Never-Changing Message, Ever-Changing Mission

"Is there anything of which one can say, 'Look, this is new'?” (Eccles. 1:9-10, New English Bible). The Old Testament Preacher expected a categorical "No" to his question, and in a previous issue of the INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN Stanley H. Skreslet agreed. His article in July 1995 emphasized the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the unchanging focus of authentic mission. However, in the lead article of the current issue, “Impending Transformation: Mission Structures for a New Century,” Skreslet, a former Presbyterian missionary in Egypt, identifies global contextual trends that call for substantial changes in the churches’ approach to mission if the Gospel is to be effectively communicated in the coming century.

Contributing Editor David A. Kerr follows with the most comprehensive and clearly presented treatment of the issue of proselytism we have seen. Proselytism is certainly one of the persistent sores in the history of Christian mission. But there are developments in the Christian movement in the non-Western world that will require fresh efforts of understanding between the various church traditions. In his conclusion, Kerr points to the phenomenon of indigenous churches now sweeping through many areas that were first evangelized by Western missions. Many, says Kerr, “are proving hugely attractive to peoples who are estranged by the alien culture of most historic mission churches.” They may thereby appear to be guilty, in Western eyes, of proselytism. Nevertheless, Western missions and churches must come to terms with the fact that these new indigenous Christian communities are growing at astounding rates and are not going to go away. Therefore, Kerr concludes, “To require non-Western Christians to conform to Western criteria . . . is to imitate the ancient Danish king of England, Canute, who vainly tried to set his throne against a rising tide.”

The mission vocations of James K. Mathews, David J. Bosch, and Vincent Lebbe, covered in this issue, bear abundant witness to the reality of change as it affects Christian mission. Mathews saw the impact of independence in India; Bosch experienced the radical reshaping of his racial assumptions in South Africa; and Lebbe, after long and costly efforts, saw the Roman Catholic Church in China become more indigenous. Jesus Christ and his Gospel are the same yesterday, today, and forever. But if we are to be faithful and effective in mission, we must respond appropriately to an ever-changing world.

On Page

2 Impending Transformation: Mission Structures for a New Century
Stanley H. Skreslet

8 Christian Understandings of Proselytism
David A. Kerr

15 You Can Help the Persecuted Church: Lessons from Chiapas, Mexico
Vernon J. Sterk

18 My Pilgrimage in Mission
James K. Mathews

20 Noteworthy

24 Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission: 1999
David B. Barrett and Todd M. Johnson

26 The Legacy of David J. Bosch
J. Kevin Livingston

29 Reader's Response

33 The Legacy of Vincent Lebbe
Jean-Paul Wiest


38 Book Reviews

39 Fifteen Outstanding Books of 1998 for Mission Studies

46 Dissertation Notices

48 Book Notes
Impending Transformation: Mission Structures for a New Century

Stanley H. Skreslet

The relationship between mission structures and theology is complex. Mission structures are a kind of "theology on four wheels," enfleshed demonstrations of a theoretical orientation to the world. As such, they are contingent and secondary, depending upon theology to suggest their proximate uses and ultimate purposes. They are also vulnerable to critique in a way that theology is not, because they are concrete. Mission structures necessarily entail the application of human institutional forms. Structures devised for mission will thus always be susceptible to the same faults and distortions that beset their secular counterparts.

Though limited in these ways, mission structures are nevertheless crucial. They are windows that allow one to peer closely at the underpinnings of a given theology of mission. They make manifest the actual direction one’s missiological thinking is likely to run in practice. In fact, mission structures can lay bare assumptions about human nature and one’s understanding of God’s purposes with such clarity that words may no longer be able to cover them up. Mission structures are critical tools, therefore, not least because without them no theory of mission has a chance of ever becoming more than unincarnated mutterings, words without effect in a world that expects action.

Andrew Walls has shrewdly observed that the structural mainstay of modern Protestant missions, the voluntary association or mission society, got its start just as missiology entered into an entirely new theological phase. From the beginning, it seems, William Carey recognized that new instruments would be required to accomplish the ambitious agenda he laid before the Christian public in his 1792 Enquiry. Thus, in acknowledgment of the close connection between theology and mission structures, Carey addressed not only the world’s need and the church’s call but also the “means” by which the heathen might be converted and the “practicalities” of future missionary endeavors. A similar awareness may be detected at work behind the theological ferment of the early 1960s. Hans Küng, for one, understood all too clearly that a thoroughgoing theological aggiornamento in the Roman Catholic Church would demand that familiar institutional assumptions and forms be reexamined. An early contribution of Küng to this effort was Strukturen der Kirke, published on the eve of Vatican II. Coincidently, and in precisely the same theological atmosphere, ecumenically inclined Protestant theologians embarked on a major three-year study entitled “Missionary Structure of the Congregation.” This too was an attempt to reflect on the need for institutional change in light of a shift in theology, represented in the integration of the World Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches at the New Delhi WCC Assembly in 1961.

Mission Structures and Historical Contexts

If the preceding comments are well founded, then one should expect effective mission structures to have theological integrity. That is, they should be able to express institutionally genuine insights that theology has discovered in the abstract. Long experience of the church in mission warns us, however, that validity in a purely theological sense is never the only issue. To be truly suitable, mission structures must also be culturally appropriate and right for their age.

Thanks to David Bosch, it is now commonplace in missiology to speak of this generation as the beginning in earnest of a new age in the history of humankind. Intellectually, this is a time of transition, in which the West seems to be passing from the certainties of Enlightenment thinking into an extended period of cultural crisis. Geopolitically, the customary ways by which the world’s nation-states have related to one another have been knocked hard by a realignment of the superpowers. Economically, new patterns of global capitalism have emerged with the power to affect for good or ill (or both) the life of virtually every person on the planet.

Perhaps the most fundamental shift to have occurred in the late twentieth century revolves around the issue of cultural identity. Conventional boundaries of language and distance are rapidly collapsing, throwing traditional notions of social reality into disarray. It is not only that a globalized economy is reaching into and tying together the fates of far-flung communities. Nor is it just a matter of one particular language, English, positioning itself to become the next millennium’s lingua franca. There is also a widespread diminishing of confidence in local wisdom, as invasive new sources of authoritative information (like CNN) become available throughout the world. One may also perceive in our time a loosening of the ties that used to bind extended families and specific places closely together, as increasing numbers of people migrate in search of opportunity or to flee some danger. There is also a kind of reconfiguration of priorities taking place in countless households and communities worldwide in the face of overwhelming economic pressures introduced from without by the logic of a market-driven global economy that relentlessly sweeps everything before it.

Not surprisingly, these and other changes have affected the ways in which late twentieth-century people have taken to organize themselves socially. New patterns of institutional life have moved to the forefront, while other previously vital structures have faded in importance. It is not possible here to describe these adjustments in any depth, but a few observations may be offered to suggest what the church’s present context seems to be saying about effective organizational structures.

Numerous social commentators have pointed to the phenomenon of decentralization as a distinctive mark of economic and political activity today. This trend may be seen, for instance,
in the push to privatize many of the functions that used to be performed by governments. In like fashion, huge corporations, many of them multinational attempts to straddle whole industries or sectors of the economy, are spinning off parts of their businesses in an effort to focus on core interests.

New businesses, too, are likely to be conceived as small, agile units that can respond quickly to changes in taste or economic conditions. Mobile and nimble, they need not be anchored to one physical location or bound to produce forever the same goods or services with which they were first identified. The most successful of these tend to rely on technological adroitness rather than on the sheer weight of massed labor or material resources to dominate markets. For these companies, careful market research is necessary in order to identify ever-larger groups of potential customers. Rigid command hierarchies and inflexible work rules are giving way to models of teamwork, even in the old, downsized entities that are left following corporate restructuring.

What might an ideal corporate structure look like today? For some very good reasons (not least among them a ledger showing some $36 billion worth of business annually), Robert Kaplan, writing in the Atlantic Monthly, has recently lifted up the engineering firm of Asea Brown Boveri (ABB) as an example of organizational structure that closely fits the demands of our age. All of the characteristics highlighted above—teamwork, attention to market forces, technological acumen, and so forth—are there, but it is the loosely knit web of tightly focused subunits that Kaplan highlights. ABB encompasses some 1,300 independent companies, spread out over 140 countries, which are linked together in an “umbrella” corporate structure. “Decentralization,” says CEO Percy Barnevik of ABB, “goes hand in hand with central monitoring.” In Kaplan’s view, this kind of industrial enterprise aptly illustrates the shape of a successfully globalized corporation that is likely to survive and thrive well into the third millennium.

Tried and Still(?) True Structures

The potential universe of structures for mission is already vast. For centuries, and without apology, the parish was the church’s basic unit of evangelism and mission. On a larger scale, but in a similar manner, the diocese was used to extend the geographic reach of the institutional church. As bold new ventures in plantatio ecclesiae were initiated in the Age of Discovery, variations on a theme were introduced for Catholic missions, such as the apostolic vicariate. In time, these would be emulated by Protestant denominations that devised overseas equivalents of domestic jurisdicties. What all these structures have in common is that they are decidedly ecclesiocentric.

The bishops and clerics of the early and medieval church did not do their missionary work alone. Equally important, and in certain situations far more effective than the regular clergy, were the great missionary monks. In the West, at least from the time of St. Columbanus and his fellow Irish itinerants, examples abound of monastic outreach to village communities that lay outside the urban areas where the church first took root. Eventually, monastic orders devoted to missionary witness would spearhead the church’s expansion into many new areas outside of Europe. Again, well-known Protestant equivalents lie at hand, in the nineteenth-century’s ubiquitous private volunteer organization, for instance, and the more recent founding of sodalities through which mainline Protestant energies for mission might be focused.

A wide variety of other key mission structures also rose to prominence in the course of the modern missionary movement,
Broader fashion, not a few of which were sponsored by institutions of higher learning that were founded around the world in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by mission agencies and non-Western national churches. Standing next to these were countless attempts to foster cultural advance in a broader fashion, not a few of which were sponsored by institutions like the local YMCA chapter. The crucial mark of all these structures at their inception was a desire to engender and sustain a movement in non-Western cultures toward “civilization” and “uplift.”

In the wake of the Second World War, a different set of emphases took hold in Western mission circles, and the leading institutions of the day illustrate the shift well. Ministries of charity, supported by theologies of “disinterested benevolence,” were pushed aside by efforts to foster self-help. This approach did not preclude churches from participating in the huge tasks of relief and disaster assistance that war and periodic catastrophes still made necessary, but another kind of mission objective emerged as primary: development. Mission organizations restructured themselves in order to respond accordingly, seeking new ways to make material aid, technical expertise, and encouragement available to church partners and new nations. For these ventures, human need was the presenting problem, but the form of the response was influenced to a great degree by a secular ideology of modernization that had insinuated itself within the Western churches.

Within this context short-term mission programs began to take on a new importance as structures for mission. Technicians, it was recognized, did not need to commit to a lifetime of mission service. A more efficient use of their knowledge might see them brought in temporarily, say at the planning and training stages of a development project, after which national workers would assume responsibility. The same could be true for teachers of English and other European languages, who came to be thought of as another kind of specialist with skills that could help Third World people take advantage of all the West’s technical resources.

A final category of structures already in place, which nevertheless promises to continue as a vital part of Christian mission in the future, consists of those associations and groups through which many Christians around the world are now working to effect social change and to influence political policies. Here one would include the burgeoning number of church-related, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that have sprung up in ever-greater numbers in the 1990s. In the West especially, NGOs often take the form of political action committees that advocate in the halls of power on behalf of the marginalized. These might be closely defined groups (political refugees from a particular area, for instance) or broader classes of people (like the homeless or persecuted Christians). For many NGOs, their chief goal is to gather comprehensive amounts of information on a select number of topics (like the environment or human rights) and then to make this information available to international organizations, governments, the churches, and other nongovernmental actors. In some places, base ecclesial communities fulfill many of the same functions undertaken by NGOs.

Incipient Outlines of the New

One should expect that all, or nearly all, of the structures mentioned in the previous section will continue to be part of the church’s mission in the next century. Based on what was presented earlier with respect to historical contexts, however, these organizations will not likely stay fixed in just these configurations or remain bound to the precise terms of their current mission statements. Rapid change in institutional life is a symptom of our age. Therefore, the conditions of late twentieth-century life, some of which were described above, are sure to shape these institutions as they continue to evolve, just as they will influence the creation of new structures for mission. In this section, an attempt will be made to characterize these institutions of the future, both the newly created and remodeled, based on what is now known about the context in which they will emerge.

Three attributes in particular suggest themselves to me as likely characteristics of the next millennium’s mission organizations.

Niche oriented. As the world’s complexity continues to increase, mission organizations, like businesses, are becoming more specialized. Few new organizations will attempt to mount the kind of comprehensive enterprises that defined earlier Protestant denominational approaches to mission. Instead, a particular service or form of mission tends to predominate, and the structure devised to present this good work will often be tightly focused as well. It also seems that some older institutions, which at one time did try to field sweeping programs of mission, are being pressed by circumstances to restrict their primary emphases to just a few areas. In this respect, moves to narrow the reach of some existing mission organizations may be a symptom of a larger adjustment taking place at the denominational level, among Protestants at least, away from a centrally managed, hierarchically arranged corporate model and toward a more flexible, decentralized approach to organizational structure.

Any attempt to survey the current field of mission work around the world is sure to turn up an astonishing variety of organizations that have mobilized in response to an equally diverse collection of needs and objectives. Many groups specialize in mission outreach to particular countries. Others concentrate on whole regions, language families, and/or specific non-Christian populations. Some aim to facilitate interfaith encounter and dialogue, while others restrict themselves to activities that correspond more closely to traditional notions of evangelism. In this latter case, some novel ways have been developed to address a familiar objective, as with the growing frontier mission movement and the concern many groups have for “unreached” peoples.

A newer category of mission organization that seems to be expanding rapidly in the 1990s is what might be called an outsourcing instrument for congregational mission. The model and, perhaps, the originator of this approach on a large scale was Habitat for Humanity, on whose building projects thousands of church mission teams have worked over the past decade or more. Many other organizations have sprung up recently with a similar role in mind, hoping to make available to congregations ongoing ministries of service or proclamation in which visiting groups can participate for a week at a time. The advantages of this
approach for youth directors and pastors with a desire to involve their young people and adults in mission outreach are obvious: remote sites are offered for Christian service that have their own infrastructure already in place. Advertisements and promotional materials for these ministries often highlight their exotic locale.

The “information agent” is yet another type of niche-oriented mission structure that has flourished at the end of the twentieth century. Here might be included organizations devoted to the task of gathering and analyzing mission information, an activity that David Barrett has dubbed the science of “missiometrics.” Others might try to combine information gathering with a desire to influence public behavior, especially with respect to issues of justice, in the manner of an NGO like Amnesty International or Greenpeace. Yet other organizations within this category, if one may be allowed to stretch the limits of the type somewhat, might specialize in recruiting (of teachers, for instance), facilitating communication between missionaries and supporting constituencies (as the Mission Aviation Fellowship does), or performing fund-raising services on behalf of other mission organizations.

Networked. No more powerful demonstration of the power of networking need be cited than that offered by the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, headed until recently by peace activist Jody Williams. In just over fourteen months, an informal coalition of some 250 organizations scattered around the world but linked by computer managed to persuade a majority of the world’s countries to initial a formal treaty that commits them not to use, produce, or export antipersonnel land mines. For their effort, the coalition and its chief organizer were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997. The land mines campaign was remarkable not only for its outcome but also because it was conducted without a formal organizational structure, an office, or even a staff. The key element that made its success possible was the concept of networking.

Networking is a virtue whose stock has risen considerably in the postmodern era. It is very likely to be an element assumed by many mission structures in the near term. An obvious reason for this is the degree of specialization that seems to characterize so many mission organizations already. In many cases, networking will make it possible for highly specialized mission structures to coordinate their work and to complement each other. This, then, may turn out to be a way to recapture in the next century a measure of the comprehensiveness that tends to be sacrificed when mission is pursued by thousands of niche-oriented organizations.

Technologically adept. Since mission is essentially a matter of witnessing to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, it only makes sense that faithful Christians and their organizations will want to make full use of all the tools of communication that God’s providence has placed at their disposal. In the next century, as now, many of these tools will be technologically based.

It is possible to see already how technological devices like the computer have begun to alter the way many mission organizations function. Electronic mail now links all but the most isolated places to everywhere else, providing assistance to missionaries far from home and timely information about their work to supporting constituencies. Satellite broadcasts of Christian programming are able to reach into the heart of non-Christian populations, whose governments may have blocked access previously. Desktop publishing is lowering dramatically the cost of producing high-quality materials that are attractive and informative. Those involved in what is called nonresidential mission-service depend heavily on technology to conduct research and to communicate with nascent groups of believers among whom they cannot live.

Other benefits of advanced technology may not be so obvious. If the example of the land-mines campaign is an indicator of what is to come, perhaps computers and other communication devices will also render superfluous or much less important the idea of a fixed headquarters location, at which all key staff are required to work together. This could make it much easier to assemble multinational teams of mission coworkers, a goal that has often been voiced in the postcolonial period but seldom realized because of the expense and disruption to family lives that long-term relocation requires. Technological aids to communication may also make it possible for highly specialized agencies offering unique services to a worldwide community of mission organizations to achieve the economies of scale that might be required for their viability.

Congregational Missionary Structure(s)

All of the mission structures discussed up to this point have been extracongregational. This reflects the persistent inclination of many mission practitioners to favor parachurch structures over the local church as frameworks for their labor, a trend that seems certain to continue. An orientation in this direction could be a cause for concern, especially if it obscures the fact that groups of believers, whether assembled as formal congregations or more simply gathered together, are, in truth, the most basic means of mission at the disposal of the Gospel. This, in my view, was among the most profound insights of the Second Vatican Council, which reclaimed for the twentieth century a vision of the local church as the fundamental expression of the church universal.

In the coming century this perspective may become even more vital than it is now. A future marked by increasing numbers of technologically linked but narrowly conceived mission structures will need healthy congregations that can reach out to near neighbors with the fullest possible witness to the Gospel. As useful as they may be, mission structures that concentrate on the delivery of ancillary services to the church cannot replace witnessing communities that worship together and, in fact, must assume them as the primary means by which the Good News of Jesus Christ is made known.

No matter how useful, mission structures cannot replace local communities as the primary means by which Jesus Christ is made known.
swim more directly in the hazardous waters of the marketplace, in competition with each other, and in the delivery of some services (like the brokering of intercultural living experiences to short-term mission participants), they must contend with a vigorous assortment of secular alternatives.

Having underlined the importance of local congregations to the world mission of the church, one is reluctant to leave it at that, without having said anything specific about how this particular structure might be helped to become a more effective agent of missionary service and outreach in the coming century. A final point of the present discussion will take up this concern.

Most local churches (among Protestants, at least) have in their organizational framework a committee within whose brief is lodged the task of “mission.” It is not unusual for the profile of this committee to be quite modest. More prominent, as a rule, are those parts of the local church’s governing structure that have charge over Christian education, worship, and pastoral care. In most congregations, the mission committee is given each year a rather small portion of the church’s total budget, which the members are free to allocate as they wish. This money is essentially a fund for grant making, and the mission committee is expected to administer it on behalf of the congregation in a responsible manner. Typically, they will decide to use it in support of persons serving in mission outside the local community or give it to one or more service projects that might be local, national, or international.

One has to wonder if this is really the only, or best, way for a structure nominally assigned responsibility for mission in the local church to carry out its work. What does it mean when the mission committee is effectively denied meaningful contact with the greater part of the church’s budget? An important assumption about the nature of mission could be at stake here. By restricting the work of the mission committee in this way, local churches may be saying that mission is a peripheral undertaking, a mere adjunct to other, more consequential functions of the church.

An alternative approach might attempt to reposition the mission committee (or its equivalent) nearer to the center of the local church’s life. Reconceived in this way, the mission committee would be expected to reflect on all the activities and major decisions of the congregation, asking how each contributes to the great ends for which this community has come into being. This is not unlike what strategic planning committees do, but the work would be joined on a continuing basis.

The mission committee is also a natural point of contact between the congregation and what is happening around it in mission. Neighboring communities of faith, specialized mission organizations, civil society groups whose objectives complement those of the local church, other parts of the world church—all these just begin to indicate the complex web of relationships that might be constructed in support of the local church’s missionary outreach. A mission committee that seriously probes existing relationships and creatively explores new forms of missionary partnership could be transformed into a kind of missiological gyroscope for the congregation, a means of theological navigation that tries to take into account what may lie over the immediate horizon. With constant change and rapidly shifting circumstances likely to define every local church’s setting in the twenty-first century, this kind of structural help could be critical.

Notes


5. Such would seem to be the case in my own denomination, the Presbyterian Church (USA), which used to be a model of comprehensiveness in its approach to mission. The impossibility of maintaining such a broad design in the late twentieth century has contributed, in my opinion, to a new strategy that emphasizes certain activities within the larger agenda (like short-term missions, development, and education), while letting go of others as primary objectives (like direct evangelism and medical work). In a textbook illustration of the phenomenon described here, other institutions related to the PCUSA but outside the official denominational structure have gained increased prominence by specializing in these “neglected” areas (e.g., the Outreach Foundation and the Medical Benevolence Fund).

6. This impression is formed on the basis of a small mountain of materials that have come my way from these ministries over the past year through the mail, visits to the web sites of many of these same organizations, and a look at the way they present themselves in publications like the Great Commission Opportunities Guide, an annual compendium of mission opportunities published by the Real Media Group (whose own web site is denominated www.GoYe.com). “Exotic” may mean anything in this context from Colorado mountains to the tropics.


8. As in Lumen gentium 26: “This Church of Christ is really present in all legitimately organized local groups of the faithful, which, in so far as they are united to their pastors, are also quite appropriately called Churches in the New Testament.”

We welcome the more than 550 new IBMR subscribers who have joined our readers since October 1998.
Learning... Growth... Fellowship

Summer School

May 24 - June 11
Foundations of New Testament Exposition:
Synoptic Gospels
Mary H. Schertz, Ph.D., AMBS

June 1-11
Celebrating the Christian Year
Marlene Kropf, D.Min.,
and June Alliman
Yoder, D.Min., AMBS
International Politics:
Christian Perspectives
John A. Lapp, Ph.D.,
guest instructor
Spirituality, Pastoral Care
and Healing
Marcus G. Smucker,
Ph.D., AMBS adjunct

June 11-18
Church Administration
and Leadership
Del Glick, D.Min.,
guest instructor
Includes weekend
Continuing Education
event, July 11-12
Pastoral Care for People
with Addictions
Brice Balmer, D.Min.,
guest instructor
Includes weekend
Continuing Education event, July 11-12

June 14-25
Apocalyptic and the New Millenium
William Klaassen, Ph.D., guest instructor
Liberation and Contextual Theologies
Daniel Schipani, Dr.Psych., Ph.D., AMBS

June 25 - July 2
Creation and Spiritual Renewal
Perry Yoder, Ph.D., AMBS
Includes canoe trip in boundary waters.

Mission and Evangelism Institute

July 6-15
Evangelism in Early Christianity
Alan Kreider, Ph.D.,
AMBS adjunct
Gospel of John
Willard M. Swartley,
Ph.D., AMBS

July 16-23
Worship and Mission
Eleanor Kreider,
M. Mus., and
Alan Kreider, Ph.D.,
AMBS adjunct
Includes weekend
Continuing Education
event, July 16-18
Evangelism and Anabaptism
Stuart Murray, Ph.D.,
teacher and consult-
ant in England
Includes weekend
Continuing Education
event, July 16-18

July 30 - August 6
Communicating the Gospel in our Culture
Wilbert Shenk, Ph.D., AMBS adjunct
Includes weekend Continuing Education event, July 31
Leadership for Church Growth
Art McPhee, Ph.D. candidate, AMBS
Includes weekend Continuing Education event, July 31
Conflict, Communication and Conciliation
Richard Blackburn, M.A., guest instructor

June 28-July 22
Global Urbanization and Mission
Art McPhee, Ph.D. candidate, AMBS
Includes study tour to Chicago, Hong Kong,
and several cities in India

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary
3003 Benham Avenue
Elkhart, Indiana 46517-1999
1 + 800 964-AMBS (2627)
www.ambs.edu
registrar@ambs.edu
Christian Understandings of Proselytism

David A. Kerr

Like the chameleon, proselytism displays itself in many shades of color. The word has different nuances in individual languages and among languages. Importantly from the point of view of this article, it is used variously among different sectors of the Christian church. It refers both to the transfer of allegiance from one religion to another and to the transfer of allegiance between churches. Attitudes to proselytism are conditioned by political, social, and cultural considerations, and responses vary from one church to another, from one culture to another. I attempt here to clarify some of the issues, particularly as they have emerged in Christian thinking through the second half of the twentieth century. I argue that the hard-sought consensus that has emerged within the ecumenical movement needs to extend itself further to include new global realities of Christianity.¹

To begin with English linguistic definitions, the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary considers "proselytism" simply as a synonym of "conversion." Derived from the Latin proselytus and the Greek proselytus, the proselyte is "one who has come to a place"—that is, a newcomer or convert. Use of the term in English literature displays both positive and negative characteristics. For Shakespeare, the proselyte's power of attraction was an evocative metaphor of female beauty; thus, of Perdita, he wrote:

This is a creature,  
Would she begin a sect, might quench the zeal  
Of all professors else; make proselytes  
Of who she but bid follow.²

By the eighteenth century, however, Enlightenment literature identified proselytism with intolerance. The leading philosopher of the Enlightenment in Scotland, David Hume, criticized an opponent for "his zeal for proselytism that he stopped not at toleration or equality." Edmund Burke vented his dislike of the French Revolution in the carping criticism that "the spirit of proselytism attends this spirit of fanaticism."³

Reflecting this negative nuancing of meaning, Webster's Dictionary of Synonyms draws a plain distinction between conversion and proselytism: the former denotes "a sincere and voluntary change of belief," whereas the latter implies "an act or process of inducing someone to convert to another faith." In current ecumenical usage, this American English meaning prevails, coercive inducement being the attribute of proselytism that differentiates it from conversion.⁴

Biblical Perspectives

The proselyte is a familiar figure in both the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament. The Greek proselytus was used in the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew ger, the "stranger" who sojourned in the land of Israel. The Deuteronomist taught that the proselyte-stranger (ger) was to be honored among the Jews, who had themselves been strangers (gerim) in Egypt (Deut. 10:19). The bulk of Talmudic literature welcomes the proselyte into the full fellowship of Israel, subject to the requirements of circumcision, baptism, and the offering of sacrifice. Jesus criticized what he deemed the Pharisaic tendency of making the proselyte a slave to the law (Matt. 23:15). From this it may be inferred that the matter of how a proselyte should be incorporated into Israel was a matter of controversy in Jesus' time. New Testament references to Jewish proselytes among the first Christians indicate that they were welcome members of the early church (Acts 2:10; 6:5; 13:43).⁵ The postbiblical histories of both Judaism and Christianity continued to honor the proselyte until more recent times, when, roughly speaking from the eighteenth century, the term came to have the negative connotations we have noted in English literary usage. The present writer would speculate that the roots of the negative interpretation of proselytism as the overzealous or coercive expression of religion lie contextually both in post-Enlightenment ideas of freedom of conscience and in secular reactions to the rise of the modern Western Christian missionary movement in the colonial era. The Bible, however, shows that the proselyte was not viewed negatively in Scripture and that Jesus defended the proselyte from the legalistic tendency of institutional religion.

Current Definitions: Roman Catholic

The Second Vatican Council's "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy" (1963) affirms that the call to conversion is one of the fundamental tasks of the church. To this end the Church announces the good news of salvation to those who do not believe, so that all may know the true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, and may repent and mend their ways. Equally, "to believers also the Church must ever pray faith and repentence." Conversion is therefore understood as a process: it begins with an initial turning in faith to God in Christ and continues throughout a believer's Christian life. Conversion in this sense is "a spiritual journey." In relation to this journey, "the Church strictly forbids forcing anyone to embrace the faith, or alluring or enticing people by unworthy techniques."⁶

With sensitivity to the ambiguities of the word, the Second Vatican Council's documents do not use the term "proselytism." But the distinction between conversion as a sincere act of faith and as a result of coercive manipulation is clearly maintained. Moreover, it is given substantial theological and philosophical exposition in the "Declaration on Religious Freedom" (1965), which propounds the case for religious freedom on grounds of divine intent, human right, and civic duty. The case against coercive proselytism is equally clear: "the human person has the right to religious freedom. This freedom means that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals or of social groups or of any human power, in such wise as in matters of religion no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly, whether alone or in association with others."⁷

In affirming sincere conversion as a right of religious freedom, and in rejecting proselytism as the infringement of such freedom, the Second Vatican Council mainly addresses the church's relations with other religions. These are addressed in

David A. Kerr, a contributing editor, is Professor of Christianity in the Non-Western World at the University of Edinburgh and Director of the center of the same name. He was formerly a professor in Hartford Seminary, Connecticut, where he directed the MacDonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations.
the “Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions,” more commonly referred to by its Latin title, Nostra aetate. In this document the church states that “[it] rejects nothing which is true and holy in these religions” and calls for “dialogue and co-operation” with them “to acknowledge, preserve and promote the spiritual and moral goods found among these men, as well as the values of their society and culture.” 11

Conversion and dialogue are thus placed side by side. If the inherent tension is not resolved theologically, a modus vivendi is at least implied: conversion as an inalienable expression of religious freedom should be understood as ongoing spiritual journey; interreligious dialogue is an important part of this journey in which partners affirm their common spiritual and human values. In both respects proselytism is rejected.

**Eastern and Oriental Orthodox**

Among the Eastern 12 and Oriental 13 Orthodox Churches, proselytism refers primarily to interchurch relations—that is, relations between non-Orthodox and Orthodox churches. This view is based on their self-understanding as churches that exercise their ecclesiastical authority within the geographic domain of the people, or nation, whose evangelization was and continues to be the responsibility of the national church. Each Orthodox Church is autocephalous, or self-governing, within its own canonical territory. Recalling the earliest mode of Christian evangelization, whereby an apostle-missionary preached the Gospel among his own people and initiated a process by which the whole nation was Christianized through its leaders, its people, and its culture, the concept of canonical territory denotes the inseparable identity of people, culture, land, and church. This is what it means for the church to be local, or indigenized, in the national life of a people.

Within this strongly ethnic identity of people and church, the Orthodox regard as illegitimate any attempt by other churches or religious groups to convert members of an Orthodox church away from Orthodoxy. This is tantamount to proselytism, whether the means are foul or fair. The Russian Orthodox Church thus defines proselytism as the active or passive encouraging of members of a given ethnic or national group to join a religion, denomination, or sect that is not historically rooted in that ethnic group or nationality.

Orthodox sensitivities regarding this understanding of proselytism arise from their historical experience of being the object of Catholic and Protestant strategies of conversion. A statement by the Armenian catholicos Karekin 14 in respect of the Oriental Orthodox Church applies equally to the Eastern Orthodox: “they underwent the hard experience of being exposed to the proselytising policies of the Roman Church and, later, the Protestant Missionary Societies of various kinds.” 15

**Catholic-Orthodox Relations**

In order to understand Orthodox sensitivity to proselytism, it is necessary to introduce a brief historical excursus in explanation of problems to which Catholicos Karekin refers. The historical problem goes back to the rift between Rome and Constantinople in 1054 and the subsequent failure of the fifteenth-century Council of Ferrara-Florence (1437-39) to reunite the church. Rome thereafter developed an alternative strategy for reunion that aimed at the conversion of both the Eastern and the Oriental Orthodox to Roman doctrine and allegiance. Medieval Catholic missions, led initially by the Franciscans and later by the Jesuits, persuaded groups within these churches to declare their union with Rome as Eastern Catholic Churches. The persuasive powers of these Catholic missions was backed by the educational and economic opportunities they offered and by the diplomatic patronage of the emerging European states. As a result, to each Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Church a Catholic equivalent was created. 16 They are known collectively as Eastern Catholic Churches, their rites of origin (liturgy and canon law) being formally upheld within their obedience to the Holy See, albeit historically with a heavy dose of Latinization—a trend that has been reversed since the Second Vatican Council. Rome claimed them as the firstfruits of a reunited church and referred to them in the Second Vatican Council as part of “the divinely revealed and undivided heritage of the universal Church.” 17

What Rome celebrated as reunion by way of conversion, the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches view disparagingly as “Uniatism,” which for them was coterminous with Catholic proselytizing incursions into their canonical territories. Rome stood accused of treating Orthodox lands as terra missionis—land open for mission.

Only in the present decade has this problem been effectively addressed. 18 In 1990 a joint Catholic-Orthodox commission on theological dialogue published Statement on the Subject of Uniatism, which agrees that Uniatism no longer provides a model or method for Catholic-Orthodox rapprochement. Further deliberations resulted in the Balamand Statement (Lebanon) of 1993, “Uniatism, Method of Union of the Past, and the Present Search for Full Communion.” 19

Accepting that the Eastern Catholic Churches may remain part of the Catholic communion, with “the right to exist and act in response to the spiritual needs of their faithful,” the Balamand Statement sets out ecclesiological principles for a new relationship between the Catholic and Orthodox churches. Henceforth they commit themselves to recognizing each other as “sister churches.” They agree that neither church can claim exclusively to profess the full apostolic faith and therefore join in shared responsibility, as sisters, “for maintaining the Church of God in fidelity to the divine purpose, most especially in what concerns unity.” 20 Rome agrees to end its “missionary apostolate” toward the Orthodox churches and declares that its “pastoral activity . . . no longer aims at having the faithful of one Church pass over to the other: that is to say, it no longer aims at proselytising among the Orthodox.” While recognizing that the Eastern Catholics have an integral role to play in preparing for eventual Catholic-Orthodox reunion, it was agreed that such reunion would not be modeled on the institution of Uniatism.

The Eastern Catholic Churches will continue to exist under the canonical jurisdictions of their respective patriarchs, while accepting the spiritual primacy of the patriarch of Rome; at the same time, they will continue to follow the liturgical, theological, and spiritual traditions of their Orthodox “sister” churches.
But—to quote a recent Orthodox-Catholic consultation in the United States—"in the negative sense of the term, ‘Uniatism,’
which in the spirit of the Orthodox is identified with proselytism,
is rejected by the Balamand Statement . . . as a method for
the conversion of Orthodox Christians and making them members
of the Catholic Church."20

Protestant-Orthodox Relations

Nineteenth-century Protestant encounter with Orthodoxy largely replicated the medieval Catholic pattern, although with
a very different understanding of the nature of Christian faith
and the church. With their emphases on the authority of the
Bible over ecclesiastical institution, on direct personal faith in
Jesus Christ mediated through Scripture, and on the priesthood
of all believers replacing the clerical authority of a centralized
church, Protestant missions inevitably clashed with the Ortho­
dox churches.21 From the perspective of their evangelical faith,
Protestants tended to regard Orthodox as “nominal” Christians
whom they wished to convert into “Christians of the heart.”

Taking the example of the American Board of Commissio­
ers for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), which began sending evan­
gelical missionaries from New England to the Middle East in the
1820s, a clear transition of policy is evident. The initial aim was
to inject a biblically based evangelical spirit into the Orthodox
churches: “not to subvert them; not to pull them down and build
anew. It is to reform them; to revive among them . . . the
knowledge and spirit of the Gospel. . . . It is not part of our object
to introduce Congregationalism or Presbyterianism among them.
. . . We are content that their present ecclesiastical organization
should remain, provided the knowledge and spirit of the Gospel
can be revived under it.” In the face of strong resistance from the
indigenous churches (Orthodox and Eastern Catholic) and at the
urging of its own missionaries and their early converts, ABCFM
revised its policy. There was no alternative, it argued, but “the

restoration of pre-Constantinian and primitive (Pauline) Chris­
tianity . . . [by] the formation not only of exemplary individuals
in their midst [i.e., among Orthodox/Eastern Catholics] but of
exemplary communities as well.” Rufus Anderson acknowl­
edged that “this admission of converts into a church, without
regard to their previous ecclesiastical relations, was a practical
ignoring of the old church organizations in that region. It was so
understood, and the spirit of opposition and persecution was
roused to the utmost.”22

This is but a particular instance of the general practice of
Anglican, Lutheran, and Reformed churches in nineteenth­
century Turkey, Syria-Palestine, and Egypt. Evangelical attitudes
to the Orthodox churches varied from Anglican appreciation of
episcopal succession to Reformed impatience with perceived
liturgical atrophy. But the result of their missions was the same:
the creation of new evangelical churches throughout the Middle
East.23

Western implants as they originally were, these churches
have integrated themselves culturally and to a degree politically
in the Middle East. This has facilitated far-reaching discussion
about ways of resolving the historical legacy of proselytism
within the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC)—the most
inclusive regional ecumenical council in the world, with Ortho­
dox (Eastern and Oriental), Catholic (Latin and Eastern), and
Protestant members. In an MECC study document entitled
Proskelism, Sects, and Pastoral Challenges (1989), representatives
of these churches agreed in defining proselytism as “a practice
that involves attempts aimed at attracting Christians from a
particular church or religious group, leading to their alienation
from their church of origin.” Criticized for being at variance with
biblical teaching and human rights, proselytism is seen to be
rooted psychologically in “individual and group egotism,” so­

The Ecumenical Consensus

These specific examples of bilateral agreements to end intra­
Christian proselytism need to be seen within a wider framework
doctor sayings of discussions that have taken place between the World Council
Churches (WCC) and the Vatican. As a result of intra-Protes­
tant tensions in the early years of the WCC, a working party was
established after the Evanston General Assembly (1954), which
wrote “Christian Witness, Proselytism, and Religious Liberty.”
This was perhaps the first document to draw the distinction
between authentic Christian witness and proselytism. The New
Delhi General Assembly (1961) affirmed the distinction, in so
doing, paving the way for Orthodox participation in the WCC.
The 1960s saw a further widening of the discussion to include
Roman Catholics, and a definitive agreement was reached by the
Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and
the WCC in 1970, entitled “Common Witness and Proselytism—
a Study Document.”28

Its discussion of proselytism includes both interreligious
and intra-Christian dimensions. “Christian witness, to those
who have not yet received or responded to the announcement of
the Gospel or to those who are already Christians, should have
certain qualities, in order to avoid being corrupted in its exercise,
thus becoming proselytism.” The document outlines the New
Testament qualities that mark genuinely Christian witness: love
of one’s neighbor; seeking the glory of God rather than the

10 INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN OF MISSIONARY RESEARCH
prestige of one's own community; empowerment by the Holy Spirit; respect for the free will and dignity of all, including the right to refuse the Gospel; freedom from any form of coercion that impedes people from witnessing to their own convictions. Specific forms of coercion to be avoided include physical coercion, moral constraint, or psychological pressure; temporal or material benefits offered in exchange for religious adherence; exploitation of the weak and uneducated; legal, social, economic, or political pressure, especially when aimed to prevent members of a religious minority from exercising their right of religious freedom; and unjust and uncharitable characterization of the beliefs and practices of another religion.

On the issue of specifically intra-Christian relations, the document urges that missionary action should always be carried out in an ecumenical spirit of cooperation between churches. While affirming that one church has legitimate freedom to exercise its missionary effort where another church is already established, it encourages cooperation, common witness, and fraternal assistance and rejects the competitive spirit that seeks to enhance the power and privilege of one church over another.

In terms of missionary encounter with other religions, the WCC has repeatedly affirmed that the Church has a mission, and it cannot be otherwise. At the same time, it accepts self-critically that Christian witness has often been distorted by coercive proselytism—conscious and unconscious, overt and subtle. Two later WCC documents deal with this aspect in greater detail. The first, dealing with Christian-Jewish relations, states: “Such rejection of proselytism, and such advocacy of respect for the integrity and the identity of all persons and all communities of faith are urgent in relation to the Jews, especially those who live as minorities among Christians. Steps toward assuring non-coercive practices are of highest importance. In dialogue ways should be found for the exchange of concerns, perceptions, and safeguards in these matters.” The second, dealing with Christian-Muslim relations, affirms that “missionary activity is integral to Christian discipleship” but recommends that “Christians explore new ways of witnessing to Christ in words and deeds, for instance, through living Christ-like lives and by demonstrating that Christianity is, like Islam, concerned with the whole of life.”

**Political Dimensions**

The ecumenical consensus treats proselytism as a religious question that needs to be addressed through dialogue—(1) between churches and other religions in terms of interreligious aspects of proselytism, and (2) between churches in terms of intra-Christian dimensions of the problem. Significant as the ecumenical achievement has been, the consensus is limited to the conciliar groups that give it consent. It cannot and does not bind nonconciliar groups, Christian or other, who continue to exercise their own understanding of missionary activity, irrespective of potential proselytizing consequences. The right freely to propagate one’s religion is given priority over all else.

The missionary activity of such nonconciliar groups has been nowhere more evident than in the Russian Federation and other post-Communist eastern European states during much of the 1990s. As part of the perestroika reform of the former Soviet Union, the 1990 Law on Freedom of Worship marked a radical departure from traditional Soviet restrictions on religion: freedom of religion and belief was guaranteed; all religious communities in the USSR were placed on an equal footing; foreign religious groups were accorded equal protection under the law; and the free exercise of missionary activity was permitted, subject only to basic principles of constitutional order. This wholesale removal of former barriers against religious activity opened the door to an avalanche of foreign missionary activity, predominantly by North American evangelical (nonconciliar) groups and new religious movements.

The ensuing confrontation between these groups and the Russian Orthodox Church exposed the clash of values that the ecumenical consensus had sought to reconcile: the individual right to propagate one’s faith, and a church’s collective right to preserve and extend the faith among its people, within its culture. The Moscow Patriarchate’s perception of the problem was candidly expressed in the following terms: “Many Protestants do not even consider the Orthodox Church to be a proper church but regard it as a dangerous phenomenon in religious life.”

In consort with Communist and nationalist groupings, the

**Russia’s 1997 law represents the most restrictive legal response to intra-Christian proselytizing activity.**

...
International Law

The examples given in the previous section illustrate that where the ecumenical consensus on proselytism is disregarded, states are resorting to national law to stem the tide of what they perceive as illegitimate missionary activity. The Russian law and similar legislation invite criticism that they contravene the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which affirms “the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion,” adding that “this right includes freedom to change [one’s] religion or belief.” Those who support legal constraints on missionary activity, however, appeal to the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which reaffirms the right of religious freedom but significantly reinterprets the 1948 declaration’s right to change religion by stating that “this right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of [one’s] choice.” At the same time, the covenant specifically prohibits coercion: “No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice.” A third instrument of international law, the 1981 Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, makes no reference to the right to change or adopt a religion, simply stating that one has the right “to have a religion or whatever belief of one’s choice,” reiterating that this choice must not be impaired by any form of coercion.

The force of these statements seems to indicate that “the focus of international law has shifted from an emphasis on the freedom to change a religion to an emphasis on the freedom to retain a religion.” Freedom to change a religion remains a right in international law but needs to be set in balance with the freedom to maintain a religion—a principle that has been strongly argued by Muslim member states of the United Nations.

Conclusion

The value of the ecumenical consensus that has been outlined in this article is precisely that it seeks to mediate between the two competing freedoms guaranteed in international law. Its commitment to the right of witness/mission entails, as a corollary, the right to change one’s religion. In rejecting unethical (coercive) forms of witness as proselytism, it calls for discernment regarding the integrity of other churches, and indeed other religions, within God’s purposes for humankind and human society. It appeals to dialogue rather than legislation as the way of discernment and encourages partners from different traditions to be willing to listen to one another in mutual openness, ready to accept mutual correction as well as receive mutual enrichment.

To continue to be effective, however, this dialogue must extend to include as partners those movements of Christian growth that established churches are inclined to rebuke as proselytizers. This must embrace, for example, the charismatic and neo-Pentecostal churches in Latin America, which the pope caricatured as “rapacious wolves” in his opening address to the 1992 Conference of Latin American Bishops, and the phenomenon of African Independent Churches, which he likewise condemned at the opening of the Conference of African Bishops for being “unyielding fundamentalist or aggressive proselytizing.”

These examples are not merely incidental to the concluding argument of this study. They represent regions where, in many respects, Christianity is showing its greatest vitality at the close of the twentieth century. Research into both African Independent Churches and Latin American neo-Pentecostalism illustrates their significance as indigenizing movements that are sowing the seeds of the Gospel in new cultural soils. The new plants are proving hugely attractive to peoples who are estranged by the alien culture of most historic mission churches in non-Western societies. As Shakespeare said of Perdita, the indigenous movements have the power to “quench the zeal of all professors else.” If, as seems probable, these radically indigenized transformations of the Christian faith predict important new trends in global Christianity of the twenty-first century, historic churches cannot simply dismiss them with the charge of “proselytism.”

The understandings of proselytism discussed in this article amount to the assault by one religious group against the territorial, ecclesiological, or faith integrity of another—an unethical way of engaging in interreligious relations, and particularly hurtful in terms of intra-Christian relations. But progress toward resolving this problem so far reflects a status quo, the product of centuries of Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant hegemony over Christianity in its historic forms. The challenge for the future is for the current ecumenical consensus to open itself to the possibility that the Spirit of God, which Christians believe brings human communities into ever-new understandings of the presence and action of God in Christ, is moving in transformative ways among Christians who have little or no stake in traditional forms of Western ecclesiology. “Newcomers” they may be, but in giving honor to the proselyte, the early church showed its capacity to embrace new experience. To require non-Western Christians to conform to Western criteria of what it is to be “church,” and to condemn as proselytism what may be faith-renewing workings of the Holy Spirit, is to imitate the ancient Danish king of England, Canute, who vainly tried to set his throne against a rising tide.

Notes

1. This article is adapted from a lecture given at the Tantur International Conference on Religion and Culture (May 31–June 4, 1998), Jerusalem. The conference theme was “Religious Freedom and Proselytism.”
2. The Winter’s Tale, act 5, scene 1.
5. This is not to suggest that international English always uses the word negatively. International lawyers at the Tantur Conference used “proselytism” as a neutral term meaning “conversion.” A study of the use of the term in other languages would be instructive.
6. For fuller discussion of the biblical material, see Eugene Heideman,
Biola’s School of Intercultural Studies field coursework gives you the advantage to earn a degree while you minister! Enroll in one of these cross cultural ministry courses while you’re in the field:

- Social Organization
- Urban Research and Development
- Dynamics of Religious Experience
- Crosscultural Leadership
- Urban Research and Development
- Principles of Church Planting
- Applied Anthropology for Christian Workers

“These field courses have had a unique advantage: applying the best of classroom insights and principles to my immediate needs and current problems on the field.”

Joanne Shetler
Wycliffe translator in Manila

Earn credit toward these degrees:

- M.A. in Intercultural Studies
- Doctor of Education
- M.Div. in Missions
- Doctor of Missiology
- M.A. in Intercultural Studies and International Business

Write or call Tom Steffen:

**800.992.4652**
Fax: 310.903.4851
E-Mail: tom_steffen@peter.biola.edu

**BIOLA UNIVERSITY**
School of Intercultural Studies
13800 Biola Avenue
La Mirada, California 90639-0001
From “Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions” / Nostra aetate, in Documents, pp. 662–63.

That is, the autocephalous, “national” Orthodox Churches that accept the credal definitions of the seven ecumenical councils (Nicaea I [325] to Nicaea II [787]) and recognize the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople as their primus inter pares.

That is, the churches that accept the credal definitions of the first three ecumenical councils (Nicaea I to Ephesus [431]) but that developed separately from the Council of Chalcedon (451). They are the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Coptic Orthodox Church, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, the Syrian Orthodox Church, and the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church (India).

Supreme Patriarch-Catholics of All Armenians, and spiritual leader of the Armenian Apostolic Church.


From the Assyrian Church of the East was created the Chaldean (Assyrian) Catholic Church (1553) and the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church (1596). From the Oriental Orthodox Church—the Syrian Catholic Church (1663), the Coptic Catholic Church (1741), the Armenian Catholic Church (1742), and the Ethiopian Catholic Church (1839); from the Eastern Orthodox Churches—the Ruthenian (Polish) and Hungarian Catholic Churches (1595), the Romanian Catholic Church (1701), the Melkite (Greek) Catholic Church (1724), the Greek Catholic Church (1860), and the Ukrainian Catholic Church (1861–64).

From “Decree on Eastern Catholic Churches” / Orientalium ecclesiariwm, in Documents, p. 373.


The same was true of the Protestant–Eastern Catholic encounter. The nineteenth-century conflict was most intense between Protestant missionaries and the Maronite Church (the largest Eastern Catholic Church, for which there is no Orthodox equivalent) in Lebanon. The first Maronite convert to Protestantism, As’ad Shidyaq, was imprisoned by the Maronite patriarch and died in jail (ca. 1823).


These churches included the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon (from 1823), the Anglican (originally Anglican-Lutheran) bispophic of Jerusalem (1841), the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East (1846), the Coptic Evangelical Church (1853), the Evangelical Church of Iran (1855), the Evangelical Church of Sudan (1900), and the Presbyterian Church in the Sudan (1902).


For the latter, the author is indebted to Vladimir Federov, New Religious Movements: An Orthodox Perspective” (paper presented to the Tantur Conference on Religious Freedom and Proselytism).


Here “Christianity” refers to non-Orthodox churches.


Article 18. For the full text, see American Journal of International Law, Supplement 127 (1949). Professor Johan van der Vyver, for example, makes the following criticism: “Values that are upheld by virtue of state-imposed coercion instead of personal conviction or individual persuasion forfeit their ethical quality” (“Religious Freedom and Proselytism: Ethical, Political, and Legal Aspects” [paper presented to the Tantur Conference on Religious Freedom and Proselytism]).


Quoted from Hirsch, “Freedom of Proselytism.”


You Can Help the Persecuted Church: Lessons from Chiapas, Mexico

Vernon J. Sterk

The pain and tragedy of persecution can be described best by those who have personally suffered the trauma and threat of persecution. Only out of their experiences can we hope to understand and analyze what is happening in various situations and help Christians survive. We are all one in the body of Christ; “if one part suffers, every part suffers with it” (1 Cor. 12:26). In keeping with this biblical principle, the underlying assumption of this essay is that believers can and must be involved when fellow believers face persecution. In our era, however, part of the tragedy of persecution is that the church worldwide has not really identified with or suffered with the persecuted church.

As a missionary who has been involved in evangelism, discipleship, and Bible translation for about thirty years in an environment hostile to the Gospel, I have found the limited involvement of the worldwide church in supporting and encouraging persecuted Christians to be very frustrating. A complicating factor is the widespread assumption that persecution is, in itself, a positive element in causing the growth of the church. Many contemporary authors and church leaders continue to assume that where there is persecution, the growth of the church will inevitably follow, reflecting Tertullian’s well-known statement “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.”

The result of such a stereotype is a lack of awareness of and concern for the increasing persecution of Christians around the world. My experience with the evangelical church in Chiapas, Mexico, leads me to question the validity of Tertullian’s statement in relation to the growth of the church. My field research in the Tzotzil Mayan tribes of Chiapas led to a Ph.D. dissertation at Fuller Theological Seminary, School of World Mission. My theme, “The Dynamics of Persecution,” was driven by the pain, destruction, and tragedy that I witnessed in the lives and churches of persecuted Christians. It became obvious that it was not persecution and suffering that caused the growth of the church but rather the growth of the church that led to persecution.

The conclusion of my study and experience is that (1) the acceptance of the gospel message leads to persecution and (2) persecution negatively affects the growth of the church. However, the damaging effects can be minimized through an adequate preparation for, and proper response to, persecution. An essential part of that response must be the prayers and involvement of the worldwide church.

Personal Involvement with Persecuted Christians

My personal involvement in persecution arose out of living with first-generation Christians in an indigenous tribe in Chiapas. After a long period of warnings, we knew that the situation had reached a volatile phase when expulsion threats were issued to the Protestant evangelicals. One Sunday morning a Christian leader from the Zinacanteco tribe arrived breathlessly at our door. He reported that several of the believers from the village of Nabenchauac had been forced onto a truck and were on their way to be executed by order of the tribal president.

My response was to jump into a vehicle and try to meet the leaders from Nabenchauac, with whom I had worked for years. With the Zinacanteco brother that had come to notify me, I headed out to the road where the assassins would reportedly be passing. As the truck carrying the condemned believers approached, I recognized it as belonging to the man from Nabenchauac with whom my family had lived for two years. Considering him my friend, I flagged down the truck. Before I was able to negotiate anything, however, five other large trucks loaded with about 250 enraged and drunken Zinacanteco men surrounded us. A man named Antun, who had been the captain of the village basketball team that I had organized and coached a few years earlier, shouted, “Let’s kill René (my name in the tribe) and put an end to all of the evangelicals!”

Before I knew what was happening, I was struck in the face, sending my glasses flying. Because I am half-blind without my glasses, I moved to retrieve them. As I picked them up in one hand, someone shouted: “He has a gun!” Evidently the way I was holding my glasses gave the appearance of having a pistol, and through a miracle of the Lord, the mob suddenly split, opening a clear path for my escape on foot. When the crowd saw me running full speed, they threw rocks that zipped past my head. I didn’t stop running until I reached the outskirts of the city, over a mile away.

The Zinacanteco Christians, including the man who had brought the news to our house, were immediately taken back to the tribal center and were beaten severely on the way. But since the tribal president feared that I would have reported him to the city police, he canceled the death sentence and expelled them from their tribal homes. They appeared at our door late that night, badly beaten but thankful to be alive.

I relate this story to illustrate a kind of personal involvement that can be helpful to persecuted Christians. To this day, the believers affirm that they surely would have been killed if someone had not been willing to risk getting involved. This involvement formed a foundation upon which I could identify with and encourage others who would face persecution.

History of Persecution in Chiapas

While the attention of the world has been drawn to Chiapas since the 1994 Zapatista Rebellion and the December 1997 massacre in Acteal, the oppression of the Indian population of this southernmost state in Mexico is not new. The Indian tribes have suffered
oppression changed. Since the first contacts with the Gospel injustice from the time of the Spanish Conquest until the present. Instead of the oppression coming from foreign invaders, it is now the tribal leaders and Indian caciques (tribal political leaders) who are persecuting their own people.

Eventually persecution abated in the Spanish-speaking areas of Chiapas, but the growth of the church in the Indian tribes brought on a new wave of persecution. Each of the indigenous tribal areas—Ch’ol, Tzeltal, Tojolabal, and Tzotzil—has struggled with the problems of persecution from the 1940s until the present. Persecution follows as a counterreaction to the changes that are caused by new freedom in Christ. Powerful tribal mafias deny freedom and justice to their own people. In this setting, the Protestant Indians voice a cry for freedom from the oppression of spiritual, social, economic, and political powers.

My wife and I have witnessed almost continuous persecution of evangelical Christians since our arrival in Chiapas in 1969. While all conceivable forms of persecution have been employed, the principal method of pressuring evangelical Christians has been expulsion from tribal land and homes. Since 1969 more than 25,000 indigenous Christians have been forcibly expelled, creating the need for more than fifty refugee communities, many of which have now become permanent relocation villages.

In the communication of the Gospel we are involved in spiritual warfare, and the threat to Satan’s power is the root cause of persecution. On a sociological level, the general cause of persecution in Chiapas is the perceived threat to traditional tribal leaders and power structures. We can enumerate several factors that help explain what has happened in Chiapas in areas where the indigenous population has responded to the Gospel. There is (1) a change of religious allegiance, which in animistic cultures is perceived as a threat to ethnic cohesion and the welfare of the entire society; (2) a threat to the position and power of the shaman or priest; (3) an increase of social and economic problems related to shortages of land and the unequal distribution of wealth; and (4) the challenge to tribal political leaders and structures.

Preparing the Church to Cope with Persecution

If the church is to survive when persecution strikes, it must not only identify the causes but also be made acutely aware of the need to prepare.

Personal response of Christian leaders. The personal response of the missionary or pastor in facing persecution will often set the pattern for how indigenous Christians will react. We must remember that it is not the presence of persecution that causes the growth of the church. Rather, it is the effective response of prepared believers in Christ and the courageous witness of indigenous Christians who are willing to risk their lives by returning to tribal villages, by maintaining cultural contact, and by witnessing to the power of God. This response can result in the growth of the church in spite of persecution.

Scripture translation and memorization. The clearest example of an established church that completely disappeared when assaulted by persistent persecution is that of the church in North Africa. Historians record that a principal factor in the demise of this church was that the Bible was never translated into the indigenous languages. Gordon Laman, in his examination of the persecution of Christians in Japan in the early 1600s, maintains that the communication of the Gospel was ineffective because the Jesuit missionaries “never translated even a major portion of the Bible into Japanese.”

Bible translation is essential for preparation to face persecution because it facilitates the penetration of the Gospel at the worldview level. In the past ten years I have been involved in an interconfessional Bible translation project with Tzotzil leaders. I am encouraged to know that in doing the translation work I am involved in a priority task for meeting persecution.

Another essential use of indigenous translations is Scripture memorization. The missionary can play an important role in teaching the importance of the memorization of Scripture in the indigenous languages. When persecution denies access to the written Word of God, the most valuable preparation that will have been done is the memorization of major passages from the Bible. This has been the testimony of Christians who have suffered repressive persecution under Communism and Islam.

Indigenization. Another significant contribution that the missionary can make is to work toward a truly indigenous church with its own leadership, financial responsibility, and mission outreach. A church can survive and even grow under persecution, but only if it has become indigenous.

Foreign control is the main roadblock in the path to indigenity, and it is usually the foreign missionary and faulty principles of mission that cause dependencies to continue. Missionary control not only contributes to the weakness of the indigenous church itself but also invites persecution. In many cases, Christians suffer persecution because of antiforeign feelings stirred up by nationalism, which is a powerful issue in many countries of the world today. Unless the church is visibly indigenized, it risks being identified as a pernicious foreign religion.

The dislike of foreignness is often a factor in persecution as a reaction to the Gospel. We saw this played out in the tribal areas of Chiapas. Local leaders call for the persecution of evangelicals as a supposed way of preserving tribal customs and traditions. The Indian Protestants are accused of being the puppets of foreign imperialists. Persecution and human rights abuses thus are justified and excused in the eyes of government and justice department officials who claim to be defending national interests against imperialism.

Missionaries must constantly be preparing believers in Christ to defeat this persecution threat by in-depth indigenization, by emphasizing the importance of tribal dress and patterns, by encouraging the use of indigenous hymns and worship patterns, and by insisting on indigenous leadership and financial responsibility.

Negative Effects of Persecution

I am convinced that unless we are ready to prepare and support the suffering church, persecution will be detrimental to the growth of the church. I do realize that there are some positive results of persecution. The refining fire of persecution does result in some Christians becoming mature and genuine in their faith. Also, when the miraculous power of God is revealed in the midst of violent persecution, some may learn to deepen their reliance on God alone. And there is the possibility that persecution of believers will entail increased exposure to the Gospel for the wider community.

Human suffering. Our experience in Chiapas shows that while a few individuals may benefit from the refining fire of persecution, the negative effects—beginning with human suffer-
instances, persecution results not in the growth of the church but in reinforcing the population’s resistance to the communication of the Gospel in the future.

**Persecution may result, not in growth, but in reinforcing a population’s resistance to the communication of the Gospel in the future.**

**Disruption and dislocation.** Another negative result of persecution is the unmistakable disruption that it causes in the lives of individuals and in the structures of families and society. When family members use the weapons of ostracism and expulsion against one another, this can become a powerful factor in causing a negative effect on the growth of the church. Many who would otherwise choose to accept the Gospel find that the threat of family disruption pushes them either to reject Christianity completely or to delay indefinitely making a decision. If the worldwide church does not help with the restoration of the losses caused by disruption in family and society, especially in helping with the formation of new relocation communities for expelled Christians, there are many who will reject the offer of Christianity. Various anthropologists in Chiapas have noted, however, that when the persecuted church receives help in reestablishing family and community, and when there is an intentional and public stand for justice and human rights, these actions are powerful factors in encouraging the growth of the church.

**Divided and weakened church.** An even more disturbing negative result of persecution is that it tends to spawn a weakened and division-prone church. People who have had their family and cultural identity disrupted will in turn produce a new community of believers in Christ that is weak and impoverished. The result consistently shows itself in the formation of unstable and divisive community and church structures that may persist for years.

When, as we witnessed in Chiapas, persecution results in expulsion and the necessity of forming a worshipping community outside of tribal areas, the potential for division and internal conflict in the relocated church is especially high. The merging of village and church leaders from more than thirty Chamula house churches and villages invited inescapable clashes of personal, political, and cultural interests. The leadership positions had to be reestablished after the persecution and dislocation. This led to debilitating and demoralizing divisions that had a negative effect not only on evangelical witness and growth but also on the entire range of communal life.

**Reversion of weak Christians.** Probably the most common and widely recognized negative result of persecution is that of the reversion of Christians. The unmistakable goal of persecutors is to cause potential and new believers in Christ to turn away from Christianity under threats of physical violence, ostracism, and expulsions. Throughout history every method of torture and abuse has been used to prompt people to revert to traditional practices and beliefs. History also documents that many Christians were not able to stand up to the trials of persecution, and they either temporarily or permanently rejected their faith in Christ.

Although the severity of persecution and the response of churches vary, the fact is that persecution does result in a significant loss in the growth of the church. Simply stated, a considerable number of individuals and families deny their new faith in Christ because of the pain and pressure of persecution.

**Halting the growth of the church.** The negative results of persecution affect both the pre-Christian and the Christian communities, but the principal concern for missionology is the inhibiting effect that persecution has on the growth of the church. This is most notable when persecution causes the loss of momentum in a people movement in a specific tribe or area. This loss of momentum leads to the suspension of Christian ministry on the part of evangelists, pastors, and workers who have suffered violence while involved in such work. Persecution can also slow the growth of the church through discouragement. When there seems to be no relief or justice in the face of persecution, it is easy for Christians to give up the battle.

**Response of the Worldwide Church**

Because the negative effects of persecution are so overwhelming, it is imperative for the worldwide church to respond in a unified and practical way. By implementing a unified and organized response, we can hope to minimize the damaging effects of persecution. At the onset of persecution, I would urge the following ten-step action by the worldwide church.

1. Notify church leaders and pastors by all available means of communication—letters, telephone, e-mail, Internet. An organized system of communication should be established on both national and international levels. In this way, prayer chains and circles of fasting can be organized around the world. The battle is a spiritual one, so we must start there. Also, offerings for financial assistance can be initiated in order to be ready to meet the inevitable needs of the suffering church.
2. Counsel persecuted Christians to negotiate for acceptable options so that violence will be avoided or delayed; encourage them to trust the Lord for protection by not abandoning their homes and tribal lands on the basis of only threats and warnings. They should avoid signing documents that require withdrawal from the community.
3. Facilitate the translation and distribution of Bibles and study materials in indigenous languages, especially where persecution threatens the survival of the church.
4. Encourage Christian leaders to identify and battle the spiri-
tual forces that are behind the persecution. In this way, they can follow the biblical directive to love their persecutors, while waging spiritual warfare against Satan and his emissaries.

5. Make official protests to national legal authorities when people have suffered from physical abuse or imprisonment, when homes or churches have been vandalized or destroyed, when expulsions have taken place, and when there have been any deaths related to persecution.

6. When reports or protests must be made to legal and government authorities, refer Christians to a church-sponsored or Christian legal defense committee (the latter should be in place before severe persecution breaks out).

7. When violent persecution or expulsions occur, organize local churches to meet emergency needs of persecuted Christians, encourage expelled Christians to seek the possibility of a calculated return, and stress the importance of maintaining contact with ethnic or family groups still living in the tribal area.

8. Assist the persecuted church in establishing house churches (provide prayer and teaching for them). Establish relocation centers when homes or churches have been vandalized or destroyed, and congregations. Don’t betray or reject hidden Christians (provide prayer and teaching for them).

9. Respond in Christian love toward persecutors. Remind persecuted Christians that a forgiving and reconciling outreach is basic keys to the growth of the church. Encourage cultural respect and maintenance of cultural forms and patterns.

10. When persecution becomes increasingly violent and persistent, refer Christians to local and state-level newspapers to publish as much of the actual events as possible. Ask the national church to pressure federal and state government authorities. Appeal to the international church for solidarity, support, and possible political denouncements and political action. Facilitate international publicity through Christian news sources and publications along with as many secular publications as possible. Where international pressure is not effective, we must organize and provide for the presence of Christian international observers to provide a human shield of protection and security for Christians who would otherwise be severely abused for their faith. We need to be willing to risk personal involvement in situations of suffering and persecution if we are going to act out the words of 1 Corinthians 12:26.

Notes


My Pilgrimage in Mission

James K. Mathews

Though my life has demanded a great variety of work, it has increasingly become clear to me—now in my ninth decade—that I am and have for a long time been essentially a missionary. Having said that, I must confess that mine has not been a very conventional missionary career.

Not very much in my upbringing and training would suggest that this was the direction in which I would be headed. I was born in Breezewood, Pennsylvania, in 1913. My family was certainly not opposed to missions; rather, we were at least nominally in support of the venture. Some distant relatives were missionaries to India, and from time to time we would hear of their work. One of them, while on furlough, gave my siblings and me a black stone figure of a reclining bull. Long afterward I understood that this was Nandi, the beast of burden of the Hindu deity Shiva. It was, I suppose, an idol, but we used it as a plaything.

I did my theological training at the Biblical Seminary in New York (now New York Theological Seminary), where there was considerable emphasis on missionary work. Among my close friends were furloughed missionaries from Japan, China, Korea, and India, as well as from Africa and Latin America. There were also nationals from various parts of the world. Among them I particularly recall Eleanor Woo. (Her Chinese name means “a precious stone hidden among the hills”; she was certainly a gem!) Her ardent witness during the Communist regime led to her long imprisonment under the harshest conditions. She was a true confessor of the faith and, I believe, finally a martyr. Whenever I recall her, I experience something like awe.

While in seminary I came to know very well the great German missiologist Dr. Julius Richter. His lectures were stimulating and wide ranging. To this day I possess extensive notes of the period when he was a visiting professor. But none of these influences ever led me to conclude that I should become a missionary. Nevertheless, Richter was a major influence in my life.

Unsuspected Turning Point

All that changed while I was doing graduate theological study in Boston University School of Theology. One evening—October 31, 1937—I went willingly but unsuspectingly to a meeting at Trinity Episcopal Church in Boston. That night my life direction was drastically altered.

Trinity Church was a masterwork of the famous architect James K. Mathews is a Bishop of the United Methodist Church, now retired. He has been a missionary to India; a mission executive; and bishop of the Boston, Washington, Harare (Zimbabwe), and Albany areas.
Sanford White. Together with the lovely Boston Public Library, it graces Boston’s Copley Square. Outside the edifice is a notable sculpture by St. Gaudens of Phillips Brooks—prince of preachers, rector of Trinity, and later bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church. At first glance the observer of the sculpture does not sense its true force. Then suddenly it becomes apparent that there is another figure in the background with a hand on the preacher’s shoulder. It is the Galilean, the source of Brooks’s power.

That evening the church was crowded, for the preacher was Bishop Azariah of Dornakal Diocese in South India. He was a stalwart person, a fervent evangelist, and the first Indian to be elected bishop of the Anglican Communion in his homeland. He had also been a delegate to the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910. On that evening in October 1937 he spoke of India and the work of Christ there. I do not know how it was with others present that night, but I know how it was with me. It seemed to me that once again Jesus stood behind that preacher, his hand on the preacher’s shoulder and the source of Azariah’s power. Though not ordinarily much given to this sort of thing, I knew then and there that I must become a missionary to India.

The very next day the speaker at the chapel service in the Boston University School of Theology was Dr. Thomas S. Donohugh, a secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He was not renowned for his eloquence as a speaker; he simply remarked that there was an immediate need for a pastor for an English-speaking church in Bombay. I knew, of course, who was elected! I spoke to Dr. Donohugh after the service, applied for missionary service, and was interviewed and appointed. Three months later I was on my way to India. I may say that it was painful for me to leave Boston, particularly since I was greatly helped in my intellectual development by two professors, Edgar S. Brightman and Edwin Prince Booth.

The last time I was to preach before sailing was on January 16, 1938, at Newburyport, Massachusetts, where another missionary, George Whitefield, preached his last sermon and where he is buried. There I spoke on Paul’s letter to the Philippians, the “epistle of joy.” My text was “Let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ.” I earnestly trusted that this might be true of me.

In most ways I was ill prepared: no special training for India or for the missionary task, no language orientation, no anthropology, “no nothing!” Sometimes I have said that I was given a passport and a ticket and was told India was “thataway.” So it was. To my mind it is a great tribute to the Indian people that they were prepared to receive a greenhorn like me, to love me, to overlook my many shortcomings, and then to help mold me into a servant of the Lord. Every untried pastor knows the feeling.

I kept a fragmentary journal of the voyage. It tells of seasickness, anxiety, eager expectation, and longing to be faithful. On Sundays there were church services both morning and evening, at which ministers on board were asked to lead. My turn came on Sunday, February 27, 1938, soon after we had passed along the volcano Stromboli—quite a sight! I remember that I preached from Acts 27, St. Paul’s stormy trip on the Mediterranean Sea. While I was preaching, we were bucking the same kind of northeaster called Euroclydon that had blown Paul toward the shipwreck on Malta. The same fate did not await us, and three weeks after we had left Tilbury docks near London we arrived in Bombay (now Mumbai).

Learning to Be at Home in India

Hardly had we reached Bombay when I was whisked off to a small hill station, Mahableshwar, to study the Marathi language, a Sanskrit derivative. I regret exceedingly that I did not really master the tongue. Nevertheless, after sixty years I can still converse a little in Marathi and am understood. Along the way I picked up a working knowledge of Hindi, the lingua franca of India. At language school the missionary gets to know his contemporaries as well; some of them became my lifelong friends. Even more, we became acquainted with India, its customs and religions, from the teachers—pundits or munshis, as they are called. Then too one meets, for the first time, sturdy missionaries such as Dr. John MacKenzie, principal of Wilson College, Bombay—a very erudite Scotsman; Bishop J. Waskom Pickett, authority on Christian mass movements and a mentor to me; Dr. J. F. Edwards, editor of a Christian periodical, who dubbed himself a booming Englishman; or the Reverend Gabriel Sundaram, later a bishop. Then I met K. M. Munshi and Sorojini Naidu, renowned nationalist leaders. Very quickly one became at home in new surroundings.

After a few weeks at language school I was appointed pastor of an English-speaking congregation in Bombay. This church was named after George Bowen, an outstanding missionary of the previous century. Robert E. Speer’s biographical account of Bowen illuminates one of the greatest missionaries in history. After this pastorate of three years I finished my short term but extended it for a further year as Methodist district superintendent in rural Maharashtra.

In a singular way I made the acquaintance of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, leader of the untouchables, now called Dalits—the rejected. I think I may say that Ambedkar and I were friends. While he was a member of the viceroy’s cabinet and when he was member in Nehru’s cabinet, I always had access to him. I tried to witness faithfully to him, but in the end he became a Buddhist.

My experience and effectiveness as a missionary were greatly enhanced when I married Eunice Jones, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. E. Stanley Jones. Born in India, she knew the culture and language (Urdu) well. So it was that my own grasp of the Indian scene enlarged, and we have remained colleagues for nearly six decades. I learned much about missionary service from both of her parents. Of course, Stanley Jones’s book The Christ of the Indian Road tremendously awakened me when first I read it, just as it does whenever I return to it. For thirty years I knew him well, and he proved to be in private what he seemed to be in public. Though he influenced me greatly, while he was still living, I never quoted from him, lest I should be seen as exploiting this tie.

I traveled widely, including village India, and met Mahatma Gandhi and other national leaders. Moreover, the 1938 International Missionary Conference (IMC) convened at Tambaram, near Madras. To my deep regret I did not get to visit the conference, but the “greats” passed through Bombay: John R. Mott, Bishop James C. Baker, Georgia Harkness, Toyohiko Kagawa, Bishop Azariah, Hendrik Kraemer, Henry P. Van Dusen, Constance Padwick, a number of German theologians, and many.
Christian history. Of that I am proud. Then, I went to India who served at one of the great missionary-sending periods in full-flower and then watch it begin to fade away. The fact is that during the last decade of British rule. I could observe that rule in others. The whole world, for a time, seemed to be at one's door. Noteworthy

Gandhi personally and two of his sons, and we are intimate with struggle for freedom in history. I would not exchange this privilege for anything. As already suggested, I came to know

Most of all I found that I had arrived in India at an exciting time. We are pleased to announce the appointment of Anne-Marie Kool as a contributing editor of the INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN OF MISSIONARY RESEARCH. A missionary of the Reformed Mission League in the Dutch Reformed Church, she has been on loan to the Reformed Church of Hungary since 1993 where she is Director of the Protestant Institute for Mission Studies in Budapest. She is also a visiting lecturer at the Lutheran Theological Academy and the Faculty of Divinity of the Gaspar Karoli Reformed University in Budapest, and is head of the department of practical theology and missiology at the Reformed Theological Academy in Papa (West Hungary). Her Ph.D. dissertation from the University of Utrecht was published in 1993 under the title God Moves in a Mysterious Way: The Hungarian Protestant Foreign Mission Movement 1756–1951, and is now being published in Hungarian in three volumes. We welcome her and look forward to her contributions in our pages.

On August 19, 1998, Josef Neuner, S.J., celebrated his ninety-first birthday and his sixtieth year of service to the church in India. A special issue of Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection (Delhi) for August 1998 is dedicated to Fr. Neuner on the theme “Theology in Dialogue,” to honor his contribution as a missionary and theologian. It includes a partial bibliography of his writings that lists 274 items. We send him our congratulations and best wishes.

Guillermo Steckling was elected the twelfth Superior General of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate on September 16, 1998. Born in Germany, he studied philosophy and theology at the University of Mainz and went as a missionary to Paraguay in 1974. He has served both as Provincial Superior and since 1992 as Assistant Superior General.

Died. Richard S. Pittman, 83, former director of translation and language research efforts for Wycliffe Bible Translators in Asia and the Pacific, August 21, 1998, in Waxhaw, North Carolina. A graduate of Asbury College in 1935, he began his Wycliffe service in Mexico in 1941. In 1951 he was asked by Wycliffe founder Cameron Townsend to pioneer the work of Wycliffe in the Philippines. In 1955 he became area director for Asia and the South Pacific. He received the Ramon Magsaysay Award for International Understanding in 1973 on behalf of Wycliffe and Summer Institute of Linguistics.

Noteworthy

Personalia

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Anne-Marie Kool as a contributing editor of the INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN OF MISSIONARY RESEARCH. A missionary of the Reformed Mission League in the Dutch Reformed Church, she has been on loan to the Reformed Church of Hungary since 1993 where she is Director of the Protestant Institute for Mission Studies in Budapest. She is also a visiting lecturer at the Lutheran Theological Academy and the Faculty of Divinity of the Gaspar Karoli Reformed University in Budapest, and is head of the department of practical theology and missiology at the Reformed Theological Academy in Papa (West Hungary). Her Ph.D. dissertation from the University of Utrecht was published in 1993 under the title God Moves in a Mysterious Way: The Hungarian Protestant Foreign Mission Movement 1756–1951, and is now being published in Hungarian in three volumes. We welcome her and look forward to her contributions in our pages.

On August 19, 1998, Josef Neuner, S.J., celebrated his nineteenth birthday and his sixtieth year of service to the church in India. A special issue of Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection (Delhi) for August 1998 is dedicated to Fr. Neuner on the theme “Theology in Dialogue,” to honor his contribution as a missionary and theologian. It includes a partial bibliography of his writings that lists 274 items. We send him our congratulations and best wishes.

Guillermo Steckling was elected the twelfth Superior General of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate on September 16, 1998. Born in Germany, he studied philosophy and theology at the University of Mainz and went as a missionary to Paraguay in 1974. He has served both as Provincial Superior and since 1992 as Assistant Superior General.

Died. Richard S. Pittman, 83, former director of translation and language research efforts for Wycliffe Bible Translators in Asia and the Pacific, August 21, 1998, in Waxhaw, North Carolina. A graduate of Asbury College in 1935, he began his Wycliffe service in Mexico in 1941. In 1951 he was asked by Wycliffe founder Cameron Townsend to pioneer the work of Wycliffe in the Philippines. In 1955 he became area director for Asia and the South Pacific. He received the Ramon Magsaysay Award for International Understanding in 1973 on behalf of Wycliffe and Summer Institute of Linguistics.

Announcing

The annual meeting of the American Society of Missiology will be held June 18–20, 1999, at Techny (near Chicago), Illinois. The theme is “The New Millennium and the Emerging Religious Encounters.” The keynote address will be given by Archbishop Marcello Zago, O.M.I., Secretary of the Vatican Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, and formerly Secretary of the Secretariat for Non-Christian Religions (now the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue). J. Dudley Woodberry, Dean of the School of World Mission at Fuller Theological Seminary, is the ASM president. The Association of Professors of Missions will meet June 17–18 at the same place. Brian Stelck of Carey Theological College, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, is president of the APM. For further information and registration for both meetings, contact Darrell R. Guder, Columbia Theological Seminary, P.O. Box 520, Decatur, Georgia 30031-0520 (Fax: 404-377-9696).

The next conference of the International Association for Mission Studies will be held in South Africa, January 21–28, 2000. The theme of the conference is “Reflecting Christ: Crucified and Living in a Broken World.” The e-mail address of Klaus Schaefer, general secretary of IAMS in Hamburg, Germany, is: iams@geod.geonet.de

We recommend two new journals. Third Millennium: Indian Journal of Evangelization is a quarterly published at Bishop’s House, P.B. No. 1, Kalavad Road, Rajkot 360 005, Gujrat, India. The Catholic Bishop of Rajkot, Gregory Karotemprel, C.M.I., is President of the Board of Directors for the journal.

Journal of African Christian Thought is published twice yearly by the Akrofi-Christaller Memorial Centre, P.O. Box 76, Akropong-Akuapem, Ghana. Gillian M. Bediako is Editor.

Gospel Communications Network www.gospelcom.net is the only Christian Web site on the noted “Media Metrix 500.” This recognition places Gospel Communications alongside such sites as Yahoo!, Netscape, Microsoft, NBC and USA Today. In one month recently, the Gospelcom Web site was hit 35,492,081 times. Gospel Communications Network is an alliance of more than 130 ministries, including Overseas Ministries Study Center www.omsc.org, providing thousands of online resources for Christian missions and ministries.

In August 1998, the Church Mission Society–USA (CMS–USA) opened headquarters in New Haven, Connecticut. Geoffrey A. Little is the first director of this new agency which is a sister organization of the Church Mission Society, Britain, the largest missionary sending agency in the Anglican Communion. CMS–USA offers its services to churches of any denomination. For further information contact CMS–USA, 62 East Grand Avenue, New Haven, CT 06513.
vanced party of the U.S. Army, gave me a direct commission as a lieutenant and supply officer. He needed persons who knew India and something of the language. Thus I served for four years, emerging from the army with the rank of major. During that period I was frequently called upon to render service also as a chaplain. This venture afforded me an extended exposure to the real world, and the administrative experience gained has served me well in the church responsibilities that followed.

**Transfer to Administration**

At war's end, quite to my surprise and just when I needed it most, I was invited to be an associate or corresponding secretary of the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church to administer southern Asia. This included India, a major Methodist field, and Burma; later still, Pakistan and Nepal. (By the way, I have always felt that the partitioning of India and the creation of Pakistan was a tragic mistake.) I continued in this role for eight years in New York City. Then for six more years I was associate general secretary, coordinating work in nearly fifty countries where Methodist missionary endeavor was carried on. During that period I was chief program officer.

This fourteen-year period was a tremendous experience. I had the good fortune of being trained by Dr. Ralph E. Diffendorfer, my mentor and the dean of missionary secretaries at the time. It was my privilege to be associated with a really able staff of devoted women and men of broad missionary experience and great wisdom. Then one came to know one's counterparts in other denominations and other parts of the world.

The administrative load was heavy, and the responsibility very great indeed. There was extensive travel abroad, especially in southern Asia, where over a period of ten years I made four major trips of from two to six months' duration, during which time I visited nearly all the widespread work of Indian Methodism. My little family paid a great price to enable this. Later I extended my range to Africa, to other parts of Asia, to Latin America, for I had responsibilities in all these regions. I came to know most of our large family of missionaries, as well as national leaders. I am indebted to hosts of these people. There was also almost constant travel in the United States in what was called "the interest of missions." Pursuing this, I spoke in nearly every state, giving literally hundreds of addresses, lectures, and sermons, interpreting the world mission of the church. For several years I joined the Florida Chain of Missions, an outstanding tour of missionaries and mission executives, giving addresses on the mission of the church all over that state. Martin Niemoeller and Dr. Helen Kim were a part of this venture, together with a multitude of others. Similarly, I often spoke at the great missionary conferences that were held in Silver Bay, New York.

At this point I made bold to include a sample of a very short address I gave in Denver at an interdenominational meeting in the mid-1950s:

As a board secretary I speak. Several scores of us are here. You spell it: B-O-A-R-D. Though we are often baffled, befuddled, and beset with difficulties, we are never bored, nor indeed can be in this present world.

Among our treasures are things new and old—

For example, we have an abundance of good missionary literature. But what of those who never read it? One mission board decided that perhaps they would read the story in another form. So a woman went forth in Christian mission—one of America's leading novelists. For months on end she sat where India's people sit. She watched the Gospel's light and leaven at work among them. She now has penned a book that those who run may read the story of mission. How well she has succeeded may be judged by those who read the current novel, *House of Earth*, by Dorothy Clarke Wilson.

But what of those in under-privileged lands who bend their sweating backs in mine and factory and farm? Is there no word for them? For them a man went forth in Christian mission—in labor relations. Graduate of a great theological seminary, he had found his vocation for a dozen years in organized labor. As General Hodges's labor advisor in Korea he saw the oft-exploited toil of Asian brothers and sisters. He was later assistant to the president of one of our most progressive labor unions. Two years ago he wrote: "It is time to bring the two halves of my life together—the ministry half and the labor half. Where better can I do it than in India?" So there today with his wife, a sculptress, their skills are available to the whole of Christ's church that people who are heavy-laden may perhaps find rest.

But what of those who dwell in villages condemned to needless disease and death? To them a man went forth in Christian mission—a sanitary engineer, a Nisei who knew what it was to be despised. Today he serves an interdenominational rural center in the Punjab. He is interested not only in villages made healthy but in lives made whole. He says: "I am not afraid to declare the Gospel and invite non-Christians to be converted to Jesus Christ, for I too am a convert, born in a Buddhist home."

Sharpening the Mind

The demands of speaking helped sharpen my theology of mission. Although a mission executive must be involved in large part with programmatic matters, it is at his or her peril if the development of mind and spirit is neglected.

Though I deeply regret that I did not find more time for writing at that time, I did manage to pen a number of articles and wrote three books. One was an interpretation of Methodism in global ethics, a slender volume, *Eternal Values in a World of Change*. Another was on mission; *To the End of the Earth*, an interpretive guide to Luke and Acts.

Sharpening the Mind

The demands of speaking helped sharpen my theology of mission. Although a mission executive must be involved in large part with programmatic matters, it is at his or her peril if the development of mind and spirit is neglected.

Though I deeply regret that I did not find more time for writing at that time, I did manage to pen a number of articles and wrote three books. One was an interpretation of Methodism in global ethics, a slender volume, *Eternal Values in a World of Change*. Another was on mission; *To the End of the Earth*, an interpretive guide to Luke and Acts.

Hardly had I launched my work for our Board of Missions in New York City when I was visited by a revered missiologist, Dr. George W. Briggs of Drew University. He urged me to undertake doctoral study at Columbia University. This I did, somehow carrying out the endeavor while working full-time at the board! Finally, I earned the Ph.D. in the field of the history of religion. Columbia's faculty was outstanding. My dissertation was on Mahatma Gandhi, entitled "The Matchless Weapon: Satyagraha." Much later this was published in India, and I received a Gandhi Peace Prize for it from Vice President K. R. Narayanan, now president of India.

These academic credentials led to teaching offers at several...
years later I did the same at Wesley Seminary in Washington, D.C., and later still at Asbury Theological Seminary.

Then I was greatly reinforced by association with the country’s leading missiologists in a group called Lux Mundi. I felt a little out of place in this eminent company, which proved invaluable in lifting my sights and broadening my horizons. I can scarcely imagine years of our church’s great Crusade Scholarship Program, which afforded graduate training to a great array of future church leaders all over the world. Then there was our church’s relief program, which involved being a part of ecumenical relief programs at the national and world levels. For a long period I was chairman of Agricultural Missions, Inc. and enjoyed close association with leaders in the rural field, such as Dr. Sam Higgenbottom, John F. Reinsner, and Ira W. Moomaw.

The 1940s and 1950s saw immense ecumenical development. I was a delegate among those who were “present at creation” of the National Council of Churches in Cleveland in 1950. Though, much to my regret, I did not attend the Amsterdam meeting of the World Council of Churches in 1948, I did get my first great worldwide exposure at the 1952 session of the International Missionary Council in Willingen, Germany. The theme was “The Missionary Obligation of the Church.” I wrote a preparatory paper for this session, “Patterns of Missionary Activity and the Necessity for Their Reshaping.” To participate in the conference was a stimulating experience. There one rubbed shoulders with John Mackay, W. A. Visser ’t Hooft, Christian Baeta of Africa, Manchester bishop W. D. L. Greer, Hendrik Kraemer, David Moses, Rajah B. Manikam, Charles W. Ranson, John W. Decker, Gloria M. Wysner, E. J. Bingle, Walter Freytag, J. C. Hoekendijk, Lesslie Newbigin, Kenneth Grubb, M. A. C. Warren, O. Fredrich Nolde, Bishop Hans Lilje, and a long list of other notables. I was to meet with such persons through many years to come. Among the younger participants were counterparts who were to become lifelong friends.

Nearly every summer following Willingen there were follow-up meetings of IMC committees. Travel, food, and lodging were available at moderate costs in those days, so we could meet at such places as Herrenalb, Davos, Spittal, Thessaloniki, London, Oxford, and so on. Along the way I worked closely with Charles Ranson, Yorke Allen, and others in the launching of the Theological Education Fund. These meetings climaxed in the great meeting at Accra, where it was finally decided by the IMC to merge with the World Council of Churches. At that time I was invited to succeed Charles Ranson as general secretary of the IMC. It was fortunate for all parties concerned that I declined, for leaders were finally able to persuade Bishop Lesslie Newbigin to assume this role. Under his guidance the merger was consummated at New Delhi in 1961.

Though it has by no means been unique with me, I have certainly found that mission and unity have been linked together: “... that they all may be one—that the world may believe.” So it has been with me: when we go forth in missionary obedience, we meet others walking that road in obedience to the same Lord: “Why not then walk together?” “Why not be together?”

After Willingen, we executives of the Methodist Board launched a series of consultations on the theology of mission. These were held at a delightful spot near the summer home of Bishop Richard C. Raines near Glen Lake, Michigan. These included such theologians as Walter G. Muelder, Carl Michalson, J. Robert Nelson, John Godsey, Richey Hogg, and others. Later we reached out to British Methodists: among them, Rupert Davies, A. Raymond George, and John Foster of Glasgow University, author of the little missionary gem After the Apostles, a book I highly commend.

And Then Full Circle

Then in June 1960 the direction of my life seemed again abruptly to change: I was elected a bishop of the Methodist Church. (In 1956 I had been chosen for this office in India but declined.) To some this suggested that my involvement in mission had ended. In my view this was not so. I was assigned to Boston, and my office was on Copley Square just opposite Trinity Church, where it had all begun twenty-two years before. I had come full circle. Only my mission field had changed. It was now New England instead of India.

Moreover, I continued to write and speak on missions. I was for eight years a voting member (not a staff member) of the Methodist Board of Missions. I continued to travel in so-called mission lands and was a part of conceiving the whole work of the church to be mission. My involvement continued in southern Asia, Korea, Chile, and Africa. My ecumenical involvement grew—as a member of the Central Committee of the WCC for twenty-three years, a short stint at Vatican II, and increasing links with Orthodoxy. Another book emerged: A Church Truly Catholic, which dealt with both missions and ecumenism.

After retirement as bishop in 1980, this commitment continued. I was recalled to active duty to be bishop in Zimbabwe for a wonderful period in 1985–86. Relation to the Christian ashram movement has taken me back to India repeatedly. My wife and I have raised considerable money for missions all around the globe. My participation in the newly established Africa University in Zimbabwe has been constant. So although others may have seen me as a hierarch and social activist, I have seen myself as evangelist and missionary.

Without attempting to exhaust the subject, I hazard a few observations:

1. While I have welcomed the broadening of the definition of mission during the past fifty years, I regret the blurring of focus that has taken place with respect to the missionary task.
2. It is my opinion that during recent years the church has not kept faith with the classic commitment to worldwide mission. For example, many have too readily accepted the Marxist critique that missions and imperialism were closely linked.
3. We find ourselves ill prepared for the meeting and dialogue among the faiths. Too many would yield the challenge before it has really begun. If we say that all religions are the same, there is nothing to talk about. If we conclude that only our view has merit, there is no need to talk. This matter demands our best, and we must give it earnest attention.
4. At the same time, I feel that the missionary task is still the churches’ greatest challenge. As when Jesus preached at Nazareth, so it is today—the poor, the physically, socially, politically, morally, and spiritually dispossessed need to hear the Good News and see it demonstrated to them throughout the earth. They await the possibility of a new beginning. Therefore, we need ever to be alert to discern the new modes of mission into which God will lead us in the days that lie ahead!
We live in an instant society. Microwaves, remote controls and the Internet give us what we want in seconds. So it’s not surprising that many Christians long for instant conversions, too. But this instant mentality can lead to insensitive encounters that may look more like drive-by shootings than heavenly appointments.

In our post-Christian, post-modern age, sharing the gospel takes time, ingenuity and incarnational love. This means living the way Jesus lived, forging authentic relationships and speaking the language of the culture. Students in the E. Stanley Jones School of World Mission and Evangelism are equipped to do just that. They learn to not only exegete the text, but exegete the context. By understanding the original message and the contemporary situation, ESJ students translate the unchanging gospel into words, images and forms of “church” that make sense to people. Whether it’s overseas, overlooking Times Square or over a picket fence, ESJ students are prepared to demonstrate and communicate the life-changing power of Jesus Christ.

So if you are interested in Christ-centered, incarnational evangelism (and keeping your neighbor’s teeth intact) call the admissions office today at 1-800-2-ASBURY or e-mail us at “admissions_office@ats.wilmore.ky.us”. Asbury Seminary: where sharing the gospel means sharing your life.

Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission: 1999

David B. Barrett and Todd M. Johnson

The table opposite is the fifteenth in an annual series describing statistics and trends in world mission. Christians in the twentieth century have had at their disposal a rich resource base of technology to proclaim the Good News to all of the earth’s inhabitants. Across the world today, for every 1,000 people there are, on average, 342 radios, 220 televisions, 118 telephones, 10 fax machines, and 81 computers. In 1900 no one could have dreamed of such a development. In the century since then, Christians have established 3,770 radio and TV stations with 584 million monthly listeners/viewers (lines 60, 62). As a result of the Christian use of technology, the number of evangelism-hours per year is nearly 50 times greater today than in 1900, and annual disciple-opportunities per capita have increased from 6 in 1900 to 77 today (line 68).

Unfair Distribution of Resources

This remarkable increase in evangelization has only served to accentuate an ongoing problem in Christian mission: grossly unfair distribution of resources (lines 68, 69). The number of individuals who have not heard the Gospel has increased over the century from 813 million to 1,530 million. This must be considered in light of the fact that today the world’s population is receiving enough evangelism to be evangelized 77 times over. Multitudes of people are getting far too much evangelism they do not need or want, while the rest of the world gets nothing at all.

A New Look at the Unevangelized

Our analysis of the plight of the unevangelized has been sharpened by a significant adjustment to our methodology this year. In

Notes

Methodological Notes on Table (referring to numbered lines on opposite page). Indented categories form part of, and are included in, unindented categories above them. Definitions of categories are as given and explained in World Christian Encyclopedia (WCE, 1982) with additional data and explanations as below. The analytic trichotomy of Worlds A, B, C was introduced in this column in the January 1991 issue. It is expounded in further detail in a handbook of global statistics, Our Globe and How to Reach It: Seeing the World Evangelized by A.D. 2000 and Beyond, ed. D. B. Barrett and T. M. Johnson (Birmingham, Ala.: New Hope, 1990). The global diagram series found in Our Globe is continued in a further series of global diagrams in the monthly A.D. 2000 Global Monitor, renamed A.D. 2050 Global Monitor (in 1995).


11. Widest definition: professing Christians plus secret believers, which equals affiliated (church members) plus unaffiliated Christians. World C is the world of all who individually are Christians. 21. Total of all non-Christs (sum of rows 12–20 above, plus adherents of other minor religions). This is also the same as World A (the unevangelized) plus World B (evangelized non-Christians).


27. World totals of current long-term trend for all confessions. (See Our Globe and How to Reach It, Global Diagram 5). The 1999 figure reflects the collapse of Communism but also the expansion of terrorism.

43. Monolithic organizations are described and analyzed in “The Fragmentation of Mission into 4,000 Freestanding, Standalone Monoliths,” International Journal of Frontier Missions (IJFM) 9, no. 1 (January 1992): 35–41.


51. Amounts embezzled (U.S. dollar equivalents, per year).

53. Total general-purpose computers and word processors owned by churches, agencies, groups, and individual Christians.

67–68. These measures are defined, derived, and analyzed in “Quantifying the Global Distribution of Evangelism and Evangelization,” IJFM, no. 2 (April 1992): 71–76.

69–70. Defined as in WCE, parts 3, 5, 6, and 9.

71. Grand total of all distinct plans and proposals for accomplishing world evangelization made by Christians since A.D. 30. (See Seven Hundred Plans to Evangelize the World: The Rise of a Global Evangelization Movement [Birmingham, Ala.: New Hope, 1988].)
### World Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1970</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>1,619,866,800</td>
<td>3,701,909,000</td>
<td>6,010,779,000</td>
<td>6,091,351,000</td>
<td>8,059,130,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban dwellers (urbanites)</td>
<td>232,694,900</td>
<td>1,349,293,000</td>
<td>2,823,795,000</td>
<td>2,889,855,000</td>
<td>4,736,200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural dwellers</td>
<td>1,387,191,900</td>
<td>2,352,616,000</td>
<td>3,186,984,000</td>
<td>3,201,496,000</td>
<td>3,302,050,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult population (over 15)</td>
<td>1,025,938,000</td>
<td>2,324,466,000</td>
<td>4,140,883,000</td>
<td>4,203,032,000</td>
<td>6,085,620,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literates</td>
<td>286,705,000</td>
<td>1,487,961,000</td>
<td>2,873,132,000</td>
<td>2,975,247,000</td>
<td>4,976,211,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonliterate</td>
<td>739,233,000</td>
<td>855,005,000</td>
<td>1,267,751,000</td>
<td>1,227,285,000</td>
<td>1,109,409,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### World Population by Religion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>1999</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nonreligious</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atheists</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New-Religionists</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affiliated church members</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marginal Christians</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentecostals / Charismatics</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthodox</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern America</td>
<td>38.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia (new UN definition)</td>
<td>39.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign-mission</td>
<td>42.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand-alone global monoliths</td>
<td>43.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christians' income, $</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parachurch and institutional income, $</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New commercial book titles per year</td>
<td>54.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian broadcasting</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian radio/TV stations</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total monthly listeners/viewers</td>
<td>61.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for Christian stations</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for secular stations</td>
<td>63.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian urban mission</td>
<td>66.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Christian megachurches</td>
<td>64.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New non-Christian urban dwellers per day</td>
<td>65.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Christians</td>
<td>66.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelism</td>
<td>69.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelism-hours per year</td>
<td>67.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciple-opportunities per capita per year</td>
<td>68.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World evangelization</td>
<td>69.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unevangelized population (=World A)</td>
<td>813,232,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unevangelized as % of world</td>
<td>50.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World evangelization plans since A.D. 30</td>
<td>50.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


- **Memberships by Ecclesiastical Bloc**
  - 32. Orthodox
  - 36. Asia (new UN definition)
  - 38. Latin America
  - 40. Oceania
  - 42. Foreign-mission
- **Christian Organizations**
  - 25.4
  - **Christian Literature**
  - 510
  - **Christian Broadcasting**
  - 60.0
  - **Christian Radio/TV stations**
  - 61.0
  - **Total monthly listeners/viewers**
  - 62.0
  - **for Christian stations**
  - 63.0
  - **for secular stations**
  - 64.0
  - **Christian Urban Mission**
  - 66.0
  - **Christian Evangelism**
  - 69.0
  - **Un-evangelized population (=World A)**
  - 813,232,000
  - **Un-evangelized as % of world**
  - 50.2
  - **World Evangelization Plans since A.D. 30**
  - 250

**January 1999**

| Page 25 |
The Legacy of David J. Bosch

J. Kevin Livingston

David Jacobus Bosch was born into an Afrikaner home on December 13, 1929, near the town of Kuruman in the Cape Province of South Africa. His parents were poor but proud farmers, “simple rural folk,” and loyal members of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC). From his earliest childhood, he received a “Christian Nationalist” education. Bosch stated how “at a very early stage already our minds were influenced by teachers and other cultural and political leaders to see the English as perpetrators of all kinds of evil and as oppressors of the Afrikaner. We read poems of Totius and Jan Celliers, we read and other cultural and political leaders to see the English as oppressors of others. After all, my own mother could tell stories about the concentration camp to which she was taken at the age of eight.”

If the English were the enemy to the young Bosch, blacks were essentially nonpersons. Blacks were hewers of wood and drawers of water, “a part of the scenery but hardly a part of the human community. . . . They belonged to the category of ‘farm implement’ rather than to the category ‘fellow-human beings.’”

In 1948, the same year that Bosch entered the University of Pretoria’s Teacher’s College, the pro-apartheid National Party was swept into power. For Afrikaners like Bosch, “it was to us like a dream come true when the Nationalist Party won that victory. We had no reservations whatsoever.” At the university, Bosch became involved with the Student Christian Association (SCA). While participating in an SCA-sponsored evangelistic outreach at a lakeside camp, he became convinced that God was calling him into the Christian ministry.

Upon returning to his parents’ farm that summer, Bosch organized a Sunday service for the black laborers. A large crowd of black workers gathered. What happened there can only be described as a conversion of sorts.

As I arrived, trembling, at the place of meeting, everybody came forward to shake hands with me! It was one of the most difficult moments in my life. When they saw my hesitation, they assured me that it was quite alright, that, in fact, it was normal for Christians to shake hands with one another! Only then did I discover that many of them were Christians: Methodists, Anglicans, members of the African Independent Churches, and so on. Previously I only thought of them as pagans and, at best, semi-savages.

Looking back now to that day, thirty years ago, I guess I can say that that was the beginning of a turning-point in my life. Not that, from then on, I accepted Blacks fully as human beings. Far from it. But something began to stir in me that day, and all I can say is that, by the grace of God, it has been growing ever since. Gradually, year by year, my horizons widened and I began to see people who were different from me with new eyes, always more and more clearly. I began to discover the simple, self-evident fact, that the things we have in common are more than the things which divide us.

Returning to the university, Bosch changed to the predivinity course and received two degrees: the M.A. in languages (Afrikaans, Dutch, German) and the B.D. in theological studies. During that time Bosch sensed a further calling to be a missionary and began to have doubts about the adequacy of the apartheid system. “In the early fifties, there were already signs that upset some of us, particularly . . . the removal of the Coloureds from the common voters roll. It was one of the first shocks; the honeymoon was over with the new National Party government.” By his final year in the B.D. program, when Bosch was chair of the SCA branch at Pretoria, he was asked to go to the University of Witwatersrand to discuss the moral legitimacy of apartheid. When pressed, Bosch realized he could no longer defend apartheid.

At Pretoria, Bosch was particularly affected by E. P. Groenewald, the professor of New Testament. Groenewald introduced Bosch to the writings of Oscar Cullmann, whose work would have profound influence on Bosch’s theological perspective. Upon graduation, Bosch undertook doctoral studies at the University of Basel under Cullmann. His thesis, “Die Heidenmission in der Zukunftsschau Jesu,” probed the link between mission and eschatology in the ministry of Jesus. Bosch also came under the influence of Karl Barth, whose impact would emerge only later, in Bosch’s systematic attempts at a theological foundation for mission.

While at Basel, Bosch distanced himself further from apartheid, although as yet he had no alternative paradigm to substitute in its place. He began to feel isolated from the Afrikaner mainstream. “By the time I arrived [in Switzerland], I had little doubt about the fact that apartheid was immoral and unacceptable. If I say I had by that time broken with the paradigm, one must take that with a grain of salt, because I had not replaced it with another paradigm. It was still very haltingly true of myself. In my early days as a student, my viewpoint was inarticulate, but it was a shift out of the laager.”

In 1957 Bosch returned to South Africa to begin work as a DRC missionary among the Xhosa people in the Transkei. For nine years Bosch labored as a missionary pastor in Madwaleni. His work consisted of village evangelism and church planting in a large, remote area. The country was rugged and accessible only by horse. Although those years had their disappointments, Bosch recalled that “these were our best years, absolutely wonderful.”

Bosch described his work of village evangelism in a large, remote area as “our best years, absolutely wonderful.”

J. Kevin Livingston is minister of St. Andrew’s Hespeler Presbyterian Church, Cambridge, Ontario, Canada. His doctoral thesis on David Bosch, A Missiology of the Road, is appearing as part of the American Society of Missiology Dissertation Series.
Frans Verstraelen is helpful here. He comments that “the missionary experience of David Bosch among and with the Xhosa in Transkei gave him precious insight into mission as service and partnership, as well as attitudes of empathy, humility, and modesty vis-à-vis people of cultural and religious backgrounds different from his own. . . . [W]hat is convincingly shown is his integrity as a human being and as a Christian, as a missionary, and as a missiologist.”

Second, Bosch’s missionary service helped him integrate theory and practice. By day he would be out among the people, visiting with them. By night he studied, trying to integrate his experience in the Transkei with the scholarly insights of various anthropologists, theologians, and missiologists. Through that study, his early theological convictions began to change considerably. Bosch identified this period of missionary activity as the decisive decade in his theological development. “I started with a very conservative theological framework and only moved to a wider approach towards the end of the 1960s.”

Although Bosch did not feel his missionary work at Madwaleni was finished, a back injury rendered him incapable of continuing with the rugged lifestyle that the job required. In 1967 he was asked to serve as senior lecturer in church history and missiology at the DRC’s Theological School in Decoligny, Transkei, training black pastors and evangelists. Bosch enjoyed teaching, but the limited scope of the work (four teachers, twenty students) impelled Bosch to seek other avenues of ministry beyond the little theological college.

First, he helped form the Transkei Council of Churches, serving as its first president. This council provided contact with a variety of church traditions, particularly Roman Catholics and Anglicans. Bosch’s growing ecumenical openness stood in sharp contrast to the ethos of the DRC, which was marked by a strict separation from other Christian bodies. As Bosch himself noted: “In the sixties, the Transkei was the only place in the Dutch Reformed Church setup where there were practical, structural, working relationships with people from other denominations. There was no other place where you had any practical expression of ecumenical contact.”

A second avenue for self-expression that Bosch developed during his Decoligny years was writing. During that period Bosch published his doctoral thesis and wrote three short books and numerous articles. He also edited five books for the fledgling South African Missiological Society. Bosch’s written work from the period, nearly all in Afrikaans, reflects two dominant themes: the missionary practice of the DRC and the biblical theology of mission.

Of special note was his Jesus, Die lydende Messias, en ons sendingmotief (Jesus, the suffering Messiah, and our missionary motive), in which Bosch applied his doctoral studies to the South African situation, arguing that the mission of Jesus can be understood only in terms of the suffering servant of the Lord, who, like a grain of wheat, must die in order to bear fruit. Jesus’ encounters with the Gentiles exemplified this ethos of servanthood, as did the experiences of the early church. It is with the same mind-set of costly servanthood that the modern church must understand its motive for mission as well.

The significance of his argument becomes apparent only when we consider the historical context in which it was written. The booklet appeared at a crossroads in DRC missions policy. The 1955 Tomlinson Commission report had uncovered statistical evidence of a large number of unevangelized blacks within South Africa. That news prompted DRC mission enthusiasts to promote an expanded evangelistic outreach among them. Bosch, however, discerned non-theological factors at work among some of the proponents. Numerous DRC missiologists and politicians linked the evangelization of blacks to the unfolding government policies of separate development and Afrikaner solidarity. Missionary work was therefore coupled to the defense of the volk and the preservation of a white-dominated South Africa. Bosch warned against such mixed motives in strong terms. “What is the end goal of mission with such a motivation? Is it to maintain the white people in South Africa—or is it the foundation of the church of Christ? . . . Is it to serve South Africa—or to serve God? Is it to hear together the sentimental voice of our own blood—or to hear together the last command of Christ? Have we, by this missionary motive, created a sheep in wolf’s clothes—or is it perhaps a wolf in sheep’s clothes?” Any missionary enthusiasm must be tempered with the realization that mission in Christ’s way is the way of the cross, the way of costly servanthood toward others. Anything less was simply religious propaganda and prone to ideological manipulation.

With writings like these, Bosch gave evidence of a departure from traditional Afrikaner sociopolitical perspectives and the DRC’s support of apartheid. Inevitably, these departures from Afrikaner “orthodoxy” began to isolate Bosch from the mainstream of the DRC. No longer a ware Afrikaner (true Afrikaner), Bosch was denied a position on the DRC theological faculty in Pretoria. Instead, in 1972 Bosch accepted the invitation to become professor of missiology at the University of South Africa (UNISA) in Pretoria. Bosch and his wife, Annemie, did so, however, with some trepidation. As he described it, “We moved back to Pretoria, very afraid of Afrikaners. Very afraid of white people. We were returning home, in a sense, but returning very different from what we were when we had left in the early 1950s.”

UNISA was unique among academic institutions in apartheid South Africa. It was an interracial university with staff and students from all ethnic groups within southern Africa. This was made possible because coursework at UNISA is done primarily by extension. UNISA was also unique because of its theology faculty, described as a “faculty-in-exile for anti-apartheid, anti-Broederbond DRC theologians.” Bosch’s move to UNISA placed him, officially at least, on the periphery of the DRC. Bosch served there as professor of mission and chair of the Department of Missiology from 1972 until his untimely death in an automobile accident in 1992. He supervised students at all academic levels from South Africa and beyond.

**Bosch the Scholar of Mission**

One dimension of Bosch’s legacy is his contribution to the academic study of Christian mission. Bosch was a theologian trained in the classic, European tradition. His facility in languages (he was conversant in Afrikaans, English, German, Dutch, French, and Xhosa) enabled him to act as a bridge builder between various theological and cultural constituencies.

As a “systematic missiologist,” Bosch was a prodigious

---

January 1999
writer. Over the course of thirty-two years, Bosch wrote six books, four book-length UNISA study guides, seven major pamphlets, and over 160 journal articles and contributions to books covering almost every aspect of mission theory and practice. He also edited seven books in English and Afrikaans. His most significant contribution was his massive 1992 work Transforming Mission. Bosch adopted the use of “paradigm theory” (as developed in science by Thomas Kuhn and in theology by Hans Küng) in an attempt “to demonstrate the extent to which the understanding and practice of mission have changed during almost twenty centuries of Christian missionary history.” Trans­forming Mission is a storehouse of historical and theological knowledge, described by Lesslie Newbigin as “a kind of Summa Missiologica” that “will surely be the indispensable foundation for the teaching of missiology for many years to come.” Notwithstanding the valid criticisms that Bosch failed to give adequate attention to the emerging theologians and perspectives of the church in the Two-Thirds World, Transforming Mission will surely remain his chief theological legacy.

Bosch was also active as an administrator and editor. He helped found the Southern African Missiological Society (SAMS), a multiracial and ecumenical fraternity of mission scholars, and he served as its general secretary from its formation in 1968 until his death. A major aspect of the work of the SAMS is the production of Missionalia, the society’s journal. From its inception in 1973 until 1992, Bosch served as its editor and contributed scores of editorials and book reviews. During his service as dean of the Faculty of Theology at UNISA, Bosch served as editor of its journal Theologia Evangelica.

Three other theological contributions deserve special mention. First, Bosch labored extensively for a deeper biblical foundation for mission. He lamented that the missionary movement had yet to develop a common understanding of how the Bible functions as the authority, basis, and frame of reference for the church’s missionary thought and practice. Bosch was critical of traditional approaches that sought to justify certain preconceived understandings of mission by “mining” for textual “nuggets,” proof texts, in the raw data of Scripture. Instead, Bosch advocated a rediscovery of the intrinsically missionary nature of the church, based on the witness of the Bible. The issue is not so much whether an adequate justification for mission can be found in the Bible but how the Bible can assist the church in living out its essentially missionary calling in the world. The Bible functions as a foundational source and standard by which the church understands its identity in Christ, as well as a source of paradigms and models for current missionary engagement with the world.

Second, Bosch sought to bring greater theological clarity to the meaning and relationship of mission and evangelism. Throughout the 1980s, Bosch’s involvement with conciliar and evangelical missionary conferences and consultations pushed him to deeper reflection. Any genuinely Christian understanding of mission must reflect the wholeness of the Gospel of Christ and the breadth of the biblical witness. “Mission,” Bosch wrote, is “more than and different from recruitment to our brand of religion; it is alerting people to the universal reign of God.” “Mission takes place where the church, in its total involvement with the world, bears its testimony in the form of a servant, with reference to unbelief, exploitation, discrimination and violence, but also with reference to salvation, healing, liberation, reconciliation and righteousness.”

Evangelism, Bosch held, is one essential dimension of that broad mission. Evangelism is the narrower concern to cross the frontier of unbelief with the announcement of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

How, then, do the two concepts relate? Although evangelism and mission are distinct entities, they are inseparably linked in creative tension; together they embody the church’s life in relation to the world. What is needed, Bosch urged, are “pan-Christians” who can “embrace both the depth and breadth of the Church’s mission and mandate, people who know that there is, by definition, no clash between our calling people to personal faith and commitment to Christ in the fellowship of the Church (evangelism) and our calling those thus committed to cross all kinds of frontiers in communicating salvation to the world (mission).”

Finally (and less well-known), Bosch sought to reflect on the meaning and communication of the Gospel in Africa. As early as 1972 Bosch showed an awareness and critical appreciation of the black theology movement, interacting with such leaders as Steve Biko, Manas Buthelezi, and James Cone. Through such publications as Het Evangelie in Afrikaans gewaad (The Gospel in African robes), “Missionary Theology in Africa,” and “The Problem of Evil in Africa: A Survey of African Views of Witchcraft and the Response of the Christian Church,” Bosch revealed a surprisingly comprehensive familiarity with African theologians and movements.

Yet his contextual orientation remained firmly Western, and northern European in particular. Frans Verstraalen has noted that Bosch had difficulty in giving “context” a central place in his theologizing because he remained in the category of “idealist” theologians who theologize from above rather than from below.

Bosch the Ecumenical Personality

It would be inadequate, however, to understand Bosch only in terms of his academic accomplishments. He was a person of the church. The church was central to his thought. A genuine concern for its unity and witness, as well as a frank acknowledgment of its vulnerability and failures, was never far from Bosch’s mind.

At the international level, this churchly concern led Bosch to devote considerable energy to overcoming the so-called evangelical-ecumenical debate in mission. His 1980 book Witness to the World was, in large part, an attempt to describe this debilitating fracture in modern Protestantism and its missionary outreach and to propose a way forward.

Bosch was an active participant in both the ecumenical and evangelical communities and attended most of their international gatherings—from evangelical conferences in Lausanne and Pattaya to WCC-related gatherings in Melbourne and San Antonio (where he served as a section leader). Bosch was a main speaker at the 1982 Grand Rapids Consultation on the Relationship Between Evangelism and Social Responsibility, cosponsored by the Lausanne Committee and the World Evangelical Fellowship. He helped draft the influential “Transformation”
statement at the WEF-sponsored Wheaton conference in 1983 on the nature and mission of the church. He participated in the WCC’s 1987 Consultation on Evangelism in Stuttgart, where he substantially wrote the consultation’s statement on evangelism.

Both in print and in practice, Bosch labored to clarify the fundamental issues of theological conflict between the evangelical and the ecumenical streams of the world missionary movement. He deeply believed that both sides had been impoverished by ignoring the concerns of the other. As a result, both had failed to develop a genuinely integral theology of mission for our era. Although the evangelical-ecumenical tension is not the only lens through which to analyze the dynamics of mission today, and although Bosch was increasingly conscious of the missiological contribution of non-Western theologians, it remains true that the evangelical-ecumenical tension insidiously hinders the life and health of the church—in both the First and the Two-Thirds Worlds!—and he sought to address this conflict.

Readers’ Response

To the Editor:

I have read the review by James Grayson of my book Christ and Caesar in Modern Korea: A History of Christianity and Politics (October 1998). The reviewer writes that the book does not introduce “facts not already known and readily available elsewhere.” I would like to ask him what books and resources are “readily available” that deal with the history of Christian mission and the church with political development of modern Korea? He also says the book “lacks any critical analysis,” and there is no “critical interpretation of the events offered.” These statements are not only erroneous but irresponsible. The book usually devotes the first and last paragraphs of each chapter to historical analysis and interpretations. My interpretations and analysis may not be to his liking, but he cannot say that the book does not have historical analysis and critical interpretations. In fact, the four scholars who reviewed the manuscript for the press commented that it contained too strong critical interpretations and analysis, especially against the military regimes of Generals Park Chung Hee, Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae Woo, and I had to make extensive revisions.

Finally, the reviewer quotes my statement on page one of the book that says, “Yi family adopted Neo-Confucianism as a political ideology and system of rule that kept Korea in total isolation,” and in sweeping generalization without any explanation he says this statement is “inaccurate.” Anyone who has some elementary knowledge of Korean history knows that the Yi dynasty that took over the Koryo dynasty of strong Buddhist culture adopted Neo-Confucianism and allied only with the Confucian “Big Brother Country” of China and kept Korea in isolation except for limited contacts with Japan, from 1392 to the latter part of the nineteenth century, shortly before the demise of the Yi dynasty. Here again I ask the reviewer to explain why the above-quoted statement is “inaccurate.”

Wi Jo Kang
Wartburg Theological Seminary
Dubuque, Iowa

Reviewer’s Reply:

I have three points to make about Prof. Kang’s comments on my review. First, as his bibliography makes quite clear, the material introduced in this book is not original. The sources which he uses are readily available to the reader. As I said in the review, this is not a major problem as many works use the same raw material. Second, what is a serious problem is that the book lacks any critical analysis of the material presented. Interpretation is the most important aspect of any historical work. Rather than simply recording a sequence of historical events, a writer should provide an interpretative analysis of the events described. I read this work wondering what underlying themes the author discerned in the Korean Christian response to the events which he outlined. Unfortunately there is very little interpretation or critical analysis. I should like to point out that the author seems to confuse “opinions” with “critical analysis.” His opinions on the military regimes of the last three decades, I suspect, are very little different from my own. But opinions are not substitutes for analysis. Third, and finally, statements such as those Prof. Kang has made about the Choson period and the use of Confucian philosophy as the basis of state policy are simply too sweeping. The royal family did not make Confucianism the state philosophy, the oligarchic government did. Confucianism was adopted to reform what was perceived to be the corruption of the late Koryo period and for the purpose of creating an ideal—Confucian—society. Korea was not in total isolation—ever. From the middle of the dynasty, following the seventeenth century invasions of the Manchus, a policy of seclusion was pursued. Even then there continued to be regular and frequent contacts with neighboring states.

James H. Grayson
Centre for Korean Studies
University of Sheffield
Sheffield, England

Bosch the South African

Bosch’s concern for the reign of God and the credibility of the church was lived out most fully, however, in his own homeland of South Africa. He agonized over the South African situation and the challenge the apartheid system represented to the integrity of the Gospel and the mission of the church. Telling evidence of Bosch’s concern was his refusal to leave. Bosch was twice offered the prestigious chair of mission and ecumenics at Princeton Theological Seminary, and twice he made the difficult decision to refuse the offer, believing that he could not leave South Africa during such a dangerous and historic time in its history. He also remained a faithful member of the DRC, despite his own marginalization within that community for many years.

Over the years Bosch’s criticism of apartheid and his own church’s justification of it became more strident. His critique tried to expose the ideological nature of apartheid and the
Afrikaner civil religion in which it was embedded. The heart of the matter, according to Bosch, was that the Afrikaner people were prisoners of their own history, afraid of the future. The ideological nature of apartheid seemingly blinded most Afrikaners to any future besides the one held out by the National Party. Yet in this desperate situation, Christians must remain hopeful, for it is not fate that controls the destiny of South Africa but the Lord of history.

In his critique of apartheid, Bosch also emphasized the cruciality of ecclesiology. Drawing from Reformed and Anabaptist sources, he urged the church in South Africa to become an "alternative community." The church is set apart from the world and called to be a church without privileges, a servant community that must embody the radical lifestyle of Christ's new community. Yet the Christian community's called-out existence is for the sake of the world. As Bosch put it: "The church has tremendous significance for society precisely because it [exists] as a uniquely separate community. . . . We have to work consistently for the renewal of the church—the alternative community—and precisely in that way at the renewal of society." Only when they worked for the renewal and unity of the church, and lived out the implications of their faith in the world, Bosch maintained, could South African Christians effectively challenge the values and standards of the apartheid society around them. The church must furnish an alternative vision of reality, of life in the kingdom of God.

The concept of the church as alternative community (AC) is grounded in the reconciling work of Christ. On the cross, Jesus reconciled the world to God, breaking down all barriers that divide humankind. Thus all differences among persons (racial, economic, linguistic, cultural, religious), while still real, have been relativized in Christ. It is thus wrong, even heretical, to divide the one church of Jesus Christ by ascribing "an unduly high value to racial and cultural distinctiveness," for this would raise the value of one's national identity above one's identity in Christ. Yet this is exactly what the white Reformed churches of South Africa had done and, as such, were perpetrating "nothing but a heresy." Instead of polarizing society by highlighting its racial, ethnic, social, or economic distinctions, the mission of the church is to be an agent of reconciliation and a witness to the unity won for the world in Christ.

Bosch helped create numerous forums to live out this vision. The 1979 South African Christian Leadership Assembly (SACLA), gathering together over 5,000 Christians from every ecclesiastical and political perspective, provided a concrete embodiment of the AC concept. Bosch was a major impetus behind the event, serving as chair of the executive committee and delivering four plenary addresses. He was a leading proponent of the 1982 Ope brief (Open letter) to the Dutch Reformed Church, signed by 123 DRC pastors and theologians, which publicly condemned apartheid and urged the DRC to pursue visible unity across the racial divide with its black sister churches. In 1985, following the declaration of the state of emergency by the South African government, Bosch became involved in the National Initiative for Reconciliation, a movement begun by Michael Cassidy of Africa Enterprise to continue the SACLA spirit in the midst of rising tension and bloodshed. For a time Bosch served as its national chairman.

For Bosch the AC concept served as a distinctly Christian socioethical response to the struggle for social justice in South Africa. The concrete political implications of the church as alternative community remained vague, however—a point on which Bosch has been criticized most notably by Anthony Balcomb and Christopher Sugden. Likewise, Bosch was criticized for remaining a part of the DRC and for emphasizing reconciliation instead of liberation in the struggle for justice in South Africa. Although not aimed at Bosch in particular, the famous Kairos Document of 1985 criticized "Church Theology" because of its superficial talk about reconciliation and nonviolence. In the interests of social liberation, Kairos rejected the call for the church to be a reconciling "alternative community."

With the privilege of hindsight, however, one could argue that the relatively nonviolent transformation we have witnessed in South Africa during the last decade has come precisely because of people like David Bosch. He remained within the DRC out of a prophetic desire to speak the truth of the Gospel to the Afrikaner people from a position of solidarity with them—even in their sin! Fellow South African theologian John de Gruchy has affirmed that in the service of social transformation, the symbols of "reconciliation" and "liberation" did not necessarily have to collide. They had the power to be complementary helpmates in the quest for justice in South Africa. After comparing and contrasting the Kairos Declaration and the National Initiative for Reconciliation Statement, de Gruchy summarized his conclusions as follows:

1. In the struggle for a just society, the church cannot be neutral, but there are different, complementary strategies.
2. The church must be the church, but this does not mean that it has its own political program alongside that of the struggle for liberation. It must participate in critical solidarity.
3. The gospel of reconciliation and liberation, as well as the political strategies of negotiation and confrontation, are not antithetical but two sides of the same coin.
4. The suffering witness of the cross, and therefore non-violent redemptive action, remains the paradigm for the Christian, even though there is an honored Christian tradition which supports the idea of a just revolution.

From this perspective, Bosch's approach—focusing as he did on the church as the alternative community, costly reconciliation, and the role of suffering witness in Christian discipleship—can be affirmed as an essential contribution to South Africa as it struggles to be a society of justice and peace. In life and in death, David Bosch provided an authentic martyrria—a witness to the world that was profoundly evangelistic.

Notes
1. The biographical data that follows, including unattributed quotations, is taken from a personal interview of Bosch by the author on September 8, 1986.
3. Ibid., p. 15.
4. Ibid.
5. In 1947 Groenewald became the first person to work out a "scriptural foundation" for apartheid. He was also a champion of the ecumenical movement and a staunch defender of DRC participation in the fledgling World Council of Churches.


12. For a complete bibliography of Bosch’s published and unpublished work, see my A Missiology of the Road: The Theology of Mission and Evangelism in the Writings of David J. Bosch (Lanham, Md.: Univ. Press of America, forthcoming).


14. This endorsement is found on the back cover of the paperback version of Transforming Mission.

15. See the essays by Christopher Sugden and Frans Verstraen in Mission in Bold Humility, and the foreword to Norman Thomas, Classic Texts in Mission and World Christianity: A Reader’s Companion to David Bosch’s Transforming Mission (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1995).


22. For an excellent summary and critique of Bosch’s missiological involvement with Africa, see Verstraen, “Africa in David Bosch’s Missiology,” pp. 8–39.


27. Emilio Castro highlights Bosch as an “ecumenical personality” in his essay in Mission in Bold Humility, pp. 162–66.

28. Bosch has commented: “In 1978, when I was writing Witness to the World, the evangelical-ecumenical issue was uppermost in my mind. . . . In my case, it was existential. I had this struggle going on in my own theological mind and my own existential heart. It wasn’t simply an attempt to balance the two. I was looking for a way forward, beyond both of them.”


32. Personal correspondence with the author, February 24, 1986.


37. Ibid., p. 9.

38. “Nothing but a Heresy,” in Apartheid Is a Heresy, ed. John de Gruchy and Charles Villa-Vicencio ( Cape Town: David Phillip; Guildford:...
39. See the moving portrayal of Bosch at SACLA in Willem Saayman’s “David Bosch, the South African,” in Mission in Bold Humility, pp. 1–2.
40. See David Bosch, Adrio König, and Willem Nicol, Perspektief op die ope brief (Kaapstad: Human & Rousseau, 1982).

Bibliography

Selected Works by Bosch

1982 The Church as the Alternative Community. Potchefstroom: Instituut vir Reformatoriese Studie.

20 “Classic” Bosch Essays

1979 “Towards True Mutuality: Exchanging the Same Commodities or Supplementing Each Others’ Needs?” Missiology 6, no. 3 (July): 284–96.

Selected Works on Bosch

Saayman, Willem, and Klippies Kritzinger, eds. Mission in Bold Humility: David Bosch’s Work Considered. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1996. (Thirteen essays; the contributions by Verstraalen and Sugden are especially noteworthy.)
The Legacy of Vincent Lebbe

Jean-Paul Wiest

“I will go to China and die a martyr’s death,” declared the eleven-year-old Belgian boy upon finishing reading the biography of the missionary martyr Jean Gabriel Perboyre. When he passed away in Chongqing in 1940, Vincent Lebbe fulfilled the promise he had made to himself some fifty years earlier. He dedicated his entire adulthood to the people and to the Catholic Church of China, becoming Chinese in dress, language, and loyalty and embracing their struggles, joys, and pains. He became a perfect example of what Bishop Fulton Sheen called a “dry martyr.” His martyrdom at the hands of persecutors was not quick and violent but lasted almost forty years as he suffered many blows from friends and foes for courageously denouncing injustice in the church and the civil society of China.

Today Vincent Lebbe (pronounced with the final e silent) is far from being a household name—even in Roman Catholic circles—and yet he is one of the foremost figures of modern Catholicism. Of all the things that could be said about Vincent Lebbe, his spirituality, his total identification with the Chinese people, his stand for justice, and his creativity in fostering new forms of apostolate constitute the most significant facets of his legacy.

Spirituality

The future missionary to China was born on August 19, 1877, in Ghent, Belgium, and was baptized under the name of Frédéric. Freddy, as he was known to his family, was the firstborn of seven children. His mother, an English convert of French descent, was a deeply spiritual woman who had considered a religious vocation. His father, a lawyer, possessed a keen sense of justice and integrity. Their generosity to the poor, their stand for justice, their kindness and concern for each other and for their children, and their steady practice of prayer reflected the strength of their inner convictions. Lebbe learned from his parents to live by the Beatitudes, and he never relented. In fact, his dedication to the poor and the oppressed, his unflinching stand for justice, his abnegation and submission to God’s will, and his constant and serene joy that so impressed those who met him, were strongly anchored in the spirit of the Beatitudes.

As already alluded to, the young Lebbe was so impressed by the biography of Jean Gabriel Perboyre that, on the day of his confirmation, he took the name of Vincent to signify his resolution to emulate the Vincentian missionary. It is therefore not surprising to see him, in November 1895, journeying to Pari to enter St. Lazare, the seminary of the Congregation of the Mission, whose priests are commonly called Vincentians, or Lazarists. Upon arriving at the seminary, Lebbe identified himself by his confirmation name and thenceforth, except to his immediate family, became known to Westerners as Vincent Lebbe.

During his first two years of formation, the young novice gained a deep appreciation for the founder of the Lazarists, St. Vincent de Paul, and decided to emulate him. From his name-sake, who used to say that charity that does not express itself in action is a sham, Lebbe learned to stay in tune with his time, to identify problems, and to come up with solutions and remedies. While still in the seminary he wrote: “To be effective, we have to stay in tune with our time, adapt to its customs, ideas and manners of expression. . . . We must enter in its movement not as counterforce, but rather to guide this world according to the light of faith and sound reason.” On Chinese soil, Vincent Lebbe was to pay dearly for translating those brave words into deeds, which turned his superiors and many foreign missionaries against him.

At St. Lazare, Lebbe found in Anthony Cotta, an Egyptian seminarian a few years his senior, a kindred spirit who shared his ideals. Cotta, who possessed a deep appreciation for the writings of St. Paul, greatly contributed to the laying of a scriptural underpinning to Lebbe’s missionary spirituality. The apostolic interests, which Perboyre had been the first to arouse, combined with the fire and zeal of St. Paul and the calm and deliberate dedication of St. Vincent de Paul to shape Lebbe’s approach to missionary life. The bonds of friendship between Cotta and Lebbe grew even stronger over the years and sustained them through the many tribulations they brought on themselves by their staunch advocacy of the Chinese against the elitist mentality prevailing in the missionary community.

In the spring of 1898 Lebbe, then a first-year philosophy student, began his first serious and prolonged encounter with the mystery of the cross when his health started to deteriorate. Within two years, he became almost an invalid, suffering from terrible bouts of headaches and afflicted with an eye illness that rendered him at times unable to read. The following September, his hopes of going to China seemed crushed when his superiors informed him that his sickly condition disqualified him for the missions. Instead, he had been slated to become a professor in one of their seminaries of Europe and North America. Disappointed but abiding by what he considered to be the will of God, Lebbe let go of his original resolve. “Clinging to nothing, nothing except God,” he traveled to the Vincentian college in Rome to further his theological studies. This was just a rehearsal for the many times in his life when he would again be forced to put aside plans or abandon promising apostolates, for as sincere as they might have been, they were still too much his choice and could not become God’s work until he had renounced them. Then God never failed to take over.

In this first instance, God took charge when Bishop Alphonse Favier, vicar apostolic of Beijing, came to Rome to report on the recent tragic events of the Boxer uprising. Lebbe informed the bishop of his desire to be a missionary in China, despite his poor health. Favier was so moved by Lebbe’s fiery enthusiasm that he convinced the Vincentian authorities in Paris to let the ailing

Jean-Paul Wiest is Research Director of the Center for Mission Research and Study at Maryknoll, New York. His primary field of research is the Roman Catholic Church in China, with an emphasis on Sino-Western cultural and religious interactions. His earlier article in this series was “The Legacy of Francis X. Ford, M.M.” (July 1988).
only five months after he had been told to renounce his dream, Lebbe sailed out of Marseilles for China.

When summer arrived, the sickly newcomer had managed to complete his theological studies at the Vincentian seminary in Beijing. But he knew that his superiors would not ordain him if his health did not show signs of improvement. Lebbe then made a novena to Jean Gabriel Perboyre, asking to be cured. By the end of the nine days of prayer and fasting, his request had been granted. Coincidence or not, he was ordained priest on October 28, 1901, on the feast of St. Jude, the patron saint of lost causes. For the rest of his life, Lebbe suffered occasional headaches, but his eyes never bothered him again.

Thirty years later, a friend asked him what spiritual program he would recommend for missionaries. Lebbe replied that there was only one program, the same for all Christians, and that it consisted in “actualizing the Gospel in one’s own life without delay.” Drawing on a spiritual experience that had begun long before he set foot on Chinese soil, he then explained that this program could be achieved only through total renunciation, true charity, and constant joy: “Complete Renunciation, Caritas non ficta, Gaudete semper. . . . Note well that all the power of the program resides in the three words italicized. . . . You will tell me that this is nothing very original, but I believe it is enough to enable you to become a saint. Try sincerely and you will soon see that the whole Gospel is there.”

**Chinese Among the Chinese**

For the most part, the Catholic missionaries who were in China at the turn of the twentieth century preached the Gospel with great zeal, loved their converts, and contributed to their welfare without much thought of self. Yet their psychological attitude toward the Chinese was radically different from the one displayed a few centuries earlier by Matteo Ricci and his companions. The industrial age had given Europe a sense of superiority and arrogance that most missionaries carried with them unconsciously. They looked down on the Chinese civilization and its people as inferior, odious, and full of corruption; they treated the Christians as children and kept the Chinese clergy in subordinate positions. They also relied heavily on the protection and interventions of the Western powers, France in particular, to preach their Christian faith. Some realized the harm being done but could not see a way out, taking refuge in the belief that God someday would take care of it. Lebbe was among the very few who, by their lifestyles, words, and deeds, dared to call for and bring about changes.

Just before his ordination, Lebbe made it clear in a letter to one of his brothers that he had cast all his life on the side of the Chinese so as to become one of them: “I am Chinese with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my strength. China is my lot and my country, and the Chinese are my brothers.” To signify this transformation, he signed his letter with his Chinese name, Lei Ming-yuan, “The Thunder Rolling in the Distance”—a thunder he would indeed be to the foreign missionary community of China.

Lebbe went on to be “all things to all men,” becoming a Chinese among Chinese (Chinois avec les Chinois). From the time he arrived in China, he set himself apart from most missionaries by donning the cotton dress worn by Chinese priests and seminarians instead of the Western-style cassock. He even shaved his head and wore a long Chinese pigtail until the Chinese republic of 1912 abolished this custom imposed by the Manchu dynasty. He moved among the ordinary people just like one of them, refusing to travel on horseback, in sedan chair, or inrickshaw as most other missionaries did. And yet Lebbe was not one to let go of practical means of transportation when he saw one that would greatly facilitate his ministry without appearing ostentatious. Whether it was just for a few minutes’ ride in town or a long journey in the countryside, he and his bicycle became a familiar sight at a time when this mode of locomotion was still very rare in China.

Endowed with good memory and musical sense, he acquired a good command of the spoken language and eventually became one of the best foreign-born Chinese speakers of his time. With his sight restored, he developed the habit of setting time aside to read Chinese classics and to practice writing with a paintbrush. He soon used his mastery of the language not only to perform traditional ministries of instructing catechumens and visiting the poor and the sick but also to launch new ways of reaching Christians and non-Christians. In 1911, for instance, in Tianjin, Lebbe thought of opening public lecture halls as a way of getting into the life of the city and bringing the church before the public. Talks on religion were given every evening by Lebbe, Chinese priests, and educated laypersons. These halls, soon to number eight, also provided a forum for discussing contemporary social and moral questions in the light of the Gospel, and thereby for introducing Christ to the Chinese people. Conversions, especially among intellectuals, multiplied at the rate of one hundred a month in some halls. Lebbe’s popularity was such that, by 1914, he was invited to speak in the largest non-Catholic public halls in front of several thousand Chinese, including high officials of the city. The following year when Japan handed China a note containing twenty-one demands, compliance with which would have effectively turned the country into a vassal state, Lebbe delivered several addresses on the love of one’s own country. One lecture in particular, entitled “Save the Country,” which described both what China needed as a country and the Christian teaching about salvation, was so well received that some thirty thousand copies were sold on the streets.

Lebbe also utilized his command of the language in pioneering the use of news media by the Catholic Church. In 1912, with the help of his friend and well-known literary figure Ying Lianzhi, he began publishing Guang Yi Lu (The royal way), the first Chinese Catholic weekly. The paper, which soon sold in most Catholic vicariates, contained not only news about Christian activities all over China but also articles by Lebbe meant to enlighten Catholics about their duties and responsibilities as citizens of the new Chinese republic. Three years later, encouraged by the success of Guang Yi Lu, Lebbe chose October 10, the Chinese national day, to launch the first Chinese Catholic daily, entitled Yi Sih Pao (The social welfare). The newspaper was an instant success among the Chinese, Christians and non-Christians alike, because of the accuracy of its news and its independent outlook. Within three months, it became the leading daily in northern China.

---

**Lebbe’s spiritual program for missionaries was “total renunciation, true charity, and constant joy.”**
The public hall lectures and the Catholic newspapers were only two among the many ways Lebbe encouraged lay apostolate. In 1909 he and a small group of missionaries in Tianjin established the Association for the Propagation of the Faith, which became the nucleus that eventually led to the formation of a nationwide Catholic Action movement.

In 1928 Lebbe was granted one of his dearest wishes when he received Chinese citizenship. Five years later, taking one more step toward his total assimilation with the Chinese, he left the Vincentians to join the Little Brothers of St. John the Baptist, a native congregation he had recently founded. When the war against the Japanese invaders intensified, Lebbe embraced China's cause unreservedly and did not hesitate to demonstrate in deeds his patriotism as a Catholic Chinese citizen. He and the Little Brothers organized trained teams of nurses and stretcher bearers who were sent out on the battlefields to rescue the wounded. Within a few years, the organization was twenty thousand men strong.

In March 1940 Lebbe fell victim to renewed tensions between the Chinese Nationalists and Communists. By then, hardships had taken their toll on him. His body was that of an old man full of arthritis and feverish with "malaria. During a six-week detention by the Communists, his health deteriorated rapidly. As his internal organs began to fail, his face turned yellow and waxy, and he would joke, "Look, I'm finally yellow, I'm absolutely Chinese!" Two months after his release, on June 24, 1940, the feasts of St. John the Baptist and Blessed Jean Gabriel Perboyre, he died surrounded by Chinese friends. Much more than his mastery of the Chinese language and the way he dressed, it was his spirituality that enabled him to empty himself of his foreignness and identify until his last breath with everything Chinese.

Passion for Justice

From childhood, Lebbe strove to live up to the words of the Sermon on the Mount. Among all the Beatitudes, "Blessed are those who are persecuted for upholding justice" (Matt. 5:10) is the one that first comes to mind when considering his missionary career. "I would be ready to die rather than go on living simply neutral, not daring to call good and evil what they are, not being able to be wholeheartedly on the side of the oppressed, even if I were the only person of my kind in the world, simply to give an example of Christian indignation."9

For denouncing all sorts of injustices, Lebbe endured the pains of isolation and misunderstanding, ostracism and exile. In fact, the word "justice" and its synonyms are the terms appearing most frequently in his correspondence. He was especially relentless in saying that as long as foreigners remained in control, the Catholic Church in China would never prosper. To become Chinese, the church had to have its own Chinese leadership. This was the main thrust of his February encyclical Rerum ecclesiae, and the June letter Ad... (continued)

January 1999 35
ipsis pontificatus primordiis made it clear that China was his primary target. On October 28, 1926, the pope took the major step of ordaining six Chinese bishops, three of whom had been recommended by Lebbe. Lebbe was present at the ceremony, which took place in St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his own ordination. A few months later, Lebbe was on his way back to China to serve under newly ordained Bishop Sun Dezhen. Although the decolonization of the Chinese church was to remain a slow and difficult process, it had reached the point of no return.

Founder of Societies

For Lebbe, the establishment of a native hierarchy was just one of the many steps that needed to be taken to bring about a Catholic Church rooted in the culture and society of China. Responding to the call of Rerum ecclesiae to consider the advantage of founding new congregations that would correspond better to the genius, character, and needs of different countries, he started two Chinese religious orders in 1928—one for men, called the Little Brothers of St. John the Baptist, the other for women, called the Little Sisters of St. Theresa of the Child Jesus. These men and women, once trained according to the strictest rules of the Trappist and Carmelite traditions, were sent in small groups to preach the Gospel while at the same time earning a living from the fruit of their hands. Their task and challenge was to contribute to the social renovation of China.

Lebbe was also committed to the training of lay Christians who would put faith and education to the service of the nation. With this in mind, he opened lecture halls and helped found the Catholic Action in China; he worked closely with prominent Catholic laymen such as Ying Lianzhi and Ma Xiangpo and

---

U.S. Catholic Overseas Mission:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Africa</th>
<th>Near East</th>
<th>Far East</th>
<th>Oceania</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>North America</th>
<th>Caribbean</th>
<th>Central America</th>
<th>South America</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>781</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>986</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>991</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>981</td>
<td>6726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>967</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>2232</td>
<td>846</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>1056</td>
<td>1796</td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>7146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>1184</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>2453</td>
<td>953</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>1079</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>2386</td>
<td>9303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>1157</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>2470</td>
<td>1027</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>1198</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>2455</td>
<td>9655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>1141</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>2137</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>1067</td>
<td>2080</td>
<td>8373</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>1107</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1955</td>
<td>826</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>819</td>
<td>1889</td>
<td>7656</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>1229</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>811</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>796</td>
<td>1783</td>
<td>7691</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>1121</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1845</td>
<td>883</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>757</td>
<td>1716</td>
<td>7418</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>1065</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>1814</td>
<td>808</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>1669</td>
<td>7148</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>1042</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>1757</td>
<td>795</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>1618</td>
<td>7010</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>1003</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>1659</td>
<td>784</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>1591</td>
<td>6760</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>966</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>1601</td>
<td>769</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>1537</td>
<td>6601</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>923</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1562</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>562</td>
<td>1545</td>
<td>6455</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>909</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1576</td>
<td>711</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>1556</td>
<td>6393</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>946</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1529</td>
<td>696</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>1535</td>
<td>6324</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>956</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>1501</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>522</td>
<td>1511</td>
<td>6245</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>990</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>1468</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>1533</td>
<td>6246</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>967</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>1420</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>1498</td>
<td>6134</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>986</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>1366</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1441</td>
<td>6056</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>944</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>1356</td>
<td>631</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>1461</td>
<td>6037</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>971</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>1335</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>1485</td>
<td>6073</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>984</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>1332</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>1491</td>
<td>6063</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>968</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1299</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>1475</td>
<td>6001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>945</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>1253</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>1413</td>
<td>5744</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>933</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1198</td>
<td>546</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>453</td>
<td>1350</td>
<td>5595</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>949</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1163</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>431</td>
<td>1286</td>
<td>5467</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Total number of missionaries for these years is accurate. Due to errors in accounting by region, however, figures do not add up to the total indicated.
2. Figures for Near East and Far East are combined; figures for Central and South America are combined.

supported their efforts to open a Catholic university; and during his 1920–27 European exile, he organized the Chinese Catholic Youth Association for Chinese studying abroad.

In 1927, just before returning to China, Lebbe also inspired the foundation of two unique groups of foreign missionaries. The Society of the Auxiliaries of the Missions offered an avenue for secular priests from Europe who, like Lebbe, desired to put themselves totally at the service of native bishops in newly established ecclesiastical jurisdictions. They became living signs of a relationship between sister churches based on equality, sharing, and service to one another and were the forerunners of the *Fidei donum* priests.2 The Lay Auxiliaries of the Missions was the feminine counterpart to the priests of the Society of the Auxiliaries of the Missions. They too were a sign of things to come because they were established as a lay missionary group at a time when religious life was still the norm for most women organizations sanctioned by the Catholic Church. These Lay Auxiliaries opened the way for the development and diversification of lay missionary groups among men and women in the Catholic Church some two decades later.3

**Conclusion**

The legacy of Vincent Lebbe is that of a life uncompromisingly dedicated to the growth of the local church of China. Long before the word “inculturation” was coined, his whole missionary life was a testimony to the spirit and the meaning encompassed by that word.

His distinct spirituality of “total renunciation, true charity, and constant joy”4 gave him the freedom of being bold and challenging to others while nonetheless remaining humble and obedient. He thereby achieved a high degree of effectiveness and persuasion.

His sensitivity to Chinese culture at least equaled if not surpassed that of Matteo Ricci. He completely identified with his chosen people, becoming one of them, a Chinese among Chinese.

His stand against injustice and his actions to bring about change were like claps of thunder that trigger the life-giving rain: they shook the foreign missionary community in China and began a process of renewal within the entire Catholic Church.

In the very long run, Lebbe paved the way for the 1939 revocation of the condemnation of the Chinese rites, the full recognition of a Chinese local Catholic Church in 1946, and much more. Truly enough, Cardinal Léon-Joseph Suenens, one of the major figures of the Vatican II council, described Lebbe as “the precursor of what were to become the major orientations of the council.”5

**Notes**

1. This Catholic religious community, founded in 1625 by St.Vincent de Paul, had as its first objective the home mission in the French countryside. Later, however, overseas missionary work became increasingly important, until by the nineteenth century it was the congregation’s chief activity.


3. Ibid., May 1, 1900, p. 30.

4. Ibid., December 25, 1899, p. 23; the sentiment is restated August 26, 1931, p. 276.

5. Ibid., August 26, 1931, pp. 278, 280.


8. Ibid., p. 318.


10. Ibid., September 18, 1917, pp. 153–54. When Lebbe wrote this letter, the only Chinese bishop had been Lo Wenzao, ordained in 1685.


12. On April 21, 1957, Pope Pius XII issued the encyclical *Fidei donum* (Gift of faith), in which he called for all bishops to become personally involved in the global missionary activity of the church. He specifically encouraged Western bishops to share the “gift of faith” by making some of their diocesan priests available for a period of time to African bishops. This sharing of priests between dioceses occurs now on a worldwide scale.

13. The Holy See’s early calls for the development of a lay mission apostolate can be traced back to Pope Pius XII’s encyclicals *Evangelii praecores* (June 1951) and *Fidei donum* (April 1957). Pope John XXIII followed suit with his encyclical *Principes pastorum* (November 1959) and his call for papal lay volunteers to Latin America in June 1960.


**Selected Bibliography**

**Material Written by Vincent Lebbe**

1930  *En Chine, il y a du nouveau*. Liége: La Pensée Catholique.


**Major Material Written About Vincent Lebbe**


Book Reviews

The Kingdom of Character: The Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions (1886-1926).


The End of a Crusade: The Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions and the Great War.


In the summer of 1886, one hundred college men at a Bible conference pledged themselves to foreign missionary service. The "Mount Herman 100" became the nucleus of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions (SVM), which by 1906 had produced about one-third of the European and American Protestant missionaries then serving. Led by missionary giants John Mott, Robert Speer, Robert Wilder, and Sherwood Eddy, the SVM dominated young people's organizations for missions until the 1920s when it began to decline in influence.

The Student Volunteer Movement ranks with the Halle pietists and Loyola's early Jesuits as one of the great student missionary movements in history. Scholars and general missions enthusiasts will therefore welcome two recent books on the SVM by Michael Parker and Nathan Showalter. Both books began as doctoral dissertations and are published in scholarly series: Showalter's in the ATLA Monograph Series, and Parker's in the new ASM dissertation series. Parker's is the broader of the two because it gives the general history of the movement from its founding until the beginning of the decline. Showalter's monograph treats in depth the impact of World War I on the SVM. The books offer compatible interpretations of the movement, as they both perceive a darker picture of the impact of war, attributing the splintering of the movement to student cynicism and disillusionment. He also portrays the leadership of the SVM as out-of-touch and ineffectual proponents of a naive American optimism. Of the two studies, Parker's is friendlier to the movement itself, perhaps because he also examines the earlier period before changing global realities undercut its effectiveness.

Parker uses the notion of "character" as an organizing concept for the SVM, illustrating how it promoted middle-class virtues, manliness, and a balance between piety and practical efficiency. His thematic coverage is thorough and insightful, with balanced attention paid to the spiritual grounding of the movement, women and minorities, the ephemeral records (including applications and pamphlets), and analysis of the SVM quadrennial conventions. A few weaknesses mar this otherwise well-written and argued dissertation, e.g., spelling errors (Halle not Hale, Vadstena not Valstena, Kyoto not Kyto). Most scholars would disagree with Parker's interpretation that holiness piety was male-dominated and subordinated women (p. 36). He assumes that the SVM should have had little appeal for women since there was already a women's missionary movement (p. 50). In fact, the women's missionary movement both fed the SVM (look at Wilder's and Mott's mothers and sisters, for example) and provided opportunities for female volunteers to serve in all-women mission societies. After all, the SVM did not send its own missionaries; rather, it organized missionary interest and then connected volunteers to pre-existing missionary societies. Also, mission leader and future president of the American Baptist Convention Helen B. Montgomery was not a "one-time missionary to India" (p. 57).

Showalter's study relies on a close reading of SVM conference records and articles in student and missions periodicals. He judges the "crusading" aspect of the SVM and finds it wanting—judged both by the war and by the inability of the movement to provide an organizational basis for its later focus on global peace and justice. The most interesting aspect of Showalter's book is its depiction of how the different SVM leaders dealt with the changes of the 1920s, ranging from Eddy's attempt to integrate the social with the personal gospel, to Wilder's quiet support of the more conservative Inter-Varsity Fellowship. The book is repetitive and interprets the SVM's breakdown narrowly as a combination of internal failures plus World War I. But Showalter deals more thoroughly with the ecumenical, theological and social agendas of the 1920s than does Parker.

These two fine books add a lot to our understanding of the SVM. Parker's book might be fruitfully used in the classroom, while Showalter's will appeal to the specialist.

—Dana L. Robert

Dana L. Robert, a contributing editor, is Professor of International Mission at the Boston University School of Theology.

The Missionary Movement in American Catholic History.


In the life cycle of every major topic of historical inquiry there is a point when a comprehensive overview of the subject matter is necessary. The time has arrived for U.S. Catholic missionary activity, and so has a capable and thorough author in the person of Dr. Angelyn Dries. Given the scope of U.S. Catholic involvement in the missions, the size of the American Catholic population, and the diversity of its missionary endeavors, Dries had her work cut out for her. The result, however, is splendid. The organization of the
Fifteen Outstanding Books of 1998 for Mission Studies

The editors of the INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN OF MISSIONARY RESEARCH have selected the following books published in 1998 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.

Blincoe, Robert.


Dries, Angelyn.


Guder, Darrell L., ed.


Hege, Nathan B.


Hunsberger, George R.


Jenkins, Paul, ed.


Karlofempré, Sébastien, ed.


Klaiber, Jeffrey.


Kostenberger, Andreas J.


Larkin, William J., and Joel F. Williams, eds.


Larson, Warren Fredrick.

Islamic Ideology and Fundamentalism in Pakistan: Climate for Conversion to Christianity? Lanham, Md.: University Press of America. $42.

Lutz, Jesse G., and Rolland Ray Lutz.


Phan, Peter C.


Poebe, John S., and Gabriel Ositelu II.


Wilson, Everett A.

Vietnam War, questioning the role and function of American interests abroad. Shifting ecclesiological emphases stressed the role of missionaries in social and economic development and the inculturation of local expressions of worship and governance.

This book will be an important resource not only for historians and theologians but for all U.S. citizens preparing for work in mission fields.

—Steven M. Avella

Steven M. Avella is Associate Professor of History at Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Religion in the Megacity: Catholic and Protestant Portraits from Latin America.


Philip Berryman hardly needs an introduction to people concerned with the Latin American religious map. This book, however, has some specific traits: it works on the basis of a “qualitative” methodology. It concentrates on the urban areas, selecting two typical “megacities” (São Paulo and Caracas). It pays attention to Protestant developments as well as to the Catholic scene. It devotes a significant section to a comparative evaluation of Catholic and Protestant conditions and perspectives and to the author’s own questions and suggestions.

Berryman’s basic focus is the new situation in Latin America, which is characterized by several factors: (1) the new social and political conditions determined by a majority urban population; (2) the crisis of the project that mobilized the church in the 1960s and 1970s—on the way to “a new kind of society . . . free to develop economically in terms of its own needs, and where ordinary people had full rights and participated fully” (p. 1); and (3) the growth of charismatic and Pentecostal Protestantism, which appeals to the new condition of the poor. In this situation, as a Brazilian Catholic priest puts it, while “five years ago there were lots of answers and few questions, today it’s the other way around: we’ve got few answers and a lot of questions.”

The last section deserves careful discussion. Berryman is probably right—contra David Martin—in rejecting a sort of “messianic” view of Protestantism as the cradle of a new Latin America. While it is quite likely that the phenomenal growth of Pentecostalism is slowly reaching its peak, Berryman is also correct in seeing a new and pluralistic religious landscape and feeling that the Catholic Church is not yet adequately reflecting on its new role in this scenario. I miss, however, a deeper discussion of the theological implications of the social and economic problems of globalization, social exclusion, and the growing conflicts of society.

—José Miguez Bonino

José Míguez Bonino is Professor of Systematic Theology at the Instituto Superior Evangélico de Estudios Teológicos, Buenos Aires, and an ordained minister of the Methodist Church in Argentina.


This is a very good book. The author, born in China of Presbyterian missionary parents and later himself a missionary in Korea, has a previous book on Christianity in the People's Republic of China. The work under review here is a balanced and well-researched descriptive history. The book has appropriate coverage of both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, includes both Northern and Southern U.S. Presbyterian bodies, has several simplified but intelligible maps, and also contains 25 photographs. Three useful appendices list Presbyterian hospitals, schools, and all of the more than 1,700 Presbyterian missionaries (North and South), including dates of arrival, departure, and stations worked at. Quotations are carefully sourced in the endnotes, and the bibliography includes several items not often found in libraries, such as privately published memoirs or booklets and pamphlets put out by various bodies within the Presbyterian church organizations.

In short, this is a carefully done work, and was obviously a labor of love on the part of the author, who personally knew several of the twentieth century actors. It is more a descriptive chronicle than an analytical or interpretive history, but in the concluding chapter Brown also includes some thoughtful assessments of the Presbyterian and wider missionary experience in China. Because the Presbyterians were among the largest of the Protestant groups in China, and because of the ecumenical nature of much of the Protestant effort in the twentieth century (e.g., in union hospitals, schools, publishing, and in church structures such as the National Christian Council), the Presbyterian experience can to some extent be writ large to represent other large denominational missions as well. Moreover, the missionary actors and events are well grounded in the main contours of Chinese history over this period, contextualizing the missions story as well as could be expected in a historical survey such as this.

—Daniel H. Bays

Daniel H. Bays is Professor of Modern Chinese History and Chairman of the History Department at the University of Kansas, Lawrence. He is editor of Christianity in China, From the Eighteenth Century to the Present (Stanford Univ. Press, 1996).


Volume 61 marks the twentieth year that Willi Henkel, O.M.I., has edited Bibliographia Missionaria. (From 1966 to 1976 he assisted the founding editor, Johannes Rommerskirchen, O.M.I.) At this milestone of accomplishment, we congratulate Father Henkel on a remarkable achievement.

Volume 61 continues the thorough presentation of every scholarly article and book published on missiology in 1997, in any European language. Volume 60 (for
The Recovery of Mission: Beyond the Pluralist Paradigm.


This book is a clearly written, welcome addition to the continuing discussion about Christian faith and witness in a religiously plural world. Ramachandra states that his book is intended as a contribution to the worldwide debate about whether “all religious traditions … have salvific value… so that the traditional Christian concept of mission must be given up in the interests of mutual religious enrichment through dialogue and peaceful co-operation” (ix-x).

Ramachandra is regional secretary of South Asia for the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, and he opens his book with an analysis and critique of the work of three South Asians—Stanley Samartha, Raimundo Panikkar, and Aloysius Pieris—who have significantly shaped the global conversation about these issues. After placing their thought into the wider context of Western philosophy and theology, he proposes an alternate approach based on Lesslie Newbigin’s articulation of the Gospel as public truth in a pluralist society. Then he focuses on the scandal of Jesus and explores the implications of the incarnation for mission.

Ramachandra actually addresses the question of the salvific value of other religions only incidentally; instead, his recurrent central theme is the particularity and ultimacy of Jesus, and the specificity and universality of the incarnation. This is the pivotal issue in his analysis of the Christology of Samartha, Panikkar and Pieris, but also in his discussion of election and mission in the Old Testament, his critique of gnosticism, his summary of the Hindu concept of avataras (the frequent appearances of the divine in physical form), and his interaction with the ideas of Hegel, Kant, and John Hick. He concludes that the God of universal history “brings that history to its goal (‘salvation’) through the particular history of a particular people” (230).

—James N. Pankratz


We have come a long way since R. Pierce Beaver first published the *Mission Handbook* in 1953 as a set of mimeographed pages at the Missionary Research Library. This seventeenth edition extends the meaningful contribution of a unique information tool. Anyone who needs data on North American mission agencies need only turn to this volume.

Since 1992 U.S. home staff grew appreciably (32 percent), but overseas staff increased only slightly (4.6 percent). The top one hundred agencies (14 percent of all) send 91 percent of long-term missionaries and receive 87 percent of the total income. U.S. income for mission, as in the 1992 data, tops two billion dollars; the total is an increase, even after adjustment for inflation.

Essays customarily included in earlier editions cede their place to an updating of “The Changing Shape of World Mission,” which was distributed to the 1996 Urbana Conference and now is helpfully embellished here. John Siewert, who has served as a MARC researcher for two decades, addresses mission motivation, describing six denominationally diverse congregations to illustrate ways local congregations are increasingly involved in mission.

MARC has created a database for the 1984–96 period of the fifty largest agencies in the United States. (The reader should note that extrapolations based on these fifty must be carefully qualified.) For the first time, rudimentary analysis is attempted on the basis of theological and denominational background. Somewhat surprisingly, agencies that refer to themselves as either Baptist or evangelical far outstrip Pentecostals, Presbyterians, Lutherans, and others in both long-term personnel and income (pp. 100, 101).

Treatment of Roman Catholic missions, prepared by a Catholic author, includes countries of service and sending communities. For the first time there is a short descriptive chapter on Orthodox mission.

—Samuel Wilson


Thirteen fascinating and informative essays compose this welcome addition (vol. 110) to Peter Lang’s highly regarded Studies in the Intercultural History of Christianity series. Originally prepared for a symposium convened at Lund...
University in August of 1996, the volume includes six papers by Ethiopian academics. Readers may find the title to be somewhat misleading, since it suggests an ecclesiastical comprehensiveness that is not found in the volume itself. Thus, while the essays examine with great sensitivity aspects of the complex historical and functional interplay between the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and European (especially Scandinavian) Lutheran and Catholic missionary efforts, there is scarcely any mention of the equally considerable impact made by missionaries from elsewhere, especially North America. A reading of this book would leave one unaware of the substantial and ongoing (if not always welcome) religious impact upon Ethiopia of Presbyterian, Baptist, Seventh-day Adventist, Mennonite, Pentecostal, interdenominational (SIM), and other mission societies. Given the fact that the Kale Heywet Church alone—still closely connected with SIM missionary activity—has a membership of some 3.5 million in nearly 4,000 congregations, this is a grievous lack indeed!

Nevertheless, the volume is essential reading for anyone interested in Ethiopian Christianity. Tadesse Tamrat's wonderfully informed chapter, "Evangelizing the Evangelized: The Root Problem Between Missions and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church," is alone worth the price of the volume! Reading between the lines, one is made acutely aware of the cultural gulf between the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and other, more recent Christian groups in that country. Consultations such as the one that eventuated in this book are a heartening sign that while bridge building between Ethiopia's Orthodox Church and other churches is slow, complex, and difficult work, construction has advanced to the point where a few are able to cross, if they are careful.

 Appropriately dedicated to Sven Rubenson, one of Sweden's premier figures in the field of Ethiopian studies, the book's usefulness is enhanced by a bibliography, an index of persons mentioned in the text and footnotes, and a list of contributors.

—Jonathan Bonk

Special Price: $64.95

Send me bound volume(s) of the International Bulletin of Missionary Research, 1993–96 at $64.95. Orders outside the U.S.A. add $7.00 per volume for postage and handling. Payment must accompany all orders. Pay in U.S. dollars only by check drawn on a U.S. bank, International Money Order, or VISA/MasterCard. Allow 5 weeks for delivery within the U.S.A.

- Enclosed is my check in the amount of $ made out to “International Bulletin of Missionary Research.”
- Charge $ to my VISA or MasterCard:
  Card # ___________ Expiry ___________
  Signature ___________
  Name ___________
  Address ___________

Mail to: Publications Office, Overseas Ministries Study Center, 490 Prospect Street, New Haven, CT 06511 U.S.A.

Visit our website at http://www.OMSC.org

Vatican Archives: An Inventory and Guide to Historical Documents of the Holy See.


This remarkable volume is the result of a huge project undertaken by the Bentley Historical Library of the University of Michigan, at the invitation of Josef Metzler, O.M.I., prefect of the Vatican Secret Archives (Archivo Segreto Vaticano, or ASV). The purpose was to provide for the first time in a single work “a comprehensive overview of extant historical documentation generated by the Holy See since the ninth century” (p. xvi).

The guide, however, includes more than the title suggests. Since it is "organized around the bureaucratic structure of the Holy See from the time of its establishment under Sixtus V," the guide actually provides a historical road map for the complicated network of some 450 congregations, commissions, offices,
agencies, departments, and secretariats of the central government of the Roman Catholic Church that functioned between the years 800 and 1960. It then "links each office or agency to its extant records" (p. xv). Historically these have included the College of Cardinals, the Papal Court, the Roman Curia, Apostolic Nunciatures and Delegations, Papal States, Permanent Commissions, Miscellaneous Materials, and Separate Collections. Mission scholars will be especially interested in the section under the Roman Curia for the "Congregatio de Propaganda Fide" (pp. 38-62).

The project staff identified and made a census of eleven hundred series of records in the ASV. They then entered basic descriptive data for each series in USMARC (United States Machine Readable Cataloging) format. "This database was loaded into the archives and manuscripts section of the Research Libraries Information Network (RLIN) . . . [and] the information regarding the ASV contained in this guide has been available to scholars through the RLIN network since 1991" (p. xxviii). This electronic database is available at most major research libraries in the United States and some European libraries. The guide is a complete printout of that database.

In addition to the inventories of records, the guide includes an analysis of existing finding aids that gives some sense of the scope and content of the records. It also includes valuable bibliography on the organization or the content of particular series. The Vatican Archives are an international treasure for historians, and this guide will help exploring scholars take advantage of its riches.

Gerald H. Anderson is Editor of this journal and Director of the Overseas Ministries Study Center, New Haven, Connecticut.


Nearly a decade ago, the British church historian Owen Chadwick commented that "the most astonishing feature of the twentieth century was the reversion to an age of persecution of Christianity" (Oxford Illustrated History of the Church, p. 354). From pogroms against Armenians and Syrian Orthodox in Ottoman Turkey to the brutal murder of Roman Catholic bishop Juan José Gerardi in Guatamala City on April 16, 1998, the twentieth century has indeed, in the words of Philip Yancey, "produced more martyrs than all other centuries combined."

The twenty chapters in this collection are powerfully written vignettes of seventeen individuals; several cases include a group who suffered together. None of the persons described here is new to students of the modern church or the twentieth-century historical canvases. The stories of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Simone Weil, Oscar Romero, and Martin Luther King, Jr., have often been told. They are properly included here. Others like Aleksandr Men, Janani Luwum, Etty Hillesum, and Eva Price are less well known. Their stories are also deeply motivating. Most of the writers are contemporary American poets and critics who only in a few cases were previously knowledgeable about their subject. The power of these essays comes in part from the way the authors were captivated by their martyr subjects.

The introduction, "Twentieth-Century Martyrs—Meditation," by the editor, who also conceived the project, and the afterword, "To Witness Truth Uncompromised," by Dana Gioia, thoughtfully squeeze meanings and significance from martyrdom for contemporary Christians. Bergman, echoing Augustine, reminds readers that "the cause of the suffering, makes genuine martyrs" (p. 6). Gioia understands that "remembrance of their sacrifice is the church's consciousness of its own identity in a secular world" (p. 326).

Martyr stories are easily distorted and oversimplified and too often become hagiography. Kathleen Norris struggles to find the martyr truth in Maria Goretti, a twelve-year-old Italian girl knifed to death in an attempted rape in 1902. Already canonized in 1950, she became a kind of "cipher, a blank page in which others write to suit their own purposes" (p. 299). Even so, she can "free us, as a powerful symbol of the grace of healing for those wounded by rape and sexual abuse" (p. 308). Robert Ellsburg forthrightly faces the ambiguity of Charles De Foucauld as military veteran and French patriot along with being an austere Trappist Little Brother of Jesus.

Martyrs is an important volume for remembering what Osag Mandestain calls a "tyrant century." It is also a book for nurturing the soul. "What matters," Etty Hillesum wrote from the prison camp, "is not whether we preserve our lives at any cost, but how we preserve them" (p. 180).

—John A. Lapp

John A. Lapp is Executive Secretary Emeritus of the Mennonite Central Committee. He is currently the Organizing Secretary of the Global Mennonite History Project, sponsored by the Mennonite World Conference.

A World of Crisis and Progress

The American YMCA in Japan, 1890-1930

JON THARES DAVIDANN

This book provides a fascinating account of the cultural relations between American YMCA missionaries and native Christians in Japan at the turn of the century. In addition to demonstrating clear evidence that this cross-cultural interaction produced changes on both sides of the Pacific, the author also analyzes the implications of late-nineteenth-century nationalism and imperialism for all participants. This work also contributes to an international perspective in historical understanding.

YMCA missionaries faced conflict and confrontation with Japanese Christians. By the 1930s, the American YMCA acknowledged the failure of its mission to Japan, identifying indigenous nationalism as the main culprit behind the failure. This book serves as a cautionary tale about the dangers of attempting to remake the world in one's own image. (Lehigh University Press, $37.50)

The Changing Role of the British Protestant Missionaries in China, 1945-1952

Oi KI LING

This book focuses on the British Protestant missionaries in China in the period from 1945 to 1952. It captures the complexity and contradictions between the missionaries' own perception of their role and Chinese reality. It also examines the missionaries' perception of the nature of Communism and their evaluation of the future prospects under Communist rule.

What results from this examination is a stimulating reflection on the missionaries' strategies for propagating the Christian faith, their priorities, and theological as well as cultural assumptions with regard to mission and politics, mission and culture, and mission-church relations during the transition from Guomindang to Communist rule. In general terms, it provides an insight into the idealism and frustrations of missionaries as they wrestled with the changing political context in China. (Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, $45.00)

ORDER FROM Associated University Presses
440 Forsgate Drive, Cranbury, NJ 08512
609-655-4770 or Fax 609-655-8366

January 1999
Dissertation Notices

Chung, Mary Keng Mun.
“Factors Influencing the Role of Women in Christian Ministries in the Chinese Church.”

Dom Wachukwu, Peter Nlemadim.
“Christianity as Authentic Igbo Religion: A Model for Inculturation.”
Ph.D. Louisville, Ky.: Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1997.

Gallagher, Robert Lloyd.

Jang, Nam Hyuck.
Ph.D. Pasadena, Calif.: Fuller Theological Seminary, 1996.

Larson, Warren Fredrick.
“Islamic Fundamentalism in Pakistan: Its Implications for Conversion to Christianity.”
Ph.D. Pasadena, Calif.: Fuller Theological Seminary, 1996.

Livingston, C. Jeter.

Nichols, Anthony Howard.

Pachuau, Lalsangkima.
“Ethnic Identity and Christianity in Northeast India: A Socio-Historical and Missiological Study, with Special Reference to Mizoram.”

Sutherland, James W.

Wasserman, Jeffrey Steven.
Ph.D. Louisville, Ky.: Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1997.

CIRCULATION STATEMENT

Statement required by the act of August 12, 1970, section 3685. Title 58, United States Code, showing ownership, management, and circulation of INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN OF MISSIONARY RESEARCH. Published 4 times per year at 490 Prospect Street, New Haven, Connecticut 06511.

Publisher: Gerald H. Anderson, Overseas Ministries Study Center, 490 Prospect Street, New Haven, Connecticut 06511. Editor: Gerald H. Anderson, Overseas Ministries Study Center, 490 Prospect Street, New Haven, Connecticut 06511. Associate Editor, Jonathan J. Bonk, Overseas Ministries Study Center, 490 Prospect Street, New Haven, Connecticut 06511. The owner is Overseas Ministries Study Center, 490 Prospect Street, New Haven, Connecticut 06511.

The known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding one percent or more of total amounts of bonds, mortgages or other securities are: None.

Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months

Total no. copies printed 7,491 7,300
Paid circulation: sales through dealers, carriers, street vendors, and counter sales 0 0
Total paid circulation 6,470 6,303
Mail subscriptions 6,470 6,303
Free distribution 470 470
Total distribution 6,930 6,773
Copies not distributed: office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing, returns from news agents 561 527
Total 7,491 7,300

Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation 93% 93%

I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

(signed) Gerald H. Anderson
Sign up now for 1999 Spring Seminars and Workshops and

Break New Ground at OMSC!

Maria Rieckelman and Donald Jacobs Apr. 12–16
Spiritual Renewal in the Mission Community. A time of renewal through biblical and personal reflection. Cosponsored by Eastern Mennonite Missions. Eight sessions. $95

David Augsburger Apr. 19–23
Counseling across Cultures. Fuller Seminary professor shows how to apply biblical principles of counseling in cross-cultural settings and highlights the dangers of ethnocentrism. Cosponsored by Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union. Eight sessions. $95

J. Martin Bailey Apr. 26–30
The Challenge of Christian Witness in the Middle East. Former communications consultant to the Middle East Council of Churches explores the roles of indigenous churches and expatriate Christians in the lands where our faith began. Cosponsored by Common Global Ministries Board of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ), Evangelicals for Middle East Understanding, Mennonite Board of Missions, and Middle East Office, National Council of Churches. Eight sessions. $95

Rob Martin May 3–5
Leadership, Fund-raising, and Donor Development for Mission. Director of First Fruit, Inc., Newport Beach, California, outlines and illustrates the steps for building the support base, including foundation funding, for mission. Mon. 2:00 p.m.–Wed. noon. $75

June 3, 1998, Breaking ground for Great Commission Hall

Send me more information about these seminars:

NAME

ADDRESS

Overseas Ministries Study Center
490 Prospect St., New Haven, CT 06511
Tel (203) 624-6672 Fax (203) 865-2857
E-mail study@OMSC.org Web http://www.OMSC.org

Publishers of the
INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN OF MISSIONARY RESEARCH
Book Notes

Baumgartner, Erich W., ed.
Re-Visioning Adventist Mission in Europe.

Becker, Dieter, and Andreas Feldkeller, eds.
Es begann in Halle: Missionswissenschaft von Gustav Warneck bis Heute.

Berneburg, Erhard.
Das Verhältnis von Verkündigung und sozialer Aktion in der evangelikalen Missionstheorie.

Denis, Philippe.

Gifford, Paul.
African Christianity: Its Public Role.

Hall, Douglas John.
The End of Christendom and the Future of Christianity.

Jonge, Marinus de.
Early Christology and Jesus’ Own View of His Mission.

Kirk, J. Andrew.
The Mission of Theology and Theology as Mission.

Leslie, Donald Daniel.

Stekelenburg, Laetitia E. van.
Wegen naar waarachtig mens-zijn . . . het werk van Wilfred Cantwell Smith.

Taylor, John V.
The Uncancelled Mandate: Four Bible Studies on Christian Mission and the Approaching Millennium.

Voshaar, Jan.
Maasai: Between the Oreteti-Tree and the Tree of the Cross.

Weber, Christian.
Missionstheologie bei Wilhelm Löhe: Aufbruch zur Kirche der Zukunft.

In Coming Issues

The Future of the Church in Latin America
C. René Padilla

A Comparison of Missionary Attrition Between Old Sending and New Sending Countries
Detlef Blöcher

In Quest of the Father of Mission Studies
Andrew F. Walls

Kenneth Cragg in Perspective: A Comparison with Temple Gairdner and Wilfred Cantwell Smith
James A. Tebbe

The Northern Outreach Program of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana
Elorn Dovlo and Solomon S. Sule-Saa

What’s Behind the 10/40 Window? A Historical Perspective
Robert T. Coote

In our Series on the Legacy of Outstanding Missionary Figures of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, articles about
Norman Anderson
Thomas Barclay
Johannes Beckmann, S.M.B.
Rowland V. Bingham
Thomas Chalmers
Hélène de Chappotin
François E. Daubanton
G. Sherwood Eddy
Hannah Kilham
Johann Ludwig Krapf
George Leslie Mackay
William Milne
Leslie Newbigin
I. Ludwig Nommensen
Constance E. Padwick
Timothy Richard
Julius Richter
John Ross
Elizabeth Russell
C. F. Schwartz
William Shellabear
James Stephen
Eugene Stock
Bengt Sundkler
William Cameron Townsend
William Ward