Mission as Spiritual Pilgrimage

When the author of this issue’s “My Pilgrimage in Mission” prepared to leave for East Africa, a well-meaning fellow Mennonite took him by the hand and admonished, “Brother Don, we hope you return from Africa just like you are now. Don’t change.” Neither “Brother Don” Jacobs nor the admonisher had any idea of the changes that would take place.

The “My Pilgrimage” series began with the autobiographical reflections of Donald A. McGavran in the April 1986 issue of the INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN. Since then, twenty-three other mission leaders have contributed to the series. Sr. Barbara Hendricks (April 1987) was one of the first to articulate the “reverse evangelization” one is likely to experience, as the missionized are used by God to reveal ways in which the Gospel has not yet sufficiently penetrated one’s own life and ministry. J. Herbert Kane expressed it in his winsome way: “I should like to think that I made a small contribution to the cause of Christ in China; but I received far more from China than I ever gave to it” (July 1987, p. 130).

One of the most dramatic accounts of conversion in missionary service was that of Nico Smith (July 1989), who went from writing articles critical of European missionaries who ate at the same table with African blacks, to resigning his academic position and social privilege in Afrikaner society and taking up residence and pastoral ministry in a black community.

Jacobs himself experienced a similar change in the course of his pilgrimage in mission. “In America,” he writes, “I was not bothered with race prejudice, but not so in Tanzania . . . . I cried out, ‘Lord, you’ve brought me all this distance to preach the Gospel, but every time I preach it, it’s dead. What’s the matter?’ Then, one night (I’m not a man for dreams) . . . . I saw the cross, with a stream flowing from its base. Rushing to the stream for cleansing, I noticed there were some Africans bathing. Looking around to see if anyone would see me, I started upstream. But as I did so, the Holy Spirit brought me down, and I bathed with my black brothers. Upon awakening, I knew what was wrong. The Lord gave me grace to repent. That was the first time I embraced an African brother in the Spirit. It was beautiful.”

“There is no doubt in my mind,” says Jacobs, “that one of the most demanding yet satisfying Christian vocations is that of the cross-cultural missionary. It calls forth every gift, skill, talent, and virtue . . . while at the same time demanding constant growth in faith in God and in his marvelous people.”

The “My Pilgrimage” series encourages each of us to welcome the changes that God works in us.
My Pilgrimage in Mission

Donald R. Jacobs

I knew where I was going. Before my wife and I left for Africa the first time, one dear brother took my hand warmly and said, “Brother Don, we hope you return from Africa just like you are now. Don’t change.”

What neither of us realized was how impossible it is for anyone seriously engaged in a missionary vocation not to change. In fact, if one does not change, one is not going to influence very many people at all.

At age sixteen and a high school senior, I had my first serious encounter with Jesus Christ. I needed him desperately to clean up the residue of my growing-up years. He did that, and much more. In less than two years I found myself teaching in an elementary public school in the mountains of Kentucky. With one year of college under my belt, I tackled an impossible job, teaching fifty-seven students in eight grades, all alone in a one-room school. But I loved it. Those two years living among mountain folk, with a culture dissimilar from my own, served me well later in life as a missionary in East Africa. I started a little Sunday school in that schoolroom, where I preached my heart out. I was fascinated by everything “local,” from squirrel hunting to Hard Shell Baptist services, where, upon occasion, people handled rattlesnakes.

I was raised within the Mennonite faith and tradition in western Pennsylvania. My mother was in the sixth generation of hardy Mennonite stock, and my father was the son of a German Lutheran immigrant. Dad “joined the Mennonites.” Our little Germanic community was an island in a sea of recent immigrants, mostly from Southern Europe. I grew up with a strong sense of thrift, service, peace—these were the positives. There were also plenty of negatives, such as, “Don’t get too friendly with the church and home.” Honesty, hard work, community, commitment to church, thrift, service, peace—these were the positives. There were also plenty of negatives, such as, “Don’t get too friendly with the world; it is out to corrupt you.” I was aware of the differences between “our” culture and “theirs” as long as I can remember. This served me well later on as a cross-cultural missionary.

Church and home inscribed the Mennonite values on my heart. Honesty, hard work, community, commitment to church, thrift, service, peace—these were the positives. There were also plenty of negatives, such as, “Don’t get too friendly with the world; it is out to corrupt you.” I was aware of the differences between “our” culture and “theirs” as long as I can remember. This served me well later on as a cross-cultural missionary.

Quest for Purpose

I grew up “Christian,” so when I had my first personal meeting with Jesus I knew that to say “yes” to him was for life and everything in life. Pouring out my life in a little Kentucky schoolhouse fit into what I knew was to be my vocation. But it also convinced me that I had better get on with education, so I pursued a degree in history at Franklin and Marshall College while teaching in a Mennonite High School in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. It was there that I married Anna Ruth Charles, an eighth-generation Lancaster Mennonite.

Inasmuch as the United States was embroiled in the Korean War just then, I was liable for the military draft. As a member of a historic peace church and a committed Christian pacifist, I knew that war was not for me, so I embarked on a master’s degree in history in the University of Maryland. For part of my M.A. work, I wrote a dissertation on one of the Mennonite conferences and discovered through that research that there was an opening for an educationist in Tanzania. Anna Ruth and I applied and were soon on our way to a big adventure.

My mission board had the sense to send us to the University of London, where I qualified as a teacher in the “British Empire.” While in London, we sat under the preaching of Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones Sunday after Sunday. This amazing man, schooled in medicine, expanded our minds and reintroduced us to the cross of Jesus Christ.

Quest for Renewal

We arrived in Tanzania without any missionary training as such, and without a clear call. We were eager to give ourselves to one term as educational missionaries and then return home to pursue careers as teachers. We ended up spending twenty years there.

Our arrival in Tanzania more or less coincided with the great tidal wave of Christian renewal known as the East African Revival.

As a student of the Anabaptist wing of the Reformation (my degree from the University of Maryland was in Reformation history), I yearned to know more of the spirituality that fueled the faith of my own spiritual ancestors. We Mennonites had managed to turn a spiritual movement into a sociological community that preserved the virtues of the faith but lacked the immediacy of the living presence of Christ. In East Africa, for the first time in my life, I found a community of faith that had the markings of my Anabaptist dream. I was fascinated to discover that these Christians represented many different denominations, from Lutherans to Seventh-day Adventists.

That was my first reaction to the revival. The second was the realization that something must change within me if I was to know the living presence of Jesus Christ like these people did. But my spiritual pride and independent spirit, mixed with un­witting prejudice, conspired to build up a resistance. I found myself on a little island of my own making in a sea of warm spiritual community.

In America I was not bothered with race prejudice, but not so in Tanzania. When people knocked at my door during siesta, I found myself grumbling, “Aren’t these people ever going to learn to follow the clock?” I became disillusioned, disheartened, and lonely. I cried out, “Lord, you’ve brought me all this distance to preach the Gospel, but every time I preach it, it’s dead. What’s the matter?” Then, one night (I’m not a man for dreams), I found I was crawling, looking for the cross of Jesus, for I had lost him. Then I saw the cross, with a stream flowing from its base. Rushing to the stream for cleansing, I noticed there were some
Africans bathing. Looking around to see if anyone would see me, I started upstream. But as I did so, the Holy Spirit brought me down, and I bathed with my black brothers. Upon awakening, I knew what was wrong. The Lord gave me grace to repent. That was the first time I embraced an African brother in the Spirit. It was beautiful. Like Christian in Pilgrim’s Progress, I leaped three times in the new freedom of the Spirit.

As I shared what was happening to me, the community reached out and embraced me as a “brother sinner” saved by grace. Immediately I felt at home. The East African Revival Movement blended well with my Anabaptist theology, producing a vision much like that of the New Testament church. From that moment I found great delight and meaning in walking “in the light” with that vigorous community of faith.

**Quest for a Comprehensive Theology**

After an initial fascination with things African, all of my unresolved theological issues clamored for attention. I was not a trained theologian by any means, but I read and was much influenced by liberal theology. (At Union Seminary in New York City I had sat spellbound as Paul Tillich recast traditional Christianity in modern, scientific terms.) My Mennonite tradition, which emphasized the ethical aspects of Christian living, stood firm in the light of liberal theology. I was much comforted by these theologians who maintained a fascination with Jesus Christ, even though they had poked some massive holes in all theologies that relied on the immanence of the supernatural and on the traditional understandings of the inspiration of the Bible. That was fine with me. I could still make a complete theology out of Christ’s ethical teaching that exposed evils in society as well as in the human heart. I was a Mennonite who embraced the Enlightenment with joy.

But the new life I was living in the East African context challenged many of my Enlightenment-rooted presuppositions. For example, as a twentieth-century Anabaptist, I was inoculated against Pietism. I distrusted any Christian movement that allowed for subjective learning. Furthermore, personal pietism led to “pie in the sky by and by.” I was committed to fleshing out the ethical teachings of Christ in the concrete reality of daily life. Jesus’ insistence on justice and liberation is for now. To my way of thinking, any attempt to spiritualize his teachings or to relocate them to another era was heretical.

What, I began to ask, is true learning? Are the philosophical assumptions of the Enlightenment friend or foe of New Testament Christianity?

**Quest for a Christ-Centered Worldview**

To further complicate my life, after three years as a teacher/principal in the nation’s educational system, the church appointed me as principal of its fledgling Bible school. The in-service church leaders of the Bible school had no stomach for my worldview at all. These people believed in the immediacy of Jesus Christ as a living presence, the power of the Holy Spirit to enthuse life, the authority of the Bible as written, and the integral relationship of the natural and supernatural. It became clear to me that my African friends held to a worldview much akin to that of the New Testament writers, and to that of Jesus Christ, in particular. I saw that much of what I was teaching missed the mark because I was teaching out of one worldview while the listeners (I almost said learners) lived in another. Finally, they confided that my course on biblical theology would be more
helpful and relevant to their pastoral work if I dealt with life as they were experiencing it.

That set me on a new direction in my pilgrimage. Determined to teach a contextualized theology, I began a doctoral program at New York University in which I concentrated on religion and worldview. Back to Tanzania we went, ready to come to grips with the cultures in that area and to try to let the Scriptures address local questions directly, whether they had to do with statehood, demons, or witchcraft. It must have appeared strange for an American missionary to enter into Christian theology by first teaching African religion and philosophy. But that is what we did—myself and a staff as determined as I to teach relevantly.

To do this with integrity I had to come to grips with my Enlightenment-oriented worldview. I knew that my teaching would ring hollow if I simply adopted the Tanzanian worldview as a good teaching technique while underneath I despised that worldview. I was especially aware of the tension created by the East African Revival, which stressed cleansing from sin, new life in the Spirit, and power over evil powers. That last was a problem because I barely believed in the existence of evil except as a sort of cantankerous force in human nature. I knew Jesus Christ as my sin-bearer, but I thought he probably had accommodated himself to the Pharisaic worldview, which included resurrection, life after death, miracles, demons, curses, heaven, hell, and the like. Was he not, as a good teacher, simply affirming the prevailing worldview, even though he knew that reality was something else? I found the worldview assumed in the New Testament to be incredible.

I found it incredible, that is, until I realized that Jesus could have chosen the worldview that prevailed in the Sanhedrin and among the rulers of the temple, namely, the Sadducean worldview, which did not allow for miracles, the immanence of a transcendent God, and the rest. I was faced with a question: You believe that Jesus told the truth and did the truth that cleansed you from sin; why do you fuss with him over his view of the world? Can you agree with him regarding your salvation and disagree on his view of the world?

A battle raged in my soul for quite a long time until at last I made a great leap. In my heart of hearts I committed myself to live in the worldview that Jesus lived in until he made it clear to me that I should change. It had taken me years to construct a world in which I believed only what could be proven by scientific method. But the moment I relaxed on that point and identified with Jesus Christ's view of the world, the Bible made sense. Prayer took on new meaning, and the whole of life lit up in a new way. Serendipitously, I stood timidly but squarely in the world that was before us.

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moment for that had come. For months I invested head and heart, and I prayed a lot. Like a burst of light it was absolutely clear: “Jesus Christ in the midst of his people.” God wants to dwell among people whom he redeems and who in turn love him. That is the heart of the old covenant and it is concretized and made possible by the finished work of Christ and the immediate ministry of the Holy Spirit.

God’s mission is Trinitarian. The context of mission must be living, active, worshiping fellowships in which the triune God makes himself known to each person and through them to the world. And that is exactly what the mission community tries to bring into existence all over the world. The context of mission, Christ-loving fellowships of believers, is also the object of mission. Wherever the Father reveals the Son by the Holy Spirit in any fellowship of believers in the world, that becomes the center of world missions. In that way all fellowships are equal. The “sending church” has no spiritual authority over the newer churches standing as equals before God and humankind. Mission boards tend to perpetuate the primacy of the erstwhile “sending church.” I had a vision where all gifts from all fellowships in the world are brought together for a new harmony of evangelization and nurture around the world. This is the future of missions, as I see it.

A Pilgrim Looks Back

As a pilgrim in mission, I found that building relationships with fellow pilgrims is the most fruitful aspect of the pilgrimage. It is not what we get done that builds the kingdom but the friendships we foster.

One of my faith-building observations is that the church, be it ever so weak, can weather unbelievable storms and survive. This is especially evident in new churches that have very little tradition or sociological glue to hold them together. They are held together by the Spirit of God, and that is about it. The Lord Jesus is the strength of the church.

I was disappointed because African economies did not prosper as I hoped. I was also appalled by the persistence of ethnocentrism, even within the church. But I also had the joy of seeing remarkable exceptions to this rule when people met at the foot of the cross and there found their new brothers and sisters, more precious, in some ways, than their own relatives.

The Lord provided in my wife and children true partners in ministry. As a family we walked together and shared the joys and sufferings that go with this vocation.

There is no doubt in my mind that one of the most demanding yet satisfying Christian vocations is that of the cross-cultural missionary. It calls forth every gift, skill, talent, and virtue in a person while at the same time demanding constant growth in faith in God and in his marvelous people.

As I reflect as a missionary, my mind is dominated by one thought: thanksgiving. I would not have chosen to be a missionary, but the Lord chose me for this task, and my heart rejoices in his grace. I thank God for the calling, the enabling, and the wonderful people with whom I have related over the years. But my most heartfelt thanks must be reserved for the joy of knowing Jesus Christ, for finding him to be my Lord, my Savior, my all. I have no doubt that it was his mission, not mine. But by his grace his mission did become mine. Of that I am convinced.
Claiming Our Heritage: Chinese Women and Christianity

Kwok Pui-lan

The history of Protestant Christianity in China has been interpreted largely from the missionary perspective. Kenneth S. Latourette, in his monumental study of more than 900 pages, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, records comprehensively the work and contribution of the missionaries. The memoirs of both male and female missionaries, such as Robert Morrison, Timothy Richard, Harriet Newell Noyes, and Welthy Honsinger, fill out the details of the activities and private lives of missionaries in China.

When Chinese scholars such as Ng Lee-ming and Lam Wing-hung began to study mission history from the Chinese side, they focused on the lives and thought of Chinese male Christians and their responses to the social change of China. But the story of Chinese women in Christianity has seldom been told. Their relationship to the unfolding drama of the missionary movement has never been the subject of serious academic study. This oversight is hardly justifiable, since according to a national report of 1922 women constituted 37 percent of the Protestant communicants, and the number of women sitting in the pew certainly was far greater.

On Writing Women's History in the Church

Scholars have not paid attention to Chinese women in the study of the history of Christianity in China for many reasons. Until women's history became a respectable field several decades ago, the contributions of women in history have been largely ignored. The lives and work of women missionaries have been taken up as serious subject matter only fairly recently. Several books published in the past few years, including Jane Hunter's *Gospel of Gentility* and Patricia R. Hill's *The World Their Household*, contribute to our knowledge of the public and private lives of American women missionaries.

Chinese women were often assumed to be passive recipients rather than active participants and were treated more as missionological objects, rather than as subjects in the encounter between China and Christianity. They did not leave behind many books and writings, their voices were seldom recorded in reports and minutes of church gatherings, and they were not ordained until more than a century after the first Chinese man was ordained. Their contributions were regarded as insignificant and trivial compared to those of their male counterparts.

Even when one decides to research the lives of Chinese Christian women, the difficulties of locating resources and developing a workable methodology are formidable. Scholars who have worked on the history of Chinese women, including Ono Kazuko, Elisabeth Croll, Kay Ann Johnson, and Phyllis Andors, are not particularly interested in Christian women and their involvement in society. Other books and studies might mention Christian women in passing, or tell the stories of a few notable Christian women, such as the Song sisters, Li Dequan, Deng Yuzhi, and Wu Yifang, without offering many details about the time and context in which they lived.

Scholars in women's history have paid more attention to women's writings, autobiographies, letters, diaries, private papers, and other unpublished works. Treating women as subjects, they have attached more importance on how women have experienced and interpreted their lives rather than what has been written about them. The major difficulty of doing research on Chinese Christian women in the earlier period of the missionary movement is that the majority of them were illiterate. The first school for girls was opened by an English woman missionary in 1844 in Ningbo, and Christian colleges for women were not instituted until the early twentieth century.

There are very few resources by Chinese women in the nineteenth century, except some short articles in *Jiaohui xinbao* (Church News) and *Wanguo gongbao* (Globe Magazine). In the early twentieth century, when Chinese women's journals and newspapers mushroomed in Shanghai and Beijing, Christian women also began to publish more in the two Christian women's journals: *Nüdouobao* (Woman's Messenger) and *Nüqingnian* (YWCA magazine). Several books and pamphlets were written by Christian women, such as Hu Binxia's study of the history of the Chinese YWCA, the autobiographies of Cai Sujuan and Zeng Baosun, and a study of Chinese women's movements by Wang Liming. Kang Cheng (Ida Kahn), Jiang Hezhen, and Zeng Baosun contributed English articles to the *Chinese Recorder*, *Woman's Work in the Far East*, and the *International Review of Missions*.

Besides these written materials, the papers of a few Christian women leaders, such as Shi Meiyu (Mary Stone) and Kang Cheng, are preserved in the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church. The papers of the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, located at Yale Divinity School, contain invaluable resources on female Christian educators and graduates of the Christian colleges for women.

Other helpful resources in reconstructing the lives of Chinese Christian women include the Chinese sermons of missionaries and Chinese preachers, church yearbooks, national church surveys, and even obituaries of women. The reports to the various denominational women's boards of foreign missions and the private correspondence of women missionaries contain rich data and often interesting materials on the "native women"
they worked with. When using materials by the missionaries, special care must be taken to contrast and verify the accounts to avoid a one-sided interpretation. Missionary reports and writings must also be analyzed and evaluated in the Chinese social and cultural context.

After the collection of data, the process of reconstructing the lives of Christian women from the pieces and sometimes fragments of materials gathered is equally demanding. First, we should emphasize that Chinese women were integral partners in the historical drama, and we have to place them at the center of our historical reconstruction. Women’s responses to mission work and the barriers forbidding them to participate in Christian activity influenced the policies of Christian missions and the organization of local congregations. Their participation in congregational life and in wider society needs to be analyzed. More important, their subjective interpretation of their own faith and experiences in the life of the church has to be clarified. This latter aspect should be the special task of scholars in religious studies, since most historians do not pay much attention to it or do not have the theological background to interpret it.

Chinese Christian women did not exist in a vacuum, and their history must be interpreted in the wider historical and social transformations of modern Chinese history. In particular, their responses to social changes need to be compared with those of the vast majority of women who did not share their faith. The influence of Christian women on the feminist movement in China and vice versa has to be closely studied. Their social analysis and strategy for social change should be contrasted with those of the socialist feminists and other secular feminists.

The women missionaries, too, did not act in a vacuum. An understanding of gender relationships and roles in the church and society they came from would help to clarify their motivation and work in China. The Victorian ideals of womanhood, stressing women’s domesticity and female subordination, influenced the outlook of many women missionaries, and their evangelical upbringing reinforced their belief that women’s God-ordained place is in the home. The study of Chinese Christian women must be a cross-cultural study because what happened to women on both sides of the Atlantic affected mission strategy and women’s work in China.

**Chinese Women and Christianity**

In 1821 the wife of the first Chinese Protestant pastor, Liang Fa, née Li, was baptized by her husband using water from a Chinese bowl instead of a baptism font. In 1842, when the Treaty of Nanjing opened the five treaty ports to the missionaries, only six Protestant Christians were reported, and we do not know if any of them were women. In 1877 the first missionary conference estimated the number of female communicants to be 4,967. The national survey of 1922 reported that there were 128,704 female communicants, with a heavy concentration in the two coastal provinces of Guangdong and Fujian. The early female church members were drawn from the relatives of the Chinese helpers and converts, as well as the domestic servants of missionary households. Later on, when Christian missions opened schools for girls, the churches could reach girls from poorer homes, along with their mothers.

It is difficult to generalize the class and social background of female Christians because of limited information and scanty statistics. From missionary reports and the obituaries of Christian women, we can see that Christianity attracted particular groups of women. In general, rural women responded more readily than did women in the cities, since rural populations tended to be less bound by the dominant Confucian tradition and since rural women were less secluded. Also, young girls and older women, being situated somewhat at the margin of the family system, had more time to participate in church activities and more freedom to explore new identities. In the beginning, some of them had to overcome family prejudice and disapproval when they attended worship services or Bible studies of a “foreign religion.”

For those who overcame various barriers to become Christians, Christianity offered them new symbolic resources to look at the world and themselves. In the process of adapting to the Chinese context, there was a process of “feminization of religious symbolism” in Christianity, especially in the nineteenth century. Missionaries emphasized the compassion of God, used both male and female images of the divine, downplayed the sin of Eve, and stressed that Jesus befriended women. In a land where both men and women worshiped strong female religious figures such as Guanyin and Mazu, the feminization of Christianity made it more appealing. Later on, as more single women missionaries arrived in China, the total number of female missionaries exceeded that of the male missionaries. The feminization of the mission force sometimes gave the impression that Christianity was primarily for women and children.

Similar to the Chinese popular religious sects, the Christian congregations offered channels to women in which they could form bonds with their peers and that could provide group support in times of personal and family crises. Many women first learned to read in church because some knowledge of the Bible was required for baptism. The literacy rate of women church members far exceeded the rate in the general female public. Since social propriety at the time made it inconvenient for women and men to have Bible studies and prayer groups together, women organized their own meetings. The segregation of the sexes in congregational life allowed women to form their own groups and develop their own leadership, enabling them to experiment with new social roles besides the familial ones. Some of the more learned women served as teachers, counselors, and arbitrators in their local communities, and a few were employed by the churches as Bible women, teaching women to read and visiting them in their homes.

Since the 1890s, Christian women experienced a growing participation in church and society, based on the creation of separate women’s spheres and the affirmation of the role of women in reproducing and nurturing strong and healthy offspring. In their reform programs, leading Chinese intellectuals Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao advocated abolition of footbinding and the establishment of schools for girls. Although efforts of reform in 1898 were unsuccessful, in 1901 the Empress Dowager issued an edict permitting the establishment of schools for girls. At the turn of the century, members of the rich class and the literati responded more favorably to girls’ schools, and a

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**Victorian ideals of women’s domesticity and subordination influenced the outlook of many women missionaries.**

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The story of Chinese Christian women testifies to how their faith has empowered them to struggle for dignity as women and to reform their society. Chinese feminist theology, rooted in women's historical experience with Christianity, will be different from that developed in the West. Many Christian women in China and in other parts of Asia experienced Christianity not as an oppressive instrument but as a liberating force challenging some of the indigenous patriarchal practices. They are interested in further exploring the liberating potential of Christian faith to address the problems women face today, so that women can share greater responsibility toward building a just and humane society.

The heritage of the lives and thought of women in the Chinese church has to be reclaimed so that we can broaden our understanding of how Christianity influences women's lives in a cross-cultural context. Following the footsteps of their foremothers, many contemporary Christian women in China...
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Notes
9. For a fuller discussion of the topic, see my Chinese Women and Christianity, 1860-1927, pp. 29-64.

Maryknoll’s Fifty Years in Latin America

Ellen M. McDonald, M.M.

Reflection on 1992 as the five hundredth anniversary of the arrival of Europeans on American shores has brought about much missionary concern and dialogue. This is due largely to the “discoveries” within the Americas during the last half century that have increased our sensitivity to the needs of all Americans, North and South. Nowhere does this seem more true than at Maryknoll, New York, home of the Catholic, U.S.-founded mission-sending organization that began to direct missioners to Latin America in April of 1942. The story of these missionaries is preserved in the Maryknoll Mission Archives, which houses the recently combined historical collections of the two branches of the organization, the Catholic Foreign Missionary Society of America (more commonly known as the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers), founded in 1911, and the Congregation of the Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic, founded in 1912.

“…to receive as much as we give.” These words of Bishop James E. Walsh, then superior general of the Maryknoll Society, spoken on April 5, 1942, at the first departure ceremony for Latin America, are seen in retrospect as prophetic:

We go to South America—not as exponents of any North American civilization—but to preach the Catholic Faith in areas where priests are scarce and mission work is needed. As far as the elements of true civilization are concerned, we expect to receive as much as we give.

In fact, not only was Maryknoll going out to a new geographic location, but its missioners would soon find themselves at sea in a whole new construct of what mission was all about.

The Pre-1940 History

At the turn of the century, the United States itself was still officially a missionary country, according to Rome. By the time this status changed in 1908, the paths of three mission-minded persons were already coming together. In Boston in 1907, a new publication had appeared called The Field Afar, with the express purpose of creating interest in and support for foreign missions. Fr. James A. Walsh, director of the Boston office of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, was involved in this effort along with three other priests and the person he called his coworker, Ms. Mary Josephine Rogers. Rogers was a student and later an instructor at Smith College who had been edified and motivated by the interest shown by Protestant women from the college in the missions of their churches. The rich collection of The Field Afar, which eventually became the Maryknoll Magazine, the official organ for the Maryknoll movement, is a major resource of the Maryknoll Mission Archives.

Sister Ellen M. McDonald, M.M., entered the Maryknoll Sisters in 1959. Assigned to the Republic of Panama in 1964, she remained there until 1991, working in various positions with the Catholic Archdiocese. She also served as secretary of the Ecumenical Committee of Panama from 1987 to 1991. She is now Curator of the Maryknoll Sisters’ collections in the Maryknoll Mission Archives.
Meanwhile, in North Carolina, Fr. Thomas F. Price was already in his tenth year of publishing a magazine called *Truth*. In 1886 Father Price had been the first native of that state ordained to the diocesan priesthood. Although dedicated to home mission work in the United States, he was also envisioning the role of the United States in sending missionaries overseas.

The coming together of these three—Walsh, Rogers, and Price—is what gave the movement its start. In their combined grace and genius, the Maryknoll charism was born. Through it, not only was a missionary consciousness created among U.S. Catholics, but many faithful workers were drawn into the task, recognizing Maryknoll as their own. Through it they would get to know the peoples of the world, and through it they would be challenged by the lessons these encounters would teach. The archival collections of these three extraordinary persons reveal the spirit that made Maryknoll a U.S. Catholic household word, even as today it helps to keep alive the ideal, hope, and task of a multicultural world where all peoples “live justly and walk humbly with their God” (Mic. 6:8).

Although China and other parts of Asia were Maryknoll’s first “fields afar,” as early as 1927 Maryknoll founder James A. Walsh was aware of needs in South America. In response to those who requested Maryknollers to work among the Japanese in Peru, he had written: “I wish we were 25 years down the line so that we could touch the South American continent.” Sooner than that, however, his wish was realized. In the Logue-McCabe Bolivia History collection of the archives, it is recorded that “two weeks after Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the society council considered the fact that of 369 Society members, more than half were in the war zone and nothing had been heard from any of them. With 25 men in the upcoming ordination class and 330 students in houses of formation, and with prospects of a long war disrupting work in the Orient, they voted to seek a new field in South America.”

The new field was to entail more than attention to Asian groups of people who had immigrated to Latin America. Meanwhile, the experience of two key Maryknollers helped set the stage for what might be expected in the new undertaking. The first of these is Fr. James Drought, who as vicar general of Maryknoll traveled to Venezuela in 1938. There he met some Catholic Venezuelan government officials who had “an admitted lack of technical proficiency in, and even concept of, social economy.” Father Drought conceived the idea of a U.S. Catholic Social Action Commission that would travel to Venezuela and meet and dialogue with their counterparts there. The plan was realized, and the archives holds the organizational records of this endeavor as well as copies of the conclusions that were drawn up by Father Drought in a pamphlet entitled *Social Economy*. Later translated and published in Spanish by the Venezuelan Ministry of Health and Social Assistance, this document was seen by Father Drought to be “a program of principles and directives supplementing the [Venezuela] Constitution.” Little is known about the effect of this effort. Father Drought died on May 1, 1943, when the first Maryknollers were just beginning their labors in Latin America.

Fr. John J. Considine was a second figure playing an important role in Maryknoll at this time. Replacing Father Drought as vicar general of Maryknoll, Father Considine was already considered a knowledgeable U.S. Catholic missiologist. As a young priest in 1924, he was assigned to Rome to oversee Maryknoll’s participation in the year-long Vatican Mission Exhibit of 1925. The book published by him under the title *The Vatican Mission Exposition* reveals the extensive information he was gathering on the worldwide mission situation. This led to his remaining in Rome until 1934 as founder and director of Fides International Service, an information and research unit of the Holy See. Considine’s work required much travel. He kept meticulous diaries of his many visits to mission countries around the world. The diary corresponding to his first trip to Latin America, a four-month visit to Maryknollers and others in 1945, became the notes for the book he published in 1946: *The Call for Forty Thousand.* This clarion call to something like a mission crusade was followed in 1961 by Pope John XXIII’s appeal for a tithing of all religious communities, a sending of 10 percent of their members to assist in Latin America. By then, Maryknoll already had close to 25 percent of its members there. In the years that followed, Father Considine’s broad mission career was to include a number of positions involving relations with Latin America, the many details of which may be found in the archives, as much in his diaries as in his numerous writings and publications.

**Arrivals and Beginnings**

In a space of approximately three years, between 1942 and 1944, Maryknollers went to eight Latin American countries. The society’s priests and brothers opened missions in Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico, Ecuador, Peru, and Chile, while the sisters followed to Bolivia and went on their own to Panama and Nicaragua. Unique accounts of their early experiences are found in the collections of diaries that had become a Maryknoll tradition and duty in both the society and the congregation. Until approximately 1968, each mission house was required to send a monthly letter to the community as well as chapter and constitution information from the missions, along with published and unpublished histories by Maryknollers and others helping round out the picture of Maryknoll’s first ten years in Latin America.

There is no doubt that the turn toward Latin America in the 1940s marked the beginning of a new era in Maryknoll, coupled as it was with a gradual shift in emphasis in mission priorities. Mother Mary Joseph (Mary Josephine Rogers’s name at Maryknoll) reported early on that “the new work offers many more problems than did the Orient—difficulties of travel and transportation, lack of food, both in variety and quality, and supplies of all kinds.” Yet some former missionaries to the Orient saw Maryknoll’s presence in Latin America as a temporary, wartime decision. As the war drew to a close and Asian missions were once again open, work in these traditionally “already evangelized” countries of Latin America had to be justified. Letters to the community as well as chapter and constitution collections of the period found in the archives record this chang-
ing situation and reveal a new commitment to mission in Latin America.

A New Look at the Mission Task

Missionaries entering a second decade in Latin America thus displayed a growing confidence in their reason for being there, evidenced in the realization of the Maryknoll Fathers’ Lima Methods Conference of 1954.¹⁰ This first major analytical review of Maryknollers’ experience in South and Central American countries following the call for 40,000 was perhaps a preview of what was to come. The rapidly increasing number of other Catholic missioners going to Latin America in response to the papal appeal of 1961 coincided with the Second Vatican Council’s years. The Considine collection of the 1960s, as well as published proceedings taken from the ten years (1964-73) of the Catholic Interamerican Cooperation Programs (CICOP) initiated by him, reveal how missioners were studying attitudinal and structural relations between the Americas. Maryknoll diaries became fewer during this period. Instead, the researcher finds documents of regional assemblies, analyses of the local realities, mission visions and plans, as well as bulletins and papers written or collected by Maryknollers. Newly created offices of research and planning, of social concerns, and of justice and peace were responsible for meetings, seminars, and forums, producing valuable records that now repose in the archives.

The trend toward analysis, changing the perception of mission, was far from a Maryknoll monopoly, though the tensions and violence revealed by such analysis often touched Maryknoll personally. Project funding records demonstrate a decline in institutional ministries and a move toward more direct pastoral work among the poor and marginalized. Several collections of personal papers that describe life in repressive and/or revolution­ary situations are held in the archives and are open for research. Some have been the source of books such as The Same Fate as the Poor,¹¹ about the U.S. women missioners who were killed in El Salvador, and What Prize Awaits Us,¹² letters of Sister Bernice Kita, M.M., written principally while living in Guatemala during the 1970s and early 1980s. Regional historical records of this period also include unusual collections of solidarity material that indicate the road that mission has taken in terms of justice and cultural understanding.

Five Hundred Years and Fifty Years

The archival trail through fifty years of encounter between the Americas, as seen and experienced through the Maryknoll movement, provides many excellent research possibilities in this quincentennial year. Even a cursory review of the collections held in the Maryknoll Mission Archives reveals that fact. Closer examination reveals an additional wealth of data on the indigenous cultures, traditions, religious practices, and issues of the people with whom Maryknollers work, as well as on the economic, social, political, and medical conditions of the corresponding Latin American countries.

Researchers are invited to visit the Maryknoll Mission Archives located in the Seminary Building, P.O. Box 305, Maryknoll, N.Y. 10545-0305. Regular office hours are Monday-Friday, 8:30 A.M.-12:30 P.M. and 1:00-4:30 P.M., except holidays. To call with questions or to make a research appointment, the number is 914-941-7590.

Notes

5. James M. Drought to Nelson Rockefeller, February 16, 1940, James M. Drought Collection.
8. A good review of this period may be found in Gerald M. Costello’s Mission to Latin America (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1979).
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The Legacy of Donald A. McGavran

George G. Hunter III

Donald Anderson McGavran was born in Damoh, India, on December 15, 1897, the second child of missionaries John Grafton McGavran and Helen Anderson McGavran. He was raised in central India with two sisters, Joyce and Grace, and a brother, Edward. Joyce and Grace eventually pursued vocations in the United States, while the brothers remained in India—Edward as a physician and public health pioneer, and Donald as a third-generation missionary of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Donald McGavran received his higher education in the United States, attending Butler University (B.A.), Yale Divinity School (B.D.), the former College of Mission, Indianapolis (M.A.), and, following two terms in India, Columbia University (Ph.D.).

McGavran invested his “first career” in India as an educator, field executive, evangelist, church planter, and researcher. In the early 1930s, McGavran began to wonder why some churches reached people and grew while others declined. He pointedly asked, “When a church is growing, why is it growing?” Discovering the answers to that question became his obsession. For twenty years, he studied growing and nongrowing churches in India, Mexico, the Philippines, Thailand, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, West Africa, North America, and other lands.

The 1955 publication of The Bridges of God made McGavran’s name known in Christian mission, but his ideas did not greatly influence mission policy, strategy, or practice until he emerged from semiretirement in 1965 for a second career as founding dean of Fuller Theological Seminary’s School of World Mission. In that role, his understanding deepened and widened through the research projects of his graduate students and through collaboration with Fuller colleagues such as Alan Tippett, Ralph Winter, Peter Wagner, and Arthur Glasser. Understanding Church Growth (in 1970, 1980, and 1990 editions) established McGavran as a premier foreign mission strategist. In the 1970s, he perceived the validity of some of his insights for Europe and North America, he collaborated with Win Arn, George Hunter, and others to help inform evangelism and church growth in the West.

Much of Donald McGavran’s enduring contribution and legacy can be described in three areas, perhaps in ascending order of importance.

The Church Growth Movement

The church growth movement represents one legacy from Donald McGavran. He identified four questions that were to preoccupy a generation of church growth scholars:

1. What are the causes of church growth?
2. What are the barriers to church growth?
3. What are the factors that can make the Christian faith a movement among some populations?
4. What principles of church growth are reproducible?

McGavran also developed a field research method for studying growing (and nongrowing) churches, employing historical analysis, observations, and interviews to collect data for analysis and case studies. From 1964 to 1980 McGavran published research findings and advanced church growth ideas in the Church Growth Bulletin and other publications. By the mid 1980s, the

McGavran asked, “When a church is growing, why is it growing?”

North American society for Church Growth and several other regional societies were established, publishing several journals, including Global Church Growth.

It is not clear whether “church growth” will survive indefinitely as a term and movement, but it is clear that church growth perspectives and methods will substantially inform mission strategy across cultures and effective evangelism within cultures. McGavran’s church growth school developed a distinctive and enduring approach to evangelism and mission. Consider the following distinctive themes and claims:

1. The perennial and indispensable work within total mission is apostolic work, that is, continuing the work of the earliest apostles and their congregations in reaching lost people and peoples.
2. The key objective in evangelism is not to “get decisions” but to “make disciples.”
3. The key objective in mission is to plant an indigenous evangelizing church among every people group.
4. There is no one method for evangelizing or church planting that will fit every population, but the church growth field research approach can help leaders discover the most reproducible methods for reaching any population.
5. The pragmatic test is useful in appraising mission and evangelism strategies and methods, so churches should employ the approaches that are most effective in the given population.
6. The Christian movement can be advanced by employing the insights and research tools of the behavioral sciences, including the gathering and graphing of relevant statistical data for mission analysis, planning, control, and critique.
7. The church growth movement affirms a high doctrine of the church: the church is Christ’s body, all people have the inalienable right to have the opportunity to follow Christ through his body, and the living Christ has promised to build his church.
8. The supreme reason for engaging in evangelism and mission is summarized in Donald McGavran’s most famous

George G. Hunter III is Dean, and Beeson Professor of Evangelism and Church Growth, Asbury Theological Seminary School of World Mission and Evangelism, previously he taught at the Perkins School of Theology of Southern Methodist University and served as the executive for evangelism for the United Methodist Church. He is the author of To Spread the Power: Church Growth in the Wesleyan Spirit (Abingdon, 1987) and How to Reach Secular People (Abingdon, 1992).
McGavran's field research methods for discovering the reproducible causes for the Christian faith's expansion—have shaped the church growth paradigm.

**Christian Mission: A Subject of Serious Research**

McGavran's second legacy (though he is not its only source) is the restoration of Christian mission as a serious and viable subject of study and research. When McGavran was young, mission was taught in virtually every seminary curriculum, and there were schools of mission and prominent graduate programs. In the 1950s, 1960s, and much of the 1970s, under the impact of theological liberalism, religious tolerance, and other Enlightenment influences, schools of mission expired while, in seminaries, retiring missions professors were not replaced and mission dropped out of the curriculum. The School of World Mission at Fuller, which McGavran founded, has been very influential in reversing this trend. Fuller adopted the term “world mission” to connote the school’s vision, adopted the Roman Catholic term “missiology” to refer to the field of study, developed a doctor of missiology program, helped lead a movement within mission to shape a postcolonial agenda, and identified the several disciplines needed to inform that agenda. Fuller attracted a student body of nationals and missionaries from every continent, fostered a new era of missiological research through several degree programs, and facilitated the placement of graduates in field leadership roles, mission agencies, and colleges and seminaries. The success of the Fuller experiment has stimulated similar degree-granting schools or centers at Biola University, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Asbury Theological Seminary, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and other institutions in North America and most other continents. Mission has now been reinstated in the curricula of many colleges and seminaries, although the institutions still most committed to Enlightenment ideals and/or the graduate school of religion model have not yet participated in, or contributed to, the renaissance of missiological education.

**McGavran’s Mission Paradigms**

Donald McGavran’s third, and perhaps greatest, legacy is found in several very major constitutive ideas through which increasing numbers of mission leaders and personnel are perceiving and practicing mission and evangelism very differently than before McGavran. Some contemporary interpreters of mission have not yet understood McGavran’s contribution at the paradigm level. For instance, David J. Bosch’s 600-page Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission4 appears to report all the major determinative ideas about mission from the early church to those most likely to shape Christian mission’s future. Yet this volume perceives McGavran as merely a generic conservative evangelical with a preference for numbers, slogans, and church planting. However, history has already demonstrated McGavran’s key paradigms to be much more significant (and pervasive!) than Bosch and some other missiologists have acknowledged.

To be sure, Donald McGavran did not invent his most important ideas ex nihilo, nor did he advance them alone. He stood on the shoulders of earlier theorists such as William Carey, John Nevius, Roland Allen, and Kenneth Scott Latourette. Acknowledging J. Wascom Pickett’s pioneering church growth field research, McGavran was fond of saying, “I lit my candle at Pickett’s fire.”5 McGavran, however, partly rediscovered strategic insights that shaped a number of historical Christian movements.6 Some ideas were developed collaboratively with Alan Tippett and Ralph Winter; Winter and Peter Wagner in turn developed some ideas beyond McGavran’s own thinking.7 Wagner, Vergil Gerber, and Win Arn popularized much of McGavran’s thought.8 The ideas have been advanced, interpreted, and adapted to denominational traditions by Baptists such as Ebbie C. Smith, Wendell Belew, Charles Chaney, Elmer Towns, and John Vaughan; Methodists such as Lyle Schaller and George Hunter; Christian Church-Church of Christ leaders such as Paul Benjamin, Herb Miller, and Flavil Yeakley; and by Kent Hunter (Lutheran), Eddie Gibbs (Anglican), and Bill Sullivan (Nazarene). Yet Donald McGavran is the seminal mind of the church growth tradition, and his distinctive mission paradigms often challenged the status quo.

In The Bridges of God McGavran burst onto the missiological stage by challenging two entrenched paradigms behind prevailing mission practices. First, McGavran observed that most missionaries see the world through Western culture’s paradigm of “individualism,” which, by analogy, regards humanity as so many unconnected “atoms.” Reflecting this paradigm, most missions won a few converts one by one and assumed that conversion against the wishes of one’s kin was more faithful than conversion with kin support. Individual conversion was much preferred to group conversions within families, clans, tribes, or castes. But McGavran also observed that most (non-Western) cultures see humanity as “molecules” rather than atoms, that most people define themselves by a group identity, do their thinking in a group process, making important decisions together. He saw that the usual mission practice, based on the individualism paradigm rather than the group-consciousness paradigm, produced tragic social dislocation in the lives of many converts, as Christianized individuals were rejected by their people and cut off from them.

Second, McGavran challenged the “mission station” paradigm that prevailed in Christian mission’s “Great Century” (1800 to 1914), and that still flourishes today. He observed the following pattern. Typically, after an exploratory period in which the pioneering missionaries learn the language, gain rapport with the nationals, and perhaps win a handful of converts, the missionaries organize their activities around a mission station or compound. They acquire land in a major transportation center and then build a chapel, residences for mission personnel and their families, and other living quarters for their national helpers, and perhaps a school, an orphanage, an agricultural center, a leprosy home, a clinic or hospital, and even a printing shop. The church at the compound is a “gathered colony” church, reflecting the missionaries’ home culture, composed of the mission personnel and their families, and the first converts, who may also live and work at the mission compound, socially isolated from their people. Most activity takes place within the compound—teaching children, caring for sick people and so forth. In this model
mission personnel also engage in forays into the hinterland within manageable travel distance from the compound, establishing casual and cordial contacts with the nationals—but not "living contacts"—and perhaps raise up a few small congregations.

McGavran concedes that, typically, mission stations were built as a first stage, with the hope of a later "great ingathering." Wherever great ingatherings did not occur, however, the means became the end, and mission experienced a "diversion to secondary aims." Mission was redefined as education, medicine, relief work, and so on, for which missionaries could see results and that involved the activities the missionaries were now used to; the next generation of missionaries were then recruited to perpetuate these activities. In such an arrangement, the activities of the mission station dominated the mission's agenda; the churches were peripheral.

McGavran saw this oft-repeated phenomenon as a tragic case of Christian mission's arrested development. The mission station should never have been regarded as an end in itself but as a stage leading to the nationalization of leadership and then to the much wider expansion of the national church. McGavran acknowledged that the mission-station approach once contributed to a remarkable period of nation building; the mission schools developed tomorrow's national leaders, and the mission stations "were seed-beds of revolutionary Christian ideas about justice, brotherhood, service and the place of womanhood." But that colonial era in which mission stations had great national influence is now past. In any case, McGavran perceived—in a phenomenon already taking place among some peoples beyond the range of mission stations—the need for a revolutionary "people movement" paradigm for strategic mission thinking.

McGavran, following Pickett, became vitally interested in the people movements that were occurring in India by the 1930s—movements that sometimes brought to faith most members of a local caste or tribe within several years. He discovered that these movements were not unique, that such was the usual pattern of the faith's first-century expansion among Jews, then among the Gentile "God-fearers" that attended the synagogues, then among various culturally distinct Gentile societies, and much later in the faith's spread among the peoples of Europe. Furthermore, McGavran observed that the Gospel does not require converts to leave their people and join another people, and that "people like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic, or class barriers."

McGavran first saw this principle as a strategic way past India's formidable caste barriers, but later he developed the "Homogeneous Unit" (HU) as a generic concept applicable to many fields. He defined a HU as any group of people with some characteristic in common who communicate and relate to each other more naturally than to other people. The principle is important for evangelism because "unbelievers understand the gospel better when expounded by their own kind of people." So McGavran came to believe that the people movements that permitted "multi-individual, mutually interdependent conversion" were indigenous to the people and represented a very great way forward for Christian mission. Not only did he see precedence for people movements in the apostolic era, he believed that the Great Commission to disciple "panta ta ethné" (Matt. 28:19) was a mandate to reach the families, clans, tribes, castes, and ethnic groups—that is, the "peoples"—of humanity. He reasoned that mission's objective, therefore, is to "reach" each cultural group by planting indigenous self-propagating churches in every population within the earth's rich mosaic of peoples.

Though McGavran's HU principle has been criticized, the equivalent concept of communication and movements within "affinity groups" has become an established principle of the behavioral sciences. In mission literature the HU term has largely been dropped, in favor of "people groups" or "peoples," and in these current forms the concept has experienced an extensive impact. For instance, the 1974 Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization projected that, of the world's approximately 30,000 known peoples, approximately 16,750 were "unreached." By the 1989 Lausanne II Congress in Manila, it was estimated that approximately 4,750 of these peoples had been "reached" in the intervening fifteen years. Many mission boards and agencies are now focusing their plans and efforts on planting indigenous churches in as many of the remaining 12,000 people groups as possible by A.D. 2000.

Another McGavran paradigm shift has become even more influential. McGavran saw that, contrary to prevailing evangelical myths, people do not usually become Christians when a stranger bears witness to them; indeed, most Christian strangers (including most missionaries) make few converts. Most people become Christians when reached by a Christian relative or friend in their intimate social network; these social networks of living Christians, especially those of new Christians, provide "the bridges of God" to undiscipled people. Today, virtually every enlightened evangelism program and ministry takes this relational paradigm for the Gospel's spread very seriously. Win and Charles Arn's The Master's Plan for Making Disciples delineates an evangelism approach based upon this principle.

McGavran and His Critics

McGavran's work necessarily involved the critique of other points of view and schools of thought, and his work was also critiqued and challenged from several sides. Leaders who especially desired dialogue and better relations with people of other religions, including those who accepted the Enlightenment teaching that all religions are essentially the same, were affronted by McGavran's emphasis on evangelism for conversion. Some Christians distrusted McGavran's use of field data, statistics, graphs, and behavioral science insights; the approach was insufficiently "biblical," "theological," or "spiritual." Some Christians, who especially want churches to transcend humanity's divisions and model reconciliation, contested McGavran's conviction that homogeneous unit congregations can be a faithful, though penultimate, expression of the universal church and its mission. To McGavran's credit, he valued his critics and used their feedback to reflect upon and refine his missiology, though they gave him no sufficient reasons to abandon his apostolic agenda.

McGavran and his critics especially disagreed on the role of mission in the future. As some mission boards and agencies reflected upon the abuses of mission's colonial period, resolved not to repeat the mistakes of the past, and heard the "missionary
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they called for a moratorium on sending missionaries and announced the end of the missionary era. McGavran countered that “we stand and go home” appeal from some Third World Christians, they called he believed that “postcolonial” approaches to mission were possible and desirable.

His theological reflection and field research led him to the “receptivity” paradigm. He observed that there are always winnable people and whole fields ready for harvest because, in every season, God’s prevenient grace is moving through the events and circumstances of some persons’ lives and within whole peoples, generating receptivity. But, he observed, receptivity ebbs and flows in history; people and societies who are receptive this year may not be receptive next year, so the church is called to “win the winnable” while they are winnable. McGavran developed indicators of likely receptive people, and he advocated the revolutionary strategy of deploying mission personnel, in disproportionate numbers, where the Spirit is moving and the people are receptive. This explains the apostolic confidence, blended with urgency, that characterizes Donald McGavran’s missiological perspective: “Opportunity blazes today, but it may be a brief blaze. Certainly conditions which create the opportunity—as far as human wisdom can discern—are transient conditions. We have today. Let us move forward.”

Donald McGavran died July 10, 1990, about three months after the death of Mary, his wife of sixty-seven years. Donald and Mary McGavran are succeeded by five of their six children, sixteen grandchildren, and a host of colleagues in the Christian movement. McGavran wrote books, articles, and countless letters of counsel and encouragement and communicated with his characteristic precision, passion, and wit until the last week of his life in this world.

Notes


3. The term “world mission” was needed because many mistook “mission” for “everything the Church does,” thereby blurring the focus of classical apostolic mission. McGavran and his colleagues advocated evangelism and church planting as perennial and indispensable parts of mission.


8. McGavran and Arnn’s How to Grow a Church (Glendale, Calif.: Regal Books, 1973), featuring a conversational format, is the most widely circulated church growth book, with over 200,000 copies sold.


10. Ibid., pp. 51ff.

11. Ibid., p. 63.

12. See ibid., chaps. 3 and 4.


15. Ibid., p. 227ff.


Bibliography

Selected Works by Donald A. McGavran


Work about Donald A. McGavran

The Legacy of Alan R. Tippett

Darrell L. Whiteman

Alan R. Tippett (1911-88) was a man who emerged from twenty years of missionary service with the Australian Methodist Mission in Fiji to become a significant missiologist contributing to the so-called church growth school of missiology. His passion was to enable the missionary enterprise to move more quickly from the colonial to the postcolonial era, and he came to believe that anthropological insights were indispensable in that endeavor. In this article we will consider several areas where Tippett has left his missiological legacy through his impeccable scholarship and wide range of publications.

Early Life

Alan Richard Tippett was the descendant of devout Wesleyan, lower-middle-class tin-miners who emigrated from Cornwall, England, in 1853 and settled in Victoria, Australia. Tippett frequently credited his Cornish background for his “defiant spirit which refused to admit defeat” when the going got tough, which it often did for him.1 The elder of two sons of a Wesleyan pastor, Tippett’s school days were filled with unpleasant experiences of being bullied by schoolmates, and on occasion being misunderstood and unappreciated by teachers. These memories haunted him all his life and often drove him to being a perfectionist in order to prove himself. Tippett was profoundly influenced by his father, who was an amateur naturalist of some renown in Victoria and passed on to his son Alan a scientific mind, a voracious curiosity about the world, and an innate ability to organize and classify data.

Tippett’s “Aldersgate experience” of faith came one evening on the way home from work in 1929, passing by an open-air evangelistic meeting in the Victoria Market in Melbourne (p. 43). Shortly afterward he knew a vocation in missions was to be his calling. “I was ready there and then to go to China or New Guinea or wherever, just as I was” (p. 44). Reluctantly taking the advice of his father, however, he pursued the full ministerial training course (1931-34), earning his L.Th. at Queens College, Melbourne University. His training, however, had no cross-cultural dimension to it and “no course in Missions, either its Theology, Theory or History” (p. 52). He resented this lack of appropriate training and years later, when he encountered formal anthropological studies, realized what a tragedy it was to have been sent to Fiji without adequate preparation.

In 1938 he was ordained in the Methodist Church and also married Edna Deckert, to whom he had been engaged for several years. In the following three years they served two rural pastors in Victoria, had their first of three daughters, and were accepted by their mission board to serve in Fiji.

Missionary Work in Fiji

After being denied even two or three weeks of specific missionary training before departing Australia, Tippett arrived in Fiji on May 6, 1941, walking right into what he perceived to be a thoroughly colonial mission.

In this situation he realized the importance of becoming a learner and so threw himself into the task of language and culture learning with great enthusiasm, setting aside a minimum of five hours a day for this purpose (p. 121). He was obviously serious about language learning, for within eight or nine weeks of his arrival he preached (or rather read) his first short sermon in Fijian without a translator (p. 123).

It did not take him long to recognize that it would be very easy to get sidetracked and swallowed up in administrative duties, noting that, a man may become so involved with this kind of administration that it takes possession of his whole life and hinders his language learning and thereby his witness. A missionary at everyone’s beck and call, however patient and loving his service, if he never learns the language to speak the things of the Spirit, is a pathetic figure. In my missionary research the wide world over I have met this person. How sad! (P. 123)

He soon discovered the worldview of the Fijians, recognizing that “more and more I became aware of the Hebrew character of it all and . . . I discovered what I had really never discovered in all my training—the Old Testament world” (p. 128). He felt his biggest missionary challenge in Fiji was “how to interpret a New Testament message to an Old Testament people” (p. 168). Early on in Fiji, Tippett began to question the picture of mission that had been given to him by his home promotion and deputationists. He remembers,

Our promotion had been built on the idea that the island people were “child races,” that they were delightful children growing up, that some day with continuing mission, with more advanced education, they would mature and be able to stand on their own two feet and be an independent church. I began to question the whole concept of the “primitive” and the “child mind” as a concept of western conceit and supposed superiority. (P. 131)

During Tippett’s twenty years in Fiji (1941-61) he served in various capacities in five locations, but his pattern of missionary work always involved heavy itineration through Fijian villages in order to stay in close contact with the world in which Fijians lived. And he always went on these treks barefoot.

I had tried boots, shoes, sandals, and shoes, all of which damaged the feet. I found the Fijian way the best, once one had learned how to

Tippett felt that a missionary who never learns the local language is a pathetic figure.  

Darrell L. Whiteman is Professor of Cultural Anthropology in the E. Stanley Jones School of World Mission and Evangelism, Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky. The research for his book Melanesians and Missionaries (1983) was stimulated by Alan Tippett’s Solomon Islands’ Christianity.
walk on coral. I continued with this until I left Fiji. It was the only way of crossing coconut trunk bridges in the rain. I also discovered why the good Lord had given us big toes. (P. 166)

During his first term Tippett was instrumental in helping to write a new constitution for the mission that would pave the way for the colonial mission to become an indigenous church, a goal he hoped would be accomplished within twenty years of the time the new constitution went into effect in 1946. Its manifest purpose was to bring an end to the long era of colonial paternalism that Tippett and other younger missionaries believed would never die of its own accord. "It had to be deliberately 'put to sleep,' and this is what we set out to do," he said. The major issue was where the decision making and ultimate authority lay. "We argued for the Fijian majority as over against the Board, or even the European Synod. We were convinced, that [i.e., European paternalism] had to go" (p. 169). And it did, with independence coming to the church in 1964, owing in no small measure to Tippett's tireless efforts to bring it about.

Although Tippett was thrust into positions of leadership in the mission's educational centers, he says, "I had not seen myself as an institutional man. It was in my itinerations, my preaching, evangelism and pastoral counselling that I found my most satisfying experiences. What spiritual gift God had given me seemed to lie in that direction" (p. 177). Nevertheless, he was given institutional responsibilities, including the editorship of the church paper Ai Tukutuku Vakalotu in 1951, and he served once as acting chairman of the mission. All of the administrative hassles dealing with a colonial structure Tippett saw retrospectively as "part of my preparation as a missiologist of post-colonial mission" (p. 294).

In 1955 Tippett went to American University in Washington, D.C., where he earned an M.A. focusing on social anthropology, history, and archives. He returned to Fiji in 1956 for what would be his last term of missionary service. Upon reflection, he saw these five years as the most manifestly rewarding years of his missionary life, but he felt it was now time to pass from the Fijian scene.

Tippett considered transferring to another field of mission or becoming involved in some aspect of training new missionaries in Australia, but his mission board provided no opportunity for either.

Alan Tippett and Donald McGavran Join Forces

In 1961 McGavran read an article published by Tippett the previous year in the International Review of Missions entitled "Probing Missionary Inadequacies at the Popular Level." McGavran was fascinated by Tippett's perceptions, which were so similar to his own. McGavran had come out of India after thirty years' struggling against colonial paternalism and had recently established the Institute of Church Growth at Northwest Christian College in Eugene, Oregon. He wrote to Tippett in Fiji, inviting him to become one of the research fellows at the institute. Tippett was familiar with McGavran's writing, including Bridges of God. "When I read it," he says, "I reflected and said to a friend in Fiji, 'This is absolutely right but this man will never sell it to the mission Boards.' So I was more than delighted when he wrote to me out of the blue. Our correspondence showed that we shared a great deal and had reacted to, and against, the same things in Christian mission" (p. 273).

Tippett settled his family in Australia and departed for the United States in late 1961 to accept McGavran's invitation, not for only nine months as he had intended, but for a long, painfully drawn out two and a half years. He joined a handful of other men studying with McGavran, noting,

We . . . shared convictions from our missionary experiences. We sought to modify colonial, paternalist mission strategy. We were aware of the fact that anthropological research had something important to say to Christian mission. We were aware that there were cases of growth and non-growth that called for scientific study. We all believed that in the world we faced days of unprecedented opportunity for Christian expansion. We were all drawn to Donald McGavran as the man who had most articulated these convictions, and was disposed to gather men together to study them. (P. 277)

Tippett had gone to Eugene expecting to earn an M.A. during his study, but neither the Institute of Church Growth nor Northwest Christian College could give one. He thus felt "hoodwinked" into doing a Ph.D. in anthropology at the University of Oregon, located across the street from Northwest Christian College in Eugene.

At the University of Oregon, Tippett's mentor was Homer Barnett, the leading applied anthropologist at the time. The two hit it off, as Barnett was pleased to have a mature student with such a rich resource of twenty years of "fieldwork" in Fiji, and Tippett was thrilled with Barnett's theories and models of culture change, which he found to be so illuminating for missiology. Of Barnett's book Innovation: The Basis of Cultural Change (1953), Tippett wrote, "Barnett's work on Innovation was the most influential book on my life, with the exception of the Bible . . . It was the most exciting thing I ever found in academia" (p. 288).

An important turning point for McGavran and Tippett came in 1963 with a consultation on church growth called by the Department of World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches to examine the two men's viewpoint, discuss the problems it raised, and make a statement for the world church. Out of this consultation came a good statement on church growth that McGavran and Tippett used widely in subsequent years. Moreover, Tippett met Victor Hayward, who later invited him to participate in the "Churches in Mission" project, which sent him to the Solomon Islands in 1964. Tippett's research there led to what is probably his best-known book, Solomon Islands Christianity (1967).

The Solomon Islands research project (August-December 1964), in which he compared Methodist and Anglican mission work, seemed almost tailor-made for Tippett. He says, "Surely I could never have found a more suitable field for testing out the theoretical base of church growth missiology" (p. 300). It was an important "rite of passage" from the role of a missionary to Fiji to becoming a missiologist to the world. He summed up the experience, noting thatafter my term with McGavran I could look more critically at a situation with what he called "church growth eyes." After my tutelage under Homer Barnett I saw situations pulsating with innovation, natural
and directed culture change, and I found a new world of models and demonstrated anthropological principles. My terms of reference had been to look at everything critically, but helpfully. I thought I could see a whole area of application of anthropology for the sake of the Gospel . . . . I felt now I could face my fellow anthropologists and McGavran himself as a peer. I was raring to go. (P. 316)

In 1965 McGavran was invited by Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, to found a new School of World Mission. Tippett notes that "McGavran was not interested, unless they would consider taking over the whole project of the Institute of Church Growth, including both himself and myself" (p. 317). Although Tippett spent only twelve years of his life at Fuller (1965-77), it is within this relatively short time span that he made his mark on the wider missiological world.

The Legacies of Alan Tippett

Let us move now from the chronological development of his thought to the substantive areas where he has left a legacy. Beyond the legacy of being instrumental in ushering in the transition from colonial mission to indigenous church in Fiji, Tippett has contributed to missionary strategy, missiological theory, teaching, scholarship, and publications.

Contribution to missionary strategy. Although Tippett was not as prominent on the lecture circuit as his colleague Donald McGavran, there is no doubt that through his careful research, strong anthropological underpinnings, and theological soundness Tippett gave much-needed credence to the emerging church growth movement. Tippett, more than his colleague, saw the necessity of using multiple models, methodologies, and approaches to the study of church growth. For example, he required his doctoral students to write their dissertations using as-yet unexplored anthropological models or ethnohistorical methods applied to missiology, and no two students ever used the same models and theories under Tippett. This approach gave a richness and depth to church growth studies that was much needed. He was always open to employing new methods of critique and never shied away from self-examination.

To McGavran's church growth concepts of discipling (quantitative growth) and perfecting (qualitative growth), Tippett stressed the importance of organic growth. He summarized it thus:

Those of us who have studied intensively the planting and growth of churches on the mission field have found that the churches that grow best and vibrate with indigenous life have paid attention to three things—a concern for winning large numbers of people from the world, a concern for effective nurture within the fellowship, and a concern for the development of functional roles and opportunities for service. Each of these stimulates a form of church growth, which we may call quantitative, qualitative and organic.

The strategy of church growth owes much to Alan Tippett, although the name of Donald McGavran is most often associated with this movement.

Contribution to missiological theory. Tippett saw missiology as an interdisciplinary field of study and brought to that field competencies in anthropology, history, and theology. He was driven by the conviction that missiology must be holistic and interdisciplinary, always striving for synthesis out of analysis, and that one area of its development must not occur at the expense of another's neglect.

In addition to the anthropological contributions Tippett made to missiological theory, he also helped shape a number of key concepts that became popular in missiological discourse. Among these included the concepts of functional substitutes, power encounter, people movements, and indigenous church. Tippett also demonstrated over and over again in his research that missionaries might be the advocates of change, but it is the receptors who are the real innovators and bring change to their lives and culture. There are many more we could highlight, and of course they are not all original with him, for he borrowed many from anthropology, but he gave them prominence because of his careful research and insightful missiological application.

I believe he was enthralled with anthropology because it opened up to him a whole new world of understanding mission, and he came to see it as indispensable for missionary training. It was this very dimension that he regretted so much having missed in his own preparation for missionary service in Fiji.

"Anthropology does not bring individuals to Christ," he said, "but it shows missionaries how they may be more effective and less of a hindrance in doing so." In his efforts to create a postcolonial missiology, he saw anthropology as fundamental, noting that "in the area of Christian education for mission, the inclusion of courses in anthropology [is] essential, and that for the post-colonial era of mission it is inconceivable that missionaries should be sent out without exposure to this discipline" (p. 339).

Contribution to missiological teaching and scholarship. Tippett’s strengths in teaching were evidenced more in the one-on-one mentoring mode than as a classroom lecturer. For those students who wanted to mine the depths of his insight and share from his reservoir of mission experience, any time spent with him, whether in class or out, was always worthwhile. I have vivid memories of meeting with him in his office surrounded by his marvelous library. He would throw himself into the conversation, asking me if I had read this book or that one, or if I was familiar with this author’s perspective or that anthropological concept. And then he would pull from his shelves book after book to illustrate his points. It was all deliciously scintillating for an eager doctoral student.

He alerted students to the diachronic and historical dimension of mission by bringing to bear ethnohistorical methods on church growth studies. And he always insisted that events be interpreted in their proper context, not from the perspective of another time or place. He could get “picky,” much to the annoyance of his colleagues, as for example, when he held up for six years the publication of People Movements in Southern Polynesia until he could check the accuracy of a single paragraph to make
sure he had interpreted it according to its proper context. And he was mighty glad he did!

Finally, we cannot conclude this section without acknowledging Alan Tippett’s role as founding editor (1973-75) of the journal *Missiology*. In 1972 the American Society of Missiology was founded, and plans were laid for its journal *Missiology* to continue *Practical Anthropology*, which was being terminated by its sponsor, the American Bible Society. Tippett, who was absent at the organizing meeting, felt pushed into the editor’s role, which he neither sought nor wanted. Nevertheless, he was ideally suited for this role because of his anthropological background and breadth of missiological acumen. He notes,

In that three years we covered most of the aspects of missiology, published material from every Continent, by missionaries and nationals. I tried to maintain a balance. If an article was at one extreme I sought another to balance it. It was a middle of the road publication between Evangelical and Conciliar emphases, though we were specific about standing on the Great Commission and Scripture. (P. 444)

**Conclusion**

We have witnessed how through teaching, publishing, and editing Alan Tippett made so many important contributions to

the field of missiology. Reflecting in his unpublished autobiography he surmised,

If I have made any worthwhile contributions to missiology for the post-colonial era, it has probably been in the area of the theoretical base, the development of research methodology, the application of anthropological principles positively to church growth, and the exploration of research models for pin-pointing matters for concentration of evangelistic thrust and pastoral care. (P. 446)

Alan Tippett was a remarkable and complex man, and only a fraction of his story has been told here. The missionary world is much richer today because of the legacies he has left us. He was that rare breed who combined the careful, meticulous eye of the scholar with the passion of a fiery evangelist. Few missiologists have blended so well the two worlds of ministry and scholarship. Perhaps it will be fitting to close with his own thoughts on how his scholarly pursuits were motivated by the drive for practical results. He says, “I have aimed at bringing anthropology as a science, the Bible as a record of God and humanity in relationship, and Christian mission as its medium for demonstration until the end of the age, together in a missiology adequate for the post-colonial era” (p. 447).

**Notes**

1. Alan R. Tippett, “No Continuing City” (unpublished autobiography, 1988), p. 32. Subsequent page citations in the text refer to this manuscript.
6. Ibid., p. 34.

**Bibliography**

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**Selected Works about Alan R. Tippett.**

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In the Way: A Study of Christian Missionary Endeavours.


As anthropologist, as observer of two generations of Christian mission, and now as interpreter of Christian life and history, Kenelm Burridge has no peer in discussing the interaction of missions and culture. In the Way is a book no student of mission can afford not to read. While remaining an anthropologist, Burridge gives us a magisterial work on the history and theology of mission. To those who know his work on millenarianism (“cargo cults”) in Papua New Guinea and his other writings, In the Way will be another feast. To those who have never encountered his work, this is a wonderful book to begin with.

Burridge sees Christianity as an intrinsically missionary faith and missionaries as people understood poorly by both their critics and their supporters. He shows that this missionary faith is a dialectical process: metaculturally transcendent in its “devotional” pole, and inculturationist in its “affirmative” pole. The dialectic, though, rises not in a conflict of ideas but in the concrete experience of God’s love in Christ as the source of mission’s disparate labors.

In the Way gives insights into the pluralistic nature of Christianity, into the relationship of social sciences and missiology, and into the structures of Christian community and missionary endeavors. Professor Burridge’s book is essential reading for both missiology and missionary anthropology courses, a book that is intellectually demanding but that also repays careful attention.

Paradoxically, the abstractness with which the anthropologist lays out the structures of missionary life reveals patterns that recur concretely in mission. To grasp Burridge’s point is to develop tolerance of those with whom one disagrees theologically without giving up the need to debate issues that divide, for In the Way reveals a process through which God writes straight with the crooked lines of missionary efforts.

—William R. Burrows

Black Christians and White Missionaries.


This book is a collection of essays that are the fruits of both recent research and long-term reflections of the author, who is emeritus professor of the history of Africa at the University of London. The overriding theme of the book is the transformations of Christianity by Africans. It is a welcome contribution to the growing number of works that seriously address African agency rather than “Western initiatives” alone. Particularly valuable is the first section of the book, which deals with the relationship between the papacy and central Africa in the seventeenth century, highlighting cosmological similarities for both black and white Christians, the significant role of the African confraternities in the local response to the Capuchin mission in Kongo and Angola, the interventions of Lourenco da Silva in Rome on behalf of oppressed slaves, Fra Girolamo’s close rapport with Soyo Christians in the kingdom of Kongo, where Christianity was far from being a “fragile exotic plant” (p. 9).

Following his reassessment of Kongo Christianity—its advances, setbacks, misunderstandings, and fruitful exchanges—Professor Gray moves to wider reflections in the second part of the book concerning the varied relationship of the missionary movement with colonial rule. He once again emphasizes the contributions of African cosmologies to nineteenth- and twentieth-century Christianity (particularly in the overlooked area of eschatology), despite the disillusions and disparities of power. In the last chapter, we are confronted with insights that are often valuable, yet sometimes debatable (how “radically new” is the concept of satanic forces for Pentecostalists compared to witchcraft in the precolonial context?) concerning the restructuring of concepts and symbols of evil.

Some may find the collection of essays less connected than anticipated; others may wish for a stronger condemnation of that most unsalvageable term “syncretism.” But in this reviewer’s opinion, the size, price, accessibility and scope endear this book both as a textbook and as a general work, providing local and historical depth to African appropriations, transformations, and interpretations of Christianity. It is hoped that Professor Gray will continue to bring his vast knowledge to bear on these complex developments—past, current, and future—and that his work will be made available to those most actively involved in such processes.

—Rosalind I. J. Hackett

Rosalind I. J. Hackett, from Britain, has been in the United States since 1984; she teaches at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She has spent more than eight years doing research and teaching in Nigeria, with shorter visits to Ghana, Cameroon, and Kenya.
Mission and Meaninglessness: The Good News in a World of Suffering and Disorder.


In this unique book, Peter Cotterell, a former missionary to Ethiopia who currently serves as Principal of London Bible College, as well as Senior Lecturer in Missiology and Linguistics, emphasizes that the task of Christian mission is to make sense of life in a world where the general unsatisfactoriness of ordinary empirical existence is of such magnitude that life appears meaningless.

The book’s thirteen chapters are divided into four parts. Part One, “Religion, Religions, and the Apparent Meaningless of Life,” consists of six chapters in which Cotterell analyzes the apparent meaninglessness of life, surveys seven ways in which Christians have approached the other religions of the world, sets forth a Christian worldview, struggles with the problems occasioned by the classic Christian insistence on the finality of Christ and the claim that salvation is to be found exclusively in him. The back cover states the significance of his conclusions: “It is the first book by a leading British Evangelical to recognize God’s saving activity among those who live without the church and without an overt knowledge of the Gospel.” This fact alone guarantees that the book will be controversial.

The second part of the book consists of eight chapters which appear to be a collection of independent essays on a variety of topics the author has grouped together under the rubric “Mission as Response to the Apparent Meaningless of Life.” Cotterell emphasizes ecclesiology and includes a perceptive critique of the Church Growth Movement. Other chapters of particular merit include an incisive survey of the church in Europe, an attempt to construct a theology of the poor, a thoughtful discussion of the relationship of Christianity to Judaism, and a brilliant exposition of the mission theology contained in the Gospel according to Matthew.

Part Three surveys three movements that Cotterell regards as alternative responses to meaninglessness: Islam, Marxism, and Liberation Theology. The fourth and final part consists of a single chapter summary of the relationship between mission and meaninglessness and a concluding postscript. Extensive notes, a select bibliography, and three indices add to the usefulness of this volume.

This comprehensive attempt to develop a holistic view of mission constitutes a major contribution to evangelical missiology. Cotterell’s work encompasses a broad range of topics in a scholarly fashion, yet is seasoned with the practicality of a veteran missionary. His attempt to relate all of the chapters to the theme of the book at times seems forced, yet detracts relatively little from a stimulating and, in some ways, ground-breaking volume.

—Kenneth B. Mulholland

Kenneth B. Mulholland is Dean and Professor of Missions at Columbia Biblical Seminary and Graduate School of Missions, Columbia, South Carolina. Previously, he served for nearly fifteen years as a missionary to Central America under the United Church Board for World Ministries.

PROPOSALS INVITED FOR PROJECTS IN MISSION RESEARCH

The Overseas Ministries Study Center, New Haven, Connecticut, announces a research enablement program for the advancement of scholarship in studies of mission and Christianity, particularly in the non-Western world. Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis in the following categories:

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An African Theology of Mission.


In this book the author investigates the concept of mission, having in mind the church in Africa, which has played host to a vast number of missionaries from Europe and America over the centuries. In the author’s judgment certain misconceptions have traditionally surrounded mission; in particular, it seems to have been assumed that mission involves a unidirectional flow of personnel and resources and that the traditional ethno-cultural system has nothing to contribute to the formation of Christian life and thought in Africa. This study thus represents a concern that a number of students of Christianity in Africa have articulated, particularly in recent decades; the author’s own earlier book The Origin and Development of African Theology belongs to the growing number of studies on the subject.

The book is rather repetitive; with chapter after chapter repeating the same criticism of missions. Furthermore, in connection with religious pluralism the author makes statements that can only be described as misleading, such as: “Evangelism among the Africans therefore does not entail introducing a new faith” (p. 53); and, “Select aspects of the Christian faith unite with ‘corresponding’ aspects of the indigenous religion for the sake of religious continuity” (p. 58). What procedure is being recommended with respect to the latter is unclear. The author stresses that mission is not the work of humans or of a mission board but is God’s work, and that conversion is the work of the Spirit. One wishes, however, that such views had been worked out more meaningfully.

—Kwesi A. Dickson

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Mission to Rural America: The Story of W. Howard Bishop, Founder of Glenmary.


The story of Catholic evangelization in the United States has yet to be told, but Christopher Kauffman’s Mission to Rural America represents one giant step toward remedying the situation. Kauffman, who has written histories of the Alexian Brothers, the Knights of Columbus, and the American Sulpician Fathers, here provides a scholarly, readable account of the life and times of W. Howard Bishop, the Catholic missionary and rural-life activist who founded the Glenmary Home Missioners. This biography will certainly rescue Bishop from undeserved obscurity and earn him a secure niche in subsequent surveys of American Catholic history. Kauffman pays fastidious attention to the details of Bishop’s career, especially to his extensive, ever-expanding network of friends, confreres, and fellow travelers, from brief encounters with Catholic Worker Peter Maurin and the Catholic publishers Frank Sheed and Maisie Ward to more sustained collaboration with
clerical activists such as Luigi Ligutti and John LaFarge, S.J., and the Maryknoll leader James Anthony Walsh. This book is more than a biography or a career study. It is a sensitive portrait within the American Catholic community, a movement that united priests, seminarians, brothers, sisters, and laypeople in a common, if occasionally conflict-ridden, effort to make America Catholic.

Mission to Rural America recaptures the spirit of a critical, almost forgotten segment of the convert crusade of the forties and fifties, and provides important historical background for those who seek to understand the roots of today’s Catholic evangelization effort among the American unchurched. This book illuminates two aspects of the early twentieth-century American Catholic Church that were neglected by contemporaries and remain neglected by historians: rural life and home missions. In so doing, it casts new light upon other, more frequently examined aspects of the Catholic experience and raises intriguing questions about the changing priorities of American Catholics in this century. —Debra Campbell

Debra Campbell is Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Colby College, Waterville, Maine. She is currently writing a history of the Catholic Evidence Guild.

Training God’s Army: The American Bible School, 1880–1940.


Over the years American Bible schools have been largely ignored or ridiculed by the scholarly and educational establishment. When Brereton undertook her research a decade ago, she discovered that almost nothing had been written on the Bible school for a general audience. She dug in with a resolve to bring empathy and appreciation for the purposes and viewpoints of these educators.

Virginia Brereton teaches history and writing at Harvard University. She has published widely in women’s religious history and conservative Protestant evangelicalism. This is the first published history of American Bible schools by an outsider. As such, she writes from a vantage point relatively free from strong positive or negative convictions. Her goal is primarily to understand what was happening on a descriptive level. The book lays a foundation for future analysis and evaluation of this movement’s educational goals and programs.

The author has produced an in-depth view of the origin and development of these schools where Protestant fundamentalists trained as evangelists, pastors, teachers, and missionaries. She shows how the Bible schools contributed much to the vitality of evangelicalism in our century. They also have played a significant role in the story of American education. They emphasized integration of theory and practice; pioneered innovative concepts and techniques; combined classroom instruction with practical experience. The schools accepted students of varying ages and educational and economic backgrounds. They offered correspondence, extension, evening and summer classes; they also

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sponsored Bible conferences and camps, and pioneered religious broadcasting and filmmaking.

While the study is based on information about a wide collection of Bible schools, it focuses on Moody Bible Institute, Gordon College, Nyack College, the Boston Bible School, and Biola College (formerly the Bible Institute of Los Angeles). The six-page appendix "Defining Fundamentalism" presents an excellent treatment of this misunderstood term.

—Charles E. Hummel

Charles E. Hummel is a former president of Barrington College (Rhode Island) and director of InterVarsity faculty ministries. He is the author of Fire in the Fireplace, Tyranny of the Urgent, and The Galileo Connection.

Cities: Missions’ New Frontier.


“Beyond question,” say the authors, “the new chapter in world and mission histories is entitled ‘Cities.’ The population projections they supply to support that claim leave no doubt. For example, Africa’s four largest cities (Cairo, Lagos, Nairobi, Kinshasa) just thirty years from now will each have fifteen million-plus people.

Their book proposes to “provide students and practitioners of Christian missions with a basic introductory textbook” for urban mission, not only to these supervillages, but to all cities whither the millions are streaming in the southern and eastern hemispheres today.

Greenway and Monsma begin with a biblical framework for understanding the city. A reformed theological model—no surprise—shapes their perspective interfaced with accents from Augustine’s “two cities.” Thus God’s “common grace” still operates in even the most pagan of cities. God “created the inhabitants, stamped his image on them, and restrains their worst intentions.”

When the Christian Gospel arrives, God’s “special grace” also goes to work in the city, engaging the forces of evil, building “a community of a different kind.” With the Gospel present in a city religious warfare ensues—the “battle between Babylon and Jerusalem.”

On this theological base the authors build their textbook, replete with case studies of urban mission in the New Testament, of “great models” from various continents today, practical counsel, and a variety of hands-on examples of successes and failures from urban mission veterans.

The hard questions of development and relief work, church growth, ethnicity, church-state relationships, all of which impact today’s urban missionary, are given extensive attention. Most moving for me were the three chapters on mission to the urban poor in the United States, to street people, and to the international “industry” of the world’s red-light districts.

Greenway and Monsma have done all of us a service with this pioneer text for urban missions. May voices from the other Christians traditions—Catholic, Lutheran, Pentecostal, Anabaptist, etc.—follow soon to fill out the ecumenical chorus on strategies for mission to the cities.

—Edward H. Schroeder

Edward H. Schroeder, a Lutheran, directs the program of The Crossings Community, St. Louis, Missouri, an ecumenical school for laity in mission to today’s secular society.

Unity of All Christians in Love and Mission: The Ecumenical Method of Kenneth Scott Latourette.


The doctrinally formed Lutheran theologian finds difficulty occasionally with the Baptist historian who had no formal theological education and whose theological statements were framed largely in biblical language. Systematic theological analysis applied to one not a systematic theologian but a historian of Christianity creates its own problems; yet Lindgren handles these creditably. He could have strengthened his presentation with a brief, focused examination of some key elements in the American Baptist heritage, part of which Latourette’s methodology reflected.

The following comments on method must be limited. Lindgren observes that for Latourette Christian unity is marked not by one church or one creed, but by love, agape, God-given and seen in Jesus Christ. “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35). That unity for which Jesus prayed (John 17:21) enables convincing witness, “that the world may believe.” Unity and mission are inextricably intertwined, and as the WCC’s 1951 Rolle Statement declares, “... every attempt to separate those two tasks violates the wholeness of Christ’s ministry to the world.”

Yet, as Latourette noted, even in the Christian community’s first days, divisiveness and division existed. These continued to multiply. In the period of the four great ecumenical councils (325–451) each effort to state accurately the truths of the faith created new fractures. Further splitting occurred. Thus for Latourette the new surge toward unity (love), springing from mission since the mid-nineteenth century and amid today’s global di-
versity, transcends lines of theological demarcation and constitutes a new work of God in history. "Reunion," he held, is a misnomer, for never has a unified church or community existed with which, even in memory, "reunion" could be achieved or to which Christians could return.

Because of sin's universality and power, Latourette doubted that doctrinal unity among Protestants could be reached. He favored the Edinburgh, 1910, pattern. Participants could discuss theological matters relating to mission, but no debate or resolutions were allowed on faith and order issues on which the participating churches or societies strongly differed. Edinburgh's profound unity in love, despite major theological differences, touched everyone. Yet finally the basic dilemma confronts Christians: does one opt for truth or the unity of love? In matters of doctrinal truth, this reviewer agrees with Lindgren: Latourette would have lived with the painful unity of love.

At the end, Lindgren repeats the ironic affirmation: "In essentials, unity. In nonessentials, freedom. In all things, love." He adds, "These are most poignantly applied to Latourette."

Two small matters need noting. First, Lindgren frequently cites Latourette-Hogg, Tomorrow is Here, 1948. In the bibliography, he uses the title page data of the New York edition (pp. xiv, 145), but he lists all citations from the London edition's pagination (pp. xii, 129). This will disconcert any North American readers checking page references. By mid-book, citations run seven to nine pages behind their location in the New York edition.

Second, this reviewer once described Latourette "as a catholic evangelical steeped in the Bible and of ecumenical conviction" (Occasional Bulletin of Missionary Research, 2:2, July 1978, p. 76). On p. 77 of that publication that statement became a bold-faced heading in which "evangelical" was erroneously substituted for "ecumenical." Unfortunately, Lindgren cited the awkward and confusing headline rather than the correct text. Only the correct wording fits meaningfully into his theme of ecumenical method.

—William Richey Hogg

William Richey Hogg is Emeritus Professor of World Christianity, Southern Methodist University, Perkins School of Theology, Dallas, Texas.
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A useful survey of mission history, a helpful lexicon of anthropological terminology; excellent stories; good questions and select bibliographies; easily digestible sections; real clarity and insight—these are some of this book’s many virtues. The occasional overcompression of ideas; a book of “snacks” rather than meals; a relative absence of practical advice for moving beyond cultural sensitivity to the actual incarnation of the Gospel—these may be concomitant limitations.

The book is “a response to [the] lack of resource material on the culture side of inculturation” (p. 1), “primarily for [those] who have little or no knowledge of anthropology . . . [and] written with the needs of First World evangelizers directly in mind” (p. 4).

In three main sections the author takes us through “Theoretical considerations” (defining central concepts such as culture, inculturation, ritual and social change); “Pastoral issues” (in which anthropological insights are applied to contemporary social realities like cults, sects, and fundamentalism); and “The pastoral agent” (proposing to offer practical assistance to the pastoral worker in situ).

I found the first section the most helpful. Section two (the longest and half the book) seems focused less on pastoral issues than on sociological realities. There is a gap here between diagnosis and treatment. The final section, potentially the most challenging, is sadly the shortest and least developed. One would have liked indica-
tions of a methodology for theological and liturgical change, or at least an acknowledgment of the problems.

As a handbook, *Earthing the Gospel* can be most attractive; it also suffers the limitations of the genre. The gifted author attempts to fill a gap in the literature; yet my own respect for Arbuckle results from reading his soaring, prophetic, imaginative ideas and in taking wing with him. This book, befitting its title, is down to earth; yet one misses the beat of wings!


Currently Professor of Theological Anthropology at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, Anthony Gittins has ministry experience in hospitals and on the streets as well as in the academy and in West Africa. He is a native of England and a resident alien in the United States.

The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Missions and British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.


Brian Stanley is one of the best historians of mission who is writing today in England. Those who read this excellent book are likely to endorse the judgment of Professor Mark Noll of Wheaton College, Illinois, printed on the cover: “On all counts—writing style, care of citation, as well as substantive research and convincing argument—this is a very fine book.”

Stanley has set out to reach two often disparate groups: historians with an interest in imperialism and missions, and those with a concern for the contemporary church’s world mission. In the judgment of this reviewer he succeeds. It is greatly to be desired that those who are addressed in his preface and encouraged to persevere with the aspects of his study that are less familiar—historical for one and theological for the other—will do so and receive the illumination that interdisciplinary studies so often give for those willing to read (or write) them.

The book handles the anticolonial reaction of our day, the nature of imperialism as expressed in the British empire, the relationship of missions to commerce and the slave trade, and the ambiguities of the relations between missions and European governments by way of case studies in such diverse fields as Fiji, Bechuanaland, Uganda, and Nyasaland. Culture, Stanley shows, rather than politics, was often at the root of anti-Christian feeling when we move into the twentieth century.

In his final chapters he considers Christianity and culture and “Empires and Missions under human and divine judgment.” This leads to the conclusion that there is a sense in which Christianity is an “imperial” religion in-so-far as Christ makes “absolute demands upon all people and all cultures” (p. 184).

The book will whet many appetites for Stanley’s forthcoming and major work, which is to mark the bicentenary of the Baptist Missionary Society (founded 1792) in a one-volume history.

—T. E. Yates


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Senior Scholar, Fall 1993: Dr. Phil Parshall

October 1992
God Does Not Foreclose: The Universal Promise of Salvation.


David Watson, Director of Covenant Discipleship for the United Methodist Church, writes with fresh words and provocative insights. I wanted to like this book. I would read a while with strong affirmation for what I was reading. Not long after I would be saying No! No! No!

Yes, when Watson describes the work of Christ making salvation available for all as a result of God’s grace. Yes, to the reality that through the Holy Spirit God’s prevenient grace is reaching all people on earth. Yes, when he indict the church for having made the mistake of assuming that being chosen by God meant being chosen for their own sakes and not for the spreading of the knowledge of God’s grace through the whole world.

No, when he says the work of Christ has already saved everyone and the work of evangelism is simply to make them aware of this. No, when he says the “long, slow work of Christ will not be complete until the final parousia.” (p. 145).

Especially No, when he says, “The final consummation of Christ’s salvation will thus be the reconciliation with God of the whole of creation, including death, and including Satan. Nothing will be lost” (p. 88).

So for me a Yes/No reading of this book. Yes, to his strong affirmation of the work of Christ, the nature of true discipleship, what the church ought to be, and the work of the Holy Spirit in the world and among all peoples.

But, No, when he defends anonymous Christianity, universal salvation, and the idea that the only distinguishing mark of the Christian is that he/she is given a foretaste of what is eventually to come in Christ’s final victory.

—Everett N. Hunt, Jr.


“The Judaizers have long since been replaced by Europeanizers. But the oikumene remains; and it is still, for the most part, untouched by Christianity.” With these words Eugene Hillman ended his pioneering book of 1968, with its famous title, The Wider Ecumenism. Some twenty years later, with much intense discussion of interfaith dialogue and religious pluralism under the bridge, Hillman gives his attention once again to the issues raised by the persistence of classical theology and what he calls the “historically conditioned and culturally alien religious experience of Europeans and North Americans” within church and mission. In a bare eighty pages of text (if one does not count the excellent bibliography and footnotes), Hillman treats four major themes: “Religion: A Component of Culture”; “Christian Theology and the Ubiquity of Grace”; “Contemporary Theology of Religion” (under his old title, i.e., “Toward a Wider Ecumenism”); and “Evangelisation and Mission in Tension.” These chapters are formidably intelligent and tightly written, combining the thinking of theologians (Lonergan, Rahner, Schillebeeckx) and social scientists (Geertz, Levy Strauss, Gutierrez) together with his own experience in Africa going back nearly forty years. Indeed under this last heading he offers his thanks to the Maasai people who demonstrated to him that “God’s grace is not less operative among non-Christians than it is among Christians” (p. ix).

I have one general criticism of Hillman’s approach in Many Paths. While it seems to me that his discussion of the possibility of salvation in and
Kingdom Concerns: A Biblical Exploration towards a Theology of Mission.


Ken Gnanakan, who is actively involved in evangelical theological education in Asia as both the chairman of the Asia Theological Association and the president of the Association of Evangelical Theological Educators in India, develops what he calls an "actualised theology" of mission in this book. He finds that contemporary ecumenical theology has made three misguided theological shifts, namely, "a movement from the concept of..."


Dr. Thompson has edited this journal of a young Scottish engineer who took his "home" leave from India in Central Africa. He did this to test his own vocation and to aid his famous cousin, Dr. James Stewart of Lovedale, the pioneer of Scottish missionary work in Malawi and Kenya.

Why should the slim journal of this young man be of any interest to us today? There are perhaps four reasons, other than the curiosity most of us have about other people’s lives. The first is that it is an eyewitness account of that time in the history of the region when it was making its first acquaintance with the outside world.

More important, from the perspective of church and Scottish history, it shows the unity of the Blantyre Mission of the Church of Scotland and Livingstoneia Mission of the Free Church. This was at a time when the bitter split of the Disruption was still an open wound in Scotland. Indeed the relations were so close that young Stewart served at different times during those three years on the staff of each mission, as did several of the official missionaries, both white and black.

The third point of interest is that when asking a chief if he wanted a mission to come to his area, Stewart invariably asked if he wanted the "English" to come! This lack of Scottish self-consciousness and positive identification of Christianity with Englishness is in contrast to the Scottish-Malawi religio-political axis of the mid-twentieth century.

Lastly it is extraordinary how both missions gave responsibility to this young man who had had no theological or missionary training whatsoever or any formal ecclesiastical endorsement.

As well as a helpful introduction, the editor has also provided excellent photographs and maps from the period.

—Andrew C. Ross

Andrew C. Ross, Senior Lecturer in the History of Missions at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, was a missionary in Malawi from 1958–1965.

The Cross and the Crescent: Reflections on Christian-Muslim Spirituality.


Phil Parshall’s *The Cross and the Crescent* is a comparative study of Islam and Christianity using the category of "spirituality" as the key for understanding. He draws liberally on his twenty-four years of Muslim evangelism in Bangladesh and Metro-Manila, the hadith of al-Buhari, and canonical scriptures of both Muslims and Christians while pursuing several purposes: to improve Muslim-Christian understanding, to stimulate Christians to greater personal devotion, and to probe the deeper meaning of Muslim and Christian spirituality.

The book can be read on each of these levels. Christian readers will gain improved understanding of Islam, mostly of the Sufi-type Islam with which the author is most acquainted. Christian self-understanding may be the biggest contribution of the book. Parshall discloses his own soul-struggles and integrates results of a questionnaire returned by 390 evangelical missionaries from 32 countries dealing with many issues including doubts about faith (32), nervousness about the inerrant Scripture issue (58), and problems with the practice of personal prayer (73).

The effort to compare Muslim and Christian spirituality with a descriptive method is less effective. Parshall is aware of the overly broad scope of the comparison (Christians and Muslims) and the definitional problems of using "spirituality" as the category of comparison. Overall, his method of comparison has too many problems.

Notwithstanding these issues, this book is quite worth reading. To Christians about Muslims, he says, allow for the possibility of an authentic experience with God, albeit an incomplete one. To Christians about Christians he says, learn humility and reject spiritual and theological pride. His candor will strike a responsive chord with all who are engaged in Muslim evangelism.

—James F. Lewis

James F. Lewis taught at Union Biblical Seminary in Pune, India (1977–81) and was a missionary of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Vietnam (1967–70). Currently he is Professor of Bible and World Religions at St. Paul Bible College, St. Bonifacius, Minnesota.
The Ideal of the Self-Governing Church: A Study in Victorian Missionary Strategy.


Peter Williams, who teaches church history at and is vice-principal of Trinity College, Bristol (England), has produced a thorough study both of the development of Venn's ideal of the self-governing church and of the history of that ideal in the committee rooms of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) after Venn's death. He has studied the minutes of the meetings of the various committees as well as their correspondence with those parts of the world where an attempt was being made to express this ideal, including Sierra Leone, Yoruba, Niger, India, and Ceylon.

The great value of the book lies in Williams's nuanced presentation of the genesis of the ideal, showing how Venn's own understanding of it changed during his lifetime, and in the detailed study of the subsequent demise of that ideal. It was not suddenly abandoned, but due to a variety of causes (the Keswick/Cambridge movement, the opposition of missionaries, the ideals of imperialism, the lack of leadership in the CMS Secretariat), the committee began to veer away from actions that would support the ideal, even while it continued to espouse Venn's articulation of it. It is an excellent study of how changes come about in institutions. It must be read by anyone interested in the CMS, Henry Venn, or self-governing churches.

The work is enriched by a description of sources used and a most complete bibliography. The index makes it a useful tool for study and research.

One will have to work one's way through the book carefully, however, as it is not easy reading. The author is so intent on presenting all aspects of the questions, all the developments in thought, affirmation, and response, and all the persons involved that it is not easy to sort out the truly significant contributions.

—Lawrence Nemer, S.V.D.

Lawrence Nemer, S.V.D., presently teaching missiology and church history at Yarra Theological Union in Melbourne (Australia), has for many years taught mission history at theological schools in Chicago (U.S.) and Tagaytay (P.I.). His doctoral thesis, on the Church Missionary Society, was under the direction of Max Warren.

Born of the Poor: The Latin American Church Since Medellín.


Born of the Poor is a collection of essays by fourteen authors familiar with Latin American Catholicism. Their aim is to assess the lasting influence of Medellín and Puebla especially in the light of the conservative reaction in the Catholic Church. The editor Edward Cleary, a Dominican priest with long experience in Bolivia and currently director of Pontifical College Josephinum, Columbus, Ohio, structures the work around three basic themes: what went
into Medellín, what came out of it, and where the church in Latin America has been going since then. The essays are short and to the point. Gustavo Gutiérrez as the key theme at Medellín was tierrez argues that the selection of pov-
a major victory. Alfred Hennelly high-
beyond Latin America, especially in the lights the impact of liberation theology United States. One of the most elo-
quently essays is by Penny Lemoux (es-
time later) in which she traces her own especially in light of her death a short Puebla.

In other essays, Daniel Levine looks at the impact of the two episcopal con-
fferences on the entire Latin American church, while Marcos McGrath com-
ments on his own intervention in the writing of some of the documents. Jaime Wright offers the testimony of a Bra-
zilian Presbyterian who witnessed the changes in the Catholic Church. Luis Ugalde and Scott Mainwaring comment upon the enduring legacy of Medellín in the face of the conservative retrenchment as well as the ambiguities that redemocratization poses for progressives in Latin Ameria. Other authors point to the base ecclesial communities as the most positive and last-
fruit of the Medellín-Puebla period. Jean-Ives Calvez ends the series of es-
ays with an assessment of the Latin American church’s impact on the rest of the Third World. All authors concur: Medellín and Puebla were not in vain; they will endure. —Jeffrey Klaiber, S.J.

Jeffrey Klaiber, S.J., teaches history at the Cath-
olic University of Peru in Lima.

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Lohfink is a German professor of Old Testament at the University of Frankfurt, and this little book, centered on the meaning of Jeremiah 31:31-34, was written in 1989, and translated here by his fellow Jesuit, John Scullion. The book has a long history, sparked off by remarks of Pope John Paul II in 1980, when he commented on the “old covenant which God has never re-
voked” (p. 5). After many presenta-
tions, Lohfink finally put together the finished form of his thoughts at a sem-
inari organized by the Sisters of Our Lady of Zion, in Rome, in 1989.

The book is an exploration into the concept of covenant, particularly the New Testament’s understanding of the relationship between the Sinai cove-

vant and Jeremiah’s covenant. Lohfink regards this new covenant as having had several levels of fulfilment, cul-

minating, for Christians, in the cove-

nant inaugurated by Jesus. However, he insists that the new covenant is sim-
ply the old covenant “shining more glorious” (p. 72), with the old still operative. Jews who live in accordance with Sinai are part of the same cove-

nant as are Christians who live in ac-
cordance with Calvary. These are two ways of salvation, but within one cov-

enant relationship with God. Romans 9-11 is not about the fate of individuals before God, facing heaven or hell, but is in fact about Israel as a nation, the other nations, and how they will experience wholeness and purpose here on earth.

This book is a fine example of a theology that is determined to elimi-
nate any concept of evangelism to Jew-

ish people in the Scriptures. Paul and the other New Testament writers would be very surprised to hear much of the argumentation. As always, Hebrews is bypassed, and as always, Jewish be-

lievers in Jesus are marginalized. On the whole, this is not a helpful book.

—Walter Riggans

Walter Riggans is Tutor in Hebrew Bible and Judaism at All Nations Christian College, England. For nine years he was a pastor and lecturer in Israel, first as an ordained minister of the Church of Scotland, then serving with the Anglican mission, the Church’s Ministry among the Jews.
Jesus Christ at the Encounter of World Religions.


The phrase “the best of the series” can appropriately be applied to J. Dupuis’s book in the Orbis “FAITH MEETS FAITH” series on interreligious dialogue. Also available in French and Italian, this book has as its purpose “to elucidate, from and in faith, the mutual relationship between Jesus Christ and the religious traditions of humanity” (p. 2). It is most competently written by one who has been immersed in the pluralism of India for over thirty years.

This seminal work divides into two broad sections. Part I traces the encounter of Jesus Christ with the Hindu tradition; the thought and experience of several Indians are presented: Gandhi, K. S. Sen, S. Radhakrishnan, Akhilananda, M. C. Parekh, and B. Upadhyaya. Dupuis elaborates various Christological models that emerge from this Neo-Hinduism encounter as “stepping-stones” to dialogue with the Christian tradition. His approach creatively and inductively contextualizes the questions that any theology of religion must confront.

Next, an entire chapter presents the experience of the “Hindu-Christian” Benedictine monk Henri Le Saux (Swami Abhishiktananda). This is followed by a pivotal chapter that carefully raises the foundational questions surrounding “Which Christian Theology of Religions?” The stage has been set for an enlightening, perceptive discussion of Jesus Christ’s role within the world’s faith-traditions for, as Dupuis asserts, “the Christological problem constitutes the nub of this debate” (p. 110).

Dupuis is a master-teacher in his careful, precise approach to this complex area of mission theology.

Part 2, entitled “Christ, One and Universal,” addresses the Christological, theological, and missiological problems raised by today's religious pluralism and the praxis of interreligious dialogue. Topics presented (again with precision and depth) include multiple divine covenants, salvation without the Gospel, the economy of the Spirit, the unicity and universality of Jesus Christ, and dialogue in the church’s mission and theology. This simple narrative of topic areas is most inadequate to capture the scope of Dupuis’s work.

As one finishes this demanding, closely written work, one feels that the entire question has been openly and adequately explored with great depth and nuance. I know of no other book available that so completely addresses Christological questions vis-à-vis world religions. Dupuis’s contribution is particularly important and welcomed with congratulations and sincere gratitude.

—James H. Kroeger, M.M.

James H. Kroeger, a Maryknoll missionary who holds a doctorate in missiology from the Gregorian University in Rome, has been a missionary in Asia for over two decades. Until recently he was based in Manila at the Loyola School of Theology; in January 1991 he began serving a six-year term as the Asia-Pacific assistant on the Maryknoll General Council.

The Early Years of a Dutch Colonial Mission: The Karo Field.


Rita Smith Kipp, professor of anthropology, Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio, has been familiar with Karo Batak society since 1972. Her fieldwork and research in Dutch and Indonesian archives form the background of this interesting and well-edited book about a unique missionary enterprise, initiated by a tobacco-magnate of the Deli Company (pp. 38-43) and carried out by the Dutch Missionary Society.

It presents the perennial dilemma: how to proclaim the Gospel without becoming dependent on the benevolence of colonial governors with their own political and economic interests abundantly evident in this field.

In chapters one and two the author discusses her approach. She lucidly elaborates the premises and practice of Dutch policy and gives special attention to the Protestant theology of missions. The first part of her research on the religion of the Dutch
Maria Cornelia Jongeling is a retired pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church (1941-1979), with missionary experience in Indonesia, teaching sociology, ethics, missionary history, and ecumenics at the Social Academy, Jakarta, and the Theological Academy, Ujung Pandang (Sulawesi) during 1957-1960, 1971-1972, 1977-1978.


Since there has been no annual publication of the "Japan Christian Yearbook" since 1970, this is a major historico-theological publication. Section 1, "World Christian Trends" and Section 4, "Churches, Councils, and Movements," present a comprehensive survey by representative writers in Japan of the Roman Catholic, NCC Japan-related, and evangelical churches. Although uneven in content, they provide the setting and the relationships for each of these major groups.

As Professor Kumazawa indicates these twenty-eight essays show Christians "groping toward the way of resolution and reconciliation" over the contradictory approaches of "church growth versus human liberation," of "docetic tendencies (of faith) to reject and abandon its current context . . ." and of the churches learning to act and live responsibly (pp. xxv-xvi).

Emerging from the difficult period of rebuilding from 1945 to 1965, Japanese Christians sensed anew their responsibility to Asian neighbors (chap. 4), and as "Christians in Turbulent Japanese Society" (section 2) were threatened by and opposed nationalistic movements (chap. 5, "Yasu kuni Shrine and the Emperor System"), they reaffirmed their new Constitution and their role as Christians (chap. 6, "Christians and Peacemaking," and were deeply divided over the role of education and Japan's rising technological and economic strength (chap. 7, "Campus Protests . . ." chap. 8, "The Church in Dispute . . .").

At the same time Christians became aware of and began work with minorities, environmental concerns, women, and Asian migrant workers (chaps 8-11). The inability to evangelize rural Japan (chap. 13) and the inroads by those movements called heretical (Jehovah's Witness, Mormons, and Unification Church) are considered.

At the same time, (section 3, "Caring and Communicative Ministries") work was continued and extended among day laborers, with the disabled, in the establishment of hospitals, through a secular agency for telephone counseling, in mass communications and publications, and by Japanese Christian artists and writers.

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