland, and co-editor of the Neue Zeitschrift für Mis­sionswissenschaft.


This study of seamen's missions is a formidable volume, but one can profit much from it. The narrative flows reasonably well, even though some of the detail could have been pruned without harm to its essential message. It is rooted in a vast array of sources, some of which have been exploited for the first time, and it places seamen's ministry in the larger context of marine social history and missiological theory and practice. Since the author is both an experienced seafarer and personally involved in missionary work among mariners, he brings to the study the insights of a participant observer.

After providing background information on early ministries to seamen and the evangelical advance of the late-eighteenth early-nineteenth centuries, he moves to the heart of the story, beginning with the Naval and Military Bible Society in 1779 and concluding with the creation of the Norwegian Seamen's Mission in 1864. His book is a definitive analysis of the "formative," or Anglo-American, phase of the movement, not a history of the totality of the missionary outreach to sailors. Among the topics dealt with are the spiritual stirrings in the British and American fleets, the work of C. G. Smith (the central figure in the mission endeavor), the use of the Bethel Flag as the symbol of the interdenominational outreach, the British Seamen's Friend Society and the Bethel Union as well as numerous other organizations, the spread of the work throughout the British Isles and the empire, the manifold tensions and divisions within the movement, the multifaceted social ministries to seamen, the entrance of the Church of England into maritime missions, the creation of ministries in the United States (especially the American Seamen's Friend Society) and the many individuals involved in these, and the transatlantic ties among the various endeavors. In the last four chapters Kverndal formulates some useful generalizations about maritime missiology.

There are really three or four books in one in this monumental labor of love, and Kverndal has filled an important gap in our understanding of the Christian world mission. In a short review...
one cannot do justice to the many stories of victories and defeats, the human frailties of the workers themselves, and
the insights for the outreach of the church. Unfortunately, the clumsy annotation system is so frustrating that
personal and social relationships as important factors leading to loss of faith or religious conversion.

Helpful to understanding "yogic" religions are the authors' emphases on the centrality of evolutionary myth (p. 39), going beyond the mind, and magic (p. 45). These appeal to adherents who often (1) have a poor start in life and (2) describe themselves as alienated or in a state of mental crisis (p. 49). They may be in revolt against a life ordered by specialists and dominated by the intellect (p. 57).

Enamored of the relativities of anthropological, sociological, and psychological factors, these authors reflect a kind of love-hate relationship with claims to truth in religion and their understanding of "traditional apologetics" (pp. 2-3). To consider the new mythology we must suspend our skepticism about their truth value (p. 25) and not discuss their truth claims (p. 27), for the historical truth or falsity has no bearing on their ability to function as myths (p. 26). Yet they complain when Lyall Watson's Supernature invokes "an epistemological relativism that allows anything to seem to be true." That reminds them of the adage "When reason sleeps, monsters are born" (p. 31).

Having helped us to understand the antirational, anti-empirical thrusts of new religions, the authors provide inadequate justification of their brief attempts to combine the nonrational and the rational. It is not enough to say in contrast to magic that "The essence of Christianity is trust" (p. 165). To meet the challenge of the Hindu-Buddhist missionaries to the West, the object of Christian trust needs clarification and a plea for this faith, rather than that another faith needs some justification.

—Gordon R. Lewis

Understanding Sectarian Groups in America.

Understanding Cults and New Religions.

Significantly the Consultation on World Evangelism in Thailand (1980) included strategy sessions on reaching the unreached-peoples groups of the mystics and cultists. But Christians do not seem to be reaching these unreached peoples as effectively as the cults are reaching other Americans. Polls now show that more than one in four Americans believe in reincarnation.

Both of these books should help North American evangelicals understand the urgency for professional missionaries to be adequately trained and supported to minister to cultists unreached by the gospel of grace. Both contribute significantly to understanding challenges to the Christian faith; neither provides grounds on which to justify their assumption that the Christian faith is true and more viable.

Braswell writes as a professor of missions "to sensitize traditional church communities to the teachings and practices of many of their neighbors who belong to these alternate religions" (p. 15). After a brief history of some twenty-five groups, Braswell objectively expounds their major beliefs and practices. Then he points up issues as the group faces life in American culture and gives a brief Christian view of their weaknesses. The book is readable and a useful introduction for lay people. I wonder about Christians who publish primarily what non-Christians believe without doing more in the way of challenging their worldviews and belief systems where they contradict divine revelation. For understanding, can we not read the primary sources?

Irving Hexham is an assistant professor of religious studies at the University of Calgary and Karla Poewe is professor of anthropology at the University of Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada. These authors major on New Age ("yogic") trends and are concerned to understand why specific individuals find the movement attractive. They want to understand cult members and befriend them (p. 4), insisting that understanding precedes criticism and that friendship is the basis of communication (p. 6). They plan to avoid mere intellectual reasoning and emphasize

Reformed Church in America Missionaries in South India, 1839–1938: An Analytical Study.

This carefully researched study by a faculty member of the United Theological College in Bangalore comes to focus on the dilemmas faced by theologically conservative, evangelistically oriented, ecumenically minded, male Americans serving as missionaries in India. The Reformed Church missionaries began their work in India under the direction of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and after 1852 under the Board of Foreign Missions of their denomination.
Therefore, this study is valuable for all who desire to know more about American missionary work in India in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This is the best and fullest treatment to date of the thought and cultural attitudes of Reformed Church missionaries in India in the century 1839-1938.

Reformed Church missionaries were confident that, as people in India heard the “pure preaching of the gospel,” the Holy Spirit would convict them of their sin and need for salvation and bring them to conversion and into the church. They resisted other means of mission outreach. They were reluctant to accept into their schools any children other than Christians. Even though there were a number of medically trained persons in the Scudder missionary family in India, medical work was held to be subservient to preaching.

Immanuel David shows that eventually Reformed Church missionaries, in their concern for the poor and oppressed among the pariah population, along with their desire for converts among the Brahmins, could not omit developing medical, educational, and agricultural work. He shows how missionaries became advocates for pariahs before government officials and enabled many to escape virtual slavery. Thus, in spite of all their prejudices, male American middle-class values, and favorable attitude toward British rule, the missionaries became catalysts for social change and defenders of the poor.

The book would have been strengthened by more attention to the missionaries’ goal of planting the church, which led to very early formation of a Reformed Church classis, and in turn to the vexed problem of the relation of church to mission. Persons who consult the valuable list of missionaries at the end of the book should check the dates of service for minor errors.

—Eugene Heideman

Eugene Heideman, former Reformed Church missionary in south India, is now Secretary for Program, Reformed Church in America.

Women in World Religions.


Studying Women in World Religions, the reader gets the idea that in general the concept of stridharma (the ideal behavior of the Hindu woman), as described in the ancient Vedas, is in some degree prevalent in all the world religions. According to stridharma the true virtues of a woman were physical beauty, sexual chastity, modesty, obedience, self-sacrifice, and self-renunciation. The “virtuous woman” in Proverbs comes close to it. Thus, though the women remained the focal point in religion and society for their female sensuality and its associated attributes, ironically, for these very reasons, women became marginal and even excluded. There have been a few exceptions.

In Confucianism, human life is seen in relationship to the cosmic order—one giving way to the other and not ruling over the other. Harmony, rather than conflict, is the cosmic order and in that order. Female force is identified with earth, with all things lowly, inferior, yielding, receptive, devoted, passive, and still like the earth. Man, on the other hand, represents heaven: high, active, strong, the initiator. Both were to complement each other, like heaven and earth, but women were to remain at home learning good manners and skills like sewing and weaving as preparation for being good wives and mothers.

Jesus’ mission was for those who were left out of the system of privilege: the poor, the ritually unclean, the socially cast out. Women were among the cast out, as represented by the widow, the Samaritan woman, and the woman with the flow of blood. While Christ brought “good news” of “salvation for all,” the church concentrated on the creation story in Genesis. Pauline Christianity gave rise to the institutionalized ministry of bishops, presbyters, and deacons—who assumed male authority over women in the church.

This book is a study in depth of the major religions interplaying with each other and with cultures, traditions, social norms and orders of their day. Since the advent of the International Year of the Woman culminating in the International Decade of the Woman, a wealth of literature has been available for research, study, and action. Women in World Religions is not just another book on this topic; it is an outstanding contribution to it. It is a book by female Western scholars in the field of religious study, edited by Arvind Sharma, an Indian scholar and researcher on the position of women in Indian religions. It thus requires concerted effort on the part of the reader to be a student and not just a reader.

—Doris Franklin Rugh

Protestant Missionaries in the Philippines, 1898-1919

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Continuity and Change among Canadian Mennonite Brethren.


Hamm’s definition of sectarianism is crucial to the thesis he develops in the study: "...a movement of religious protest against the social order, be it state, institution or society, or established religious organization, which results in voluntary separation from such environment to demonstrate the dissonance between what the group perceives as normative in matters of faith and practice and what it experiences as dominant in the social order" (p. 11). This definition, however ponderous, sees sectarianism as a vital, ongoing process capable of evolving, changing and, most important, surviving. After providing the reader with a clarification of terminology and a brief historical sketch of the Mennonite Brethren, the author devotes five chapters each to the questions of "continuity" and "change."

In sociological terms he speaks of the "Sacralization of Identity," on the one hand, and the "Secularization Process," on the other. In layman’s terms: What holds a sect together and what brings about decline and change? In the context of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren, Hamm insists, these forces are not competitive or opposing but complementary. Cohesive elements like family solidarity, frequent participation in worship, a sense of ethnicity, concern with lifestyle, church structures, and church service are actually kept vibrant and viable by what appear to be disruptive processes. Urbanization, higher education, upward economic mobility, occupational flux—factors that should ensure the demise of an immigrant sectarian community, now become corrective and balancing forces. Hamm speaks of a "complex dialectic" in which the forces of continuity and cohesiveness restrict the sect's absorption into the host society, while the forces of change, potentially disruptive, actually prevent the solidification of reactionary and conservative tendencies.

This is a sociological study and the author naturally feels obligated to deploy the complex vocabulary and typologies associated with the discipline. In arguing that a small sect can successfully survive significant social change, Hamm is forced to respond to popular sectarian typologies generated by Europeans like Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch or North Americans like S. D. Clark and H. Richard Niebuhr. His response is laudatory. While sectarian models are useful and can be of help, the case study itself must determine the outcome. Hamm's conclusion, backed by solid scholarship, says in effect: some models help, others are not applicable. Sectarianism as typified by the Canadian Mennonite Brethren can survive and even prosper in times of religious flux. The key element in the continued viability of this group relates to ideological values, religious in nature, which cut across the growing ethnic complexity of the group and provide a common focus.

Like a scholar in any field, Hamm felt obligated to use the technical jargon of his profession. Some readers may have difficulty with the terminology. On the other hand, Hamm's open-minded approach, convincing data, careful argumentation, and independence of thought make the book a pleasure to read.

---John B. Toews

The Encounter between Theology and Ideology: An Exploration into the Communicative Theology of M. M. Thomas.


This brief book is extremely welcome. One knows that it is only one of the first of many that will be written about the thought and life of M. M. Thomas. But, as Charles West of Princeton Seminary writes in an excellent, succinct Foreword, "It is time someone held a mirror up to M. M. Thomas, not as the last act in his career, but as an occasion for new dialogue between him, the gospel, and the rest of us" (p. xiii).

M.M.'s special gift has been to theologize at the crucial points where Christian faith and the world's ideologies intersect. Always aware of the relativities of cultures and ideologies, and of our understandings of the revelation of God in Christ, M.M. has developed a Christ-centered "humanization" theology that makes most "liberation theologies" look superficial by comparison.

T. M. Philip has much to say that is helpful, but he wisely lets M.M. speak for himself in many pithy quotations. The most useful parts of this study are the many quotations translated from M.M.'s Malayalam writings. One realizes anew how deeply this ecumenical theologian is rooted in his native Kerala and its old and rich language. Passages from his Malayalam Autobiography are especially moving, none more so than the "conversion experience" narrated on pages 2 and 3 of Philip's enlightening book.

---Charles A. Ryerson

Charles A. Ryerson is Associate Professor of the History of Religions at Princeton Theological Seminary and has been for many years a research associate of India's Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society.

John B. Toews teaches in the Department of History, University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

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Priests in Working-Class Blue:
The History of the Worker-Priests (1943–1954).


Dr. Arnal, assistant professor of church history at Wilfrid Laurier University and Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, Waterloo, Ontario, has written a superb book on the French and Belgian Worker-Priests. Not only has he used printed sources for this study (which are listed in a very complete bibliography and enriched by many more suggestions in the footnotes), but also information gathered through interviews with half of the hundred priests as well as with many other people connected with the movement.

The attempt on the part of the Worker-Priests to break down the wall between the church and the working class generated strong feelings both of support and of opposition. The author gives a very balanced treatment to the priests and their supporters, even detailing the spirituality that nourished the Worker-Priests, as well as to those who were opposed on the grounds that priests did not belong in factories, consorting and at times collaborating with communist union leaders. A particular strength of the book is that the story is placed in the context of French religious and political life and the movement is presented as a forerunner of liberation theology.

This radical movement stemmed from the realization that working-class people were no longer Christian and that new structures would be needed to evangelize these people. The author communicates in a most moving way how these priests, secular and religious, were incarnated into the working world, an incarnation that led them from "being with" the people to becoming "engaged" to improve their lot. He also points out that this very engagement in union politics led to the prohibition against Workers-Priests in 1954. However, at Vatican II this style of priesthood was approved and today there are more than 900 Worker-Priests in France alone.

—Lawrence Nemer, S.V.D.

Lawrence Nemer, S.V.D., is Professor of Church History and Director of the World Mission Program at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. He has also taught in seminaries in the Philippines and Australia.

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Pastoral Counseling in Intercultural Perspective.


Emmanuel Lartey, professor of pastoral theology at Trinity College, University of Ghana, has written one of the first books on intercultural pastoral counseling from an African perspective. This study of Ghanaian and Anglo-American views of human existence and counseling is an excellent published form of Lartey’s doctoral dissertation at the University of Birmingham, England.

The great strength of this book lies in its insistence on grounding all therapy in the culture, values, and views of the people served, and in its clear presentation of Ghanaian views of human life, worldviews, relationships, understandings of the person, and notions of theology. The contrast of these perspectives, with Anglo-American values and the dialogue between their points of convergence is fascinating reading for anyone who thinks both globally and locally about Christian mission and ministry.

The selection of Gestalt therapy and family therapy as the two Western schools of therapy for correlation with African thought provides a workable bridge between the two different worlds. The participative African culture (I participate, therefore I am), with its collective sociocentric personality formation, approaches therapy from a familiar-tribal process (a la family therapy) and from an awareness-responsibility present focus, as in Gestalt therapy. Both of these approaches theoretically minimize the individualism (I think, therefore I am) of Western psychotherapies, but their practice in the West is dominated by cultural individualism.

Lartey is not only a careful psychologist and theologian, he is also a practicing pastor. This pastoral attitude and ability emerges in his comparative case studies of a Ghanaian indigenous church and the contrast with a British urban counseling ministry.

This is a book with promise. In conclusion, Lartey points toward a therapy that may be authentically African, an approach that harmonizes the traditional healing experience of Africa with Christian theology, Western medicine, and intercultural counseling theory. In my personal conversations with Lartey, I find him extending his work in developing both theology and therapy of pastoral care that is more deeply grounded in his particular African culture and at the same time is open to rich intercultural dialogue with neighboring cultures and the global conversation on pastoral therapy. He offers the first steps of fulfilling this promise of leadership in his first book. We shall eagerly await the next developments in his work and thought.

—David Augsburger

Not without Struggle: The Story of William E. Hoy and the Beginnings of Tohoku Gakuin.


A Dream Incarnate: The Beginnings of Miyagi Gakuin for Women.


As part of the centennial of the founding of Tohoku Gakuin, initially for men, and Miyagi Gakuin for Women, both in Sendai, Japan, C. William Mensendiek has written these two books that tell the stories of the beginnings of these two schools. Although each book has been written to stand on its own, the accounts overlap a great deal, for they cover many of the same incidents and persons.

Both schools were begun through cooperation between Christians in Japan and the United States. Masayoshi Oshikawa (ca. 1850-1928), a disinherted samurai and one of the first twelve Japanese Protestant Christians, had a dream for the establishment in his city of Sendai of a school for boys and a school for girls. He enlisted the efforts of missionaries of the German Reformed Church, who had only recently arrived (or were to arrive) in Japan, from the Pennsylvania area: Rev. William E. Hoy (1858-1927), his wife, Mary Ault Hoy (1863-1937), and Miss Lizzie Poorbaugh (1854-1927). Hoy started the Theological Training School of Sendai for boys in June 1886, and Poorbaugh began the Girls’ School in September 1886; these two schools were the beginnings of the large educational institutions that recently celebrated their centennials.

The two books give vivid pictures of the early days of both schools and their founders, drawn mostly from English-language accounts in mission archives in America, since many of the documents in Japan were destroyed in World War II. The efforts for cooperation between Japanese and Americans were frequently beset by tensions and misunderstandings on both sides, but the schools pulled through nonetheless. Lizzie Poorbaugh stayed on in Japan for only seven years, but that was long enough to see Miyagi Girls’ School launched in its own building and with its first graduating class. The Hoyes stayed a little longer, but in 1899 relocated to central China because of his asthma, and there they pioneered in the founding of yet another group of Christian institutions.

James M. Phillips, Associate Director of the Overseas Ministries Study Center, served as a Presbyterian missionary in Korea (1949-52) and in Japan (1959-75).
The author of these books, C. William Mensendeik, is a professor of Christian Studies at Tohoku Gakuin and a missionary of the United Church of Christ (U.S.A.), and is personally connected with the tradition of the German Reformed Church, which sent out the American founders of these schools. Having written an earlier book about Tohoku Gakuin's history, he has pursued the research for these books as a labor of love, even traveling to central China to visit the area where the Hoyes last worked.

Tohoku Gakuin today has a thriving campus in the middle of Sendai, while Miyagi Gakuin has a new campus in a lovely wooded area outside the city. Both schools have sought to maintain the high educational standards and the Christian principles envisioned by their founders.

—James M. Phillips

Christian Conversion: A Developmental Interpretation of Autonomy and Surrender.


Conversion and Discipleship: A Christian Foundation for Ethics and Doctrine.


Those of us engaged in personal evangelism find ourselves both helped and unnerved by the wealth of materials now available in the area of faith development, and especially in the understanding of conversion. While this should never be regarded as an exclusively personal phenomenon, as brilliantly argued by John Walsh in Evangelization and Justice (Orbis Books, 1982), it is nonetheless in personal conversion that most evangelistic work has been done, and where most misunderstandings have occurred. The field is thus ripe for a new generation of resources. John R. Hendrick gave us a pioneering work in Opening the Door of Faith (John Knox, 1977), and in these two volumes we have theological and psychological treatments of the first order. They are valuable additions to the literature of missional and evangelistic studies.

The volume by Conn is the more psychologically technical. His thesis is that conversion must be understood in relationship to conscience. Defined as ethical development, and distinguished alike from self-fulfillment and self-sacrifice, conscience is "the dynamic core of conscious subjectivity which constitutes the very being of the person, driving him or her toward the authenticity of self-transcendence" (p. 25). This is expounded in detail through the developmental theories of Erikson, Piaget, Kohlberg, Fowler, and Kegan. But the key issue is the conversion, which is distinctively Christian—the response of a person to God's love in Jesus Christ. Citing Bernard Lonergan, this is an "other-worldly falling in love," the "fulfillment, joy, peace and bliss [which are] the fruits of being in love with a mysterious, incomprehended God" (p. 224). Thomas Merton's spiritual pilgrimage is presented as a paradigm of this transformation (incidentally providing an

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excellent introduction to Merton himself), with the clear implication that if developmental theory ultimately fails to explain religious conversion, the corollary is equally true: that Christian conversion must also be moral, cognitive, and affective, if it is to have authenticity in Christian life and witness.

Much of the same territory is covered by Happel and Walter, though with a significant difference in perspective. Drawing for the most part on Kohler and Fowler for their theories of faith development, it is the concern of Happel and Walter to ground conversion in the tradition of Christian discipleship—the response to Jesus Christ, which converts to holy living in the world. "The witness disciples give is centered on the person of Christ; it simultaneously identifies with him and actively wills to live his way in the ordinary world. . . . Our discipleship must mirror his way" (p. 13). The implications of Christian conversion are those of moral and doctrinal praxis (p. 212), an "incarnational imagination," which changes persons, not merely to belief in Jesus Christ, but to a radical obedience of his ethical imperatives.

Much of this is implicit in the Conn volume, especially in the sections on Merton. But in the Happel and Walter book it is explicit: the praxis of Cardinal and Solentiname from the compass-bearing of Merton, so to speak. The two books are thus admirably complementary, and highly recommended for the equally complementary tasks of informing personal evangelism (primarily in the Western context) and fertilizing the technics of faith development with the call to Christian discipleship.

—David Lowes Watson

A Chicano Theology.


The author is a Roman Catholic layman with impressive credentials to write a "Chicano theology." Born in Texas to immigrant Mexican parents, he grew up in barrio poverty, subject to endless indignities by dominant Anglos. In time he obtained a Ph.D. degree in religion at Harvard Divinity School under the supervision of Harvey Cox.

Guerrero builds his case in dialogue with nine Chicano leaders, two of whom are Protestant and the rest Roman Catholic, including two women. Only one is a church official and none a technical theologian. Together they reflect on twelve "shared themes" of key significance to Chicano experi-

ence, ranging from issues of machismo and economics to race and religion. Guerrero serves as enabler, synthesizer, and commentator, all along searching for materials of liberating import and theological relevance.

For those not familiar with Chicano reality, this family dialogue becomes an illuminating introduction, and, for those within, a useful clarification of history and prospects. Guerrero and the leaders focus much of their attention on the liberating contribution to Chicanos of the Virgin of Guadalupe and the vision of la raza cósmica. The focus is one of "cosmic oppression" and mestizaje (the offspring of European and Indian parentage).

Any book that deals with such powerful symbols is likely to make a valuable contribution. Such is the case here. On the other hand, material of

Christians and Muslims
Together: An Exploration by Presbyterians.


Author-editor Byron Haines is the co-director of the Office of Christian-Muslim Relations of the National Council of Churches, and Frank Cooley is a Staff Associate for Asia and the Islamic World with the Presbyterian Church (USA). Both came to this book at the request

of the General Assembly of that denomination. They draw on their years of service among Muslims and the resources of other Presbyterian researchers between 1983-87.

Many reasons compel Christians to examine their relations with the Muslim community, their largest religious neighbor. This slender volume aims "to provide reliable information about Islam and the Muslim world, to examine the relationships between Muslims and Christians in several countries (Nigeria, Indonesia, Egypt, USA), and to explore together the nature and direction of future associations in the pluralistic world."

Beginning with a concise overview of the faith and practices of Islam (chap. 1) and a historical survey of Christian-Muslim Relations (chap. 2), chapter 3, "The Contemporary Muslim World," provides excellent coverage of demographic, ethnic-cultural, and socioeconomic-political data. This volume is worth its cost for these keen insights into dynamic Islamic developments taking place today in many lands. It is must reading for those who would improve Christian-Muslim re-


Dean Gilliland spent some twenty years in north Nigeria as an American missionary, from 1956 to 1976, and currently teaches at Fuller Theological Seminary. The book is largely the record of his missionary years, supplemented with additional information on developments since his departure. The first five chapters examine how Islam interacts with African traditional religious practices in an attempt to come to grips with the issue of religious change. The last two chapters form a kind of addendum treating the course of developments between 1965 and about 1986.

It is easy for a book of this type to become nothing more than a historical catechism, bulging with moral lessons about events as dogmatic signs, but I think Dean Gilliland has striven hard to provide an insight into the religious makeup of north Nigeria. I found his personal observations to be full of interest, and regretted his having to appeal to some outdated anthropological literature to explain the significance of things. In several crucial places the book screams for a second chance, and the pivotal concept of religious change would have gained immeasurably from more detailed attention to the record of a twenty-year missionary residence, augmented with the excellent scholarly work done on reform Islam in the Sokoto Caliphate. Reform Islam shows that Muslims have an advantage in questions of religious change, and that is highly relevant to current debate about the nature of conversion in Africa. In spite of these reservations, I felt myself carried by the force of the author's personal reminiscences and often unique observations. He raises many important questions, showing how Christian interest in religious questions may illuminate and deepen scholarly inquiry.

—Lamin Sanneh

Introducing Liberation Theology.


As a self-conscious theological movement, Latin American liberation theology is almost twenty years old. Yet until now one would be hard-pressed to find a short, nontechnical introduction to liberation theology by a Latin American. Even Gustavo Gutiérrez's now classic A Theology of Liberation (English trans., 1973) is heavy going for people unfamiliar with the historical and pastoral background to the issues he discusses. In the present book, Leonardo Boff and his less notorious but equally intelligent brother, Clo-

In the closing chapter, Haines seeks the things that make for "faithfulness to God, reconciliation and peace." His is a call for cooperation and yet witness, leaving the results with God. Those looking for directions concerning the evangelization of Muslims must look elsewhere, but those aspiring to be hospitable neighbors to Muslims will find much that is helpful in this volume whether they are Presbyterian or other.

—Lyle Vander Werff
Although this is an introduction, the Boffs treat substantive issues. For example, they distinguish between various levels of theology (professional, pastoral, and popular), outlining their various characteristics, while at the same time insisting on the continuum running from one to another.

Phillip Berryman is a translator and writer who has worked in Panama (1965–73) and Central America (1976–80). His most recent book is Liberation Theology (1987).

They also devote attention to the idea of "mediations," which Clodovis Boff has developed in a recently translated work on theological methodology. That is, theology makes use of three kinds of "mediation": socioanalytical, hermeneutical, and practical. Throughout the book the authors strive to sort out different aspects of this theological movement. In addition they survey key biblical and theological themes, do a historical sketch of how liberation theology has developed, show connections with other kinds of theology, and make projections—all in under a hundred pages.

—Phillip Berryman

Dissertation Notices

From the United States

Burleson, Blake W.
"John Mbiti: The Dialogue of an African Theologian with African Traditional Religions."

Candelaria, Michael Richard.
"Popular Religion and Liberation: An Examination of the Discussion in Latin American Liberation Theology."

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