Contextualization: Mission in the Balance

Just when the coming of A.D. 2000, with its latent triumphalism, stirs talk of fulfilling the Great Commission, here we are bringing up the nettlesome issue of contextualization. In the lead article of this issue, Darrell Whiteman recalls a student at Asbury Seminary who had wrestled with feelings of alienation toward her Thai family and culture. Is she typical of converts in Buddhist lands? Does a lack of contextualization help to account for the fact that after four centuries of Catholic mission and a century and a half of Protestant mission, barely one percent of the population of Thailand has been attracted to the Christian Gospel?

G. C. Oosthuizen follows Whiteman with a detailed account of the runaway appeal of the Zionist churches among South African blacks. Soon, reports Oosthuizen, half of the population of Christian blacks will be members of Zionist-type African Independent Churches. Meanwhile, according to the South African Christian Handbook, Western-oriented churches in South Africa attract a significantly smaller portion of the Christian population than they did three decades ago. The losses from the mainline churches are mostly turning up in African Independent Churches, of which the Zionists account for about 80 percent. Western-style Christianity among South African blacks—however effective it may have appeared in the past—has not been able to relate authentically to the taproot of African traditional religion. But the Zionist churches have.

The contextualization issue came to mind when we read a report last year from the Evangelical Missions Information Service about the state of the Christian community of Waorani Indians of Ecuador. The evangelical world remembers them as Aucas, the people for whom Jim Elliot and his four companions gave their lives in 1956. After stirring stories of sacrifice and spiritual breakthroughs over the last forty years, the Waorani church today is seen to be in danger of succumbing to the encroachments of secular culture. For various reasons, “no self-reliant church emerged among the Waorani,” states the report. Are contextualization issues at the root of this tenuous situation?

The good news is that when individuals like Whiteman’s Thai student hear about the principles of contextualization, they often experience a spiritual and cultural breakthrough. In her own words, “It always seemed strange to me that after I converted to Christianity out of Buddhism, I became so aggressive and felt forced to turn my back on my Buddhist family and denounce my culture. Now I realize . . . that I can practice a cherished value of meekness, affirm much of my Thai culture, and follow Jesus in the Thai way.”

In our pursuit of authentic contextualization we may be privileged to discover in other cultures a foretaste of the treasures that will strengthen and guide us for faithfulness in the kingdom.
Contextualization: The Theory, the Gap, the Challenge

Darrell L. Whiteman

Contextualization may be one of the most important issues in mission today. Unlike the “Death of God” movement in theology, contextualization is no mere missiological fad that will fade when another “hot topic” catches our attention. Concern over issues of contextualization has been a part of the Christian church from its inception, even though the vocabulary of contextualization dates back only to the early 1970s. It is a perennial challenge—one that Christians have faced every time they have communicated the Gospel across language and cultural boundaries. The church has struggled with this problem through the ages as it has evolved from one era to another. Essentially, contextualization is concerned with how the Gospel and culture relate to one another across geographic space and down through time.

Contextualization captures in method and perspective the challenge of relating the Gospel to culture. In this sense the concern of contextualization is ancient—going back to the early church as it struggled to break loose from its Jewish cultural trappings and enter the Greco-Roman world of the Gentiles. At the same time, it is something new. Ever since the word emerged in the 1970s, there has been almost an explosion of writing, thinking, and talking about contextualization.

Contextualization is part of an evolving stream of thought that relates the Gospel and church to a local context. In the past we have used words such as “adaptation,” “accommodation,” and “indigenization” to describe this relationship between Gospel, church, and culture, but “contextualization,” introduced in 1971, and a companion term “inculturation” that emerged in the literature in 1974, are deeper, more dynamic, and more adequate terms to describe what we are about in mission today. So I believe we are making some progress in our understanding of the relationship between Gospel, church, and culture, but we have a long way to go in everyday practice.

Contextualization is not something we pursue motivated by an agenda of pragmatic efficiency. Rather, it must be followed because of our faithfulness to God, who sent God’s son as a servant to die so that we all may live. As Peter Schineller says, “We have the obligation to search continually for ways in which the good news can be more deeply lived, celebrated and shared.”

In this essay I will discuss three functions of contextualization in mission today. I will then look at the gap that exists between the theory and the practice of contextualization, and then I will discuss two areas of resistance to contextualization.

Last year one of our students at Asbury Seminary, studying with us from Thailand, said to me, “Now that I have been studying contextualization and have discovered how the Gospel relates to culture, I am realizing that I can be both Christian and Thai.” On a recent sabbatical in Southeast Asia, I probed the question of how the Gospel was being proclaimed and lived out in a contextualized manner, and, frankly, I was disappointed. In Thailand I heard over and over again, “To be Thai is to be Buddhist.” The notion that one could be both Thai and Christian was an oxymoron to many. My student at Asbury went on to confide, “It always seemed strange to me that after I converted to Christianity out of Buddhism, I became so aggressive and felt forced to turn my back on my Buddhist family and denounce my culture. Now I realize through the insights of contextualization that I can practice a cherished value of meekness, affirm much of my Thai culture, and follow Jesus in the ‘Thai Way.” Contextualization was the key that unlocked the door in her understanding that had kept Christianity bound up in a Westernized room. But now, with this new insight, a burst of sunshine has come into her room that affirmed Buddhist teaching on meekness and reinforced her love and respect for her family, while at the same time strengthening her love for God as revealed in Jesus Christ. She is now working on a dissertation entitled “The Way of Meekness: Being Christian and Thai in the Thai Way.”

Three Functions of Contextualization

This story of my Thai student sets the stage for discussing the first function of contextualization in mission. Contextualization attempts to communicate the Gospel in word and deed and to establish the church in ways that make sense to people within their local cultural context, presenting Christianity in such a way that it meets people’s deepest needs and penetrates their worldview, thus allowing them to follow Christ and remain within their own culture.

This function seems at first to be self-evident, but it is clear we have not always done mission in this mode. Why, then, this sudden burst of energy and excitement, at least in the academy, about this notion of contextualization? I believe the answer lies partly in the postcolonial discovery that much of our understanding and practice of faith has been shaped by our own culture and context, and yet we often assumed that our culturally conditioned interpretation of the Gospel was the Gospel. We are now beginning to realize that we have often confused the two and have inadvertently equated our culturally conditioned versions of the Gospel with the kingdom of God.

As we have become more critical in a postmodern world, we have discovered how urgent the task of contextualization is everywhere in the world, including—or should I say especially—in North America. An example of contextualization is the Willow Creek Community Church in suburban Chicago, Illinois, which discovered the need to contextualize the Gospel and the church in order to reach a particular subculture of American society in this location.

My concern over why the mission of the church so often required people to abandon their culture is the main reason I trained as an anthropologist in preparation for cross-cultural ministry. I initially expected my research and ministry in Melanesia to help primarily expatriate missionaries figure out the complex and diverse Melanesian cultural context. But it did not take me long to discover that when I talked about contextualization with Melanesians, they became very excited about the possibility of being Christian and Melanesian without first having to become Australian, German, American, or whatever the cultural origin was of the missionaries with whom they identified.
On a furlough assignment I remember sharing with churches in the United States about my mission work in Melanesia and driving home the idea that my work was not to encourage Melanesian Christians to become like Americans but rather to enable Melanesians to become better Melanesians by becoming Christian. This was a brand new idea for many congregations with whom I spoke. I remember the enthusiasm of one elderly parishioner when she asked, “Did you invent this way of missionary work? I’ve never heard anyone talk like this.” “No,” I replied, “I can’t take credit for it. It’s not my invention.” Being a good Methodist, she figured this must have been John Wesley’s invention. And although he was certainly on target, credit for this approach to mission must go back to the early church as it broke free from its Jewish cultural trappings and made the important decision at the Jerusalem Council that one could follow Christ without first becoming culturally a Jew (Acts 15).

Present-day discussions of contextualization are getting us back in touch with this principle, for at nearly every era of the church’s history, Christians have had to relearn this important principle. Contextualization is a fine balancing act between necessary involvement in the culture, being in the situation, and also maintaining an outside, critical perspective that is also needed. In anthropology, we would call this holding in tension emic and etic perspectives—the insider’s deep understanding with the outsider’s critique.

**Good Contextualization Offends**

Another function of contextualization in mission is to offend—but only for the right reasons, not the wrong ones. Good contextualization offends people for the right reasons. Bad contextualization, or the lack of it altogether, offends them for the wrong reasons. When the Gospel is presented in word and deed, and the fellowship of believers we call the church is organized along appropriate cultural patterns, then people will more likely be confronted with the offense of the Gospel, exposing their own sinfulness and the tendency toward evil, oppressive structures and behavior patterns within their culture. It could certainly be argued that the genius of the Wesleyan revival in eighteenth-century England was precisely that through preaching, music, and social organization in a society undergoing rapid and significant social and economic change, John and Charles Wesley contextualized Christianity so well that the power of the Gospel transformed personal lives and reformed a nation. 6

Andrew Walls said it so clearly years ago in contrasting the indigenizing and the pilgrim principles, which we must always strive to hold in balance. He notes:

Along with the indigenising principle which makes his faith a place to feel at home, the Christian inherits the pilgrim principle, which whispers to him that he has no abiding city and warns him that to be faithful to Christ will put him out of step with his society; for that society never existed, in East or West, ancient time or modern, which could absorb the word of Christ painlessly into its system. Jesus within Jewish culture, Paul within Hellenistic culture, take it for granted that there will be rubs and friction—not from the adoption of a new culture, but from the transformation of the mind towards that of Christ.

Unfortunately, when Christianity is not contextualized or is contextualized poorly, then people are culturally offended, turned off to inquiring more about who Jesus is, or view missionaries and their small band of converts with suspicion as cultural misfits and aliens. When people are offended for the wrong
Contextualization forces us to have a more adequate view of God as the God of all persons.

I have experienced this connection many times where two Christians from very different cultures have much more in common than do their respective cultures. This is because the common bond that unites them and bridges the chasm created by language and cultural differences is the Holy Spirit, who knows no boundaries of race, class, gender, or social location.

Encounters with Christians from other cultural contexts expand our understanding of God, for no longer are we satisfied with our own limited perception and experience. For example, I learned very little about the church functioning as a community and body of believers growing up in the United States, where faith is so privatized and individual. I had to learn this important biblical principle of the community nature of the church from living with Christians in a Melanesian village. Contextualization, therefore, forces us to have a wider loyalty that “corresponds to an enlarged and more adequate view of God as the God of all persons, male and female, and as a God who especially hears the cry of the poor. God can no longer simply be the god of myself, my family, my community, my nation; such a god is ultimately an idol or false god, one made according to my narrow and limited image and perspective.”

In this sense the anthropologists are correct—human beings have a tendency to create God in their own image, but we must always counter this observation with the biblical view that God has created all human beings in God’s image. Stretching our understanding of God through contextualization will enable us to gain insights from around the world, which we need to inform each other and certainly the church in North America. From Asia we can learn more about the mystery and transcendence of God; from Oceania we can recover the notion of the body of Christ as community; from Africa we can discover the nature of celebration and the healing power of the church; and from Latin America we are learning about the role of the church in the work for justice.

In his well-known book The Primal Vision (1963), which reflects on his study of the growth of the church in Buganda, John V. Taylor helps us realize the value of learning from and listening to other voices of Christian faith. He notes:

> The question is, rather, whether in Buganda, and elsewhere in Africa, the Church will be enabled by God’s grace to discover a new synthesis between a saving Gospel and a total, unbroken unity of society. For there are many who feel that the spiritual sickness of the West, which reveals itself in the divorce of the sacred from the secular, of the cerebral from the instinctive, and in the loneliness and homelessness of individualism, may be healed through a recovery of the wisdom which Africa has not yet thrown away. The world church awaits something new out of Africa. The church in Buganda, and in many other parts of the continent, by obedient response to God’s calling, for all its sinfulness and bewilderment, may yet become the agent through whom the Holy Spirit will teach his people everywhere how to be in Christ without ceasing to be involved in mankind.

When I think about this function of contextualization in expanding the universal church’s understanding of God, I am reminded of the picture we are given in Revelation 7:9 of people from every ethnolinguistic group surrounding the throne of God, not worshiping God in English, or even English as a second language, but in their own language shaped by their own worldview and culture. We can count on hearing about 6,280 languages. The view we get of the kingdom is a multicultural view, not one of ethnic uniformity. One of the things we admire about the Gospel is its ability to speak within the worldview of every culture. To me, this feature is the empirical proof of the Gospel’s authenticity.

Perhaps one of the most important functions of contextualization in mission is to remind us that we do not have a privileged position when it comes to understanding and practicing Christianity. It cannot be the exclusive property of any one culture, for it refuses to be culture bound; it continually bursts free from the chains of bondage to cultural tradition. Kosuke Koyama reminded us that there is “no handle” on the cross; and Lamin Sanneh has persuasively argued that Christianity demands to be “translated” from one cultural context to another.

The Gap Between Our Talk and Our Practice

Recently I had breakfast with the president of a large Protestant denominational mission board in the United States. In our conversation he said, “I have come to realize that the cutting edge of missiology and our most urgent need in mission today is contextualization. Unless we present the Gospel locally in ways that connect to peoples’ language, culture, and worldview, we will fail in our efforts at world evangelization.” I nodded my head in hearty agreement, cheered him on, and affirmed his insight. I said that this approach to cross-cultural ministry represented the best thinking in missiology today and was clearly anchored in the biblical model of our Lord in his incarnation. But then this mission executive went on to say, “The problem I face in trying to move our mission toward a more contextualized approach is that I am held accountable to a board of trustees, and they don’t understand anything about contextualization. They
are interested only in extending our denomination across the face of the globe, sincerely believing that this is the best way to win the world for Christ." It was obvious that he was stuck between a theological rock and an ecclesiastical hard place. I urged him to push ahead in leading his mission to become more contextualized in its approach. With confidence, I boldly stated that if his mission chose the contextualization route, in the end they would have more churches planted and connected to their denomination than if they continued in their present noncontextual approach, even though these churches wouldn't necessarily resemble the same kinds of churches his board of trustee members attended every Sunday.

This conversation illustrates the fact that there still remains an enormous gulf between the models of contextualization that we missiologists discuss and teach in our seminary classes and the practice of contextualized mission by North American and European missionaries, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. Contextualization and denominational extension are two very different agendas, but if most of us are committed intellectually to the former, we frequently draw our paycheck from the later, and this creates the problem. It must also be noted that this is not just a problem for Western missionaries. For example, Korean missionaries, as well as other non-Western missionaries, have the same struggle of disentangling their culture from their understanding and practice of Christianity.  

Another illustration of this tension between contextualization and denominational extension comes from my mission work in Melanesia. I was asked to lead a weeklong workshop on Melanesian culture and religion for Catholic missionaries working in the southern highlands of Papua New Guinea. They were wanting to pioneer a new pastoral approach called Basic Christian Communities. As we know, this concept originated in Latin America, and for this Catholic order it had spread to Tanzania and was now being brought to Papua New Guinea. As an anthropologist, I led them through the process of understanding the social structures, economic patterns, values, and worldviews of Melanesian communities. We had a wonderful week together as we got deeper into understanding things Melanesian. Then we came to the final session. I recalled how we had discussed in great detail the nature of basic Melanesian communities, and I suggested that if they would begin their new pastoral approach in this Melanesian context and let it take on a Melanesian face and be expressed in Melanesian ways, and if they would infuse this Melanesian world with Gospel values, then their pastoral plan, I predicted, would be successful. These basic Christian communities would be both Melanesian and Christian. "But," I warned them, "if you approach these communities with a prepackaged plan and lay that heavy burden on the shoulders of these Melanesian communities, I fear your approach will fail, because it will not be rooted in Melanesian soil." 

A veteran missionary at the back of the room jumped up and, with anger in his voice, said, "Now you have gone too far! We are here first as—and he named his order—and there are certain distinctive features of our Catholic order on which we must insist. We cannot forfeit those in order to adapt to the Melanesian context."

My heart sank and my blood pressure rose. After pouring myself out for a week to help them understand how these communities could be both Christian and Melanesian, they still did not get it. They were fearful that contextualization would lead to at best a weak church or at worst to syncretism. In fact, it is just the opposite. When we fail to contextualize, we run a much greater risk of establishing weak churches, whose members will turn to non-Christian syncretistic explanations, follow nonbiblical lifestyles, and engage in magical rituals. This is because a noncontextualized Christianity seldom engages people at the level of their deepest needs and aspirations, and so we end up with what Jesuit Jaime Bulatao in the Philippines calls a "split-level" Christianity.  

But the news on the contextualization front is not all bad. In fact, there is a lot of good news. We have made some progress.  

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Non-contextualized Christianity seldom engages people at the level of their deepest needs.

Where has it been? In worship styles? church social organization and structures? in contextual theology? We can celebrate the incremental progress that has occurred over the past twenty-five years, but there is still a gap—and at times an enormous gap—between our scholarly books and articles on models of contextualization that we write to one another and the actual practice around the world, where in far too many corners of the globe, Christianity is still identified as a Western religion and where for various reasons people have missed the universal appeal of Jesus.

There are notable exceptions, but they tend to occur in places where Western missionaries or Western-trained national church leaders are not in control. In fact, if we look around the world to see what has happened in the past twenty-five years since the terms "contextualization" and "inculturation" came into missiological discussions, we will discover that some of the arguments about contextualization have passed us by as the Christian church's center of gravity has shifted from the North and West to the South and East.

A notable exception to this lack of contextualization are some of the African Independent Churches. The documentary film Rise Up and Walk profiles five of these churches, and it knocks the theological and ecclesiastical socks off my students every time I show it. Ecclesiastical hegemony—a carryover from colonial and political domination, and a close cousin of economic domination today—is one of the major obstacles to contextualization. Let me illustrate what I mean.

A friend of mine at a school that was about to introduce a Ph.D. program in intercultural studies complained that such a program was not needed. His reasoning was that non-Western church leaders who would be attracted to the program would be people who already understood their culture and context. He mused, "What could they possibly learn from a Ph.D. in intercultural studies that they don't already know because they were born in a non-Western context? What they really need," he argued, "is a Ph.D. in systematic theology and biblical studies so that they can return to their countries and teach and preach the truth"—which to him meant his particular denominational theological system.

Little does my systematic theologian colleague realize that until non-Western Christians learn how to exegete their own cultural context as well as they exegete the biblical text, no number of Ph.D. students trained in standard Western theological and biblical studies will automatically enable and encourage church leaders to plant and grow indigenous, contextualized, churches.
Points of Resistance

What are the points of resistance to contextualization? I limit my discussion to two primary sources. One source of resistance comes from the mission-sending organizations themselves. I have often observed the enthusiasm with which missionary candidates train for cross-cultural ministry. It is thrilling to see them acquire skills to begin distinguishing the universalizing Gospel from their parochial culture. They come to realize the value of their cross-cultural training and the need to express the Gospel in ways that are appropriate to the local context of their candidates train for cross-cultural ministry. It is thrilling to see comes from the mission-sending organizations themselves. I discussion to two primary sources. One source of resistance

Points of Resistance

have often observed the enthusiasm with which missionary them acquire skills to begin distinguishing the universalizing sometimes surprised, and certainly disappointed, when they discover that their mission organization is very intent on reproducing the church “over there” to look like the church back home. I have observed that this problem occurs equally with independent “faith missions,” denominational mission boards, and Catholic mission orders. In other words, we are all guilty.

The first point of resistance to contextualization often comes from mission executives and denominational leaders, who frequently do not think missiologically about these issues. They nevertheless hold positions of power and influence that shape the patterns of mission work.

The second source of resistance to contextualization, and sometimes the dominant one, comes from the leaders of the very churches the missions created several generations previously. This resistance can certainly catch new missionaries by surprise. They wonder, “Why would these people be so hesitant and cautious about connecting the Gospel to their own context in ways that are both relevant and challenging?” I believe the primary cause is that as non-Western Christians have learned a non-contextualized Christianity from their missionary teachers and have adopted it at a formal, behavioral level, it still has not yet penetrated the deeper levels of their worldview. It has not connected with their social structure or addressed the critical questions arising from their political and economic situations. When this happens after several generations it is not unusual for the church to be plagued with nominalism. But there is security about contextualization can be both frightening and threatening, especially to those persons who are in positions of power.

I believe the only way through this maze is to discover the tools and perspectives of contextualization and then have the courage to implement them. We must work at closing the gap between our discussions about contextualization, the training of cross-cultural witnesses and church leaders, and their actual practice of contextualization around the world.

Why, for example, does Christianity continue to be viewed as a foreign religion in much of Asia and Southeast Asia? The answer? Because frequently that is how it is practiced. For example, in China before 1949 there were about 10,000 missionaries and 1.5 million Christians. A common phrase at the time was, “One more Christian, one less Chinese,” or “Gain a convert, lose a citizen.” A common, if not implicit, perception by both missionaries and Chinese was that one could not follow Christ without becoming Westernized in the process. This is the old Judaizer problem in a new guise. Then Mao Tse-tung came to power, and the Western missionaries were forced to leave China. And many thought the church would now die without their presence. But it didn’t. In fact it has flourished, with a rough estimate of 30-40 million Christians today. Now what is the missiological lesson to be learned here? Kick out the missionaries and the church grows? Perhaps, but I do not think so.

The lesson to be learned is that the Chinese discovered that the Gospel could be contextualized in their own contemporary Chinese experience, as oppressive as it often was. They discovered they could follow Jesus and remain Chinese. In other words, they discovered the important principle hammered out in the Jerusalem Council as recorded in Acts 15. Gentiles did not have to become Jews culturally in order to follow Christ. And Chinese do not have to become Westernized, acquiring white, middle-class values to be Christian. One of the most precious items out of China that I have held in my hands is a two-inch-thick Chinese hymnal printed on thin rice paper, containing 1,000 hymns—all created during the turbulent period following 1949. It is a beautiful symbol and vivid reminder of the importance and fruit of contextualization.

Conclusion

Although we can see the obvious need for contextualization, the actual practice of it is not easy. Blinded by our own ethnocentrism and ecclesiastical hegemony, we find it is very difficult to cultivate the art of listening and learning from those different from ourselves. But in a spirit of humility this is a fundamental requirement for contextualization.

The challenge that contextualization brings to us is, How do we carry out the Great Commission and live out the Great Commandment in a world of cultural diversity with a Gospel that is both truly Christian in content and culturally significant in form?

The function of contextualization in mission leaves us with three challenges:

1. Contextualization changes and transforms the context—this is the prophetic challenge.
2. Contextualization expands our understanding of the Gospel because we now see the Gospel through a different cultural lens—this is the hermeneutic challenge.
3. Contextualization changes the missionaries because they will not be the same once they have become part of the body of Christ in a context different from their own—this is the personal challenge.

In our discussion and practice of contextualization, we must take our cues from the incarnation. In the same way that Jesus emptied himself and dwelt among us, we must be willing to do likewise as we enter another culture with the Gospel. The incarnation is our model for contextualization, as J.D. Gordon once said, “Jesus is God spelled out in language human beings can understand”—I would add, “in every culture, in every context.”

Notes


3. For a discussion of contextualization as a method in contrast to church growth strategy, see Taber, “Contextualization.”


5. See George Hunter’s discussion of the Willow Creek Community Church in *Church for the Unchurched* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996).


10. Ibid., p. 116.


The value of other people’s perspectives can be destroyed by ignorance. The movement known as African Independent Churches (AIC) in South Africa provides a case in point. Initially—from about 1890 to 1920—the movement received considerable attention, but it was largely ignored in succeeding decades. It is past time to revisit the AIC to see what there is to learn from the indigenous Christianity of South Africa.

In recent decades the AIC movement has grown into the most dynamic church movement in South Africa. It is proliferating among black South Africans, attracting adherents of traditional African religions, and drawing into its fold many former members of mainline churches (i.e., churches that trace their origins to Western churches and missions). In 1950, fully 75 to 80 percent of all black South African Christians were members of mainline churches; only 12 to 14 percent were members of the AICs. By 1980 the mainline share of the black Christian population had dropped to 52 percent, while the AICs had increased to 27 percent; by 1991 the figures were 41 percent and 36 percent. This dramatic shift has occurred despite the apparent absence of any kind of AIC missionizing program. It would appear that traditional religionists and mainline church members flock to AIC churches simply for what they are and what they do. If present trends continue, by early next century most black South African Christians will be members of AIC congregations.

There are some 6,000 denominations within the South African AIC movement (many consisting of a single congregation).

If present trends continue, early in the next century most black South African Christians will be in independent churches.

They range theologically from evangelical to syncretistic; some groups mix Christian beliefs with ancestor reverence and other animistic practices. Almost uniformly, however, a Christian sense of sharing and caring is their distinguishing mark. Many congregations gather in houses, shacks, shelters made from wooden boxes, or in open spaces in the cities and towns. Here the spirit of the traditional extended family finds expression in an ecclesiastical context, along with the basic aspects of traditional culture and religion. The venue is not important as long as there is fellowship, spontaneity in worship, mutual discussion of problems, healing services that provide spiritual and physical refreshment, and empowerment rituals that deal with malevolent social and spiritual forces. In most mainline South African churches, these features are poorly represented or missing altogether. It is not surprising, therefore, that many South African Christians in the mainline churches attend AIC healing and exorcism sessions and that they are reappraising the traditional approaches. Both the theology and the structure of mainline churches have become progressively more suspect.

There are two major strands within the AIC movement of South Africa, designated by the terms “independent”—and “indigenous.” Churches that split off from Western-oriented churches are referred to as independent; churches that were initiated by Africans themselves, never having had ties to Western missions, are referred to as indigenous. The former tend to selectively retain certain features of the churches from which they seceded, while the latter are more oriented to traditional African religions. As is common in discussions of these two strands, in this article both will be embraced by the abbreviation AIC—African Independent Churches.

The movement is also characterized by three types. Ethiopian churches were inspired by Ethiopian-type churches in the United States at the turn of the century, especially the African Methodist Episcopal Church. South African Ethiopian churches reacted strongly at the end of the last century to ecclesiastical colonialism; they also played a part in the formation of the African liberation movement. A second type is known as Zionist. The Zionist movement resulted from contacts with the Christian Catholic Church, based in Zion City, Illinois. Zion City was founded around the turn of the century by John Alexander Dowie as a Christian “restorationist” community where faith healing was practiced. The third category is known as Apostolic. The Apostolic AIC churches resulted from the initiative of John Lake and Thomas Hezmalhalch of the Apostolic Faith Movement in the United States. Arriving in South Africa in 1908, they established the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) and brought with them the Pentecostal Christianity exemplified by the Azusa Street Mission of Los Angeles.

Of these three movements, the Ethiopian is the smallest, and it remains ecclesiastically closest to the mainline churches, while the Zionist and Apostolic movements have assimilated more of traditional African culture and religion. The word “Zion” appears in 80 percent of AIC names; most of the churches influenced by the AFM added “Zion” and “of South Africa” to their names. Those who omit “Zion” from their name indicate thereby that they wish to avoid association with certain Zionist churches that have become indigenized to the point of losing significant elements of Christianity.

Reassessing Traditional Culture

The growing appeal of the AIC churches focuses the issue of the importance of African traditional culture. Western ideology and scholarship often undervalue African cultural heritages. Things African are seen as lacking significance. African thinking is perceived as “prelogical” because it does not fit the secular intellectualist approach. The former is seen as “primitive” and “traditional,” the latter as “civilized” and “modern.” Likewise,
for many years the typical missionary and anthropological litera
ture has presented African religion in a negative manner, charac-
terizing it as pervaded with irrational beliefs in magic, fetishes,
spirits, ancestors, and so forth. Indigenous values and sociomoral
injunctions based on African cultural and religious inheritances
have been underestimated and misrepresented. In this intellectu-
tual climate, it is little wonder that Western theological con-
structs and ecclesiastical models were imposed on South African
Christians. As a result, the positive contributions of traditional
African culture were smothered.

But a process of reassessment is taking place. In 1994 a major
article in the New York Times Magazine on AICs characterized
them as the "surprising silent majority in South Africa." The
editors wrote, "The Zion Church's millions work hard, abhor
violence and respect authority. They are more likely than revolu-
tionaries to shape the future." As is characteristic in many
parts of the world today, it is not change that predominates. More
and more it is the past that endures. The spiritualities of the past
have a way of reappearing in the religions of the present. Intellectu-
tual rationalizations of religion and philosophical and theologi-
cal fashions do not last. In contrast, deep spiritual themes reassert
themselves.

African Traditional Religion (ATR) runs deeper than the
empirical Christianity of the West. Utility is an all-important
aspect of religion, most especially of ATR. It is not the outward
form of a religion that makes a lasting impact but its essence. In
African societies, where the self is composite and not unitary,
open to its surrounding environment and not closed in upon
itself, relationship is the essence of life and religion. The most
prominent features of ATR include a strong sense of community,
of sharing and caring, anchored in the extended-family patterns
of rural Africa. African traditional moral systems have the inter-
est of the human community at heart. As Sogolo states, "An
action [is] judged right or wrong depending on the extent to
which it promote[s] well-being, mutual understanding and so-
cial harmony."

The preservation of social harmony and timeless axiomatic
themes is precisely what the AICs have achieved. The AICs
reflect the traditional African outlook—the metaphysical world
with its spiritual beings and forces, its view of the nature of truth
and of cause and effect, its emphasis on mutuality and communi-
ity life, and its understanding of quality-of-life issues. A careful
reassessment of the AIC movement will make this claim abun-
dantly clear.

AIC Christianity Versus Individualism

The AICs are protective of what they consider to be the basic
aspects of their indigenous culture. The most prominent feature
of ATR that is preserved in AIC churches is the strong sense of
fellowship, of sharing and caring, and of being part of a dynamic
community bound together by mutual assistance. In times of
need, one is not individualized by AIC churches in the Western
manner. On the contrary, members receive assistance on the
basis of mutuality within the extended family. This approach
contrasts sharply with the mainline churches, where, typically,
special committees—which often function poorly—are formed
to assist the poor. Recipients of assistance find themselves singled
out as individuals, disconnected from the larger community of
believers. The sense of community and mutuality is lost. This
individualizing of the human being is seen by the AICs as a
negative, un-Christian development, and it is foreign to their
very essence. Fellowship and mutual support, caring and shar-
ing as understood in the traditional African context, do not find
much expression in modern Western churches. This goes far to
explain the drain of members from the mainline churches to the
AICs.

In the AICs—again, a reflection of ATR—reality is not found
in solitary being but in human relationships. More relationships
mean "more power and transcendence, for power flows through
relationship." The more intense and numerous are one's rela-
tionships, the more one's own spirituality is enhanced. It is
essential, therefore, to enter into networks of solidarity. This
principle finds expression in the thousands of small AIC single-
congregation fellowships, especially in urban and informal settle-
ment areas, that act as fully fledged denominations. The empha-
sis is on being part of the cosmic web that holds all things and
beings together.

Bringing Two Worlds Together

The juxtaposition of the world of modern industrialism with the
world of traditional disposition and orientation often leads to a
new dualism that "causes a kind of mental and ethical schizo-
phrenia in some spheres of conduct." When black Africans
embraced Western Christianity, crises of identity were often
experienced—crises still apparent among members of mainline
black churches. Within the AICs the secular onslaught against
the wisdom of centuries is counteracted calmly and strongly.
Social, psychological, religious, political, and cultural aspects are
interwoven with the religious and the secular. Because the AICs
have solved the dualism between empirical Western-oriented
Christianity and African traditional culture and religion, they are
able to help those who have come to them from the mainline
churches. The AICs have taken on a reconstructive mission in
which the fundamental principle of traditional African religion
has been analyzed and interpreted in the Christian context and
applied in an urban, secularized world.

In ATR thinking, everything must be subjected to the good
of society, as this constitutes the divine order. Reconciliation,
therefore, is a continuous activity in the AICs. Evil forces that
are apprehensible are not as severe a threat as hidden anger; attacks
resulting from such anger are destructive to individuals and
society. In the AICs these evil forces, not Satan, receive the
greater attention. They destroy harmony where societal har-
mony is a primary concern. Many of these evil forces are pro-
jected sociopolitical problems. To remove the effects of such
forces, exorcism—the most prominent ritual of AIC—is applied.
In the AIC perspective, the cosmic order—not merely the indi-
vidual—benefits from such services of exorcism.

Secular politics, which implies struggle, disharmony, and
animosity, is avoided because the AICs' holistic self-help ap-
proach has proved more effective. This avoidance of political
involvement has sometimes given rise to the charge that the AICs
are irrelevant in South African society. This is a simplistic and
unfair analysis of the desperate situation in which members of

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AIC churches find themselves. "While the AICs have turned away from public causes, they have been strongly involved on their own ground [with] urban poverty." They have replicated

and preserved the equality and mutuality of the traditional extended family system in the urban and settlement areas, along with other advantageous social practices of an earlier rural generation. A spiritual, communitarian approach is the chosen means of problem solving, not secular politics. The AICs are more than a "silent majority"; they are South Africa's silent source of power. Christianity began as a religion of the down-trodden, the underprivileged, the outcast. The AICs ensure that it survives in such a context.

**Traditional Healing Procedures**

A substantial number of Africans seek the traditional healing approach rooted in ATR. ATR gives attention to culturally conditioned diseases that Western-trained doctors and psychiatrists are unable to handle. Many activities of the traditional healer are psychotherapeutic, providing human warmth, empathy, and integrity that bring more comfort to the patient than the clinical, often impersonal Western approach. The healing process is humanized; a deep relationship is established with the patient, who is never a mere object to be cured.

The AICs typically adapt forms of traditional African healing. In the AIC perspective, disease is not just a physical or mental condition but also a religious matter. Sickness implies an imbalance between the metaphysical and the human world that is disturbing the flow of life force (numinous power). The prophets/prayer healers in the AICs treat therapy-resistant cases of culture-bound syndromes in African patients. In effect, the AIC healers become health care providers. They also often become healers of society by creating harmonious relationships. This cannot usually be said of Western-trained psychologists and physicians.

Cooperation between traditional healers and Western-trained professionals is becoming increasingly acceptable in Africa. The impact of the AICs is due to their holistic stance toward healing. They have become to their adherents true hospitals and social welfare institutions, which explains why many mainline Christians attend AIC night healing sessions. In addition to the primary benefits associated with AIC healing services, they find that they can save themselves the cost of Western medicine.

**Countering Secular Depersonalization**

A major consequence of nearly half a century of apartheid was the partial collapse of the rural areas, especially the underindustrialized homelands. This fact led to massive migration to urban areas, with most people settling in informal areas with little hope of employment or decent living conditions. In this situation the AICs, with their numerous house congregations, have provided reception networks for the newly urbanized poor. Here the poor help the poor, a theme basic to traditional African humanity but lost to much of Westernized Christianity. In the informal settlements and in the urban areas, the AICs have constructed "a caring enclave in an impersonal urban world." By means of their vibrant form of worship, in which healing, music, and hand clapping bring back the traditional atmosphere of the rural areas, the AICs have created for the alienated urban poor "an urban family idiom."

The rapid growth of AIC adherents and numbers of AIC denominations after the mid-1970s, at a time when influx from rural and semirural areas reached tremendous proportions, suggests a close relationship. The rural-born population in the informal settlements around Durban is about 70 percent of the total population, and figures are probably comparable for other urban areas. In this context the grassroots structures of the AICs, their intimate extended-family type relationships, their emphasis on mutual aid, and their practical help in seeking and obtaining work for urban immigrants give them a special place in the South African context. Their money-saving clubs, small businesses, and skills training have much to offer prospective congregants. Meanwhile, local government agencies designated to assist in the settlement process hardly exist, and nongovernmental organizations are few and far between. Research suggests that the AICs are the only popular institutions mediating the urban settlement and employment process of in-migrating households.

Our studies have highlighted the role of household and personal networks in facilitating the settlement process. The AICs are voluntary organizations consisting of networks of people deeply involved with the poor, in spite of (or because of) themselves being poor. They offer a "portable community" and "unite the disadvantaged in stable alliances ... quick and reliable networks in unfamiliar areas." Those who enter the network as strangers have immediate support through a community "assembled round an ideology of mutual support, which operates in a Christian framework directly related to poverty." In this way mission activities take place without any mission programs or special mission funds. Mainline churches spend millions on mission activities, through proclamation of the Gospel, medical institutions, and so forth, with less impact on the masses. But people flock to the AICs for the feeling of what true humanity implies and what it does.

**Overcoming Ethnic Divisions**

Further, AICs are examples of inter- and intra-ethnic harmony. The Ethiopian church movement has served as a catalyst among the AICs for more openness of ethnic groups toward each other. The historic mission churches directed their work largely to specific ethnic groups, while the Ethiopians, Zionists, and Apostolics directed their evangelizing activities on an interethnic basis. The Zion Christian Church, the largest AIC in South Africa, operates among the southern and northern Sotho, among Zulu and Xhosa speakers in urban areas, and among the people of Zimbabwe. The St. Johns Apostolic Church, founded by MaNku (a woman), in the 1930s, also works among the northern and southern Sotho, Zulu, and Xhosa. In greater Durban, where the membership is predominantly Zulu speakers, the leading minister is a Sotho. Every announcement and sermon is simultaneously translated. In the largest AIC in KwaZulu/Natal, the iBanla lamaNazaretha (The church of the Nazarites), with a membership and adherents of about 400,000, the singing is from a Zulu hymnal composed by the church's founder, Isaiah Shembe,
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Women play key roles in the AICs. Two-thirds of all healers in the various fund-raising activities such as sewing, cake baking, and so forth. Women are drawn into the formal and informal economic sectors. Many act as heads of households. Men are often away seeking employment, or the women are widowed, divorced, abandoned, or separated. They come from various rural areas. In one sample of seventy households headed by women, only fifteen were headed by local women; fifty-five of the women had come from different parts of the country. Networking is thus an important aspect of the survival of the women and their children in the informal settlements.

Within the AICs youth have their own sphere of activity. They tend to be more literate and educated than their parents, despite tremendous crises in their education that left most of them undereducated. Young people have played an important role in the anti-apartheid struggle since 1976. School boycotts and other actions have brought about a high degree of awareness and organization among the youth. They were pressured to take sides in the political struggle, contrary to the AIC pattern of avoiding political confrontation. But many have remained with the AICs, in spite of the charge of being apolitical. To their youth the AICs offer a vision of a strong, dedicated society based on self-reliance, as well as a structured relation to what is considered to be the source of inner strength and stability.

Conclusion

In South African society, where the major lines of cleavage have often been ethnically drawn, the strong AIC record of ethnic reconciliation and harmony will greatly benefit the peaceful development of this multiethnic nation. In spite of the power of secularization and the continued Western-oriented character of the mainline churches, African traditional spirituality and worldview will not be destroyed but will continue to make their influence felt. The AIC churches demonstrate the power of worship and community life that is existential and holistic.

Notes

22. Ibid., p. 5.
23. Ibid., pp. 26–37.
24. Ibid., pp. 41–42.
25. Ibid., p. 42.
Missions and the Magic Lantern

Donald Simpson

In May 1895 the Church Missionary Society (CMS) sent out a party of new missionaries to Uganda, in response to an appeal from the Right Reverend Alfred Robert Tucker, Anglican bishop of Eastern Equatorial Africa. The five women in the group were the first CMS women to be sent to Uganda, where they became engaged chiefly in educational work at Mengo (just south of Kampala). CMS headquarters arranged for two photos of the party: a studio pose in England on the eve of their May 18 departure, and another in Mombasa, where they arrived on July 9, this time in less formal dress. Tucker (in full beard, center of the middle row, Mombasa photo) and another CMS missionary, Dr. Edward J. Baxter (directly behind Tucker), had come to Mombasa to welcome the newcomers; Tucker would accompany them inland to their stations in Uganda.

Most British mission supporters who viewed these two pictures around the turn of the century saw them not in the form of prints or published photographs but as “magic lantern” slides projected on a screen. A century ago magic lantern shows were widely used by mission agencies, both in their overseas work and in the promotion of missions at home. The pictures accompanying this article were reproduced from the original glass slides. They are part of a trove of 621 missionary lantern slides transferred from CMS archives in 1988 to the Royal Commonwealth Society Library (now part of the Cambridge University collections), thanks to the good offices of Rosemary Keen, CMS archivist.

Mission Origins of Magic Lantern

The magic lantern—a translation of the Latin Laterna magica—was probably devised in the 1640s by Jesuit scholar and missions advocate Athanasius Kircher. A professor of Oriental languages in the Roman College of the Jesuits (now the Gregorian University in Rome), he is best known for his work in deciphering Egyptian hieroglyphics, for his research into the life and faith of Coptic Christians, and for a comprehensive survey of European and missionary contacts with China. While the first use of magic lanterns was religious, the technology was such as to stir the
viewer to wonder, if not apprehension. An English observer, writing in 1696, described it as follows: “A Magic Lanthorn, a certain small Optical Macheen, that shows by a gloomy Light upon a white Wall, Spectres and Monsters so hideous, that he who knows not the Secret, believes it to be performed by Magic Art.”

During the nineteenth century the magic lantern developed remarkably. Starting with hand-painted colored pictures on strips of glass, by mid-century the slides were produced on 3¼-inch glass squares, using photographs (often hand-colored), chromolithographs, or transfers. Each slide consisted of two pieces of glass; one carried the image, and the other was a plain piece protecting the illustrated surface. Magic lantern programs were largely the province of traveling showmen—religious, comical, or anecdotal. Their presentation ranged from the highly professional, in which triple-lensed projectors could produce remarkable effects of dissolving views, to amateur productions in a church hall and domestic showing for the family circle. Before the days of electric power, illumination was provided by an oil lamp, which was silent but smoky, or, more elaborately, by gas jets playing on a carbon pencil. The latter gave a better light than the lamp but emitted a hissing noise. It required the user to carry around gas cylinders, which were heavy and cumbersome, and with the lantern itself and heavy slides to carry, volunteers or family members were pressed into service for transport. The size of an audience was limited by the quality of the light source. Churches and small halls were often used for shows, but programs could also be presented out of doors, using the wall of a building or a white sheet as a projection screen.

The range of topics was extremely wide. Religious subjects, including the words of hymns, sometimes with accompanying pictures; moral tales, particularly in the cause of temperance (in England, photographic slides on the topic of temperance, made by the firm of Joseph Bamforth of Holmfirth, Yorkshire, were particularly prominent); as well as educational topics, travel, humor, art, children’s stories, novels, and poems were among the subjects offered. In the absence of the modern sound track, one could have a narrator comment on the action or tell a story. One might also employ a singer to render a popular ballad to a series of illustrative pictures, and the words of the chorus could be projected onto the screen for all to join in. Long before the cinema, magic lantern operators, by manipulating two or more slides, could give movement to the images projected on the screen.

By the end of World War I, the cinema had effectively killed the wider entertainment aspect of the lantern show, but the use of slides for educational lectures and religious purposes continued a few more years. (The author recalls a Good Friday “lantern service” from about 1930.) Finally, the clumsy and fragile glass slide was superseded by the filmstrip and the 35mm slide, all too familiar to those who have had to endure their friends’ holiday pictures. These in turn have yielded to the ubiquitous camcorder.

In its heyday, however, the magic lantern was employed in many places. David Livingstone had one, which he used extensively in the open air when he visited the Makololo and Balonda in 1853–54. It had Old Testament scenes such as Abraham and Isaac, and Moses before Pharaoh, which he would explain and comment on. He described it as “a good means of arresting the attention, and conveying important facts... It was the only mode of instruction I was ever pressed to repeat.”

However, lantern slides sometimes produced alarm among the viewers. Livingstone, in describing a scene of Abraham and Isaac, recorded, “The ladies listened with silent awe; but, when I moved the slide, the uplifted dagger moving towards them, they thought it was to be sheathed in their bodies instead of Isaac’s. ‘Mother! mother!’ all shouted at once, and off they rushed helter-skelter, tumbling pell-mell over each other, and over the little idol-huts and tobacco-bushes: we could not get one of them back again.” Livingstone recounted that one chief, perhaps concerned lest this should be repeated, “politely put off this mysterious affair by saying he would see [the slides] when we returned.”

A CMS correspondent in the mission field listed some of the benefits of using slides: the aid to the audience’s concentration resulting from the showing of pictures in darkness; the use of the eye as well as the ear in teaching; the solemn silence; the possibility of two or three hours of connected teaching and singing; and the fact that such occasions were popular, so that missionaries were invited to present them. Another missionary commented to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, “No more effectual way of propagating the Gospel... can be imagined than by means of these lantern exhibitions.”

Livingstone the Subject of Lantern Slides

In due course Livingstone’s own life was to be the subject of sets of slides. As a popular medium of education and instruction, the magic lantern obviously reflected the social interests of the period and also the missionary impulse. Societies recorded their own activities on lantern slides for use in lectures advocating their causes. The CMS set up its Lantern and Loan Department in 1881; in 1898 there were nearly 3,000 requests for use of sets of slides; in 1914, there were 2,648 loans.

When the magic lantern became obsolete, glass slides, easily liable to damage in any case, tended to be discarded by the body that owned them. It is fortunate that among those that have survived are the 621 slides of the Church Missionary Society. In view of the extent of the CMS loans noted above, there must have been a much larger collection originally. Of the surviving total, some two-thirds relate to Africa, including forty-seven from the Reverend A. B. Fisher’s service in Uganda, 1892–1914. Some appear to be the sole surviving copies of the picture concerned.

An example is one showing the Reverend Alexander Fraser and the Reverend J. E. K. Aggrey, first principal and vice-principal respectively of Achimota College in the Gold Coast (now Ghana). The setting appears to be English, a fact that leads one to conjecture that the original photo may have been taken in January 1924, when J. H. Oldham arranged the interview between Fraser and Aggrey that led to their becoming the founding leaders of Achimota College. The photo may have been the only one showing Fraser and Aggrey together (although other photos show them as part of larger groups); the CMS glass slide is now the sole form in which the photo survives.

It is not difficult to imagine CMS supporters in England viewing the two slides shown here. In 1900 most of the group returned on leave to England, where no doubt these and other slides helped them report on their missionary work and travels.
They surely pointed out Martin Hall (center, foreground of Mombasa photo), who, in August of that year, had drowned in Lake Victoria. Peter Rattray, a medical doctor appointed only to accompany the caravan on the inland journey to Uganda, may have been the first to use the slides, for he was back in England in 1896. The two photos of the group were presumably shown together, contrasting the formality of the English photo studio with the frontier look of actual missionary service.

Then, as now, visual images helped bring to life the challenge of the Christian world mission.

Notes
2. For details of the journey, see F. Eleanor R. Hall, *In Full and Glad Surrender* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1905), pp. 151–52. The identification of the individuals in the Mombasa photograph appears in Martin J. Hall, *Through My Spectacles in Uganda* (London: CMS, 1898), p. 24. The identifications in the earlier, more formal photo have been determined by comparison with the photo taken in Mombasa; they have also been confirmed independently by the penciled notations of H. B. Thomas, former director of surveys in Uganda and an authority on that country. See the published version of the group, facing p. 156 of the Royal Commonwealth Society’s copy of *In Full and Glad Surrender.*
8. One popular lantern slide program was “The Life and Work of David Livingstone,” a series of forty colored slides produced by the London Missionary Society about 1900. It was recently shown in the exhibition mentioned under note 5 above.
11. *Church Missionary Intelligencer* 52 (1901): 13. For Hall’s life as a missionary, see Hall, “In Full and Glad Surrender.”

Photos on page 13 are from the Royal Commonwealth Society Collection, Cambridge University Library; used by permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library.

My Pilgrimage in Mission

Clayton L. (“Mike”) Berg, Jr.

My lifelong experience has been a series of surprises. I frequently find myself thinking, “This is not what I expected.”

I was born in Drumright, Oklahoma, in 1928, but my parents moved to California in 1930. My mother was one of twelve children of Irish-Cherokee tenant cotton farmers in Oklahoma and Texas. My father, born of Norwegian immigrant parents, grew up on a wheat farm in Minnesota and was employed for thirty-five years by a California oil company as a pipeline machinist superintendent.

In a real sense, I started on the road to Latin America in 1944, while still a sophomore in a southern California high school. It was Lucille Allen that God used to launch me on my way. She was a member of my church, a public school teacher, and for a short while, my Sunday school teacher. She spoke fluent Spanish and had worked closely with Henrietta Mears in Sunday school curriculum development at Hollywood’s First Presbyterian Church. Now she was leaving a vital ministry to go far away to work in Costa Rica with the Latin America Mission (LAM).

I had begun the study of the Spanish language in school. A short time before she left, Lucille gave a Spanish New Testament. In it she wrote, “To Clayton Berg, 2 Timothy 2:15. Lovingly, Lucille Allen.” She presented it to me with the words, “I’ll see you in Costa Rica someday.” Although I muttered under my breath, “In a pig’s eye you will” (my major interest was sports, and I had a secret desire to be sports editor someday of the Los Angeles Times), I never forgot her brief words.

In Costa Rica, Lucille carried out a remarkable ministry in the brief 2½-year period she was there. She taught Christian education at the Seminario Bíblico Latinoamericano in San José and initiated the adaptation and publishing in Spanish of several grades of Sunday school materials. On a brief furlough to California, she died following surgery.

Many years later—after completing high school, college, seminary, graduate school, pastoral work, and language stud-

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ies—I found myself in Costa Rica teaching Christian education in the same seminary and working with the LAM’s publishing house in a revision and expansion of the curriculum that Lucille had begun twenty years before. It was not what I expected. But Lucille’s brief words and her interest in me as a person as well as her Christian example had pointed me in the right direction.

The road to Latin America was characterized further by a dozen other similar, though varied, influences. I lived until my twelfth year in central California’s strongly Roman Catholic San Luis Obispo, which dates back to the Spanish Franciscan settlement in 1772. I enjoyed warm friendships with Mexican Americans throughout my childhood and youth. Spiritual nudges toward ministry overseas came from pastors, visiting missionaries, summer camping programs, Youth for Christ rallies, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship’s on-campus ministry, chapel services, and retreats in college and seminary, among other influences. All of this occurred primarily in a nonhistoric, interdenominational church background with Presbyterian influences.

By my senior year of high school (1945-46), my vocation had been chosen—and it no longer involved pursuing a university journalism scholarship. The previous summer God had spoken clearly about entering the ministry, with possible service overseas. Also in my senior year I met Jo Ann Schell of Presbyterian stock from San Jose, California, at a private school in Los Angeles. We were married almost five years later in 1950 at Christmas time after she had completed her nurses training and I had graduated from Westmont College in Santa Barbara and had begun the first of four years at Dallas Theological Seminary.

There was never any question that God was leading and empowering us in our studies, our service, the beginnings of our family, and even consideration of our ultimate place of work. While life was fraught with surprises and not always easy, we were blessed with the assurance of God’s direction.

Further focus on Latin America came from the on-campus ministry at Dallas of R. Kenneth Strachan, director of LAM. Both in 1953 and 1954, we were greatly challenged by Strachan’s direct, serious, honest, quiet, winsome presentation of the great needs in Latin America and his vision of partnership with Latin America’s struggling church. These encounters, after studying other mission boards’ programs, led us to apply to LAM, which accepted us.

It was at this point that the unexpected occurred. The logical next step for us—with a Th.M., ordination, and sufficient interest and support by U.S. friends—would have been to go directly to Costa Rica and language studies. This is what the mission and our supporting churches anticipated, but it did not happen.

Rather, we took a two-year detour with the conviction that it was what we were to do. I lacked advanced studies in religious education and ministry in an urban church. Both were combined with great profit in the Chicago area in a master’s program at Wheaton Graduate School and at Western Springs Village Church where I served as youth minister. Before we were finished, however, our three-year old son, Stephen, contracted poliomyelitis.

With treatment and rehabilitation underway, we prepared to leave for Costa Rica on August 1, 1956, less than a month before

While life was fraught with surprises and not always easy, we were blessed with the assurance of God’s direction.

Noteworthy

Personalia

The INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN is pleased to announce the appointment of three new contributing editors. Stephen Bevans, S.V.D. is Professor of Doctrinal Theology at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, and Director of the Chicago Center for Global Missions. A member of the Society of the Divine Word, he was a missionary in the Philippines from 1972 to 1981. He has a licentiate from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome and a Ph.D. from University of Notre Dame, and is a member of St. Edmund’s College, Cambridge, England. Paul G. Hiebert is Associate Dean of Academic Doctoral Studies, Chair of the Department of Mission and Evangelism, and Professor of Mission and Anthropology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (a part of Trinity International University), Deerfield, Illinois. He has a Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Minnesota. An ordained minister of the Mennonite Brethren Church, he was the principal of Bethany Bible School, Andhra Pradesh, India, for six years, and has taught at Kansas State University, University of Washington, Osmania University (India), and Fuller Theological Seminary. Sebastian Karotempre, S.D.B., from India, is Professor of Missiology at the Pontifical Urban University in Rome. A member of the Salesians of Don Bosco, he has a doctorate from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, and was the founder-editor of the Indian Missiological Review (1979–1992). He is a member of the International Theological Commission, a consultor of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, and a member of the Joint Working Group between the World Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church. We welcome these colleagues and look forward to their contributions to our journal.

Samuel Escobar, from Peru, a contributing editor of the INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN and professor of missiology at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, has been elected president of the United Bible Societies. He will hold this office until 2004. In 1995 the UBS worldwide fellowship of 135 national Bible societies distributed more than 29 million Bibles and New Testaments, and 535 million Scripture portions and selections in some 600 languages around the world.

Columbia Biblical Seminary and Graduate School of Missions, part of Columbia International University in Columbia, South Carolina, has appointed Warren Larson as director of a new Muslim Studies program leading to a master
the projected birth of our third child. Then, we learned of the need of surgery for Steve, which was not recommended until at least one year following the onset of polio. We were confronted again with a tough decision. The natural thing to do was to stay in California until after the surgery.

Again, however, we opted for the unexpected course. We finally decided to accept the gracious invitation of Jo's physician-brother and family to have Steve live with them through the beginning of the fall term of language school. With this painful decision, our departure for Latin America produced a bitter-sweet experience until Steve joined us six months later.

**Life among Latin Americans**

The vital contextualization process began vigorously with one year of Spanish language studies in San José, Costa Rica. Another surprise was that few North American missionaries speak impeccable Spanish. All too many muddle along at an elementary level. The acquisition of the language and the excitement of understanding the Latin beat, along with continuous exposure to and involvement in the Costa Rican church, transformed us steadily, if slowly, to be able to relate in some measure to Latin Americans.

The writings of sixteenth-century Roman Catholic Spanish mystics, and especially Santa Teresa de Ávila, helped me greatly in the early days to comprehend the Spanish mind-set. She soon became "the other woman in my life." Her example of meditation and prayer coupled with a life of poverty spoke to me eloquently. Her passion to know Jesus Christ and her vision of our wounded Christ awakened my mind and soul to the mystery of our faith as well as the nonlinear, deeply personal nature of my Latin friends' faith.

Twenty years later, beginning my service as LAM president, I rediscovered Santa Teresa. This time her writings showed me that she was faced with most of the basic challenges that confronted me in my work—unending correspondence and reports, urgently needed fund-raising, supervision and oversight of professional religious workers, incessant travel, basic administration, communication with the constituency (my board of trustees corresponded to her spiritual order), and spiritual vision and pastoral direction.

**The Joy of Teaching**

I began teaching at the Seminario Bíblico Latinoamericano in Costa Rica in 1958. Involvement in this scholarly theological seminary, which embraced a broad range of denominations, was a heady experience. It provided an exhilarating context in which to serve with students, many of them denominational leaders, from every Spanish-speaking country, and with a great variety of churches sending students, from Anglican to Pentecostal. We also (after 1962 and Vatican II) engaged in cautious dialogue with Roman Catholic priests and pursued a determined course to further "latinamericanize" the seminary's leadership and faculty.

Eleven fruitful years passed as I revealed in the joy of teaching on campus and in several other countries. I also thoroughly enjoyed various administrative responsibilities, both in the seminary and, later, heading up the broader Education Division of LAM.

But I began to feel restless. This was partly because of a nagging suspicion that although our seminary was a superior international graduate school, it was not doing as good a job as it should of developing parish priests and local pastors. I was also concerned by the growing concentration of missionaries, LAM and others, in tiny Costa Rica.

of arts degree. Larson has a Ph.D. from Fuller Theological Seminary, and was a missionary in Pakistan for twenty-three years.

Died. Eugene L. Stockwell, 73, Methodist missionary and ecumenical leader, on October 8, 1996, in Atlanta, Georgia. After service as a Methodist missionary in Uruguay from 1953 to 1962, he served as Latin America area secretary and later as associate general secretary of the Methodist Board of Global Ministries in New York City. From 1972 to 1984 he was associate general secretary of the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A., leading its division of overseas ministries. From 1984 to 1989 he directed the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches in Geneva, and was also editor of the International Review of Mission. When he retired from the council, he first served as a senior mission scholar in residence at the Overseas Ministries Study Center in New Haven, Connecticut. Then in 1990 he went to Buenos Aires, Argentina, to head the Union Theological Seminary (known by its Spanish acronym ISEDET) which was founded by his father, B. Foster Stockwell. The International Bulletin published "Mission as Seen from Geneva: A Conversation with Eugene L. Stockwell" in July 1987, and his autobiographical reflections, "My Pilgrimage in Mission," in April 1990.

**Announcing**

A total of 4,402 Korean Protestant missionaries were working in 138 countries in June 1996, according to a handbook published by the Korea Research Institute for Missions. Half of them were working in other Asian countries, with 498 in the Philippines, 413 in China, 339 in Russia, 334 in Japan, 137 in Indonesia, and 126 in Thailand.

The Teylers Godegeleerd Genootschap, which is the oldest theological society in the Netherlands, has announced an essay competition on the theme "An Inquiry into the Place of Biblical Israel in Current Christian Theology in Asia." Essays should be about 100-150 pages in manuscript, ready for publication. The deadline is May 1, 1998, and 10,000 Dutch Guilders will be awarded to the winners. For further information, write to: Directors of Teylers Stichting, Damstraat 21, 2011 HA Haarlem, The Netherlands.
The Making of Books

About then, a surprise call came for me to assume the direction of the mission’s Spanish-language publishing house, Editorial Caribe. I seized the opportunity enthusiastically. Actually, I had been actively involved in the development of curriculum for five years with the publisher. Therefore, I was somewhat knowledgeable in the process of “making books.”

By 1969, when I became president of Editorial Caribe, it had served the Latin American church well for twenty years. With dual offices in Costa Rica and Miami, Florida, it was a great privilege to continue in this tradition with a Christian education curriculum, an exhaustive Bible concordance, an original Bible dictionary, and several other large volumes. A unique opportunity was to have a part in moving the publishing house to an autonomous status with its own international board—in line with the LAM’s decentralization, beginning in 1971.

After eight years of publishing books, I again became restless, believing that the institution was firmly established in governance, financial stability, and publishing and distributing significant titles, and with skilled Latin leadership on board to replace me. As I left this ministry, however, I continued to be burdened for the crying need for many more works to be written by Latin Americans for Latin America.

Kicked Upstairs

Yet another surprise was in store for us, even greater than the ones before. In the summer of 1976, LAM head Horace L. (Dit) Fenton, Jr., made it clear, as he had said before, that he wished to retire. In the fall of 1976, then, I was named the fifth president of the LAM, in which position I served through 1989. I accepted the job painfully aware of my weaknesses, barely aware of any strengths I might have, but heartened by the pledged partnership of colleagues, especially W. Dayton Roberts in the crucial early years.

Personally conscious of my penchant for serving for a specific period of time and moving on to another challenge, the LAM’s board of trustees and its new president came to a general understanding that unless the president was fired beforehand, he would serve for a maximum of ten years. (As it turned out, it took the board an eleventh year to realize I was serious about passing the baton on to someone else, and then a twelfth and a portion of the thirteenth to find my replacement.)

My predecessor Dit Fenton had guided the mission in a most pastoral manner throughout the overwhelming task of decentralization during the early years of the 1970s. For Fenton this had entailed passing over the reins of command from the then New Jersey-based LAM to a variety of ministries located primarily in Colombia and Costa Rica, but also including broad ministries in other republics. Each of the ministries, including support entities, LAM-US and LAM-Canada, was a member in CLAME (Latin America Community of Evangelical Ministries), a common, fraternal organization with its base in Costa Rica. Each entity had its own governing board and operation. LAM missionaries were seconded to the various ministries, receiving their marching orders from the Latin leadership.

By 1976 LAM’s role had become essentially one of recruiting personnel according to the expressed requests from the entities of service and raising funds for these same groups. It became our responsibility as a new administration to examine the mission of the mission and recognize what our role should be. A number of options were considered, from closing up shop and letting

CLAME assume responsibility for everything, to operating as a clearing house, transmitting monies overseas with a tiny staff.

But it became apparent that in addition to the above, there was a continuing catalytic work in partnership ministry for the mission. It was essential that this begin with a direct ministry by LAM in the United States. The first area was among the Hispanics, which was carried out with uneven effectiveness. The second was imparting to the North American church the realities of Latin America in its society and its church. This was accomplished through on-campus seminars, weekend sessions in local churches, and on-site seminars for North American Christian leaders in Latin America. These activities constituted a renewal of LAM’s direct ministry.

Somewhat later—after CLAME had fulfilled its essential, fraternal function and dissolved its operations (it served from 1971 to 1983)—LAM began a new evangelistic venture. I became increasingly burdened about the great physical and spiritual needs in the huge Mexican and South American cities in the late 1970s. Urbanologist Ray Bakke influenced my thinking greatly as we roamed together at the Pattaya Conference of the Lausanne movement in Thailand in 1980. God used his contagious enthusiasm and down-to-earth approach to understanding a city to make me look at Latin America from an urbanologist’s perspective and to move LAM’s emphasis in that direction. The Board of Trustees responded positively. They soon grasped the idea that LAM’s original calling to evangelism and its current capacities were together compelling reasons for the mission to reach out in partnership with Latin churches and other agencies to the mushrooming needs and spiritual blackouts of Latin America’s great cities. It was agreed that the program should be holistic and that we should be careful to incorporate an adequate research compo-

I became increasingly burdened about the great physical and spiritual needs in the huge Mexican and South American cities in the late 1970s.

ent, seeking to apply any lessons learned from the shortcomings of LAM’s previous Evangelism-in-Depth (1960-74). It was named Christ for the City (CFC).

During the 1970s and 1980s, three important factors began impacting the LAM and its evangelistic outreach in a new way. These factors can best be described as characterizing the climate in which CFC has developed its ministry and which have influenced the entire growth of the Christian church in Latin America. These are 1) the charismatic renewal, 2) the great urban migration, and 3) the sudden surge of missionary interest among Latin American Christians.

In line with a more proactive approach of the new administration, a restructuring of the board of trustees and the headquarters’ staff took place in the fall of 1976. This entailed creating a completely outside board with specific terms of service before rotating off and one that had national and Latin American representation. Formerly, the board was composed of staff members and trustees from the general New York City vicinity. The new board’s functions were restricted to policy-making matters,
but with a concerted effort on the part of the president to maintain constant communication with them by monthly reports and personal contact. The staff was reorganized by departments, and a large measure of accountability was assured with the use of objectives and review.

It was also agreed at the outset that LAM’s headquarters would be relocated from New Jersey to Miami, Florida. Considerable discussion had been generated some years before about such a possibility. The chief reasons for this radical change were the continuous acceleration of costs for operations in the New York City area as well as the need to be closer to Latin America. The move was effected over a period of several months in 1977-78.

In the years since stepping aside as president and with retirement from the mission at the end of 1995, I have been actively and fruitfully involved in short-term teaching stints in Latin American seminaries, in writing projects, and in processing the mission’s archives from 1971 through 1989 (the 1921–70 period having already been completed)—all of which has given me great fulfillment.

Reflections about Latin America

As I ponder life in Latin America these past thirty-nine years, the following thoughts come to the surface. These are through the eyes of a North American missionary practitioner who had the privilege of giving his granito de arena (grain of sand) to the work.

First, the impact of the unity of the body of Christ is a wonderful and marvelous thing to behold. It makes possible recognition of one another, love shown toward each other, and cooperation in common efforts to reach out with the Gospel. This kind of unity transcends ecclesiastical relationships and nonessential distinctiveness.

Second, evangelism assumes primacy as to the mission of the church as it is carried out through mobilization of believers and other resources. It is also essential in the work of the church that Christian love be demonstrated and that its social responsibility be fulfilled. This has become particularly apparent as many of us have become more directly involved with the work of the church in the “Two-Thirds World.”

Third, cultural awareness is an indispensable need in doing the work of the Lord. For North American missions and personnel ministering in Latin America, this means at least a continued, conscious effort to encourage, develop, and involve national leadership for the ministry of the Gospel and to respond to any invitation from them to join in cooperative projects. Contextual sensitivity also normally produces flexibility in strategy based on biblical principles.

Fourth, administrative integrity is of great importance in doing mission in Latin America. Being members of the body of Christ in submission to him and to each other calls for accountability in every aspect of administration and ministry in relation to God, to missionaries, to churches in the Latin and Anglo worlds, to individual constituents, and to cooperating organizations. Responsible stewardship exercises scrupulous accounting procedures, respect for the use of designated funds, honesty in reporting, and maintenance at appropriate levels of monies used for the promotional and administrative aspects of the work.

Fifth—jo and behold!—see the grace of God at work. The context of my period of service in Latin America was as a storm that came and has almost passed. Things were well-defined when we began working in 1956. All Protestants were “evangelical,” including mainline denominational people. All Roman Catholics were the enemy. Pentecostals were on the fringe of things and were beyond our concern.

Then came Vatican II, the Protestant explosion, and the tremendous social upheaval, when we feared that all of the Latin world would be swallowed up by the socialist/communist camp. Allende, Castro, guerrillas, liberation theologies, and revolutions in Central America were followed by oppressive military dictatorships in most Latin republics.

Now much of this is past, with the overwhelming exception of the great social revolution that rolls on in diverse forms in Latin America as it has since the beginnings of this century. Also, although relations with the Roman Catholic Church in some places have reverted to an adversarial position, at least now we recognize that many Catholics are believers. Now we cooperate with Pentecostals. And we are ended with the realization of how privileged we were to live through this storm.

In the midst of it all, the Latin Protestant church exploded in growth and missionary zeal. A great satisfaction wells up as we contemplate our minor involvement in something that has changed the course of history and as we have witnessed the growth of the Latin church within our lifetime of service. Not every missionary in other parts of the world has had this opportunity.

It is not as if we had very much to do with it. The thriving, mushrooming autochthonous or grassroots churches attest to this. But there is a tremendous source of joy in having participated in a small way in making a great spiritual impact by God’s mercy and grace. “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men” (Titus 2:11).
The Legacy of Robert Mackie

Nansie Blackie

It is dangerous to become an evangelist because it is so apt to put one beyond the reach of salvation!” So wrote Robert Mackie in 1935.1 Often he said, “I have few pretensions to be a missionary expert.” This, however, is the man who was invited on different occasions to join the staff of the International Missionary Council (IMC) but could not do so because of particularities of time and circumstance. As it happened, he was to be, first, the prime mover in the cooperation between the World’s Student Christian Federation (WSCF) and the IMC; next, a significant figure in a similar cooperation with the World Council of Churches (WCC); and, finally, a continuing influence toward the full integration of the IMC into the WCC at the New Delhi assembly in 1961.2

Robert Mackie, in his life and person, embodied an integrated concept of the Gospel as both word and action, producing a church for the world. Speaking at his funeral in Edinburgh in January 1984, Jean Fraser, a WCC colleague, included a phrase be a missionary expert.” This, however, is the man who was born in 1899 in Bothwell, a small town about ten miles from Scotland’s largest industrial city, Glasgow, where his father was the minister of the United Presbyterian congregation. His schoolfellows envied him for the “church in his garden.” From his bedroom window he “could see through the trees the gaunt half-deserted tenement in which David Livingston had been born.” The local congregation was from the beginning always seen in the context of the world church. Robert remembered, “There was an enormous respect and affection for missionaries in my home. No money would ever be spent in our congregation on any facility we needed—and we had almost none!—if it would detract from our missionary giving. And it was not just the missionaries of our own church. Chalmers of New Guinea and Mackay of Uganda belonged to us too because they had given their lives for the one cause that mattered.”3

With such a background, it was entirely natural for him—returned from service in World War I to Glasgow University—both to join the SCM and also to become a Student Volunteer with the promise, “It is my purpose, if God permit, to devote my life to missionary service abroad.” Occasionally in the future he was to wonder as to his fidelity to that promise, as he never in fact filled a professional missionary post. Instead, he was to accept appointments in the Scottish and British SCMs, then move to the WSCF and the WCC. All round the world, however, leaders in church and society who had found their calling through his personal action: “We went round business premises asking for ... European Student Relief.”4

Robert Mackie envisioned a world community without divisive distinctions and the Church Universal as a foretaste of the Kingdom.” Consequently, he saw the church itself as being mission.

Early Influences for Christian Mission

This unity of church and mission started early for Mackie. He was born in 1899 in Bothwell, a small town about ten miles from Scotland’s largest industrial city, Glasgow, where his father was the minister of the United Presbyterian congregation. His schoolfellows envied him for the “church in his garden.” From his bedroom window he “could see through the trees the gaunt half-deserted tenement in which David Livingston had been born.” The local congregation was from the beginning always seen in the context of the world church. Robert remembered, “There was an enormous respect and affection for missionaries in my home. No money would ever be spent in our congregation on any facility we needed—and we had almost none!—if it would detract from our missionary giving. And it was not just the missionaries of our own church. Chalmers of New Guinea and Mackay of Uganda belonged to us too because they had given their lives for the one cause that mattered.”5

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When he joined the SCM as a student, the movement was learning in the aftermath of war that any previous division between mission and social concern was irrelevant, and any distinction between an “internationalist” and a “foreign mission” approach unfruitful: peace, poverty, racism, and injustice at home and overseas were seen to belong together. Writing in 1982, he indicated two specific ways in which world affairs impinged on Glasgow University in 1919. First, the presence of numerous overseas students: “We realized suddenly the limits of our experience and the weakness of our judgements. We had so much to learn.” The need to listen and the capacity to learn characterized his attitude to others from the start, and his intercultural sensitivity was commended by no less an expert than former WCC president Philip Potter. These qualities became the foundation of his approach to any type of missionary activity.

Second, “The immediate world concern that really affected my generation was the discovery that our European fellow students—in Russia, in Eastern Europe and in Germany—were in deep poverty and distress. There was a crowded meeting in the [university] Union to decide whether we would take part in European Student Relief. There was opposition, but a majority decision to do so. This was a challenge which it was not easy to meet after the bitterness of war. Gradually there arose a new sense of solidarity with our fellow students.” Typically, even then, Mackie operated on several levels at once, from theological convictions about reconciliation to the simplest practical personal action: “We went round business premises asking for ... surplus clothing. To the Glasgow 1921 [SCM] Conference we each brought an extra pair of shoes to send to ... European Student Relief.”6

New Perspectives from a Visit to India

His first visit to a non-European country came about when he responded to a letter in a church magazine in 1924 asking for someone to go out to the Jharia coalfield in India for four months to experiment with the idea of a coalfield chaplaincy: “The Indian visit did much more to prepare me for my life-work than my three years at a Theological College.”7 In the 1920s the issues surrounding the struggle for Indian independence seem to have occupied the place in British student thinking that apartheid and South Africa assumed in the decades after World War II, with Gandhi the Mandela of his day. In the SCM, attitudes were further radicalized by a deep unease over the ambiguous associa-

Nansie Blackie, formerly on the staff of the British Student Christian Movement and more recently with the Church of Scotland’s missionary training college, St. Colm’s, Edinburgh, is the author of In Love and in Laughter: A Portrait of Robert Mackie (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1995).
tion between colonialism and past missionary endeavor. It is all the more remarkable, then, that Mackie’s letters home reveal an attitude both nonideological and nonjudgmental. “I shall know more about India when I return, but I shall be less willing to give an opinion.”

Traveling round remote villages, he was immediately drawn to the Santais: “One felt the sacredness of the whole scheme of life.” At the same time, he appreciated the efforts of many of the mine managers to behave with fairness and concern. Attending a debate on the future of Europeans in India, he was impressed by an Indian civil servant’s quoting “the words of Jesus as the rule for India: ‘He that is greatest among you shall be the servant of all.’ . . . He was cheated but I am afraid that only a small percentage agreed.” Among those who agreed was the agent in charge of several collieries, who believed it “to the hilt and is not afraid to say so. I never saw a man so fierce for justice and truth. . . . S.C.M. folk don’t do our simple, self-educated, hard-headed countrymen justice.” He was full of admiration for “the hard and very often dull work of a missionary’s life [done] well and gladly” but was clear that it was the total witness of the church in the situation that was of greatest significance. “It is the love in a man’s heart that counts.”

His youthful reactions to the brief visit in India foreshadow his later development. He often found it difficult to take sides, still more to be convinced that he was then right. His peculiar capacity was to understand why people hold different opinions and act in diverse ways; he never underestimated their sincerity. In the world of students and church leadership it was a rare characteristic, and possibly less valued than a prophetic bent; but it was at the heart of Mackie’s outstanding pastoral gifts. It was frequently to keep him silent in debate but made him “the world’s best chairman.” About the Gospel he had no doubts at all. Bishop Leslie Newbigin said at the London memorial service, “I think of Robert as the best example I have known of what Luther called ‘the freedom of the Christian man.’ Because he had a confidence in God too deep to be shaken by any passing winds, he could be completely free, flexible, human.”

The SCM Years, 1925–1938

Mackie led the Scottish, then the British SCM very much as a missionary calling. His first task was to chair the 1925 Manchester Quadrennial Conference on the theme “The World Task of the Christian Church,” with T. Z. Koo speaking on China and J. H. Oldham on race. There was always a minority of “senior friends” who feared that the overseas emphasis was diminishing, but the change was rather one of language and perspective. From the first, Mackie spoke of missionaries going “not as fathers but as brothers and friends.”

In the SCM he laid claim to only two innovations, which together provide clues to his missionary approach. The first was to undermine pervasive British insularity by introducing a greater stress on membership in the WSCF; this led to a strong sense of solidarity with students in distress, as in Hitler’s Germany and in a China invaded by Japan. The second was the encouragement of a new Industrial Department devoted to a better understanding of the economic dimensions of society. In establishing this department, Mackie insisted as usual that others provided the original ideas, but these same others confessed how much they depended on his support. Convinced of the enabling character of all Christian leadership, he was at pains to discern the potentialities of the young and to provide opportunities for their development. At the 1937 Oxford Conference on Church, Community, and State, some overseas visitors were surprised to find that Mackie had elected to remain at SCM’s Annandale (London) headquarters to allow others to attend the major event.

It could be claimed, on the evidence, that the British SCM of the 1930s was living through its most successful period of outreach. Excluding an extensive fringe, the official membership reached 11,500 out of a total student population of 72,000. A. D. Lindsay, the distinguished master of Balliol, considered that it was the SCM that was responsible for a sense of student community quite new for British universities.

Mackie himself, however, would never have made such a claim to success. His annual reports reveal a questing and questioning spirit on the subject; for example, “The sudden outcrop of college missions . . . tend not to reach outsiders but strengthen the faithful, . . . a very interesting sign of the times. . . . What exactly it betokens I don’t know. Is it a movement of the Spirit which will finally burst forth in a fresh turning of student life to God, or does it indicate a rather fevered condition in Student Movement branches which know they are doing their job badly and want something to happen to relieve their consciences? I am in grave doubts about this.”

He remained convinced that, as the primary vocation of the student was study, so the appropriate methodology for any student movement was the study group. “Right action springs from true thinking,” he wrote, “and it is one of our principal concerns to reset study in the centre of our work as the primary organised means whereby our evangelistic task is carried out.” He therefore supported the transformation into a study conference of one of the two large annual summer conferences at Swanwick by the addition of library facilities and a longer, more reflective program. Similarly, he encouraged the development in the WSCF at large of what came to be called after the war “the University concern,” that is, the Christian obligation to take seriously the university, its values and purposes, for its own sake and not merely for its role as contact for individual evangelism and pastoring. This theological approach has had wider implications for the relationship between church and society and for missiology itself.

It is perhaps important to record that Mackie—whose background, convictions, and temperament could never be described as other than “evangelical” in the traditional and wide sense of that abused word—was deeply concerned by the division of the original student movement marked by the foundation in 1928 of the InterVarsity Fellowship. He never gave up attempts at reconciliation at the national and international levels but remained convinced that it was not the function of the SCM, which was not a church, to apply doctrinal tests to its membership, speakers, and program.

The WSCF Years, 1938–1949

In 1938 Mackie succeeded W. A. Visser ‘t Hooft as general secretary of the World’s Student Christian Federation. During
the next eleven years he was based first in Geneva then, for most of the war years, in Toronto. This assignment allowed him to travel and fulfill his role as interpreter across national barriers and battlefronts; he earned the trust of individuals and movements on a global scale and, as editor, made Student World a significant instrument for the purpose. He emphasized that theWSCF magazine must, in wartime, take the place of the personal encounters the WSCF had done so much to promote. The very existence of the federation and the sharing of resources demonstrated by student relief were themselves both proclamation and identification with one side of the conflict led them to apply inappropriate pressure to the IMC. On the World Day of Prayer in Shanghai, “our service was in the German Church. . . . It was typical that on this first occasion when there was no S.C.M. in Germany . . . Chinese students, many of them refugees, should lead our singing beside a Holy Table with the inscription ‘Ein Feste Burg ist unser Gott.’” The very same words were sung by the crowd of German church folk barred by police from the SCM service in Darmstadt. As he left Shanghai, he was given greetings to take to the YMCA in Japan “in the name of our Redeemer.”

Providing the WCC with a Heart

In 1948 Visser’t Hooft, general secretary of the fledgling WCC, recruited Mackie for the dual post of associate general secretary of the WCC and director of Inter-Church Aid, the WCC’s post-war recovery program. Mackie moved to Geneva in 1949, and here his outstanding administrative skills came to the fore. It was of the first importance that the wide diversity of bodies that had composed the missionary and ecumenical movement of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries should be brought into cooperation and commitment to the common task under the umbrella of the WCC. Strength of conviction, loyalty to tradition, and respect for sacrificial predecessors all have their reverse qualities. Every historic institution, whether denomination, mission board, or idealistic autonomous fellowship, has its own goals, perspective, and methods. With patience, understanding, and humor Mackie initiated, convened, and guided the people and agencies involved. Stringent self-discipline was required, for Mackie was drawn much more strongly to the life of preacher and pastor than to administration. Former colleague Eric Duncan wrote, “Once in Geneva Visser’t Hooft said to me in some astonishment, ‘Robert says he doesn’t like administration! That is absurd! It’s like Rembrandt saying he doesn’t like painting!’ I think Robert’s secret was his utter and complete dedication of all his talents in a simplicity of spirit which was itself God’s wonderful gift to him and through him a blessing to us.”

As WCC associate general secretary, Mackie exercised an exemplary and complementary partnership with Visser’t Hooft. He was commonly seen to be the humanizing influence, helping to “provide the ecumenical movement with a heart.” But he was also expert in the conduct of meetings in different national and international contexts, an outstanding example being his chairing of a second Beirut consultation in 1956 on the Arab refugee situation. Although he retired from the WCC in 1955, Mackie continued as chairman of Inter-Church Aid until 1961; thus, his role in the Beirut consultation of 1956. This involved the WCC, the IMC, and the United Nations Refugee Agency. Moreover, as Inter-Church Aid was responsible for relief programs in Europe, and the IMC responsible outside of Europe, much of his time was taken by coordination. He strove to persuade the separate churches to fulfill their commitment to action on an ecumenical basis; the spirit was one of equal partnership, where the category of receiver or donor was of merely local and temporary significance. Mindful of the situation of the Orthodox churches in Eastern Europe, he exhorted: “Any failure on the part of a

Mackie’s communications in spite of the delays and hazards of war brought news of suffering, resistance, and solidarity.

YMCA who admitted him to occupied China; to a Russian SCM member on the French/Spanish border, waiting to distribute a trainload of American relief while Mackie was exploring a way to take his family across the Atlantic.

Unhappy with his absence from Britain when invasion threatened, Mackie was attracted by the offer of a job with the IMC based in London but concluded he must stay at his post at the WSCF. His wife wrote, “I don’t believe for one minute that any-one else can hold that particular position, and the fact that it is a continual struggle and pain to you may be just the reflex side of a definite contribution God asks of you to the work of the Christian Church now and hereafter. Peace of mind can be purchased too dearly. . . . We were led out into a far country for a reason.” The welfare of German SCM leaders such as Hanns Lilje remained a constant concern, and she added, “You must never forget that in doing your present job you are doing something for him and these invisible brothers which you could not really do in your own country. . . . I feel that if the news should reach him that you had left the W.S.C.F. he would feel that something had slipped in the outside world. . . . Because he knows you and trusts you he knows that you are perfectly true to him and his.”

Having been part of the WSCF delegation to the 1938 IMC meeting in Tambaram, Mackie pursued his wartime activities in close association with the worldwide missionary movement at both organizational and personal levels. Preaching to an open-air audience of a thousand at Kunming, he was heartened to discover that the tiny minority of Christian students was continuing to run “Religion and Life” weeks in that context. It may never be possible to gauge the part played by this fidelity to mission in the creation and later resurgence of a truly indigenous Christian movement in China. Visiting “free,” “international,” and “occupied” China, Korea, and also Japan, he was most impressed by the concern for each other shown by Christians placed in such diverse situations; indeed, on occasion he found a greater mutual appreciation of their dilemmas from Chinese and Japanese than from some missionaries whose sympathetic identification with one side of the conflict led them to apply
national inter-church committee to be fair in its allocations; any tendency of a church outside Europe to help its co-religionists out of all proportion to their comparative needs; any attempt to encourage confessional loyalty through the distribution of aid; any refusal to establish proper clearances, and above all any spirit of competition, cuts at the heart of Inter-Church Aid and saps the foundation of the World Council of Churches [instead of] building up not only individual churches, but the whole Church of Christ in Europe.”

Otto Dibelius, bishop in Berlin, spoke for his Evangelical Church in 1955: “Inter-Church Aid and Service to the Refugees—those words have become signs of a tendency of a church outside Europe to help its co-religionists...”

Visser ‘t Hooft in his memoirs concluded, “Only with regard to inter-church aid is our record perhaps somewhat comparable to that of the early church.”

Mackie wrote in Student World in 1946, “missions may be regarded as the way in which the whole Church shares its resources... The world Christian mission and the Federation are not only compatible, they are inseparable.”

“Inter-Church Aid and Service to the Refugees—are words the church outside Europe has become signs of a tendency to help its co-religionists.”

Faithful Through the Home Stretch

True to his convictions about the nature of Christian leadership—interchanging, enabling, corporate—in 1955 Mackie relinquished his WCC post and returned to Scotland. “People have no notion of the importance of change at the right time,” he wrote to his wife. There was a spontaneous outburst of sorrow and even dismay from church leaders around the world, many of whom had found their vocation through his example and pastoral concern. They included Archbishop Athenagoras of the Greek Orthodox; Bishops Bell of Chichester, Berggrav of Oslo, German of the Serbian Orthodox, and Lilje of Hanover; D. T. Niles of Ceylon; and from the United States Charles Arbuthnot, Samuel Caver, Douglas Horton, Henry Leiper, and Henry Pitney Van Dusen. Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam expressed gratitude for “a spirit so winsome as to be convincing... good humour... patience... tolerance... the song that has always been in your heart.”

Back home in Scotland Mackie began—and for thirty years continued—exercising a very similar kind of leadership but based in one small country—his own. For a while he held the part-time position of adviser for ecumenical work in Scotland, with the Scottish Churches’ Ecumenical Committee (later to be the Scottish Churches Council), and currently, Action of Churches Together in Scotland; most of his activity, however, was honorary and on his own initiative. Diverse ecumenical groups used him as chairman and adviser, and he was largely successful in coordinating their efforts. His concept of mission remained both extensive and intensive. An example was his chairing of the first Kirk Week in Aberdeen, which attempted to affirm the whole life of a city, including its work and worship, its civic and community culture, its arts and leisure. All projects were inadequate if not ecumenical. In a broadcast at the time he said, “Christian unity is not just a case of joining up broken places of the Church. Unity has to do with the well-being of the total life of the community. And anything which prevents the churches helping—like their disunity—must go.” He was the moving spirit, but always in the background, behind the creation of the Scottish Churches’ House, still today a potent symbol of such unity.

At the United Kingdom level he was entrusted with the difficult task of chairing the International Department of the British Council of Churches during the late 1950s, when there were painful divisions over nuclear disarmament, the Suez crisis, and the short-lived Hungarian revolution. He was the known and trusted emissary for the WCC throughout Europe and beyond.

Eric Duncan wrote: “Robert, more than anyone else I have ever known, emerged triumphantly from all the conferences, committees, minute drafting, project initiating, clarifying of others’ muddled thoughts—at all of which he was such a master—emerged as a sensitive, profoundly understanding human being.”

Another former colleague from the British SCM, Kay Fenn, found perhaps the best words of all to describe him: “He went through the world expecting the Son of God to pass.”

Notes

1. Student Movement, May 1935.
2. Conversation between Lesslie Newbigin and Steven Mackie, September 1996.
3. “Growing up in the Church,” Mackie Papers, Edinburgh.
5. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Letters, April 1943, Mackie Papers.
17. Ibid.
18. Letter for eightieth birthday.

Bibliography

Works by Robert Mackie

Numerous articles appeared in such publications as Student Movement, Student World, and Ecumenical Review. Reports are to be found in the SCM, WSCF, and WCC archives. Sermons, letters, Scottish materials, and broadcast items are cataloged in the Mackie Papers, held by Steven Mackie, Edinburgh.


Works About Robert Mackie


Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission: 1997

David B. Barrett

The table opposite is the thirteenth in an annual series describing statistics and trends in world mission. Since 1985, these summary reports have been designed to monitor and to track the progress of the Christian world mission. How well is this mission doing?

Measuring the Christian Impact

Many lines on the table demonstrate the enormous size of the Christian impact on the world. Think of the magnitude of one particular achievement. In 1996 the distribution of scriptures across the globe totaled 1.8 billion (line 59). Our research this past year uncovered another startling statistic. We counted the total of all book titles in the world’s libraries with Jesus as their main subject. It comes to 65,571 books (53,094 of which have “Jesus” in their titles), of which 25,077 have been published since 1970. In 1996 alone 1,500 new “Jesus” titles came off the press (four a day). Shades of John 21:25!

Sizing up the Non-Christian World

The table opposite also allows us to examine the world that has not been impacted by the Christian world mission. The non-Christian world, termed “Worlds A and B” (lines 21, 69), provides the global context of Christian mission. (World B is that portion of the non-Christian world that benefits from Christian contact and witness. World A consists of population blocs and people groups that as yet lack any contact with Christians and have no knowledge of anything Christian.) A vast amount is now known about the contemporary situation of the non-Christian world, including its demography, languages, peoples, and cities (as in lines 64, 65). Non-Christians in mid-1997 number 3,897 million. Each year their number grows by 47 million, an increase of 129,000 a day. In the year 1900 they numbered 1,062 million. By A.D. 2000 non-Christians will number just over 4 billion; and 25 years later, around 5.2 billion.

Eighty-one percent of the world’s individuals profess to follow a religion. Lines 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20 describe the seven major non-Christian world religious blocs. An additional 1,110 million persons are atheists or nonreligious (lines 13, 16). The biggest surprise is the religious diversity of the non-Christian world. Our research has identified well over 15,000 distinct, separate, and different religions and religious movements. Two or three entirely new non-Christian religions are begun on earth every day. This hardly seems commensurate with a successful program of global Christian mission.

Placing Achievements in Global Context

Year after year Christians and their organizations publicize startlingly large Christian events—huge meetings, mass baptisms, massive church growth, TV successes, vast Bible printings, and so on. But these achievements must be interpreted in the total global context. To illustrate: the world’s library catalogs list 34 million distinct book titles, in 360 languages; meanwhile, some 900,000 new books are published each year. In this context, the 65,571 books about Jesus number only 0.2 percent. And 73 percent of the non-Christian world (70 percent of World B, and 90 percent of World A) is adults or children who cannot read; another 15 percent can read but will never get a chance to read the 0.2 percent of books dealing with Jesus.

Locating the Christian Impact

Another dose of realism emerges when we ask who the beneficiaries are of all this Christian impact. The surprising and disturbing answer is that other Christians including ourselves (i.e., the Christian world, World C) are the focus of 97 percent of all Christian ministry in the world. The remaining 3 percent is focused on those non-Christians we are already in contact with (World B). World A, by definition, is not impacted at all (line 69). An example can be found in a revealing sentence in a recent survey by the United Bible Societies describing progress toward their stated goal of reaching with the Scriptures all unreached peoples in the world by A.D. 2000. After detailing what populations are now receiving the huge total of nearly 600 million scriptures distributed annually by UBS, the report laments, “We are doing a better job in reaching out to Christians than we are to non-Christians. Most of our effort is actually therefore to the people who have been reached by the gospel already!”

This failure to impact the non-Christian world has several causes. Chief among them are (1) the older foreign mission boards and societies of Europe and America no longer place missionaries among unevangelized peoples without an invitation to do so, having decided to engage in mission only in cooperation with their overseas partner churches; and (2) these agencies and their overseas partners respond, in most cases exclusively, to formal requests for foreign mission resources submitted by church leaders, missionaries, or local Christians. But among World A individuals there are no churches and no persons who are likely to request mission resources or church planters, so none get assigned to World A contexts.

Toward a Solution

What has gone wrong is that most Christian activity does not impact the non-Christian world at all. To remedy this, here is a suggested solution. Christians today employ 5,151,000 full-time workers (lines 44, 45). What about setting as a goal the assigning by A.D. 2000 of one worker, preferably a foreign or cross-cultural missionary, or one missionary couple or pair, to every one of the 4,000 unevangelized ethnolinguistic peoples on earth, and another worker to every one of the 15,000 non-Christian religions on the face of the globe? That’s less than 0.4 percent of our present workforce.

Until we deliberately establish direct, comprehensive, personal contact with every distinct non-Christian population across the globe, Christians will continue to be irrelevant to the lives, hopes, and fears of those 4 billion non-Christians.

#### WORLD POPULATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Urban Dwellers (urbanites)</th>
<th>Rural Dwellers</th>
<th>Adult Population (over 15s)</th>
<th>Literates</th>
<th>Nonliterates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>1,619,866,900</td>
<td>3,697,141,000</td>
<td>2,324,357,000</td>
<td>4,099,081,000</td>
<td>2,685,031,000</td>
<td>1,374,770,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>3,921,086,900</td>
<td>27,716,800</td>
<td>2,073,357,000</td>
<td>4,192,081,000</td>
<td>3,003,071,000</td>
<td>1,238,926,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>6,158,051,000</td>
<td>6,229,050,000</td>
<td>5,231,745,000</td>
<td>6,229,050,000</td>
<td>5,093,494,000</td>
<td>1,135,556,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2025</td>
<td>8,294,341,000</td>
<td>8,064,050,000</td>
<td>7,231,745,000</td>
<td>8,064,050,000</td>
<td>7,029,494,000</td>
<td>1,375,556,000</td>
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#### WORLDWIDE EXPANSION OF CITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Population (over 100,000)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metropolises</td>
<td>300,000,000</td>
<td>420,000,000</td>
<td>540,000,000</td>
<td>660,000,000</td>
<td>780,000,000</td>
<td>900,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Dwellers</td>
<td>780,000,000</td>
<td>900,000,000</td>
<td>1,020,000,000</td>
<td>1,140,000,000</td>
<td>1,260,000,000</td>
<td>1,380,000,000</td>
</tr>
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#### WORLD POPULATION BY RELIGION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>World %</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christians</td>
<td>2,685,031,000</td>
<td>13.5 %</td>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>328,233,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonreligious</td>
<td>3,003,071,000</td>
<td>15.5 %</td>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>305,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonwhite indigenous Christians</td>
<td>1,374,770,000</td>
<td>7.0 %</td>
<td>North America</td>
<td>301,147,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationals (all denominations)</td>
<td>3,003,071,000</td>
<td>15.5 %</td>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>299,170,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal income of church members, for secular stations</td>
<td>4,192,081,000</td>
<td>21.5 %</td>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>19,512,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### CHRISTIAN WORKERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christians for secular stations</td>
<td>3,003,071,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scriptures including gospels, selections</td>
<td>3,003,071,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New non-Christian urban dwellers per day</td>
<td>10,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### CHURCHES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disciple-opportunities per capita per year</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipleship opportunities per capita per year</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelism-hours per year</td>
<td>4,250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult population (over 15s)</td>
<td>1,782,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonwhite indigenous Christians</td>
<td>3,003,071,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian workers for secular stations</td>
<td>3,003,071,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### MEMBERSHIP BY ECCLESIASTICAL BLOC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anglicans</td>
<td>54,381,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholics (non-Roman)</td>
<td>6,385,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marginal Protestants</td>
<td>34,513,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonwhite indigenous Christians</td>
<td>40,155,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthodox</td>
<td>219,592,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast Asia</td>
<td>241,849,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>20,111,000</td>
</tr>
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#### MEMBERSHIP BY CONTINENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>339,285,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>299,170,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe (new UN definition)</td>
<td>526,572,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
<td>471,855,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>201,352,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>10,868,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service agencies</td>
<td>24,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign-mission sending agencies</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand-alone global monoliths</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
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</table>

#### CHRISTIAN WORKERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nationals (all denominations)</td>
<td>5,104,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allen (foreign missionaries)</td>
<td>420,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### CHRISTIAN FINANCE (in U.S. $, per year)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Finance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal income of church members</td>
<td>11,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal income of Pentecostals/Charismatic</td>
<td>1,375,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving to Christian causes</td>
<td>220,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churches' income</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parishcure and institutional income</td>
<td>132,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecclesiastical crime</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income of global foreign missions</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers in use (total number)</td>
<td>315,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New commercial book titles per year</td>
<td>24,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian periodicals</td>
<td>31,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New books/articles on evangelization per year</td>
<td>16,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### SCRIPTURE DISTRIBUTION (all sources)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bibles per year</td>
<td>64,094,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Testaments per year</td>
<td>110,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scriptures including gospels, selections</td>
<td>1,833,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### CHRISTIAN BROADCASTING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Finance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radio/TV stations</td>
<td>2,400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total monthly listeners/viewers</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For Christian stations</td>
<td>8,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For secular stations</td>
<td>8,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### CHRISTIAN URBAN MISSION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Christian megacities</td>
<td>1,393,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New non-Christian urban dwellers per day</td>
<td>1,238,926,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Christians</td>
<td>1,393,700,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### CHRISTIAN EVANGELISM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Finance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evangelism-hours per year</td>
<td>4,250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciple-opportunities per capita per year</td>
<td>77,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### WORLD EVANGELIZATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Finance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unconverted population</td>
<td>6,000,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unconverted as % of world</td>
<td>16,600,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World evangelization plans since a.d. 30</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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January 1997

25
The Legacy of John Copley Winslow

William W. Emilsen

John “Jack” Copley Winslow (1882-1974), the son of an Anglican clergyman, was raised in a comfortable country rectory in the village of Hanworth in Middlesex, England. He came from a long evangelical tradition. One of his great-grandmothers was Mary Winslow, whose Life and Letters was a household favorite among evangelicals of the nineteenth century. His parents, too, imbued him with a strict sense of religious discipline and evangelical piety. Winslow was educated at Eton and then proceeded to Balliol College, Oxford (1902–5), where he came under the influence of the Anglo-Catholic scholars Charles Gore, editor of the influential Lux Mundi, and Edwin James Palmer, the chaplain of Balliol and later bishop of Bombay (1908–29). The “fulfillment” theology that Winslow’s ashram community would later embody may be traced back to Gore’s and Caird’s direct influence. 

After graduating in 1905, and still preparing for ordination, Winslow visited India. In Delhi and Calcutta he was particularly impressed by the attempts of the Anglican missionary brotherhoods to present Christianity in terms of Hindu culture to Western-educated elites through a lifestyle of austerity and good works. In Delhi he also met C. F. Andrews of the Cambridge Mission to Delhi, who later became his close friend and guru. Winslow’s friendship with Andrews was decisive for his future work, particularly in regard to developing the ashram ideal. Returning to England, Winslow spent a year at Wells Theological College, Salisbury, and then worked for four years in the parish of Wimbledon. He was made a deacon in 1907 and was ordained a priest in 1908. From Wimbledon he proceeded to St. Augustine’s College, Canterbury, where he spent three years as a lecturer preparing candidates for ordination and overseas service.

Missionary in India

In 1914 Winslow returned to India as a missionary with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. At first he was sent by Bishop Palmer to Dapoli in the Konkan, 100 miles south of Bombay, where he devoted much of his time to the study of bhajans (loving devotion) and the singing of bhajans (Indian devotional songs) for Christian worship and evangelism. It was also through Tilak’s influence that he realized the valuable contribution the church in India had to offer to the world. Winslow was fond of quoting Tilak’s prophecy:

Yea, at the end of pregnant strife,  
Enthroned as Guru of the earth,  
This land of Hind shall teach the worth  
Of Christian faith and Christian life.

Toward the end of his time at Ahmednagar, Winslow became convinced that Indian Christians needed a Eucharistic liturgy that was more Indian in form and spirit than the Anglican liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer. His conviction was shared by E. C. Ratcliff, a liturgical scholar, who had studied the Syriac liturgy of St. James as used for centuries by the Syrian Christians in Travancore. Together, they shortened and adapted the Syriac liturgy for Indian conditions and in several places supplemented it from other Eastern and Western liturgies. The new Indian liturgy was published in 1920 with a long preface by Bishop Palmer and introductory essays by Winslow, Ratcliff, and Major J. E. G. Festing of the Royal Engineers, under the title The Eucharist in India. The liturgy, according to Palmer, was revolutionary and important: revolutionary in the sense that the liturgy was framed on Oriental models; important in the sense that Winslow and the others had taken a first step toward encouraging Indians to develop their own forms of worship. One of Winslow’s most creative writings, the liturgy was subsequently approved by the Liturgical Committee of the Lambeth Conference in 1920, sanctioned by the Episcopal Synod of India for use in any diocese of the Indian church with the bishop’s approval, and later used by the compilers of the liturgies for the Church in Sri Lanka and the Church of South India.

Meanwhile, on furlough in England in August 1919, Winslow had “one of those mysterious experiences” that he described in his autobiography as “divine guidance” or “revelation,” which forcibly implanted upon his mind the importance of ashrams for the Indian church. Three factors helped to shape this conviction:

William W. Emilsen lectures in church history and world religions at the United Theological College, North Parramatta, Sydney, Australia. He has written on Christianity in India and published The India of My Dreams: Samuel Stoke’s Challenge to Christian Missions (ISPCK, 1995).
The first was the inspiration he had received from Andrews, Sundar Singh, Tilak, and the Thomas Christians in Kerala. They was sensitive to the new stirrings of Indian nationalism and was conscious that a church exclusive and remote could never win the heart of India. The Indian church, in Winslow’s view, had to show that it welcomed the “desirable things” of Indian religions and culture so that its message might be heard and its invitation accepted. Above all, however, was the impact of the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre in Amritsar in April 1919. The massacre, in Winslow’s view, “gathered into one blazing point all the smouldering resentment awakened by a hundred lesser acts of cold superciliousness and cynical contempt, of callous indifference on the part of Englishmen to Indian susceptibilities.”14

The Launching of Christa Seva Sangh

Faced with the question as to how missionaries could proceed after Amritsar, Winslow decided to establish a Christian ashram and to become a Christian sannyasi in order “to try to contribute something towards the healing of inter-racial strife.”15 He saw it as an act of reparation for the racial arrogance among missionaries. As Winslow commented: “I had been trifling with my fancy for an Anglo-Indian ashram before Amritsar. Amritsar sealed it for ever. I . . . [saw] it as an answer to Amritsar. It’s the opposite of Amritsar. An ashram where British and Indians live side by side, unconscious of race or colour, master or servant, Brahman or untouchable.”16

In 1920 Winslow published the details of his vision for an Indian church in the International Review of Missions. He envisaged an Indian church with community ministers. The natural leader of a community, without relinquishing his profession, was to act as an elder or minister and be commissioned to dispense the sacraments. In other matters, such as discipline and administration, the leader would act in consultation with a panchayat (court) that had the confidence of the people. Over a wider area, a similar system of church government was to prevail with a bishop or overseer as head.17 Winslow’s proposed model for a Christian community was to be truly Indian. The community must be patriotic and eager to promote India’s freedom. Its communal life was to be stronger than caste but not isolated from other Indians. It must distinguish itself among its neighbors by its high standards of living and thinking. The education of young children, Winslow envisaged, would follow a pattern similar to that in Rabindranath Tagore’s ashram at Bolpur in Bengal, where children learned from the example of a revered guru. For worship, bhajans and other Indian devotional songs would be sung with Indian musical instruments.18 In terms of architecture, churches should follow the design of Hindu temples. On their walls would be frescoes of exemplary figures of different religious traditions: Isaiah in the temple; Gautama beneath the banyan tree; Sita, the type of widely faithfulness; and Ruth the Moabite, a pattern of self-sacrificing affection.

On his return to India in 1920, Winslow began to realize his vision. He gathered together a small group of Indian Christians at Ahmednagar to form the nucleus of the ashram community called Christa Seva Sangh (initially composed of Indians and Winslow). After an experimental year of living together, Bishop Palmer of Bombay commissioned the first members of the Christa Seva Sangh on June 11, 1922. Details of the early history of Christa Seva Sangh need not concern us,19 except to note that the object of the ashram was to provide a small fellowship where Indians and Europeans could live together in Indian style and spend half the year in study and training at a central ashram and the other half in touring for evangelistic work. The name Christa Seva Sangh was interpreted in two ways: “The Fellowship of the Servants of Christ,” and “The Christian Fellowship of Service.” The first translation was in line with the first two aims of the society, which were bhakti (devotion) and the study of sacred texts. The second translation was in keeping with two further aims: service, especially for the sick and suffering, and evangelistic work, based on the conviction that the Gospel of Jesus Christ has in it the secret of uplift and re-creation. The final aim, seen by Winslow as the most distinctive mark of the fellowship, was unpaid work and the sharing of a common fund.20

During the early years of Christa Seva Sangh, Winslow wrote three small books exploring Indian and Christian mysticism. In 1923 he published Christian Yoga, containing four devotional addresses first delivered in England. In 1924 he published Jagadguru or, The World-Significance of Jesus Christ, a reprint of nine articles previously published in the Guardian (Calcutta). Finally in October 1926 he wrote The Indian Mystic: Some Thoughts on India’s Contribution to Christianity, published by the Student Christian Movement. Each work was written out of a conviction about the immense value to the West of Indian ascetic and mystical practices. As he observed in Christian Yoga, he had “a vision of India… helping powerfully in the task of bringing back to a West grown dry and thirsty in the deserts of a barren materialism the refreshing streams of a living faith in God and in the supremacy of spiritual values.”21

By June 1926 there were serious fears that the original community of Christa Seva Sangh would collapse, and Winslow used the opportunity of a furlough in England to recruit new blood. At a Student Christian Movement (SCM) conference in Swanwick, Winslow met William Strawan Robertson (later known as Father Algry), an SCM traveling secretary who had worked with W. E. S. Holland at St. Paul’s College, Calcutta, and who was interested in returning to work in India.22 Robertson, an Anglo-Catholic, was able to persuade two SCM friends, Verrier Elwin and Oliver Fielding-Clarke from Oxford, and several laymen to join Winslow in what was soon to be lauded as “the English Church’s newest missionary venture abroad.”23

At a public meeting in Trevelyan Hall, Westminster, on October 11, 1927, held to publicize the venture, Bishop St. Clair Donaldson of Salisbury, chairman of the Missionary Council of the Church of England, delineated the “three great things” about Christa Seva Sangh that had captured his imagination: the fact that it stood for reconciliation between race and race, nation and nation, class and class; that it stood for revolt against a great abuse in missionary work; and that it was a venture of faith. At about the same time, Verrier Elwin offered the Church Times his own understanding of the venture. Christa Seva Sangh, according to Elwin, represented a brotherhood, transcending the distinctions of race, caste, and class; it offered a living demonstra-
tation of Tagore’s maxim that “humanity is one at the core. East and West are but alternate beats of the same heart.”24 Later, reflecting on his motivation in joining Winslow’s missionary experiment, and using language that might as readily have come from William Wilberforce or Albert Schweitzer, Elwin returned to Winslow’s theme of atonement and reparation: “I joined the Christa Seva Sangh because I understood that its main interests were scholarship, mysticism [and] reparation.”25

### Breaking New Ground in the Context of Indian Nationalism

The arrival in November 1927 of Winslow’s new recruits from Oxford, Cambridge, and elsewhere marked the beginning of the most creative phase of Christa Seva Sangh’s existence. Previously, the community had devoted itself to prayer, study, evangelism, and the care of the sick. Now, with Bishop Palmer’s encouragement, it sought to break new ground by undertaking literary and educational work among the intelligentsia of Poona, an important center of Hindu scholarship and educational reform.26 Winslow at this time saw his and the ashram’s role as an interpreter of “the ancient Christian Church to India, and of India to the Christian Churches of the West.”27 This interpretive role placed a new emphasis upon the ashram’s “works”: giving lectures in the city, holding retreats, publishing a scholarly review, supporting social reform, running a student hostel, and building up the Poona branch of the Federation of International Fellowship. The fellowship had recently been established for the purpose of bringing together groups of Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and other religious groups for prayer and discussion of social, economic, and political problems facing the country.28

Unlike the bulk of missionaries working in India at the time, Winslow was sympathetic with Gandhi and other leaders of the Indian nationalistic movement. He took on the Indian name Devadatta. He wore khadi (homespun), a potent symbol of Indian nationalism, and hosted lectures at the ashram on Gandhi’s philosophy of nonviolence. Winslow was not as committed to the nationalistic movement as some of the other members of the ashram were, and at times he had difficulty defending them before officials of the India Office and the Bombay government. Nevertheless, in his final work written in India, The Dawn of Indian Freedom, coauthored with Elwin, he opposed the government’s bullying tactics of missionaries,29 he sang the praises of Gandhi’s satyagraha campaign, and he went as far as to depict Christ as the fulfillment of India’s national aspirations.30

In his poem “Hail to the Mother,” written during the civil disobedience campaign of 1930–31, Winslow is quite lyrical about the nationalist movement:

India, my India! Mother beloved!  
Shatter the chains of thy thraldom past!  
Ransom thy captives and raise thy fallen!  
Fold to thy bosom thy sons outcast!  
Rise in the might of thine ancient splendour!  
Shout for thy great Release, at last!31

Winslow left India in 1934, troubled by conflict within the ashram and strongly attracted by the Oxford Group movement (later called Moral Rearmament). He returned to England and took up parish work, broadcasting, and writing. Later he became chaplain of Bryanstone School. From 1948 to 1962 he served as the first chaplain to the great evangelistic center at Lee Abbey in North Devon. He died May 29, 1974, at the age of 92.

Winslow’s legacy has been variously assessed. Archbishop William Temple, who wrote the foreword to The Dawn of Indian Freedom, and who took a close interest in Winslow’s work, saw him as a great interpreter of the Indian mind to England.32 Andrew Webb describes him as an “erratic genius” who nevertheless best enshrined the fulfillment theology of the period.33 Winslow, however, always saw himself as an evangelist. Although he was ahead of his time in his attitude to Hinduism and although he played a major part in the development of the Christian ashram movement and indigenous expressions of faith and worship, he argued that he did so as an evangelist. It is in this light that we best understand Winslow’s frequent quotation from Dean Inge describing the ideal missionary: “What we most need in all our missionary work is a few saints, a few men who are really living such a life as apostles of Christ ought to live.”

### Notes


6. In December 1914 Winslow passed the first examination in Marathi with the highest marks of any candidate. See Proceedings of a meeting of the Bombay Diocesan Committee, SPG, held on Tuesday, 8 December 1914, United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel archives (hereafter USPG), CLR/8.


10. Winslow and Ratcliffe were assisted by an Indian colleague, Dinkar
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Athavale, and Major J. E. G. Festing of the Royal Engineers.

11. Some of the changes included a greater emphasis upon contemplation and adoration, reverence for the saints, and the sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist. A large place was also given to ceremony, color, movement, and gesture.


18. Ibid., pp. 248–249.


29. Winslow opposed the government’s actions in extracting pledges from non-British missionaries not to engage in political matters, and in bringing pressure upon British missionaries who took an independent line.


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1920 *The Eucharist in India: A Plea for a Distinctive Liturgy for the Indian Church, with a Suggested Form*. London: Longmans, Green.


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**Materials Written about Winslow**


Book Reviews

Missiology: An Ecumenical Introduction. Texts and Contexts of Global Christianity.


The Dutch have always had a particular genius for missiology. This ecumenical introduction, an updated and revised English translation of the 1988 Dutch original, demonstrates our continuing indebtedness to ground-breaking contributions by Dutch missiologists. An integrated missiological handbook could probably have been produced only in the Netherlands, where Reformed and Catholic missiologists have closely collaborated for decades. The result is a systematic work of Continental scholarship—comprehensive, balanced, and analytic—which offers corrective to the more pragmatic and results-oriented efforts of North American missiologists.

An opening query about the meaning of missiology first evokes an unqualified negative reply—it is not the study of Christian expansion from the West—then a more tentative reply. It is a discipline “searching for a new working self-definition” (p. 2). Missiology examines the multiplicity of processes in which Christianity is involved globally, both planned and unplanned. It studies the “movement of Christianity,” using insights from church history, cultural anthropology, religious studies, or sociology, but always from a “faith perspective.”

“Mission is . . . the dynamic relationship between God and the world” (p. 4). Both the mission of God and the sentness of the church must be examined in close relation to biblical and systematic theology. An “ecumenical” approach recognizes the plurality of faith perspectives held by missiologists as well as the diversity of geographic, cultural, religious, and other missionary contexts. We cannot yet speak of an “ecumenical missiology” (p. 437), but the authors hope for a “shared conversion to the essentials” of a common missiology.

The survey opens with sketches of the “experience of Christianity” in several geographic regions: the Middle East, Netherlands, China, Ghana, Indonesia, and Brazil. These demonstrate the polycentric diversity of global Christianity and the unique forms, problems, and yearnings peculiar to each region. Six essays explore the meaning of unity and diversity occasioned by “appeal to one holy scripture as the focus of unity in a complex and diverse Christianity” (p. 121). Missiology must re-examine the biblical foundations for the why, how, and what of mission; address questions of biblical hermeneutics in various interpretive contexts; and develop a theological model for the Christian approach to people of other faiths.

A historical section traces missionary motives, methods, and relationships from the time of Columbus and Vasco da Gama (1492) to the twentieth century. Ecumenical mission begins with the IMC integration into the WCC (1961) and Ecumenical Council Vatican II (1962–65). “Missionary vitality” is shown by newer contextual theologies in Africa and Asia, and by Latin American liberation theology. American Protestant missions and current evangelistic efforts in Russia are examined.

The conclusion outlines the genesis of a common missiology in the Netherlands and reviews current trends. Today’s leading missiological options are said to be church growth, theology of dialogue, and liberation theology. Catholic, ecumenical Protestant, and evangelical mission movements are analyzed.

With the rise of polycentric global Christianity, missiology has the task of fostering cross-cultural communication and of being the “initiator and mediator in dealing with the new challenge that theology will face on every side” (p. 467). Missiology’s contribution toward maintaining the unity of global Christianity will lie in making sense of Christian pluralism. Readers will be challenged by many propositions put forward here.

—James A. Scherer

James A. Scherer is Professor Emeritus, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.

Arab and Christian? Christians in the Middle East.


It is clear that Anton Wessels is a historian. Even when he deals with the future of the church in the Middle East, he approaches the question with a scholarly look at the past. He shows, for example, that the decline of the church in the Middle East predates the rise of Islam; in large parts of the region the decline occurred because Christianity was essentially Roman and failed to become indigenous.

“Arab and Christian?” also is a study of mission, for Wessels looks carefully at efforts to spread the Gospel in the lands where the Good News first was preached. Throughout the book he looks at mission strategies that failed largely because they were long on enthusiasm and short on understanding. And he demonstrates that the enthusiasm of the nineteenth-century missionaries often was for Western culture and economic theory rather than for the spirit of the risen Christ. Even when Protestant missionaries worked hard at conversion, they found that members of ancient Christian communities (e.g., Armenian and Greek Orthodox) were more open to their evangelical invitations than either Muslims or Jews.

The translation of Wessels’s book is sometimes awkward and ambiguous. It is such an important work that one hopes the rough places will be made plain English in later editions. This excellent book is made even more helpful by thorough endnotes and a full index and by a very extensive bibliography of works published in English, French, German, Dutch, and Arabic.
In a time when Christians in Europe and North America as well as advocates for the Gospel in other lands must deal with Islam and Judaism, this volume provides a thoughtful analysis of the interactions among the Abrahamic faiths in the Middle East. The author’s careful treatment of the rise of fundamentalism in all three faiths is especially noteworthy.

In the end, Wessels is cautiously hopeful. If the church becomes what Jean Corbon calls “the community of God and Arabs,” it will make a unique contribution to the building of a more humane world. Then, says Wessels, “one will be able to speak in the third millennium of both Arab and Christian.” —J. Martin Bailey

J. Martin Bailey, a volunteer in mission serving the Middle East Council of Churches under appointment of the Common Mission Board of the United Church of Christ and the Disciples of Christ, works primarily with the Arab Christian community in Palestine and Israel. He also serves as communication consultant to churches throughout the Middle East.

THE PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS

Research Advancement Grants for Projects on Christian Mission and World Christianity

The Religion Program of The Pew Charitable Trusts invites proposals for large-scale projects that will enhance team research and publication in studies of Christian Mission and non-Western Christianity. Grants will be made on a competitive basis for two- to three-year collaborative projects that will contribute significantly to the advancement of scholarship on cross-cultural mission and/or the development of Christianity in the southern and eastern continents. Grants will range from $50,000 to $100,000 (U.S.) per year.

Projects should be directed by one or more established scholars, have access to appropriate research facilities, involve scholars from two or more regions of the world, and contribute to the intellectual and cross-cultural vitality of the global Christian movement. Projects that are interdenominational and interdisciplinary and that elicit significant contributions from the non-Western world are particularly welcome. Two or three grants will be awarded at the end of 1997, subject to the quality of proposals received and the availability of funds.

The deadline for receiving initial proposals (maximum four pages) for 1997 Research Advancement Grants is May 1, 1997. For further information and instructions please contact:

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One Earth Many Religions: Multifaith Dialogue and Global Responsibility.


Both of these books represent what has come to be known as the pluralist position regarding Christianity’s relation to other religions. Both are lucid and respond to various criticisms made of the pluralist approach. They are also similar in eventually arguing that the truth of a religion is known by its ethical fruits. However (like good pluralists), they are dissimilar in their route to this common goal: Hick via a Kantian-type philosophical framework and Knitter via a ecopolitical-liberationist route. The commonality in their dissimilar routes lies in their highly problematic (to this reviewer), non-Trinitarian Christologies and reductive ecclesiology.

Hick’s book opens with an excellent summary of what he calls his pluralist hypothesis, developed in his magisterial Interpretation of Religion (1989). The following four chapters are written in a dialogue form, with Hick being questioned philosophically (by “Phil”) and theologically (by “Grace”). One might say that Hick, while being respectful to Phil and Grace, overcomes both—and Grace is a more subdued figure than I would have preferred. Footnotes indicate the real-life critics, and the main text deals with issues. The four main contentious topics are postmodern critiques and truth claims, the knowability of the Real, Christology (note the ordering), and mission and dialogue.

I would register two responses. First, this book is useful for a summary of Hick and for highlighting key issues in the debate. Second, Hick’s position still seems driven by a problematic epistemology, which means that “revelation” is always controlled by philosophical presuppositions (basically agnostic Kantianism). Hence, not only Christians but “orthodox” members of other traditions might well find his global interpretation of all religions yet one more particular vantage point claiming priority over all other truth claims. Perhaps pluralism conceals an exclusivism!

Knitter’s book is part 1 of a two-volume study. It is prefaced by a moving and interesting autobiography in which Knitter plots his conversion from exclusivism to inclusivism to pluralism. The latter is also charted from theocentricism (in No
Fifteen Outstanding Books of 1996 for Mission Studies

The editors of the INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN OF MISSIONARY RESEARCH have selected the following books published in 1996 for special recognition of their contribution to mission studies. We have limited our selection to books in English, since it would be impossible to consider fairly the books in many other languages that are not readily available to us. We commend the authors, editors, and publishers represented here for their contribution to the advancement of scholarship in studies of Christian mission and world Christianity.

Bickers, Robert A., and Rosemary Seton, eds.
Missionary Encounters: Sources and Issues.

Bays, Daniel H., ed.
Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present.
Stanford, California: Stanford Univ. Press. $55.

Hiebert, Paul G., and Eloise Hiebert Meneses.
Incarnational Ministry: Planting Churches in Band, Tribal, Peasant and Urban Societies.

Hunsberger, George R., and Craig Van Gelder, eds.
The Church between Gospel and Culture: The Emerging Mission in North America.

Irvin, Dale T., and Akintunde E. Akinade, eds.
The Agitated Mind of God: The Theology of Kosuke Koyama.

Karotemprel, Sebastian, et al., eds.
Following Christ in Mission: A Foundational Course in Missiology.

Kraft, Charles H.
Anthropology for Christian Witness.

Krummel, John W., ed.
Tokyo: Kyō Bun Kaikan. Available from Cokesbury, P.O. Box 801, Nashville, Tenn. $85.

Miguéz Bonino, José.
Faces of Latin American Protestantism.

Newbigin, Lesslie.
Truth and Authority in Modernity.

Saayman, Willem, and Klippies Kritzinger, eds.
Mission in Bold Humility: David Bosch’s Work Considered.

Sanneh, Lamin.
Piety and Power: Muslims and Christians in West Africa.
Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books. $25.

Van Engen, Charles.

Walls, Andrew F.
The Missionary Movement in Christian History.

Woodberry, J. Dudley, Charles Van Engen, and Edgar J. Elliston, eds.
Missiological Education for the Twenty-First Century.
In searching for a criterion or two appropriate for the review of this dictionary, I became acutely aware of the importance of perspective. Hexham is quite open about his own (1) undergraduate religious studies, (2) Christian orientation, and (3) conservative outlook (e.g., "the old liberal approach is an anachronism," p. 241). And no doubt that perspective accounts for more than two thousand entries covering all the world's great religions and much more. (My own perspective is that of a liberal, Catholic Jesuit priest with decades of seminary, refugee, and missionary work in the Middle East and Africa.)

There is no doubt that Hexham has admirably accomplished what he set out to do. The book is a genuinely handy quick-reference tool for young students often woefully ignorant of their own religion, let alone the religions of others throughout the world. One admires his discipline while wondering, sometimes bemusedly, at his criteria for inclusion. For example, why is Hans Küng included but not John Paul II (or Paul VI or any Pius but IX)? Why George Orwell and Shirley MacLaine ("the Madam Blavatsky of the late twentieth century," p. 141) but not Gustavo Gutiérrez or Louis Farrakhan?

There are actually some real surprises, despite one's respect for Hexham's perspective. The article on Roman Catholicism is so distorted as to be embarrassing, and the one on racism makes no allusion at all to its effects in the United States. Teilhard de Chardin, with all respect to Hexham, is more worthy of note for his vision of the universe (à la Col. 1:15–20 and Eph. 1:3–14) than for his relation to Piltdown Man or his alleged pro-Fascist sympathies! Contrary to Hexham, the Roman Catholic Church claims Jesus Christ, not Peter, as its founder.

Some of my remarks may be quibbling, others perhaps not. But they illustrate that the value and utility of this compendium do indeed depend on one's basic perspective.

—Simon E. Smith, S.J.

Historiography of the Chinese Catholic Church: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.


With this volume the Ferdinand Verbiest Foundation, located at the Flemish-language segment of what was once Louvain University in Belgium, has grandly launched its series Louvain Chinese Studies. The foundation's research program focuses on "the history of relations between the Low Countries and China" and, within that scope, focuses on the missionary enterprise in China (p. 5). This book ranges more widely, however. It publishes papers from a conference of 1990 and reports on projects touching Catholic missionaries from several European countries as well as North America. It also calls for more work presenting the circumstances and perspectives of Chinese Catholics and manages to include some examples. (Françoise Aubin shows, in her fascinating account of Catholic practice from the point of view of Chinese believers, what can be gleaned anthropologically from European ecclesiastical archives.)

Merely to list the fifty articles of the volume would tax the space limits of this review. Perhaps the book is best considered a sort of encyclopedia on its topic, offering capsule histories of the modern mission experience in China of a number of Catholic missionary orders and societies, as well as selected topical essays on the experience of some Chinese Catholics. In addition, the articles report usefully on projects under way all over the world, on previously published work, and on archives of use to future researchers. The

Spontaneous Combustion: Grass Roots Christianity, Latin America Style.


This important book by two veteran missionaries of the Latin America Mission describes the new family of churches emerging in Latin America, which are now a worldwide phenomenon. Such churches constitute the most rapidly growing Christian communities in most parts of the world. While classification cannot be precise, the authors suggest the following: those that have no history of being a product of a missionary organization or an established foreign denomination, those that have become decidedly free of foreign influence and have adopted authentic national characteristics, and those planted by missionaries from another Latin American country.

They range from churches among the very poor, meeting in warehouses, to those among middle-class professionals. Most flourish in growing urban centers. Their styles of leadership and worship are different from typical Protestant churches. Most affirm all the biblical gifts of the Spirit but differ from traditional Pentecostals. Some relate positively to the broader Protestant movement, and some are extremely sectarian and exploitative.

There are both positive lessons and dangers in these movements. The book raises many issues that require more study. One is the question of spirits in a continent where various forms of spiritism constitute the most widely practiced religion. At what point does contextualization become syncretism? A second is that of leadership. As the founding, often authoritarian leaders pass from the scene, who will take their places? How will they be selected and trained? Third, will those churches move into the mainstream of evangelical Christianity and a deeper understanding of discipleship, or will they become increasingly cultic? Finally, will older Christian movements be able to move into positive relationships with such churches in order that each might learn from the other?

This book is significant and should be studied by all who long to see churches on every continent reach those outside their traditional boundaries.

—Paul E. Pierson

Paul E. Pierson, Dean Emeritus and Professor of History and Mission and Latin American Studies at the School of World Mission of Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California, served as a missionary in Brazil (1956–70) and in Portugal (1971–73).
book, however, is not intended to be comprehensive. Not only are major components of the Catholic mission enterprise in China in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries not well represented, but the contributors to the volume are keenly conscious of the scholarly road still to be traveled.

In a collection of essays of such diversity, it is striking how prominent in the historiography are the religious orders and missionary societies as boundaries of research and thereby barriers to a general view. These divisions in Catholicism appear as difficult for scholars to breach as Protestant denominations, perhaps more so. The turn to study of the Chinese Catholic Church in China would be the unraveling of some potential for overcoming the blinders of the orders. The effects on scholars of the provincialism of the orders might also be tackled from quite the other end. Robert Carbonneau points to the puzzle of the Vatican, that "a great contribution to the historiography of the Catholic Church in China would be the unraveling of the 'Roman mentality'" (p. 78).

—Ernest P. Young

Ernest P. Young is Professor of History, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The Evacuation of Shekomeko and the Early Moravian Missions to Native North Americans.


In 1740 Moravian missionaries began a work among Native Americans in southwestern colonial New York at Shekomeko. This effort was beset by a host of difficulties from its inception until it was finally given up in 1746. Westmeier has written the most comprehensive study of this work ever to appear and has done so from a unique perspective.

The difficulties the Moravians encountered were in relationship to various local civil authorities. Westmeier has isolated eight specific incidents of this type and uses them to form the framework of the book. He approaches his task with a method he labels "missiological . . . that is, research from the perspective of the intellectual communication of the Christian faith" (p. iv). Thus while telling the history, he also utilizes extensive material of an anthropological and sociological nature to provide helpful contextualization for the events he is describing. So, for example, the description of the conflict provoked over British recruiting efforts for King George's War includes discussion of the nature of warfare according to European and Native American understandings, the methods of warfare of both peoples, and Moravian pacifist attitudes. Although at times a cumbersome device, this approach does provide a more thorough understanding of the mission effort than a traditional historical account alone.

Westmeier, who teaches at the Alliance Theological Seminary in Puerto Rico, has made extensive use of Moravian archival materials in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and Herrnhut, Germany. He is also well acquainted with the appropriate secondary material.

Westmeier's book is a valuable contribution to the field of Moravian mission studies and to the wider area of missiological research.

—David A. Schattschneider

David A. Schattschneider is Dean and Professor of the History of Christianity at Moravian Theological Seminary, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

The Foundations of Historical Understanding

Robert Eric Frykenberg

"This is a thoughtful treatise in the realm between history and philosophy, the product of mature reflection on the part of a historian who has himself struggled for decades with the issues of historical understanding and writing honest history . . . . This book reinforces eloquently the truth that deep-seated religious or ideological beliefs inform the very conceptualization of history and are inextricably intertwined with historical understanding."

—Daniel H. Bays

"This important new work provides a penetrating guide to historical knowledge and its structure and limits. . . . [It] gives us one of the best introductions that we have to the relationship between knowledge, belief, and faith in historical study, helping to elucidate the historical grounding of belief and search for meaning."

—Stanley G. Payne

"Building upon four decades of his own scholarly work in the field of history, Frykenberg presents a notable achievement for clarifying the rich overlap between facts and theory, evidence and belief, history and religion, East and West. He deserves to be commended."

—Lamin Sanneh

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At your bookstore, or call 800-253-7521 • Fax 616-459-6540
Winds of Change: Rapidly Growing Religious Groups in the Pacific Islands.


In this comprehensive study Manfred Ernst, a social scientist with wide experience in research and writing and fieldwork in the Caribbean and Latin America during the 1980s, documents the invasion of new religious movements into the Pacific region, primarily in the last thirty years, and discusses their affect on the established “mainline” churches. The pattern is clear: the percentage of Pacific Island Christians in the historic mainline churches has dramatically declined during the past two decades, while some of the new religious groups are growing rapidly.

Ernst’s three-year study sponsored by the Pacific Conference of Churches spans the Pacific, excluding Papua New Guinea, the Mariana Islands in Micronesia, New Zealand, and Hawaii. He surveys four categories of religious movements: (1) the most widespread and well-established new religious groups (the Assemblies of God, the Baha’i faith, the Mormons, the Jehovah’s Witnesses, and the Seventh-day Adventists); (2) the most recent arrivals (nine churches discussed); (3) breakaway new religious groups (six churches studied); and (4) evangelical-fundamentalist parachurch organizations (eight organizations analyzed).

Following this excellent descriptive survey, Ernst presents case studies of six Pacific Island nations, documenting how the new religious groups are interacting with and affecting the historic mainline churches. Part 3 of the book attempts a sociological analysis of why these new religious groups are growing while the mainline churches are declining. Ernst believes that the appeal of these new religious groups “seems to lie in meeting the very fundamental needs of individuals in rapidly changing societies” (p. 248). It is also noteworthy that without exception, as far as his research is concerned, all the new religious groups have their basis and majority of adherents in the urban areas.

This well-written book is especially useful because of the inclusion of many tables, maps, charts, section summaries, statistical appendices, glossaries, and an index. It should serve as a standard reference work for many years to come, and I commend it highly.

—Darrell L. Whiteman

Bamboo Stone: The Evolution of a Chinese Medical Elite.


My heart skips a beat! A history of “my” university—but what a strange title. Opening the book, I find it is the name of a Qing dynasty poem: “Cleaving to the mountain never letting go / Roots sunk deeply in jagged stone / Still standing strong and firm after many storms / No matter what direction the wind blows.” My mind flashes back to the eleven years I worked at the West China Union University (1941–52) and to my eight visits since 1973; Bamboo Stone is indeed a suitable title.

The author’s extensive research and understanding of Chinese history enable her to reflect with candor and insight on the many storms affecting the life of the university. Bamboo Stone goes beyond interesting facts and figures; it tells the story of how these events comes to life, paradoxes and conflicts are graphically portrayed.

Uninvited, zealous American, British, and Canadian missionaries thrust themselves upon an unwilling Sichuan Province in the early years of the twentieth century—and faced the first of many storms. The idealistic pioneers eventually succeed in attracting youth from a conservative, Confucian society to a Westernized Christian campus community promoting science and technology.

Japanese occupation drives four more-advanced universities to seek refuge on the West China campus. Competition is intense but eventually enhances the status of the university. The moderate winds of change after 1949 are followed by hurricanes; doctors and dentists become pariahs for many years until the wind shifts its direction yet again when the “medical elite” receives official blessing.

Assessing the outcome at the end of a storm-plagued era, Minden reflects on failure and success. The missionaries’ vision of meeting the medical needs of the ten million people of the Sichuan plain was not realized. However, eventually the university was named one of the six key medical universities (out of 112) in China. Its alumni have served on policy-making bodies, given leadership in colleges and institutes, and provided staff for hospitals throughout China, especially in the field of dentistry.

Bamboo Stone is a valuable addition to the history of missionary activity in China, a tribute to the fortitude of the “medical elite,” and an acknowledgment of the need for deep roots to counter inevitable storms.

—William W. Small

The Mainline Church’s Funding Crisis: Issues and Possibilities.


“Ron Vallet and Charles Zech tell us what we in the mainline church have been reluctant to admit. The numbers do not lie,” says William Willimon in the foreword of The Mainline Church’s Funding Crisis. Indeed, the authors bring the kind of credentials to this study that encourage the reader to focus on the issues without suspecting that biases or self-serving assumptions dictate the outcomes.

Vallet offers a description of the mission-funding crisis, including evidence drawn from surveys and reports from church sources as well as secular and public media. Zech looks at the funding crisis through the lens of theories based in social
science, followed by a focus on the issues that are germane to the crisis. Vallet concludes the study with sections on the life of the church in modernity and on the future of church and denomination in a postmodern world.

In their summary the authors acknowledge that the crisis is real, but the social science theories did not yield any clear-cut causes or solutions. Nonetheless, both authors claim hope for the church if “it takes seriously the assumptions and household rules of the Bible and theological reflection,” articulated in the last chapter. That hope, however, is based on imagination that faces the future instead of nostalgia that beckons into the future.

Meanwhile, in the transition to the future, congregations will fare better than denominations. Having said that, the authors believe denominations will remain, although they give no suggestions as to what a viable denominational structure would look like in the future. Pastors, lay leaders, and missions-related personnel would be well served to struggle honestly with the realities revealed through this study. It is more than an antidote for either myopia or denial. It is a call to renewal of a biblical kingdom agenda for the church in the twenty-first century.

—William R. O’Brien

William R. O’Brien is the Director of the Global Center of Samford University’s Beeson Divinity School, Birmingham, Alabama. He is a former missionary in Indonesia.

The Chinese Rites Controversy: Its History and Meaning.


The essays in this volume were first presented in 1992 by Chinese and Western scholars at a symposium coinciding with the three hundredth anniversary of the Kangxi emperor’s Edict of Toleration for Christianity. They include a super analysis of the repercussions of Charles Maigrot’s fateful mandate against the Chinese rites of 1693, which formally inaugurated the most dramatic phase of the long-simmering controversy between the Jesuits and their mainly mendicant adversaries over the accommodation between Christianity and Confucianism, Chinese religion, and the worship of ancestors. Another valuable contribution sheds new light on the “fateful clash of wills” in 1706–7 between Rome’s plenipotentiary, Cardinal de Tournon, and the Chinese emperor. The two essays on the Figurist ideas of Joseph Frémare, S.J., and the substantial unpublished writings of Antoine de Beauvoilier, S.J., reveal the complex nature of the Rites Controversy.

Special mention must be made of Erik Zürcher’s remarkable contribution, for it is one the very few chapters that considers the essentially European Rites Controversy from a Chinese perspective. Zürcher presents a fascinating interpretation of early Chinese Christianity as an “indigenous marginal religion,” a hybrid created by converted Chinese lower-fringe literati. However, it should be noted that none of the articles provides much information on the adaptation of Christian beliefs and practices by ordinary Chinese to indigenous popular culture.

Most of the essays are very well researched and provide much new information on and new insights into a brief but highly significant episode of the protracted Chinese Rites and Term Controversy. Since there is as yet no definitive or comprehensive history, this scholarly work affords a useful introduction to the tragic struggle,
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IBMR "Mission Legacies" are gathered in this attractive, durable hardback from Orbis Books. Included are the founders and most prominent leaders of the Christian missionary movement from the late 18th century to the present: John R. Mott, Pope Pius XI, Ruth Rouse, William Carey, Francis X. Ford, Roland Allen, Hendrik Kraemer, Stephen Neill, E. Stanley Jones, Joseph Schmidlin, Wilhelm Schmidt, Alan R. Tippett, Max Warren, Helen Barnett Montgomery, Lucy Waterbury Peabody, John Philip, David Livingstone, Charles Simeon, and many more. Authors of these biographical sketches are a veritable "who's who" of church historians, including Dana Robert, John C. Bennett, Karl Müller, SVD, Lesslie Newbigin, A. Christopher Smith, Eric J. Sharpe, and Jean-Paul Wiest. With biographical and bibliographic information available nowhere else, Mission Legacies belongs in every theological library and on the bookshelf of every student of World Christianity and mission.

which agitated the church for several centuries. D. E. Mungello of Baylor University, an expert on early modern Sino-Western cultural exchange, is to be congratulated for a well-edited volume.

—R. G. Tiedemann

R. G. Tiedemann teaches modern Chinese history at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. He is currently engaged in research leading toward a history of the Chinese Christian Church.

Charismatic Christianity as a Global Culture.


The worldwide growth of Pentecostal/charismatic Christianity has long merited extensive research and analysis. Yet information has usually come only from Euramerican mission agencies through publications that report on successes and assure home constituencies that related overseas churches conform to their doctrinal and ecclesiastical standards. Unfortunately, this limitation has the effect of presenting charismatic Christianity as a monolithic movement. Karla Poewe, professor of anthropology at the University of Calgary, and the other contributors challenge this portrayal.

Hardly uniform, Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity transcends ethnic, racial, and class boundaries to constitute a "global culture," produced by its "experiential, idealistic, biblical, and oppositional" dimensions (p. xii). Although it lacks a single integrating system of theology and liturgy, prominent features include a believer's personal relationship with God, love of one's neighbor, and holistic religious experience. To study the magnitude of this culture, Poewe gathered experts in sociology, anthropology, history, and religious studies to share their insights; among them were such well-known scholars as Walter Hollenweger, David Martin, and Russell P. Spittler. While individual contributions in books of this nature usually reveal varying levels of reflection, I am impressed by the consistent quality of the chapters, which fall under four headings: Methods and Models, Regional Overviews and Variations, Turning Orality into Literary Narrative—the Making of Pentecostal and Holy Spirit History, and Charismatic Christian Thought.

The emphasis on the seemingly unending diversity of charismatic Christian-
ity loads the term “charismatic” with so much assorted baggage that it fails to recognize adequately the unity of millions of Pentecostals and charismatics in their confession of evangelical faith. While much work remains to be done, Poewe’s insightful volume nevertheless is a significant contribution to the study of global Christianity.

—Gary B. McGee

Gary B. McGee, a contributing editor, is Professor of Church History at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, Springfield, Missouri. He co-edited the Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements (1988).

Transforming Health: Christian Approaches to Healing and Wholeness.


This book is a collection of twenty-three essays contributed by Christian health workers from around the world. Its purpose is to describe and promote a holistic view of health from the Christian perspective. An introduction by the book’s editor, Eric Ram, director of Global Health Programs of World Vision International, provides the reader with an overview of the material organized in four sections.

The five essays in part 1, “Healing and Wholeness,” provide the basic biblical and conceptual background for holistic health care. To achieve true wholeness and health, we must learn from the example of Christ and treat not only the body but also the mind and spirit, not only the individual but also the community in which he or she lives. Sickness is a result of microbes, but it is also a result of social poverty, mental ignorance, moral weakness, and spiritual emptiness. Part 2, “Making Health a Reality,” is a collection of nine essays that describe practical efforts by Christians in large and small projects to transform individuals and communities in a holistic fashion. Part 3, “Building Healing Communities,” focuses on the importance to health of an individual’s sense of community and provides examples of supportive Christian communities. Part 4, “Breaking New Ground,” presents Christian perspectives on controversial forms of treatment such as those based on African traditional medicine, herbal cures, pranic healing [from prana, Sanskrit for “vital principle”], and homeopathy. As one would expect, not all of the essays in the book will awaken the same level of interest in the reader, nor do they

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all fit neatly under their assigned sections. But in Transforming Health, Dr. Eric Ram has put together a very useful, theoretical, and practical overview of holistic medicine from a Christian standpoint.

—Tom Frist

Tom Frist, President of the International Federation of Anti-Leprosy Associations (ILEP), worked for eighteen years in Brazil, Tanzania, India, and Vietnam with UN, university, and missionary associations in disability, health, refugee, and educational activities.

Christianity and the Religions: A Biblical Theology of World Religions.


“They have Hindus as their neighbors, their children go to school with Muslims. Religious pluralism is a fact of their lives, and these people seem to be decent, ordinary people who wrestle with the same problems and concern which face any Christian” (p.10). So Gordon T. Smith sets the scene for this welcome volume by members of the Evangelical Missiological Society.

The first section consists of essays from biblical scholars. They provide rich material for discussion, but there are un-resolved hermeneutical issues. The religious pluralism that the biblical writers knew is hardly the pluralism that Gordon Smith describes, yet we get here only a biblical theology of the religions of the ancient world. I wonder how helpful that is to contemporary American laypeople. Missionaries have a better appreciation of what it felt like to be Paul in Athens, Corinth, or Ephesus than purely biblical scholars. See, for example, Don Howell’s brilliant discussion of Paul’s attitudes from within a Japanese context. A less helpful section entitled “Historical and Doctrinal Perspectives” contains nevertheless a stimulating essay by Charles Van Engen, “The Uniqueness of Christ in Mission Theology.”

Some serious editorial omissions mar this book’s usefulness. There is no index and no indication of who the contributors are. There are errors and omissions in the bibliographies. A word-processing problem has peppered some pages with intrusive hyphens.

Gordon Smith sums up one of the book’s abiding themes. He writes, “dialogue can also include debate, when this is understood in the broad sense of gracious, reasoned contention—conversation that enables people to think clearly, and wrestle with the human predicament” (p. 20). Not only is this helpful to understanding interreligious activity, it could also presage a new dialogue between evangelicals and ecumenicals on the theology of religion.

—Kenneth Cracknell

Kenneth Cracknell, a British Methodist, is Research Professor in Theology and Mission at Brite Divinity School, Fort Worth, Texas. He served for five years as a missionary in Nigeria.
Recognize the Spiritual Bonds Which Unite Us: Sixteen Years of Christian-Muslim Dialogue.


The attractive, colored cover of this book clearly signals its central theme: Muslim-Christian interfaith dialogue. Two pictures appear on the cover: the painting of the sixteen-century Islam emperor Akbar (shown presiding over an interreligious discussion among Catholic priests and Muslim scholars) and a 1992 photo of Muslim leaders and Pope John Paul II in dialogue in a mosque in Dakar, Senegal.

Edited by two Islamic experts of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, this volume highlights the numerous initiatives of Muslim-Christian dialogue from 1978 (the year of John Paul II's election) until 1994. An inviting format of presentation is employed; each chapter consists of a narrative, generously interspersed with selected quotes from original documents, biographical vignettes, plus colored (over 100) and black-and-white photographs.

The title of this volume is selected from a reflection by John Paul II in Ankara, Turkey, in 1979, when the pope asked: "I wonder whether it is not urgent... to recognize and develop the spiritual bonds which unite us." (p. 15). Similarly, on a 1980 African visit the pope declared in Nairobi, Kenya: "On my part I wish to do everything possible to help develop the spiritual bonds between Christians and Muslims" (p. 18). Clearly, mutual spiritual convictions lie at the root of all Muslim-Christian dialogue, and this faith perspective repeatedly emerges in the book.

Individual chapters invitingly treat a wide variety of themes: history of Muslim-Christian dialogue, early pioneers, role of the popes, the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, youth, dialogue in the church's mission, praying together, worldwide dialogue initiatives, and dialogue in the Abrahamic tradition. The reader thus develops a sensitivity and solid appreciation of the central importance of dialogue in today's world church.

The book is thoroughly helpful in providing a panoramic perspective of dialogue in its many forms. Readers will have their appetites whetted to explore in greater depth the role that dialogue with all religious traditions necessarily will play in the Christian church of the third millennium.

—James H. Kroeger, M.M.

James H. Kroeger served as a Maryknoll missioner in the Philippines and Bangladesh for over two decades; he is now the Asia-Pacific Area Assistant on the Maryknoll General Council. Orbis Books recently published his latest work, Living Mission.


Bernard Booth has written a well-researched study of the contribution made by the St. Joseph's Missionary Society of Mill Hill to the people of Cameroon, especially the English-speaking former West Cameroon. His sources include records at Rhodes House, Oxford, and the mission archives at Mill Hill, and in Cameroon at the archives of the Buea Diocese in Soppo. To these he has added splendid oral and written testimony to argue that, despite their flaws, Mill Hill missionaries deserve great credit for their service to the West Cameroon before independence and for the decade after. In his opinion, they had a major role in preparing the Cameroon people for entry into the English-speaking world because of their work in education, health care, and development.

The book's more impressive contribution, aside from the author's many important insights gained during his field research for a Ph.D. twenty-five years ago, are the individuals he interviewed. Without Booth's fieldwork the oral testimony of Fathers Staats, Jacobs, Woodman, Nielen, and Nabben and of Mother Camilla and many others would be lost. For example, Simon Staats developed into one of best education administrators the church had in Nigeria and the Cameroons between 1935 and independence.

James Nielen, the "idealist" of St. Augustine's College, is still in Cameroon. He wrote me in December 1995 that he is living at Njinikon, "just being a priest." Booth's story of the beginnings of St. Augustine's shows how conflicts among church people and between the church and the state arise and are often resolved.

The founder of the Mill Hill Missionaries in 1866 was Herbert Vaughan. When he was bishop of Salford, he began St. Bede's College, Manchester (Bernard Booth's own school). Booth went on to earn a Ph.D. at the University of Califor-
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Cardinal Herbert Vaughan.


A skillful, critical historian and a Mill Hill Missionary, Robert O’Neil has written a thoroughly convincing, rounded account of the achievements, limitations, and essential greatness of the founder of his society. He shows first how Vaughan’s missionary vocation was rooted in his native soil on the borders of England and Wales. Through three centuries of discrimination and persecution, his family of landowners had retained its Catholic faith. The church was central to their identity, and mission was an integral part of the church’s life, generations of children being offered in its service. Vaughan wanted to become a missionary to Wales; instead, after ordination he found himself soon called by Wiseman and Manning to serve the church in England. Vaughan still saw foreign missions as vital for the church. In 1863 he visited California and Latin America to collect funds for a missionary college at Mill Hill, and the author brings out clearly how Vaughan repaid this debt. The first work undertaken by ordinands from the college was among Afro-Americans. Vaughan and his missionaries challenged the racial antagonisms of that epoch and hoped that Afro-Americans might undertake the conversion of Africa. Later, in 1889, Vaughan appealed to Cardinal Gibbons that American Catholics should take the lead in foreign missions, and his example and admonition were recalled when Maryknoll was founded. Vaughan was unable to devote single-mindedly his talents to his missionary society. As bishop of Salford and then cardinal archbishop of Westminster, he was called to the conversion of England, and this study embraces his many activities. It uses many unpublished sources, though it could be enriched by consulting the documents in the Vatican and at Propaganda Fide. Yet it admirably succeeds in revealing the spirituality and humanity of a priest who sometimes appeared to contemporaries as intolerably grim and narrow.

—Richard Gray

Richard Gray is Professor Emeritus of African History at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.
Spiritual Power and Missions: Raising the Issues.


Much has been written in the past few years in evangelical missiological circles on the subject of spiritual power and ministries such as exorcisms, spiritual warfare, and dealing with territorial spirits, most of it by practitioners in the field. There have been few careful studies on the subject on the basis of theological or empirical analysis. This volume raises key questions that must be answered and provides a preliminary response to the critique.

In an extended chapter, Robert Priest and his associates raise critical biblical, ontological, and practical issues regarding the current movement, citing widely from the current literature in the field. They are concerned that the movement can become a form of Christian animism based on pragmatism, noting that too often practitioners in spiritual warfare do not distinguish between phenomenological realities reported by people and ontological reality as defined by a biblical worldview. Priest, raised in the Bolivian Amazon, where his parents were missionaries, and trained as an anthropologist in traditional religions, is deeply aware of persisting animistic practices in young churches around the world and of the transforming power of the Gospel that delivers people from the spirits.

In response, Charles Kraft describes his discovery of the importance of spiritual warfare in Scriptures and Christian ministry and defends his explorations in the areas of exorcism and exercising the authority Christ gives us. Kraft, a professor at Michigan State and later at Fuller Theological Seminary, is aware of the supernatural/natural dualism that has secularized much of everyday life in many North American Christians and is concerned that missionaries be able to present the Gospel with power to overcome the attacks of Satan and his followers.

In a third chapter, Patrick Johnstone calls for careful reflection and moderation in the areas of spiritual warfare and calls missionaries and the church back to prayer as the greatest power that they can exercise in the global outreach of the church. Several important issues emerge from the debate: the biblical teachings regarding evil spirits and their powers over people, including committed Christians; the relationship between human phenomenological reports and ontological realities; the relationship of human experience to divine revelation; the Christian response to demons and demon possession; and the place of spiritual warfare in mission outreach. What is not at question for any of the writers is the reality of Satan, demons, and evil in the world. This book does not solve these questions, but in raising them, it will hopefully lead to an ongoing discussion that can help churches and missionaries deal with Satan and sin within the larger message of God establishing his reign over all creation.

—Paul G. Hiebert

Paul G. Hiebert is Associate Dean of Academic Doctoral Studies and Professor of Mission Anthropology and South Asian Studies, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois.

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This memoir of a young Yale graduate teaching at Yali, the Yale-in-China boys' middle school in central China, at the outset of the war with Japan is both entertaining and insightful. It entertains because it is truly a "photo-memoir." The young Gulick (who later became a respected diplomatic historian at Wellesley College), who was an excellent photographer, returned from China in 1939 with over 1,000 prints; about 150 appear in this volume. The photos themselves constitute a perceptive and shrewd set of observations on the school, Gulick's American and Chinese colleagues, the students, and life around them.

For students of missiology, Gulick's observations and insights are useful in two areas. As part of his discussion of the school, its curriculum and activities, he depicts frankly the tepid religiosity in what had become an academically top-flight middle school. In this school founded soon after 1900 by evangelicals of the Student Volunteer Movement, Gulick and his colleagues were "agnostics with a religious temperament" (p. 212); yet he viewed it as still a distinctly "Christian" school. More important (because more unique among such memoirs), Gulick describes the Sinoforeign dynamics of the school, including relationships among faculty and between foreign faculty and Chinese students. He shares frankly what he, a novice foreign teacher, learned of the intricacies and subtleties of Chinese society in his two years' teaching at Yali. Those interested in other American mission schools abroad, for example in the Middle East, can read this discussion with profit.

Of interest to China historians is Gulick's description of the wartime context. His first year of teaching was at the regular campus, with the Japanese invaders coming closer; in the fall of 1938, the school moved several hundred miles west. We get here a rare detailed account of one institution's experience in this great exodus. Finally, this volume lacks an index.

—Daniel H. Bays

Daniel H. Bays is Professor and Chairman of the Department of History at the University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas. He is editor of a volume of twenty essays, Christianity in China: The Eighteenth Century to the Present (Stanford University Press, 1996).

Touching the Soul of Islam: Sharing the Gospel in Muslim Cultures.


Written against the background of many years' Christian service in Arab cultures of the Middle East, with several mission agencies and the Anglican church in Egypt, this book marks Bill Musk's most interesting contribution to evangelical literature on Islam. His image of "the soul of Islam" is gleaned from the cultural patterns of Muslim peoples and societies in the Middle East. In ten chapters he selects a variety of cultural factors that contribute to traditional Arab societies. These range from gender and family relationships to issues of honor, hospitality, time, language, brotherhood, and resignation, each of which Musk discusses in terms of what he sees to be its tension with competitive values: for example, the tension between female and male, between individual and family, between violence and hospitality. He wends his way through these cultural variables by personal observation and anecdotes, backed up by Arab proverbs, excerpts from various genres of Arab imaginative literature in English translation, and some scholarly anthropology.

On the premise that "the Bible comes to us in the guise of Semitic thought forms" (p. 152), Musk finds biblical equivalents for each of his contemporary subjects and offers brief interpretations of the biblical cases as suggestions of how God's action might be discerned in the inward transformation of Muslim cultural patterns today. Insisting that missionaries "need deliberately to leave to the Holy Spirit the prerogative of deciding where each cultural circle might be broken open" (p. 208), he appeals for greater intercultural sensitivity, particularly on the part of Westerners living in Muslim societies. Musk offers the vision of a Christian relationship with Arab Muslims that is biblically inspired by the Semitic character of Christian and Muslim (and Jewish) traditions of faith. In this regard Musk recognizes that Western Christians have much to learn from Arab Christians.

Challenging as Musk's vision is, it needs to be set in a more radical analysis of the internal dynamics of change, which, in the estimation of this reviewer, make contemporary Arab societies more diffusely and dangerously complex than Musk's occasionally sentimental descriptions suggest.

—David A. Kerr

David Kerr is Professor of Christianity in the Non-Western World in the Faculty of Divinity at the University of Edinburgh, where he directs the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World. He was formerly professor of Islamic studies and Christian-Muslim relations at Hartford Seminary, Hartford, Connecticut.

Crusaders Against Opium: Protestant Missionaries in China, 1874-1917.


The export of opium from British India to China, forced on China under military duress in the mid-nineteenth century, became a great obstacle to Christian missionary work in the country, both because all foreigners were tainted in Chinese eyes by association with the iniquitous trade, and because opium addicts—who numbered in the millions—were put effectively out of reach of conversion by the habit.

It is not surprising, therefore, that missionaries became active in agitating against British involvement in the opium trade. In this book, Kathleen Lodwick, professor of history at Pennsylvania State University, traces the development of opposition to the trade, first among the missionary body in China, then among churchmen in Britain. Medical missionaries in China played a particularly crucial role by accumulating the first systematic medical evidence on the damaging effects of drug addiction. In Britain the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, founded in 1874 and made up chiefly of members of the nonconformist churches, worked with China missionaries to publicize the facts about Britain's role in the opium trade and the harm wrought by it in China.

As Lodwick shows, however, the opium trade was supported by powerful interests in Britain, in India, and among
nonmissionary foreigners in China. In Britain, missionaries and their supporters labored against a popular perception that they were sensationalists whose reports of the numbers and degradation of Chinese opium addicts were exaggerated. Nevertheless, by the 1900s they had succeeded in swaying public opinion in Britain, including Parliament, against the trade. The new climate of opinion in Britain coincided with the emergence of a strong public consensus within China against the opium habit, sparked not by missionary reform efforts but by developing Chinese nationalism. The British government officially terminated the export of opium from India to China in 1913, and the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade disbanded in 1917.

Based mostly on published sources in English, Crusaders Against Opium is an informative and readable book on a fascinating topic. A considerable portion of it focuses more on Britain than on China, and it could be a useful basis for further work on such issues as the impact of missionaries on their home societies and the place of the anti-opium movement in Christian social activism in Victorian Britain.

—Ryan Dunch

Ryan Dunch recently completed a Ph.D. in modern Chinese history at Yale University. He teaches East Asian History at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Missionary Encounters: Sources and Issues.


This book is a collection of ten papers from the Workshop on Missionary Archives sponsored by the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, in July 1992. Justin Willis's paper is republished from Past and Present, and Rosemary Seton's "Archival Sources in Britain for the Study of Mission History" (INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN OF MISSIONARY RESEARCH, April 1994) is an appendix. The authors all have firsthand knowledge of missionary archives and demonstrate both the potential and limitations of these sources. Stephen Maughan shows how English denominational missionary societies organized to raise funds for their work in the nineteenth century. Brian Stanley recounts his recent experience of writing a major one-volume bicentennial history of the British Baptist Missionary Society, including problems of control and preservation of archival materials in Africa and Asia.

Several chapters treat aspects of the experience of women missionaries: Rosemary Fitzgerald, how women who trained to be missionary doctors led the way for British women generally to receive medical training.

Chapters by J. D. Y. Peel, Paul Jenkins, Dick Kooiman, Geoffrey A. Oddie, and Robert A. Bickers address the importance of missionary archives for anthropologists, missionary attitudes toward the indigenous peoples, the impact of mission-sponsored education, missionaries as social commentators, and missionary photography in the nineteenth century.

The approach to mission history a century ago by Eugene Stock and Richard Lovett has been superseded by a more critical approach. If anything, this requires even closer attention to the original sources. As these essays show, the sources are rich and plentiful.

—Wilbert R. Shenk

Wilbert R. Shenk is Professor of Mission History and Contemporary Culture, School of World Mission, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California.
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