Violent Religion and Jesus’ Mission

The modern imagination blanches at the thought of twelfth-century Crusaders singing “Jesu, Dulcis Memoria.” The saintly Bernard of Clairvaux, often credited with that hymn of devotion (in English, “Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee”), helped plan and inspire the Second Crusade, which contributed to a legacy of brutality and terror in a land that had been occupied by Muslims for many centuries.

As the West ponders the religiously inspired terror of September 11, it is worth noting that the religious sensibilities of that former era endorsed violence in the supposed service of the reign of God. The very thought of Jesus, for Bernard, filled the breast with sweetness, but there seemed to be a gaping blind spot when it came to the suffering his warriors were likely to inflict on the Holy Land.

When religion countenances violence on behalf of mission, as in the medieval reading of Luke 14:23 (“Compel them to come in”) or in the modern Taliban movement, how should Christian mission respond? How should governments respond? In this issue J. Dudley Woodberry draws on long experience as a minister of the Gospel in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the Near East to help us see into the mind of fundamentalist Islam, sometimes peaceable, sometimes militant. (Woodberry’s autobiographical “My Pilgrimage in Mission” also appears in this issue.)

Contributing Editor David A. Kerr offers a survey of fourteen centuries of Christian scholarship regarding Islam, along with a listing of centers and institutes devoted to the study of Islam and Christian-Muslim relations. Other offerings, including James A. Tebbe’s comparison of the striking differences in approach to Islam of Temple Gairdner, Kenneth Cragg, and Wilfred Cantwell Smith, contribute to our understanding of the challenge of Islam for Christian mission.

Commenting on their annual statistical table on global mission, David B. Barrett and Todd M. Johnson point out the fact that the world of Islam is today’s fastest growing religious community.

Some years ago at the Overseas Ministries Study Center, in New Haven, Connecticut, where this journal is edited, we were told of a missionary couple in Afghanistan who were brutally murdered in their bed by enemies of the Gospel. As she bled to death, the wife wrote in letters of blood, “We love Afghanistan.” Jesus’ mission is not to coerce but to love. If blood is to be shed, let it be that of his servants, who follow him in life and death. “The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many” (Matt. 20:28).

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Terrorism, Islam, and Mission: Reflections of a Guest in Muslim Lands

J. Dudley Woodberry

My wife and I had just returned from Peshawar, Pakistan, the birthplace of the Taliban and Osama bin Laden's main conduit to the world. In a service celebrating World Communion Sunday, we heard the news: bombs were falling in Afghanistan. As the round loaf of bread was broken, symbolizing Christ's broken body, I also thought of our broken world. As the cup was poured, commemorating his shed blood, I thought of the blood being shed right then in Afghanistan, a land that had been our home. Bombs were landing in or near places where we had walked.

When we turned on our radio, we heard a recording of bin Laden calling on all Muslims to join a holy war against the infidel West, especially Americans. Yet Muslims had been our hosts during our years of living in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia, and our ministry had made us guests for shorter periods in most other Muslim lands.

On our way back from Peshawar accompanying aid personnel who had been working with Afghans, we stopped in Thailand for a few days to see whether events might indicate the possibility of a return to Peshawar within a few weeks. As my wife and I walked the beach near a fishing village, we looked up and saw the crescent moon (a Muslim symbol) with dark storm clouds gathering around it and fishing boats moving out for a night of work. That scene started my reflections on the peaceful and/or militant nature of Islam, on the reasons for the anger that drives the dark storm clouds of terrorism, and on its implications for governments, Muslim-Christian relations, and mission.

Islam: Peaceful or Militant?

The media has bombarded us with generalizations about the peacefulness or militancy of Islam, and fundamentalists (Islamists) and militants have been frequently equated. Such generalizations fail to grasp the diversity within Islam, both in its contemporary expressions and in its roots. The Qur'an comprises recitations by Muhammad, believed to come from God, to meet the needs that arose on specific occasions. Some were peaceful; others were militant. Therefore either position can be argued by selecting specific verses or illustrations from history.

The peaceful interpretation held by a majority of Muslims is based on Qur'anic verses like 2:256: “There is no compulsion in religion” and 5:82: “The nearest in affection to the believers are those who say, ‘We are Christians.’” The social regulations devised by early Muslim leaders for non-Muslim minorities within Muslim lands, which applied particularly to Jews and Christians, gave religious minorities the right to practice their faith as long as they were loyal citizens and performed their obligations to Muslim rulers. In the Middle Ages Muslim governments were commonly more tolerant of Jews and Christians than Christian governments were of Jews and Muslims.

Militants within Islam, however, base their position on Qur'anic verses like 2:216: “Fighting is prescribed for you”; 2:190–92: “Fight in the cause of God those who fight you and slay them . . . for tumult and oppression are worse than slaughter . . . Fight them until there is no more persecution and oppression and there prevails justice and faith in God”; 9:5: “Fight and slay the infidels”; and 49:15: “The true believers are those who . . . strive with . . . their lives for the cause of God.” In their pronouncements, militants like bin Laden echo the words found in these texts: Fighting and slaying is prescribed by God. Americans cause oppression and injustice and are infidels (although in its immediate context the Qur’an is referring to polytheists); Muslims therefore must strive with their lives for the cause of God.

According to the canonical traditions, Muhammad taught that martyrs would have their sins forgiven, be shown their abode in paradise, avoid purgatory, and receive the crown of honor. Islamic suicide bombers thus see themselves as performing a sacred obligation for God and his community and acquiring honor and an eternal reward. Furthermore, their experiences have led them to believe that they do not have diplomatic or military power to overcome God's enemies by other means.

Another question that arises is how the rigid faith and practice of the Taliban fits into Islam. The Taliban has its historic roots in Hanbalism, the most fundamentalist of the four orthodox schools of the Sunni branch of Islam. By definition, fundamentalists are those who turn for guidance to the fundamentals of their faith—the Qur’an and Sunna (practice) of Muhammad and the earliest Muslims—and reject later adaptations. They hold that their understanding of the society of the earliest Muslims is the model for society even today, and it applies to all areas of life.

This view of fundamentalist Islam may find expression in either peaceful or militant versions. The Wahhabism of Saudi Arabia is a modern example of fundamentalist Islam. It was formerly militant when the families of Ibn Saud and Ibn Abd al-Wahhab were conquering most of Arabia and destroying popular saint veneration in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. Today, however, its expression in the Saudi government is largely peaceful.

Another fundamentalist movement found in much of the Arab world is the Muslim Brotherhood, some of whose leaders I met with secretly in the 1960s when they were outlawed in Egypt and I was writing my doctoral dissertation on the theology of their founder. They were pious and idealistic, but their goal was so important to them that they would commit terrorism if other means were blocked. One member greatly influenced bin Laden in his student days in Saudi Arabia, while others taught in the schools and mosques of southwestern Arabia that produced a number of the plane hijackers on September 11.

The Taliban is another such group. These movements normally arise from the interaction of a feeling of trauma, unsettled local conditions, and a millenarian ideology. In the case of the Taliban, the trauma and local conditions include the fighting between the seven major mujahedin groups (with their rival
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Sources of Anger Behind Terrorism

Terrorism is a response to built-up grievances, real or imagined. Therefore, one cannot drive out terrorism without dealing with the grievances that have led to it. The most obvious of these issues is the Israeli-Palestine conflict. This source of anger is reinforced almost daily by the media coverage of rock-throwing Palestinian youths, and some suicide bombers, against vastly superior Israeli firepower.

The resentment has been building for years. Arab anger started with the Zionists' encouragement of Jewish immigration into Palestine in the late 1800s under the slogan "A land without a people for a people without a land"—a strange phrase, since Palestine had been Arabized for over twelve centuries. The resentment increased after the British promised at the beginning of World War I to support Arab independence in exchange for Arab support in the war effort against their Ottoman Turkish masters. This promise was later ignored by the Sykes-Picot Agreement (to divide the Near East into European protectorates) and then the Balfour Declaration (that the government "looks with favor" upon the creation of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine "but nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities"). Arab anger turned against the United States and occasional bombings of Iraq ten years after the Gulf War. Bin Laden and the Taliban's Mullah Omar ask where the Americans are when they want justice. And Arabs and Muslims around the world ask the same question.

The reasons may be obvious, but pictures and reports of civilian deaths and occasional bombings of, Iraq ten years after the Gulf War. The reasons may be obvious, but pictures and reports of civilian casualties or U.N. resolutions to return the lands conquered in 1967.

Palestinian refugee camps are filled with people whose families had owned Palestinian land for centuries. Now, on television, they watch its Jewish occupiers defending it and killing other Palestinians with missiles and F-16s made in the U.S. and purchased with $3 billion in American military aid each year. Bin Laden and the Taliban's Mullah Omar ask where the Americans are when they want justice. And Arabs and Muslims around the world ask the same question.

Another obvious grievance is the continued sanctions against, and occasional bombings of, Iraq ten years after the Gulf War. The reasons may be obvious, but pictures and reports of civilian casualties or U.N. reports of the thousands of children dying from malnutrition and disease continue to inflame passions. For many Arabs Saddam Hussein was another Nasser uniting the

ethicities and leaders) after they had driven the Soviets out of Afghanistan. The original Taliban (literally "students") included many orphans who had lost their fathers in the previous fifteen years of fighting and were raised in the madrasas (religious schools) around Peshawar, where they learned little beyond the Qur'an and the ideology that all would be well if they got rid of external enemies and initiated a social system based on that of the early Muslim community. After initial success against mujahedeen militias, they were seen as a source of law and order, and hence they received Pakistani support and recruits from Pushhtuns (also called Pakhtuns and Pathans) in Afghanistan and Pakistan. But power corrupted many of the leaders, and the general populace has come to resent their strict laws and punishments and the increasing number and influence of "Arab Afghans" harbored by the Taliban leadership.

Books for review and correspondence regarding editorial matters should be addressed to the editors. Manuscripts unaccompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope (or international postal coupons) will not be returned.

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Arab World; to many Muslims, another Saladin fighting the most recent Crusade; to many Third World people, another Robin Hood stealing from the corrupt rich to share with the poor. Sanctions against Syria, Libya, Iran, and Sudan, plus bombing of a pharmaceutical factory in Sudan without convincing proof of its military use, have fanned the flames of hatred.

A third grievance is the stage on which all the others play, namely, the Muslims' sense of being humiliated and in danger. For over a millennium the Islamic empires were the superpowers. During these centuries the Sunni Islam of the majority did not develop a theology of suffering, for God seemed obviously to be on their side. Then Western colonial powers divided the Muslim world among them. Today Muslims have been humiliated, not only by Jews in Palestine, but by Christian Serbs in Bosnia and Kosovo, by atheistic or Christian Russians in Chechnya, and sometimes by Hindus in Kashmir. After the bomb blasts that killed twenty-four Americans in Saudi Arabia in 1995 and 1996, bin Laden is quoted as saying that the bombers “have raised the nation's head high and washed away a great part of the shame that has enveloped us.”

The ascendency of the West is seen, fourthly, as affecting Muslims in a number of ways. It has corroded morality with the flow of alcoholism, drugs, materialism, sexual promiscuity, and arrogance through movies, television, and international travel. Modern Muslim states have tended to adopt Western law codes rather than the Islamic laws believed to be divinely ordained. Economically, the world is seen as controlled by Western global economic ideas based, for example, on charging interest, which is not allowed by Islam. The majority of Muslim nations are poor and under a crippling foreign debt burden, so such economic practices are seen as clearly working against them. To sum up, Islamists are angered by the fact that they believe they have a superior culture, but the West, especially Americans, have superior power.

Lastly, with their superior power Americans have espoused democracy but also have backed Muslim regimes that Islamists feel have tried to crush their own aspirations in, for example, Iran (in the 1970s under the Shah), Kuwait, Algeria, and Saudi Arabia. For many years Americans have built the Saudi military bases and overseen the training and equipping of both their military and their national guard. A significant number of the alleged hijackers in the September 11 tragedy came from Saudi Arabia, where all of us who lived there had daily reminders of the American presence with the planes flying out of the local air bases. In 1990, at the time of the Gulf War, Osama bin Laden directed his sights on Americans after the Saudi government declined his offer to use Muslim veterans of the 1980s Afghan-Soviet war. Instead the Saudis brought thousands of “infidel” Americans onto the holy soil of Islam’s prophet, and a significant number stayed after the conflict. In 1998 he protested: “For more than seven years the U.S. has been occupying the lands of Islam in the holiest of its territories, Arabia, plundering its riches, overwhelming its rulers, humiliating its people, threatening its neighbors, and using its bases in the peninsula as a spearhead to fight against the neighboring Islamic people.”

Appropriate Governmental Response

Since much of the anger that has led to terrorism has resulted from years of feeling that the foreign policy of the United States and others with power has been unjust, the first area that must be addressed is foreign policy. Although Americans cannot police the world, in issues like the Palestine conflict, where we can help the opposing parties work out solutions, we must strive for a maximum of justice rather than settle for what is politically expedient at home. One person’s “terrorist” is another’s “freedom fighter,” and many governments in the coalition against terrorism expect support for suppressing their own opposition groups. Therefore any action will require a delicate hand, whether in Israel-Palestine, Kashmir, Chechnya, Sri Lanka, or Kurdish areas of Turkey. Also the world community needs to build on the opportunities the new coalition brings for rapprochement between nations.

Next, relief and development in Afghanistan cannot stop at the end of the military action, as much of it did after the expulsion of the Soviets in 1989. Twenty-two years of fighting, three years of famine, and five years of Taliban rule in Kabul and much of the country have made the situation desperate. There are millions of land mines and hundreds of men and children on the streets of Afghanistan and Peshawar who have lost arms or legs. Much of Kabul is in ruins. And there is little food.

Third, we need to be aware of the limitations of military action alone. To kill a terrorist makes him a martyr that inspires new terrorists, as the Israel-Palestine conflict has shown. Furthermore, a broader action, particularly if it kills civilians, typically results in increasing the militancy. Coordinated international pressure on a country harboring terrorists until they give them up proved effective with Pan Am Flight 103 and the Libyans (although admittedly it has been less effective with Iraq).

Lastly, although the Afghans were not able to hold together a united government on their own in the early 1990s, America and other foreign powers must keep as low a profile as possible in any help they give in nation building. History has shown that the one thing that unites Afghans is the presence of a foreign power on their soil.

Muslim-Christian Relations

The present crisis underlines the urgency of improving Muslim-Christian relations. The repeated assertion by President Bush and coalition members that the war on terrorism is not a war against Islam has often been drowned out by the call of bin Laden and militants for all Muslims to rise up in holy war against the “Crusade on Islam.” Mutual demonization has been a result.

Yet the crisis has presented a unique opportunity to work on long-overdue issues. The coalition against terrorism drew together some Muslim and non-Muslim nations that previously were on opposite sides of the table, creating opportunities to work on some of the issues that have divided us, including festering wounds like Israel-Palestine, Iraq, Kashmir, and Chechnya, where religion is one of the components. September 11 has also forced Muslims to delineate more clearly what are legitimate and illegitimate means to reach what are considered to be just goals, even as it has given many Christians their first
The Fuller School of World Mission celebrates Jesus Christ, the risen Lord, by equipping more than 300 students each year to proclaim "good news" and make disciples throughout the nations of the world. Founded in 1965 by Donald McGavran, the School of World Mission has provided quality missiological training for more than 3,500 men and women from 70 countries who speak 140 languages. One of the School's distinguished faculty is Dr. J. Dudley Woodberry, an internationally recognized expert in the field of contemporary Islam. Dr. Woodberry has conducted research in many Islamic countries and has lived in Afghanistan for several years. Faculty like Dr. Woodberry keep the School of World Mission on the cutting edge of missiological education.
Noteworthy

Personalia

Asbury Theological Seminary has named George G. Hunter, III, retired dean of the E. Stanley Jones School of World Mission and Evangelism, as its first Distinguished Professor of Church Growth and Evangelism.

Princeton Theological Seminary, New Jersey, appointed Darrel L. Guder the Henry Winters Luce Professor of Missional and Ecumenical Theology effective January 1, 2002. He was Peachtree Professor of Evangelism and Church Growth, Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Georgia.

McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, appointed Ogbu Kalu the Henry Winters Luce Professor of World Christianity and Mission. He was Professor of Church History, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and is the founding chairman of the Conference of African Theological Institutions.

Died. Roberta H. Winter, 71, cofounder with her husband, Ralph D. Winter, of the U.S. Center for World Mission, Pasadena, California, October 28, 2001, following a five-year battle with multiple myeloma. She was the author of I Will Do a New Thing: The U.S. Center for World Mission . . . and Beyond. (An earlier version was published under the title Once More Around Jericho: The Story of the U.S. Center for World Mission.)

Announcing

The American Society of Missiology will convene its annual meeting in Techny, Illinois, from June 21–23, 2002. The theme will be "Migration: Challenge and Avenue for Christian Mission." Samuel Escobar, an IBMR Contributing Editor, is this year’s ASM president. The Association of Professors of Mission will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary at its annual meeting at the same location, June 20–21, 2002, on the theme "Celebrating the Jubilee Year of APM: Tapping into the Pioneers’ Vision." Contact: www.asmweb.org or Judy Bos, (616) 392-3622, judybos@hayburn.com.

The University of Oxford Refugee Studies Centre, which holds an archive of some 30,000 unpublished documents and internal reports on forced migration produced both by governments and nongovernmental organizations, has made selections of its collection available online. Countries represented in the collection include East Timor, Georgia, Guatemala, Rwanda, and Vietnam, as well as large areas of the Middle East and central Asia. Contact: www.qeh.ox.ac.uk/rsp.

The International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church, a new biannual journal promoting ecumenical discussion across various Christian traditions, published its inaugural issue in December 2001 with emphasis on the bicentenary of the birth of John Henry Newman. The editors are Paul Atan (Council for Christian Unity, General Synod of the Church of England, Exeter), and Christine Hall and Robert Hannaford (Bishop Otter Centre for Theology and Ministry, University College, Chichester, England). Contact: www.ex.ac.uk/theology/cesc/journal.htm.

The Center for Multireligious Studies at the University of Aarhus, Denmark, will hold a conference May 13–15, 2002, on multiculturalism and multireligiosity. Vitor Westhelle of Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago; Lamin Sanneh of Yale University Divinity School, New Haven, Connecticut; and Joachim Track of the Lutheran World Federation will be the keynote speakers. Contact: www.teo.au.dk.

The Micah Network, a coalition of evangelical agencies engaged in relief, development, and justice ministry, convened a consultation of 140 leaders of Christian organizations involved with the poor from fifty countries. Meeting in Oxford in mid-September, the participants produced The Micah Declaration on Integral Mission. Contact: www.micahnetwork.org.

The annual meeting of the Yale-Edinburgh Group, scheduled for July 11–13, 2002, will be hosted by the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World at the University of Edinburgh. Organizers have issued a call for papers relating to the theme “Missions and the Powers: Seen and Unseen.” Contact: www.library.yale.edu/div/yaleedin.htm, or email Martha Smalley at martha.smalley@yale.edu, or Margaret Acton at actonnm@div.ed.ac.uk.
Reflections on Mission

Crisis can awaken us to learn. Initially we can turn to Scripture to help us face the crises. When I was privileged to speak to the Christian aid workers after their expulsion from Afghanistan by the Taliban in September, we looked at passages God had given us in previous crises. After the incarceration of two visitors there for giving out four copies of the Gospel of Luke in 1971, we saw how God saved Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (not out of the fire but in the fire), burned their bonds, sent a divine companion, and was glorified in the nation (Dan. 3:1–30).

When the church building in Kabul was torn down by the Afghan government in 1973 and the government fell the next day, we were led to Joseph’s words to his brothers: “You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good” (Gen. 50:20). We felt led to look for the good that God was bringing in increased prayer and flexibility of ministry. We returned to that verse again in 1998 during a previous expulsion of Christian workers by the Taliban. Last fall, with the imprisonment of expatriates and Afghans from one agency and the expulsion of expatriates with other agencies, we were led to Philippians 1:12–30, where, through prayer and the Holy Spirit, Paul overcame the circumstances of his imprisonment, the occasion for resentment of other colleagues, fear of death, and his personal desires. When we pass through situations like those in the biblical records, God uses the Scriptures to encourage and guide us.

We also can look to Scripture to see how God in Christ reaches militant fundamentalists like the Taliban. First-century Jews, like Muslims today, faced their imperialists—for them, the Romans. And they, like Muslims today, were being engulfed by an alien globalizing culture—for them, Hellenism. The response of Pharisaism was similar to today’s Islamists, a return to the Law in their Scripture and a return to the Torah. Some became peaceful Pharisees like Nicodemus, others militant ones like Saul. It took a literal vision of Jesus to change Saul, even as it has in a significant percentage of Muslim conversions to Christ today. During the evacuation from Afghanistan three years ago we found a parallel in Saul on his way to Damascus, “breathing out threats and murder” against the Christians but converted in the process.

Third, research at Fuller Theological Seminary’s School of World Mission has shown that where Islamists have imposed shari’a law and there are local friendly Christians, there is receptivity to the Gospel among Muslims, which in turn can lead to persecution of Christians. This domino pattern, first noted after the Khomeini revolution in Iran, then in Zia al-Haq’s Islamization in Pakistan, is also observed elsewhere. We can expect that disillusionment with fundamentalist rigidity under Taliban rule will create a hunger for grace and fertile ground for the seed of the Gospel. Research has also demonstrated that various facets of the present crisis have been the contexts elsewhere for people turning to Christ when they see Christian love demonstrated in their midst. These contexts include political or military turmoil, natural disasters like famines, migration of refugees, and urbanization.

A fourth implication of recent events, in which militants warned of the Western (or American) crusade, is the obvious need to redouble our efforts to distinguish between Christian faith and Western culture. This must be done through appropriate contextualization of word and deed and the deployment of more non-Western missionaries.

Fifth, the imprisoning of Christian aid personnel on charges of “preaching Christianity” and the expulsion of others highlights the need to reach a consensus with colleagues concerning the form of witness appropriate in the cycles of greater suppression or freedom in countries opposed to Christian missions. Attention needs to be given to long-term and short-term goals, integrity, and the leading of the Spirit in the community.

Sixth, the imprisoning of expatriate Christian aid workers and Afghan colleagues underlines the need to be prepared to help moderate Muslims reason with extremists. In a case in Afghanistan thirty years ago (similar to the recent case in Kabul), we were able to offer arguments from the earliest Muslim sources for greater religious freedom. We offered a Muslim lawyer a case based on the Qur’an, and acquittal was achieved. In 1979 in Saudi Arabia, when the government would not let us worship in one auditorium, we provided letters that early Muslim sources ascribe to Muhammad, allowing Christians in Najran in Arabia to retain their churches and priests.

Finally, God has given Christians the “ministry of reconciliation.” The last twelve of twenty-two years of fighting have been between Afghan factions, showing the need for this reconciliation. The results of this Gospel were demonstrated recently when I was privileged to visit new believers in a country in western Africa where two ethnic groups that had been killing each other on the streets were now eating and worshiping together because they were one in Christ.

As mission agencies prepare for post-September 11 ministries in the Muslim world, there is a cluster of implications:

• continue the trend for coalitions of mission agencies;
• increase relief and development capabilities for the tremendous human need;
• facilitate programs for youth (including orphans), who make up a major segment of Muslim countries;
• retain at least skeleton teams for quick mobility when places like Afghanistan reopen;
• with the heightened danger and anti-American feeling, provide orientation in security measures and deploy more personnel without children at home and more non-Americans;
• develop guidelines for appropriate forms of witness, discussed in orientation and broadly agreed upon by workers;
• repeatedly update evacuation plans for a variety of emergencies with designated tasks, accessible cash and documents, backup of computer and paper records, and adequate communication (even satellite phones) and transportation.

Earlier in these reflections I described how my wife and I were walking down the beach in Thailand just after our evacuation from Peshawar, Pakistan, and how we observed dark storm clouds gathering around the crescent moon, which symbolized for me what was happening in our world. By the time we walked back, the darkness had settled in, but we noted dozens of fishing boats with lights and a group of people on the beach gathered around candles, each lighting up the place where they worked until the dawn came, and we knew better what we needed to do.

My wife and I had learned of the start of the Allied bombing of Afghanistan as we were beginning a Communion service. A few days earlier I had led a Communion service with aid workers who had just been expelled from Afghanistan. As we reflected on how God had cared for us in previous crises, we felt led to make a pile of stones as God’s people did when they crossed the Jordan to commemorate God’s care (Joshua 4). Each person carried a stone to the pile that will be taken back to Afghanistan when the time to rebuild begins.
Christian Mission and Islamic Studies: Beyond Antithesis

David A. Kerr

For many professionals the combination of Christian mission and Islamic studies is anathema. This essay will argue, however, that missionary scholarship concerning Islam deserves serious attention on four counts. Historically, missionary scholars pioneered the study of Islam. In addition, missionary scholars were the first to examine Islam in the cultural context of Muslim societies. In the sense of the outworking of a theological vision, missionary scholars were also the first to explore the possibility of an ecumenical relationship between Christianity and Islam, bequeathing a more varied legacy of interreligious concern than is generally credited. Finally, in terms of sociopolitical commitment to the transformation of unjust sociopolitical conditions, missionary scholars today are among the leading advocates of Christian-Muslim solidarity in human liberation from oppressions that contradict the reign of God.

From this base it will be concluded that scholarship of Islam, in both its university and missionary manifestations, needs to move beyond schizophrenic antithesis and develop new concepts and methods that befit the okoumene of the one world, in which Christianity and Islam inhabit shared space.

Eastern Christian Scholarship

The beginnings of Christian scholarship of Islam beckon us to the region where Christians and Muslims first found common space: Palestine in the seventh century A.D. Our story begins a few miles east of Jerusalem (which fell to Islam in 638), in the Judean hills beyond Bethlehem, at the monastery of Mar Saba, clamped to the cliffs of the upper Kidron Valley (wadi al-nahr). Originally a Greek laura, Mar Saba was the place where Arabic replaced Greek as the language of Palestinian Christian theology from the second half of the eighth century. This shift paralleled the transition from Greek to Arabic in the administrative language of the Umayyad Caliphate in Damascus. When John of Damascus (675-749) resigned his position as financial secretary to the early Umayyad caliphs in Damascus, he moved to Mar Saba and devoted his remaining years to writing. He was a bilingual theologian. The references in his theological writing to “the heresy of the Ishmaelites” evidence his command of Arabic, but he wrote his Fount of Knowledge in Greek. His chief successor, Theodore Abu Qurra (ca. 750-ca. 820), hailed from lower Mesopotamia. He joined the monks of Mar Saba and contributed formatively to the development of Christian apologetics, writing in both Greek and Arabic. By the mid-ninth century apologetics had given way to more systematic Arabic Christian theology; the genre of jumla, equivalent to the Latin summa, embraced the range of Christian theology—biblical exegesis, history, doctrine, liturgy, ethics—formulated consciously within the worldview of Islam. Of this development Sidney Griffith states, “The time was now ripe for a comprehensive presentation of the Christian point of view, taking into account the new socio-political realities of life under the rule of Muslims.”

The Mar Saba theologians did not write about Islam; indeed, they adopted a policy of judicious silence about the Qur’an and Muhammad. But they wrote from within the Islamic cultural milieu, and their theology, robustly Christian in content, was expressed in the language characteristically associated with the Qur’an, and in dialectic with the developing traditions of Islamic falsafa (philosophy). Eastern Christian scholarship of Islam begins not from the outside looking in but from within a common cultural matrix to which both Muslims and Christians contributed.

Western Christian Scholarship

Turning to the West, it is again in the monasteries that we find the earliest Latin interest in the study of Islam. Cluniac monks from France were probably the first Latin Christians to venture as missionaries to Andalusia. There they encountered Jews and Christians who had been in Spain since the second century, and Muslims who conquered the Visigoths in the seventh. By the eleventh century the abbey of Cluny already housed a library of Islamic literature, and it was the twelfth Abbot, Peter the Venerable (1094-1156), who recruited a group of Cluniac scholars to translate a collection of Islamic religious texts, including the Qur’an, from Arabic into Latin. The Toledan collection constituted the primary source of textual knowledge about Islam in medieval Christendom.

Peter the Venerable failed to persuade theologians of his own day to make use of the translations. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153) was more interested in supporting the Crusaders than understanding their foes. He refused to write a Christian response to Islam, and eventually Peter wrote his own in two volumes, Summa totius haeresis Saracenorum and Liber contra sectam sive haeresim Saracenorum.

Distinguished for their charitable intent more than scholarly content, these first faltering attempts at a Latin account of Islam were qualitatively surpassed by the work of the Dominicans in the thirteenth century. In the realm of language, Raymond of Peñaafort (1180–1275) pioneered missionary schools for the study of both Hebrew and Arabic, which were established first in Tunis, where the Dominicans maintained a mission from 1225, and then in Barcelona for Hebrew and Valencia for Arabic. Raymond is credited with persuading his fellow Dominican Thomas Aquinas (1225–74) to write an exposition of Christian doctrine for use among Dominican missionaries to Islam. In contrast to Peter’s biblically based approach, Thomas’s Summa contra Gentiles (1259–64) used philosophy rather than Scripture to outline the religious principles that Christians and Muslims held in common. According to this Thomist view, if a Muslim could be persuaded to admit the rational basis of Christian faith, the verities of Christian doctrine could thereafter be received through grace.

Applying these principles, the late thirteenth-century Dominican William of Tripoli (1220–91) was the first to explore the libraries of Syria in search of historical information on Islam—the life of the Prophet, the compilation of the Qur’an, and the history

of the caliphate down to his own times. He wrote up his research, together with a review of points of theological agreement and disagreement between Islam and Christianity, in his *Tractatus de statu Saracenorum.* William’s near contemporary the Italian Ricceldo da Montecroce (1243–1320) studied Arabic, Islamic theology, and philosophy for five years at the Mustansiriyya University in Baghdad and included among his writings an *Itinerarium* that contains reports on the social conditions and mores of the Muslim communities he visited in Palestine, Syria, and Iraq.

To these early Dominican missionary studies of Islamic religion, history, and society must be added the contribution of the Franciscan Ramon Lull (1235–1315), the first medieval theologian to develop a full missionary theology toward Islam. Following in the path of St. Francis (1181–1226), whose First Rule instructed Franciscan missionaries on how to live peacefully among Saracens, Lull pioneered a different theological approach to Islam than that of his Dominican peers. Although he shared Raymond of Peñafort’s enthusiasm for the Arabic language and Thomas’s avocation for philosophy, he was as imaginative as Raymond was rational, as mystical as Thomas was scholastic. His distinction lay in his pioneering interest in Sufism, the spiritual tradition of Islam. He read, translated, and popularized the work of the Persian theologian al-Ghazali (d. 1111), whose integration of Sufi interiority with Islamic religious learning made his *Ihya Ulum al-Din* (The revivification of religious sciences) one of the masterpieces of medieval Islam. Al-Ghazali’s thought influenced Lull’s great work, the *Ars magna.* Lull may also have read the Murcian mystic Ibn al-Arabi (1165–1240), whose emanationist theories of the manifestation of divine attributes in the phenomena of nature, and in the personalities of the prophets, are reflected in Lull’s own mysticism.

Lull used his several university appointments in France and Italy to include Islam in the curriculum of religious sciences. In the court of James I of Majorca he found patronage for his ambition to create a new study center in the Majorcan town of Miramar. Toward the end of his life he persuaded the Council of Vienne (1312) to approve, though it failed to implement, his plans for the establishment of Arabic and Islamic studies in the universities of Rome, Bologna, Salamanca, Paris, and Oxford.

This brief review of the thirteenth-century Dominican and Franciscan initiatives reveals the scope and intent of early-medieval Latin missionary scholarship of Islam. It was linguistically based in Arabic, marking a qualitative advance upon Peter the Venerable, who was entirely dependent on Latin translations. It broadened the knowledge furnished by Peter’s Toledan collection to include Islamic history, qur’anic study, philosophy, and mysticism. In contrast to the Crusading model of Christian-Muslim military confrontation, it presented a vision of ecumenicity between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

This last point is most imaginatively expounded in Lull’s *Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men,* written probably at Miramar about 1275. It tells of a Gentile’s search for true religion, which leads him into conversation with three sages, a Jew, a Christian, and a Muslim; each commends his religion in the most positive and courteous terms, without a trace of polemical rejection of the others. The Gentile held his own counsel as to which of the faiths he would choose. But the three wise men, reciprocally impressed by each other’s explanations of the truth, promised to continue their conversations until, “agreed on one faith, they would go forth into the world, giving glory and praise to the name of our Lord God.”

**Nineteenth-Century University Studies**

The father of modern Islamic studies is generally considered to be Silvestre de Sacy (1758–1838), who held the chair of Arabic in Paris. He pioneered the secularization of university scholarship. Philology rather than theology became the main disciplinary tool of Islamic studies. His two-volume *Grammaire Arabe* (1810) established the priority of Arabic studies, to which Turkish was a close second. These were the languages of the Ottoman Empire, identified by Europeans in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as the “Near East”—their closest point of contact with the world of Islam. Beyond the Ottoman empire, Persian civilization and language were a “Middle Eastern” addition of particular importance to Britain and Russia, as Britain expanded its economic, military, and political involvement in India, and Russia sought warm-water access to international trade in the Indian Ocean. The “Far East”—domains beyond Britain’s Indian empire—fell within Dutch imperial influence, and the study of Indonesian languages became the specialization of the University of Leiden.

Whereas the medieval scholarship of Islam reflected the interests of the church, the nineteenth-century development of Islamic studies went hand-in-hand with diplomacy and imperialism. But university scholarship also had two areas of religious interest. First was the Semiticists’ cultural interest in the *Sitz im Leben* of biblical texts and their authors. Julius Wellhausen (1844–1918) pioneered research in the textual history and background of the Hebrew scriptures, for which purpose he used Arabic as a cognate language and culture. He believed that the study of pre-Islamic Arabia and the early history of Islam revealed typological parallels with the development of Hebrew religion.

Second religious interest among university scholars lay in the philosophy of religion. Ignaz Goldziher (1850–1921) admired Islam, viewing it as a naturally Semitic religion that could speak to the needs of its Semitic relative, Judaism. Goldziher, a lifelong member of the reformed synagogue in Budapest, confessed to being drawn to Islam as “the only religion in which superstition and pagan elements were expunged not through rationalism but through orthodox teaching.” In *His Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law* he explained Islam as a human and civilizational exemplification of Schleiermacher’s notion of religion as dependence upon Transcendence.

The university discipline of Islamic studies thus embraced both Islamic civilization and religion, but the latter was analyzed under historical-cultural categories that reflected the secularizing instincts of European Enlightenment scholarship. Islamic society and religion were accessed primarily through texts. This approach privileged Cairo and Damascus as the centers of intellectual attention, where manuscripts could be acquired in abundance, and in turn privileged the thinking of urban Muslim reformers. Like them, nineteenth-century European scholars, Jews and Christians, preferred earlier to later texts, the shared methodology being to return to the origins of religion in order to
Nineteenth-Century Missionary Scholarship

While nineteenth-century missionary scholarship shared certain traits in common with Islamic studies in the university, it is instructive to call attention to dissimilarities. Among Protestant missions, the motivating spirit came directly from eighteenth-century evangelicalism, with its emphasis on personal conversion and salvation by faith in the atoning death of Jesus Christ. Henry Martyn (1781–1812), the first English missionary among Muslims, was a friend of Charles Simeon (1759–1836), the leader of the Evangelical Revival in Cambridge. Martyn represented the rationalistic strand of evangelical debate with Muslim religious thinkers whom he encountered in Northwest India and Persia. Karl Pfander (1803–1865) on the other hand, was nurtured in German Pietism. His Balance of Truth provides an apologetic comparison of the doctrines of the Bible and the Qur’an, of Christianity and Islam, based on a precritical acceptance of biblical authority.

Pfander was a self-taught missionary scholar who spent most of his life in Persia, isolated from the contemporary theories of biblical and Islamic studies in the European universities. This background proved a considerable handicap in his public debates with Muslim religious leaders in Agra. Through the influence of Indian Muslims who had studied in Britain, they were aware of the new trends of biblical criticism. They were also aware that some British scholars were writing rather sympathetically about Islam and Islamic civilization. To Pfander’s acute discomfort, his Muslim debaters skilfully turned these arguments against his belief in biblical inerrancy and his charges of moral failures in Islam.

Into this missionary crisis stepped two evangelical scholars. The more famous in Islamic studies was William Muir (1819–1928) was the first missionary scholar to apply European critical scholarship to the sources of Islam. He concluded that Islamic origins lay in a confluence of Sabean, Jewish, Zoroastrian, and heretical Christian influences. A similar kind of approach was developed by the Scottish émigré to the United States Duncan Black Macdonald (1863–1943), who was appointed first professor of Islamic studies in Hartford Seminary Foundation, home (from 1911) of the Kennedy School of Missions.

If missionary scholars thus borrowed some of the concepts and results of university scholarship, the fit has never been comfortable. Evangelical Christianity is, after all, characteristically concerned with the quality of personal faith, rather than with the origins and textual history of religion. Andrew Wals illustrated this generalization in a comparison between Karl Pfander and Samuel Adjar Crowther (1807–91), both members of the Church Missionary Society (CMS). Crowther was not a trained missionary scholar of Islam, but his posthumous work Experiences with Heathens and Mohammedans in West Africa (1892) observes Muslim practice in ways that contrast with Pfander’s reliance on texts. As Pfander pressed the doctrinal polarity between Christianity and Islam, Crowther’s reflections on Islam accepted the qur’anic understanding of Jesus (Isa ibn Mariam) without denunciation and built upon it toward a Christian witness of Jesus Christ that avoided the doctrinal formulas that Muslims find provocative. No less biblical than Pfander, Crowther’s use of the Yoruba vernacular commended Christian scripture to the Niger mallams with whom he debated. More important than the profusion of biblical texts with which his Experiences concludes were the sociocultural observations that he offered about the customs of the Muslim communities he visited along the Niger River. Anecdotal and often prejudicial as they are, they provide for the first time in the English language a humane account of Yoruba Muslim life.

As Crowther gave a human face to Islam in West Africa, so it was CMS women missionaries in Qajar Persia who provided the earliest descriptions of the condition of Persian Muslim women, avoiding both the apologetics of Pfander and the romanticism of orientalist scholars of Persian poetry. The most famous of these is Mary Bird, whose Persian Women and Their Creed (1899) is based on years of medical and educational work among Persian women and children in Julfa. Friendship rather than text was the source of her information. Her strategic preference for high-born women who were more likely to effect social change among their poorer sisters parallels the university scholars’ preference for the literary elite. Both illustrate the European class-based ideology that infused university and missionary scholarship of the day.

In refreshing contrast the letters of Irish-born Isabella Read anticipate what might be termed a postorientalist approach that has no ulterior motive in observing the lives of Persian and Armenian women. Isabella married an Armenian and took an “almost child-like pleasure in Persian and Armenian women for their own sake, without constant need for theological qualification.”

Twentieth-Century Protestant Contributions

Twentieth-century developments of missionary scholarship have significantly advanced evangelical interest in the human aspects of Muslim society. Developments can be traced along three main lines that, although here treated separately, in reality often intersect.

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and societies, which was pioneered by the German-American missionary scholar Samuel Zwemer (1867–1952). A convinced Calvinist, he had deep theological misgivings about Islam. His Calvinist polarity between faith and works, grace and law, led him to judge Islam as belonging to the works-law syndrome, its civilizational achievement providing copious evidence of the spiritual and ethical ambiguity, and ultimate hopelessness, of the human search for God. His categorical rejection of theological value in Islam liberated him from the snares of interfaith ambiguity and freed him to explore other reasons for the social strength of Islam. He was fascinated by Muslim cultural and social practices, and particularly the seemingly endless variety of ways in which popular religion manifests itself. He mapped and charted Muslim societies from Africa to China, gathering popular artifacts of all kinds, which he later gathered into a unique collection in Princeton Theological Seminary. His finds became research data for a new kind of missionary scholarship, which he used to advantage in his *Studies in Popular Islam* (1939).

The foundations that Zwemer laid in a practical anthropology of Muslim popular religion have been built upon in more recent times by a coterie of evangelical missionary scholars. To Zwemer’s stimulating fieldwork, they have added a sometimes-labored theoretical superstructure for a missiology based in social sciences. Encouraged by the 1974 conference on world evangelization in Lausanne, Switzerland, which included the issue of “cultural contextualization” in its themes, evangelical missionary scholars of Islam met in North America in 1978 in a conference “The Gospel and Islam.” The conference volume bears voluminous testimony to the fact that theology was all but displaced by cultural and social analysis. Islam is understood to exist in people, almost to the exclusion of texts. Folk Islam has precedence over formal Islam. An alternative route to researching the human qualities of Islam has been explored by the British missionary scholars of the Anglican tradition, especially by CMS-related missionaries in Egypt. The young Anglo-Scot William Temple Gairdner (1873–1924) was a CMS missionary in Cairo. With a good command of Arabic, he pursued doctoral studies at Hartford Seminary Foundation under Professor Macdonald. He translated al-Ghazali’s *Mishkat al Anwar* (Niche of lights), which offers a mystical understanding of verses of the Qur’an that liken God to light. Gairdner later recalled this work as a conversionary experience, in the

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A convinced Calvinist, Samuel Zwemer pioneered the earliest anthropological study of Muslim cultures.

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Centers for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations

The 1906 Cairo conference “Methods of Missionary Work Among Muslims” called for the creation of a center where Christians could study Islam. “Cooperation in Christian-Muslim Studies,” an international conference hosted by the University of Balamand in Lebanon in 1997, included representatives of seventeen centers of Christian-Muslim studies around the world. The following synopsis of some of these shows the range of resources for the study of Christian-Muslim relations that now exists.

**St. John of Damascus Faculty of Theology.** This center is named after the earliest Christian to engage in theological study of Islam. Located near Tripoli, Lebanon, within the Patriarchate of Antioch, it draws on the historic tradition of Arab Christian theology, originally pioneered by Byzantine theologians who wrote in Arabic. The contextual approach of Balamand prioritizes issues of importance to Arab Christians, particularly in the social and political sphere. (www.balamand.edu.lb)

**Henry Martyn Institute.** Located in Hyderabad, India, the Henry Martyn Institute is the oldest Protestant center for the study of Islam. Originally designed for missionary training, it has extended its work to embrace interreligious reconciliation in India. The *Bulletin of the Henry Martyn Institute* is a rich source of information on Christian-Muslim encounter in South Asia. (www.web.ca/~icact)

**Christian Study Centre (CSC).** This center, in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, serving the Church of Pakistan, deals with a broad range of contextual challenges facing the church in an Islamic society. Its serial publication *Al-Mushir* contains a valuable

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sense that it turned him from a polemical to a spiritually searching approach to Islam. In his address to the 1928 Jerusalem world mission conference, which was read posthumously after his premature death, he referred to Islam as a \textit{a preparatio evangelica}.\textsuperscript{31}

Gairdner's biographer, Constance Padwick (1886–1928), pursued this line of missionary scholarship in her own research into the prayer life of Islam. The \textit{lex credendi}, she argued, is a surer route to Christian understanding of what lies at the heart of Islam than either Goldziher's study of Muslim creeds or Zwemer's peregrinations around Muslim societies. Her book \textit{Muslim Devotions} demonstrates the method of missionary scholarship as spiritual exploration rather than sociological reduction.\textsuperscript{32} Kenneth Cragg, who has written several appreciations of Constance Padwick,\textsuperscript{33} developed this approach in his extensive writings on Islam. With gentle yet persistent reiteration, he argues that missionary scholarship should engage Islam in its interior commitments to the life of the spirit, rather than relying superficially on civilizational or social manifestations. Cragg therefore seeks to respond to Islam's primary witness (\textit{shahada}) that "there is no god but God" with an interpretation of the New Testament's understanding of God, who, in condescension, reveals the inner meaning of divine transcendence as immanence with humanity. From his first book, aptly entitled \textit{The Call of the Minaret} (1956), Cragg seeks to relate the Gospel to the Qur'an in "a community of faith" that respects differences of belief while affirming a communality of inner intention.\textsuperscript{34}

Fuller School of World Mission focuses on both folk Islam and formal, textual Islam, as illustrated in its CD ROM program \textit{World of Islam: Resources for Understanding} (available from Global Mapping International, Colorado Springs, Colorado). (www.fuller.edu; www.GMI.org)

\textbf{Luther Seminary Global Mission Institute.} Located in St. Paul, Minnesota, this center is developing resources for the study of Islam, with support from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. It offers a strong master's program designed for Christian professionals, including missionaries. The program has operative links with the Coptic Evangelical Seminary in Cairo and with the Christian Study Centre, Rawalpindi. (www.luthersem.edu)

\textbf{Center for Muslim Christian Understanding (CMCU).} This Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., center has an international staff of Christian and Muslim scholars. CMCU offers undergraduate and master's courses and publishes extensively on the fourteen centuries of cultural, social, political, and theological interaction between Christianity and Islam. It aims to address the business, government, and academic circles in Washington, D.C., and reach a wider public with its focus on Islam in the West. (www.cmcu.net)

David A. Kerr

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and Muslim scholars at the levels of governance, staffing, and students. Having pioneered the study of Muslim communities in Europe, CSIC also has strong resources on Islam in Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East. Its journal \textit{Studies in Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations}, copublished with the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding in Washington (see below), focuses on contemporary issues (www.bham.ac.uk/theology/csic). Two other centers with similar sounding names exist in London: \textbf{Centre for Islamic Studies} at the London Bible College (www.londonbiblecollege.ac.uk), and the independent \textbf{International Institute for the Study of Islam and Christianity}, both of which stand in the tradition of evangelical Christian engagement with Islam.

\textbf{Duncan Black Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations.} This center, located at Hartford Seminary, Hartford, Connecticut, is the oldest center in the United States for Christian-Muslim studies. With a staff of both Christian and Muslim professors, it offers degree programs at master's and doctoral levels. Its quarterly \textit{Muslim World} continues the publication founded by Samuel Zwemer at Princeton in 1911. (www.hartsem.edu)

\textbf{Zwemer Institute of Muslim Studies.} Situated within the Lausanne Movement, the Zwemer Institute preserves and builds on Samuel Zwemer's missionary legacy. It focuses on the anthropological analysis of "folk Islam" in Muslim societies more than the textual tradition of formal Islam. The institute's offices are located at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

\textbf{Fuller Theological Seminary School of World Mission.} The
sociopolitical matrix of religion and politics that Islam and Christianity find their effective encounter. Charles Amjad Ali from Pakistan sees political theology as providing the new basis for a Christian scholarship of Islam that can be relevant to Muslim scholarship itself. From Lebanon the Orthodox Christian Tarek Mitri has focused on the need for new Christian scholarship of Islamic shari'a that takes full account of the diversity of current Muslim scholarship in this area.  

**Twentieth-Century Catholic Scholarship**

By comparison with the character of contemporary Protestant missionary thinking about Islam, Catholics have given much greater attention to the study of Islamic religious doctrine, setting it significantly in the missionary context. The pioneer was the Egyptian Dominican George Anawati, whose *Introduction à la théologie Musulmane: Essai de théologie comparée*, published in 1948, broke new ground in the study of comparative doctrine. Anawati had a lifelong association with the Dominican Institute in Cairo. Its sister institute in Baghdad was associated with the work of the American Dominican Richard McCarthy, who studied the theology of the classical Iraqi scholar al-Ash'ari (d. 935), founder of the Ash'ariyya school of Islamic orthodoxy. Louis Gardet, of the Society of Missionaries to Africa, who continued this scholastic research in his study *Dieu et la destinée de l'homme*, was closely associated with the development of the Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies in Rome. While some Protestant scholars have also contributed to this area of scholarship—for example, Duncan Black Macdonald, already mentioned, and William Montgomery Watt of the University of Edinburgh—their work never enjoyed the influence among Protestant missions as did that of their Catholic counterparts among Catholic missions.

Rather than attempting to deal comprehensively with twentieth-century Catholic scholarship, this article will focus on the contribution of the French Islamicist Louis Massignon (1883–1962), widely regarded as the leading Islamologist of his generation. He held the chair of Islamic sociology in the University of Paris for nearly thirty years, from 1926 to 1954. He was also a leading religious thinker of his generation, and his Christian faith infused his critical scholarship. His reconversion to Catholicism while conducting archaeological research in Iraq (1908) left him with a profound sense of spiritual indebtedness to Islam and a commitment to exploring the relationship between his personal faith and the subject of his scholarly research. In 1931 he became a Franciscan tertiary, adopting the name Abraham. In 1949 he moved from the Roman to the Melkite Catholic rite and in 1950 was ordained a Melkite Catholic priest in Cairo. He committed the last years of his life to active campaigning on behalf of Christian-Muslim relations, seeking justice for Algerian Muslims in France during the Algerian struggle for independence (1954–62).

Massignon pioneered the modern study of Sufism, the mystical tradition of Islam. In 1922 he presented two doctoral theses. The first, entitled *Essais sur les origines du lexique technique de la mystique musulmane*, explored the precise nature of Sufi terminology, showing that it is rooted in the Qur'an and early Islamic exegesis. The second and more famous work, *La passion d'al-Hallaj: Martyr mystique de l'Islam*, examined the life of this tenth-century Baghdad Sufi (d. 920), exonerating him from the charge of heresy that led to his execution and attesting the miracles that are attributed to him. The implications of these two theses for Christian-Muslim relations are clear: that Islam has an authentic spirituality that should not be subsumed under Christian or other religious categories, and that it has produced real saints who, in the case of al-Hallaj, manifest Christ-like qualities.

This was the basis on which Massignon sought to understand the spiritual relationship between Christianity and Islam. He found it in the metaphor of Abraham as the spiritual ancestor of Christians, Muslims, and Jews. He saw Islam as "the only incorruptible fragment of the paternal legacy made to Ismael, rediscovered at last and venerated with a jealous exclusiveness."  

Massignon's spirituality was expressed in radical social engagement. Shaped by the Gandhian social doctrine of satyagraha, by which Massignon understood "the civic vindication of truth," he believed that to "vow" oneself to truth in such a way as binds both soul and intellect is to become an instrument by which truth transforms the world. He resigned his professorship and dedicated his final years to nonviolent action for justice and peace during the Franco-Algerian war, visiting Algerian prisoners in jail and leading joint Christian-Muslim pilgrimages to shrines of the Virgin Mary that Christians and Muslims both venerated in the popular piety of their religions.

Professor Massignon died in 1962, the year in which the Second Vatican Council began. Acquainted with both Pope John XXIII and Pope Paul VI, and a friend of those who drafted the *Nostra aetate*, it is widely believed that he had a posthumous influence upon the council's thinking about Islam. The council drew attention to a spiritual kinship between Christians and Muslims through Abrahamic monotheism expressed in terms of prayer, charity, and fasting, through Mary as a woman of radical piety who inspires the veneration of Catholic and Muslim alike, and through commitment to social justice.

By way of conclusion, two questions can be extrapolated from Massignon's approach. Of secular university scholarship his legacy asks: Where is religion in Islamic studies? Of missionary scholarship it asks: Can Islam be authentically understood in the sphere of mission studies and the history of religion? He writes: "The major epistemological problem in Islamic studies still seems to be the correlation between the scholarly categories of description, analysis and interpretation, and the adequate translation and conceptualization of Islamic realities on the basis of the raw data themselves."  

Although Waardenburg does not address missionary scholarship, his observations apply, with an important expansion: correlation needs be found between the concepts and categories of scholarship and the raw data of Islamic religious experience, while recognizing that missionary scholarship seeks to infuse both with an ethicospiritual commitment to transforming human and social conditions toward greater affinity with the reign of God.
Notes

4. The Summa attacks "hypocrites" (munafiqin), whose accommodations of Islam amounted, in the anonymous author’s judgment, to "wavering" (mushababha) from their Christian faith.
5. Al-Andalus in the Arabic sources denotes the whole of the Iberian Peninsula, while in Western usage it refers only to those parts of the peninsula that fell under the Caliphate, the domains of which varied during the Islamic conquests and the Christian reconquests. Toledo was conquered by the Muslims in 712, and reconquered by Alphonse VI of Leon and Castile in 1085, shortly before the arrival of the Cluniac mission.
7. Thus Peter wrote, “I do not attack you—Muslims—as our people often do, by arms, but by words; not by force, but by reason; not in hatred, but in love” (quoted in ibid., p. 47).
13. Ibid., 1:303.
15. J. Redhouse, A Turkish and English Lexicon (1890).
27. Reported in Across the Muslim World (1929), as well as in other volumes: Report on a Visit to Mesopotamia, the Persian Gulf, and India (1924), and Report on a Visit to India and Ceylon (1928). In addition, Zwemer contributed numerous regional studies as articles in the Moslem World, which he founded in 1911 and edited in Princeton.
30. Sura al-Nur (Chapter of light) 24:35.
42. For MacDonald, see Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory (New York: Scribner & Sons, 1903); For Watt, see The Formative Period of Islamic Thought (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 1973).
Kenneth Cragg in Perspective: A Comparison with Temple Gairdner and Wilfred Cantwell Smith

James A. Tebbe

People belong to their times. In retrospect, even those who have made the most remarkable contributions in human history can be seen to have had horizons limited by the perspectives of location and time. Their legacy is better understood when their contribution is compared to that of others with similar backgrounds, engaging in similar endeavors, in comparable time and place. In this article we compare Kenneth Cragg to two others like him in order to highlight the significantly different emphases in their Christian engagement with Islam, particularly on scriptural issues.

Bishop Albert Kenneth Cragg (b. 1913) is perhaps the most significant British missiologist in the area of Islam, either living or dead. He was reared in a household where a carefully taught Christian faith was a central ingredient. This faith, which he has continued to nurture in the Anglican Church throughout his long life, together with a successful pursuit of academics and Middle Eastern experience, combined to produce a prolific and distinctive blend of writings, primarily, but not exclusively, about Islam. In his autobiography Cragg interprets his life as a negotiation between his Christian faith continued from childhood, his broadening education begun at Oxford, and the reality of conflicting belief systems in the world.1

Temple Gairdner and Kenneth Cragg

William Henry Temple Gairdner (1873-1928) was a noted Christian missionary in the Muslim world of the generation just prior to Kenneth Cragg. “In him, one finds reflected the personal compassion of Henry Martyn; the apologetics flowing from Pfander to Lefroy, the concern for the indigenous church evidenced by French and Clark; the scholarly literary labours of Tisdall.”2

Gairdner’s call to the mission field grew out of his enthusiastic participation in the Oxford Inter-Collegiate Christian Union (OICCU). During his time OICCU was marked by a zealous commitment to prayer, evangelism, and a simple lifestyle where the group avoided personal expenditure wherever possible, with every penny saved being given to missions. Throughout his life Gairdner remained positive about his involvement in OICCU, recognizing that zeal provides a motivation that later can be tempered by wisdom. His fundamental motivation in mission remained constant. “All ‘debate’ or ‘dialogue’ was with intent to save, not crudely to score, nor idly to compare, nor cosily to converse.”3

Thirty-five years later Cragg was an active participant in the same movement in Oxford, including being the representative of his college and engaging in public evangelism. Yet Cragg’s motivation in ministry changed to be somewhat different from that of his college years and consequently from that of Gairdner. Cragg came to see his mission as speaking to the mind of Islam (not so much to Muslims), showing the relevance of Christ and the New Testament to Islam on its own terms. In contrast, to the end of his life Gairdner saw his ministry as being to Muslims, intending their conversion.

Gairdner’s Anglican identity coupled with his Cairo link through the Church Missionary Society (CMS) provides a strong point of continuity with Cragg, one that is based in the Middle East. Given similar backgrounds, motivations, and tasks, had Cragg lived some fifty years earlier, there are many ways in which he could have been a Temple Gairdner. But separated as

The influence of modernity is seen in Cragg’s finding common ground between Christianity and Islam—which his critics do not see.

Cragg and Gairdner are by a half-century, they have had significantly diverging perspectives. I argue here that Gairdner maintained a largely premodern outlook on faith issues, while Cragg’s contribution was made through a synthesis of his faith and a worldview influenced heavily by modernity.

By “modernity” is meant the underlying assumptions of modern thought and life that arose out of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment and that continue to find expression in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Morality and truth were no longer rooted in traditional concepts such as the character of God as understood in the Bible. Rather, there was an emphasis on reason and the “universal ideal.” Cragg is not a modernist in the sense of seeing reason in place of God. But the influence of modernity is seen in his finding common ground between Christianity and Islam—ground his critics do not easily see.

Below we highlight a few significant differences on scriptural issues between Cragg and Gairdner that can be traced back to this fundamentally different perspective.

Gairdner died relatively young (fifty-five), while much of Cragg’s more significant writing has come in the years after he turned sixty-five. Also, Cragg’s influence has been much greater because he gave more time to scholarly pursuits. Gairdner often poured his time into mundane tasks that he believed would contribute significantly toward producing converts from Islam. Though a brilliant Arabist who had learned much about Islam in his engagements with Muslims, he nevertheless failed to produce much in the way of significant scholarly works, something men such as Duncan Black Macdonald and Ignaz Goldziher had encouraged him to do.4 The task of reaching Muslims was more important to him than engaging the mind of Islam.

Over time, Gairdner’s approach to Muslims shifted from polemics to apologetics, which meant, if not a more positive view of things Islamic, at least an approach that was less confrontational. Realizing the strategic value of literature, Gairdner and a mission colleague did a survey of the then-available Christian
material that engaged with Islam. They found it surprisingly inadequate in content and confrontational in tone. They observed that converts who came by that route were often themselves antagonistic and argumentative in their new Christian faith. This insight prompted Gairdner to move away from an attack on Islam to a focus on explaining to Muslims problems they faced with various Christian beliefs.\(^5\)

Some reviewers have gone so far as to suggest that Gairdner came to see that Islam (and its Qur’an) could be to the Arabs what Judaism was to Hebrew Christians, a preparatio evangelica.\(^6\) Gairdner may have been moving in that direction, but there is no evidence in his writings that he actually arrived at that conclusion. To the end, Gairdner was convinced that “Christian mission had decisive ‘quarrel’ with Islam, which irenic sensitivity must refine but could in no way loyally evade.”\(^7\)

To the end, this “quarrel” stands in contrast to Cragg’s position. Cragg, operating from the premise that the cross is relevant to Islam on Islam’s own terms, stretches the boundaries of traditional understanding through a new interpretation not only of the Qur’an but of the Christian Scriptures as well.

**Revelation**

Gairdner struggled with the differing concepts of revelation in Christianity and Islam. He was critical of what he understood to be the Muslim concept of revelation, “a formal and mechanical link between incompatibles.”\(^8\) His unequivocal judgment is one Cragg abandoned in favor of a more conciliatory approach. Cragg too believes that the Muslim orthodox understanding of the Qur’an and revelation is a mechanical model. He argues, however, that this understanding does not necessarily come from the Qur’an itself but rather from misled interpreters.\(^9\) Thus he felt free to develop his own definition and understanding of revelation.\(^10\)

Engagement with Islam brought Gairdner to consider issues of revelation in Christianity. Although he did not articulate the theological implications, he more than hinted in his writings that the Qur’an must be compared to Christ and not the Bible. “Islam conducts us to a Book which truly was given forth by its founder. Christianity conducts us to a Christ who truly lived.”\(^11\) This juxtaposition shows the points of comparison that Cragg later picked up. Comparing Christ to the Qur’an is an assumed part of Cragg’s understanding of both revelation and Scripture.

Gairdner and Cragg interpret the Muslim understanding of revelation similarly. Both move toward a position of comparing revelation to revelation rather than scripture to scripture, which results in a comparison of Christ, as written in Scriptures, to the Qur’an. From there, however, they solve the problem differently. Cragg, seeking common ground, argues that a mechanical revelation is not a true Qur’anic understanding and develops his own definition of revelation. Gairdner sees the difference as part of an irreducible quarrel with Islam. This conclusion in turn leads to a different handling of not just the Qur’an but also the Old Testament.

Like Cragg, Gairdner noted areas of discontinuity between the Old and New Testaments. He handled the problem through a theology of dispensations, or progressive revelation.\(^12\) Over the course of his writing, Cragg’s approach moves toward a stronger element of rejection of the Old Testament. Part of this position is evident when he does not distinguish between natural and special revelation, making it possible for him essentially to see the Qur’an and the Old Testament in much the same light as different types of preparation for receiving the Gospel. Thus for

Cragg “unique” is not a word that can be used for any faith, even Christianity, for the term “unique” suggests an exclusiveness as that which is totally “other.”\(^13\)

**Scriptural Criticism and the Hadith**

Gairdner, aware of issues of biblical criticism, pressed for Muslims themselves to use historical criticism, not necessarily on the Qur’an itself, but at least on the Hadith. This approach did not indicate an acceptance of the Qur’an but, rather, an indirect way of critiquing it. In contrast to this implication for Muslim scriptures, Gairdner saw the criticism of people such as Adolf Harnack as only providing further proof of the Gospels’ reliability. His purpose in calling for this criticism of the Hadith was not to produce a reformed Islam (an approach that some people have charged Cragg with using) but rather “to help Muslims see their real dilemma and to become receptive to God’s news in Christ.”\(^14\)

According to Gairdner, much in Islam, even down to shari’a, the law itself, was historically incorrect.\(^15\)

Although Cragg had a similar view of the Hadith and other scriptural traditions in Islam, his approach differed from Gairdner’s in that for Cragg these (unreliable) traditions were powerful evidence that the Qur’an needed to be interpreted situationally, something that is not part of orthodox interpretation. Their existence for Cragg was proof of the need for a new, innovative interpretation of the Qur’an. Though both reject the Hadith, Gairdner used it as an indirect attack on the Qur’an and the whole Islamic system. Cragg uses it as an argument for reinterpreting the Qur’an.

One of the more distinctive legacies Gairdner left was the work he did in drama. Bringing together his skills as a poet, musician, and theologian, he wrote and produced several biblical dramas that were well received.\(^16\)

It is significant that Gairdner’s first drama, Joseph and His Brothers, not only was from the Old Testament but emphasized the Jews as a covenant people. It is probable that the Egyptian connection in the Joseph story was one reason for this choice. Cragg was uncomfortable with the exclusive ethnicity that he felt was implied in the idea of a people chosen by God. Gairdner did not have the same intellectual struggle as Cragg with the particular or prototype covenant (Old Testament) that later was made universal for all humankind (New Testament). There was, of course, no Jewish state during Gairdner’s time. The Arab-Israeli issue loomed large in Cragg’s personal experience, which undoubtedly is part of the reason for this difference.

Although Cragg himself is something of a poet and has expressed appreciation for Gairdner’s dramatic contributions, his theology does not use the medium of poetry. His approach is not to relay scriptural “truth” per se. It is the crucified Christ who is to be contemplated and understood. This emphasis is seen best in the New Testament, but the Qur’an has pointers as well. Second, the popularizing form of a drama in relation to Scripture is an unlikely form of approach for Cragg. Cragg’s inclinations in Bible translation into Arabic are more toward high literary style, similar to Qur’anic Arabic, and toward one translation that can be accepted by all the churches.\(^17\)

**The Gospel of Barnabas**

Some Muslims active in the tahlīf debate have utilized the existence of the Gospel of Barnabas as proof that Christians have changed their Scripture. The Gospel of Barnabas, now almost universally recognized by scholars as a medieval forgery, was
“designed to exalt the religion of Islam, and an Islamic flavour pervades the whole.”18 In 1907, very shortly after it was discovered and translated into Arabic, Gairdner and an Egyptian colleague wrote a refutation. This refutation has been used as the basis for many other critiques of the Gospel of Barnabas. With very little other comment, it has also been republished in modern times as a response to Muslims’ continuing use of this spurious gospel as a polemical tool.

Cragg, in contrast, ignores the area of polemics and generally does not answer Muslims in the arena of the tahrif question. Although Gairdner’s work on the Gospel of Barnabas was early in his career, when he was more inclined to be polemical, it can still be argued that questions of Christian scriptural integrity were more important for his theology than they generally are for Cragg.

Though Gairdner was a learner about Islam, he would not have seen it as his vocation to be a learner from Islam and its Qur’an, as Cragg came to be. For Gairdner there remained an uncritical acceptance of the Bible as Scripture, though there is evidence of a comparison of Christ to the Qur’an rather than the Bible to the Qur’an. His approach was premodern, with a continued reliance on propositional truth as conveyed through the Bible.

There is no evidence, despite his softening stance toward Islam over the years, that Gairdner ever accepted the Qur’an in quite the same way as Cragg does. For Gairdner the Qur’an remained part of a non-Christian system that could only be construed as error. Cragg, in contrast, looked for a commonality between the faiths and tried to build reasonable argument for it. This is a characteristic of modernity.

Cragg and Modernity

“Christian theology is . . . not on alien ground in the territory of Muhammad’s Mecca . . . [and in] the study of Islam [Christians] are squarely within the dimensions of the gospel.”19 The mindset of modernity has touched Christianity as well as the rest of culture, and it needed someone who could reconcile it to faith questions. It was for this reason that Cragg’s two earliest books, The Call of the Minaret (1956) and Sandals at the Mosque (1959), were so well received and acclaimed by the Christian mission world, including evangelicals. Those books represented, however, more than a compassionate understanding of Islam from a Christian faith position. They were the beginning of a philosophical change that became clearer in Cragg’s later writings. This change can be understood, at least partially, as being influenced by modernity in its search for universal, common truth. Theologically, Cragg has moved a considerable distance from the theological position of his first books.

Cragg further reflects modernity when he either ignores or dismisses those aspects of Islam or Christianity that are closely linked to particular peoples or cultures. Lamin Sanneh has noted, “The Enlightenment view was that cultural differences conceal and thus distort the truth of one humanity.”20 For example, Cragg largely rejects the value of the Islamic concept of the state and the shari’a necessary for that state. Also, he has a low view of the value of the “ethnic” Jewish links in the Old Testament and of the reliance of the New Testament on those links.

Cragg began his serious consideration of interfaith questions at the time when at least some intellectual leaders of the Muslim world were embracing Western thought and, with it, modernism. This embrace, for example, could be observed in “a young Muslim, fashionably dressed, [who] sits with his friends in the Lahore Coffee House. . . . He has perhaps never studied the Qur’an, and dislikes what he knows of the Canon Law. Yet he is intensely conscious of being a Muslim. . . . His philosophy and way of life have much in common with those of many young men-to-day in, say, London.”21 The traditionalist backlash against modernism in the Muslim world was soon to lead to a decline in the influence of such people. The Pakistan movement, created and shaped by modernists such as Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and later the nation’s founder, Qaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, was ideologically hijacked by the traditionalists. Western scholarship, because of its modernist mind-set, was slow to acknowledge the rise of traditionalism in Pakistan. In the same way, Cragg’s writing continued to address the minority in Islam who had a modern mind-set.

Wilfred Cantwell Smith and Kenneth Cragg

Wilfred Cantwell Smith (b. 1916) was active in the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions in Canada. He too went out as a missionary (to Lahore, then in India) and throughout his life has maintained his Presbyterian Church ties. In 1951 Smith founded, and for fifteen years headed, McGill University’s Graduate Institute of Islamic Studies. He moved from there to Harvard to become professor of world religions and also the director of the Center for the Study of World Religions.

There are three distinct periods of thought in Smith’s life. His earliest book, Modern Islam in India: A Social Analysis (1946), is the work of an ideological socialist strongly influenced by Marxist economic theory. This second period roughly coincides with his time at McGill University. Islam in Modern History, which analyzes various aspects of Islamic self-definition in the twentieth century, is considered to be a seminal work and can be taken as representative of this time in Smith’s life. A third period begins with Smith’s research in India in 1963–64, when his horizons further broaden to include religions besides Islam. This change is marked by another seminal work, The Meaning and End of Religion.22

Although there are many ways in which Smith’s background can be compared to that of Gairdner and Cragg, the shore on which he has landed places him at some distance from them. Just as the colonial mind-set is reflected in the premodern approaches to Islam of Zwemer and Gairdner, and just as the modernist mind-set has influenced Cragg’s writings, so, we argue, postmodernity is identifiable in Smith’s later work.

Smith and Postmodernity

By postmodernity we mean a move away from common, universal values to individualized cultures/beliefs (either personal or common to small cultural groupings), each with no more “value” than another. One feature of postmodernity is that the pressure to conform that accompanied modernity is gone, and in its place there is an acceptance of differences, bordering on what would have been deemed as bizarre in earlier generations. Postmodernity is a reaction to modernity and its assumption that common global values can be achieved.

This backlash against modernism has occurred in the developing world as well. The recent rise in consciousness of ethnic identity is undoubtedly at least partially due to a reaction of traditional culture to modernism. The rise of fundamentalism in Islam is one example. Benjamin Barber argues that traditional values have reacted against modernism, leading to backlashes of ethnicity.23
Window on the World is your ticket to travel around the world! Find out how God is changing the lives of families everywhere through prayer -- from the frozen Arctic to the hottest desert, on the highest mountains and in crowded cities.

Window on the World brings to life the culture, history and traditions of all sorts of different people. With ‘Fact files’ and ‘Do you know?’ features, each section brings you information, true stories, maps, and easy-to-use prayer points that take you into homes around the world. See how children live, what they like to do, where they go to school, what they eat and wear and what they hope and dream.

World Christian Trends, AD 30-AD 2200
Interpreting the Annual Christian Megacensus
David Barrett & Todd Johnson
This valuable resource is a global overview of world Christianity that analyzes, interprets and evaluates the country-by-country data reported in the 2001 World Christian Encyclopedia. Special features include the first-ever statistical survey of evangelism/ization; statistical survey of persecution and Christian martyrs; and projections to AD 2200 about Christianity and world religions. Includes glossary, bibliography, color maps, and a CD-ROM for quick reference.

Operation World (2001 edition)
Patrick Johnstone & Jason Mandryk
The updated version of this remarkable prayer encyclopedia tells what God has been doing in numerous countries. Factual and very detailed, Operation World is also inspiring in its coverage of the powerful reality of God’s Spirit at work around the world.

*Wholesale price: 3 or more of the same title. Prices are subject to change without notice.
Smith’s Western academic approach, challenged by his engagement with Islam, has produced a theology that is also a reaction to modernity. Aspects of it are clearly postmodernist. It is striking that some of the responses of traditional societies to modernity—their emphasis on morality and ethics, and their contention that they possess superior moral values—are picked up by Smith in his postmodernist critique.

Smith, as Cragg notes, makes his arguments through the “careful, insistent definition of basic terms.” Two such terms are “belief” and “faith.” For Smith, belief is the self-aware holding to certain doctrines; they can be articulated. This is contrasted to faith, which is often subliminal and may not be readily understood or perhaps only, understood through these two concepts.25

Smith insists that only people within a particular religious tradition have the right to interpret that tradition.26

“Faithing” is the primary religious activity, while religions are “cumulative traditions” (belief). The latter are but indications of true religiosity, that is, personal faith. His distinction is reminiscent of Martin Buber’s two faiths. The one is a faith of relationship, not founded on objective data. The other is an assent: “I acknowledge a thing to be true.”

Smith argues that belief, as defined by him, is a product of the Enlightenment. He attributes to the Enlightenment (modernity, by our definition) the abandonment of the traditional understanding of faith as relationship, substituting belief as the core of religious life.27

Smith insists that only people within a particular religious tradition have the right to interpret that tradition. Outsiders cannot and should not interpret another religion, as their efforts will undoubtedly carry elements of religious imperialism with them, pitting one belief system against another. “One community’s faith is on principle precluded from being the object of another community’s theology. Faith can be theologised only from inside.”

It is in just this kind of assertion that we detect elements of postmodernity. While Smith’s approach avoids the tendency to impose Christianity that Cragg’s approach has fostered, it also has its drawbacks. Smith does not seek common ground of understanding; rather, what is important to him is faith transcending belief systems. “With Christianity no longer at the centre of the religious world, each religion can be recognized as having a partial perspective on the divine.”

In his move toward a “world theology,” Smith has given up the quest for a rational common ground such as was seen in his earliest book, Modern Islam in India. He even goes so far as to state that it would not be irreverent or facetious to say, “It is only by becoming in part Hindu that a Westerner is enabled to be both Christian and Muslim at the same time.”

Revelation and Scriptures

Smith rejects what he calls “the big bang theory,” or “the notion that a religion begins with one great seismic event.” I reject a first-century theory of revelation, as intellectually untenable today along with modern knowledge.” Religion is more a “continuous creation. . . . To understand the role in human life of oaks, one must study more than acorns.”28

This is not to say, however, that Smith does not take the question of the scriptures of various faiths seriously. Indeed, his quarrel with Western scholars is that they study scriptures as if they were not scriptures.29 Although they may be limited, they cannot be reduced to human documents like other writing. Explaining Smith’s understanding of the Qur’an, Hughes writes, “The divine Word made available to Muhammad was limited in expression and comprehension by the capacities of Arabian culture and the personality of the Prophet. The divine reality is both revealed and veiled in the Qur’an, which may be thought of as ‘the closest approximation to the Eternal Word that Muhammad could rise to.”30

Smith sees Western scholarship’s preoccupation with exploring “original revelations” as based on the faulty assumption that it is here that they can find the real meaning of religion. This interpretation should be carried out only by those to whom the revelation, tradition, or scripture belongs. This approach directly contradicts Cragg’s; Cragg asserts that critical study of the Qur’an is essential in order to get to its true meaning, and that one must not be bound by rigid interpretations set in place and time through tafsir or Hadith.

Smith has moved toward quite a radical view of Scripture. “Fundamental, we suggest, to a new understanding of scripture is the recognition that no text is a scripture in itself and as such. People—a given community—make a text into scripture, or keep it scripture: by treating it in a certain way. I suggest: scripture is a human activity.”31 Smith means that there has been, throughout history, an inclination on the part of humans to scripturalize. Scripture is part of the “cumulative tradition” and not the essence of faith.

Approaches to the New and Old Testaments

Not surprisingly, Smith has difficulty with aspects of Paul’s writings in the New Testament. “If St Paul . . . thinks that only Christians can be saved, St Paul was wrong.”32 Hughes notes that for Smith, “Paul’s exclusivism needs to be interpreted in a personal manner, either as a zealous error, or as a statement about his disenchantment with legalism.” Smith believes Christology is the major block in the way of Christians wishing to come to a world theology. He sees it as the very core of Christian exclusivism.33 Cragg argues that such a position seriously calls into question the all-important “Christ-event,” which he sees is at the very heart of Christianity. His modernist stance leads him to search for the Christ-event in Islam. Indeed, Christopher Lamb, in assessing Cragg’s theological method, even goes so far as to ask whether Cragg is not “unduly Christocentric.”34

Unlike Smith, Cragg has little difficulty with Paul. For Cragg, Paul’s writings reflect the responsive quality of revelation, where the Christian community takes in and lives out what it has received from God. The Christ-event is for all and is to some extent discernible in Islam. But for Smith, this understanding of Christ is too Christian and not universal enough for a true world theology.

Smith, though, does not have as much trouble with the Old Testament as Cragg seems to have. That God comes through a particular culture fits perfectly well with Smith’s concept of cumulative traditions making up the belief aspect of religion. The coming of Christ and the New Testament’s move to universalize the Christian faith is what presents a problem for him.
Revelation, not Scripture, is the issue for Cragg. For Smith neither is the issue, but both are pointers to a world theology in which personal faith is at the core. The kind of careful study Cragg does of the Qur'an would be invalid if we take Smith's position. Similarly, Cragg's efforts at holding to Christian basics and seeing many of them in one form or another in Islam could be construed as religious imperialism by Smith.

**Summary**

In Gairdner there is some theological movement that could be construed as an attempt to come to grips with Western modernism. Yet his perspective on the world remained largely premodern and at the same time very biblical. To the end, he had a passion to see Muslims become Christians.

**Notes**

5. Many of these "tracts" had a circulation limited to the Middle East. A number of these tracts can be accessed at the Partnership House Library of CMS in Waterloo, London.
16. For instance, *Joseph and His Brothers* (1921), *Passover Night* (1921), *The Last Passover Night* (1922), *Saul and Stephen, a Sacred Drama* (1922), and *The Good Samaritan* (1923).
27. Smith, *Meaning and End of Religion*, p. 44.
34. Smith, *What Is Scripture?* p. 18 (Smith's emphasis).
Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission: 2002

David B. Barrett and Todd M. Johnson

The table opposite is the eighteenth in an annual series describing statistics and trends in world mission. This year we have added new data drawn from the World Christian Encyclopedia, 2d ed. (WCE; Oxford Univ. Press, 2001). Several of the new categories, and the methodology followed, are explained in a newly released companion volume to the WCE. Entitled World Christian Trends (WCT), it is available from the William Carey Library. The new categories are line 11: Total all distinct religions; line 44: Denominations; line 45: Congregations (listed and enumerated for 238 countries in WCE); line 55: Cost-effectiveness (expounded in WCT, part 20, “Finance,” and presented for all 238 countries in WCE, part 4, “Countries”); line 59: Books about Christianity; line 60: Books on Christian mission; and line 66: Bible density (copies in place).

Interpreting Trends

This year also a new column, “trend, % p.a.” (percent per annum), has been added after the column “mid-2000,” indicating the annual rate of growth. The seventy-nine trend numbers in the table opposite provide the reader opportunity for line-by-line comparison and missiological interpretation. A useful starting point is to compare each trend with the trend for world population (line 1). World population is growing at 1.22 percent per year. This rate of growth produces a net increase (births minus deaths) of about 75 million people each year. Of the other trends listed, twenty are less than the world population growth rate, while fifty-seven are greater. (One category, line 43, shows the same growth rate as the population growth rate.) Of special interest are the categories showing the greatest rate of growth. Thirteen are greater than 4 percent; growth at this rate results in doubling every eighteen years. Five are more than 6 percent, which results in doubling every twelve years. Some of these trends challenge current negative stereotypes about the progress of global mission.

Trends in the Twenty-first Century

Some examples illustrate how these trend figures can be utilized. Comparing lines 14 (Nonreligious) and 15 (Hindus), one sees immediately how differing growth rates affect the totals. In 1970 the nonreligious were more numerous than Hindus by almost 70 million individuals. However, by A.D. 2000 Hindus outnumbered the nonreligious by over 40 million. The explanation: By A.D. 2000 Hindus were growing at an annual rate of 1.54 percent, while the nonreligious were growing at only 0.80 percent. The gap between the two is expected to widen further, so that by 2025 there will likely be 175 million more Hindus than nonreligious. This change should not be too surprising if one reflects on the fact that by 2025 India (home to most Hindus) is expected to be growing demographically at 0.90 percent, while China (home to most nonreligious) is projected to grow at 0.35 percent. Furthermore, at the global level the trend figures in lines 12 through 22 can be compared to the global population growth rate to gain an understanding of the relative growth or decline of the world’s religious (and nonreligious) communities. For instance, Muslims are growing far faster than all other major religions.

To sum up, nowadays churches and their agencies are measuring most areas of Christian life and mission. The trends identified allow everyone concerned to measure directly success or failure in the various areas.

Methodological notes on table (referring to numbered lines on opposite page). Indented categories form part of, and are included in, unindented categories above them. Definitions of categories are as given and explained in World Christian Encyclopedia (1ed. ed., 1982; 2d ed., 2001) and World Christian Trends (2001), with additional data and explanations as below. The global diagram series and the analytic trichotomy of Worlds A, B, C are explained in WCT.

12. Widest definition: professing Christians plus crypto-Christians (secret believers), which equals affiliated (church members) plus unaffiliated Christians. World C is the world of all who individually are Christians. Total of all non-Christians (sum of rows 13–21 above, plus adherents of other minor religions). This is also the same as World A (the unevangelized) plus World B (evangelized non-Christians).
24. Persons professing publicly to be Christians but who are not affiliated with a church.
26–30. These categories overlap in varying degrees.
27. Born into church.
28. Church adherents, denominations, and individuals who identify themselves as evangelicals by membership in denominations linked to evangelical alliances (e.g. World Evangelical Alliance, until 2002 named Fellowship) or by self-identification in polls.
29. Great Commission Christians are defined as active church members of all traditions who take seriously Christ’s Great Commission and his call to mission.
31. World totals of current long-term trend for all confessions. (See WCT, part 4, “Evangelization.”) The 2002 figure reflects the collapse of Communism but also the expansion of terrorism.
50–57. Defined in WCT, part 20, “Finance.”
51. See footnote 30 above.
56. Amounts embezzled by top custodians of Christian monies (U.S. dollar equivalents, per year).
58. Total general-purpose computers and word processors owned by churches, agencies, groups, and individual Christians.
74–76. These measures are defined, derived, and analyzed in WCT, part 23, “Evangelization.”
77–78. Defined as in WCT, part 25 “Macroevangelistics.”
79. Grand total of all distinct plans and proposals for accomplishing world evangelization made by Christians since A.D. 30. See WCT, part 27, “GeoStrategies.”

WORLD POPULATION BY RELIGION

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WORLDWIDE EXPANSION OF CITIES

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GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY

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January 2002
My Pilgrimage in Mission

J. Dudley Woodberry

The footprints I joined in my pilgrimage were made by grandparents who built schools and a church in China despite encountering the Boxer Rebellion, polio, drowning, and smallpox. They were carried on by a father who continued to serve through two world wars and as a chaplain of Chinese prisoners in the Korean War, and by a mother who refused to be deterred when she was rejected by every mission to which she applied because of ill health. Instead, when she heard a mission executive say that anyone who could work at the Catherine Street Mission in Hell’s Kitchen in New York could go anywhere in the world, she proved she could. These footprints pointed a direction for me to follow.

From Mud Walls to Barbed Wire

My pilgrimage started inside the mud walls of a Presbyterian mission hospital in Ichowfu (now Linyi) in the interior of the Chinese province of Shandung in 1934. At the age of three, during a family furlough, in a childlike way I committed my life to Christ at Pinebrook, a Christian camp in Pennsylvania. This experience led to a sense that I had been saved for a purpose. My early awareness of the need for mission developed as I heard Chinese wailing at gravesides and saw them going into the Buddhist temple near our home to burn incense before a Buddha. I sensed my parents’ response as I rode the crossbar of my father’s bike in Panglai, where he was an evangelist at a Presbyterian mission school. My brothers and sisters and I also learned the cost when the mission said that they would have to close the station in Ichowfu if both my parents did not go there, which meant we four younger children went into boarding at the China Inland Mission School in Chefoo. I was age six.

World War II broke out, and we children became prisoners behind the barbed wire that the Japanese soldiers strung around our school. We began to learn the lessons that are best learned in adversity. There was God’s care. After not being able to get word from our parents for a year, we learned that a Christian Japanese officer had arranged for us to join them and to be exchanged for Japanese civilians in the United States. We missed a train, only to learn later that it was derailed by guerrillas.

Arriving in Shanghai, we visited the grave of our grandmother—who had overcome her original reluctance to become a missionary. When her husband went into what was believed to be his final coma with smallpox, she anointed him with oil (since there were no elders) and sang the Doxology, only to have him sit up healed and join her in singing. She was a grain of wheat that fell into the ground and bore fruit. After two months of sailing to Singapore, East Africa, and Brazil, we passed the burning remains of a torpedoed ship three days out of New York. As we sailed past the Statue of Liberty in the early morning haze, a vision was emerging that some day would send me back the other way.

From the Barnyard to the Schoolyard

During that first year in the United States my parents studied agriculture for overseas contexts at Cornell University. Then we moved to a farm in upstate New York where the farm family with whom we lived would finish chores early so we could attend missionary meetings at nearby Camp Pinnacle. One year they sold all the cows, canned all the chickens and pigs, and drove across the continent to study at Prairie Bible Institute before restarting farming. No wonder that all three of their surviving children went to the mission field as did I—though giving up feeding the pigs, collecting the eggs, and shoveling out the barn was not a great sacrifice for me.

With Dad returning to China, Mother, one sister, and I moved to Nyack on the Hudson River, where Mother ultimately taught missions at the Missionary Training Institute (now Nyack College). Here we listened to a stream of missionaries and each year attended the Congress of Bands in Carnegie Hall, New York, to hear missionary reports from around the world. But it was through Samuel Zwemer’s challenge to go to the most needy and difficult lands that God called me to the Muslim world. This call was nurtured by biographies such as Borden of Yale.

In seventh grade I went off to boarding school at Stony Brook, Long Island, and the family moved to Manhattan. One of our teachers, Marvin Goldberg, became a major influence. He expected excellence in track and chemistry and made sure that we achieved it. The motto on my desk became, “Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might” (Eccl. 9:10). One of my jobs was to clean the chapel. Each time I swept the platform, I saw the words on the pulpit, “Sir, we would see Jesus” (John 12:21). I began to teach Sunday school, visit homes, and give out evangelistic literature. Years later the headmaster, Frank Gaebelien, told me that he prayed for me every day. Whatever it was that made him see the need, my vision became more focused.

From College Campus to Tramp Steamer

I chose Union College in Schenectady, New York, wanting to have a ministry in a secular school near a good church. The pastor of the large Presbyterian Church, Herbert Mkeel, a bachelor, made the young people his own and challenged us all with Christian service. We heard reports of Christian workers like Christy and Betty Wilson, who had just gone out from that church to serve in Afghanistan.

The local church plus the triennial InterVarsity student missionary conventions at Urbana, Illinois, kept the vision alive, but I still needed a vocation through which to express that vision. My jobs teaching horseback riding, chauffeuring, and writing for a city newspaper did not have much career potential, and I could not continue to be premed and preeducation just to keep all options open. Aptitude tests told me to keep away from languages and do science or architecture, but my primary interests were not there. My pastor advised that public speaking was not

J. Dudley Woodberry is Dean Emeritus and Professor of Islamic Studies at the School of World Mission, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California, having served with his family in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Saudi Arabia. He is the editor of Muslims and Christians on the Emmaus Road (MARC) and joint editor of Missiological Education for the Twenty-first Century (Orbis).
one of my gifts, though the Holy Spirit has not seen fit to excuse me from using this part of the clay pot.

In order to advance my quest to find a missionary vocation, I decided to hitchhike to as many ministries in Latin America as I could find. I visited schools, clinics, hospitals (my hand and stomach were not up to surgery), and radio stations (my voice was not good enough for broadcasting); I even investigated the funds to reach Quito, Ecuador, I needed to return, but I had discovered only what I could not do well, not what I should do. While I worked my way back to the United States on an old patrol boat by helping to steer, we pulled into Havana, Cuba, for repairs and to sit out a hurricane. This was not in my plan, but in the providence of God the stopover gave me an opportunity to visit a nearby theological seminary where I sensed that I should prepare for seminary teaching as a means of equipping indigenous Christians for ministry.

There still was the need to confirm a childhood calling, through Samuel Zwemer, to the Muslim world. The next summer the American Friends Service Committee agreed to send me to Lebanon to help build a model goat barn at an agricultural center to facilitate reforestation of the hillsides. Although the barn was burned down and the Swiss goats put back on the hillsides or eaten in the subsequent civil war, this work gave me an opportunity for the first time to live among Muslims and Christians from the ancient churches and confirm my calling to Muslims. I also got to see Palestinian refugee camps and begin to sense some of the issues of peace and justice that must be part of a holistic Gospel.

Subsequently in divided Jerusalem, where Jews and Arabs had just finished a round of fighting and were rebuilding the walls between them, I saw barbed wire that looked like a crown of thorns above Gordon’s Calvary, a hill shaped like a skull, and my mind heard the echo of Christ’s words, “Would that you had just finished a round of fighting and were rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, as you have been doing, instead of fighting over the dead!” Later I earned my passage from Haifa on a decrepit tramp steamer that in its former days as a sailing ship had been used to smuggle Jews from the horrors of the Holocaust in Europe, and I began to feel the complexity of the issues that the church must address.

Back in Europe, I hitchhiked with a friend who had been part of a Bible study group at Union College. As we stood in a cold lake in northern Italy, I asked him why he had given up his plans to be a Christian minister. He replied, “Because I have nothing to preach.” The chill has never left me.

From Biblical to Qur’anic Studies

At Fuller Seminary impressive models surrounded me. Two stand out. The founder, Charles E. Fuller, invited four of us students to help him in evangelistic crusades in Las Vegas and Reno. In him we saw the power of the simple, unadorned Gospel to change lives. The other was Edward John Carnell, in whom we saw the complexity of many of the issues we confront with that Gospel. From him we learned an open-ended evangelicalism that gave us enough confidence in our faith to be open to learn from others with different perspectives.

During my second year at Fuller I met with some students at Princeton Theological Seminary and we came to the conviction that we needed to go overseas as learners before we ever tried to communicate, and we could better do this as students. So we set up the International Studies Program and sent two Princeton students to the Benares Hindu University in India, and two of us Fuller students went to the American University of Beirut. This move allowed me to start my formal Islamic studies in the Arab heartland, where the professors included Nabih Faris (an Arab Christian) and St. John Philby (an English Muslim and counselor to Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, the late king of Saudi Arabia). This time also coincided with the Lebanese civil war that started in 1958, in which most Christians were on one side and most Muslims on the other, and which showed the complexity of their relationship. This was also the time when the Presbyterian Church turned over mission property to the national church—an important step away from paternalism.

During the summer I was privileged to study under Kenneth Cragg, the dean of all scholars who try to enter deeply into the understanding of Muslims and share the Gospel with them. There too I studied under Daud Rahbar, a Muslim wrestling through issues that in the coming year would lead him to follow Christ. While living with scholars working on the Dead Sea Scrolls at what was then the American School of Oriental Research, I would slip up to the Mount of Olives and reflect on Christ’s missionary commission in Acts 1:8—noting the Muslim concentrations in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth.

Hitchhiking through the Near East enroute to India, I passed through Iraq at the time of a coup and was able to see little more than the inside of a jail. After reaching India, I returned by deck passage and was introduced to the sheikdoms along the Arabian coast. Here the wealth of Muslim cultures and the variety of Muslim felt needs were evident.

Back in Beirut I met Roberta Smith, a young woman with whom I would ultimately share my life after she finished her studies at Beirut College for Women (now the Lebanese American University) and I finished mine at Fuller Theological Seminary. After marriage we established our home in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where we had our first two sons, John and Bob, while I studied at Harvard University, and we served part-time ministering to international students on the staff of Park Street Church in Boston, where the pastor, Harold John Ockenga, emphasized missions. Harvard provided a wealth of scholars who, though they might not agree with my calling, left their stamp on me: the breadth of Sir Hamilton Gibb, the depth of George Makdisi, the Muslim piety of Seyyed Hossein Nasr, the sensitivity of Annemarie Schimmel, the social analysis of Robert Bellah, and the empathy of Wilfred Cantwell Smith. I specialized in Islamic fundamentalism, a topic few saw the value of then, but which has become crucial for understanding Muslims today.

From the Newest to the Oldest Muslim Country

When we applied to the Presbyterian Program Agency to serve as missionaries, they said that they had a job for us in Pakistan, at that time the newest and largest Muslim nation. Although we had prepared for the Arab world, we said, “Under God we
picked the team; you can pick the stadium.” Little did we know that this step would later take us to the Arab heartland. When India was getting independence, Pakistan was created as the “pure” (pak) “land” (istan) for Islam. When we visited the graveyard in Sialkot, the gravestones spoke volumes about the sacrifice of the early missionaries who lost spouses and children. This scene became more poignant with the birth of our last son, David.

We were assigned to the Christian Study Centre in Rawalpindi, near the capital city of Islamabad. The first thing I noticed was the contrast between the formal Islam of the textbook and the folk Islam of the street, where people were far more interested in a savior from fear (of evil forces and spirits) than a savior from sin. That began for me a lifelong study of what Muslims actually believe and do rather than just what they are supposed to believe and do and how the Gospel meets these needs. Ours was a task of dialoguing with Muslims and equipping church leaders so their witness was relevant to the Muslims around them. During this time the United Church of Pakistan was formed, a healthy advance beyond some of the denominations imported from the West.

J. Christy Wilson, Jr., had been the first resident pastor in Afghanistan in the twentieth century. When Roberta and I were filling in for him and his wife, Betty, at the Community Christian Church in Kabul during one of their furloughs, two missionaries from Pakistan were incarcerated for giving out four copies of the Gospel of Luke. I provided a Muslim lawyer with a defense based on the Qur’an that resulted in their release and expulsion. After the new church building was torn down by the Afghan government and the Wilsons had to leave, the congregation called us with the hope that we would be able to get maximum freedom in the future based on similar use of Qur’anic arguments.

Here we had to wrestle with the ethical issues of those who stressed that we should obey God rather than human restrictions on evangelism versus those who said our integrity in abiding by restrictions is part of our witness. We struggled with how to learn too noticeable for the Saudis, so they closed us down, and we moved to house churches with a suggested sermon for lay leaders each week called “Catacomb Contemplations.” We then circulated among government officials copies of letters Muhammad is reported to have sent to the Christians of the southwestern city of Najran, allowing them to have priests and pastors as long as they were loyal and paid the poll tax. Subsequently the network of house churches was permitted to continue. We returned to the States when there was no more local schooling for our oldest son, and when Roberta’s allergies became too severe from such causes as the municipality’s regular fogging of streets with chemicals to control flies.

**From Educating Islamicists to Educating Missiologists**

While our two oldest boys finished high school, we lived in Grand Rapids and taught at Reformed Bible College, where I could begin to integrate our experiences with insights from such missiological disciplines as the theology of mission and anthropology. We were able to focus again on the Muslim world when we joined the Zwemer Institute of Muslim Studies in Pasadena, California, to train people at all academic levels. This responsibility included some teaching at the School of World Mission at Fuller Theological Seminary, where gradually we felt led to invest our full time.

Fuller provided the synergy to rethink our mission with a broad faculty of specialists who met for a two-hour lunch each week for fellowship and prayer and to interact on a missiological issue and also with a student body representing well over sixty nationalities and a hundred denominations. This breadth allowed us to do research projects that compared Muslim movements to Christ in Asia and Africa and individual conversions to Christ in Asia and Africa and individual conversions from Islam around the world. Through the Muslim track of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, we were able to compare our research with that of other workers among Muslims at consultations in Zeist (Netherlands), Stuttgart, Manila, and Cyprus. The first resulted in the book *Muslims and Christians on the Emmaus Road*.

When subsequently I was invited to assume the deanship of Fuller’s School of World Mission, my wife and I had to struggle with what would be the best stewardship of our gifts. Finally we accepted the call, since the seven years before I became sixty-five would be time enough to make a contribution, but not too deep a rut, and I could then return to full-time teaching of Islamic studies.

This was a challenging time for Christian mission and mission education, with accelerating changes in the world involving both globalization and regionalization, secularization and religious resurgence, pluralism and religious conflict, enlarging and restricting of women’s roles, increased poverty and wealth, and indigenization and internationalization of mission. Also there was the population explosion, communication explosion, and urbanization. There were shifts in the center of gravity of the world church from west and north to the east and south, and from mainline to evangelical and Pentecostal. Mission personnel were shifting from traditional and long-term service to bivocational and short-term. Sending agencies were shifting from traditional ones to new agencies and local churches. Training was shifting from seminaries and Bible colleges to in-house training in the new agencies and local churches.

Our faculty response was to invite educators and practitioners from the major branches of the church, the major regions of
Prepare for a Lifetime of Effective Ministry, ANYWHERE!

Christianity's World Mission would be less intimidating and more manageable if everyone spoke the same language, followed the same customs and viewed life the same way. That idyllic world, however, is not the world Christ calls us to engage.

The real world features at least a dozen major cultural families and more than 2,000 religions, 6,000 languages and 30,000 distinct societies and cultures. There are also an unknown (and shifting) number of sub-cultures, counter-cultures and peoples with their own distinct name, history and identity. Furthermore, secularization has transformed Western nations into “mission fields” once again.

Several fields of knowledge prepare the effective missionary to “exegete” the biblical text and people’s cultural context. These literatures are as necessary, and as sophisticated, as the literatures that prepare physicians to make sense of an epidemic, or astronomers of a galaxy. Asbury’s ESJ School will prepare you to understand the historical, cultural and religious contexts of the field of mission to which Christ has called you, and to serve, communicate and help grow the indigenous Church in that place.

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The Legacy of William Shellabear

Robert A. Hunt

William Shellabear (1862–1948) was one of the pioneer Methodist missionaries to British Malaya, yet he is better known among Malay Muslims than among Christians. His editions of classical Malay literature are still in print, and his studies of the Malay language and orthography are still in use by linguists. His Christian works in Malay did not find a place in a church, which came to be dominated by ethnic Chinese and Indians who spoke English or their own vernacular languages.

Nonetheless, Shellabear left a Christian legacy in Malaya. From 1891 to 1948 he introduced and guided changes in attitudes toward Malays and Islam, which made it possible for Methodist missionaries to relate positively to Malays while maintaining the integrity of their evangelistic outreach. These changes involved first a reevaluation of Malay culture, and then of Malay religion and spirituality. In an era in which Christian-Muslim relations and Malay religious aspirations were dominant themes of an all-too-strident Christian discussion, the legacy of a missionary who could retain both his integrity as an evangelist and the respect of those whom he sought to convert is worthy of study.

Shellabear was born on the earl of Leicester’s Holkam Hall estate in Norfolk, where his father was the estate manager. He was raised in a household where conformity to middle-class Victorian sensibilities was more important than personal piety. His early attempt to read the Bible through was discouraged by his parents, who preferred that their son be engaged in manly activities outdoors on the estate grounds. His formal education followed a route toward military service, carefully mapped out by his father. It was incidental to this plan that William was exposed to revival meetings and missionary hymns while at school in Folkstone. These helped form an image of Christian service abroad, which moved beyond the civil and military aims of the empire. After a period in Haileybury School in Hertford, and the Royal Academy at Woolwich, Shellabear began his service in the Royal Engineers in 1882. His academic and leadership skills, always evident, led to further training in Gosport, and it was there that he experienced the religious awakening that shaped the rest of his career.

The stimulus for this awakening came through relatives of Shellabear in Gosport, who introduced him to the family of John Kealy. The Kealy family had close ties with Brethren, Baptist, and Wesleyan churches and introduced Shellabear to St. Matthew’s Anglican Church, then served by a former Church Missionary Society missionary to India. Shellabear quickly found himself exposed to a Christian society in which evangelistic and missionary commitments were more important than maintaining sectarian differences. After a three-month period spent working in isolation on the Isle of Wight, during which he reflected on his spiritual state, and with the urging of Fanny Kealy, the sixteen-year-old daughter of John Kealy, Shellabear made a definite commitment to Christ. A short time later he began to court Fanny and under her influence gave up smoking and drinking. By the time he received orders to ship out to Singapore in 1886, he and Fanny were engaged to be married, and he had become an enthusiastic witness to Christianity among the other soldiers.

In Singapore Shellabear began to learn the Malay language in order to lead a group of Malay soldiers, and it became his most important pastime. Dissatisfied with the missionary commitment of the Anglican church in Singapore, he became part of the close-knit fellowship of Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregationalist missionaries led by Sophia Cook. Under the influence of William Oldham, founder of the American Methodist Mission in Singapore, Shellabear had a second conversion, this time to Holiness Christianity. He became known as the preaching captain for his frequent sermons to soldiers and sailors and began to translate Christian hymns into Malay, teaching them to his soldiers as they rowed across the harbor.

Years of Transition

As his first tour of duty drew to a close, Shellabear began to have serious doubts about his military vocation, seeing in it a potential conflict of loyalties between service of the nation and Christ’s demand for righteousness. By 1888 he had embraced a pacifism that did not discount the possibility of fighting but that could not countenance it for purely nationalistic purposes. Encouraged by his fiancée, but with opposition from both families, he returned to England in 1889 and resigned his commission in order to join the Methodist Mission in Singapore. After a period of training in printing and street evangelism, he and Fanny were married and sailed for Singapore in 1891.

The next eleven years were among the busiest and most troubling of Shellabear’s life. He threw himself into building the Methodist mission press, which within a year was producing hymnals, tracts, and booklets in Malay and Chinese for the Bible
Society and the Tract Society. He translated Christian works into Malay, intending to create a complete body of Methodist literature to serve the Malay-speaking churches he hoped to form. He began and edited the Malaysia Message, a monthly journal for missionaries in Singapore and Malaysia. Through it for over three decades he sought to educate and motivate his fellow missionaries.

His studies of the language led him into the circle of British and Malay scholars who gathered in Singapore as the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society. In 1895 he published a new edition of Sejarah Melanyu (History of the Malays), followed by a series of printed editions of Malay classical literature prepared by himself and others. Shellabear believed such scholarly works were essential tools for training missionaries in Malay language and culture. He wrote and published both Malay-English Vocabulary and Practical Malay Grammar at the close of the decade for the same purpose. These popular works cemented a long-standing relationship between the press and the colonial officials engaged in building up a system of Malay-medium schools and helped the press win a steady stream of contracts for textbooks in Malay. Shellabear also turned his attention to the needs of the Chinese Methodists. He studied Hokkien and learned to read Chinese characters. In 1898 the press branched into publications in both romanized Hokkien and Chinese characters.

While Shellabear focused his attention on the press, death and disability soon left him the most senior Methodist missionary in Singapore and Malaya. In 1896 he was made presiding elder, and in this capacity he had oversight of the entire mission and its many complex conflicts with Singaporean society. With other missionaries Shellabear vigorously attacked licensed prostitution and the sale of opium, leading the Methodists into nearly a decade of acrimonious debate in the local press. In 1896 the Methodist Anglo-Chinese school, the largest in Singapore, attracted the attention of Chinese nationalists, who were opposed to its religious influence. Important Chinese business leaders, including Lim Boon Keng, called for a boycott against the school, accusing it of practicing forced conversion (a charge subsequently proved groundless). In the financial crisis that followed, Shellabear was forced to take over the management of the school. It was, for him, an onerous task. By 1895 he was convinced that the English-medium schools were absorbing far too many resources and missionary personnel. For the next five years he was locked in an intense conflict with his fellow missionaries over the merits of vernacular versus English-language education.

By 1899 Shellabear was again questioning his vocation. Fanny had died in 1893, after the birth of their son Hugh. In 1897 he married Elizabeth Ferris. Their daughters Margaret and Fanny were born in 1897 and 1899. By then he and she were exhausted by a heavy workload, family commitments, and the conflicts of managing both the rapidly expanding Methodist mission and the mission press. Finally she and their children took emergency leave and sailed to the United States, leaving Shellabear to finish his term as presiding elder. Despite the success of the mission, Shellabear had found little satisfaction in administration. His calling was to work with the Malay people, which inspired his scholarly love for their language and his work as a publisher. His work as editor and translator had convinced him of the need for a new Malay translation of the Bible, suitable for the particular needs of Singapore and Malaya. He dreamed of devoting his days to translation and study. Finally in 1900 he left the mission press in the hands of W. T. Cherry and officially began work under a joint contract with the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) and the Methodist Mission to revise the Malay Bible. In 1902 he visited the United States, and in 1903 the Shellabear family moved to Malacca so that he could dedicate his time to translation of the Bible in a Malay Muslim environment.

**Studying Malay Culture**

For the next fourteen years the translation of the Bible into Malay was Shellabear’s central concern, although he continued to write and translate other Christian literature and serve as superintendent of different Methodist districts in Malaya. During his seven years in Malacca he completed the Malay New Testament and Old Testament. From 1909 to 1911 he managed a rubber estate and orphanage in the midst of a Chinese Christian colony, which the Methodists had built at Sitiawan, on the west coast of Malaya. There he began a translation of the Bible into “Baba Malay,” the Malay dialect of the Straits Chinese. This was completed after he once again took up residence in Singapore from 1912 to 1916. In the same period he continued his study and publication of Malay manuscripts, as well as philological investigations of classical Malay and Baba Malay. These literary efforts were complemented by his outreach to Malay youth in Malacca and Singapore, the formation of Malay girls’ schools, and an effort to build a hospital for rural Malays near Sitiawan.

He also began to immerse himself in contemporary Malay culture through his work with Malay Muslim teachers, particularly Sulaiman bin Muhammed Nur, with whom he edited two books of Malay proverbs and poetry. Out of this collaboration Shellabear gained a positive attitude about Malay culture and religion, which influenced his personal goals as a missionary evangelist. His changing attitudes were reinforced and complemented by the work of the Cairo missionary conference of 1909 and the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910. Through his role as a mentor and teacher of both missionaries and indigenous Christian leaders, he mediated these changes to two generations of prewar missionaries.

In the 1980s most Methodist missionary perceptions about the Malays were dominated by cultural prejudices against their supposed laziness and backwardness in the context of an economically vibrant Chinese population, which was relatively open to both mission schools and conversion to Christianity. Islam, the religion of the Malays, elicited a particularly hostile response from missionaries, who found its followers resistant to evangelization. Shellabear initially shared these prejudices, despite his personal affection for his Malay soldiers and workers at the press. However, as he came into contact with “pro-Malay” British civil servants and Malay scholars in Singapore, as well as with the rich classical Malay literature, his perceptions changed. From 1896 to 1902 he argued strongly for the value of Malay vernacular education against fellow missionaries who felt English was bound to displace the Oriental languages. Ancient Malay cultural traditions were, in his view, the finest part of Malay society.

The tendency in early nineteenth-century studies of Malay...
culture was to regard Islam as a relatively thin religious veneer on what was primarily an animistic culture. This seemed a logical conclusion when Islam was defined primarily in terms of orthodox commentaries and legal texts. Shellabear’s collaboration with Sulaiman bin Muhammed Nur and his exposure to Malay culture in Malacca led him to see more clearly how Malay

**Shellabear urged scholars to positively value Malay culture and to appreciate the important contribution of Islam to Malaysia.**

spirituality represented a genuine commitment to Islam, despite its failure to conform to the expectations of Orientalists. In his writing for the Methodists, and finally in a 1915 essay entitled “The Influence of Islam on the Malay Race,” he urged a significant change in attitude toward the Malays. As he had done for over a decade, he urged them to positively value the Malay culture and people as part of the development of Malaya, rather than focusing exclusively on the economic potential of the Chinese and Indian populations. Now in addition he urged that the significance of Islam in Malay culture be recognized so that effective evangelistic programs could be developed. Finally, he urged an end to all polemical approaches to evangelism among Malays and, following the lead of the 1910 Edinburgh conference, began looking for points of contact between Malay Muslim spirituality and Christian faith.

Shellabear’s realistic evaluation of the influence of Islam on Malay culture did not include a positive evaluation of its orthodox form, which he continued to see primarily through the eyes of Samuel Zwemer, whose works he had read for over a decade. Then in 1915 and 1917 Shellabear used his furlough to attend the Kennedy School of Missions in Hartford and study under Duncan Black Macdonald. This experience revolutionized his evaluation of Islam as a religion and convinced him that bridges could be built between Islamic and Christian teaching that would make a new era of evangelism possible. Unfortunately, when he tried to return to Singapore in 1916 and again in 1918, a long-simmering conflict with a rival missionary leader caused Shellabear to have a mental and physical breakdown. A further attempt to return to Singapore in 1919 also ended with a breakdown, and by 1920 he had officially retired from the mission.

**New Missiological Strategies**

After a period of recovery Shellabear was able to join the faculty at Hartford Seminary, in Hartford, Connecticut, as a teacher of Malay language and culture to Methodist missionaries. Soon afterward he traveled to Leiden to study Arabic with Snouk Hrugronje, and then to Cairo to learn Qur’an reading and vernacular Arabic. In 1924 he was offered a full-time position at Hartford, where he remained until his death in 1948, briefly occupying the chair of Professor of Muhammedan Studies and serving as an editor of the *Muslim World* journal until his retirement in 1936.

This final stage of Shellabear’s career was one in which he sought to integrate his understanding of evangelism and religious and cultural appreciation into new missiological approaches. With collaborators in the Netherlands Bible Society and the BFBS, he coordinated a union Bible translation that could be used throughout the Malay-speaking world. The project eventually lost British support because of language differences and political conflicts, but it did result in the first new Indonesian Bible in half a century. More successful were Shellabear’s translations of the story of the Bible, and then the Gospels, into classical Malay poetry, or shair. First published in the 1930s, these books went through a number of editions in the next twenty years. They were published both as booklets and in serial form for evangelism in Malaya and were published in Latin characters with study notes for use by Malay-speaking Christians in Sumatra. After the Second World War they were reprinted, and finally in the 1960s they were broadcast by the Far East Broadcasting Company out of Manila. Shellabear also wrote commentaries on the Gospels in Malay, concentrating on what he believed were key theological points of contact with Islamic teaching. Again these books enjoyed wide circulation and were published in several editions. They were intended to instill both interested Muslims and Malay-speaking Christians who worked with Muslims. Toward the end of his life he attempted a translation of the Qur’an into Malay so that Malay-speaking Christians and Muslims could use a Muslim text to discuss religious truth. The project was not completed before he died in 1948, but descriptions of its purpose and intent were widely read by missionaries serving in prewar Malaya.

The Methodist Mission in Malaysia was thus influenced by Shellabear to respect and honor the culture and religion of the Malays. Its key leaders, including its first postwar bishop, studied under Shellabear at Hartford. Yet it never assigned a full-time missionary to work among Malays. Literature, relatively cheap and easy to distribute, replaced efforts at personal contact. The few converts were integrated into Malay-speaking Chinese congregations, and a Malay church was never formed. The intensive development of English-medium schools and the political interests of the dominantly non-Malay Methodists became the chief concerns of the mission after the Second World War. After Malaysia gained its independence in 1956, the sensitivities that Shellabear had cultivated became necessities in dealing with the politically dominant Malays, yet the Methodists offered little to the Malay community itself. Eventually the Malaysian government passed laws that made the kind of ministry Shellabear envisioned virtually impossible among Muslims. Even in Singapore, more open for evangelism, his legacy became a legacy of questions—about why a resourceful Christian mission would fail to reach out in ministry to an entire ethnic group, and about whether the window of opportunity for that ministry is now totally closed.

In his leadership of the Methodist Mission, his extensive publications in English and Malay, and finally as a teacher of missionaries, Shellabear challenged his fellow missionaries to continually reevaluate their missionary vocation, attitudes, and commitments toward Muslims. It was this change in heart on the part of Christians, rather than an ever higher social profile or ever more powerful institutions, that he regarded as the key to evangelism among Malays. That challenge, when heeded, may well be his most lasting legacy.
Notes
2. Oldham had been raised in India and, like Shellabear, had studied engineering before being called as a missionary during the Holiness revivals in India in the 1870s.
3. A paper read to the Straits Philosophical Society, no. 87. The unpublished manuscript is in the hands of Dr. Lim Teck Ghee, of the Institute of Advanced Studies, University of Malaya.

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The Legacy of Isabella Lilias Trotter

Lisa M. Sinclair

The life and work of Isabella Lilias Trotter (1853–1928) are curiously relevant to current missiological issues. As a single independent British missionary to Algeria and the informal founder of the Algiers Mission Band (AMB), Trotter was well acquainted with such concerns as female leadership and singleness. Her writings reveal wrestlings with the as-yet-unnamed concepts of incarnational ministry, contextualization, and power encounter. She spearheaded the use of short-termers and was active in the philosophy and process of missionary recruitment and training. She was a Muslim mission strategist and was indefatigably optimistic. Trotter surrendered her unique gifts to the Lord, leaving a legacy of prayer, writings, illustrations, perseverance, and vision. She was known to the Muslims of Algeria and Tunisia as Lili, the one who “loves me and will not turn me out.” Her voluminous diaries are ornate with her burden for individual souls and her longing that Muslim converts live out the principles of the Christian life. Today, little known and little read, her voice still calls to mission.

Constance Padwick, an Islamic scholar in her own right and a contemporary and acquaintance of Trotter, described Trotter’s lasting contribution to world missions as the “first-fruits of the Church’s offering of surrender to the Cross on behalf of the Moslem world”—a world against which the church of Jesus Christ historically had shown “prejudice for prejudice, antagonism, dominance, [and] fear, rather than redemptive love.” Padwick notes that the church “has been the part-builder of the spiritual barrier . . . , and the only weapon mighty to the pulling down of this stronghold is a penitent love which claims both the cleansing of the Cross for her own past and present, and a share of the suffering of the Cross for the sake of others. . . . This was [Lilias Trotter’s] spiritual quality.”

Early Life and Call

Isabella Lilias Trotter lived and served during the “Great Century” of Christian missions. Born in 1853, she was the daughter of a London businessman and enjoyed a happy, open, and educated childhood. She was converted under the ministry of Hannah Pearsall Smith, and her life’s work was stimulated by her confrontation with her upper-class social standing. As she started, so she would continue—different, creative, bold. Her very uniqueness would threaten her missionary vision. In 1876, while she and her mother traveled in Venice, Lilias came under the tutelage of the famous artist John Ruskin, who was quite impressed with her sketches, seeing “extremely right-minded and careful work.” After two or three lessons, Ruskin noted that Trotter “seemed to learn everything the instant she was shown it, and ever so much more than she was taught.” Ruskin showed her drawings to his Oxford students as examples in which the “plainest and frankest manner shew us how to do it—or, more modestly speaking, how, if heaven help us, it can be done—minute, instantaneous and unerring record of the things that are precisely best.” John Ruskin would have “possessed her spiritually and have had her whole life devoted to the service of art.” He coveted her as an artistic talent and as a fascinating friend. In 1879, Trotter turned from her potential future as a brilliant artist, saying, “I see clear as daylight now, that I cannot dedicate myself to painting in the way that [Ruskin] means and continue to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.” (Still, their friendship spanned three decades and was a source of mutual edification.) Trotter would later recount to Padwick that the “renunciations” and the “pain” of her gift were with her to the end, and most clearly felt in her illustrations of Arabic primers and devotional booklets. Padwick described this as the “peculiar discipline and sorrow” of the “artist-saint.”

Neither Trotter’s journals nor friends’ anecdotes nor biographers speak to the issue of singleness. Given the historical context of England in the latter half of the nineteenth century and Trotter’s upper-class social standing, it is likely that her penchant for intense ministry in unlovely places marked her for celibacy. In 1884, still balancing her London ministry to needy girls with her art, Trotter experienced the first of many periods of exhaustion and necessary convalescence. She underwent a minor surgery with a slow recovery, and suffered permanent cardiac weakness. Her most recent biographer notes, “Such overextension in work, followed by a period of enforced rest, would become an observable pattern throughout Lily’s life.”

Lilias Trotter received the call to Algeria. She recounted to her biographer Blanche Piggott that whenever she heard the words “North Africa” it sounded as if a voice were calling her. In May 1887, when Mr. Glenny of the North Africa Mission asked in a missionary meeting, “Is there anyone in this room whom God is calling to North Africa?” Trotter rose and said, “He is calling me.” Her longing to go and minister “where Christ was unknown” endured throughout her life’s ministry.

Experience in Algeria

Rejected by two mission societies for health reasons, in 1888 Trotter and two single friends, Blanche Haworth and Katie Stuart, sailed for Algiers as independent missionaries. Trotter describes their arrival:

On March 9th, 1888, we steamed into the Bay of Algiers, the water below shimmering with phosphorescence, the crescent of the shore set with gleaming lights, and the glorious southern sky above full of its quiet stars. . . . Three of us stood there, looking at our battle-field, none of us fit to pass a doctor for any [mission] society, not knowing a soul in the place, or a sentence of Arabic, or a clue for beginning work on untouched ground; we only knew we had to come. Truly if God needed weakness, He had it!”

Lisa M. Sinclair and her husband are serving as missionaries in Mali, West Africa, under United World Mission. A certified Family Nurse Practitioner, she has been active in trauma healing and reconciliation workshops in Rwanda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Kenya.
She said that those early years were like “knocking our heads against stone walls,” with learning Arabic and trying to gain access into national homes as the first formidable barriers. With just a few vocabulary words, Sunday school classes for the market and “shoe-black” boys were initiated. Entrance into national homes came through the children. The first converts were a “poor set—the paper and sticks . . . needed to set light to the coal,” which would become “the real fire.” A time of outward disappointments and inner-life failures followed. She wrote of the “nerve strain of the climate, the pressure on our spirits of the Satanic forces with which all teems out here, the lessons which we thought we knew and which we had ‘turned back’ again and again to be learnt afresh.”

From 1890 to 1902 Trotter and colleagues learned the hard work of ministry in the North African Muslim context. Burdened for the interior, she started her winter itinerations to unreached locations. Her artwork and words were forever marked by a fearlessness of the colors and shapes of desert beauty and with a love for the Arabs there.

In 1896, after a six-month convalescence in England with debilitating heart strain, Trotter entered into a period of external conflict. French-English relations were acrimonious, and the French prohibited evangelistic endeavors. Government relations were strained. Newspapers printed negative press, there was general suspicion, and the Band’s winter journeys to surrounding villages were curtailed. Men were prohibited from going near the AMB workers or from taking their offered literature. In 1905, her “darkest year,” Trotter was forced by climate, exhaustion, and strain to take six months of bed rest. During such times of forced inactivity, she wrote her devotionals and illustrated her letters and journals with tiny watercolors of Arab life. Yet, even with the cyclical constraints of illness and painful limitations that lasted until the end of World War I, Trotter saw some come to know the Lord.

She had a special compassion for the plight of Muslim converts, who suffered banishment, beatings, brain drugging, and poisoning. She “saw dullness and misery gather over them and they would stay aloof from us. . . . We grew to know the symptoms sadly well—they had fallen under the brain drugs . . . that can be given unnoticed in food or drink, and produce a paralysis of mind and will. . . . Long were the prayer fights to keep hold for God against this satanic counter-pull. . . . These triumphs of the enemy were the saddest of that time.” Many came to Christ, only to die, and Trotter came to rejoice in their loss. “[We] were glad to let them go. One needs to live in a Moslem land to know the meaning of those words, ‘He comforted concerning him knowing that he was dead.’ One draws a breath of relief when they get safe home [to heaven].” At the same time, Christian death was a witness to unbelieving families, who marvelled, saying, “Your death is a beautiful death.”

Miriam Rockness characterizes Trotter’s first years in North Africa—those years of “knocking heads against stone walls”—as “inexhaustible and indiscourageable.” There were many disappointments, many closing doors and confusing signs for those who read God’s leading through the interplay of circumstance and his word, yet Trotter’s resilience was revealed as she trusted God for the unseen and the impossible. In her inimitable style, she wrote, “Let us take very good care not to make a misery of anything that ‘anywhere’ brings us. To us in Algeria it [may] mean . . . Arab food. Do we object to it? And mice, do we mind them? And mosquitos, do we think them dreadful? In some parts it means close contact with dirt and repulsive disease. Yet if Jesus is there what have we possible to complain of? It means living among a stiff-necked and untrue people and struggling with a strange and difficult language. And yet let us evermore write over all our miseries . . . these transforming words ‘With Jesus.’

The map over her bed was her “manual of intercession,” and Trotter agonized under it in prayer into the early hours of the morning.

And then the very breath of Heaven will breathe upon our whole being and we shall be glad.”

By 1906 there came a season of greater freedom, with an expansion of workers, of areas covered, and of points and means of ministry. By 1920 AMB had expanded from three to thirty full-time workers, and fifteen preaching stations had been established. Portions of Scripture were translated into colloquial Arabic, lithographed in Arabic script to be more culturally attractive and accessible. Conversions came from among the Arabs, French, Jews, and black Africans.

The Traveler-Journalist

Trotter loved to travel and had a pioneer-adventurer-explorer spirit. Her “journeyings satisfied the gipsy and the tramp in her.” Throughout her forty years in North Africa, Trotter learned the importance of taking regular times apart with the Lord for her necessary refreshment. Summers were spent in England or Switzerland, or in the Band’s Algerian respite house, Dar Naama. In later years Trotter traveled broadly in her role as mission leader and conference speaker with John R. Mott and Samuel Zwemer.

The map of Algeria and Tunisia—her “manual of intercession”—hung over her bed, and she would strategize and agonize in prayer under it, with lamp lit until the early hours of the morning, “of such intercession as only lovers make.” Inscribed on the map in her own calligraphy was the rally, “Take heed to the ministry which thou has received in the Lord that thou fulfill it.”

Trotter was also a prodigious writer. Her prose may seem too flowery for us, yet it accurately reflected the literature of her day. Journaling a full page almost daily during her forty years of service in Algeria, she filled her writing with descriptions and illustrations of the natural creation around her. Trotter saw the way of effective service as the way of the cross, the way of surrender and death, the way of sacrificial love. This was the foundation of her enduring vision and staying power. Her lovely devotional book, Parables of the Cross, was described in the foreword by H. W. Stolley as “The expression and illustration of [her] great theme ‘MORS JANUA VITAE’—Death is the gateway of life.”

“Death is the gate of life.” . . . Have we learnt to go down . . . into its gathering shadows in quietness and confidence, knowing that there is always “a better resurrection” beyond? . . . It is when we come to self-despair, when we feel ourselves locked in waiting our doom, that the glory and beauty of God’s way of escape dawns upon us, and we submit ourselves to Him in it . . . Take the very hardest thing in your life—the place of difficulty outward or inward, and expect God to triumph gloriously in that very spot. Just there He can bring your soul into blossom.”

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The Mission Strategist

Trotter did not leave a manual of her missiological principles. They must be drawn from her practices, her writings, and the anecdotes of her biographers and coworkers. Trotter never solicited funds, finding that “the supply always forestalled the want, as is the wont of an earthly father whose wealth is boundless.” This provision, she mused, was as if God “knew how hard the battle would be in other ways, and has never let that weight press, glory to His name.”

The ministry of early years was funded primarily by the independent income of the women themselves, until expansion required a new dependence on God for financial care. The AMB

Single female missionaries were recruited. Trotter saw outreach to women as a “great line of cleavage in the rock face of Islam.”

was international, comprising British, Danish, and French in the early days, and collaborating with other mission societies. Christian community development was not a catchword of that time, yet the Band established an industrial farm where inquirers and converts could learn a trade such as irrigation or agriculture. The need for urban/rural cross-training was emphasized, and new workers did their required internship at the urban “slum-post,” named the Room of Grace.

Short-termers were solicited, and a hostel was created for them. Trotter believed that “there must be many educated girls who can come on a self-supporting basis for a term of service, in all the countless ways in which such can be rendered, with small knowledge of language, if hands and hearts are ready.”

Single female missionaries were solicited as essential in the outreach to Muslim women, who represented the majority of the population as caregivers to small children and conservative defenders of Islam. Trotter saw that outreach to women was a “great line of cleavage” in the rock face of Islam. “What women of the Moslem world need supremely is the sacrificial service of their Christian sisters from the West.”

All work was based in prayer, and spiritual warfare was a constant reality: “We need yet to learn how to stand in the battle over them [Muslim converts] as they win their way inch by inch against the power of darkness.” Signs and wonders, dreams and visions were commonplace occurrences as guidance to Christ for Muslim seekers. The Band knew that only God could bring life to this dry land, so dry that it seemed dead.

Trotter took on the role of mission leadership, but viewed it as “a heavy discipline of loneliness,” one that she was eager to give over in heaven, if not sooner.

The AMB was called to the “outlying and untouched places,” and Trotter related to Padwick that she felt ashamed “when there are too many round this table.” She determined to send them out two by two. Stalley described her as “forward looking” and “ready to take advantage of every new opportunity that presented itself.”

Her mission methodology reflected flexibility and an embodiment of 1 Corinthians 9:22b: “I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some.” For the AMB “all means” included literacy and education, knitting and spinning wool, storytelling and artwork, medical work and traveling, colporteurs and literature distribution, translations of the New Testament, and establishment of places of refuge.

Trotter viewed literature as the “unused explosive force” in Muslim evangelism. Because of the solidarity of Islam, she felt that materials could be used across the Muslim world with little alteration if written in Arabic. With the assistance of the Nile Mission Press, the entire AMB rose to the challenge of literature needs for boys, girls, men, and women, illustrated with culturally appropriate design and color.

Trotter was invited to cross unheard of boundaries and debate among the mystical Brotherhood of Sufi. She wrote a devotional guide for these Muslim mystics based on the seven “I am” statements found in John’s writings, The Way of the Sevenfold Secret. She found among these men “an instant response when one speaks of seeking Him who is light and life and love.”

Trotter continued her massive correspondence and her writing through her invalid years (1925–28), educating and fascinating the West, rallying prayer support, and winning workers to North Africa. Her bedroom became the heart of the mission, the seat of strategy, the center of prayer. In weakness she strategized, trained future leaders, and wrote voluminously. In Between the Desert and the Sea she describes with almost tedious detail the geography of the land, the different people groups, cultural patterns, and the joys and sorrows of life in Algeria and Tunisia. Because of her writing and her illustrations, many became involved in the far-off work of North Africa.

When Lilias Trotter summarized the meaning of her life and work, and that of the AMB in Muslim North Africa, she gave the following analogy:

The autumn-crocus is the snowdrop as it were of these lands, breaking out of the hard dry ground and laughing at the barrenness of everything around in its faith that the rains are coming. . . . Wonderful things may be waiting in the ages to come as the fruit of Christ’s sacrifice, but nothing can come up to the joy of being part of His “autumn-crocus”—the first thing which He sees of the travail of His soul. . . . Others may see the full glory of the sunrise in the Moslem world, to us only is given the joy of seeing Him as the morning star. To miss the first rose flush of the dawn is to miss the whole.

Trotter died in her bed in Dar Naama, after forty years of ministry in Algeria, surrounded by her beloved coworkers. Her courage, tenacity, vision, and touch of beauty are worthy of our study.
Notes

1. The Algiers Mission Band (AMB) was started by Trotter in 1888. It later merged with North Africa Mission and Southern Moroccan Mission to become Arab World Ministries.

2. Trotter staked her work on the miraculous intervention of God. For her, “Difficulty is the very atmosphere of miracle. It is miracle in its first stage. If it is to be a great miracle, the condition is not difficulty but impossibility.” Constance E. Padwick, Lillias Trotter of Algiers (Rushden, Northants: Stanley L. Hunt, n.d.), p. 16.


4. Ibid., pp. 126–27.


9. Padwick, Lillias, p. 10; “Lillias,” p. 119. About this giving of her gift to the call, she later challenged: “Have we learned the buttercup’s lesson yet? Are our hands off the very blossom of our life? Are all things—even the treasures that He has sanctified—held loosely, ready to be parted with, without a struggle, when He asks for them? ... Death means a loosened grasp—loosened beyond all power of grasping again. ... Are you ready to ratify the words when His emptying begins to come?” (Parables of the Cross [London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1947], pp. 20–21).


11. Ibid., p. 76.


14. I. Lillias Trotter, “Back-ground and Fore-ground” (personal mission report, 1913), p. 1. This work provides a brief history of the early mission work and the first of her mission reports. In the first seventeen years on the field, only one other woman joined the little team. From 1905 to 1912, nineteen women and only two men joined the AMB.


16. Rockness relates the story of an 1894 trip: “The initial trip to Biskra was an almost 450-mile stretch achieved by primitive arrangements: rail, diligence (rickety horse-drawn carriage), and camel. Penetration deeper into the desert ... was long, fiery hot, and risky. Two women traveling alone with an unfamiliar native guide were at the complete mercy of humankind and the elements. They were in a place where thieves made it their business to profit from unsuspecting Europeans. Deadly scorpions, disease, and ferocious dogs were the gamble of any given day.” (Rockness, Passion, p. 109.)


22. Zwemer wrote of Trotter, “My best impression of her life could best be expressed in two words—it was a life of Vision and a life of Prayer. ... She was ... an embodiment of her own expression, ‘The glory of the impossible.’ Personally, I owe very much to her missionary messages, which were my inspiration and comfort in the early days of my pioneering work in Arabia.” (Rockness, Passion, pp. 275–76.)


27. Ibid., p. 11.


29. Annie Van Sommer and Samuel M. Zwemer, eds., Daytime in the Harem: A New Era for Moslem Women (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1911), p. 213. Resolution 11 from the Jerusalem and Lucknow Conferences states that “the aid of Christian women is urgently needed for the evangelisation and uplifting of Mohammedan women who with their little children, constitute the larger part of the Moslem world.”


33. Trotter questions rhetorically, “Do we believe that each heaven-sent prayer brings the cloud-burst nearer? That one last cry of faith, somewhere, will set it free? Do we act as if we believed it? Shall we give ourselves to hasten it? And when it comes, we shall see the latent possibilities awake, and the latent powers assert themselves, and the people of Moslem countries, men and women, show what they can be and do for Him and in His Kingdom. For, thank God, they are not dead lands, they are ‘only dry’” (Annie Van Sommer and Samuel M. Zwemer, eds., Our Moslem Sisters [New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1907], p. 98).


35. Harold Stalley, former Home Secretary of AMB, wrote of his desire after WWII to consolidate the workers into teams. A peer of Trotter retorted, “I know what Lillias would say to that—may God drop a bomb onto your team and scatter them.” Stalley, personal correspondence with the author, 1991.


Selected Bibliography

Works by I. Lillias Trotter
1913 “Back-ground and Fore-ground.” Personal mission report.

Works About I. Lillias Trotter
Considering the lack of books on Islam that reflect the experiences and perspectives of women, this compilation of twenty-five articles by women working among Muslims meets a need for more information and insight into the lives of Muslim women and into ministry among them. This compendium comes out of the Consultation on Ministry to Muslim Women (May 1999), in which forty "missionary stateswomen"—professors, mission leaders, and field personnel working among a broad spectrum of people groups—gathered to discuss the relevant issues and to learn from one another. The book includes excerpts from the thought-provoking discussion that followed the presentation of each paper.

In the first section, "The World of Muslim Women," vivid vignettes offer a window into a variety of Muslim women's lives, their fears, roles, experiences with the occult, life-cycle events, worldview, and connection to their community. In this context authors share ministry experiences, often emphasizing the importance of cultural sensitivity.

The second section, "Muslim Background Believers," includes analyses and different accounts of how Muslim women have come to Christ, as well as discussion of the related challenges and how to help women face suffering and persecution with love and forgiveness. The authors present models for ministry, including practical ideas for building community among new believers, the use of chronological Bible storying among nonliterate women, and the training of women leaders.

The final section, "The Missionary Woman," presents refreshingly candid discussion of the special challenges women in this ministry face and of the relationship between missionary women and their sending agencies. Available resources and practical suggestions are given, based on many years of experience. All who care about Muslims, from mission executives to prefield candidates, should read Ministry to Muslim Women to better understand Muslim women and the work of women who minister to them. A good sequel would include articles written by Muslim-background women believers themselves.

—Michele Cumming

Michele Cumming, a registered nurse, has worked with her husband for fourteen years in relief and development in North Africa.

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**Christians and Muslims: The Dialogue Activities of the World Council of Churches and Their Theological Foundation.**


This study provides an overview and assessment of the last twenty-five years of Christian-Muslim dialogue involving the World Council of Churches (WCC). Supported by copious endnotes, it starts with a helpful chronological summary of inter-religious dialogues in general and Christian-Muslim dialogues in particular that go all the way back to the World Missionary Conference in Jerusalem in 1928.

The author then moves to a thematic study of Christian-Muslim dialogue and inter-religious dialogue more broadly. An initial problem was that it continues to be how to determine representative people in bodies as diverse as the WCC and the worldwide Islamic community. Second, there has been the problem of building trust, only accomplished after a number of friendly encounters. Third, a major issue has been the many theologies of religions. How do we view other religions? Can there be salvation outside of our own?

There have been a variety of perspectives among Christians and Muslims.

Fourth was the problem of defining "mission," "dialogue," "evangelism," "proselytism," and "service" and their relationship to each other. Christians commonly have not wanted to separate mission, dialogue, and service, but Muslims have felt that dialogue and service are only alternative forms of proselytism—charges similar to those that some Christians have raised against Muslim da'wa (the "call" to true Islam).

These and other problems have led to dealing with practical issues like peace, justice, ecology, and pastoral concerns from the possibility of common worship to mixed marriages. These and other issues that surfaced early in the discussions remain unresolved, but our world and our calling require that we continue to wrestle with them.

Although the nature of the book involves repetition of accounts and ideas, and it gives no clear set of guidelines for dialogue, it is and will remain a necessary source for studying Christian-Muslim relations.

—J. Dudley Woodberry

J. Dudley Woodberry is Dean Emeritus and Professor of Islamic Studies at the School of World Mission, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California, having served with his wife in Lebanon, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Saudi Arabia.

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**Evangelizing the Chosen People: Mission to the Jews in America, 1880–2000.**


The appearance of this study on Jewish evangelism by Yaakov Ariel, an Israeli Jewish scholar, will certainly be well received by all followers of Jesus, whether Gentiles or Jews. Although not a believer in Jesus, Ariel is forthright and fair in his efforts to produce an objective and detailed account of evangelicals—Gentile and...
Jewish—who sought to share the Gospel of Jesus, the Messiah, with Jewish people in America from 1880 to the present.

In the course of his extensive research, Ariel contacted more than a dozen well-known and highly respected leaders within this believing community. He found them most helpful. As a result he was able to demolish the myths that Jewish leaders created over the years to caricature the efforts of those who shared the Gospel with Jewish people. This volume also clarifies the motives that prompted Jewish people to give allegiance to Jesus as their Lord and Messiah, despite the social ostracism that frequently accompanied their alleged betrayal of their Jewishness (a conclusion that they stoutly resisted).

Ariel divides this lengthy history into three periods that mark distinct changes in the values of and the social factors affecting Jewish people in America: immigrants (till 1920), American-born (1920-70), and baby-boomers (1970-2000). He even-handedly details the complexity of their encounter with Gentile missions, Jewish believers, Jewish Messianic congregations, and antimissionary activities.

In addition, Ariel candidly exposes some of the jealousies that plagued Jewish leaders. But I could wish that he had not given dispensationalism such ongoing prominence in Jewish evangelistic motivation. Scofield’s notes are rarely quoted today! Rather, diverse theological reflection exists among evangelicals on details of the role of Jews in the second coming of Jesus and the future kingdom age. Ariel also frequently refers to conversion as “believing in Christianity.” Had he put this question directly to Messianic Jews, he would have learned that what drew them to faith was the appeal of Jesus himself, not the Christian movement, whose leaders have often failed to respect the Jewish people.

Ariel commends Jewish missions and Messianic congregations for their adaptations of solid contextualization principles throughout this lengthy history, which he contrasts with the growing waywardness and decline of Jewish cultural coherence in America. Indeed, he seems to be moving toward the suggestion of Rabbi Cohn-Sherbok—that Messianic Judaism be accorded legitimacy as a distinctly Jewish movement. After all, there has always been a continuum of Jewish believers in Jesus since the first century.

—Arthur F. Glasser

Arthur F. Glasser is Dean Emeritus of the School of World Mission, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California.

Fifteen Outstanding Books of 2001 for Mission Studies

In consultation with twenty-five distinguished missiologists, the editors of the International Bulletin of Missionary Research have selected fifteen books published in 2001 for special recognition of their contribution to mission studies. Selections have been restricted to books in English, since it would be impossible to consider fairly the books in many other languages that are not readily available to us. We commend the authors, editors, and publishers represented here for their contribution to the advancement of scholarship in studies of the Christian mission and world Christianity.


Sunquist, Scott W., with David Wu Chu Sing and John Chew Hsiang Chea, eds. A Dictionary of Asian Christianity. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. $75.

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Protestant Pentecostalism in Latin America. A Study in the Dynamics of Missions


This book is a valuable addition to the growing body of scholarship about Protestantism in Latin America. The author is a German missiologist who has spent most of his life as a theological educator with the Christian and Missionary Alliance, first in Colombia and now in Puerto Rico. His work fits the standards of the most serious scholarship, but it also benefits from the first-hand observation of the author as an insider, well known and appreciated among Latin American Protestants. The author has made good use of a variety of sources in several languages; the volume features 499 footnotes after 169 pages of dense text. In addition, there are seventeen pages of bibliography.

The thrust of Westmeier's work is missiological, and from this perspective he offers a critical interpretation of Latin American Protestantism, which he considers basically Pentecostal to the point that he has decided to use the terms Protestant Christian, evangelical, and Pentecostal "interchangeably" (p. 21). His account of North American missionary work in chapter 2 does not spare criticism, but he comes to the conclusion that "the Latin American creyentes have 'undermined' the Protestantism of the missionaries and recast it in their own molds" (p.52); and that "with the advent of Pentecostalism, the conventicle-like existence of the early Protestants was broken and the Evangelical faith exploded into the concern of the masses" (p.55). A wide missiological frame of reference is always present as the author deals with controversial issues such as liberation theologies, social and political impact of Protestantism, and popular religiosity. An appendix about research methods, as well as its valuable footnotes and bibliography, make Westmeier's work an excellent textbook for courses about Christianity in Latin America.

—Samuel Escobar

Samuel Escobar is honorary president of the Latin American Theological Fraternity, professor of Missiology at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Consultant for Theological Education with Baptist International Ministries in Latin America.

To Understand the World, To Save the World: The Interface Between Missiology and the Social Sciences.


If the practice of Christian mission and the health of contemporary cultures are in a parlous state, avoidance or engagement may be equally reasonable reactions by concerned parties. The series to which this modest volume belongs is no advocate of avoidance but fosters creative dialogue between Christian mission and modern culture. This particular book offers a view of both missiology and the social sciences, and its subtitle aptly identifies the field.

Taber argues that missiology has exoticized and wooed sociocultural anthropology while neglecting the other social sciences; that the relationship has been naive, superficial, and uncritical, at least on the part of missiology; but that the social sciences are actually made of sterner stuff than may appear. He asserts that a "missiology that intends to address the inhabitants of the contemporary Western world, that hopes to make the gospel in all its integrity and power intelligible and persuasive in that world, must arm itself with a penetrating and critical understanding of the social sciences, using them both as tools of interpretation and as symptoms of what is to be understood" (p. 2). Amen!

The book outlines the historical antecedents of missiology and the social sciences, exploring their uneven and sometimes hostile relationship during the twentieth century. It discusses their interface, acknowledging that they have never been a mutual admiration society. The author chides missiologists for their ignorance and naivete (p.100) and
identifies the sophistication (and indeed the tedium) of the social sciences. Finally, he raises issues in the social sciences pertinent to the contemporary missiological agenda, offering tentative suggestions. The careful and cautious approach of this handy introduction will appeal. Its criticisms of the social sciences outweigh its commendations, and thus it probably offers greater encouragement to conservative Christians than to (potential) social scientists. But this is vintage Taber.


### History of Protestantism in China: The Indigenization of Christianity.


This volume is the culmination of the life work of Professor Yamamoto (1914–1997), perhaps the foremost Japanese authority on the modern history of Protestant Christianity in China. After the Pacific War Yamamoto became one of the pioneers in this field. Her writings were combined into an important Japanese-language book, *Studies on the History of Christianity in China*, published in 1972. Later Yamamoto undertook to revise, expand, and translate this major work into English. She completed the task just before her death. Her husband and fellow historian Tatsuro Yamamoto shepherded the manuscript through to publication.

The present volume should be acquired by libraries. Its coverage of the major Protestant bodies from the early 1900s to the 1930s is very solid and includes extensive quotations from primary sources. There is a comprehensive index with Chinese characters included, which assists in the search for specific actors, and a useful chronology of Protestantism from 1807 to the late 1930s. Finally, the bibliography is meticulously detailed and precise in identifying the libraries or archives where the more ephemeral items cited (e.g. pamphlets and newsletters) are to be found.

Nevertheless, this work is unfortunately imbalanced and incomplete. It is extremely thin after the 1930s, with the decade of the 1940s being skipped altogether and the chapter on the Communist period extremely superficial. The author also did not incorporate in this revision more than a smattering of the many relevant works published since the Japanese version of the book appeared almost thirty years ago. Finally, although she says that she wants to stress the Chinese side of the story, not the missionaries, in fact she writes almost solely about those Chinese church leaders and theologians affiliated with the foreign establishment in China. The sections on China’s truly independent Protestant movements of the twentieth century (e.g. the True Jesus Church or the Little Flock) are few, short, and often distorted.

—Daniel H. Bays

Daniel H. Bays is Professor of History, Emeritus, at the University of Kansas, and Professor of History at Calvin College. He is editor of Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present (Stanford Univ. Press, 1996).
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NGOs and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: “A Curious Grapevine.”


Future historians may look back on the twentieth century and conclude that its most important—certainly its most constructive—development was the rise and global spread of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). From the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 to the appointment of a High Commissioner for Human Rights in 1993, the growth in world consciousness of both the brutality and savagery of crimes against humanity and the determination to expose and address them has been the result of people power—that determination to take control of our destiny and define the good of all beyond the narrow interests of national leaders.

William Korey has done a great service by highlighting the critical role of “soft power” and its effectiveness in giving strength to the noble aspirations of the United Nations. He traces its development from the anti-slavery movement in the precivil war U.S. through the efforts of Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch today. It is a remarkable story, one in which Eleanor Roosevelt figures prominently. Jimmy Carter was the first national leader to make human rights an integral part of his foreign policy, much to the scorn and dismay of realists. Yet, attention to human rights is now a given in international discussions at all levels. Tocqueville would be pleased to see how far voluntary organizations have come. Korey’s book helps us to see that, but also the formidable distance we have yet to go. This is a very important and helpful book for understanding human well being today.

—James T. Laney

James T. Laney is a former missionary to Korea, president of Emory University, and U.S. Ambassador to Korea (1993–97).

The Bible in China: The History of the Union Version; or, The Culmination of Protestant Missionary Bible Translation in China.


This book, together with its extensive reference materials, is a major contribution to the subject of Bible translations into Chinese. The first part of this study reviews the numerous partial and complete nineteenth-century translations into Chinese (most of them into classical Chinese), and the second presents an exhaustive account of how the most successful translation, the Union Version, was completed in 1919. The author, who is an independent scholar, has made excellent use of vast unpublished archival materials, as well as published reports and letters in missionary journals. Quoting extensively from the translators’ letters, he has allowed them to speak about their work and how they evaluated earlier and contemporary translating efforts.

Among several major themes is the author’s persuasive argument that the Union Version was the inevitable result of previous translations, which had proved to be unsatisfactory for one reason or another. Closely related is the theme of the function of the Chinese assistants in the translation process and their increasing importance for the Bible in spoken Chinese. Still another is the problem of translating principles and techniques, involving such issues as fidelity and literalness to the Hebrew and Greek texts and standardizing transliterations of biblical names in Chinese.

Zetsche skillfully describes the complex translating process. By the time the missionaries decided on the Union Version, they knew that, aside from two translations into higher and lower classical style, an additional translation into the spoken vernacular (Mandarin) was mandatory, as the success of the earlier Peking Version clearly demonstrated. Although three different versions were actually translated between 1890 and 1919, in the end it was the Mandarin Bible that was most popular. Intensive discussions in the 1910s by Chinese intellectuals both
in China and abroad about using spoken Chinese for writing had prepared the ground. Whether missionary translators and their Chinese colleagues were aware of these discussions, including the literary experiments in spoken Chinese, is a tantalizing question. —Irene Eber

Irene Eber is the Louis Friberg Professor of East Asian Studies, Emeritus, and Senior Fellow at the Truman Research Institute, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

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In May 1821 Daniel Tyerman and George Bennet began a voyage that lasted until 1829. They were the third deputation sent out by the London Missionary Society (LMS) and the first to visit the mission's stations in the Pacific and Asia as well as those in Africa.

Tom Hiney provides a vivid retelling of their adventures based on extracts from their published journal. Hiney makes reference to the LMS archives, though there is no record of his having used them. The strongest sense of time and place relates to South Africa, where Hiney is located, but errors of detail include reference to the founding of the LMS in 1792 (actually, 1795). Statements about church relationships seem to lack familiarity with deeper issues. There are attractive maps and some reproduced lithographs.

The missionary movement has had enough of a bad press to be glad for an assessment in terms of intentions and positive outcomes, but critical analysis is still needed. Hiney places the deputation's travels in context but does not explore the impact of their confidential reports.

The genre is probably best regarded as historical travelogue, recapturing a sense of exotic adventure and risk. But the journey here is also one of faith, possibly including Hiney's. He provides a valuable popularizing role with this window into the convictions and curiosity of two remarkable adventurers for Christ. Hiney wanted to know more of why they did it, and to share his reflections. So should we.

—John Roxborough

John Roxborough is Coordinator of Lay and Recognized Ministry Training at the Presbyterian School of Ministry, Knox College, Dunedin, New Zealand. From 1983 to 1990 he was a missionary teacher in West Malaysia.


No one is better qualified to write on the subject of Mennonite missions than the author of this book, who served twenty-five years on the staff of the Mennonite Board of Missions before assuming his present position teaching missions at Fuller Seminary. The book is made up of a number of earlier papers combined with some fresh writings. While the title deals with Mennonite missions generally, the chief interest of the work is in missionary thinking. Only one chapter is devoted

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If Christianity—including Christian faith and theology—is to avoid becoming totally out of touch with the world—a museum piece at best, a force of baleful reaction at worst—it must constantly update itself by constant interaction, dialogue, dialectic with all the important intellectual currents, movements, disciplines of today. In the process, it must not lose its soul, or else it becomes useless. But, as Friedrich Schleiermacher said, it must open its windows to the world, lest it become irrelevant or even harmful.

Historians and theologians have traced the development of Christian doctrine, and even offered theories to explain it. On the other hand, various observers of the church in the world—perhaps most notoriously Max Weber—have interpreted how Christianity and the world have, for better or for worse, reacted upon one another. But going beyond such works, The Dialectical Development of Doctrine combines the two themes by proposing a necessary two-way dialectic between theology and the world, a dialectic absolutely essential to the healthy growth and development of both our faith and our understanding of the world, as well as of the culture which we continue to create and will bequeath to our children.

---
Mennonite missions can look back with pride to their precursors, the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century, who were constantly reaching out in missions but who suffered terrible persecution in consequence. The Mennonites of the following centuries, to shield themselves from persecution, warded themselves off from the world and became introverted. Shenk traces the influence of the evangelical movement of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which gradually, and through many struggles, put an end to the seclusion. Finally Mennonites became ready for mission, but they lagged behind other churches in their missionary action and thought.

The last part of the book is concerned mostly with the long-delayed thought. There was no expression of Mennonite missionary theology till after 1978. The last chapter surveys the writings that have appeared since that date and summarizes their main points, which, in the opinion of this reviewer, could well be adopted by other churches and missions.

—Charles W. Forman

Charles W. Forman is Professor of Missions, Emeritus, at Yale University Divinity School.

Essays on the Modern Japanese Church: Christianity in Modern Japan.


Yamaji Aizan's (1864–1917) Essays on the History of the Modern Japanese Church debuted in Japanese in 1906 and is the earliest study of Protestantism’s crucial role in Japan's Meiji (1868–1912) transformation. The recent publication of the English-language translation by Graham Squires, lecturer in Japanese at Australia’s University of Newcastle, brings Yamaji’s vibrant eyewitness account to a much wider audience. The accompanying essays by Squires and A. Hamish Ion of the Royal Military College of Canada, as well as abundant biographical data and an up-to-date bibliography, enhance the book’s usefulness.

Yamaji was among the first wave of Japanese youth—mostly former samurai educated in new mission schools—who swelled Protestant ranks from 1873 (when the postfeudal government rescinded the shogun’s prohibition of Christianity) through the late 1880s. They saw Christianity as the spiritual engine of the West’s material power and, as church leaders, worked hard to have Christian values perfect Confucianism and Bushidō, guide Japan’s Westernization, and inspire democratic institutions.

After 1890 nativist sentiments rose against Christianity. In response, Yamaji left the pastoral ministry to give voice to Protestant orthodoxy by editing the Methodist journal Gokyo (Defender of the faith). To the xenophobes accusing Christians of exalting God over emperor, Yamaji insisted that Japanese could be both Christian and patriotic. To Darwinians who belittled faith, Yamaji retorted that “science is nothing but praise of the glory of God” (p. 132) and asserted that Christianity had, in fact, evolved beyond Buddhism and Shinto to become a uniquely Japanese faith. This was a prophetic conviction, for in the decades since Yamaji’s death, Japanese Protestant Christianity not only survived militarism’s withering grip but now finds itself

Sharing the Book: Religious Perspectives on the Rights and Wrongs of Proselytism.


The editors and authors insist that tough proselytism endangers everyone. Jewish proselytism was always limited (Novak), never a priority in Jewish law (Broyde). Conversely, Christian and Muslim proselytism is one source of anti-Semitism (Hellig).

In Islam the threat of death involved apostates, seldom converts (Artz). Arab pagans felt this threat. Medieval theological disputations featured discussions with Jews and Christians, but these latter communities could not legally disciple Muslims (Martin). Yet a limited acceptance of pluralism in Islam stands under the concept of invitation (Esack).

Early Christians were open to others, tried to persuade them, and warned of their fatal errors, but they neither viewed those religions as totally evil nor coerced conversion (Johnson). Medieval and early modern Christian theologians defended a state’s need for religious uniformity, a position now taken by nations to restrict or refuse missionaries (Muldoon).

Relativized mission won’t do; the church must invite, not compel (Tomko). Mainline Protestants see the defense of human rights as part of mission (Stackhouse and King Hainsworth). Historically, Orthodox mission was strong and contextual. Orthodox complaints about Protestant mission invasion of Russia have merit (Guroian).

Modern mission movements like the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Oaks and Wickman), Jehovah’s Witnesses (How and Brumley), Seventh-day Adventists (Miles), and Baha’i (Kazemzadeh) have suffered religious persecution and usually have avoided proselytism that ignores human rights. Evangelism without proselytism is best (Thangara).

There are deficiencies in this volume. Christianity without mission is something about which more could be said. Economic and psychological pressures need more careful study. Also, “human rights” defined by the United Nations should be defended, but they depend too much on democratic assumptions. For Christians, all people are created in the image of God, a dignity not explained by rights. When fear and greed have prevailed, the United States has treated blacks, Hispanics, Indians, and Japanese miserably. Each democracy has had similar problems.

—Frederick W. Norris

Frederick W. Norris is Dean E. Walker Professor of Church History and Professor of World Mission/Evangelism at Emmanuel School of Religion, Johnson City, Tennessee. From 1972 to 1977 he served as associate director, then director, of the Institut zur Erforschung des Urchristentums in Tübingen, Germany.
blossoming in numerous indigenous, postmissionary forms. — P. Richard Bohr

P. Richard Bohr is Professor of History and Director of Asian Studies at the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University, St. Joseph and Collegeville, Minnesota.

The Re-entry Team.


Using what he calls the “Antioch Model,” the author of Re-entry Team gives an excellent description of the desirable “flow of care” for missionaries, from prefield preparation through reentry. He correctly emphasizes the fact that reentry is not an event but a process that begins before the person/family ever leaves home and continues long after return. Since the reentry is part of a continuum that begins with leaving, it becomes clear that the sending church fellowship is the primary player in good reentry, with the support of the mission agency. The mission agency may provide seminars, insight, and guidance relative to specific needs and referral to resources, but returning missionaries should find their sense of home and daily support from the local church fellowship.

Pirolo helps those who have not experienced the process of reentry understand the radical changes that take place in the individual and family. His list of nine factors that determine the extent of impact and the nine areas of life that are affected communicates something of the complexity of the process and thus the need for understanding and patience, coupled with action in providing appropriate support.

A weakness in this work is that the Antioch model of reentry care, by itself, fails to be compelling. The motivation and base for any aspect of member care is not found in models but in the Master’s specific command, “A new commandment I give unto you that you love one another” (John 13:34). Member care is not just a model but a mandate.

—David Pollock

David Pollock is Executive Director of Interaction and consultant and adjunct professor of Intercultural Programs at Houghton College, New York. Since 1980 he has developed and directed transition/reentry seminars for Third Culture kids, adult personnel, and educators on every continent.

Ancestors, Power, and History in Madagascar.


This volume is mainly a collection of anthropological papers on Madagascar. Missiologists seek to familiarize themselves with anthropological writings, especially the issues that relate to their field. Anthropologists, however, apparently are not required to be familiar with the mission history of the country about which they are writing. It was surprising, in a series on religion in Africa, to find so little understanding of the overall church history of Madagascar and such a pronounced antimission bias as is found in this work.

There are many major (and repeated) grammatical errors in Malagasy, which

A Dictionary of ASIAN Christianity

Scott W. Sunquist, editor

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—WILBERT R. SHENK

“Scholars and students of Asian Christianity will rejoice heartily at the publication of this dictionary. . . This trove of information will be the standard reference for many years to come. Anyone wanting accurate and up-to-date data on Asian Christianity will have to consult it. In its historical comprehensiveness, ecumenical breadth, and interreligious scope, A Dictionary of Asian Christianity is unrivaled . . . A magnificent production.”

—PETER C. PHAN

ISBN 0-8028-3776-X • 992 pages • hardcover • $75.00
The authors in this collection represent a range between some of the most published and authoritative figures writing on Madagascar (Bloch, Raison-Jorde, Middleton) to recent doctoral dissertations completed or still in progress (Walsh, Skeie, Evers). In between, there is to be found a “new wave” of up-and-coming scholars (Larson, Cole, Graeber, Lambeck, and Sharp). As can be imagined, the quality of the chapters is thus also varied. The index is well done.

If one is looking for some of the most recent anthropological work on Madagascar, this volume is a valuable, though flawed, resource. If one is looking for history, as promised in the title, and insight into the Christian or mission history of the Great Red Island, one will be sorely disappointed.

—James B. Vigen

James B. Vigen is Pastor of Stavanger International Church, Stavanger, Norway. He was a missionary in Madagascar from 1978 to 1996.

Sailing on the Next Tide: Missions, Missiology, and the Third Reich.


German missions and missionary thinking during the Nazi regime is a little-known and neglected episode in the history of the twentieth-century missionary movement. Based on careful archival study, this book shows that most missionary leaders and missiologists at the time welcomed the regime—for strategic reasons, no doubt, but also because of a strong German tradition that focused on the notion of Volk (people) as the basic constituent for the survival of human society and for the sustainability of its deep religious foundations. There was a widespread hope that National Socialism would provide a framework in which European Christianity, including its colonial/missionary global presence, could acquire a durable identity, capable of withstandng “Anglo-saxon modernity.” The book places the complicated interplay between church, state, and missions in Nazi Germany in the context of the larger and ongoing identity discussion that had engaged the leading minds of the international missionary movement even before the rise of Nazism. How was Western Christianity to survive vis-a-vis modernity and secularism or, more fundamentally, vis-a-vis increasing religious and cultural plurality?

Ustorf shows how in the postwar years this discussion was discontinued, even suppressed, in the then-dominating ideology of an ecumenical world Christianity based on autonomous indigenous churches. A serious evaluation of the specifically German struggle with the identity question, therefore, never took place. Ustorf's book provides an important stimulus to fill this gap as well.

—Bert Hoedemaker

Bert Hoedemaker is Professor Emeritus of Missions and Ecumenics at the State University of Groningen, Netherlands.
Pentecostalism and the Future of the Christian Churches: Promises, Limitations, Challenges.


Richard Shaull and Waldo Cesar serve as interlocutors between Pentecostal and historic/mainline traditions. Their posture is constructed with creative perspectives on the promises, challenges, and limitations of Pentecostal traditions in Brazil, such as the Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus, the Assembleia de Deus, and the Congregação Cristã do Brasil.

The first section of the book, written by Cesar, is a sociological analysis focusing on the interplay—both symbolic and nonsymbolic—between the daily struggles of the poor in Pentecostalism and the global economic forces threatening their existence. Building upon interviews and important sociological and anthropological studies by Brazilian scholars, he offers a fresh, theologically friendly sociological interpretation of the Pentecostal traditions as they face the complex social reality of Brazil. The analysis is balanced, inviting the reader to see in the symbolic and nonsymbolic religious milieu practices of resistance and liberation against the hardships of poverty. Cesar is not, however, naive about the ambiguous yet hopeful embodiment of the Pentecostal faith in a context of so many social, religious, and economic cross-currents.

Shaull, a distinguished liberation theologian, writes the second section, a theological treatise on the challenge of the Pentecostal traditions to Euramerican Christianity. Shaull is able to compare and contrast the “old paradigm,” as understood by mainline/historic and Reformed traditions, with the “new paradigm” embodied—but at times less understood—in the Pentecostal congregations. His theological interpretation, informed by fresh material written by Pentecostals in Latin America, personal interviews, and his engagement with the congregations’ practices andologies, is critical and incisive, identifying promising and problematic issues with commitment and solidarity.

Despite some of the limitations in these traditions, Shaull and Cesar see in Pentecostalism a new Reformation: An embodied faith lived in the day-to-day liturgy of hope and life in the face of the worldly liturgy of hopelessness and death.

—Carlos F. Cardoza-Orlandi

Carlos F. Cardoza-Orlandi, a Puerto Rican, is Associate Professor of World Christianity at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia.

Summer sessions for learning, worship and fellowship

June 3–14
Worship: Ceremony, Symbol, Celebration
Marlene Kropf, D.Min., and
June Alliman Yoder, D.Min, AMBS

Epic Prophecy: Joshua–Kings
Wilma Bailey, Ph.D., guest instructor

Anthropology and Sociology for Christian Witness
Art McPhee, Ph.D., AMBS

June 17–28
Congregational Song: Practices Past and Present
Rebecca Slough, Ph.D., AMBS

Spirituality, Pastoral Care and Healing
Arthur Paul Boers, Ph.D., AMBS

Urban and Multi-ethnic Mission: Current Challenges
John Powell, MPA, AMBS adjunct

July 15–26
Thinking Mission: An Introduction
Walter Sawatsky, Ph.D., AMBS

Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations
Jon Hoover, Ph.D. candidate, and
Jacqueline Hoover, M.A., guest instructors

The Revelation to John
Nelson Kraybill, Ph.D., and Loren Johns, Ph.D., AMBS

July 19–26
Conflict, Conciliation and Communication
Carolyn Schrock-Shenk, M.A., guest instructor, and
Marcus Smucker, Ph.D., AMBS emeritus

August 2–9
Evangelism and Anabaptism
Stuart Murray Williams, Ph.D., guest speaker

July 29–August 9
Ethics: Self and Other
Chris Huebner, Ph.D., guest instructor

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Dissertation Notices

Herman Gustav Buehler.
"Reaffirming the Missio Dei: A Trinitarian Theology of Mission in the Ministries of the Liebenzell Mission."

Armando I. Carandang.
"Vestiges of the Trinity in Australian Aboriginal Religions."

Olu kayode Gbolahan.
"You Shall Receive Power: The Establishment of the Pentecostal Movement in the Nigerian Context."

Benjamin L. Hegeman.
"Between Glory and Shame: A Historical and Systematic Study of Education and Leadership Training Models Among the Baatonu in North Benin."

Marja Hinjelaar.
"Respectable and Responsible Women: Methodist and Roman-Catholic Women's Organizations in Harare, Zimbabwe (1919–1985)."

Young-Gi Hong.
"Dynamism and Dilemma: The Nature of Charismatic Pastoral Leadership in the Korean Mega Churches."

David L. Johnston.
"Toward Muslims and Christians as Joint Caretakers of Creation in a Postmodern World."

Graham Kings.

Lawrence Adeniyi Lasisi.
"Bridging from African Indigenous Churches to Muslims in Southwestern Nigeria."

Callisto Locheng.
"Fundamental Values of African Traditional Beliefs for Effective Evangelization: Foundational Principles of Inculturation."
Ph.D. Rome, Italy: Faculty of Missiology of the Pontifical Gregorian Univ., 2000.

Arthur Gene McPhee.
"Pickett's Fire: The Indian Odyssey of J. Waskom Pickett."

Salim Munayer.
"The Ethnic Identity of the (Palestinian) Arab Christian Adolescents in Israel."

Paul Monash Narayanasamy.
"A Study of the Development of Malay Ethnicity in Modern Malaysia in Its Historical Context and Its Implications for the Church."

William Price Payne.
"The Missionary Character and Effective Organization of Early American Methodism."

Evelyn Annick Reisacher.
"The Processes of Attachment Between the Algerians and French Within the Christian Community in France."

Diane Barbara Stinton.
"Jesus of Africa: Voices of Contemporary African Christology from Selected Textual and Oral Sources."

Carl Sundberg.
"Conversion and Contextual Conceptions of Christ: A Missiological Study Among Young Converts in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo."

Paul Allen Williams.
Ph.D. Chicago, Ill.: Univ. of Chicago, 2000.
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Cohn-Sherbok, Dan.
Voices of Messianic Judaism: Confronting Critical Issues Facing a Maturing Movement.

David, M. D.
Missions: Cross-Cultural Encounter and Change in Western India.

Fernando, Ajith.
Sharing the Truth in Love: How to Relate to People of Other Faiths.

Hattaway, Paul.
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Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity.

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Interfaith Encounter: The Twin Tracks of Theology and Dialogue.

Snyder, Howard A., ed.

Sweeten, Alan Richard.
Christianity in Rural China: Conflict and Accommodation in Jiangxi Province, 1860–1900.

Van Elderen, Marlin.
Finding a Voice: Communicating the Ecumenical Movement.

Varickasseril, Jose, and Mathew Kariapuram, eds.
Be My Witnesses: Essays in Honour of Dr. Sebastian Karotempres, S.D.B.

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