Few writers in the English language have conveyed so vividly the sin of pride as Dorothy Sayers:

But the head and origin of all sin is the basic sin of Superbia or Pride. In one way there is so much to say about Pride that one might speak of it for a week and not have done. Yet in another way, all there is to be said about it can be said in a single sentence. It is the sin of trying to be as God. It is the sin which proclaims that Man can produce out of his own wits, and his own impulses nise pride when we see it, we stand aghast to see the havoc wrought by the triumphs of human idealism. We meant well, we thought we were succeeding—and look what has come of our efforts! There is a proverb which says that the way to hell is paved with good intentions. We usually take it as referring to intentions that have been weakly abandoned; but it has a deeper and much subtler meaning. That road is paved with good intentions strongly and obstinately pursued, until they become self-sufficing ends in themselves and deified.

Continued next page
Sin grows with doing good... Servant of God has chance of greater sin
And sorrow, than the man who serves a king.
For those who serve the greater cause may make the cause serve them,
Still doing right.¹

With support from texts such as Isaiah 14:12–20, theologians have generally agreed that the mother of all sins—Lucifer’s folly—is pride. We human beings have proven sadly receptive to the Great Deceiver’s DNA. Pride of race, nation, clan, religion, profession, and accomplishment flourish in the fertile soil of individual and collective egocentrism. Perhaps, as Sayers suggested and as Jesus’ encounters with the professionally pious of his day proved, it is especially the prestige pious among us who reveal pride’s most hideously debilitating malformities.

Mark Shaw’s ironic response to Robert Wuthnow’s book Boundless Faith: The Global Outreach of American Churches (2009) reminds us of the American conceit that “we are still the center of the show.” Long held to be a self-evident political, economic, and military truth, this delusion has too often infected Christian mission. Any pride, including religious, requires comparison. We human beings are comparative creatures, knowing who we are and where we fit, principally by measuring ourselves against others. Pride is so woven into the warp and woof of our lives that we are scarcely conscious of it. Theologically self-assured missionaries in the days of Jesus received his stinging condemnation: “You cross sea and land to make a single convert, assured missionaries in the days of Jesus received his stinging rebuke.”² While there is some truth in Illich’s assertion, his is not the whole truth.

Illich’s assertion, his is not the whole truth. Christians, whether Americans or not, can never be satisfied with passive acceptance of a neighbor’s misfortune when it lies in their power to do good. Far from being a peculiarly American trait, active pursuit of the well-being of others is the quintessential pattern of behavior that separates “sheep” from “goats” on judgment day (Matt. 25:31–46). Whatever the thrust of Christian missionary labors—whether incarnation among Muslims or disembodied voices over the airwaves—genuine humility is not only appropriate but essential (Mark 10:41–45). Mission, in line with the wise counsel of the late David Bosch, is a life of adventure that requires bold humility. —Jonathan J. Bonk

Notes


Robert Wuthnow and World Christianity: A Response to Boundless Faith

Mark Shaw

The year 2002 produced two religious monographs that attracted a great deal of public attention. The first was Steve Bruce’s God Is Dead: Secularization in the West. His book reflected the mood captured in the Economist in a mock obituary in its millennial issue. God had simply ceased to exist for many Europeans, and it was just a question of time before the rest of the globe caught up. The second notable publication that year took a very different line. Philip Jenkins argued in The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity that, far from heading into retirement, God was busy in the twenty-first century, gaining market share just about everywhere, most visibly in Latin America, Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa. Building on the work of scholars such as Walbert Bühlmann, Andrew Walls, Dana Robert, and Lamin Sanneh, Jenkins argued that a major demographic shift had taken place. Christianity’s center had now shifted from the Global North to the Global South.

The past decade has been kinder to Jenkins than to Bruce. Even the editors of the Economist published what amounted to a book-length retraction of their earlier God obituary, entitled God Is Back.4 God was alive and well—and living in Brazil.

Missiology and church history were most affected by this shift, but a whole range of disciplines, from religious studies to political science, sought to understand this new phenomenon. Centers for the study of world Christianity sprang up around the world. New chairs were founded at seminaries and departments of religion in the Global North. New books poured forth from major publishers describing the new shape of Christianity.

It should come as no surprise that the rise of world Christianity as both a perspective and a discipline has met with skepticism on the part of some within the academic community. Serious questions have been raised. More evidence has been demanded.

Joining the ranks of these critics is Robert Wuthnow, Andlinger Professor of Sociology at Princeton University, director of its Center for the Study of Religion, and author of many celebrated studies of American religious life. To these studies, Wuthnow has added Boundless Faith: The Global Outreach of American Churches (2009). In ten well-researched and vigorously argued chapters, he gives a thoughtful report on American Christianity’s ongoing central role in shaping global Christianity and, indirectly, on international politics in the twenty-first century. He seeks to provide a corrective to views that have relegated North American churches to the margins of what God is doing in his world. One such view Wuthnow sees as needing correction is what he calls the new paradigm. He identifies this view with writers such as Philip Jenkins, Andrew Walls, and Lamin Sanneh, calling it “a huge, conceptual obstacle” to understanding what is really going on in the Christian world.

The new paradigm to which Wuthnow objects tells a story about how non-Western Christianity “saved” the Christian movement from the decadence of the West. The missionaries may have brought the Gospel from the West, “but then a surprising thing happened. Once left to themselves, people all over the non-Christian world began to discover Christianity on their own.” Christianity moved its center to these flourishing new churches, which began to take charge of the global missions movement by sending missionaries back to the declining West, as well as to unchristianized parts of the world. Wuthnow rejects this narrative and offers one of his own, arguing that American churches are riding the tidal wave of globalization to connect with the church around the world as never before. Contrary to the new paradigm, American influence over global Christianity is not waning but is growing, because of the continuing educational, economic, cultural, and political power of the West (pp. 5, 108).

In this article I do not offer an extensive treatment of Wuthnow’s main theme of resurgent American Christian global engagement. I focus only on what is for him a secondary theme of his book, his critique of the new paradigm of world Christianity, responding to his three most important criticisms of the new paradigm. Beginning with his main criticism, that the new paradigm marginalizes the role of American Christianity in global Christianity, I then move on to his charge that the new paradigm overemphasizes demographics to the neglect of globalization. Finally, I review his argument that the new paradigm is overly influenced by the secularization thesis and postcolonialism.

Marginalizing of American Christianity?

Wuthnow’s central criticism of the new paradigm is that it leaves no place for American Christianity in shaping global Christianity. Having documented the growing vitality and overseas involvement of American congregations, Wuthnow expresses genuine puzzlement at the silence of the new paradigm concerning this fact. The new paradigm, he claims, fails to address “whether or not U.S. churches have any significant role to play in the further unfolding of global Christianity.” Somewhat facetiously he asks, “Should the American church pull its 40,000 foreign missionar-ies from the field” if their global role no longer matters? He is incredulous that the new paradigm seems to discount this ongoing missionary activity, emphasizing instead “the autonomous growth of Christianity in parts of Africa, Latin America, and Asia” (pp. 51, 72).
There can be little dispute with the evidence that Wuthnow marshals to demonstrate the ongoing vitality of North American Christianity. Consider the $4 billion (a number that recent sources would put much higher) that American churches spend on overseas ministries, a 50 percent increase from ten years ago. Consider that the number of full-time missionaries sent by American churches, of all kinds, is greater than fifty years ago. American congregations are reengineering themselves in surprising ways. No longer content simply to be chaplaincies of the rat race, American churches are becoming airports of a new globalization. American religious influence is at an all-time high. The new paradigm, he suggests, turns a blind eye to these important developments (p. 14).

While Wuthnow is certainly correct that American Christianity’s missionary impulse continues to be vital, his view that the new paradigm ignores this fact is exaggerated. Consider first the host of studies of American missions conducted by proponents of the new paradigm. While Philip Jenkins may not have devoted much attention to American missionary endeavor, other scholars in the new paradigm have. Andrew Walls, Lamin Sanneh, Brian Stanley, and Dana Robert, to name just a few, have published widely on the missionary factor in world Christianity. Consider Brian Stanley, director of the Centre for the Study of World Christianity at the University of Edinburgh, who, with Robert E. Frykenberg, has been the general editor of the multivolume series “Studies in the History of Christian Missions,” published by Eerdmans. Consider the title of Andrew Walls’s influential 1996 book on the new paradigm, The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith. Consider the editorial policy of Studies in World Christianity, the oldest journal of the new paradigm, founded by Walls and published by the University of Edinburgh: “Whilst the primary interest of the journal is in the rich diversity of Christian life and thought found in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Oceania, and eastern Europe, contributions that reflect on channels of influence in either direction between Christianity in the major- ity world and western Europe or North America will also be considered.” While the above writers, as historians, focus on the Western missionary contribution in the past, others have used new paradigm perspectives to understand the current role of Western mission in world Christianity. Donald Miller and Ted Yamamori’s study, Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement, is but one example.

This same vision governs the Centre for the Study of World Christianity at Edinburgh, the first of its kind and the inspiration for similar centers around the world. World Christianity understands that “channels of influence” flow in many directions and thus its interest in Western movements as well as non-Western ones. My own study of global awakenings and their missionary consequences includes a chapter on American Christianity and the ongoing impact of the Lausanne movement on holistic mission among evangelical churches. Admittedly, critics of the new paradigm who rely too heavily on Philip Jenkins may miss the complex and comprehensive scope of the discipline. But that is more a fault of the critics’ restricted choice of sources than of the new paradigm itself.

But a second point must be added. As strong as is the new paradigm’s commitment to missions, it cannot end the story there. Whatever may be the ongoing role of the United States in missions, world Christianity can never be satisfied with telling a story of missionary transmission without also telling the story of indigenous response. Without the story of how the world’s people groups received and responded to the Gospel, we have only half a story. And it is this half of the story, not the American half, that is the most neglected. For two hundred years we have studied the mission from the West. Only recently and in light of the massive response of the Global South to the Gospel have we finally turned our attention to the rest of the story.

Perhaps an example would help make the point. In his excellent study An Unpredictable Gospel, Jay Case writes about the evangelization of the Karen people of Burma. Although the pioneer missionaries were Adoniram and Ann Judson, the next generation included missionaries such as George Boardman carrying on the work. A powerful people movement broke out among the Karen, with long-term effects that have lasted until today. It would be possible to explain this movement simply in terms of missionary transmission, Western globalization, and the acids of modernity. This kind of explanation makes sense to Western scholars. The real story of the conversion of the Karen, however, is somewhat different. The Karen people believed that their creator God, Y’wa, had given them a book of life that they had lost, plunging their culture into misery and poverty. The myth prophesied, however, that the book would be returned to the people and they would be given another chance. The Karen response to the message of Judson and Boardman had less to do with missionary transmission and the forces of modernity than it did with indigenous elements within Karen culture. The new paradigm wants to tell the rest of this story.

The Dynamics of Globalization

Wuthnow also takes the new paradigm to task for what he sees as its naïve understanding of what constitutes “influence” in the shaping of global Christianity. For him, the most important influence shaping religion today is globalization. “Although the demographic center is shifting to the global south,” he writes, “the organizational and material resources of global Christianity remain heavily concentrated in the more affluent countries of North America and Europe” (p. 107). Wuthnow therefore concludes that the demographic shift of Christianity to the Global South is less significant than the Western-driven globalization that is exporting American religion.

Wuthnow sees the renewed international engagement of American Christianity as closely tied to “the nation’s wider participation in the international economic, political, and cultural community.” He argues that “because of foreign trade and finance, travel, and the mass media,” American Christians have been swept up in the strong outgoing tide of globalization and that this tide is changing their Christian identity and that of their congregations (p. 15).

I find his discussion of globalization rich and nuanced, leading him to view globalization as a pair of paradoxes. The mix of economic, political, and cultural forces that make up
globalization produces the paradox of sameness and diversification. In other words, the same force that produces McWorld also produces choice and competition. Globalization also produces the paradox of economic benefit in certain quarters even while it increases economic misery in others. He is not a globalization romantic.

Wuthnow is further aware that globalization is a catalyst of glocalization, the revival and renewal of the local. He recognizes that much of the global resurgence of Christianity and other world religions is an expression of glocalization (p. 105).

But at the end of the day, Wuthnow sees globalization as a wind from the West against which the local must eventually yield. He quotes with approval Bernice Martin’s assertion that “global capitalism, mediated through the high level political and economic choices made by the big players in the geopolitics-economic game, has set the structural limits but does not minutely determine the range of responses to them” (p. 107). Glocalization is free to play, but only in the globalization sandbox. Wuthnow faults the new paradigm for underestimating the power of globalization and for overestimating local agency.

Given the power of globalization, Wuthnow denies that there has been a shift in any meaningful sense. In his view, the demographic changes that Philip Jenkins and others propose as evidence of a shift are of little consequence when it comes to the issue of influence and power. Wuthnow asserts that though the demographic shift is real, “the notion of a shift of influence . . . cannot be inferred from such evidence” (p. 55). Because there is no shift in influence, the claims of Walls and others that a new age of Christianity has dawned with the explosion of Christianity in the Global South must be rejected as hyperbole. He recruits the late David Barrett to his side, claiming that the latter’s statistical studies support his view that the Western missionary presence is still the determinative factor in shaping global Christianity and that non-Western Christianity and its growth can be explained largely as a matter of a higher birthrate.

Pentecostalism is the one exception. Wuthnow is willing to admit that the global rise of charismatic faith does demonstrate a vitality that cannot simply be accounted for by a global baby boom. Pentecostalism for Wuthnow, however, seems to be an isolated case.

He offers his own model of global Christianity, which can properly be labeled as American hegemony, dominant but not tyrannical. We must understand real influence in terms of “economic transactions, communications flows, armed conflicts, political alliances, or cultural exchanges” (p. 55). The new paradigm, he contends, is too enamored with demographics to take globalization seriously.

How should the student of world Christianity respond? Consider Wuthnow’s assertion of American hegemony within global Christianity. With this proposal he has landed firmly, if unwittingly, in the briar patch of an ongoing, if different, debate about the “exporting of the American gospel.” This phrase comes from the title of a volume at the heart of this debate. In 1996 Steve Brouwer, Paul Gifford, and Susan Rose proposed that American capitalistic globalization was exporting a right-wing, money-focused, fundamentalist faith around the world. They contended that “Americans still believe, unlike the citizens of other advanced industrialized countries, that . . . other peoples of the globe can and ought to be made over in their image.” They add that “this religious preoccupation is fueled by the fact that the United States presently has the world’s dominant culture.”

Gifford has been the most aggressive proponent of the view that the emerging world Christianity is an expression of American religious hegemony, particularly in Africa. While the authors of Exporting the American Gospel are, unlike Wuthnow, highly critical of this American hegemony in global Christianity, they agree in seeing the hegemony model as the correct one.

The new paradigm does not deny that the religious and cultural traffic from the West has been heavy. What it denies is globalization’s control. New studies by Niall Ferguson and Charles Kupchan, coupled with the earlier pioneering studies of Roland Robertson, contest a simplistic view of globalization that sees it flowing only from the West. In their view, globalization has multiple centers and flows back toward the West as much as it once did from the West. This multicentered globalization has produced the conditions of massive religious pluralism and competition around the world. These conditions have enabled an equally massive response to the Gospel that is as diverse and dynamic as it is numerous. This Majority World response must be taken seriously. Given the dynamics of glocalization, by which the non-Western local expressions of Christianity become globalized, we should not dismiss demographic shifts as easily as Wuthnow does. Scholars of demographics have noted how the demographic shift caused by European migration around the

In the long run, Christian expansion is seldom if ever a matter of intimidation and power.
modernity and science advance. The second is a postcolonialism that rejects Western domination in any sphere and exalts local agency at all costs. Consequently, Wuthnow asserts that “the new framework is in turn a political act.” He writes, “The new paradigm is attractive because it offers a neat resolution to the secularization debate. It says in effect that both sides are right” (pp. 46, 62). Its paradigm of a declining post-Christian West and a rising post-Western Christianity is a feeble attempt to satisfy everybody.

More serious is the charge that the new paradigm is an attempt to compromise with postcolonialism and its emphasis on local agency. He singles out Lamin Sanneh for writing that it is because “the west still looms so large in the standard accounts of Third World Christianity that there is little room for the men and women on the ground” (p. 67). He hears in Sanneh’s appeal for local agency the echoes of postcolonialism.

First, how should a student of the new paradigm respond to the charge that we have been “politicized” by secularization and postcolonialism? In regard to bowing to the secularization thesis, I would say that most of the bowing that is going on is not on the part of the new paradigm. Proponents of postcolonialism and secularization theory are revising their views in light of what has been happening in world Christianity. Prominent among the names is Peter Berger. While Wuthnow notes Berger as a key secularization theorist, he fails to note Berger’s recent shift in light of the global resurgence of religion in general and Christianity in particular. In a remarkable volume, The Desecularization of the

Globalization is producing, not little replicas of the West, but an explosion of choice, pluralism, and competition.

World, Berger makes this candid confession: “The assumption that we live in a secularized world is false. The world today, with some exceptions to which I will come presently, is as furiously religious as it ever was, and in some places more so than ever. This means that a whole body of literature by historians and social scientists loosely labeled ‘secularization theory’ is essentially mistaken. In my early work I contributed to this literature.”

The new paradigm is not attempting to satisfy the demands of the secularization thesis. It is promoting a view of world Christianity that recognizes the truth of Berger’s words—that we live in a world that is “furiously religious.” It does not treat the West as an exception to this, although it recognizes that the cultural influence of Christianity in the West has declined since the Second World War. It simply notes that traditional forms of Christianity are in decline, even while new expressions are on the rise.

Second, what of Wuthnow’s claim that the new paradigm is unduly influenced by postcolonialism? Wuthnow quotes Lamin Sanneh’s Whose Religion Is Christianity? as evidence to this effect. Ironically, he seems unaware of Sanneh’s courageous challenging of the postcolonial paradigm given voice in his translation model and statements on the power of vernacular Scriptures. He criticizes Sanneh for bowing to the postcolonial critique without taking seriously Sanneh’s complete argument, articulated most thoroughly in Translating the Message, a title missing from Wuthnow’s bibliography. This modern classic, originally issued in 1989 and now republished in a revised edition, states its position as follows: “One major consequence of the thesis of this book is to reopen the whole subject of mission and colonialism, with an indication of the fresh lines of inquiry now open to us. Modern historiography has established a tradition that mission was the surrogate of Western colonialism, and that—more germane to the thesis of this book—together these two movements combined to destroy indigenous cultures. . . . I wish in this book to present another point of view, which, however tentative, should help restore some objectivity to the subject and bring it forward as part of the active field of scholarly endeavor.”

The view that Sanneh subsequently laid out—that missionaries were the renewers, not the destroyers, of culture through their emphasis on vernacular translation—has been one of the most significant challenges to postcolonialist discourse in the last twenty years. Sanneh may or may not be right in his views about the missionary contribution, but what he cannot be accused of, and what the new paradigm should not be accused of, is bowing to postcolonialism.

Conclusion: Catching Up with the Shift

I conclude that Robert Wuthnow, in an otherwise fine study, presents a critique of the new paradigm of world Christianity that is flawed both in its description of the new paradigm and in its prescription of how we are best to understand what God is doing in his world. Does the new paradigm render American Christianity useless and irrelevant to what God is doing in his world today? No, it does not. Does it take globalization seriously? Yes, and it also takes seriously the idea that globalization produces powerful movements of glocalization that cannot always be confined to the sandbox of globalization. Does it concede too much to secularization theory and postcolonialism? No, it does not. On the contrary, it represents one of the most persistent challenges to both secularization theory and postcolonialism.

Wuthnow’s book is a reminder of the ongoing struggle of American Christianity to catch up with the shift. For American evangelicals, Lausanne 1974 was the place where that shift hit home. Many came to Lausanne still clinging to the tradition that mission was from the West to the rest. They came away from Lausanne faced with a new reality: God’s mission is from everywhere to everyone. Western ecumenicals have taken the shift more in stride but still wrestle with what their role and identity are in this world of the new paradigm. All parts of the missional church have come far in accepting the global shift in Christianity, but we have moments in which we lose our way, alternately wondering if we have any place at all in this brave new world or, on the other extreme, asserting that we are still the center of the show. The new paradigm represents a third way between these extremes. God’s mission is from everywhere to everyone, and we are crucial to what he wants done in his world. But we must move beyond traditional views of center and periphery. God’s mission is polycentric. If our theology is biblical, we must believe that we are all central and that we are all peripheral. God is the only absolute center.

What does all of this mean for evangelicals and ecumenicals who want to understand what God is doing in their world and want to be relevant to his mission? The new paradigm reminds us that power is upside down in God’s mission. We, as American Christians, may be weaker in some ways than we once were, but at the end of the day we know that we partner with a God who delights to use the weak things of this world to defeat the strong, and the foolish things to confound the wise.
Short-Term Mission
An Ethnography of Christian Travel Narrative and Experience
Brian M. Howell

“Anthropologist Brian Howell brings rich research skills in participant observation and expertise in social theory to this fascinating project. His book is at the cutting edge of emerging scholarship on the topic of short-term missions. Scholars, students and participants in short-term mission trips will all find this book educational, insightful and provocative.”
—Robert J. Priest, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

Global Theology in Evangelical Perspective
Exploring the Contextual Nature of Theology and Mission
Edited by Jeffrey P. Greenman & Gene L. Green

These essays, drawn from the 2011 Wheaton Theology Conference, explore the past, present and future shape of biblical interpretation and theological engagement in the Majority World.

Contributors: Vince Bacote • Samuel Escobar • Ken Gnanakan • James Kombo • Mark Labberton • Terry LeBlanc • Juan Martínez • Ruth Padilla DeBorst • Lamin Sanneh • Andrew Walls • K. K. Yeo • Amos Yong
James M. Phillips, 1929–2012

James M. Phillips, associate director of the Overseas Ministries Study Center and associate editor of the International Bulletin of Missionary Research from 1983 to 1997, died August 2, 2012, at a hospital in Westborough, Massachusetts, after suffering complications from a fall at his residence in Hamden, Connecticut. He was 83.

Born into a Presbyterian family in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, he graduated from Princeton University in 1949 with a major in international affairs and went on a three-year assignment as a Presbyterian missionary to teach history, politics, and English Bible at what is now Yonsei University in Seoul, Korea. After he had taught for one year, the Korean War broke out, and he was evacuated with others to Japan for six months. He was able to return to South Korea, where he worked for nearly two years, mainly helping refugees from North Korea.

During his time in Korea Jim felt called to the ministry, so in 1952 he enrolled in Yale Divinity School, where he worked part-time as a student secretary for Kenneth Scott Latourette. Following graduation from Yale in 1955, he was ordained to the ministry in the Presbyterian Church and returned to Princeton University for graduate study in Christian ethics. During this time he met and married Ruth Henning. In 1959, upon completion of his doctoral studies at Princeton, he and Ruth (with their first daughter, Cathy) were sent as Presbyterian missionaries to Japan, where, after Japanese language study, Jim taught church history at Tokyo Union Theological Seminary. He also served as pastor of the West Tokyo Union Church and traveled to Korea and other East Asian countries on periodic visits in connection with his work with the Northeast Asia Association of Theological Schools. A second daughter, Marjorie, was born in Tokyo.

The period from 1968 to 1970 was a time of social turmoil in Japanese society and in its Christian institutions, when many of the nation’s schools were barricaded by striking students—including Tokyo Union Theological Seminary for six months. Jim started a chronicle of the seminary’s problems that was shared with a wider audience in Japan and overseas regarding what seemed to be the major social and theological issues that were surging. Eventually, this work became a book that traced the history of Japan’s Christian community from 1945 to 1975, published as From the Rising of the Sun: Christians and Society in Contemporary Japan (Orbis Books, 1981).

In 1975 the family returned to the United States because of Ruth’s health problems, and Jim became a visiting professor of church history at San Francisco Theological Seminary, which was part of the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley.

Then in 1983 Jim joined the staff of the Overseas Ministries Study Center, located in Ventnor, New Jersey, and later in New Haven, where the Center relocated close to Yale Divinity School. Here he served with distinction until he retired in 1997. Ruth died in 1999. In retirement Jim did volunteer service in Hungary, Croatia, and South Korea, and he also served for three months as a volunteer hospital chaplain at the Christian Medical Hospital in Vellore, India.

In April 2008 his article “My Pilgrimage in Mission” was published in the IBMR.
Ivan Illich and Leo Mahon: Folk Religion and Catechesis in Latin America

Todd Hartch

Priest and social critic Ivan Illich played a major role in discouraging Roman Catholic missions from the United States to Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s, as detailed in a previous issue of this journal. To make a long story short, during the early 1960s Illich first used his position as the director of a training center for missionaries to persuade would-be missionaries to go back to the United States; in 1967 he wrote a denunciation of American missionary activity called “The Seamy Side of Charity,” which spread his ideas to almost every Catholic missionary in Latin America and also to the wider Catholic public in the United States.

This article contrasts Illich with Chicago priest Leo Mahon, who led a mission project in Panama sponsored by the Archdiocese of Chicago. Between 1962 and 1980 Mahon and a team of priests, nuns, and laypeople tried to establish an experimental parish that not only would reach the residents of the San Miguelito neighborhood outside of Panama City but also would serve as a model for other mission projects and for the rest of the Catholic Church in Latin America. For a time this experiment proved wildly successful, but eventually it, like many North American missionary projects of the time, ended in almost complete defeat.

Illich: Folk Religion vs. Consumer Catholicism

So what was all the fuss about in the first place? Why was Catholic priest Ivan Illich so upset about U.S. Catholic missions to Latin America? The story begins on August 17, 1961, when Monsignor Agostino Casaroli, speaking on behalf of Pope John XXIII, challenged the Catholic Church in the United States to send 10 percent of its priests, nuns, and religious brothers to Latin America, and American Catholics responded with a surge of interest and hundreds of new missionaries. Illich, who had served as vice-rector of a Catholic university in Puerto Rico and had been commissioned by Fordham University to run a training center for future missionaries in Cuernavaca, Mexico, eventually came to believe that the influx of missionaries was part of a “multifaceted plan to keep Latin America within the ideologies of the West” and to turn the Latin American church into “a satellite to North American cultural phenomena and policy,” as he wrote in “The Seamy Side of Charity.” Because of their cultural baggage, missionaries from the United States had transformed the church in Latin America into “the Lord’s supermarket”; even the best missionaries were doing no more than “maintaining a clerical and irrelevant church.” He had little but scorn for the vast majority of American missionaries, calling them “a colonial power’s lackey chaplains,” “U.S. liberals who cannot make their point at home,” and “traveling escapists.” These missionaries had to accept that they were “useless and even harmful” because they were purveying not true Christianity but a modern perversion of the religion. Illich was vehement in his denunciation of the missionary initiative, risking his very priesthood, because he saw this form of missions as a caricature of Christ’s call to bring the Gospel to all nations. The Peace Corps, American cultural imperialism, the spread of American business models—these all were evils in his mind. Much worse, however, was the corruption of the body of Christ into “the Lord’s supermarket, with catechisms, liturgy, and other means of grace heavily in stock.”

At the same time, Illich did not view popular Latin American Catholicism as deficient. Whereas many Catholic social scientists and missionary intellectuals saw the Catholic practice of most Latin Americans as clearly substandard, Illich had no such qualms, primarily because of his experiences in Puerto Rico. “For anybody who has ever breathed the atmosphere of the Island,” he said of Puerto Rico, “there is no doubt that theirs is a Catholic folk-culture.” He went on to describe the ways in which people who had little contact with the institutional church nevertheless “regularly ask their parents’ blessing before leaving the house,” “devotedly invoke the names of Our Lord or the Virgin,” “plaster their homes with holy pictures,” and “sign themselves with the Cross before leaving home.” Because most Puerto Ricans lived “dispersed over the steep hills of the interior,” they could not attend Mass regularly, baptize their children, or marry in the church. “‘Bad habits’ like these,” he believed, “are not a sign of lack of Catholic spirit, but rather the effects of a peculiar ecclesiastical history.” In short, to Illich it would have been a blasphemy to replace Latin American folk Catholicism—a valid, even glorious, expression of Catholic faith—with the impersonal, consumerist version purveyed by American missionaries.

Illich’s denunciation caused quite a commotion, as he intended. He prevailed upon the editors of the Jesuit journal America to publish “The Seamy Side of Charity” right before the commencement of the 1967 meeting of the Catholic Inter-American Cooperation Program, an annual conference designed to encourage American interest in Latin America and the Latin American church. Illich and others then passed out copies of the article to all three thousand people in attendance. Catholic missionary activity quickly entered an era of confusion and doubt. Missionaries themselves suffered crises of confidence, while their supporters and advocates at home faced growing questions and criticisms about almost every aspect of missionary activity. In combination with the general distrust of authority in the Vietnam era, revelations about the role of the CIA’s use of missionaries, and the general malaise of the 1970s, Illich’s article contributed to a tapering off of U.S. Catholic missionary activity in Latin America.

The Mahon Plan

But not all missionaries agreed with Illich that American missionaries were a destructive force. One of those who disagreed with Illich’s basic premise (although not with some of his
Illich’s center in 1965. For example, lecturing for four days to a training class at the City, Panama, with no paved roads, sewers, or electrical service. The priests would “train and direct a large group of laymen in functions formerly performed by priests—especially catechesis.” Religious brothers and sisters would actually be counterproductive since it would not be reproducible in other parts of the region. Consequently, the experimental parish would have to focus on “the training and direction of laymen in functions formerly performed by priests—especially catechesis.” Meyer accepted Mahon’s proposal, and in 1963 Mahon and two other Chicago priests began their experimental parish in San Miguelito, a shantytown on the outskirts of Panama City, Panama, with no paved roads, sewers, or electrical service. It then was home to 40,000 people and grew to several times that size by the time they left in 1980.

For a time, Mahon and Illich were quite close. In fact, in 1961 Illich said, “I believe that Mahon’s catechetical approach is one of the most valuable things the United States will ultimately have exported to Latin America.” In 1962 Illich’s journal CIF Reports praised the lessons in Mahon’s catechism, The Family of God, as “warm, simple, and clear [and] seriously theological,” and a year later he called himself an “exponent of the Mahon Gospel.” Mahon had a similarly rosy view of Illich and used Illich’s center for language and cultural training for his team of missionaries before they came to Panama; Mahon once told the director of another Catholic mission, “I would by all means advise your sending your men to Cuernavaca.” He also worked closely with Illich, for example, lecturing for four days to a training class at Illich’s center in 1965.

But while Illich was becoming more and more skeptical about the prospects for any kind of positive missionary impact in Latin America, developing the views that he expressed in his scathing 1967 article, Mahon did not waver in his conviction that beneficial missionary work was possible in San Miguelito and, by extension, throughout Latin America. As early as 1964 he was expressing doubts about the direction of Illich’s center, which was not surprising, since by that time Illich was indeed attempting to discourage many potential missionaries.

Many missionaries built Catholic schools and seminaries and saw staffing and running them as a major part of their ministry, but Mahon, because he believed that most poor Latin Americans did not know even the rudiments of Catholic theology, proposed the primacy of “catechesis,” or in more common language, religious teaching; he was not talking about formal education that takes place in schools, but about the kind of teaching that could take place in the actual Mass and in informal groups that might meet in homes and neighborhood centers. He was not against Catholic schools; he simply believed that they were too expensive and used too much labor to educate a small, often wealthy, minority, when other methods could reach many times more people.

Mahon’s solution, as mentioned earlier, was to use a small number of priests to form a team with nuns and religious brothers. The priests would “train and direct a large group of laymen who would work with the best, most advanced ideas in popular catechesis and liturgy.” Religious brothers and sisters would not, as was usual, work in parochial schools or other Catholic institutions but instead would develop “mass-scale catechetical methods.” This departure from traditional missionary practice highlights how serious Mahon believed the religious crisis of Latin America was. The lack of priests and the constantly growing megacities of Latin America were to him the perfect recipe for the church to lose the lower classes completely. For example, he agreed with theologian Juan Luis Segundo that most of Latin America was in a “pre-Christian stage.” On another occasion he stated to his bishop, “Panama is a Catholic country in name only,” because, among other factors, only about 5 percent of the population attended Mass. The logical response was to make an all-out effort to spread the faith: “Much of Panama would like to be Christian but will first have to be instructed and converted, in the usage of the day, evangelized.” Institution building, school administration, and similar approaches were simply inefficient ways of responding to a spiritual emergency.

San Miguelito in Practice

Leo Mahon and two other Chicago priests arrived in San Miguelito in 1963 and immediately began taking stock of their surroundings. Their first observation was that Catholicism in their neighborhood was not, as was usual, work in parochial schools or other Catholic institutions but instead would develop “mass-scale catechetical methods.” This departure from traditional missionary practice highlights how serious Mahon believed the religious crisis of Latin America was. The lack of priests and the constantly growing megacities of Latin America were to him the perfect recipe for the church to lose the lower classes completely. For example, he agreed with theologian Juan Luis Segundo that most of Latin America was in a “pre-Christian stage.” On another occasion he stated to his bishop, “Panama is a Catholic country in name only,” because, among other factors, only about 5 percent of the population attended Mass. The logical response was to make an all-out effort to spread the faith: “Much of Panama would like to be Christian but will first have to be instructed and converted, in the usage of the day, evangelized.” Institution building, school administration, and similar approaches were simply inefficient ways of responding to a spiritual emergency.

Leo Mahon and two other Chicago priests arrived in San Miguelito in 1963 and immediately began taking stock of their surroundings. Their first observation was that Catholicism in their neighborhood was the province of women and children and that very few men seemed to feel comfortable at Mass. They also learned that Panamanian priests had supported themselves through “stole fees,” which were in effect charges for services, so that, for example, a Mass, a funeral, and baptism each had a specific price. As for popular religion, the American priests were dismayed to learn that residents of San Miguelito considered themselves good Catholics if they were baptized, were devoted to a specific saint, and had holy pictures in their houses—even if they were adulterers who never attended Mass and had demonstrated no evidence of love for their neighbors. “Being Catholic,” concluded Mahon, “was devoid of the messages of Christ and meant being totally dependent on external religious practices.” The religion of the masses of Latin America, in his view, was based on “deviated doctrines,” and its celebrations were “pagan festivals covered by a layer of Christianity so thin as to be transparent.”

Mahon was thus deeply convinced that folk Catholicism was not enough, that it was, in fact, not very Catholic. He put a strong emphasis on catechetical efforts because he believed that most people in San Miguelito simply did not understand basic Catholicism. For instance, he reported, “Few, if any, of those who attend have a clue as to what the Eucharist truly means”; for them, it was just “a near superstitious continuation of an ancient tradition.” He did not accept local traditions as set in stone; instead, he critiqued them and tried to improve them, for example, adding more doctrinal content to the processes that the community carried out during Holy Week. In the past these processions had failed to provide “a sense of living mystery and of the necessity of inner conversion,” but he reformed them by adding more teaching and explanations of each liturgical action.

Mahon’s approach could be quite confrontational, as when he tried to instruct a group that was planning a feast in honor of Saint Rose, a Peruvian who had made herself ugly to preserve her chastity, but that knew almost nothing about who she really was. “To be devoted to St. Rose,” he said, “means to have respect for one’s own body, but above all for the integrity of women.” He went on to explain that it was wrong and irrational to celebrate her while rejecting everything that she stood for. “To honor her as the patroness of the community without resolving to stop
While the success can be measured by the fact that in 1971 they had trained school for lay cursillo teachers. The extent of these programs’ over parish affairs, monthly days of reflection, and a training married couples, parish councils that exercised real leadership parish. Other programs included courses for young people and ment, not just to God and to Catholicism, but also to their local community. None of the new programs in San Miguelito would

have been necessary if folk Catholicism was a fruitful approach to Catholic life. The corollary of this idea of the insufficiency of folk Catholicism was that missionary activity in Latin America was both necessary and possible. If Mahon was right, the multitudes of Latin America were in great need of instruction in Catholic faith and practice, and missionaries like his team from Chicago could be extremely beneficial to them. Mahon thus provided both the rationale for American Catholic missions in Latin America and a practical model for them to follow.

For a season, Mahon and San Miguelito were regarded as on the cutting edge not just of Catholic missionary work but of the Catholic Church in Latin America more generally. For instance, in 1968 when René Laurentin wrote a book on “the Catholic Church’s position on the continent today,” he focused on three influential leaders: Ivan Illich, Brazilian bishop Helder Camara, and Leo Mahon. In 1972 Enrique Dussell, the distinguished historian of the church in Latin America, called San Miguelito “unique in Latin America” and called for its use as a model for the region. According to one author, by 1973 the San Miguelito experiment had influenced the creation of thirteen similar communities “in at least ten other countries,” including Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and the United States. Unfortunately for Mahon, however, by 1975 he was back in Chicago, and in 1980 Chicago’s last remaining priest was called home from San Miguelito. Tensions with Panamanian priests, conflict with the government of Panama due to Mahon’s vocal criticisms of its policies, and a new Chicago archbishop who did not share the vision for San Miguelito, along with the general antimissionary spirit fostered by Illich and similar critics of missions, led to the ending of the archdiocese’s support for the project. It seemed that Mahon’s efforts had been wasted and that Illich had won another victory.

Who Won?

Illich and similar critics really did pop the balloon of Catholic enthusiasm for missionary work in Latin America. The gradual buildup of American missionaries responding to the pope’s call for 10 percent to go to Latin America resulted in the 1968 peak of 3,391 who answered the call to work in the region. Responding in large part to the doubts awakened by Illich’s article, more than 500 missionaries had left the field by 1970, and numbers continued to drop through the 1970s, so that by 1979 there were only about 2,300 American Catholic missionaries left in Latin America. Illich and his allies rejoiced.

One could clearly look at San Miguelito as another instance of North American missionary failure in Latin America. Leo Mahon managed to stay for only twelve years, and the whole project lasted less than two decades. In most of the parishes and churches that the Chicago team had set up, by the 2000s there was far less activity and excitement. Reflecting on the San Miguelito experiment, one Panamanian scholar reported that by the 2000s, the Catholic youth of San Miguelito demonstrated far less commitment than their predecessors had in the 1960s and 1970s, and even those who had participated in the experiment during those decades felt a sense of disillusionment. The church in San Miguelito had not been able to sustain the catechesis, social involvement, and basic enthusiasm of the Chicago years. But the same scholar also reported that the church had changed substantially: “Now there are more possibilities for self expression and action in the Church. Bishops . . . in many ways allow their priests and their faithful to develop their own initiatives.” In fact, he believed that the Panamanian bishops had adopted
the complexity of the Latin-American reality.’’

Meanwhile, the rise of base ecclesial communities, lay catechists, and the new ecclesial movements (such as Focolare and the Neocatechumenal Way) meant that, even apart from missionaries, lay Catholics were studying the Bible and teaching and learning Catholic doctrine to a degree never before seen in Latin America.

In short, despite the termination of the Archdiocese of Chicago’s experiment in San Miguelito, mission to Latin America continued along the lines pioneered by Leo Mahon in Panama, even as catechism and lay leadership took off throughout the region. Who was more influential? In 1980 most observers would have said Ivan Illich, but looking back thirty years later, it is clear that Leo Mahon’s priorities carried the day. It is also clear that Mahon’s fundamental conviction that folk Catholicism was not forming moral, committed Catholics and therefore needed to be reformed had been adopted by the Latin American hierarchy and laity. The active and growing segments of the Latin American Catholic Church, with their base ecclesial communities, the charismatic renewal, and movements like Focolare, all agreed that folk Catholicism was not enough.

Notes

4. Ibid., pp. 5, 7, 8, 9.
7. Leo Mahon to Albert Meyer, February 15, 1962, Box 1, File 1 (1:1), San Miguelito Mission Records, University of Notre Dame Archives, Notre Dame, Ind. (Except where noted below, all correspondence is located in these records.)
18. Ibid., pp. 44–45, 74–76.
19. Ibid., p. 85.
22. Although not exactly the text they used in 1963, a similar version of this catechism appears in two Maryknoll publications (Maryknoll, N.Y.): Leo Mahon and Sister Mary Xavier, The Family of God (1964); and Leo Mahon and Madre Mary Xavier, Catecismo de la Familia de Dios (1965).
30. Francisco Blanco, “San Miguelito.”
Da‘wah: Islamic Mission and Its Current Implications

Albrecht Hauser

Islam is a missionary religion with universal claims, covering every aspect of human existence. Islam is also a political religion, teaching that both public and private space must be guided by the will of Allah, as revealed in the Quran and exemplified in the sunna (the sayings and traditions of Muhammad’s life, which are considered normative). In Islam we encounter a comprehensive faith system that requires people’s full surrender to Allah. Muslims are obliged to call all humanity to submit to and acknowledge the total rule of Allah over the whole world. They believe that humanity finds Allah’s “straight way” only through Islam (sura 1:6–7).²

As a Christian writing about Islam, I wish to make clear at the outset that I differentiate between Muslims as human beings and Islam as a faith system. My life has been enriched and challenged by encounter with many Muslims over the years. At the same time, I have become more and more convinced that Islam is an ideology, belief system, and missionary religion that is fundamentally and diametrically opposed to the central tenets of the Gospel. We must realize that Islam involves a corporate community of faith in which not every individual may share all aspects of the whole. I thus have no hesitation in saying that I find the majority of Muslims to be peaceable and peace loving. They are such, I would say, not because of, but in spite of, Islam.

After having been engaged in Christian mission in Asia for eighteen years, I came back to Germany in 1980 and soon realized the increasing challenge of Islam to church and society in my own country. Even in 1979 the awakening and increasing assertiveness of political and militant Islam prompted an editorial in the Guardian Weekly to state, “Islam has begun to make Marxism look decidedly familiar and manageable. . . . [Islam] presents itself as a powerful force in international affairs.”³

Europe is now being forced to take a fresh look at Islam and its influence because of Islamic beliefs about jihad (holy war) and da‘wah (from Arabic da‘a, meaning “call, invite,” referring to the Islamic mission, the “call” to submit to Islam). Doing so is no longer only an academic exercise but involves interacting with Muslims in daily experience, rubbing shoulders with them on the streets of our towns, at our workplaces, and in our schools and shopping malls. As we meet ordinary Muslims, we need to recognize that they are, first of all, fellow human beings with needs, hopes, and anxieties similar to our own. For Christians this challenge comes at a time when many traditional values have been undermined by materialism and secularism, but also at a time when new religious movements are making inroads among people of all ages.

This new situation forces the church both to develop a biblical and Christian theology of religions and to affirm authentically Christian patterns of behavior. We are called to discover afresh in our generation what our apostolate and mission are. We must overcome our lack of confidence in the Gospel and understand more deeply what it means when the crucified and risen Lord Jesus Christ says to us, “As the Father has sent me, so I send you” (John 20:21). The Gospel needs to be shared in an ongoing dialogue of love, life, and truth. We are called to be compassionate with the people who live among us, to be scholarly and accurate in our evaluation of Islam, and to remain absolutely true to Jesus Christ. Yet we would be foolish not to look squarely at the nature of Islam and discern its strategic da‘wah goals and concepts. We need to be aware of history and the prevailing cultural relativism of our day, lest we inadvertently facilitate the da‘wah strategies of organized Islam without realizing the potentially devastating effects on our civil and religious liberties. Traditionally, Islam has not granted religious liberty in the letter or spirit of article 18 of the U.N. Universal Human Rights Declaration. Where Sharia becomes the rule of life, human rights, especially for minorities, are strangled, and civil liberties are curbed.

Nature and Scope of Islamic Da‘wah

Islam is not just a faith, concerned only with the spiritual aspects of life, and not just a religion, content to play a minority role in a society. The late Zaki Badawi, former president of the Muslim College in London, in explaining how Islam should impact all of life, stated: “The history of Islam as a faith is also the history of a state and a community of believers living by Divine law. The Muslims, jurists and theologians, have always expounded Islam as both a Government and a faith. This reflects the historical fact that Muslims, from the start, lived under their own law. Muslim theologians naturally produced a theology with this in view—it is a theology of the majority. Being a minority was not seriously considered or even contemplated.”⁴

Muslims generally claim that Islam is the final religion and therefore rightfully supersedes all previous religions, whichever are innately deficient or have been corrupted in the course of history. “And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers” (sura 3:85). This conviction and confidence is deeply embedded in the Islamic consciousness through the Quran and the sunna (e.g., see sura 3:110).

Da‘wah and Jihad

It is generally agreed that Muslims are obliged to call and invite everyone to full submission to the one God (note the central place of tawḥīd, or “oneness [of God],” in Muslim teaching). This call is clearly expressed in sura 3, the historical context of which is a polemical dialogue of Muhammad with visiting Christians from Najran whom Muhammad urged to become Muslims. “Say [O Mohammad], O people of the Scriptures [Jews and Christians]: Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allah. Then, if they turn away, say: Bear witness that we are Muslim” (sura 3:64).⁵ It also appears in Muhammad’s invitation letter to the Byzantine emperor Flavius Heraclius (ruled 610–41), warning him to heed the call of Islam or to bear the consequences of his rejection.⁶

The late Sheikh Abdul Azeer ibn Abdullah and ibn Baaz, for-
mer grand mufti of Saudi Arabia and head of the Council of Senior Scholars, stated in his Words of Advice Regarding Da’wah that the obligation of da’wah is both a collective duty (fard kifayyah) of the Muslim community and a personal duty (fard ’ain) of each individual Muslim.9

To accept tawhid includes rejecting wholeheartedly anything that endangers this unity in order to avoid the unforgivable sin of shirk (which means to associate with Allah anything that is not Allah). Allah’s will and way have been defined in the Quran and interpreted through the sunna. Those who are enlightened must see that ignorance and unbelief are eliminated. Therefore all humanity must be called to make the shahada, or public confession: “There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the apostle (messenger) of Allah.” The Islamic nation, that is, the Ummah (the worldwide Islamic community), is the instrument to fulfill and establish Allah’s will on earth through da’wah. Tawhid is impossible without Muhammad, and allegiance to Allah includes obedience to Muhammad. Through da’wah humanity is invited to witness to the truth of Islam and the conviction that Muhammad is the final prophet of Allah. Through confessing the shahada a person becomes a Muslim and joins the Ummah.

The Quran and the hadith (the body of traditions or sayings attributed to Muhammad) contain several references to da’wah.10 Muhammad himself is considered the prime model for the implementation of da’wah. His life in word and deed is considered the normative model in all aspects of faith and life and valid for every succeeding generation.11 Sheikh ibn Baaz states further that “the aim of da’wah is to bring the people out of the darkness and into the light, and to guide them to the truth until they hold on to it and are saved from the Fire and the Anger of Allah.”12 Resistance to da’wah on the part of hearers leads inevitably to jihad, provided that the power balance in the area of resistance is in Islam’s favor: Since all power and territory is considered to belong to Allah, Muslims affirm their duty and right to Islamize all of life in all countries of the world. Territory once gained is especially considered to belong forever to Allah; if it should be lost politically, every effort should be made to regain it. The need to overcome unbelief (kuffar) and to establish “Dar al-Islam” (lit., house or abode of Islam, that is, a realm where the Muslim religion may be freely practiced) may require more than verbal da’wah, especially if the invitation is rejected. Ali Isa Othman, for some years adviser to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), states, “The spread of Islam was military. There is a tendency to apologise for this and we should not. It is one of the injunctions of the Quran that you must fight for the spreading of Islam. . . . Fighting for God (Jihad) has a wider meaning. It may be militant, or it may be evangelical, in the Christian sense. The militant is not excluded. This is because, according to the Quran, communities have always resisted a prophet’s offer of guidance from God.”13

Soon after his migration to Medina, Muhammad was willing to apply military and political pressure in order to implement Allah’s will. At the same time, jihad can create the conditions for people to accept Islam through da’wah, rather than being killed or having to live as dhimmis (non-Muslims in a Muslim state, who live under certain restrictions), since Allah is ultimately the protector and guardian only of those who truly believe.14 Ibn Baaz is clear in asserting the need to use coercion against any resistance to establishing the Islamic order. “The aim of da’wah and jihad is not to shed blood, take wealth or enslave women and children; these things happen incidentally but are not the aim. This only takes place when the disbelievers refrain from accepting the truth and persist in disbelief and refuse to be subdued and to pay the jizya (tax levied on free non-Muslims living under Muslim rule) when it is requested from them. In this case, Allah has prescribed the Muslims to kill them, take their wealth as booty and enslave their women and children.”15

Institutional Support and Inspirational Source

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and Saudi-financed institutions pay special attention to organizing and assisting Muslims who live in the West, not only as a bridgehead for da’wah, but also for their value as an interest lobby for generating finances and for the influence that they, like Rachid Ghannouchi who returned in 2011 from London to Tunisia, can assert back to their countries of origin. In addition, powerful networks of Islamist movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood have global networks of institutions and think tanks in the Islamic world and in the West. They have organized mosque communities to strengthen Islamic identity and awareness of belonging to the worldwide Islamic Ummah and to support the idea that their being in the West is ordained by Allah to spread the knowledge and acceptance of Islam.

In 1980 the Islamic Council of Europe announced a strategy for the Islamization of Europe: “Once a community [of Muslims] is well organized, its leaders should strive to seek the recognition of Muslims as a religious community having its own characteristics by the authorities. Once recognized, the community should continue to request the same rights the other religious communities enjoy in the country. Eventually, the community may seek to gain political rights as a constituent community of the nation. Once these rights are obtained, then the community should seek to generalize its characteristics to the entire nation.”16

This da’wah strategy is derived from early Islam. In a paper entitled “The Charter (Constitution) of Medina,” Amir Zaidan, formerly of the Islamic Association of Hessen and lecturer at the University of Frankfurt, states that the Muslims in Germany need to understand the importance of their historical roots, especially the political and communal events soon after Muhammad’s arrival at Medina. He writes, “The first historical activity of the prophet Mohammed (salla-llahu, alaihi wa sallam [may Allah honor him and grant him peace]) right after his arrival in the exile of Medina was the purpose establishment of an Islamic identity in order to transform step by step the given structures of society. . . . In order to regulate the political relations of the Muslims to the other communities, the inhabitants of Medina entered into a written agreement and contract with the new rulers, the new immigrants as well as the natives and all other minorities who dwelled there.”17 He even states that, from this concept of the “Charter of Medina,” one could construct the idea of a power-sharing constitutional statehood for the Muslims living in the West. Zaidan fails to mention, however, that when Muhammad arrived at Medina the majority population were Jews. During Muhammad’s
lifetime, they were either sent into exile or eliminated, and Muhammad became the arbitrator of all conflicts.18

In the early days of Muhammad’s preaching in Mecca, da‘wah was a call and summons to faith in the one God. But soon after his move away from Mecca and his migration to Medina, he was willing to apply military and political pressure in order to implement Allah’s will (see suras 9:5; 9:111; 8:60).19 Contracts, which were negotiated by putting others under duress, could later be broken at will. These practices, which left the non-Muslim “unbelievers” in a legally precarious position, created a climate of uncertainty, which throughout the centuries has accompanied dhimmitude, or minority status, of Jews and Christians under Islam.20

For Muslims who represent political Islam, the Charter of Medina and Muhammad’s ten years there are relevant models for today. Muhammad’s behavior shows how he could successfully “transform step by step the given structures of society” by keeping his opponents in limbo. The time of the Prophet in Medina is an ideal for these Muslims. Inspired by his model, the present-day Islamic da‘wah strategy does not primarily aim at individual converts but seeks to achieve its society-wide goals by using and influencing the institutions of a given society. It demands special privileges for Muslim communities, including space for observance of Sharia. These objectives are to be achieved through keeping the societal and governmental institutions busy with an Islamic agenda. Yusuf Al Qaradawi, the influential president of the International Union of Muslim Scholars and of the European Fatwa Council, states in a fatwa: “Muslims in the west ought to be sincere callers to their religion. They should keep in mind that calling others to Islam is not only restricted to scholars and Sheikhs, but it goes far to encompass every committed Muslim.”21

Global and Local Interrelatedness

At its meeting in London on July 10, 2006, the European Council for Fatwa and Research, of which Al Qaradawi is president, called on Muslims living in the West to abide by the laws in their respective countries and to respect the rights of non-Muslims. But the council also stated: “While abiding by the host country’s laws, Muslims are also asked to form Islamic bodies to organize their personal issues in accordance with Shari’a.”22 Furthermore, this body recommends that Muslims in the West spare no effort in getting the countries in which they live to recognize Islam as a religion and Muslims as a community that should enjoy full rights—in other words, agitate for a parallel Islamic community. Al Qaradawi has a popular weekly program on Al Jazeera and has been prominently present on the Web. He has repeatedly stated that Islam will triumph over the whole world. Referring to a hadith saying that Constantinople and Rome will both be conquered for Islam, he argues that, since this prophecy has been realized for Constantinople (now Istanbul), “thus remains the second part of the prophetic tidings to be fulfilled, the conquest of Rome, through which Islam will enter Europe once again. . . . Most probably this conquest will be through the power of word and pen, not through military force.”23 Many Islamic Web sites illustrate how the role model of Muhammad and the early history of Islam are an inspiration and textbook for today. The global migration of refugees and the mass exodus of able young Muslims to the West is seen as a modern hijra (emulating the emigration of Muhammad and his followers from Mecca to Medina).24 Throughout Islamic history, migration and intermarriage have served as means to facilitate the Islamization of society.

Approximately 15 million Muslims live in western Europe. Quite a few have gained citizenship in their adopted countries. In Europe as a whole there are about 50 million Muslims, half of them in Russia. The influx of significant numbers of Muslims into western Europe from the mid-1950s onward coincided with a resurgence of fundamentalist Islam, and even liberal-minded Europeans need to realize that the presence of Muslims in Europe cannot be isolated from what is happening in the rest of the Islamic world. Islam sees the secularized and postmodern West as decadent. One part of da‘wah strategy is therefore aimed at countering the faith-corrupting influences of Western society. Muslim diplomats and members of international agencies strengthen Islamic interests in Europe and the West. Students from Islamic countries are found in almost every university. Many of them are highly motivated Muslim activists, well organized and often linked to political Islam. They may be involved in the politics of their home countries or may be part of global Islamic networks.

Yet neither in Islamic countries nor in the West are Muslims a monolithic block. They also experience the challenge of globalization and clashes of culture. Living in the free West, they are at times keenly aware that not all is well in Dar al-Islam. Yet to acknowledge why so many Muslim countries fail to grant social justice, human rights, and religious liberty to all their citizens would cause a loss of face. Instead, Muslim opinion shapers present themselves as a despised and marginalized community.25

At the same time, the West is increasingly on the agenda of Islamic revival and its da‘wah strategies. The best Muslim thinkers are analyzing its cultural context in an effort to discern its strengths and weaknesses. Coordinated da‘wah strategies are being developed, including the use of semantics to imprint Islamic thought patterns and concepts.26 Ismail Raji al Faruqi sought to make Islamic terminology part of the everyday German language.27 So-called islamologcal translations create new words.28 Amir Zaidan seems to have made it his goal to introduce untranslatable Arabic into German.29 New conservative translations of the Quran and other Islamic literature promote this process.

While Muslims are unabashedly involved in da‘wah, they at the same time reject Christian missionary approaches to them.30 The Crusades, colonialism, and Christian mission are considered the capital sins of the West. Globalization and Western dominance, which are stantly resisted, are seen as the reason for the corruption of the Islamic world. Islam clearly does not accept other religions as equals. For Muslims, the so-called Abrahamic faiths (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) are not in parity.31 Islam is the only and unique religion; the Quran always speaks in the singular about religion (e.g., sura 3:19, 85; 48:28).

Muslims want to convince their dialogue partners to embrace Islam. After all, each non-Muslim is seen as a potential Muslim who must be brought back to the true faith.32 Every newborn child is considered to be a genuine Muslim who, except for a contrary education and upbringing, will continue in Islamic

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faith (sura 30:30); only Islam is natural (fitra). Some converts to Islam in the West therefore speak about their “reversion” to Islam. But Islam is a one-way street when it comes to conversion or “apostasy.” Leaving Islam is considered treason, a crime worthy of death, but da’wah is legitimate—and is supposedly gaining momentum.

Between 2004 and 2005 more than 4,000 Germans are alleged to have embraced Islam. While the statistics may be propaganda, Muslims in Europe have clearly upgraded their public relations activities. Muslims are producing more quality publications, and the presence of Muslims in the media is disproportionally high. The latest communication technology, including YouTube, is used to reach out to both Muslim and non-Muslim communities. Even the hijab (a veil covering the hair), perhaps the most visible sign of Islam as a counterculture under Sharia, is promoted. One German study, for example, tries to show that the crown of women’s emancipation is Islam. A few prominent converts play a very active role in da’wah, and in Germany they have become more assertive and polemical. Pierre Vogel, who presents himself as a German-Arab sheikh, reaches out to young people, presenting Islam as the only true religion and teaching on stage how easy it is to “revert” to Islam. The number of prominent Muslims, some of them very outspoken, is increasing. Quite a few have published books and explained why they embraced Islam and why others should do the same.

Dialogue with Christians and secular society is quite often seen, within the framework of da’wah, as an opportunity to interact, not with the goal of greater mutual understanding, but in order to create favorable conditions for the Muslim community. In these interactions, Muslims have shown a general tendency to depict themselves as victim and to present grievances in order to gain favorable and privileged conditions for the Muslim community. There has been much strife in Germany over the Islamic dress code, with Muslims demanding women-only days for public swimming pools and exemption from coeducational activities. Muslims have also demanded halal (lit. “permissible”) food in schools and hospitals. Requests to build mosques have raised questions in some communities, but in order to create favorable conditions for the Muslim community. In these interactions, Muslims have shown a general tendency to depict themselves as victim and to present grievances in order to gain favorable and privileged conditions for the Muslim community. There has been much strife in Germany over the Islamic dress code, with Muslims demanding women-only days for public swimming pools and exemption from coeducational activities. Muslims have also demanded halal (lit. “permissible”) food in schools and hospitals. Requests to build mosques have raised questions in some communities, as the public is becoming increasingly aware that religious minorities in Islamic countries are routinely denied religious freedom and the right to build their own places of worship. In Germany the push to build mosques, complete with minarets and domes, has caused much discussion and strife, ending only when the permission to build is granted. Germany has between 3.5 and 4 million Muslims, which is approximately 4.4 percent of the population, with the prognosis of about 10 million Muslims by 2030. The demographic developments (higher birth rate in the Muslim community and immigration of refugees) are an encouragement for Muslims engaged in da’wah, since they also mean more presence. There is further a tendency for Muslims to concentrate in lower-cost housing areas and around mosques, which creates communities with a high-density Muslim population and leads to the development of parallel societies. Non-Muslims may move out of these neighborhoods, sometimes on the “advice” of the Muslims, especially if they happen to be migrant Christians or converts from Islam. This segregation of society, which is part of da’wah strategy, is certainly not helpful for the integration of Muslims into a liberal and civil society, as the West still currently claims to be.

**The Role of Saudi Arabia and the OIC**

The government of Saudi Arabia has long played a vital role in da’wah outreach to the Muslim diaspora in the West, as well as to non-Muslims. Within Saudi Arabia, da’wah activities are supervised by a well-funded ministry. Various Saudi institutions and instruments coordinate da’wah activities overseas. In December 2005 King Fahd’s Web site claimed that the king’s personal efforts had led to the establishment of numerous centers, mosques, colleges, and schools. It also mentions secular universities and colleges that have received grants to establish Islamic departments and chairs. Islamic interests are often part of the agenda of diplomatic and foreign delegations.

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), along with its related institutions, has become the major international political da’wah organization. The primary basis of the OIC is the quranic concept of the Ummah. It understands itself as the continuation of the caliphate (the office of the caliph, or successor to Muhammad as temporal and spiritual head of Islam)—abandoned since 1924 in the wake of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire—qualified to address the challenges facing Islam in the international arena in the twenty-first century. Its objective is to propagate the principles of Islam and to coordinate and finance the dissemination of Islam throughout the world.

Migrants are currently using the present global economic crisis to promote Islamic banking through investment in industry and commerce. This too is part of the Islamist da’wah agenda. Islamic opinion makers and heads of leading Islamic organizations strongly encourage Muslims to fulfill the obligation of da’wah to the West. As Khurram Murad states, “On the one hand, there is the requirement of building and reinforcing the Muslim sense of identity, self-assurance and confidence. . . . On the other, there is the goal of bringing the same West to Islam, which would necessarily mean that it would become part of the Muslim Ummah.”

Intellectuals and institutions related to the Muslim Brotherhood play a central part in the planning of global da’wah. The so-called Project, described in a document found in Switzerland during an investigation of Islamic terrorism, illustrates how da’wah, which is publicly distanced from violent jihad, nevertheless aims at the same end result: an Islamic takeover. The soft da’wah and the hard jihad both aim to undermine and transform civil societies and bring them into Dar al-Islam. They move together in the direction of supplanting democratic, freedom-loving civil societies.

Political Islam has become increasingly impatient since September 11, 2001, and the subsequent military conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Various efforts have been made to polish Islam’s tainted image and to stress the rhetoric that Islam is peace-loving. The West is generally blamed for all ills, and great efforts are under way to curb so-called Islamophobia. The head of religious affairs in Turkey has on several occasions expressed his concern that Islamophobia and criticism of Islam endanger world peace. The OIC has created an international forum for da’wah to

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**Da’wah today involves much global strategic thinking and analysis, along with local action and implementation.**

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strengthen Islamic solidarity in the defense of Islamic interests and to spread Islam. A comprehensive ten-year action plan for implementing da’wah was adopted at the OIC summit in Mecca in December 2005 and has been affirmed in subsequent meetings, such as the OIC annual summit at Dakar, Senegal, in March 2008. 46

Da’wah today involves much global strategic thinking and analysis, along with local action and implementation, and includes the role of the OIC at the United Nations, in the European Union, and in the Council of Europe. At the Human Rights Council and the United Nations, representatives of OIC member-states have sought to place resolutions against defamation of religion on the agenda. While sounding innocuous and even commendable, their real intent and effective outcome would be to curb any possible critique of Islam. Lawyers of the European Centre for Law and Justice have warned of the dire consequences for human rights and religious liberty if these resolutions are pushed through. 47 Direct criticism of Islam and even raising questions about Islam are seen by Muslims as Islamophobia. Muslims have attempted to undermine the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its related conventions, trying to give the Sharia-based Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam (1990) equal standing at the United Nations. 48 They even claim that Sharia is the basis for all human rights and needs to fill the gaps in the U.N. declaration. 49

Unless the emerging global da’wah and jihad are defeated in the next few years, European society could face balkanization. The idea of a global caliphate not only embracing the Ummah but also conquering the West for Islam is a dangerous Islamist dream. Some want to achieve this goal through da’wah; others think jihad is the best approach. Conflicts are unavoidable unless these issues are recognized and efforts are made to neutralize Islam’s current totalitarian presuppositions. The free world needs to be resolute in protecting human rights and religious liberties for the entire world and therefore needs to resist anything that undermines the Declaration of Human Rights and its related conventions. If the West puts its collective head in the sand by denying the danger that political and militant Islam represents for liberally conceived civil society, its own refusal to act with seriousness will lead to bondage and dehumanization. Facing truth is costly but liberating. As we anticipate the future, various scenarios are possible, for Muslims too are caught up in much wishful thinking and also find it difficult to face reality.

We may not know where history is going, yet we can be certain that Europe now faces an immense challenge from Islam. Bernard Lewis, for one, has predicted that Europe will be under Islam by the end of the twenty-first century. 50 He may be correct, and in certain areas the takeover could happen even earlier. But in history and in society as a whole, there is not only a death instinct operative (for example, the impulse no longer to resist dictatorial ideologies), but also a desire to achieve sanity and freedom (for in living to the glory of God humans are most fully alive). To acquiesce in dhimmi status is to give up on life by accepting a sort of death in the midst of life. This line of thought should challenge the church, not to lose hope or to be paralyzed by fear, but to remain faithful to Christ by sharing the Gospel with Muslims and challenging Islam both as Christians and as members of civil society. A quite different scenario for Europe is presented by Philip Jenkins, who speaks of “Europe’s Christian comeback.” 51 For such optimism to be justified by events, however, a great reawakening indeed will be required.

Despite all that has just been stated, we should be cognizant that a significant number of Muslims are turning to Christ. This is happening not only in the West, where there is religious freedom, but even in Islamic countries. Some Muslims become open or silent agnostics. Others encounter Christ and experience the liberating love of God and the Gospel. The migrant churches in the West could play a significant role in demonstrating that in Christ, fullness of life and redemption for humanity have come. Yet at the same time and even in the West, intimidation and threats are experienced by Muslims who turn to Christ. This issue, now openly discussed even in the secular media, is one that Muslims, as well as secular governments, must acknowledge.

Where is European history going? Does it have a future outside Dar al-Islam? Yes, I would say, since I refuse to accept despair as an option. Standing for the truth can be costly, but it is still a liberating power in history, society, and one’s personal life. I am deeply convinced that to the extent that we rediscover the Reformations of sola Scriptura, sola gratia, and sola fide, we will also be empowered to speak the truth in love and to experience afresh the renewing power of the Gospel and the drawing power of the cross. No situation must or will slip out of the hand of him who assures his disciples, “In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!” (John 16:33).

Notes

1. See sura 2:142b. Unless stated otherwise, translations are from Interpretation of the Meanings of the Noble Quran in the English Language: A Summarized Version of at-Tabari, al-Qurtubi, al-Jalalayn, and ibn Kathir, with Comments from Sahih al-Bukhari, summarized by Muhammad Taqi-Din Al-Hilali and Muhammad Muhsin Khan (Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 1996). Arabic insertions in the English text of this Quran are omitted, and the use of capital letters has not always been followed.

2. The tafsir (“interpretation”) on the al-Bayt Website (www.altafsir.com) commenting on the tafsir al Jalalayn confirms this interpretation. All URLs cited in these notes were verified and active as of July 2012.


5. “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance” (www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/).


8. Da’wah letter, as quoted in Noble Quran, sura 3:64n.


12. Ibn Baaz, Words of Advice Regarding Da’wah, p. 22.


14. See sura 2:256, which follows 2:256, the “no compulsion in religion”
 verse. There is, however, debate among scholars over whether this verse has been abrogated. See the illuminating paper by Patricia Crone, “Islam and Religious Freedom” (delivered at the Orientalistenitag, Freiburg, Germany, on Sept. 24, 2007, http://orient.ruf.uni-freiburg.de/dotpub/crone.pdf, in which she refers to various interpretations of sura 2:256 throughout Islamic history.

15. Ibn Ishaq, Words of Advice Regarding Da’wah, pp. 22ff.


19. Ibn Ishaq, Das Leben des Propheten (Kandern: Spohr, 1999). In this connection it is also advisable to look afresh into the exegetical rule of al-nasikh wa al-mansukh (lit. “the abrogating and the abrogated”), by which an earlier quranic verse might be abrogated if it stands in conflict with a quranic verse revealed later. See www.sunnipath.com/library/books/B0040P0021.aspx.


27. Ismail Raji al Faruqi, Toward Islamic English (Herndon, Va.: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1986).

28. See the translation by German convert Ahmad von Denffer, Der Koran. Die Heilige Schrift des Islam in deutscher Übertragung: Mit Erläuterungen nach den Kommentaren von Dschalalain, Tabari und anderen hervorragenden klassischen Koranauslegern (Munich: Islamisches Zentrum, 2001). The almost untranslatable neologism “mitgöttergebende” is an example of the creation of a new word. It means someone who actively associates idols with Allah.


31. See “Fatwa Against the Call for the Unification of the Religions” (fatwa no. 19402, dated 25 Muharram 1418H), www.sunnahonline.com/ilm/ageedah/0002.htm.


38. See http://www.pierrevogel.de.

39. See Murad Hofmann, Hedayat Ullah Hübsch, and many more. The Internet is full of stories on why so-and-so became a Muslim, as well as hundreds of Web sites giving da’wah guidance and telling how to become a Muslim (e.g., www.diewahreligion.de/wpplayer/index.html). See Uryia Shavit and Fredric Wiesenbach, “Muslim Strategies to Convert Western Christians,” Middle East Quarterly 16, no. 2 (Spring 2009): 3–14, www.meforum.org/2104/muslim-strategies-to-convert-western-christians.


43. Murad, Da’wah Among Non-Muslims in the West, pp. 8ff.


47. See http://ecij.org/UN/.


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Said’s Orientalism and Pentecostal Views of Islam in Palestine

Eric N. Newberg

The prevailing attitude of American Protestant missionaries toward Islam in 1916 is reflected in a training document compiled by the Board of Missionary Preparation, which helped prepare Christian missionaries for overseas service in Muslim lands. In discussing the rise of Islam, the document begins by stating that the personality of its founder is deeply impressed upon Islam. It mentions that Muhammad was reportedly raised in the fear of God: “How to escape the future vengeance was his problem, and it weighed upon him to such an extent that his personality evidently became unsettled. He had always, in all probability, been psychically pathological, and now he began to hear voices and see visions. For a long time he was in doubt regarding their source, whether from evil spirits or from God. How he was led to the fixed conclusion that they came from God we do not know.”1 This sort of reductionist view or from God. How he was led to the fixed conclusion that they came from evil spirits or from God. How he was led to the fixed conclusion that they came from God we do not know.”1 This sort of reductionist view.

In this article we closely examine the views of Islam espoused by early Pentecostal missionaries in Palestine. Some of the very first Pentecostal missionaries sent out from the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles went to Palestine, arriving in 1908. In its first ten years the Pentecostal mission there gained a foothold in Jerusalem, due primarily to the efforts of three pioneering missionaries: Lucy Leatherman, Charles Leonard, and A. Elizabeth Brown. In the interwar period the Pentecostal mission expanded its territory into Transjordan, Syria, and Persia, but it was severely tested and lost its momentum during the Arab Revolt of 1936–39, World War II, and the Partition Crisis of 1947. In the War of 1948 the Pentecostal missionaries fled from Palestine as their preponderantly Arab clients were swept away in the Palestinian diaspora. After 1948 a valiant attempt was made to sustain the mission, but it eventually lost its vitality and suffered its demise in the 1970s.2

Conceptual Tools for Intercultural Analysis

As with all missionaries, the Pentecostal missionaries in Palestine were faced with the challenge of bridging the cultural distance between themselves and the indigenous peoples they wished to evangelize. The classic work Orientalism, by Edward Said (sah-eeed), provides a method for analyzing the intercultural attitudes of missionaries.3 This article borrows from Herb Swan son’s groundbreaking study “Said’s Orientalism and the Study of Christian Missions” (2004), in which the author suggests five theoretical concepts of Said’s intercultural analysis that might be of value for missiology: dualism, the other, intimate estrangement, discourses of power, and textual attitudes.3 Said uses the term dualism to refer to the polar distinctions (“us” vs. “them”) made between the West and the East. In Said’s view, Western Orientalists have concocted an image of the other that is the exact opposite of the way Westerners view themselves. This image contrasts the “static” qualities of the East (strange, uncivilized, cruel, and exotic) with the “progressive” qualities of the West (dynamic, progressive, enlightened, and humanitarian).

For Said, the relationship between Orientalists and the Orient is one of intimate estrangement. Although intimately acquainted with the cultures of the Orient, Orientalists, because of their presumption of Western superiority, are estranged from Orientals. The dark side of Orientalism is the political aggression that it fosters. Said believed that, as a discourse of power, Orientalism misrepresents the East in the interest of legitimating Western colonial domination over the East. Said contended that the means of this domination can be detected in its textual attitudes, that is, the ideological perspectives embedded in the discourse. According to Said, the ideology of Orientalism is an oppressive strategy of caricaturing the “essence” of the Orient by using pejorative terms as a means of justifying Western domination of Arabs and the Muslim East.5

I employ Said’s concepts in considering the following topics: oppositional dualism, perceptions of the cultures of Palestine, the use of “heathen” terminology, missionary prejudices, and textual attitudes. I then examine missiological implications, focusing explicitly on Pentecostal views of Muslims, as seen in eyewitness observations of Pentecostal missionaries in Palestine, comments by other Pentecostal missionaries in the Near East, and relevant articles in Pentecostal periodicals.

Oppositional Dualism

The early Pentecostal missionaries viewed Muslims in dualistic and oppositional terms. The tone was set in 1910 by James Roughhead, a British missionary of the Pentecostal Missionary Union in Palestine, who relates the story of a Muslim woman and Historical Studies at Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, Oklahoma. His interest in Christian missions in Palestine was sparked during a 2002 sabbatical at the Tantur Ecumenical Institute in Jerusalem.

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places.” He blames the Turks for reducing the Christian population in Persia from 300,000 to 25,000 through massacres and accuses them of taking many young Christian women into captivity.7

Cultural Perceptions of Palestine

Dualism can also be seen in the missionaries’ perceptions of the cultures of Palestine. In their representations of the cultures of the Middle East, the missionaries’ reports from Palestine constitute a Pentecostal variety of Orientalist discourse. Albert Weaver, a short-term American Pentecostal missionary, contrasts the houses in Jewish colonies with those in Arab villages, writing, “Many of these returning Jews carry with them Western civilization, and this is quite noticeable in the cultivation of the soil, the houses in which they live, their customs and manner of living, contrasted with the natives of the country.” Weaver notes that the Jewish houses are “neatly built of lumber, with modern roofs, doors and windows.” In contrast, the Arab houses in the towns are “composed of mud and stone, low, and with flat thatched roofs, no chimneys and often no windows, and with but a single doorway.” In Arab homes he was surprised to find “so many people huddled together in such a small space. Not only human beings do we find therein, but donkeys, horses, cows, sheep, goats, hens, pigeons, dogs, etc., often in close proximity as one common family. But no swine, which both Jews and Mohammedans abominate.”8

Overwhelmingly, the missionaries’ perceptions of the cultures of Palestine were negative. After arriving in Jerusalem in 1924, Laura Radford wrote, “All about us are ‘souls in the dark, undone’—the orthodox Jew, the bigoted Moslem, the educated Syrian, the proud Arabian and Egyptian, the wandering, homeless Bedouin, all alike deeply religious, but few with a ‘living hope.’ Bound by a spirit of fatalism that is as oppressive as idolatry, and as ignorant of the power and love of the living Christ as are the heathen in the heart of Africa, their lives are indeed hopeless. The great poverty and degradation throughout the land would greatly discourage, were we not able to lead hungry men and women to Christ ‘in whom are hid all the riches of God, the God of an all-bountiful supply.’”9

Radford perceives great unrest among the Muslims as they struggle “in their blind desire to unite into one dominating force their political power and religious propaganda.” She upbraids them for attributing to God’s will “every result following from their own rash acts of passion, pride, or ignorance.” Her impression of the Arab Christians is equally disapproving: “Not able to read, and not understanding one word of the Latin or Greek in which the prayers in their Churches must be chanted, they have before them crucifixes, candles, and beads, and to them these things mean just what the idol means to the idol worshipper in India.” Radford nonetheless sees hope because “in the midst of all this darkness and superstition there re-echo the words, ‘And the Spirit of God was brooding upon the face of the waters, and God said, Let there be light,’ and men are hearing His voice and are turning to Him.”10

“Heathen” Terminology

Pentecostal missionaries shared in the ethnocentrism of Western missionary discourse. This can be seen in their use of the term “heathen.” This term was part and parcel of the dualistic, oppositional worldview of the Pentecostal missionaries. As Frank Bartleman, an American Pentecostal runabout, made his way toward Palestine on his world tour in 1911, he came by way of Egypt, where he had the opportunity to preach in Nikali. He spent the night in rustic conditions, about which he writes, “I slept that night on a bare board. But I did not sleep very much. The mosquitoes and the heat were both fierce. The dogs howled and the men quarreled all night in the streets. It was raw heathendom.”11

A survey of articles in Pentecostal periodicals dealing with the concept of heathendom helps to clarify the implications of the Pentecostal use of this term.

Elizabeth Sexton, editor of the Pentecostal periodical Bridegroom’s Messenger, displays a broad conception of heathendom, considering not only Muslims but also just about every adherent of non-Pentecostal Christianity to be heathen. She writes, “All religions of the heathen world are dead formalities, ceremonies and idol worship. Their gods have no life-giving power. They cannot save from sin or transform a sinful life.” Sexton throws nominal Christians into the heathen hamper, stating that many professing Christians “in our Christian countries” are Christians in name only. As a criterion of “real Christianity,” she cites Romans 8:9: “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (KJV), and then comments, “Without the Spirit they fall into lifeless, loveless, powerless, ceremonial worship, not far removed from some forms of heathen customs in their services.” Sexton leaves no doubt as to whom she has in mind. “In some Catholic countries, where they know nothing of the Holy Ghost, and where the Bible is kept from the people, their spiritual poverty is appalling. They know not the Spirit of truth, therefore they have no life more than those who sit in dark heathendom.”12

Angst over the perceived abuse of women in foreign cultures was a prominent theme in Pentecostal missionary discourse. Sexton was stirred to compassion by the “cry of the oppressed heathen women” and saw Christianity as the solution to their deplorable condition: “Especially does the wretched, appalling condition of the women of heathendom appeal to us. God sees their tears and hears their groans and will set them free. Wherever Christianity has gone, the women have been uplifted, and education, civilization and refinement have always followed.”13

Missionary Prejudices

The prejudices of the Pentecostal missionaries hampered their ability to build strong intercultural bridges to the Muslims of Palestine. During the First World War the Latter Rain Evangel printed several eyewitness accounts of events in the war zone. These reports clearly reveal a deep suspicion, if not an irrational fear, of Muslims. The Pentecostal periodicals indulged in a form of Christian yellow journalism, playing on the specter of Islam’s degradation of women. In an article entitled “Christian Girls in Moslem Harems,” the Pentecostal Evangel reflects this attitude in its publicizing a supposed League of Nations report claiming that in Turkey “there are at least thirty thousand Christian women and children still living in Moslem houses, most of them longing for rescue.” The same article references an account of the Bible Lands Missions’ Aid Society: “During the many deportations
by the Turks, the elder girls and young women were separated from their families and either abducted by their captors or sold for wicked purposes. That thousands of such girls have been detained in harems is certain."14 The Pentecostal Evangel also caricatures Arabs in derogatory terms as politically ambitious and hostile, alleging, "The Arabs are inflamed with the thought of possessing Palestine, Syria, Iraq, and Trans-Jordan, with Feisal the king of Iraq, as their king. It is because of this ambition in their hearts that the majority of the Arabs are fiercely opposed to the Jews, and also to Great Britain, which holds the mandate of Palestine." The editor supports his anti-Arab bias with a biblical quotation: "How true is the prophecy given four thousand years ago concerning Ishmael, 'He will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him' [Gen. 16:12 KJV]."15

The above prejudices surely had an adverse effect on the relationships of missionaries and local Muslims, acting as a barrier to intercultural communication and witness. Archibald Forder was the exception among the Pentecostal missionaries in Palestine. He writes that when approached with genuine love, "the inhabitants of Moab are friendly to the missionaries." Forder found this to be true during the many years he lived as a missionary in Kerak, in the region of ancient Moab, east of Palestine, as he "frequently visited it and ministered to the inhabitants both in tent and town." He recalls an occasion during an insurrection by the Arabs against the Turks when his Arab friends protected him. At that time "all other outsiders then in Kerak were massacred." However, the local chiefs gave strict orders that Forder and nine others with him were not to be harmed, and their orders were scrupulously heeded. Forder explains the reason for this protection: "Thus was demonstrated the fact that years of work among the people had not been wasted, but a lasting friendship created, and the desire of the people of Moab is that the missionaries should return and settle and work among them." He was convinced that the Arab Muslims could be reached; to fail to do so would be "a lasting disgrace to the world of missions."16

Textual Attitudes

The Bible was the textual sourcebook of the intercultural attitudes of Pentecostal missionaries. More precisely, the biblical hermeneutic of Pentecostalism shaped the missionaries’ perceptions of the Muslims of Palestine. The early Pentecostals interpreted the Bible in ways that were literal, yet fluid and creative. Certain metaphors, such as "budding fig tree," "Ishmael and Isaac," and "latter rain," were treated as metonyms of Zionist restorationism. Taken in a political sense, these metaphors were employed to express a political-theological bias in favor of the Zionist movement.

The "budding fig tree" was a prophetic image used by Jesus in Matthew 24:32–33 as an apocalyptic sign. Early Pentecostal writers understood this image to refer to historical Israel, and they saw its fulfillment in contemporary events. One finds this usage frequently in Pentecostal periodicals. For example, Alexander Boddy writes, "But the (Jewish) fig tree is now putting forth its leaves (Matt. 24:32–33)."17 The contemporary meaning of this image was clearly stated by Sarah Parham: "The 'fig tree' is understood by Bible students to represent the Jewish nation and is the emblem of Israel. The rapid returning of the Jews to Palestine is perhaps the greatest sign of the close of this age, and the return of our Lord."18

Pentecostals held that Abraham’s sons Ishmael and Isaac stood not merely for two individuals, but for living people groups, the Arabs and the Jews. By extension, Pentecostals understood Ishmael and Isaac to refer to two religions, Islam and Judaism. In reporting on the 1929 Wailing Wall riots in Jerusalem, the Latter Rain Evangel employed the imagery of the two brothers. "Since the days of Ishmael the Arab has been the enemy of Israel . . . . Prophetically, the Jew is fulfilling his mission returning to his land and establishing a national life, but with the great Moslem world smoldering in hatred and sympathizing with the Arab, ready to proclaim a 'holy war,' the prospect is dark and foreboding."19

The most popular of the Old Testament typological images utilized by early Pentecostals was "latter rain." In his Latter Rain Covenant, David W. Myland expounds on the Old Testament images of the early and latter rain (Joel 2:23) as prophecies of Pentecostal spirituality and the Zionist movement. Commenting on rainfall data obtained from the weather bureau of the American Colony in Jerusalem, he writes, "Since 1860 the measurement of rain in Palestine has been recorded very accurately at Jerusalem, and shows a great increase, especially of the latter rain. It is a generally understood fact that for many centuries the rain-fall in Palestine was very small. During comparatively recent years the rain has been increasing. The official record of rain-fall, which was not kept until 1860, divides the time into ten-year periods, and the facts are that forty-three per cent more rain fell between the years 1890 and 1900 than fell from 1860 to 1870.20

From this Myland drew the striking conclusion that “spiritually the latter rain is coming to the church of God at the same time it is coming literally upon the land, and it will never be taken away from her."21 Lecturing at the Stone Church in Chicago in 1910, Myland developed the implications of the latter rain for the land of Palestine, stating, "God’s eyes are on Palestine tonight. The usurper has tramped over it; Mohammedans have overrun it, the Sultan of Turkey has ravished it, and he is paying a part of the judgment now, for God’s eyes are on it. Even this week negotiations are in progress for the purchase of Mesopotamia, which will finally eventuate in the ancient people of God entering into the Holy Land by way of Mesopotamia. This is the fulfillment of the prophecy and shows the hastening of the end."22

Myland’s prediction about Mesopotamia proved to be unfounded, yet his contribution to the textual attitudes of Pentecostals was significant. Myland used the Bible as an ideological text in the interest of ascribing legitimacy to the Zionist project and the Pentecostal movement in one fell swoop. His textual attitude was imbied by the Pentecostal missionaries in Palestine and the wider Pentecostal community.

Missiological Implications

It is an axiom of missiology that missionaries are to identify as much as possible with those to whom they are sent, not only acquiring fluency in their language but also immer sing themselves in the host culture and observing its customs, mores, habits, and traditions. Through enculturation, missionaries build intercultural bridges of communication and witness, resulting—ideally—in the transmission and acceptance of the contextualized Christian message. How successful were the early Pentecostal missionaries in contextualizing the Pentecostal message in the host cultures of Palestine?

It is significant that the Pentecostal missionary with the most favorable attitude toward Arabs and Muslims, Archibald Forder, was one who totally immersed himself in Arab culture. Forder, however, was not representative of the Pentecostal missionaries. By and large, the missionaries held unfavorable attitudes toward the Jews, Arab Christians, and Muslims of Palestine. These
attitudes certainly influenced their ability to build intercultural bridges. In my judgment, a significant shortfall of the Pentecostal mission in Palestine was its failure to create a contextualized Christian community. The Pentecostal missionaries neither developed a significant following nor trained a stable corps of indigenous leaders.

With few exceptions, the Pentecostal missionaries lived apart from the “native” Christians and were not in intimate touch with them. As a result, the cultural gap between the missionaries and their converts remained unbridged. To close this gap, the essential requirement was a contextualized Christian environment in which converts could be cared for, supported, and trained for participation in the mission. The frequently encountered criticism that Western missionaries forced people to break from the prevailing culture without providing a viable alternative applies to the Pentecostal mission in Palestine. T. E. Backman wrote in the Moslem World in 1939, “Conversion has too often been regarded as completed when a person formally breaks with his non-Christian background. But actually, as far as livelihood and sanctification are concerned, this is only the beginning. There must be a community of believers into which the convert may be brought. In that moment the need for fellowship is far beyond what the stay-at-home Christian can really imagine.”

The Pentecostal missionaries did not fully comprehend what they were asking of their converts, nor did they provide the support system that was required for aftercare of their converts. Conversion in Palestine entailed a severe social dislocation, often a break in family, economic, and communal ties. To compensate, a new community that provided for its members holistically should have been developed; the Pentecostal missionaries failed to foster such a community.

In order to achieve effective intercultural communication in Palestine, the Pentecostal missionaries might have profited from a study of the history of Christian missions in Muslim lands and the cultural factors that dictated an indirect approach to evangelizing Muslims. Although public preaching was prohibited in Ottoman Palestine, the door was open for private conversations, for the establishment of educational institutions, medical facilities, clubs, and societies, and for the distribution and sale of the Bible. Even during the period of the British mandate (1923–48), most Protestant missions in Palestine eschewed a direct approach to evangelization. After extensive experience in a Muslim culture, they were content to disseminate the Christian message through schools, medical clinics, and charity. In contrast, the Pentecostal missionaries largely opted for more direct tactics such as public preaching. This was problematic, because direct evangelization was more likely to evoke a harsh response from the Muslim community. Muslims in Palestine were somewhat receptive to the Christian message and converts from Islam were being made by means of the indirect approach. The breakdown came in retaining converts. When a Muslim converted to Christianity, he or she was frequently met with grassroots intimidation, threats, physical harassment, or even death. This pressure is what diverted many missions from a confrontational approach to evangelizing the Palestinian Muslims.

Perhaps the factor that worked most strongly against the formation of a contextualized Christian community was the Pentecostal missionaries’ preferential option for Zionism. In Palestine the major wedge of conflict was not between Christianity and Islam, but rather between the Zionist and Arab national movements. The Pentecostal missionaries sided with the Zionists and expressed especially negative attitudes toward Arab culture and Muslims.

Ultimately, the explanation for the failure of the Pentecostal missionaries to retain a sizable number of converts lies in the intercultural attitudes documented in this article. The Pentecostal view of the Muslim other in Palestine was dualistic and oppositional, with ethnocentric and derogatory perceptions of the local cultures. In striving to evangelize Muslims, Pentecostals construed their cause in terms of conquest, giving the impression that the missionaries were pitted against those whom they were attempting to convert. Overall, the Gospel message of the Pentecostal missionaries in Palestine seems sadly to have been embedded with a deep-seated fear, even hatred, of Islam.

Notes
10. Ibid.
21. Ibid., p. 95.
Missionaries have long served as agents of globalization.¹ As early as the sixteenth century, European missionaries imagined the globe as a unified space for cultural action. In turn, the missionary encounter implied a particular set of power relations based in space that changed over time. Beginning with William Carey’s pioneering venture, evangelically minded missionaries sought to convert the unsaved around the world through a set of labor-intensive methods that involved face-to-face interaction under the framework of direct European colonial rule. In a general pattern that reached its apogee before the First World War, Anglicans, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and other mainline Protestant groups from Europe and North America formed mission enclaves—initially, mission villages; later, outstations in European-controlled territory. Brick-and-mortar mission “stations” drew prospective converts out from socially marginalized groups (such as widows, childless women, former slaves, and the extreme poor), severing them from their native environment and submerging them in a thoroughly Westernized milieu. Compounds typically included a dispensary, school, and church, from which missionaries administered medical services, provided basic education, and engaged in personal evangelism. While missionaries held a complex, at times conflicting, relationship with colonial authorities, their fieldwork, grounded in geographic space, assumed the territorial control, administrative stability, and cultural prestige afforded by European imperial power.²

By contrast, missionary expansion in the twentieth century included evangelical use of radio airwaves and took place under the aegis of a postcolonial and postterritorial American “empire.” Missionary activity in the American century demonstrated American exceptionalism in two related areas: (1) the increasing dominance on the mission field of conservative evangelical workers from the United States and (2) the prevalence of the private American system of broadcasting in the field of transnational religious radio. Unlike earlier missionary methods, global expansion of religion by radio required “deterриториализация”—that is, a disembedding of the Gospel from its point of origin in physical space and its transposition into an electronic message that could then be communicated universally by broadcast “stations” around the world. “Radio revivalism,” as developed by evangelical preachers for the American market of the 1920s, fit this purpose well. Crafted initially for listening audiences in the United States, evangelical programs combined music with preaching in a highly personalized form of religion that was freed from corporate church requirements of priest, liturgy, or sacrament and was oriented instead to individual experience and conversion.

Easily reproducible by mechanical means and hence readily expandable, radio programming facilitated American evangelical expansion on a global basis. Pioneer American broadcasters tied “radio revivalism” to a voluntary, parachurch form of faith missions, relying on a loose worldwide association of broadcasting organizations funded by private donations to extend their influence abroad. Radio Vatican began worldwide Catholic broadcasts from Rome in 1931. The same year, conservative evangelicals in the United States launched the first full-time Protestant religious radio station overseas—Station HCB in Quito, Ecuador. By the mid-1950s, conservative religious broadcasters had established sixteen radio beachheads on medium wave and shortwave transmitters in the major regions of the Global South (Central and South America, the Caribbean, Asia, sub-Saharan and North Africa), as well as in Europe. In countries where privately owned religious outlets were not available, radio missionaries purchased airtime on government or commercial establishments.³ By 1970, conservative Protestant radio stations comprised “a far-flung gospel radio network around the world” that easily trumped its Catholic or mainline Protestant counterparts in its size and influence.⁴ Electronic communication made it possible for the first time in the history of world missions simultaneously to reach mass audiences around the planet with the Gospel in real time. For enthusiastic supporters in the United States—donors, radio preachers, and even average churchgoers—missions by radio routinized the central missionary task of evangelization, reducing the need for field personnel and thereby facilitating the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

Popular evangelical enthusiasm for missionary radio in the United States assumed that broadcast technology presented a universal solution to the task of world missions. Yet global missions by radio required not only propagating the Christian Gospel over the airwaves, but ensuring its proper reception as well. Missionary broadcast communication necessitated reembedding the evangelical Gospel from the United States within diverse churches, cultures, and communities around the world. As we see in the history of Station ELWA in Liberia, the predominant religious station in Africa during the continent’s transition from colonialism, producing converts through a spaceless electronic medium entailed complicated work on the ground that strongly echoed the labor-intensive evangelistic methods of an earlier era. Between 1954 and 1970, ELWA station workers and their national partners constructed transmission platforms, established language services, developed political relations, created receiver distribution programs, and organized community efforts in order to translate the “universal” meaning of midcentury American evangelicalism into a postcolonial West African environment.⁵ Blending Western technology, programs, and personnel with local knowledge and partnerships on the ground, American radio missionaries formed hybrid, transnational arrangements that blurred geographic boundaries across space as well as chronological boundaries backwards in time.

Establishing Station ELWA

Liberia provided an extremely challenging platform for private American missionary broadcasting on the continent of Africa during the postwar period. To begin with, African countries lacked radio facilities; in 1950 the continent had only 140 transmitters and only 1,100 kilowatts of total transmitter power—the second lowest totals in the world.⁶ Furthermore, the meager facilities that existed in Africa were government-run. Broadcasting in Africa in

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the mid-1950s was under the tight control of French and British colonial authorities—a pattern of public ownership that would be carried over by postcolonial African governments. Missionary enthusiasm fueled the establishment of Station ELWA in Africa’s austere postwar broadcasting environment. In April 1950, united by a common vision to evangelize Africa by radio, three American mission students from Wheaton College, outside Chicago—William Watkins, Abe Thiessen, and Merle Steely—formed the West African Broadcasting Association. In February 1951, following the government’s failed attempt to start a station, Liberian officials generously granted the American students an unrestricted broadcast franchise, along with a sizable grant of coastal property and a waiver of import duties on imported station equipment. Watkins and Thiessen interpreted the assigned call letters ELWA—“Eternal Love Wins Africa”—to describe the evangelical mission of Africa’s first full-time religious radio station. In November 1952 the station’s organizers merged with the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM), a North American faith mission headquartered in Toronto, Canada, and operating out of Jos, Nigeria. SIM had long sought a broadcast outlet to supplement its extensive West African print operations, extending its influence across the African continent.

Launched in January 1954, ELWA rapidly increased its transmitter power and expanded its language programs, acquiring worldwide audiences. Before long, the “Radio Voice of the Sudan Interior Mission” reached deep into Liberia, a thousand miles along the West African coast, and across the African continent on long wave, medium wave, and shortwave transmitters. Liberia’s official use of the English language facilitated ELWA’s early growth, providing an immediate market in Monrovia for prerecorded religious programs from the United States. The station aired nearly thirty different sponsored Gospel programs each week, featuring prominent American radio preachers such as Charles Fuller, Billy Graham, and Theodore Epp. ELWA also produced its own studio programs, employing local Liberian musicians and announcers, as well as broadcasting Liberian government material. In 1955, only its second year of operation, ELWA received more than 11,000 letters from forty-four different countries, including twenty-one countries in Africa, various European nations, and the United States, attesting to the new station’s strong presence on the continent and the global reach of its transmitters.

Producing Regional Vernacular Programs

Missionaries at ELWA rapidly specialized in regional and vernacular broadcasting. Shortly after adding its first shortwave transmitter in March 1955, ELWA launched its first programs in French, Arabic, and the Nigerian tongues of Hausa and Yoruba. Soon listeners could hear over 100 programs per week on each of ELWA’s long wave and shortwave services in twenty different languages overall, mostly tribal dialects from Liberia and Nigeria. By the mid-1960s, ELWA was broadcasting in an astonishing forty-nine regional languages, including the principal tongues of Liberia, Guinea, Mali, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Congo, East Africa, North Africa, and the Middle East. To produce regional material, North American missionaries at ELWA relied on an extensive network of mission groups and workers across Africa. To meet the demand for local Liberian programs, ELWA trained its own local announcers, recruiting candidates from Bible schools in the country’s interior. By 1964 the station had ten full-time Liberian “dialect broadcasters” who translated daily news, produced regular programming, and interpreted biblical texts from English, since their native tribes rarely had complete translations of the Bible in their own tongues. Vernacular programming incorporated earlier, face-to-face, evangelistic methods. “Dialect broadcasters” frequently visited their language areas to meet radio listeners and new converts, attend church conferences, conduct evangelistic campaigns, and record popular materials for retransmission on the air. By the start of its third decade in 1970, ELWA had significantly indigenized its operations in order to meet the demand for local material. The station employed more than three times as many local workers and technicians as Western missionaries—200 Africans, mostly from Liberia, compared with 60 expatriates from North America.

Accommodating Liberia’s Political Elite

ELWA’s success depended on its highly favorable political relations with Liberia’s governing elite, the minority Anglo-Liberians. Descendants of the former American slaves who originally settled in Liberia in 1822 and later organized the Liberian Republic in 1847, pro-Western America-Liberians monopolized political power in the country through the True Whig Party. The small elite imposed centralized governmental rule from Monrovia over Liberia’s tribal interior, where 90 percent of the population lived. Through their broadcast operations, ELWA’s organizers helped to consolidate the cultural hegemony and political control of Liberia’s leaders. In its original license, ELWA’s founders agreed to distribute free radios in Liberia’s hinterland and to evangelize the populace there, which overwhelmingly practiced African traditional religion. ELWA contracted to air government programs regularly, including a variety of “public service” broadcasts, and to publicize the Tubman administration’s two economic development plans—the Open Door policy and the National Development Campaign—in the country’s rural regions. Finally, ELWA promised to promote the public image of Liberia abroad; by 1958 the station had provided broadcasting services to a lengthy list of the country’s government departments and agencies. In return, Liberia’s Protestant elite provided ELWA with “an open door for Gospel radio,” as the station’s first director boasted to supporters. High-ranking members of the Liberian government, including President William Tubman himself, attended ELWA’s inaugural ceremony and frequently participated in the station’s prayer services and anniversary celebrations. Tubman pronounced ELWA to be his favorite
Building Reception for Local Audiences

In the period following WWII, centralized transmission of radio programs posed little technical difficulty for missionary broadcasters. Wartime advances in high-frequency transmission, as well as the availability of surplus military equipment and the strategic location of American bases around the globe, ensured American missionaries access to the airwaves worldwide. Radio reception, however, proved a far different story. In most regions of the Global South, missionary broadcasters had to work hard to provide audiences with the physical means of reception for their religious message. Throughout Africa, radio receivers were extremely scarce during the postwar period. In 1950 the fifty countries surveyed in Africa possessed a total of 1.4 million radio receivers—a mere 7 radios per 1,000 inhabitants and a miniscule 1 percent of the world’s total, the lowest of any continent. According to estimates by Voice of America, only 4,000 sets existed in Liberia in mid-1953. ELWA officials initiated a receiver distribution program after it started transmitting in January 1954, handing out freely tunable vacuum-tube radios in Monrovia in an attempt to immediately build local audiences for its programs. By April 1957, ELWA had distributed 225 receivers in Liberia—a small but significant number in light of the negligible size of the Liberian radio market and Liberians’ communal usage of receivers.

ELWA missionaries sought to align usage of its radios in Liberia with standards of efficiency and mission priorities. Vacuum-tube radios were difficult to maintain in the mission field, consuming large amounts of battery power that was hard to acquire and replace. When ELWA initiated its receiver program in 1954, officials decided to lend, rather than sell, radios to Liberians, assuming that this would allow the station greater control over how borrowers used the sets. Officials insisted on two lending conditions: they lent radios only to Christians, identified through a written questionnaire, and they sought to restrict usage of receivers to communal settings in order to maximize audience size. In late 1959, ELWA officials began to purchase large quantities of a special pretuned commercial transistor set manufactured by Philips N.V. of Holland, attempting both to expand its missionary audiences in Liberia and to control their activities. During the 1960s, missionary stations around the world followed suit, adopting the universal technological standard of pretuned transistor sets in their growing radio receiver departments. Pretuned transistor radios provided a dual benefit to missionary stations. Hard wiring ensured that borrowers used sets solely for religious purposes, since they could pick up only a single station, while transistors dramatically reduced power consumption, significantly expanding battery and radio life.

Forming Radio Church Communities

As early as 1945, missionary broadcasters such as Clarence Jones of Station HCJB in Ecuador had attempted to address the “receiver problem” in the developing world by mass producing a single radio receiver for use worldwide. Missionary interest in a receiver for the masses peaked in 1954, when conservative evangelical engineers organized a five-year project to custom design and build a single pretuned “missionary transistor radio” for the global mission field. Yet evangelical attempts to craft a proprietary solution to the world shortage of radio receivers foundered on evangelicals’ contradictory objectives of expansion and control. By insisting on the use of pretuned radios, which utilized myriad bandwidths and frequencies, broadcasters segmented the global missionary market and eliminated the possibility of producing a single radio model worldwide. Instead, American missionary broadcasters targeted a range of narrower, more geographically circumscribed audiences, identified with ethnic language areas, rural villages, national church workers, and even individual missionaries. To reach these potential listeners, broadcasters frequently collaborated with established mission organizations and indigenous groups. ELWA’s most fruitful area for radio mission work lay in Liberia’s eastern hinterland, where the country’s tribal populations lived. Expansion into Liberia’s frontier areas meant reliance on Protestant mission groups to distribute ELWA’s radio sets. ELWA’s receiver department worked with almost half of the forty American mission organizations operating in Liberia.

Officials provided pretuned, battery-operated radios to mission stations, which then placed the radios with indigenous pastors and evangelists for use among their native peoples to grow radio church communities. The case of the Elizabeth Native Interior Mission (ENIM) illustrates how broadcasters, missionaries, and indigenous workers joined together around radio receiver technology. Originally founded as an agricultural, industrial, and religious training institute in Sinoe County by a black Baptist schoolteacher from Texas, ENIM was subsequently taken over by Augustus Marwiew, a prominent Liberian Christian leader. Marwiew petitioned ELWA for twenty-five pretuned receivers, which he then placed in the hands of indigenous pastors and evangelists for use in townships in Liberia’s southeastern Grand Gedeh County. Touring rural districts that lacked electricity, itinerant evangelists used battery-powered sets known as “Portable Missionaries” (PMs) to attract audiences, convert nonbelievers, and grow village churches. In Kudi Town, the township met on a daily basis for two and a half hours for the PM radio service in the Krah language. After the radio service concluded, the pastor conducted an evening meeting, preaching to the whole town that had assembled. Women rearranged their traditional cooking hours so they could attend radio services, preparing food in the afternoon rather than at night. After hearing PM services, church members in Gbahu occasionally spent the entire evening in the town square to listen to the radio. This strategy of organizing daily and nighttime meetings aimed to cultivate harmonious relations with the local community and establish ELWA’s radio stations as a staple of everyday life. By the 1970s, ELWA’s radio receivers were in widespread use throughout Liberia, contributing to the formation of vibrant radio church communities in the nation’s interior.
By the late 1950s, radio preacher Walter Maier’s programs from Monrovia into rural Liberian village life, utilizing the form of pretuned transistor radios to transport missionary Itinerant ENIM evangelists thus used portable technology in a mix of modern electronic and traditional missionary methods.

ELWA’s diverse activities illustrate the transnational and hybrid character of the radio project undertaken by conservative evangelical American missionaries after the Second World War. ELWA brought together local, regional, national, and global scales of operation, as the station broadcast simultaneously to greater Monrovia, the Liberian interior, West Africa, and the African continent, as well as to other regions of the world. A private organization, ELWA connected supporters, radio preachers, and broadcasters from the United States directly with church workers and villagers in Liberia, as well as indirectly with listeners worldwide. ELWA’s transnational operations over the airwaves rested on hybrid missionary practices on the ground; to transcend spatial boundaries, modern missionary radio stations required grounding their operations in physical space. Global missions by radio involved more than simply transmitting a Gospel message; it also required building audience receptivity, which ELWA broadcasters did through creative technological and cultural efforts. Receptivity necessitated, first, possession of a radio, the physical means of reception—a major obstacle in Africa as well as most of the developing world following World War II. But conversion required cultural receptivity as well, which entailed framing the evangelical message in vernacular idioms familiar to local West African audiences. To be heard, American officials at ELWA thus indigenized their transnational radio operations—training tribal translators and partnering with local church workers—and reached out to sister missionary organizations in the field. In a pattern repeated by other missionary stations around the world, ELWA broadcasters, scriptwriters, announcers, studio personnel, national church workers, and partner mission agencies worked together to translate American evangelicalism at ELWA into terms that were recognizable to local West African listeners. Blurring demarcations in time as they had in space, missionary broadcasters across the globe combined virtual, electronic forms of outreach with earlier labor-intensive approaches in order to ensure reception of the Gospel message.

As a project emanating from the United States at the peak of postwar American power, radio mission raises the question of cultural hegemony. Missionary translation obscured the foreign origins of American program material, as well as the source of American influence in Monrovia. The effects of English-language broadcasts outside West Africa and the global impact of missionary radio as a whole are hard to assess. Like the printing press in the sixteenth century, electronic media in the twentieth century vastly expanded the geographic reach of evangelical forms of Protestant Christianity, well beyond the direct control of missionary broadcasters, and facilitated the experience of evangelical Protestantism around the world. Radio broadcasting supported the historic spread of evangelical Christianity on a global scale during the second half of the twentieth century, legitimizing American evangelicalism in the minds of audiences in the Global South through the sheer force of its presence on the radio dial. As a transnational project originating from a homogenous American market yet translated into a range of local practices, missionary radio consolidated the trend toward a worldwide Christianity that was at once global and diverse.

Notes

5. The concept of translation is a rich trope found in the work of numerous scholars. In missiological studies, see Lamin Sanneh, Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1989).


12. R. G. de la Haye to Abe Thiessen, August 27, 1957, Folder 26, Box 33, Collection 86, BGCA. Languages included Arabic, Bassa, Belle, English, Fanti, French, Fula, Gio, Gola, Kono, Kpelle, Krinianinka, Mende, Putu, Sabo, Sieh, Twi, and Vai ("List of Languages Heard over ELWA During 1955," Beginnings [1956–69], Box 14, Broadcast Division, LC-SIM).


18. The complete list includes the Booker Washington Institute, Bureau of Fundamental Education, Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, Bureau of Information, Department of Defense, Department of National Defense, Department of Public Instruction, Department of Public Works and Utilities, Department of State, House of Representatives, Liberian Senate, National Police Force, National Public Health Service, Post Office, Supreme Court, Treasury Department Customs Office, and University of Liberia ("Here is some interesting information for your files, Ray," February 25, 1958, Newspaper Clippings [1951–60] folder, Box 1, Liberia Information, LC-SIM).

19. "Radio Station ELWA Annual Report (1954)," Director’s Annual Reports (1960–80) folder, Box 15, Broadcasting Division, LC-SIM.

20. William S. Tubman to Ray de la Haye, January 18, 1964, Public Information Office—Publication Reviews (1964–69) folder, Box 13, Administration, LC-SIM.

21. The station fell prey to the civil war that broke out in Liberia in 1990, which disrupted its transmission capabilities.

22. UNESCO, Statistics on Radio and Television, 1950–1960, pp. 11–17. Despite the considerable methodological difficulties involved in compiling receiver data, the figures reveal the immense gap in radio ownership between the Global North and Global South. North Americans alone possessed 93 million radios, or 51 percent of the world’s total.

23. United States Information Agency, Office of Research and Intelligence, "World Wide Distribution of Radio Receiver Sets," December 31, 1957, Folder 5, Box 33, Collection 86, BGCA.


25. ELWA’s total distribution of radios by 1957 approached 20 percent of the Voice of America’s figures for the country in 1953.

26. United States Information Service, "Facts on Liberia Communications Media," September 1, 1960, 976.00/6-2460, Box 3088, General Records of the Department of State, Central Decimal Files, 1960–63, Record Group 59, National Archives Records Administration, College Park, Md. (henceforth NARA); T. W. Chalmers, "This is the Nigerian Broadcasting Service," from Nigeria, no. 40, 1953, pp. 280–96, Folder 6, Box 29, Collection 86, BGCA.

27. United States Information Service, "Facts on Liberia Communications Media," September 1, 1960, 976.00/6-2460, Box 3088, General Records of the Department of State, Central Decimal Files, 1960–63, Record Group 59, National Archives Records Administration, College Park, Md. (henceforth NARA); T. W. Chalmers, "This is the Nigerian Broadcasting Service," from Nigeria, no. 40, 1953, pp. 280–96, Folder 6, Box 29, Collection 86, BGCA.


29. Of roughly 2,400 total sets distributed, 2,187 were transistorized ("PMR Proposal," September 26, 1970, MRR Minutes).

30. These included the Lutheran Mission, Methodist Mission, Mid-Liberia Baptist Union, World-Wide Evangelization Crusade, and several Pentecostal groups.


32. It is worth noting that with outside help ELWA resumed operation after the country’s crises in 1990 and 1996. Liberian Christians now carry on the station’s activity on FM and shortwave. See www.elwaministries.org/AreasofMinistry/RadioStation/tabid/60/Default.aspx.

33. For a history of international organizations in the twentieth century, see Akira Iriye, Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2002).
Impacting the world ...

Carolyn Moore, Asbury Seminary M.Div. graduate, is impacting the world through Mosaic United Methodist Church in Evans, Georgia. Eight years ago she faced a unique challenge—planting a church as a woman in the South. Since then, Mosaic has grown to nearly 250 members and 180 have become followers of Christ or recommitted their lives. Carolyn is paving the way for other women called to plant churches. People’s lives are being changed.

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My Pilgrimage in Mission

Samuel Escobar

My parents became evangelical believers two years before my birth in 1934. Since my father was an officer in the police force, he had to move constantly. As a consequence, I received my early spiritual formation from the hands of my mother and British missionaries from the Evangelical Union of South America (now Latin Link), whose elementary international school was one of the best schools in my native Arequipa, in the south of Peru. I would read to my mother while she was working at her sewing machine; she especially liked the Book of Proverbs, as well as the missionary stories in books I received for Christmas in Sunday School. In 1946 I was the only Protestant among the five hundred students who entered the state high school. My firm conviction in my beliefs was tested, and being part of a minority became a mark of my identity.

While in high school I felt the birth of a strong literary vocation. I devoured books and wrote poems, and in 1951 entered the School of Arts and Literature at San Marcos University in Lima, where small classes allowed for close interaction with some of the best-known writers and literary critics of Peru. In graduate school I studied education, planning to pursue a career in teaching.

Marxism was a powerful ideology on campuses, and extreme poverty, military dictatorships, and oppression of the poor made its message relevant. I had to make up my mind about my evangelical commitment, and in 1951 I was baptized by Southern Baptist missionary M. David Oates. The discipleship process included basic training for evangelism, church planting, and teaching. But even the best books in Spanish by Southern Baptist theologians had nothing to say about Marxism, and soon I found myself trying to develop my own apologetics, which would unite faith in Christ with intellectual integrity and commitment to justice. In this effort I was helped by the writings of John Alexander Mackay, whose Preface to Christian Theology (1941) put me in touch with Russian philosopher Nikolay Berdiyayev, Spanish writer Miguel de Unamuno, and Swiss theologian Karl Barth.

The University as a Mission Field

In 1953 I was sent by the growing Baptist churches in Peru to the World Baptist Youth Congress in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where I was impressed by the size, organizing ability, and enthusiasm of Brazilian Baptists. On the way back to Peru, I stopped in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and found that Mackay was in town to give the Carnahan Lectures. I asked for an interview, and he generously gave me more than an hour of his time, which was a defining experience for me.

Back in Peru, I felt led to start an evangelistic and discipleship effort in my university. Missionary Oates provided a room with books, games, and music that, patterned after the American model, could function as the Baptist student union. At that early stage of my life, I was introduced to the difficulties and contradictions of Baptist missionary policies, which included an administrative crisis in the mission that brought an end to the Baptist student center. The mission had brought pastors from Argentina and Cuba to help in evangelism and church planting. Although they modeled good preaching and developed Christian education programs, after five years of sustained growth a conflict arose over mission strategy and the ownership of church property. The mission dismissed the pastors and became suspicious and defensive about initiatives from Peruvian Baptist leaders. This crisis brought divisions, confusion, and disappointment.

During this period, in 1955, I met Ruth Siemens, a teacher in the American School of Lima who had been active in InterVarsity in California. In her apartment she hosted an inductive group Bible study, a method that was a great discovery for us evangelical students. She passed on to me the conviction that, in order to last, any Christian work must be indigenous and self-supported. I also recognized that interdenominational work on campus could serve as a testimony to non-Christians. As I came to know Presbyterians, Independents, and Pentecostals, we developed mutual respect and a sense of unity in mission.

As our group grew in size and influence, we were visited by another InterVarsity graduate, Robert Young, who was a traveling secretary with the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES). He convinced us that the university was a mission field with its own challenges. In addition to their commitment to Bible study, Ruth and Bob were very intentional in their devotional life, and we learned from them the spiritual disciplines of daily Bible reading, meditation, and prayer. Our Latin American experience also taught us to insist that student work should in no way replace active membership in a local church.

In 1957 I began teaching high school in Lima. My father had convinced me that even if I later became a Christian worker, I would benefit from working first as a salaried teacher, for I would acquire discipline and habits that could not be learned in any other way. I enjoyed teaching high school, but all my free time and energy were dedicated to the student group, which by this time had become a training school for mission in the universities. News about similar developments in other countries and my experience at the World Baptist Youth Congress led me to suggest that we should have a similar but interdenominational congress for all the new Latin American groups. Bob committed himself to getting help from IFES to this end. Meanwhile, I became engaged to Lilly Artola, my girlfriend from church, and as both of us had good jobs, we started to think of marriage. When Stacey Woods, the general secretary of IFES, visited Lima that year and invited me to become a traveling secretary for student work in Latin America, I spoke of our marriage plans. Woods also interviewed Lilly and asked if she was ready to live by faith and tolerate a traveling husband. She said yes, and we were married in March 1958.

IFES Work in Latin America

The first Latin American Congress of Evangelical Students was held in July 1958 in Cochabamba, Bolivia. The fifty delegates represented seventeen groups from nine countries. Along with

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sessions on apologetics and evangelism on campus, we discussed our doctrinal basis and a mission statement. We designed a leadership training program in key countries and a literature program with a quarterly magazine and books geared to students. The lectures on the Book of Nehemiah given by John White, a medical missionary in Bolivia who had been the student chairman of InterVarsity in the United Kingdom, provided a key part of the program. As a Plymouth Brethren, White had strong convictions about indigeneity, student initiative, and leadership style, all of which left a mark on us.

The congress voted unanimously to invite me to become involved full-time in student work. René Padilla, whom I had first met at the congress, was also invited to join the IFES team, and we became close friends, working as a team for over two decades in student work in Latin America. Later we were joined by Pedro Arana, a chemical engineer from Peru, and by several American and British colleagues. By December 1958 I had quit my job and started my Latin American pilgrimage, visiting campuses in Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia, contacting evangelical students and graduates, identifying and training leaders for ministry to students, speaking in public on subjects that were hot on campuses, and trying to update and refine my perception of intellectual trends in universities. I supplemented my lack of formal theological training with an intensive reading program.

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evangelism; and third, as John Stott had made evident, especially in his exposition of John 20:21, that Jesus not only commanded us to go to the world but also gave us an example of how to do so, a style for doing mission. Alexander Clifford and I took this threefold message back to Latin America, through literature in particular.

Several regional congresses on evangelism followed up on Berlin. Nine hundred evangelical leaders representing a wide spectrum within Protestantism attended the Bogotá Congress in November 1969. My paper there on the social responsibility of the church summarized what Rene Padilla and I had been seeking to develop among university students and gave a historical and biblical basis for an evangelical approach to social justice. To my surprise, the paper received a standing ovation. We realized that churches all over Latin America were looking for guidance on how to face the social ferment that agitated the continent. The time had come for Latin Americans to define how we understood the term “evangelical” and to determine what kind of theology we were going to develop.

After an English translation of my Bogotá paper was published in the Evangelical Missions Quarterly (1970; later published as a chapter in Brian Griffiths, ed., Is Revolution Change? [Inter-Varsity, 1972]), I started to receive invitations to speak. One was to the Urbana Missionary Convention in 1970, where I had a chance to deepen my acquaintance and fellowship with John Stott, and there also I met Myron Augsburger, Tom Skinner, and David Howard. The following year I visited Messiah College in Grantham, Pennsylvania, to give the Staley Lectures. On its Phila-

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**Noteworthy**

“Classics in Mission Spirituality” is the theme for the annual meeting of the American Society of Missiology—Eastern Fellowship of Professors of Mission, November 2–3, 2012, at Maryknoll Mission Institute, OSSining, New York. Scheduled presenters include Claudette LaVerdiere, M.M., on the spirituality of Mary Joseph Rogers, founder in 1912 of the Maryknoll Sisters; Rady Roldan-Figueroa on Bartolome de Las Casas; Grace May on Margaret Emma Barber, a spiritual mentor for Watchman Nee; and Jon Sensbach on Rebecca Proten, an eighteenth-century Afro-Caribbean evangelist. For details or to register, contact Benjamin L. Hartley (bhartley@eastern.edu), Palmer Theological Seminary, or Rodney L. Petersen (petersen@bostontheological.org), Boston Theological Institute.

Using information technology and social media to advance world Christianity is the idea behind Mission Platform, a free Internet portal launched in June 2012 by a pastor, a psychologist, an IT professional, and a Bible college student in Brisbane, Australia. Their independent organization serves other ministries by connecting “people who feel inspired to serve God in the world with a wide range of initiatives they could potentially support,” according to Simon Ives, the chief operating officer (simon.ives@missionplatform.com). Founding partner agencies include SIM, Youth for Christ International, Mercy Ships, Interserve, International Teams, and WEC International. To view the site, go to www.missionplatform.com.

The Billy Graham School of Missions and Evangelism, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, is publishing the Southern Baptist Journal of Missions and Evangelism “to help scholars and practitioners think biblically and theologically about the Great Commission.” Jeff K. Walters, a former church planter in Europe and an assistant professor of Christian missions and urban ministry, is editor, and Zane G. Pratt, dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions and Evangelism and associate professor of Christian missions, is executive editor. For details on the quarterly publication, go to www.sbts.edu/bgs/sbjme, or e-mail the editor at jwalters@sbts.edu.

A journal will be published to “provide theoretically informed analysis on the social, economic, cultural, and political transformation of African societies during the pre-colonial, colonial, and postcolonial periods,” according to an online announcement. The inaugural issue of the Journal of Retracing Africa is being prepared by editor-in-chief Ogechi E. Anyanwu, associate professor of African history (ogechi.anyanwu@eku.edu), and managing editor Salome C. Nnoromele, professor of English and director of African-American Studies (salome.nnoromele@eku.edu), both at Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, Kentucky. For details on JORA, a peer-reviewed interdisciplinary online journal published annually, see http://encompass.eku.edu/jora.

Regnum Books, an imprint of the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, Oxford, U.K., is offering ten titles in its Regnum Edinburgh 2010 book series as free downloads for personal and group study, including classes, according to OCMS executive director Wonsuk Ma. These volumes include Edinburgh 2010: Mission Today and Tomorrow; Evangelical and Frontier Mission: Perspectives on the Global Progress of the Gospel; and Witnessing to Christ in a Pluralistic Age: Christian Mission Among Other Faiths. Go online to www.ocms.ac.uk/regnum/list.php?cat=3 to view and download these resources.

The Nagel Institute for the Study of World Christianity, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan, is developing a database of Christian study centers, institutes, and ongoing programs that foster “study of Christianity’s interaction with culture, in local, regional, or global contexts,” according to institute director Joel Carpenter. To submit information about a center or to access the current list of more than one hundred such centers, go to www.calvin.edu/nagel/resources/institutions.

The Global Community of Mission Information Workers, an emerging task force of the World Evangelical Alliance Mission Commission, promotes cooperation among information personnel around the world. Organized in 2001 as “a group of people who come together around a common interest and expertise” in order to “create, share, and apply knowledge across the boundaries of their families, teams and organizations,” the CMIW network plans to “increase the number and quality of the connections between us,” says Chris Maynard, a task force member and information management consultant (CMIW@workemail.net). Larry Kraft, director of research for OC International, is leader of the task force. CMIW e-mails its newsletter, “Correct Me If I’m Wrong,” to some four hundred subscribers, and a Web site is planned for www.globalmiwi.net.
delphia campus I met Ron Sider and we talked extensively about evangelicals and social responsibility. This encounter marked the beginning of a long friendship in a common pilgrimage. It became evident to me that there was growing awareness among evangelicals around the world that the evangelistic and missionary zeal of the evangelical tradition needed to be matched with an equal concern for justice in society.

Canadian Interlude

In 1972 Canadian InterVarsity was in a process of transition and invited me to become their general director. After much heart searching and prayer, Lilly and I accepted the invitation for a three-year period, with a clear commitment to return to student work in Latin America. The InterVarsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF) board agreed to let me remain active in IFES and in contact with theological developments in Latin America. In August 1972 we moved to Toronto.

Our three years in Canada became an experience that we treasure as a family. Lilly learned to drive in snow, and our two children, then aged nine and four and knowing only a few words of English when they arrived, were immersed overnight in an English-speaking school. Besides maintaining family life in a new environment and with me repeatedly absent, Lilly worked to pay the mortgage of our house in Argentina and volunteered at Ontario Pioneer Camp. We were members of Spring Garden Baptist Church, a lively evangelical and missionary congregation from which we received constant spiritual support and nourishment.

The 4/14 Window Global Movement (http://4to14window.com) is planning an international mission conference February 26–28, 2013, at Hallelujah Community Church, Seoul, South Korea, with the theme “Recognizing Children and Youth as Strong Mission Partners for the Season.” The 4/14 Window, which refers to “the demographic group from age four to fourteen years old, which is the most open and receptive to every form of spiritual and developmental input,” will bring together some 120 global church leaders, missiologists, theologians, and ministry practitioners to explore biblical principles that “enable church and ministry leaders at all levels of influence to shape a mission-oriented response to holistic ministry to and with children.” Participants will be asked to “review and challenge modern missionary methods, concepts, vocabularies, and practices in light of biblical insights on the roles of children and youth.”

For information on the conference, contact Dan Brewster or Rosalind Tan at 414missiology@gmail.com.

Personalia

Appointed. Philip Mounstephen, chaplain of St. Michael’s Church, Paris, as leader of the Church Mission Society, Oxford (www.cms-uk.org). Previously, Mounstephen worked for the Church Pastoral Aid Society, which equips U.K. churches in mission and ministry, and led a multiethnic church in Streatham, a district in South London. Founded in April 1799, CMS is a group of evangelistic societies that work with the Anglican Communion and Protestant Christians around the world. CMS counts some 150 mission-partner agencies. Mounstephen succeeds Timothy J. Dakin, CMS general secretary since 2000, who now is bishop of Winchester, U.K.

Appointed. Riad Kassis as international director of the International Council for Evangelical Theological Education (www.icete-edu.org), beginning January 1, 2013. Kassis is currently regional director for the Middle East, North Africa, and Eastern Europe for Overseas Council, Indianapolis, Indiana. In collaboration between ICETE and Langham Partnership International, the London-based ministry started by John Stott, Kassis will concurrently become international program director, beginning November 1, 2012, for Langham Scholars (www.langhampartnership.org/scholars), which counts more than three hundred scholars. At ICETE Kassis succeeds Paul Sanders, who has served as international director since 2006.
IVCF work was divided among six regional divisions, and I soon became aware that any national movement in Canada experiences a tension between the local and the national. IVCF work had a tradition of social awareness, and their respected camping program, known as Pioneer Camps, was a very effective way of friendship evangelism. I focused my work on the leadership team of regional directors, relationships with the board, and a teaching and preaching ministry to students and supporters across the nation. I crossed Canada three times, from Atlantic to Pacific. Through these years I came to understand better the ethos, virtues, and shortcomings of the North American missionary enterprise.

In November 1973 I participated in a workshop in Chicago on evangelicals and social concern. Organized by Ron Sider, the event was an incredible moment of convergence of some of the most respected evangelical leaders. It was my privilege to meet Carl Henry, Rufus Jones, Foy Valentine, David Moberg, Richard Pierard, and Paul Henry, and to interact again with Paul Rees, Bernard Ramm, and John Howard Yoder, all of whom I had met earlier in Argentina. After intense theological debate and reflection, we agreed unanimously to sign the Chicago Declaration of Evangelical Social Concern, further evidence that evangelicals and social concern. Organized by Ron Sider, the event was an incredible moment of convergence of some of the most respected evangelical leaders. It was my privilege to meet Carl Henry, Rufus Jones, Foy Valentine, David Moberg, Richard Pierard, and Paul Henry, and to interact again with Paul Rees, Bernard Ramm, and John Howard Yoder, all of whom I had met earlier in Argentina. After intense theological debate and reflection, we agreed unanimously to sign the Chicago Declaration of Evangelical Social Concern, further evidence that evangelicals were moving toward a new understanding of Christian mission, a direction that would be solidified at Lausanne.

**Lausanne 1974**

Convinced through experience that if evangelicals come together and cooperate, they can accomplish much in joint efforts in mission, I accepted an invitation to join the committee that was preparing the Lausanne International Congress on World Evangelization. Some American supporters of the call for a new congress of evangelism had the idea that it would be an ideal juncture for taking evangelistic methodology developed in Texas or California and promoting it around the world. The regional meetings that followed the earlier Berlin congress had shown, however, that the Gospel had to be understood within the various contexts in which evangelicals were active. Concern was growing for more active participation in alleviation of injustice and poverty and in the struggle against the structural causes that produce them. The main papers to be presented at Lausanne were circulated almost a year in advance, and I received more than five hundred responses to my paper, “Evangelism and Man’s Search for Freedom, Justice, and Fulfillment.”

The awareness and sensitivity of Jack Dain, John Stott, Leighton Ford, and Paul Little for the new situation that evangelicals were facing around the world were crucial in making the Lausanne Congress what it was. These men insisted on allowing the widest possible range of evangelicals to participate. At the same time they insisted upon theological depth and integrity, which proved a counterweight to the typical American missionary activism, marked at times by theological shallowness and a narrow provincial vision. As I look back on the organizational committee meetings in preparation for Lausanne, I can recall intense theological and missiological debate. The same process took place during the congress itself, especially as we drafted the Lausanne Covenant.

The Lausanne Covenant summarizes key points from the public presentations, incorporating also the processes of confrontation and dialogue that took place at the congress. The genius of the movement that issued from Lausanne 1974 was to follow up the agenda suggested by the covenant in consultations in which practitioners and theologians came together. It was my privilege to take part in this process. My own reflection on those days is summarized in *Christian Mission and Social Justice* (Herald Press, 1978), which I co-wrote with Mennonite missionary-theologian John Driver.

**A New Stage in Latin America**

In 1975 our family returned to Argentina, a country that was being torn apart by Catholic nationalist generals, corrupt labor union factions, and guerrilla movements. Working among students, I found that I was under police surveillance and that it would be increasingly difficult for me, as a foreigner, to continue my ministry. Therefore, at the end of 1976 we moved back to Lima to assume responsibility for the IFES Latin American regional office. Student work had grown, and there were several national movements, some of which were flourishing and had their own staff. Besides continuing with public speaking to student audiences, teaching, and writing, I now had pastoral responsibilities for staff. My Canadian experience had been good training for this new stage.

My church in Lima invited me to be part of its three-person pastoral team when I was not traveling with IFES responsibilities, which led to my being ordained as a Baptist minister in 1979. For a family with a teenager, being a part of a growing and lively congregation was a blessing. Lilly had discovered that some sixty children lived with their mothers in a neighboring women’s prison, their presence tolerated by prison authorities but with no provision for their feeding and sleeping. With the help of youth from area churches, she developed a program for the children that included camps and trips. She also did errands for inmates and started a kitchen and dining room for the children. For the church youth, including our own children, this mission was their initiation into evangelical social action.

Asked to teach a course in a new department of missiology in the evangelical seminary in Lima, along with colleagues Stewart McIntosh, a veteran Scottish missionary, and Peruvian anthropologist Tito Paredes, I started to apply Lausanne Missiology and to develop a curriculum. Liberation theology had been born in Peru and became an interlocutor for us in both university and seminary. A sixty-page booklet I wrote about liberation theologies from an evangelical perspective circulated widely and was well received.

**Grand Rapids, Philadelphia, and the World**

In August 1983 we moved with our son to Grand Rapids, Michigan, where for one year I was a visiting professor at Calvin College. (Our daughter had previously entered university to study in the Normal School and be trained as a teacher.) At Calvin I taught courses on Latin America, liberation theolo-
gies, and evangelical missiology. With a first-class library and a lively faculty, Calvin College provided an ideal environment for “reflection on praxis.” I also attended meetings of the American Society of Missiology and developed what has proved to be long friendships with Gerald Anderson and James Phillips of the Overseas Ministries Study Center (OMSC), now in New Haven, Connecticut. Thus I was plunged into an environment in which missionary activists gathered to reflect on their practice as loving critics of the missionary enterprise. At Grand Rapids my booklet on liberation theologies grew into a 224-page volume published in 1987 as La fe evangélica y las teologías de la liberación (Evangelical faith and liberation theologies). Parts of it appear in my booklet Liberation Themes in Reformational Perspective (Dordt College Press, 1989).

As my time at Calvin was coming to an end in 1984 I was offered the Thornley B. Wood Chair of Missiology at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, as successor to Orlando Costas, which led to a time of soul-searching for our family. The Calvin College experience and a certain fatigue after twenty-six years of intensive traveling in student ministry helped us decide to accept. In August 1985 we left Lima for Philadelphia.

The leadership of Eastern shared the missiological concerns that Sider, Costas, and I expressed in different ways, and the seminary was intentional about the ministry of women and the development of a truly multiracial campus that included African Americans, Hispanics, and Asians. The composition of the student body and the pressure of the context—the school was located on the borderline between suburbia and the urban realities of poverty, crime, immigration, family disintegration, and social struggle—were moving the faculty to look for a renewal of curriculum and teaching methods. It was a time of transition, and the struggles, joys, and sorrows that we shared were similar to those we had known in Latin America and in Canada.

Designing courses provided the opportunity to reflect on my own missionary praxis and to articulate a missiological perspective that would express my evangelical theological convictions while being sensitive to the demands of context. I had done doctoral work on Paulo Freire, the Brazilian educator who championed a participative educational process, and my classes became a laboratory in which I could test my ideas in dialogue with overseas missionaries during their furlough, Hispanic and African American pastors from the urban chaos of Philadelphia, students from ethnic minorities in India and Myanmar, and Latin American students from a variety of ministry situations, as well as students from typical suburban American Baptist churches. In Philadelphia it was a particular privilege to minister with the Hispanic community. Thanks to a Pew Fund grant to Eastern, I was able to lead a three-year program with ten Hispanic pastors from New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, encouraging them to write materials in Spanish for the specific context of their own churches. Seven books were published as a result.

My own missiological development can be tracked in dozens of articles and chapters of books and in contributions for academic gatherings at OMSC, the American Society of Missiology, and the Latin American Theological Fraternity. I value greatly the collegial and friendly atmosphere in these groups and the give-and-take process, which has enriched my reflection. I also learned much as a member of the boards of missionary organizations on which I served, including OMSC, Latin America Mission, Latin Link, Wycliffe Bible Translators, IFES, and the United Bible Societies. My books Changing Tides (2002) and The New Global Mission (2003) are in a way summaries of my learning process.

Living in Two Worlds

In 1995, ten years after I arrived at Eastern, the seminary agreed to allow me to spend half of the year as a missionary in Peru, working especially in theological education. In 1997 I was appointed by the Board of International Missions (BIM) of the American Baptist Church as a consultant in theological education, to be based in Lima. My experience of mission in the student world had convinced me that it was necessary to examine the nature and development of Protestantism in Latin America from a missiological perspective. As part of this process, I organized three missiological consultations (again supported by a Pew Fund grant)—in Buenos Aires, Lima, and Philadelphia—and formed a team of researchers in Lima, who after four years of intensive work published Protestantism in Peru: A Guide to Bibliography and Sources (2001). I was also a visiting professor in Baptist seminaries in Chile, Bolivia, Argentina, and Colombia, and in 1999 I organized a missiological consultation, out of which came the Red de Instituciones Bautistas de Educación Teológica (RIBET), a network of Baptist theological education in Latin America.

After taking one of my classes at Eastern College, our son, Alejandro, decided to go to Bolivia as a Mennonite Central Committee volunteer. He continued with graduate studies in agricultural economics at Penn State University, and then missionary service with Mennonite Economic Development Associates in Bolivia. He married a Bolivian girl in 1998. In 2000 our daughter, Lilly, who taught at Eastern (by this time renamed Eastern University), married and went to live in Valencia, Spain. BIM had received a request from the Baptist Union of Spain for a missionary to help with theological education, so in December 2001 my wife, Lilly, and I also moved to Valencia, where the offices of the Baptist Union are located. Spanish society and churches are facing challenges created by the growing immigration of Latin Americans, Africans, and eastern Europeans. An immigrant myself, I found that my missiological research and teaching acquired a new component. Until our retirement in June 2005, we commuted to Eastern Seminary during the fall and served in Spain the rest of the year. In retirement we have continued to serve Baptist churches and evangelical organizations. Recently the Spanish government has accredited the Baptist seminary where I teach with university status.

In 2004 Lilly was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease. My daughter and I have reorganized our lives to care for her, and a measure of teaching and writing is still possible. We try to keep in touch with our three grandchildren. My dream is to finish some literary projects left over from my years of active ministry. These days, it is a distinct joy to receive news from my former students who are now serving as missionaries around the world and, from time to time, to write a prologue to one of their books.

An immigrant myself, I found in Spain that my missiological research and teaching acquired a new component.
Revisiting the Legacy of Mary Josephine Rogers

Claudette LaVerdiere

Mary Josephine Rogers, who became Mother Mary Joseph, founder of the Maryknoll Sisters, was one of the most extraordinary women in mission of the twentieth century. I refer the readers of the INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN OF MISSIONARY RESEARCH to the article on Mary Josephine Rogers by Barbara Hendricks published in this Legacy series in 1997. Hendricks discussed the life and experiences that led Mary Rogers to establish the first American Roman Catholic congregation of women dedicated to foreign mission. To provide context for some of the more recently produced material based on the writings of Mother Mary Joseph, I begin this article with a brief overview of the founder’s life. Three specific components of her spiritual legacy are then considered: her sense of the presence of God, the bold initiatives she took in mission, and her promotion of just relationships in community.

Mary Josephine, known as Mollie in her family, was born in 1882 in Boston, Massachusetts, the fourth of eight children. Her paternal grandfather, Patrick Henry, had emigrated from Ireland and was determined that his family would fit into Boston society, overcoming the prejudices to which Irish Catholics were so often subjected in the nineteenth century. To this end the Rogers children, as well as the subsequent Rogers generations, were educated in public rather than Catholic schools. At home, Mollie’s parents reinforced the faith their children learned weekly at her parish church just off the campus and pledged her life to the mission of the church, having no idea how she would follow this commitment.

After graduation, Mollie returned to Smith as a demonstrator in zoology, intending also to begin work on a master’s degree. She was unaware that the teachers then were very concerned about their Catholic students, who remained peripheral to the college’s social and religious activities. One of the teachers, Elizabeth Deering Hanscom, approached Mollie early in the semester and asked her to “do something for the Catholic girls.” Mollie’s response was to start a mission club, which evolved into what is now the Newman Club at Smith. Her search for materials led her to Father James Anthony Walsh, director of the Boston office of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. He encouraged her, sent her materials, and at her first visit to his office, in December 1906, introduced her to his vision to inspire Catholics with regard to the church’s mission. In the United States, Catholics were one hundred years behind their Protestant peers in foreign mission endeavor. Walsh felt it was high time Catholics joined their European counterparts in spreading the Word of God. He showed her the first draft of the mission magazine he was starting, The Field Aeon. Walsh was also thinking of opening a seminary to train young men as missionary priests. His vision had an electrifying effect on Mollie. Thereafter she spent summers and school breaks at his office, translating letters from French missioners for the magazine and doing various editorial tasks.

Mollie gave up the idea of a master’s degree after two years at Smith and transferred to teach in a Boston city school in order to devote more of her time to Walsh’s mission magazine. The year was 1908, the very year that Pope Pius X declared the United States no longer mission territory. The Catholic Church in America was deemed ready and capable of caring for its own people. The World’s Parliament of Religions, held in Chicago in 1893, had generated much excitement about world mission, and Catholic-sponsored mission conferences kept the flame alive. In 1910 Fathers Walsh and Price, a priest from North Carolina, planned the groundwork for the foreign-mission seminary they were cofounding. On June 29, 1911, the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America—the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers—was launched.

In the meantime, three other women besides Mollie had come forward to offer their services to Father Walsh’s mission effort. They were Mary Louise Wholean, a graduate of Wellesley College, Wellesley, Massachusetts; Sara Sullivan, secretary to the dean at Harvard Medical School; and Mary Dwyer, a Boston businesswoman who contributed much of the machinery that was needed in publishing. In following years, women continued to come, all gathering around Mollie, the natural leader among them. Inevitably, as the women worked on The Field Aeon in an atmosphere steeped in the church’s mission, they began to dream about someday being missioners themselves. It had occurred to Mollie while she was still a student at Smith that if Protestant women had a place in foreign missions, then why not also Catholic laywomen? For the women of Maryknoll, however, it was not to be that simple. Their dedicated life notwithstanding, they had no official standing as a group within the church, and therefore no stability or security. Because of their lack of official status, young women were discouraged from joining them.

Mollie and the others realized that, to have a future in the mission field of the Catholic Church, they would have to establish themselves as a religious congregation. While they knew little about religious life, they knew that they wanted to be Sisters who could adapt to all kinds of situations and cultures. The Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa, Wisconsin, who were entrusted with the final formation of the Maryknoll women, recognized the value of adaptability for missioners and purposefully fostered its development in the fledgling community.

On February 14, 1920, thirty-five women welcomed the...
news from Archbishop Patrick Joseph Hayes of New York that they were now constituted as a bona fide religious congregation, with Mollie, now Mother Mary Joseph, as the official head of the group. From 1920 until her death, on October 9, 1955, Mother Mary Joseph spent her time and energy in the ongoing spiritual formation of the Maryknoll Sisters, who by 1955 numbered 1,160, had opened missions in twenty countries, and were serving racial minorities in six cities in the United States.

From this brief overview of Mother Mary Joseph’s life and path to Maryknoll, we turn to some aspects of the richness of her spiritual legacy.

The Presence of God

The most prominent feature of the endowment Mother Mary Joseph left to her Sisters of Maryknoll is the cultivation of the presence of God, which the Sisters identify as the taproot of her mentoring of the congregation. The presence of God, Mother Mary Joseph taught them, was the solid ground on which their relationships and all their mission activities rested. Her insight into the presence of God first appears in her letter to the Sisters of November 1, 1921. From then on, it is everywhere in her conferences. In 1929, when she was still fairly young in religious life, she said, “We know that God is everywhere: mountain tops, depths of the earth and sea. God is in us and the marvel of it all is that we realize it so little. If we did realize it, we would be overwhelmed...[by] the Godhead dwelling within us. Unfortunately, however, we go to the other extreme and we go about from day to day as though God were not with us.”

Mother Mary Joseph here unwittingly evokes Augustine’s rapturous words, “Late have I loved you, O beauty ever ancient, ever new... always you were with me, and I was not with you.”

Mother Mary Joseph’s own growth in the awareness of the presence of God took shape in the midst of a very busy life. She constantly searched for clearer ways to explain how Sisters could remain in the presence of God at all times, because some Sisters did not agree that to do so was possible. Some insisted there was work and there was prayer, but not both at the same time, to which she countered: “In our active religious life we don’t have time for sustained and long prayer. We must cultivate union with God at every possible moment.” Opportunities for that cultivation included walking from one office to another or waiting for something. It could happen anywhere and anytime. Mother Mary Joseph held firmly that it was not a question of doing the impossible but of maintaining a spirit of recollection so that, when free moments came, God’s loving presence would spring to mind spontaneously. “And that,” she insisted, “is all we mean by habitual recollection. It is very possible! It ought to characterize every Maryknoll Sister.”

She enjoined the Sisters to cultivate the presence of God for several reasons. Most basically, it was their means of responding to the intimacy of God’s total involvement with them. And she had another motive. In her mission visitations she had witnessed the appalling loneliness that beset many a missioner in China. She cautioned the Sisters: “If you have not cultivated the habit of speaking with Christ, you will find yourself frightened and alone in a great desert. So learn to listen to him. There is no need for us to feel discouraged, because God is with us.” She also had a deep conviction that, if the Sisters lived in God’s presence, people would “see” God in them.

Mother Mary Joseph often used the term “cultivate.” It was one of her signature words, and its frequent use suggests that she saw living in the presence of God as not automatic. It is not that God ever leaves us but that we are often oblivious of the Holy Mystery that enfolds us. She recognized that the Sisters would need to be active in their encounter with God’s presence, knowing that God would do the work, but not without them. She never suggested that it would be easy to balance a life of prayer with one of extreme activity. But if the Sisters learned to cultivate God’s presence, as she told them, “Our humility will deepen, our charity towards one another will grow more warmly, our religious obligations will take on a new flavor, and we will find all things working together for good. For God is love, and where love is, there is God—there is peace.”

Mother Mary Joseph understood that, through the cultivation of God’s loving presence, the Sisters would begin to see one another as God sees them. This faith conviction inflamed her heart, and she passed it on liberally to her Sisters of Maryknoll.

Bold Risks in Mission

Mother Mary Joseph’s legacy is found also in her willingness to take bold risks without fearing failure or censure. Three instances serve here to illustrate her actions when she knew in her heart the right thing to do and the way to go.

The first example concerns innovation. In the late 1920s and 1930s, Mother Mary Joseph’s views resonated with the desire of Maryknoll Father Francis Ford to have the Sisters go out two by two into the Chinese villages. Interestingly, Ford had formed this idea after observing Mother Mary Joseph when she made her first visitation to China, in the early 1920s. Ford noticed that, even though Mary Joseph had no Chinese language, the Chinese women readily took to her smile as she accompanied the Sisters
in their ministries. His observation led him to hope that, in a country where contact between the sexes was strictly monitored, the Sisters would be able to go directly into the villages to mingle with the women at the hearth of the home. And Mother Mary Joseph concurred.19

Catholic Sisters had never worked in this way before. Prior to Vatican II they were expected to be in their convents after school or clinic hours. It was a great day for Ford and Mother Mary Joseph when Cardinal Pietro Fumasoni-Biondi, prefect of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in Rome, wrote his approval of the method: “Let us hope that this work may grow and that God may bless it with abundant fruit.”20 It is instructive, however, that Mother Mary Joseph, who was always deeply respectful of church authority, had not waited for approval to prepare more young Sisters for apostolic work in China. The driving force for her was the mission of Jesus. To truly go out in that spirit, the Maryknoll Sisters needed to be willing to do whatever was necessary, under any conditions.

The second instance of Mother Mary Joseph’s dauntless foresight is seen in the formation of the Maryknoll Sisters, where she intentionally and deliberately introduced the cultivation of individuality. “We have tried from the beginning to cultivate a spirit which is extremely difficult and which for a long time might have been misunderstood even by those nearest to us.”21 She realized that her ideas of what a Sister could be ran counter to the generally accepted conventions for women religious at the time, but she was forming a community for mission, and the resilience needed superseded the expectations of religious propriety. Speaking on the Maryknoll spirit, and based on the experience of her mission visitsations in China, she maintained: “We expect to go out and live amongst those who will be suspicious of us, who will not like us, who will respect us only when we have proven our virtue, our sincerity and our usefulness to them. . . . [We need to] make the advances [not waiting for them to come to us]. . . . For this we need all of our individuality, all our generosity . . . all the things which the good God has given to us.”22

As noted above, Mother Mary Joseph did not attend a Catholic school. As a consequence, she had no tapes playing in her head telling her what a Sister should be or how she should act. She knew only that she wanted the Sisters to be refined and also natural, with no affectations, so that the Chinese women would be attracted to them in order to come to learn about the Christ these women did not know. She insisted that the spirit she was fostering was “an attempt to keep our individuality, casting out what is objectionable in it, finding what is good and beautiful . . . and supernaturalizing all this, using it, not for ourselves, not for any honor or [personal] distinction . . . [but only] for God’s honor.”23

Mother Mary Joseph expected the Sisters to “supernaturalize” their gifts by keeping the word “others” in mind. “Think of others.”24 In 1914 she wrote his approval of the method: “Let us hope that this work may grow and that God may bless it with abundant fruit.”20 It is instructive, however, that Mother Mary Joseph, who was always deeply respectful of church authority, had not waited for approval to prepare more young Sisters for apostolic work in China. The driving force for her was the mission of Jesus. To truly go out in that spirit, the Maryknoll Sisters needed to be willing to do whatever was necessary, under any conditions.

Among the qualities Mother Mary Joseph encouraged in the Sisters, “fearless honesty” stands out as particularly challenging. To be honest is to be sincere, frank, and open in all ways with one another. Today, we call this transparency. How does one speak and act with fearless honesty? Mother Mary Joseph stressed that the Sisters would be able to approach one another with candor only if they really loved one another. The challenge is not simply to tell the truth but to do so with compassion, or as St. Paul would have it, “speaking the truth in love” (Eph. 4:15).

I close by recalling the simple way in which Mollie Rogers came to accept the daunting task of founding the first American congregation of women religious for foreign mission. With few, if any, guidelines from other people or organizations, she prayed, consulted, and constantly learned through observation and trial and error. The circumstances for mission are altogether different now, but in her day she planted seeds that enabled the Sisters to respond to the needs of their time. In order that they might thrive in community and in mission, she urged them to cultivate the presence of God. She bestowed on them the gifts of her intrepid spirit, her expansiveness of mind, and her heart, entrusting them not only to love one another but indeed to see one another as God sees them.
Selected Bibliography

Works by Mary Josephine Rogers (Mother Mary Joseph Rogers)
All of the writings of Mary Josephine Rogers (Mother Mary Joseph Rogers) are located in the Mother Mary Joseph Papers in the Maryknoll Mission Archives, Maryknoll, New York (hereinafter MMA).

Works About Mary Josephine Rogers (Mother Mary Joseph Rogers)
The following works include those appearing in the bibliography of the 1997 Legacy article by Barbara Hendricks, as well as additional works, marked with an asterisk.


Notes
2. Patrick assumed the name Henry because he thought it would be politically advantageous to be associated with such a famous patriot. See Frank Rogers Callahan, “The Rogers Family Story,” December 6, 1999, Maryknoll Mission Archives, Maryknoll, N.Y. (henceforth MMA).
3. Mother Mary Joseph Rogers, “Mission Interest” (conference paper, Seattle, Wash., early 1940s?). Mother Mary Joseph Rogers Papers, MMA, box 12, folder 7. Subsequent items by Mother Mary Joseph Rogers, all in MMA, show box and folder numbers only.
7. The title was changed to Maryknoll in January 1957, the magazine’s fiftieth anniversary year.
9. The Dominican Sisters assumed this task at the request of Father John T. McNicholas, a Dominican Father and good friend of Father James Anthony Walsh.
17. Mother Mary Joseph Rogers, Chapter Conference for Superiors, December 1941, box 11, folder 1.
18. Francis X. Ford was the first student to arrive at Maryknoll in 1912 and, after his ordination, in 1918, was in the first group to leave for China. He became bishop of Kaying in 1935 and ultimately died in a Communist prison in 1952.


Stanley Skreslet opens his Comprehending Mission with “a fairly representative sample (Winter, Karotempeli, Vadakumpadan, Jongeneel, Walls, Bosch, Verstraalen, Muller, Verkyl) of the most widely used contemporary introductions to missiology” (p. 9). For this volume he adopts Andrew Walls’s definition of missiology as “the systematic study of all aspects of mission” (p. 12) but expands on it, stating that his own conception of missiology as “an integrative, multidisciplinary academic” discipline in some respects resembles the position taken by Louis Luzbetak (p. 14). “Missiology . . . properly encompasses every kind of scholarly inquiry performed on the subject of mission without necessarily subordinating any group of studies to any other” (p. 15).

Skreslet seeks to “describe an academic field of study,” “show how the field of missiology has developed over time,” and “communicate enthusiasm for missiology as a field of study” (pp. 17–18). This threefold aim is developed in six chapters—“Bible and Mission,” “History of Mission,” “Theology, Mission, Culture,” “Christian Mission in a World of Religions,” “The Means of Mission,” and “Missionary Vocation.” These cover the breadth of mission down through the ages, ecumenically and expansively.

Writing with a clear, compact style, Skreslet admirably achieves his three aims, providing an excellent introduction to the field of missiology in a short monograph. The chapter “History of Mission,” for example, encompasses “Luke the Historian, Ecclesiastical History, Hagiography, Early Modern Ethnography, Historical Missiowissenschaft, Critical Ethnography, Current Trends in Research, and Forward in Mission History” (p. v). In summary, Comprehending Mission deserves to be placed high on the list of contemporary volumes introducing missiology.

I conclude with a criticism, namely, that Skreslet makes no reference to Eastern Orthodox missiology. This is especially surprising, since James Stamoolis’s Eastern Orthodox Mission Theology Today (2001), like Skreslet’s volume, appears in the American Society of Missiology series. —Marvin D. Hoff

Mission in Context: Explorations Inspired by J. Andrew Kirk.


I love books created to honor someone who has influenced others in advancing the Gospel around the world. I like such a book because it gives the reader a wonderful collage of snapshots of the one being honored, gathering in one place information about the honoree and her or his friends, colleagues, and peers.

John Corrie (Trinity Theological College, Bristol) and Cathy Ross (Regent’s Park College, Oxford) have masterfully compiled this book, gathering reflections from significant thinkers in theological reflection on mission—or, as Andrew Kirk would emphasize, missiological rethinking of theology. The book is organized in four sections, the first biographical, concerning Kirk as a person and as a mission theologian. Part 2 deals with the relationship between mission and theology, and part 3, with mission in a pluralistic world. Part 4 includes references to a number of areas to which mission theology may make important contributions: culture, education, and religious studies. The book coheres admirably.

This work is a testimony to the profound influence that Andrew Kirk has had on many of us. To my knowledge, no one in missiology has made a more compelling case for the missiological transformation of theology than Andrew. An example of this, mentioned by several in this book, was Andrew’s wisdom and clear thinking during the heyday of reflection in Latin America concerning liberation theology.

I am glad to see this tribute to Andrew Kirk, in whose debt I stand; his writings had a great impact on my own mission theology. This book is important reading for pastors, students of mission, mission practitioners, and mission teachers. Here we all are granted the joy of meeting Andrew and his friends once again.

—Charles Van Engen

Mission History of Asian Churches.


Mission History of Asian Churches emphasizes how churches in seven Asian countries are being de-Westernized “in order to allow for a Christian fulfillment of Asian selfhood” (p. 3). Arising from the Second International Forum of the Asian Society of Missiology, held in 2009 in Semarang, Indonesia, the book contains brief mission histories of churches in China, India, Indochina, Indonesia, Korea, Philippines, and Singapore. Reflecting on their own historical, cultural, and ecclesiastical contexts, Asian church historians and missiologists examine their churches as a “new force in world mission” (p. xi).

The first chapter serves as an introduction to the volume, laying out broad themes of an emerging de-Westernized new Christianity and the concomitant rise of indigenized denominations and spontaneous indigenous missionary movements, as well as a call to current Asian missionaries and mission leaders to have flexible mission strategies for the future success of the church. While
contributors focus primarily on churches established by evangelical faith missions, mainline Protestant and Roman Catholic churches are also considered as part of the historical investigation.

The essays present brief country overviews, then show how indigenous church movements have reached not only their own people but often moved beyond national borders through diaspora communities. Replete with statistics (showing church growth, numbers of missionaries, and numbers of churches) and heuristic charts, the essays discuss the history of evangelical missionaries, mission structures, and the mission networks and partnerships extant both within and outside various Asian countries. The book presents an honest appraisal of the negative impact of mission Christianity and includes local perceptions of missionaries. Also included in most chapters are assessments and evaluations of the past and suggestions for the future. The book would benefit from definitions for nonspecialists (e.g., of varnasrama dharma), a better spell-checker, and a conclusion that would highlight broader Asian ecclesiological and missiological trends.

Park’s judicious selection of contributors makes this book a strong contribution to understanding mission both inside and outside of Asia. I would highly recommend it to students and scholars who seek to learn about the mission impact of Asian churches worldwide.

—Charles E. Farhadian

Charles E. Farhadian is Associate Professor of World Religions and Christian Mission at Westmont College, Santa Barbara, California. His most recent book is Introducing World Christianity (Wiley-Blackwell, 2012).


At a recent seminar I attended, a renowned anthropologist summed up the shift in the social and cultural study of Christianity over the last decade by saying, “Today it is impossible to throw a stone into even a modest group of young anthropologists without hitting one or two studying Christianity.” He was referring to the rapidly growing interest in Christianity across cultural contexts outside of traditional mission study circles. What students of Christian mission history have long held to be their speciality—Christianity outside of the Western world—has now caught the attention of scholars ranging from historians of religion to social historians and cultural anthropologists.

In the present volume David Lindenfeld, a historian, and Miles Richardson, an anthropologist, have furthered the larger scholarly discussion of Christianity outside the Western world, especially focusing on how Christianity interacts with heterogeneous religious traditions across various contexts.

Through nine chapters the larger discussion of the contrast between the microcosm of a traditional village society and the macrocosm of the wider world and of world religions surfaces repeatedly: Should conversion, for example, to Christianity, be viewed as the victory of more supreme spiritual beings over lesser spiritual beings? Or is it the case that whenever cultural and religious worlds meet, people engage in a process of distinguishing and connecting these worlds, maintaining a dynamic tension between them? Generally, the

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The Role of the American Board in the World contains fifteen essays, half of them written for a conference hosted by the Congregational Library in Boston on the 200th anniversary of the founding of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM).

As coeditor Clifford Putney notes in his helpful introduction, the ABCFM was the first American organization to sponsor overseas missions and the largest American foreign missions organization of the 1800s. Its goals and strategies deeply influenced the modern missionary movement. Between its formation by Congregationalists in 1810 and its integration into the missionary arm of the United Church of Christ in 1961, the ABCFM sent to the field nearly 5,000 missionaries (p. xv).

The essays in this book concentrate on the ABCFM’s first century or so of existence and, with only a few exceptions, its efforts in Asia and Hawaii. Many chapters expose internal disagreements, most significantly over the balance between evangelism and other activities. By the early 1900s, the ABCFM had rejected its initial emphasis on preaching and was prioritizing what Sharon Taylor calls “cultural redemption” through education and medicine (p. 24).

The shift is memorably depicted in Alice Hunsberger’s examination of changes across three generations of an ABCFM family in India.

Given the emphasis of recent missions scholarship on indigenous appropriation, there are surprisingly few non-Western actors in these pages. With notable exceptions in essays by Char Miller, Hamish Ion, and Regina Pfeiffer, there is little explanation of how the ABCFM was shaped by the groups among whom it ministered. One also wishes for more about the Board’s influence on America, a line of inquiry followed with valuable results in Taylor’s study (chap. 2) of theological controversy and Virginia Metaxas’s discussion (chap. 5) of missionary efforts to publicize the Armenian genocide.

This book will appeal most to readers interested in exploring the developing theology and missionary philosophy of the ABCFM and the details of ABCFM efforts in a variety of far-flung locations. Thomas Oey sheds new light on missionary David Abeel in China, and Donald Philip Corr does the same for Titus Coan in Hawaii. Essays by Timothy Roberts and coeditor Paul Burlin illuminate the relationship between religion and commerce, while other essays examine ties with politics and diplomacy.

ABCFM official Rufus Anderson declared in 1848 that America, “more perhaps than any other nation,” existed for “the benefit of the entire world” (p. 28). This book does a helpful service by tracing some of the mixed results of this potent cocktail of self-importance and benevolence.

—Andrew Witmer

Andrew Witmer is Assistant Professor of History at James Madison University, Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Complexities of Money and Mission in Asia.


The title of this book indicates clearly its contents. Mission and money are two subjects that should not be separated from each other. The book focuses on Asian countries, where more than 50 percent of the world’s population lives, the majority of whom are not Christians. And the handling of issues related to money and mission in Asia are complex indeed. The contributors of the book’s seven chapters come from the United States, Canada, South Africa, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Australia. Most have had experience in Asian countries.

Because Asians place such strong emphasis on shame, face, and honor, it is very interesting to consider how they cope with receiving financial support from Christian-majority countries. In his chapter “Speaking of the Unspeakable: Money and Missions in Patron-Client Buddhist Cultures,” Paul De Neui explains the meaning and impact of money, as well as the implications of patron-client relationships.

G. P. V. Somaranta’s comparison (chap. 1) of the Buddhist concept of giving for public good and the Christian view of charity is very helpful for understanding an Asian mentality. In chapter 5 Mary Lederleitner, who had twelve years’ experience as a financial manager in Asia, emphasizes the importance of dialogue in each stage and throughout any partnership. Together they present typical Asian Buddhist perspectives on Christians’ use of funds and financial aid (e.g., still holding Christianity accountable for its preeminent position in colonial power structures).

Recently, several Christian organizations have poured funds into Sri Lanka to help in natural disaster, poverty, and development programs. Buddhists worry that the operations of well-funded evangelical Christian groups will eventually reduce the Buddhist religion to minority status in the country, as happened in South Korea over the course of the twentieth century, where an 80 percent Buddhist population has been reduced to less than 40 percent because of Christian evangelism and resulting conversions.

One challenge raised by Alex Smith (chap. 2) is the missionary dilemma of when to give and when not to give, whom...
to support and whom not to support, and how to give and yet still keep a balance. As a missionary to Thailand, he points to Caucasian missionaries’ lifestyles that are like those of rich businesspeople—living in securely guarded palatial housing, having nice limousines, and maintaining membership in expensive, exclusive clubs on the field. His practical principles are good advice for missionaries, giving guidance in money matters and principles for fund-raising.

In chapter 3 Andrew Thomas introduces the idea that use of funds is for empowering believers, not to enslave or control them, stating that the central principle of using money is love.

And in chapter 4 Jonathan Bonk, author of Missions and Money (expanded ed., 2006), introduces topics such as an affluent Western society and human greed; missionaries and the abundance of possessions; and strategic, relational, and theological implications of wealth. For Bonk, while the beginnings and endings in Buddhist and Christian theological understandings are very different, they have some things in common. Their views of materialism, self-discipline, and moderation as a way of life are similar. He offers biblical references and suggests principles of economic justice, raising awareness of the inherent dangers of wealth.

I recommend this book for those interested in Asian countries and especially for those interested in mission to the Buddhist world.

—Chang Ju Kim

Erratum—

The review of Robinson Crusoe Tries Again: Missiology and European Constructions of “Self” and “Other” in a Global World, 1789–2010, by Werner Ustorf and edited by Roland Löfﬂer (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010), in the July 2012 issue of the IBMR, indicated that the volume was “posthumously published.” Happily that is incorrect. Professor Ustorf, now retired, can be reached at his home in the United Kingdom.

The editors regret the error.

The Religious Question in Modern China.


This is an ambitious and thought-provoking book that addresses a vast subject—religion in modern and contemporary China (including Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Singapore)—spanning over a hundred years of history, from 1898 to 2008. Adopting a theoretically informed historical approach, Vincent Goossaert and David Palmer have surveyed the evolving relationship between Chinese religions and politics and society. Their panoramic portrayal scans the creativity and reinvention of Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam. This is accompanied by a strong focus on religious policies, discourses, practices, and trends in the different ages of imperialism, revolution, nationalism, modernity, and globalization from the late Qing, through the warlord government, to the Guomindang and Communist rule. Other topics covered include utopianism, ethnic identities, and the heritage movement.

The book is divided into two parts—

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Communicating the Word: Revelation, Translation, and Interpretation in Christianity and Islam.


Every year since 2002 the archbishop of Canterbury has convened a Building Bridges seminar between leading Christian and Muslim scholars. Communicating the Word is the record of the 2008 seminar, held in Rome. The book covers three themes—revelation, translation, and interpretation—each of which is explored through lectures and studies of Qur’anic and biblical texts by Muslim and Christian theologians from various parts of the world. A concluding chapter summarizes the critical and creative reflections that took place among the twenty-two participants.

In his afterword, the convener of the seminar emphasizes the use of scriptures, noting that for most of Islamic and Christian history, the Qur’ an and the Bible were primarily recited publicly and corporately. Both religions claim that God speaks to us; the challenge is to learn to listen. In this sense, dialogue is to “look at each other’s faces as they are when turned toward God” (p. 179).

What makes this book special is that it invites the reader into the exegetical workshop of both Christian and Muslim theologians working on the same themes and reflecting on each other’s faith—in the presence of each other. Similarities and common challenges surface in the book, but also the critical areas where the two faiths ultimately diverge. Daniel A. Madigan expresses well the approach to dialogue that this book represents: “We can try to avoid the clash of our particularities and take refuge in vague generalities, yet it is the particularities that make us who we are, and who we are is where dialogue begins” (p. 24).

I highly recommend this book for all who are engaged in, or want to be engaged in, dialogue to build bridges of theological understanding between Muslims and Christians.

—Mogens S. Mogensen

Mogens S. Mogensen, a part-time lecturer and freelance consultant in interreligious and intercultural issues in Denmark, was a missionary among Muslim Fulanis in northern Nigeria (1982–91).

Global Mission: Reflections and Case Studies in Contextualization for the Whole Church.


A fascinating kaleidoscope, Global Mission combines missional scholarship and practice, offering a testimonial that the Gospel of God spans the globe across cultures, languages, and religions, even in the twenty-first century. Editor Rose Dowsett has skillfully assembled essays, case studies, and reflections that demonstrate how the life-giving Word is at work, transforming people’s lives both from within and through sociopolitical and religious structures.

The book focuses on contextualization. Prominent missiologists present their views on the topic, building on personal expertise and complementing the wisdom of veteran missionaries such as Lesslie Newbigin, Ralph Winter, and Paul Hiebert. All contributors are committed to a common goal: “to make clear the gospel to people in a way that demands a response which will lead to conversion and sincere and candid Christian discipleship” (p. 90).

Global Mission invites readers to become fearless risk-takers in the service of the Gospel, which transforms both unreached peoples and hands-on missionaries (p. 104). Cross-cultural communication requires “mature colaborship” (p. 105). We read about four different models for explaining wholeness to the Wolof of Senegal (chap. 12), and we have an eight-page description connecting biblical shalom with the concept of mañay held by the Waray of the Philippines (chap. 20). The missionary challenges are relentless!

Today’s whole world is a mission field, ripe for the Gospel. The various conversations the book offers—on small-group ministry, house churches, emerging church, incarnational ministry, an attractional model, nonbaptized believers, churchless Christians, and
more—speak directly to the missional task in both the West and the East. The careful reader will find little to disagree with in Global Mission.

This book is required reading for my course “Theology of Mission.” Mission leaders, missionaries, and mission agencies will find it to be a very useful resource. —Victor Raj

Victor Raj, Mission Professor of Exegetical Theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, is editor of Missio Apostolica, journal of the Lutheran Society for Missiology.

Nigerian Immigrants in the United States: Race, Identity, and Acculturation.


Nigerian Immigrants in the United States is a refreshing read. The book focuses on the experience of Nigerian immigrants in the United States and their interpretation of this experience, an approach the author refers to as phenomenological, or one of qualitative social research (p. 53). It is based on case studies of individual immigrants who discuss why they left Nigeria, what their experiences in the United States have been, and whether they see it as a good decision to have come to the States.

The central question of the book is, How do the immigrants themselves interpret their experiences in their new society? Answering this question generates others, such as, Who are these Nigerians who have left their homeland? What has been their experience? and How has their experience shaped them and their understanding of the immigration process? Finally, it asks, “What can we learn from this experience?” (p. xi). The case samples include Nigerians who have come as students, as spouses, as permanent visitors, and as visa lottery winners.

The author discusses lessons learned in these case studies in the context of historical, theoretical, and general principles of immigration to the United States. These lessons, which help us see how Nigerians have adapted to and integrated into American society, also reveal the various human services used to support their adjustment.

Ette makes clear the varied motivations for emigration to America, as well as the important role that social networks continue to play in the immigrants’ experience. Education is one of the strongest motivators for coming to the United States. Once in the States, the immigrants tend not to move to new locations. Like most other immigrants, Nigerians maintain close contact with their homeland. Most still hope to return some day to Nigeria, and some are acquiring property there for that day. “Nigerian immigrants, like other immigrants, chose a new land because the old was no longer supporting their desires and plans. They chose this new land because they were looking for a way to make their lives better” (p. 174).

—John T. Nwangwu

John T. Nwangwu, originally from Nigeria, teaches infectious diseases and epidemiology at Southern Connecticut State University and at Yale University, both in New Haven, Connecticut. He is a consultant for the World Health Organization and has been a missionary in Nigeria, India, Bangladesh, and Sierra Leone.
Religion and Development: Ways of Transforming the World.


The wording of the title, Religion and Development, may sound rather paradoxical to many postmodern scholars in the West, but noting what ordinary people do on the ground, Gerrie ter Haar brilliantly demonstrates that religion uniquely and effectively contributes to world development.

This book, divided into four parts, is the fruit of eighteen contributors from various backgrounds. Part 1 is conceptual in nature. It affirms the centrality of religion in international affairs and the important contribution of faith institutions. In the last chapter of this section, Louke van Wensveen shows why scholarly communities are reluctant to “cooperate in efforts to enhance the instrumental use of religion for mechanistic development purposes” (p. 108).

The second section explores the role of religion in economics, arguing that religion plays a role in “enhancing economic development” (p. 11). It is worth noticing that the last two chapters of this section bring Islamic perspectives into the discussion, which is valuable, given the current global religious context.

Part 3 acknowledges the role of religion in achieving the U.N.’s Millennium Development Goals. It is clear that religion is built into people’s life and worldview and that many religious figures are already making a difference.

The last part deals with religion and social change. The highlight of this section is the statement by Christiaan Hogenhuis that “development is about material, social and spiritual transformation, with the various aspects supporting and reinforcing each other.”

Cultural Encounters at Cape Farewell: The East Greenlandic Immigrants and the German Moravian Mission in the Nineteenth Century.


This important book collects nine essays on the interactions among missionary, commercial, colonizing, and indigenous interests at Cape Farewell (Danish: Kap Farvel; Greenlandic: Uummannarsuaq), the southernmost point of Greenland. The authors, two of whom were born in Greenland, describe the arrival in the nineteenth century of large numbers of eastern Greenlandic indigenous people at the German Moravian mission station of Friedrichsthal, located near Cape Farewell. The integration of these people into the life of the mission—through baptism, instruction, commerce, and other cultural interactions—is the main concern of the volume.

Hans C. Gulløv reviews the history of the first inhabitants of this part of Greenland. Einar L. Jensen next examines the history of “contacts and colonisation” during the eighteenth century, focusing on the relations between East Greenlanders and West Greenlanders. Jensen also devotes two long chapters to European traders and missionaries, phases of internal Greenlandic immigration, and conflicts within the mission field. His work is especially thoughtful in its assessment of conflicts between the state monopoly Trading Company and the Moravian Brethren mission, as well as competition between the Danish Lutheran mission and the Moravian Brethren. In their chapter “Greenland in Herrnhut,” Kristine Raahauge and Hans Gulløv catalog many of the Greenlandic objects preserved in the Moravian Völkerkundemuseum at Herrnhut, Germany.

Readers with little familiarity with nineteenth-century Greenlandic history will appreciate the careful use of German, Danish, and Greenlandic words for places, individuals, and terms. A large number of helpful maps, charts, and photographs well document the Moravian missionary experience in Greenland.

The authors fail to situate Moravian-Greenlandic interaction within the literature of other circumpolar missionary efforts. (One thinks particularly of the work of Frédéric Lazure, Arich Oosten, and François Trudel on contemporary Anglican missionary activity among the Inuit of Canada’s Baffin Island.) Nevertheless, Cultural Encounters at Cape Farewell is an attractive and interesting book that deserves a wide audience. Despite occasional unidiomatic English, it offers a refreshing exploration of missionary activity and influence in a particular time and place.

—the last part of the book

The Chaplains of the East India Company, 1601–1858.


The tension between Christianity and imperialism remains a central issue in the history of missions. Daniel O’Connor contributes to this ongoing historiographical discussion by focusing on the activities of the East India Company chaplains working in India over a 250-year period. O’Connor, formerly a college chaplain in India, notes that the book is intended to be a “preliminary sketch” rather than an exhaustive study (p. 3). The work is organized into six thematic and chronological chapters (Company, Voyage,
Factory, City, Garrison, and Empire), which together summarize the experience of the chaplains in the Company’s history.

O’Connor emphasizes the role of Christian piety in the founding of the East India Company, which resulted in an ongoing relationship between the English ecclesiastical leadership and the Company. According to O’Connor, this explicit interconnection between Christianity and commerce “made the appointment of chaplains inevitable” (p. 145). The chaplains worked broadly among sailors, merchants, officers, soldiers, wives, children, and the indigenous population. Chaplains operated in a variety of capacities, from being military chaplains, pastors, and missionaries to serving as educators, translators, and social reformers. In addition to their pastoral duties, some chaplains sought personal wealth, while others supported “a sacralized version of the imperial vision” (p. 98). O’Connor highlights several chaplains, such as Christian Friedrich Schwartz and James Gray, who made distinctive contributions to the Company. He also provides insight into the Company’s complicated relationship with Roman Catholics, and he notes the influence of various Christian groups and missionary organizations on the religious work carried out under the auspices of the Company.

This book offers an excellent overview of the chaplaincy in India and makes a valuable contribution to the study of Christianity, imperialism, and the East India Company. The work should, as the author intends, provoke more in-depth study.

—Darin D. Lenz

Darin D. Lenz is Associate Professor of History at Fresno Pacific University, Fresno, California.

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BOOK SERIES: Resources for Reconciliation.
Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2008–. Paperback, $15 each.


2012. Making Peace with the Land: God’s Call to Reconcile with Creation, 182 pp., by Fred Bahnson and Norman Wirzba.

The seven volumes to date of InterVarsity’s Resources for Reconciliation series represent a partnership between InterVarsity Press and the Center for Reconciliation at Duke Divinity School. The result is a remarkable and worthwhile contribution to the ongoing conversation concerning the proclamation of the Christian Gospel and social justice. The initial volume, by series editors Emmanuel Katongole and Chris Rice, includes a helpful preface that defines the scope and intent of the project. Their pairing of a (mainly) academic contributor and a grassroots practitioner as authors, who are allowed to contribute more or less equally, is what makes these books so useful in the commitment of the church to balanced speaking and acting.

Space does not allow for comments on each book. A couple observations about the most recent volume, Making Peace with the Land: God’s Call to Reconcile with Creation, must serve as an appetizer for the series. Fred Bahnson and Norman Wirzba are competent guides to this complicated, urgent subject. Too often, readers are hammered with statistics that, while true, tend to confuse and overwhelm. In this case, however, statistics are absolutely necessary and are used judiciously—in no small measure because of the high level of expertise of both authors. (Bahnson is a permaculture gardener, and Wirzba is an accredited theologian, specializing at Duke in ecology and rural life.) One statistic: The 1 billion hungry people in the world today is now equaled by the number of obese people, “which means that nearly one in three humans suffers from the ill effects of a poor diet.” The lamentable
result is that today “we know more than ever about the science of nutrition and yet we have not yet been able to move the needle on healthful eating” (p. 89).

The helpfulness of each book comes when readers take the pains to place themselves within the framework of the topics under discussion. The cross-disciplinary approach the editors chose also carries risks, but the wisdom of making good use of thinkers with different backgrounds has resulted in insights from a wider perspective. That the contributors come from a variety of nationalities and ethnicities, as well as a mixture of theological perspectives (Roman Catholic, mainline Protestant, and conservative evangelical), makes for a treat.

Highlights of the series include the contributions by Katongole and Rice, Marsh and Perkins, and Jones and Musekura. Five of the seven volumes include study guides. Each book can be profitably read, if not fully digested, in one sitting.

To understand the entire project, one must begin by reading the first volume. Otherwise, the rest of the collection can be read in any order. I benefited greatly from my own reading of the books and recommend them highly for classroom use, as well as use by local churches seeking direction for being more strategic in thinking and ministry.

—John Nyquist

John Nyquist is Professor Emeritus of Mission and Evangelism, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois.

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**British Missionaries and the End of Empire: East, Central, and Southern Africa, 1939–64.**


*British Missionaries* is a carefully researched, broadly focused, and pleasantly written account of missions at the end of colonialism. Chapter 1 focuses on missionary opposition to the “color bar” in Africa. Despite widespread desire for change, few missionaries publicly campaigned for justice, preferring instead to lobby officials behind the scenes. A similar protocol was followed during the controversy surrounding the marriage of Seretse Khama (heir to the Bangwato throne) and an English woman named Ruth Williams, discussed in chapter 2.

The London Missionary Society failed to offer Khama unambiguous support when the Colonial Office blocked his succession, which had ramifications in the religious sphere. Chapter 3 recalls the short-lived course of the Central African Federation (made up of the current nations of Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe), one of the most important political issues of the 1950s (p. 75). Though many clergy (especially within the Church of Scotland) openly criticized the scheme, chapter 4 records how their stand was all but ignored by Africans (who identified with nationalists) and deeply resented by the British colonial government. In East Africa the Mau Mau fought against the same kind of disregard for African concerns exhibited in the federation. Chapter 5 explores missionary involvement in the rehabilitation of captured Mau Mau, but also their growing criticism of government’s handling of the crisis, especially the maltreatment of detainees. The final years of empire witnessed fundamental shifts, including the rise of NGOs, the decline of British missions, and the redefinition of “mission,” which are all discussed in chapter 6.

*British Missionaries* is an important
The Ethiopian Prophecy in Black American Letters.


Most scholars working in the field of black church studies are familiar with Psalm 68:31, the “Ethiopian Prophecy”: “Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God” (KJV). The Ethiopian Prophecy in Black American Letters chronicles various interpretations of this prophecy by David from the eighteenth through the twentieth centuries.

Roy Kay begins by distinguishing between Jewish and Christian readings of the verse. Starting with George Fox, founder of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), he organizes the book chronologically, focusing on various individuals within each chapter. Fox interprets the verse from an evangelical and missionary perspective, stating that Ethiopia here represents the Gentile church. John Marrant, one of the first African American missionaries in colonial America, likens Ethiopia not simply to individuals of African descent but also to Native Americans. African Methodist Episcopal Church founder Richard Allen asserts that this Scripture foreshadows the emancipation of black slaves in the Americas. Other authors—from Phyllis Wheatley to Absalom Jones—view the verse as a call to Christianize Africa. Abolitionist Prince Hall sees it as a prophetic proclamation that speaks of the deliverance of Africans from slavery. The most secular reading that Kay analyzes is that of W. E. B. DuBois, who sees Ethiopia as a female suffering servant who has been repeatedly raped by imperialist Westerners. Finally, Kay examines the narrative configuration and gives exhaustive figural analysis of the verse, synthesizing various allusions to and interpretations of Psalm 68:31.

The book has limitations. The historical descriptions offered can become overwhelming. Although Kay gives readers a glimpse into the thoughts of some of the best-known writers in American

Thomas W. Higgins

Thomas W. Higgins recently earned a Ph.D. in African Christianity from the Center for the Study of World Christianity at the University of Edinburgh. He has conducted mission-focused research in Nigeria and Kenya.

Witness to World Christianity

The International Association for Mission Studies, 1972–2012

Gerald H. Anderson
with
John Roxborough
John M. Prior, S.V.D.
Christoffer H. Grundmann

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Forty years after its founding in 1972, the International Association for Mission Studies has become an international and interdenominational network of individuals, organizations, and centers engaged in the scholarly study of the Christian world mission. IAMS provides mutual encouragement, fellowship, and dissemination of information for the advancement of scholarship about world mission and the encounter of the Gospel with cultures and religions worldwide. It is not a sending or promotional agency, but an association for the study of mission.

Gerald H. Anderson is director emeritus of the Overseas Ministries Study Center, and was editor of the IBMR.

For details or to order a copy, go to www.omsc.org/iamshistory
serve as a useful point of departure for Kay’s largely descriptive book, it may serve as a useful point of departure for further analysis. Indeed, it is a must-read for anyone interested in exploring the ways in which the “Ethiopian Prophecy” has been used by black intellectuals over the past three centuries.

—Charles L. Chavis, Jr.

Charles L. Chavis, Jr., is studying the black church in the African diaspora at Vanderbilt Divinity School, Nashville, Tennessee. In 2011 he published “Yared (Saint, 505–571 AD),” on the sixth-century Ethiopian pioneer of musical notation, in BlackPast.org, an online reference guide to African American history.

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

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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.

Weeklong seminars, public lectures, corporate worship, and informal exchanges afford Western mission personnel, pastors, educators, students, and others opportunity to gain insight into the perspectives and concerns of seasoned non-Western mission and church leaders. In addition, OMSC publishes the International Bulletin of Missionary Research, which is widely respected as a leading professional journal of mission research and reflection.

Readers who may be familiar with Timothy Dudley-Smith’s two-volume biography (John Stott [InterVarsity Press, 1999–2001]) may be wondering what else there is to add. Undoubtedly, the uniqueness of this volume is the variety of voices: from Michael Green, Dick Lucas, Michael Baughen, and Richard Bewes, to Stott’s longtime secretary, Frances Whitehead. Stott’s global family is also well represented by Aijith Fernando, Samuel Escobar, René Padilla, David Gitari, Michael Nazir-Ali, and Peter Kuzmić. Not surprisingly, there is uniformity of agreement on the usual themes: Stott was diligent in Bible study and delighted in bird watching; he defended the faith firmly, yet with grace; he exercised ruthless self-discipline and lived a simple lifestyle. Even for those who followed Stott closely, Frances Whitehead’s revelation that Stott emptied her office wastebasket every day for many years may come as a surprising example of Stott’s humility. We also learn that, when Stott sensed that Anglicanism was facing grave dangers, he convened a group of like-minded pastors so that they would be a source of strength for each other within the Anglican Church.

In a life that spanned almost a century, it is difficult to choose a highligh, but these words of Peter Kuzmić identify perhaps Stott’s greatest contribution: “It was at Lausanne [1974] that the world recognized John Stott as the apostle or, to put it in more secular terms, the chief engineer of evangelical unity in theological essentials and holistic mission. In his plenary presentation John laid foundations for the theme of the strategic gathering and provided definitional clarity, while resisting all temptations to evangelical triumphalism” (p. 151). Probably the final word should come from Keith and Gladys Hunt: “It’s enough to say that we know God better because of knowing John Stott” (p. 111).

—Casely B. Essamuah


Portraits of a Radical Disciple: Recollections of John Stott’s Life and Ministry.


Thirty-four authors celebrate their friendship with John Stott in this warm and affectionate book. The book spans all of Stott’s life, including ministry in London as curate and rector at All Souls Church, his global reach, and his life with study assistants.

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Dr. Dale T. Irvin, New York Theological Seminary, considers the city in the mission of God. The seminar includes a day trip in New York City.

Seminar costs $175 unless otherwise noted. Full information—including content descriptions, directions, schedules, and links to register online—may be found online.

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