Book Reviews


This volume presents a definitive study of concepts, theories, and interpretations of religious conversion and identity. Thirty-six authors, representing major Asian, African, European, and American cultures and religious settings, present forty-six essays written for three international conferences in Basel, Switzerland (in 2009, 2010, and 2011), dealing with understandings of conversion. Individuals and communities experience conversion in their religious, psychological, social, communal, and political spheres; in this process they develop their personal and collaborative identities. Their former understanding of God, self, and the world becomes restructured. Conversion alters their interpersonal relationships and their views on social customs and life priorities.

This book examines biographies of several converts, including Panditha Ramabai, Wilhelm Gundert, and Pearl Buck. Their conversions and reconversions lead readers to consider the fluid nature of conversion. Part 2 explores historical aspects of conversion. It begins with antiquity, proceeds through the New Testament, interacts with Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed views on conversion, and ends with postcolonial interactions of Euro-American scholars. This part forms the backdrop for the following four parts.

Part 3 highlights “switching” between mainline Christian denominations and the resulting ecumenical challenges. For example, leaders of Orthodox churches disapprove of the proselytizing efforts of Euro-American Protestant missionaries and, in particular, their cultural, historical, and theological insensitivity. Part 4 points out the political, economic, and relational consequences of Christian minorities living or merely surviving among people of other dominant religions (e.g., Islam and Hinduism) and ideologies (e.g., Confucianism).

Part 5 addresses the constitutional and humanitarian rights of religious freedom promised by various governments. Experiences of religious freedom in Pakistan, Malaysia, or Indonesia, for example, are not the same as those in Uganda or Nigeria. Likewise, Euro-American Enlightenment views on religious freedom have their limitations. Most countries guarantee religious freedom, at least on paper, but their practices often contradict their intentions and assurances. Converts often struggle to get justice. Generally, Christian converts carry with them several aspects of their ancestral religions, cultures, and traditions and review them only gradually. Part 6 evaluates the main concepts of conversion from theological and practical vantage points. The essayists investigate various possibilities, opportunities, and challenges for religious conversion within particular legal systems or theological traditions, noting that conversion experiences in liberal democracies differ from those in strict autocratic regimes. Since religious conversions affect the close working relationship between state and politics and one's loyalty to them, Christians are urged to practice tolerance and cautious mission.

This book is a treasure trove of information, not merely in the main essays, but also in the footnotes. All the essays are scholarly, reflecting academic discussions in Euro-American universities and academies. (Some essays are in German; it would be a boon to have them translated into English.) I heartily congratulate the editors for this work and recommend it warmly for graduate students and scholars.

—Daniel Jeyaraj

Daniel Jeyaraj, a contributing editor, is Professor of World Christianity and Director of the Centre for the Study of African and Asian Christianity at Liverpool Hope University, England.

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Paul’s Missionary Methods: In His Time and Ours.


Published in commemoration of the centennial anniversary of Roland Allen’s Missionary Methods: Saint Paul’s or Ours? (1912), and arranged in two parts, Paul’s Missionary Methods: In His Time and Ours advances a simple argument: we ought to derive our modern missionary methodology from Paul’s missionary methodology.

In part 1, “New Testament,” the contributors examine Paul’s message in its first-century context. Michael Bird shows how Paul’s ability to understand and read his own Jewish, Greek, and Roman contexts contributed to the success of his mission. Eckhard Schnabel tells how Paul’s encounter with the risen Christ and his desire to win all shaped his missionary task. Robert Plummer draws our attention to the missional significance of Paul’s understanding of the Gospel as the only means of salvation and as a new dynamic realm in which believers stand. Benjamin Merkle shows that Paul’s understanding of the church “as the gathered people of God” (60), led by a plurality of leaders, who trust in Christ and meet together both to worship the triune God and to participate in the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, made him successful. Christoph Stenschke considers Paul’s understanding of mission as the mission of the church, while Don Howell and Craig Keener discuss the importance of suffering and spiritual warfare in Paul’s mission strategy.

In part 2, “Paul’s Influence on Missions,” several contributors address the implications of Paul’s and Allen’s mission strategies for today. For example, John Terry considers Paul’s establishment of self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating indigenous churches, while Ed Stetzer and Lizette Beard outline his
inclusive church planting strategy, contextualized approach to church planting, and intentional nurturing of the new converts, as well as the importance he placed on visitation and follow-up. Chuck Lawless points to his model of preparing leaders who will in turn train others. J. D. Payne draws our attention to some elements in Allen’s missiology, namely the way of Jesus, the apostolic paradigm, pneumatology, evangelism, and faith.

By bringing Paul’s missionary method to bear on the church’s mission today, the volume makes a major contribution to contemporary missiology. However, the attempt to understand Paul’s missionary strategy from the perspective of the deutero-Pauline epistles instead of strictly from his undisputed letters weakens the book’s argument, at least for those who accept critical Pauline scholarship. This weakness in the eyes of many scholars notwithstanding, missionaries, mission executives, and students of mission will find this book enriching.

—Frank Kofi Blibo

Frank Kofi Blibo is a graduate student of New Testament and Early Christianity at Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Honoring the Generations: Learning with Asian North American Congregations.


Honoring the Generations is the fruit of collaboration among a number of Asian American ministry leaders who wanted to see more clearly what God was doing in Asian North American (ANA) churches. Members of the group include both theologians and practitioners of ministry, partnering to develop a contextualized theological framework for ANA churches. The various authors of Honoring the Generations seek to help people understand and improve ANA church ministry through the integration of theology and practice.

The book starts with a theology of the household of God based on the Book of Ephesians. It then addresses the often difficult relationship between the first generation and the second and third generations in ANA churches, giving some possible ways of improving the relationship. As it continues, the volume addresses a number of important areas of church life, such as pastoral formation, lay ministry, and global mission in ANA churches. These areas can present real challenges for any church, but obviously special challenges may appear in ANA churches that are both cross-cultural and intergenerational. It is especially on these challenges that the contributors focus.

The strength of the book is that it garners theological and practical insights from a diverse group of scholars and pastors who are familiar with the ANA church context. This diversity provides different perspectives on how to do ministry better in such a context and can be helpful to any minister serving in an ANA church. At the same time, this strength is also the book’s weakness, as it has no unifying theology or strategy. The main unity of the book comes from the goal of improving ministry in such churches, and it is clearly worthwhile for people interested in that topic.

—Sun Man Kim

Sun Man Kim serves as Senior Pastor of the First Korean Presbyterian Church of Greater Hartford, in Manchester, Connecticut. His congregation supports more than forty missionaries and mission agencies around the world.

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ROBERT HURTEAU
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This edited volume of papers presented at a conference in 2009 at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars reveals the latest twist in international business. Wealthy nations or corporations have refined their business strategy to include leasing or purchasing farmland from governments in some of the poorer nations. This is clearly nothing new (21); however, inequalities in power and the often unfavorable positioning of the least powerful land users between their own governments and international players raise a series of economic and ethical concerns.

What is new is that “food security” drives a country such as China or a corporation such as Daewoo to lease or buy land in a country such as Tanzania or Madagascar, then to work the land with their own imported labor and to ship all the produce back to the home country. This system not only cuts out the middleman but also alienates local communities from both land and labor.

It is estimated that in the period 2000–2012, over 200 million hectares—that is, an area “the size of Western Europe” (1)—have been leased or sold or are under negotiation. Investors want a return on their money; nations want food to feed or fuel their populations; and governments want to secure their tenure in power. Ethical issues involve the rights of indigenous populations (who may be at odds with their governments), the meaning of “unused” land, the control of water, and the fact that some poor countries leasing or selling farmland also receive food aid from the World Food Program (14).

Some of the authors argue that “we should accept the reality and seek to learn more about these deals with a spirit of inquiry that steers clear of undue alarmism and Pollyannism alike” (6). Fair enough, but when I read about “uninhabited land,” I have to ask how it became uninhabited. Is there really unused or surplus land anywhere? Should we be reassured to read that “land under foreign control remains a relatively small proportion of total land in host countries” (8)? Or should we ask what proportion of the arable land is under foreign control? I am reminded of correspondent Thomas Fowler’s phrase in Graham Greene’s novel The Quiet American, “Sometimes, to be human, you have to take sides.”

In this age, one should always ask about differential power among actors. This book provides a variety of articles from the point of view of investors, of host countries, and of concerned parties. The church and mission agencies, however, are lamentably absent from the conversation. Is this an editorial oversight, or does the church not have a respectable theology of land and labor?

—Michael A. Rynkiewich

Michael A. Rynkiewich, now retired, was Professor of Anthropology at the E. Stanley Jones School of World Mission and Evangelism, Ashbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky.
The chorus of voices criticizing political evangelicalism in the United States has reached a highpoint. That this decline in the fortunes of evangelicalism is greeted with a smug harrumph by news organizations such as the New York Times is understandable, but that so much of the criticism comes from within the ranks of evangelicals past and present is particularly notable. David Fitch is Lindner Professor of Evangelical Theology at Northern Seminary in Lombard, Illinois. Fitch’s End of Evangelicalism takes the criticisms seriously, but he is also intent on seeking models for Christian engagement with the broader American body politic on grounds that lead to authentic Christian missional practices and that are in touch with solid insights from political philosophy and science. His book is essential reading, particularly as evidence piles up that—to all outward appearances—a range of Christian political choices are made on the basis of predetermined cultural attitudes rather than by Christian sociopolitical and ethical discernment. That situation raises the question, “How does one avoid the trap of making up one’s mind on issues first and looking for biblical and theological warrants later?” Fitch is fully aware of this problem and the danger of we-group, Christian narcissism as he proposes that evangelicalism is a political ideology in need of a carefully constructed political theology. As for what evangelicalism is, he follows David Bebbington’s and Mark Noll’s well-known markers.

The most important intellectual move in Fitch’s book is his argument that the Slovenian philosopher and social theorist Slavoj Žižek can help sort out the causes of evangelicalism’s becoming a “hardened” complex of positions that paper over hidden “antagonisms” and that cripple evangelicalism’s Christian identity and effectiveness in achieving its real mission. Fitch’s explication of Žižek’s positions is subtle and convincing. Summarizing that material would take us beyond the prescribed length of this brief review, however, and I can only say that reading his explication is well worth the effort, despite the charge by radical orthodox theologian John Milbank that Žižek is a mystical nihilist.

Chapters 1 and 2 identify the problems of the present manner of evangelical engagement; chapters 3 through 6 make the case for a deeper participation in the life of the triune God, as opposed to the arrogance of the rigid use of Scripture as a cudgel to smite enemies and close off conversation (chap. 3). For me as a Roman Catholic, Fitch succeeds in maintaining the supremacy of Scripture while working from a deeper hermeneutic of what I like to call “what Scripture as a whole” emphasizes, as opposed to cherry-picking the Bible for verbal ukases to hurl at infidels. While Fitch’s use of Žižek is convincing, I wonder whether a better place to start might be the classic Catholic-Protestant divide between Scripture and Tradition and Scripture versus Tradition, on the one
hand, and, on the other, recent attempts to phrase the relationship as Scripture within Tradition. The latter, I believe, fits much better with the missiological insights of the late Paul Hiebert and his explication of a “bounded-set” versus a “centered-set” mentality.

Chapter 5 does a masterly job of laying out the ways that a Christian-nation ideology nurtures forms of antagonism toward its enemies and falls short of what a well-thought-through vision of Christian mission requires. Chapter 6 and the epilogue are the best single explanation I have seen of how a more adequate political theology can help us determine the mission of Christians in a polarized but rudderless nation like the United States. If the mission-as-expansion-of-franchise era is or ought to be over, the challenge of the early twenty-first century is for churches that are now planted in the midst of the nations to discern what they are called to by God. Although Fitch’s book has an explicit reference to mission in the public square of the United States, I think it may be very useful for Christians in other lands as well.

—William R. Burrows

William R. Burrows, a contributing editor, is Senior Fellow in the Walls Center for the Study of African and Asian Christianity at Liverpool Hope University, Liverpool, England.

The Gospel of Freedom and Power: Protestant Missionaries in American Culture after World War II


American Protestant missionaries and their supporters from World War II onward managed to combine a strong commitment to the greater freedom of once-colonized populations with a sense that they, as Americans and Christians, knew just how that freedom should be exercised. This is the chief analytic theme of this book, and it is a sound one. Yet what is valuable about this book is a series of highly particular research contributions by Sarah Ruble that are only modestly connected with this basic, rather banal claim.

The first contribution is an overview of the conversation about missions carried on among the old “mainstream” Protestants, especially the Methodists, as visible above all in the pages of Christian Century. Second, Ruble provides a comparable overview of the conversation about the same topics as carried on by more evangelical Protestants, especially as seen in the pages of Christianity Today and in the doings of the Free Methodist Church, a denomination more aligned with the evangelicals than with the ecumenical “mainline,” of which the United Methodist Church was a key element. These two contributions indicate the Methodist-intensive character of the book, which has very little to tell us about Presbyterians, Baptists, Episcopalians, and other groups also central to the study of Protestant missionaries in American culture after World War II. But Ruble has a good feel for what matters in the conversations of the two types of Methodists, as well as in the relevant pages of the two leading Protestant magazines of the period.

Ruble’s third and fourth contributions are even more selective. She offers an account of the occasional conversations between anthropologists and missionaries about the ways in which their endeavors overlap or conflict. And finally, she traces various formulations of the gender distinction as those formulations affected missionary organizations and the image of missionaries as displayed in several popular works of fiction. Her treatment
of the relationship between missionaries and anthropologists does not even mention the debate over Robert Priest’s intervention concerning the concept of “the missionary position,” and it leaves out several other prominent episodes in missionary-anthropologist discussions. Her treatment of gender is largely devoted to a reading of two popular novels and otherwise does not go beyond the already substantial work of Dana Robert and other missiologists on women and Protestant missions. As a result, this book is valuable more for the many engaging bits and pieces of information it presents than for its comprehensive analysis.

—David A. Hollinger

David A. Hollinger is the Preston Hatchins Professor of American History, University of California, Berkeley.


We know that businesses can fail and hurt people (e.g., Enron) and harm nature (e.g., BP). But it is equally true that we all depend on businesses and that they can do good. The woman in Proverbs 31 is an astute businesswoman whose ventures serve people and her community. The Quakers practiced a kind of corporate social responsibility (CSR) long before academicians developed the term. Their motto was “spiritual and solvent.” They served God and people in and through business. Even Adam Smith, author of The Wealth of Nations and sometimes called the father of capitalism, said that business should operate within a framework of fair play, justice, and rule of law.

Five highly qualified American academics have produced a landmark publication, Corporate Responsibility: The American Experience. It is a thorough and helpful study of the development of business behavior in the United States from the mid-eighteenth century until today.

There has been a gradual shift from focus on shareholders and profit to the inclusion of growing sets of stakeholders such as customers, staff, suppliers, community, and environment. Corporate responsibility is about businesses having a positive impact economically, socially, and environmentally: the triple bottom line. This wider outlook goes beyond corporate philanthropy of merely giving part of profit to charitable causes. The book refers to a 2008 study that, although it found thirty-seven definitions of CSR, showed a strong congruence in the understanding and praxis of corporate responsibility. The concept of CSR is still evolving through the interaction of theory and application, and its global impact is growing.

As Christians, we welcome these CSR conversations and developments, and we should join in various ways, including drawing from the enormous well of intellectual capital regarding CSR found in this book. But we must also include God as a stakeholder and thus we need to ask: How can we shape business both for God and for the common good? This is CSR+. We want to start and grow businesses to serve people, align with God’s purposes, be good stewards of the planet, and make a profit.

—Mats Tunehag

Mats Tunehag is the Lausanne Senior Associate on Business as Mission, as well as Chair of the Global Think Tank on Business as Mission, www.BAMthinktank.org.

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Dr. Volker Küster—Fall 2013

Dr. Volker Küster, professor of comparative religion and mission studies at Johannes-Gutenberg University, Mainz, Germany, studies the “interconfessional, intercultural, and interreligious dimensions of Christian faith [from the] perspectives of culture, religion, race, class, and gender.” An expert on Christian art and theology in the majority world, he is author of The Many Faces of Jesus Christ: Intercultural Christology (2001), editor of Reshaping Protestantism in a Global Context (2009), and co-editor of Visual Arts and Religion (2009). Before assuming his present academic chair in October 2012, he was professor of cross-cultural theology at Protestant Theological University, Kampen, The Netherlands. Dr. Küster studied theology in Heidelberg and Seoul. His research focuses on dialogue, conflict and reconciliation, and visual art and religion.

Dr. Mary Mikhael—Spring 2014

Dr. Mary Mikhael was president from 1994 to 2011 of the Near East School of Theology, Beirut, Lebanon, and is the first woman seminary president in the Middle East. She was NEST academic dean, and director of the women’s program for the Middle East Council of Churches (1988–95). A Presbyterian who was born in Syria to Greek Orthodox parents, Dr. Mikhael has been involved in ecumenical and interfaith activities and is a noted authority on the church in the Middle East and the role of women in the church. She is author of the 2009 Horizons Bible Study “Joshua: A Journey of Faith” and was coauthor of She Shall Be Called Woman (2009), a meditation on biblical women.

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The Fervent Embrace: Liberal Protestants, Evangelicals, and Israel.


The Fervent Embrace bridges church history and foreign relations history. Building on her 2008 Emory University dissertation, Caitlin Carenen argues that Protestant interpretations of Jews and Zionism from the Holocaust to the present have been a key part of the United States’s relationship with Israel. She also traces the theological and organizational changes that brought, first, mainline and then evangelical Protestants to support Israel, moving from pragmatic and humanitarian reasons for mainline advocacy in the wake of the Holocaust to evangelical eschatology in the 1970s and beyond.

The book uses a chronological narrative and three short case studies to illustrate key figures and moments in the Protestant relationship with Israel. Mainline Protestants changed Christian-Jewish relationships by reaching out to Jews after the Holocaust. Reinhold Niebuhr and organizations like the American Christian Palestine Committee argued that humanitarian protection for Jews and Cold War pragmatism necessitated a Jewish state. Soon, however, concern for Palestinian refugees sparked mainline doubts about political support for Israel, particularly after the 1967 Six-Day War. Fundamentalist leaders interpreted Zionism through premillennial dispensationalist theology, but only in the late 1950s did they begin taking active steps to embrace Jews and ensure the fulfillment of prophecy by supporting the State of Israel. By the 1970s and 1980s, evangelical political and cultural power had strengthened American ties to Israel. Zionist groups and the Israeli government kept close tabs on American Protestants throughout, wooing key leaders and aiding pro-Israel organizations. Case studies on the Martin Niemöller controversy, post–World War II debates on whether to emphasize conversion for Jews, and the pro-Israel advocacy of Ursula Niebuhr illustrate moments of theological change and organizational mobilization.

Carenen provides a valuable contribution by incorporating State Department and Zionist groups’ perspectives as well as those of Protestants and by emphasizing the importance of mainline support for Israel alongside better-known evangelical relationships. Room remains for exploration of relations between policy makers and Protestant leaders; and a clearer distinction between evangelical leaders, organizations, and denominations would improve the book’s second half. Ultimately, Carenen convincingly argues that the theology and activism of Protestant organizations and leaders had a powerful influence on the American public and on national policy.

—Michael Limberg

Michael Limberg is studying toward the Ph.D. in history at the University of Connecticut, Storrs, Connecticut.

Theology in the Public Sphere: Public Theology as a Catalyst for Open Debate.


Sebastian Kim, professor of theology and public life at York St John University, York, England, offers a readable introduction to the theme of public theology, complete with engaging illustrations of the type of conversation he has in mind. Readers familiar with his earlier work might not discover anything new, but it is good to have his key concentrations presented in a single volume. The text itself consists of three parts: a survey of the history and method of public theology, a discussion of the churches’ responses in four global contexts, and issues in contemporary Europe. The examples from the last two parts are intended to illustrate and fill out the theoretical assertions made in the first. Though the language Kim uses is that of “public theology,” the strength of his work rests in the seamless way he draws theory and examples from mission studies into that discussion. His contextual examples are well researched and presented from an insider’s perspective. Especially for those unacquainted with Kim’s work, this text is recommended.

One small concern is how Kim relates his theoretical work to his practical examples. The initial survey situates public theology within a wider discussion, and many of his fundamental categories and distinctions seem more suited to the contexts of Europe and America than to the global context (his references to South Africa and the Global Network for Public Theology notwithstanding). Kim stresses the centrality of conversation and seeks a common language usable by Christians and understandable to a wider audience. Chapter 2 deals with the Bible as a “public book” and contains an excellent discussion of the hermeneutical openness brought by reading the Bible in non-Western contexts. It is less than clear, however, how the second chapter informs the problems of the first, for the two discourses appear to be so divergent as to offer no common language of the variety seemingly central to public theology. This same observation might be made of the chapters that deal with world Christianity. I do not deny that such a connection is possible, but at times Kim seems to leave such work to the reader.

—John Flett

John Flett, a New Zealand native, is a Habilitant at the Kirchliche Hochschule Wuppertal/Bethel, Germany, writing on the theme of apostolicity.

Short-Term Mission: An Ethnography of Christian Travel Narrative and Experience.


Among recent scholars who are turning their attention to the exploding phenomenon of short-term missions (STM), Brian Howell is the first to provide a full-length ethnography exploring “what these trips mean for those who participate, how they reflect or refashion the practices and beliefs of participants and how they contribute to particular understandings of the world beyond those of the STM travelers” (29). A professor of anthropology at Wheaton College, in Wheaton, Illinois, Howell gathered and analyzed data from two trips he took with local church members to the

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Dominican Republic. Rather than orient his writing to anthropologists, Howell chose InterVarsity Press, using his theological training and evangelical membership to speak to short-term travelers, leaders, and informed Christian readers.

Drawing on the Billy Graham Center archives, his own field notes, and follow-up interviews, he examines the narratives evangelicals tell themselves about what they are doing. With accessible scholarly sophistication and insider humor, he analyzes the unhelpful nature of narratives that obscure global material realities while encouraging suburbanites to be thankful for their social location, even while taking “lessons” from the poor “happy” nationals they encounter (especially cute brown children).

Simply put, what church people repeatedly hear and see about the STM experience is how they imagine their trip before ever stepping foot abroad. Such expectations shape perceptions during preparation, interactions on location, and reports upon return. This pervasive experiential feedback loop reinforces myopia by stymieing informed engagement with global realities and hindering authentic encounters with people STMers meet.

Howell uses the voices of respected evangelical international leaders in a concluding chapter that offers generalized prescriptive suggestions for greater self-awareness, cross-cultural respectfulness, and justice-informed engagement. My only critique is that Howell’s own insider/outside ambivalences may have constrained him from delving deeper into the coercive power of discourse. If we are to stop unilateral STM narratives from circumventing the agency of national believers and leaders, we need to be shown more of the destructive detail than Howell actually exposes so that it can be repaired. Nevertheless, I highly recommend this groundbreaking book.

—Kersten Bayt Priest

Kersten Bayt Priest is Assistant Professor of Sociology at Indiana Wesleyan University, Marion, Indiana.


This biography of the first Indian woman to be principal of a Christian college in India was cowritten by the professor and head of the Western History Department of Lucknow University and by the founder-director of the Institute for Career Studies, Lucknow, who is the granddaughter of the biography’s subject.

Constance Prem Nath Dass was born in 1886 into a very prominent high-caste and well-to-do Punjabi Christian family. She was educated first at home, then at schools in Lahore and at Isabella Thoburn College in Lucknow. She did another B.A. (Phi Beta Kappa) at Goucher College (Baltimore) in the United States. Upon returning to India, she taught at Isabella Thoburn College and completed an M.A. in English literature from Allahabad University.

In 1914 she married Prem Nath Dass, from an equally prominent Christian family in the United Provinces. Between 1915 and 1924 they had six children. After her husband died in 1931, she rejoined the faculty of Isabella Thoburn College and became its vice principal. During a sabbatical in 1938–39 she completed a master’s degree in education at Columbia Teachers College (New York City) and received honorary doctorates from Goucher Col-
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Utrecht University: 375 Years Mission Studies, Mission Activities, and Overseas Ministries.


The Netherlands has a remarkable history and rich legacy of mission studies and missionary activity. Utrecht University has been a vital center of this activity, with a nearly unbroken record of 375 years of missiological involvement.

In this volume Jan A. B. Jongeneel, who is honorary professor emeritus of missiology at Utrecht (where he supervised forty-one doctoral dissertations), gives a brilliantly documented description and analysis of this history that is comparable in its thoroughness to his earlier two-volume Missiological Encyclopedia (1995–97).

In addition to the mission studies and all their professors and lecturers at the university through the decades (beginning with Gisbertus Voetius, “the founding father of Protestant missionary theology,” p. xv), Jongeneel discusses the overseas ministries of their Dutch and non-Dutch alumni, their involvement with mission agencies, and those who received honorary degrees, and lists every doctoral dissertation and M.Th. thesis connected with missions and overseas ministries done at Utrecht University since 1897. This work is a goldmine of research.

Jongeneel also includes a report on the Religious Education Training Programme, jointly sponsored by Utrecht University and the University of Zimbabwe (1986–92). The objective of this “peculiar project,” paid for by the Dutch government (271), was a study of “curriculum and staff development in the fields of religious education (RE) and African Traditional Religions (ATRs) and the production of teaching materials for RE in Zimbabwean schools” (307).

A very important initiative was the
Inter-university Institute for Missiological and Ecumenical Research (IIMO), established jointly in 1969 at Leiden and Utrecht universities, which sponsored numerous research projects and publications, including since 1972 the periodical *Exchange: Journal of Missiological and Ecumenical Research*. In 2005 IIMO was transformed into the Centre for Intercultural Theology, Interreligious Dialogue, Missiology, and Ecumenism, based at Utrecht University only. Martha T. Frederiks, Jongeneel’s successor in the chair of missiology, is also director of this center.

The missiological enterprise owes a debt of gratitude to the Dutch in general and to Utrecht University in particular.

—Gerald H. Anderson

Gerald H. Anderson, a senior contributing editor, is Director Emeritus of the Overseas Ministries Study Center, New Haven, Connecticut.

**Pioneers to Partners: The Reformed Church in America and Christian Mission with the Japanese.**


Gordon Laman’s overview of one of the earliest Protestant denominations to send missionaries to Japan—the Reformed Church in America (RCA)—is a welcome addition to the historical literature on missions. If anyone is qualified to write such a history, it is Laman, a veteran RCA missionary retired after forty-three years of service. Throughout the work, Laman discusses the challenges facing the missionaries, which included hostility to Christianity, tensions from nationalism and militarism, disagreements on priorities over education and evangelism, shortages of funds and personnel, and, in particular, the hurdles to true partnership between the RCA and the Japanese church.

Few works on Protestant missions to Japan provide a continuous account of missions both before and after World War II. Laman does this with relative ease, at one point highlighting Sara Couch, a single woman missionary and the only RCA missionary to remain in Japan during the war. The brief treatment of missions since the 1960s could have been expanded, particularly since the author was in Japan during that period. Though Laman keeps the narrative in the third-person throughout the book, perhaps more insight into the author’s life and work—particularly with his acknowledged study of Japan’s historical “resistance to Christianity” (630)—would have been instructive.

Laman’s work relies heavily on missionary correspondence, as well as some of his earlier research on Henry Stout in Kyushu. Though admittedly a missionary-focused account, the lack of Japanese sources and recent literature on missions or Japanese history may limit its appeal to a wider audience. In addition, there are some small, yet glaring, errors. For example, the pioneer Episcopal missionary is Channing M. Williams, not Chandler, and a photograph on p. 126, ostensibly of Guido F. Verbeck, is actually of William Elliot Griffis.

Overall, Laman’s comprehensive and up-to-date account of the experience of one pivotal denomination provides a helpful perspective on the historical development of Christianity in Japan.

—James M. Hommes

*James M. Hommes was born in Japan, where his parents were Protestant missionaries for nineteen years. He is a Ph.D. candidate in history at the University of Pittsburgh, writing his dissertation on the RCA missionary Guido F. Verbeck.*

The Overseas Ministries Study Center has served church leaders and missionaries from around the world for ninety years. Each year some fifty long-term residents from as many as twenty countries contribute to OMSC’s vibrant community life. Similarly broad is the ecclesiastical spectrum represented in the OMSC community—Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Evangelical, Pentecostal, Anabaptist, Reformed, Lutheran, Independent—all of whom find at OMSC a welcoming and nurturing community.

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*Many of today’s foremost missiologists and mission thinkers appear both in the IBMR and as lecturers at OMSC.*

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Although Scott Moreau states that Contextualization in World Missions came about almost by accident when he accepted the challenge to add a supplement to Stephen Bevan’s map of the models of contextualization, this work is obviously the result of years of research, observation, and personal involvement in the praxis of contextualization. While serving as a missionary in Africa, Moreau gained much experience in working with contextualization issues, and as a professor of intercultural studies at Wheaton College (Wheaton, Ill.), he is dedicated to communicating the principles of contextualization to his students, as well as giving them a broad perspective on the various models of contextualization that have been used in the cross-cultural communication of the Gospel.

In the opening pages the author presents an outline of the book, his purpose in writing it, and definitions of the terms he uses. In addition, in the first chapter he reviews the pertinent literature. As an evangelical, Moreau focuses on “mapping” evangelical models of contextualization, while not neglecting to position them within the broader map of the world of Christian contextualization.

In the first section of the book, Moreau describes assumptions missiologists make and criteria used for evaluating models of contextualization. He goes on to portray the basic principles that guide evangelical methods and the tools used for analysis and ultimately for application in the field. The second part of the book comprises descriptive “tours” through the various territories of the map. These chapters present well-documented examples from church life and from the Bible of the various roles played by the initiators of contextualization—facilitator, guide, herald, pathfinder, prophet, and restorer. The concluding chapter poses some future possibilities for contextualization.

Moreau has added a valuable volume to the literature on contextualization. The writing is clear, insightful, and easy to follow throughout. This book is a must for anyone seriously interested in the communication of the Gospel cross-culturally, whether beginner, student, or career missionary. For the professor who wishes to employ this book as a teaching text, a series of PowerPoint slides is available for use in the classroom.

To search OMSC’s free online database of over 6,300 dissertations in English, compiled in cooperation with Yale Divinity School Library, go to www.internationalbulletin.org/resources.

Penelope R. Hall, a Canadian, currently serves as a consultant for theological studies and theological libraries in the Majority World. She served as a missionary/Bible translator in South Vietnam (1966–75) and in Ecuador (1978–88).


This volume evolved from the 2010 symposium “Europe in China—China in Europe,” held at Zurich University for the 400th anniversary of Matteo Ricci’s death. The papers successfully “deepen the understanding of the scientific and missionary engagement of Matteo Ricci and his followers” (10). In particular, the Artur K. Wardega and Michela Fontana papers, which foreground Ricci, place much flesh upon this missiological skeleton while successfully avoiding a hagiographic approach. They contextualize Ricci the purveyor of “cultural accommodation” (23) and emphasize Ricci the academic. Of particular interest is Fontana’s illuminative account of Ricci’s youthful scientific studies, which underscores his use of science as disciple “bait” (28), from which we can draw twentieth-century parallels with the medical missionary “point of a lancet” approach.

Yu Sanle’s paper on the Swiss Jesuit Stadlin as a proponent of Ricci’s cultural accommodation is fascinating, and the account of the Zhalan foreign missionary cemetery provides a splendid example of the missionary-legacy revisionism of the People’s Republic of China. Eric Zettl’s paper, in German, on the eighteenth-century painter Sichelbarth details the Jesuit artistic association with court life; it is supported by Peter F. Tschudin’s informative, well-illustrated contribution on the history of paper making. Claudia Von Collani’s paper on lady Candida Xu offers a remarkable account of the first ranking female Christian in China. I do, however, take some issue with Xu Wemnin’s pejorative definitions of the Ming dynasty rulers, while providing no definition of “ruler” (40), together with a quotation from “later historical research” with no supporting reference or date (42). I was also, on several occasions throughout this volume, distracted by Latin and French phrases that required translation both within texts (54) and within footnotes (8). Setting aside these minor protests, however, this volume not only is a worthy addition to any Chinese historian’s library but also provides valuable pedagogical material.

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