Mission and the Margins

A margin is the blank border of a printed page. To be marginal is to be of the edge, neither central nor significant. Some 150 million human beings officially qualified as “migrants,” of which an estimated 20 million were refugees, according to United Nations figures for 2002. Such ciphers mask the angst of social dislocation—with its attendant miseries, humiliations, and dangers—endured by specific individuals, each with a name, a story, and modest hopes. Refugees are on the margins of the marginalized, significant only to the extent that they constitute an inconvenience or a security threat to their comfortably incumbent host populations.

In his lead article, Jehu Hanciles explores the impact of migration on church and mission, arguing that the Christian faith depends for its survival upon cross-cultural diffusion—one of the inevitable side effects of population dislocation. Lalsangkima Pachuau’s wonderfully informative study takes a close look at some of the most vital churches in the world, whose combined membership represents nearly a quarter of India’s Christian population. Inhabiting the disdained edges of mainstream Hindu society, the peoples of Northeast India have affirmed and grounded their indigenous identities by embracing an extraordinarily missional Christianity.

In Great Britain, as elsewhere in Christendom’s traditional heartlands, a once confident establishment church, having atrophied into a spiritually enfeebled, demographically decimated, and missiologically tentative vestige of its former self, now struggles to survive. Although it has paid scant official attention to its missionary fringes in the past, its renewal—if there is renewal—may spring from these now vital margins, according to Kenneth Ross in his article “Blessed Reflex.”

The essays in this issue remind us that the universe is not like a two-dimensional sheet of paper. Seeing merely the surface of things, we humans necessarily invent and employ terms that reflect this limitation. But the mysterious verity embedded in our moral universe is that those on the outer edges of human cognitive maps are at the center of God’s modus operandi. God’s multidimensional perspective places human margins—even religious ones, as Jacques Dupuis suggests—at the center of divine significance. The One whose memory “Christianity” evokes was himself profoundly dispossessed. Born into the ethnic fringes of a powerful empire, he found himself on its margins. He annoyed, provoked, and was finally dispatched by custodians of the status quo. His coterie comprised mostly people with neither pedigree nor the capacity to make a mark on human history. The humble, his mother had sung, would be exalted; the meek, he had claimed, would inherit the earth.

And truly, it was and is such men and women who, acutely conscious that “here we have no lasting city,” have turned the world upside down. This issue of the *IBMR* reflects that reality.

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of Missionary Research
Migration and Mission: Some Implications for the Twenty-first-Century Church

Jehu J. Hanciles

Human migration is a fact of history. People have been on the move from the earliest times, often over great distances and for a wide variety of reasons, including trade, epidemics, economic opportunities, asylum, war, persecution, natural disasters, even adventure. Most significantly, when people move, they carry their ideas, beliefs, and religious practices with them. Peter Stearns aptly describes such movements as cultures in motion. The impact and implications of such movements can be profound. Regardless of whether the cultural encounters that occur in migration are marked by coercion or by fruitful accommodation, the cultural groups involved are seldom left unchanged. The movement of peoples has the capacity not only to foster cultural diversity but also to significantly alter demographic, economic, and social structures. This capacity makes it a potent source of social transformation and an active ingredient in the great dramas of history.

For all the above reasons, migration movement was—and remains—a prime factor in the global spread of world religions, notably Islam and Christianity. In the first five centuries of its existence (from the seventh to twelfth centuries), the Islamic faith achieved a scope of expansion unparalleled in history, as it eventually stretched from Iberia and Morocco in the west to sub-Saharan Africa in the south and as far east as Persia, northern India, and, later, Indonesia. As a result, Muslim civilization came to the fore as the most successful heir to the Roman and Persian empires, so that the period from roughly 750 to 1750 is conventionally regarded in world history as the Islamic Age. This emergence was largely due to a global pattern of migration that combined military conquest, imperial expansion, missionaries, and merchants.

Not until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did Christianity achieve a similar global presence, precisely the era when the fifteenth-century maritime revolution stimulated the military and colonial expansion of European powers and set in motion one of the most extraordinary migration movements in history. In the nineteenth century—between 1815 and 1915—roughly 50–60 million Europeans emigrated overseas. It is not often realized, observes Samuel Huntington, that “the export of people was perhaps the single most important dimension of the rise of the West between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries.”

For a host of reasons, including the growing realities of religious plurality in Western societies, the fortunes of the world’s major religions (Islam and Christianity again take preeminence) are in the forefront of the public imagination and public discourse these days. It is gradually becoming obvious that the process(es) of globalization—in particular, the unprecedented magnitude of transregional people movement and the speeding up of global interactions through the development of worldwide systems of transport and communication—is potentially transforming several major faiths into truly global religions, present in nearly every country, even if in culturally distinctive forms.

Immigrants travel with their religion. It is central to their way of life and a crucial means of preserving identity as well as homeland connections. Even the less religious among immigrants often renew or revive their religious commitment as a vital part of dealing with uprootedness and alienation. The key postulate developed in this article is that recent migration movements, as a critical dimension of contemporary global transformations, have the potential to significantly affect the geographic and demographic contours of the world’s major religions and provide a vital outlet for proselytism and missionary expansion.

An Overview of Contemporary Migration

In recent decades international transfers of population and associated displacements have increased to unprecedented levels, so much so that some scholars have declared that we are living in “the age of migration.” These migrant movements are incredibly complex and varied. Credible statistics are lacking in many parts of the world, and the rising tide of undocumented workers and “irregular,” or illegal, immigrants compounds the difficulty. Partly for these reasons, the data on the number of international migrants in the world today inevitably involve educated guesses. By the early 1990s there were about 17 million refugees and asylum seekers in the world, 20 million internally displaced people, 30 million “regular” migrants, and another 30 million migrants with an “irregular” status. The combined total of 97 million persons represents a doubling of the global migrant population in the space of five years. A more recent survey puts the number of migrants—defined as people who have lived outside their homeland for one year or more—at 150 million.

International migrants are also unevenly spread across the globe. Sub-Saharan Africa, with an estimated 35 million migrants, has the largest numbers of any continent, followed by Asia and the Middle East. Additionally, most migrants—including the bulk of the world’s 17 million officially registered refugees and asylum seekers—stay in their region of origin. Most important for our discussion, interregional transfers occur mainly from South to North; it is conjectured that many movements that start as South-to-South transfers end up as South-to-North flows.

The various theories about the nature, origins, and processes of international migration focus on a number of issues. The oldest and best-known, the neoclassical economic perspective, explains international migration in terms of the supply of and demand for labor. The historical-structural approach (allied to the world-systems theory) focuses on the unequal distribution of economic and political power. Theories that emphasize social capital draw attention to the network connections on which potential migrants draw and the self-perpetuating nature of migration networks. The more recent migration systems theory focuses on interactions within specific regions or between specific countries and regions. It proposes that “migratory movements generally arise from the existence of prior links between sending and receiving countries based on colonization, political influence, trade investment, and cultural ties.”

This diversity of approaches attests to the complexity of contemporary international migration. It is important to bear in mind...
mind that international migration is anchored in historical processes—in particular, Western colonial expansion—and is a manifestation of worldwide transformations associated with globalization. One of the best summary evaluations holds that “the upsurge in migration is due to rapid processes of economic, demographic, social, political, cultural and environmental change, which rise from decolonization, modernization and uneven development.” Furthermore, “these processes seem set to accelerate in the future, leading to even greater dislocations and changes in societies, and hence to even larger migrations.”

South-to-North Migration Movement

The overwhelming majority of contemporary international migrations are economically driven. The widening economic gap between the highly industrialized countries of the North and the “developing” or “underdeveloped” countries of the South has transformed the former into a magnet for migrant movement. “Economic crisis and social change in the South,” argue Castles and Miller, “is generating new pressures for migrating to the North.” For example, Argentina’s recent economic collapse saw “thousands of Argentines queuing up at foreign embassies in Buenos Aires, seeking a passport or a visa.”

The unprecedented levels of international migration seem set to continue. The various stimuli for migrant movement—including wars, employment, and asylum seeking—are growing worldwide. Less widely noticed perhaps are the demographic factors. In a world where the richest 1 percent receive as much income as the poorest 57 percent, the inverse relationship between demographic growth and economic development is a potent catalyst in the buildup of pressures that stimulate mass migration. It is estimated that around 95 percent of all global population growth in the next quarter of a century will take place in developing countries (i.e., in the South). Some have predicted that Africa, the fastest-growing continent of all, will triple its current population of nearly 800 million. This projected increase seems exaggerated, given existing social pathologies on the continent. Even a doubling of the population, however, will translate into massive poverty, escalating instability, and further migration movements.

In sharp contrast, the developed countries, which compose 15 percent of the world population (but account for about 60 percent of its GDP), will experience stagnant or negative population growth. In every single developed country the birthrate has dropped well below the replacement rate of 2.2 live births per woman of reproductive age.

In Europe the decline is projected to continue. Germany, the world’s third largest economy, faces the prospect of having almost half its adult population aged sixty-five or over by 2030. In the United States the decline in the birth rate has been followed by striking recovery (by the 1990s) to continue. Germany, the world’s third largest economy, faces the prospect of having almost half its adult population aged sixty-five or over by 2030. In the United States the decline in the birth rate has been followed by striking recovery (by the 1990s) to just below the replacement level, and it continues to rise. The crucial difference between the two regions is that “America’s immigration outstrips Europe’s and its immigrant population is reproducing faster than native-born Americans.” By contrast, increased barriers to immigrant entry in Europe (since 1950) have contributed greatly to that continent’s decline in population.

The economic and long-term geopolitical implications of this demographic disparity are complex. Over the next fifteen years, observes Peter Drucker, Germany will “have to import one million immigrants of working age each year simply to maintain its workforce.” Unfortunately, growing anti-immigration sentiments in Europe, which has seen a fierce backlash against immigration and foreigners, act as a major stumbling block.
ingly for Western governments, the general trend toward increasing global interchange and communication is at odds with the amount of effort needed to control and provide surveillance of borders. They have erected ever higher barriers to stem this flow—transforming the world less into a global village than a "gated community"—but the impulses stimulating mass migration are often too strong for restrictions to be fully effective. In the United States the grotesque tragedy of September 11, 2001, has catapulted immigration onto the center stage of national consciousness and government policy-making. Indeed, the very genuine fears and concerns it has generated have provided excellent cover for the rhetoric of public figures, including some Christian leaders, given to racially motivated xenophobia.

Impact of Migration on Home Countries

The impact of migration on home countries is equally significant. Adverse effects on homelands include the lost investment in human capital, as well as a diminishing pool of taxpayers and potential leaders. The "brain drain" is the most-cited negative effect. Africa, for instance, is calculated to have lost about one-third of its skilled people (including 45 percent of its engineers) to Europe. But many migrants are unable to find stable employment in their home countries in the first place, which means that a more nuanced understanding of this phenomenon is called for. Since it is rarely the poorest people from the least-developed countries who move to the richest countries, international migration is considered both a consequence of, and a contributor to, uneven economic development.

From a different perspective, migrants are often of tremendous economic value to their homeland. For many developing countries migrant remittances have become a far more important source of revenue than foreign aid; in several smaller countries they are a bigger source of foreign exchange than foreign investment or even exports. IMF figures indicate that developing countries receive $60 billion a year in remittances. According to estimates, remittances to India exceed $9 billion per annum—six times the amount it receives in foreign aid.

Most important, global migration movements link the fate of distant communities in a manner that transcends national boundaries and significantly weakens culture-place or identity-place correlation. An ever-increasing number of households in the South have at least one family member or close relative with whom they have close ties living in the North. This reality has led some migration scholars to reject the common notion of immigrants as individuals who uproot themselves from their home country to start a completely new life in a new land. Rather, contemporary patterns of international migration would perhaps more helpfully be termed "transnational migration" or "transmigration." This new paradigm suggests that "even though migrants invest socially, economically, and politically in their new society, they may continue to participate in the daily life of the society from which they emigrated but which they did not abandon." Transmigrants are often bilingual, can lead dual lives, move easily between cultures, frequently maintain homes in two countries, and are incorporated as social actors in both.

Transmigration is not a new phenomenon. The traditional Western missionary was essentially a transmigrant, one who claimed and was claimed by two societies, with strong ties and commitment to both. On a wider canvas, the Western missionary movement not only played a crucial role in the spread of Western values throughout non-Western societies but also helped to shape public opinion and deepen knowledge of non-Western cultures at home. In many ways it linked the destinies of two worlds. What is new is the intensification of global interactions and interconnectedness, combined with the increased volume of migrant movement.

Understanding Global Christian Expansion

None of the other major religions has quite matched Christianity's expansionism and missionary mobilization. The Christian faith was barely a decade old when its detractors complained that its adherents were causing trouble "all over the world" (Acts 17:6 NIV). Contemporary critics are unlikely to disagree. Quite simply, the missionary impulse imbedded in Christianity's core message defies restraint. Already in the third century Origen attested that "Christians do not neglect, as far as in them lies, to take measures to disseminate their doctrine throughout the whole world." Even during periods in the history of Christianity when the odds were heavily stacked against its very prospects for survival, its "universalist momentum," in Adrian Hastings' apt phrase, has defied territorial confinement and transcended all human constraints—political, social, and cultural.

Christianity's capacity for cross-cultural transmission has periodically generated major demographic and geographic shifts involving a relocation of its cultural center, a pattern that has earned it the dubious distinction of being the only world religion that is a minority faith in its place of origin. Indeed, Andrew Walls argues that Christianity owes its survival as a separate faith to its capacity to expand across cultural frontiers in a manner that renders "each new point on the Christian circumference ... a new potential Christian centre." This characteristic, he insists, is quite peculiar to Christianity. Other world religions, even the far older Hinduism and the equally universalistic Islam, have retained the same geographic and cultural center throughout their existence.

Walls goes on to identify six historical phases in which transformation by cultural diffusion gave the Christian faith continued existence, each stage investing it with new cultural attributes and effectively widening its impact:

1. the Jewish age, marked by Jewish practices and ideas
2. the Hellenistic-Roman age, marked by the idea of orthodoxy
3. the barbarian age, marked by the idea of a Christian nation
4. the western European age, marked by the primacy of the individual
5. the age of expanding Europe and Christian recession, marked by cross-cultural transplantation but also accompanied by massive recession from the faith among European peoples
6. (just beginning) the Southern age, featuring extensive penetration of new cultures in Africa, Latin America, the Pacific, and parts of Asia
The sixth stage has invalidated the standard representation of Christianity as a Western religion. As Philip Jenkins pointedly notes, “The era of Western Christianity has passed within our lifetimes, and the day of Southern Christianity is dawning. The fact of change itself is undeniable: it has happened, and will continue to happen. So little did we notice this momentous change that it was barely mentioned in all the media hoopla surrounding the end of the second millennium.”

Perhaps few areas of the world demonstrate this dramatic shift more clearly than Africa, an area “experiencing the fastest church growth of any region” in the world. While much of this increase is surely linked to population growth, it is significant that the percentage of Christians grew from 9.2 percent in 1900 to 45 percent by 2000. The World Christian Encyclopedia (2d ed., 2001) also estimates that African Christians are increasing at a rate of 23,000 new Christians a day (or 8.5 million a year), while churches in Europe and North America lose an estimated 6,000 church members a day. There are good reasons for viewing such statistics with caution, not least because multiple membership and fluid allegiances are common elements in African Christianity. But such data are impossible to ignore completely.

Significantly, Africa is also a major source and center of migrant flows. It has more migrants than any other continent and is home to about one-third of the world’s refugees and asylum seekers. This fact raises the question of just how much this massive upsurge of people movements may be contributing to Christian expansion on the continent, as violence and political instability drive hordes of people from predominantly Christian countries to predominantly Muslim countries, and vice versa. At the same time, sub-Saharan Africa also generates significant outflows of intercontinental migrants not only to western Europe but also to North America and the Middle East. This movement from the new heartlands of Christianity to the old centers where the faith is experiencing dramatic erosion and marginalization has critical implications for global Christian witness.

**Instrument of Christian Expansion**

Christianity is a migratory religion, and migration movements have been a functional element in its expansion. The six ages or phases of Christian history identified by Walls were shaped to one extent or another by migratory movements. From the outset, the spread of the Gospel was linked to migrant networks; most significantly, the inception of the Gentile mission is marked by the actions of unnamed migrant refugees in Antioch (Acts 11:19-20). In the centuries that immediately followed, the Christian faith spread mainly through kinship and commercial networks, migrant movements (some stimulated by persecution), and other informal means.

The thousand years from A.D. 500 to 1500, which saw the entrenchment of Christianity as the faith of western Europe, were marked, writes Kenneth Scott Latourette, “by vast movements of peoples,” notably in the Eurasian landmass. The end of that period witnessed the beginning of the momentous expansion of Europeans from the heartlands of Christianity to other parts of the world. From 1815 to 1914, the great century of Western missionary enterprise, up to 60 million Europeans left for the Americas, Oceania, and East and South Africa. It is hardly an accident of history that the greatest Christian missionary expansion of all time coincided with possibly the most remarkable of all migrations in human history, culminating in an epochal transformation of global Christianity.

Missionary initiatives from the old heartlands of Europe and North America are arguably diminishing in significance. A major reversal (and diffusion) of missionary enterprise is underway, one significantly tied to the fact that the direction of global migratory flow is now primarily south to north and east to west, where it was once primarily north to south. Before 1925, 85 percent of all international migrants originated from Europe; since 1960 Europe has contributed an increasingly small fraction of emigrants to world emigration flows as emigrants from Africa, Asia, and Latin America have increased dramatically. Once again, the possibilities for Christian expansion and migratory movement are forcibly and intimately intertwined.

But how will these post-Western Christianities affect a post-Christian West? If, as Walls contends, the Christian faith has depended on cross-cultural diffusion for its survival, then we could say that the future of Christianity is intricately bound up with the emerging non-Western missionary movement. The southward shift in global Christianity’s center of gravity poses intriguing and, as yet, little-analyzed questions regarding the scope and dynamics of global Christian witness or mission enterprise. One consideration will be central. To the extent that it is predominantly non-Western, the new face of global Christianity is one of relative poverty and powerlessness, as for the first time in over a millennium, the global church displays the most explosive growth and increasing missionary vitality precisely in those areas that are most marginalized and impoverished. This change is bound to have an impact on basic assumptions.

**A Changed Understanding**

The version of the Great Commission recorded in Matthew 28:18-20 became the watchword of the Western missionary movement—perhaps emblematic of its activist voluntarism, grand strategies, focus on evangelism, and emphasis on the use of means. It is doubtful that this text will retain its primacy in the growing non-Western missionary movement. The latter boasts neither the economic and technological advantages of the Western missionary movement nor the protection of strong economic and military powers that the Western missionary movement enjoyed. In acute contrast it comes not from the centers of political power and economic wealth but from the periphery. Critically also, it emanates from contexts of religious plurality where Christianity has historically been a minority faith, a persecuted religion, or simply one among others. These factors have serious implications for the effectiveness of its “missionaries.” They are likely to be free from the arrogance and triumphalism associated with a Christendom mentality (though they will likely face equally strong temptations of a spiritual superciliousness) and will plausibly have much to offer the church in the West as it grapples with issues of identity and relevance in the face of emerging religious plurality.

Other versions of the Great Commission, specifically the Johannine model (John 17:18 and 20:21), will likely provide a better missiological orientation. John 20:21 directs simply, “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you” (NIV). Already in the

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mid-1970s John Stott began to argue that this Johannine version is in fact the “crucial form in which the Great Commission has been handed down to us.”45 He pointed out that it carries two profound implications: first, Christian mission must be one of service (not epitomized by structures or attitudes of dominance); second, it must be incarnational (with an emphasis on being one with others and, by implication, being vulnerable).

Certain aspects of Christ’s ministry were unique and unrepeatable. Yet, focusing on his mission as the archetype of Christian mission is replete with poignancy and paradoxes that will resonate within the non-Western missionary movement and provide more meaningful reference points. To begin with, Christ’s life and ministry included the travail of a refugee, the pain of uprootedness, and the alienation that comes with being a stranger. Even the emptying of status to take on the form of a servant has its parallels in the migrant experience. And, without pressing the parallel too far, the incarnational dimension is also significantly recaptured in other ways. Non-Western Christian migrants live among new peoples, dwell in the neighborhood, and are pressed into varying degrees of adaptation and assimilation, though often without entirely losing cultural traits.46 Much about their experience also evokes sharp images of the biblical paradigm of God’s people as pilgrims, migrants, and refugees. This notion of God’s mission as originating from the margins is powerfully depicted by the Cuban-American scholar Miguel De La Torre: “God’s self-revelation to humanity does not occur from the centers of world power but in the margins of society. It is not from the court of Pharaoh that God’s laws are revealed to humanity but from their slaves. Nor does the incarnation occur in the imperial palace of Caesar, or to the household of the high priest in Jerusalem. Rather, God is made flesh among the impure Galileans . . . in a region where the unclean Gentiles outnumbered the Jews.”47

Walls argues that “the territorial ‘from-to’ idea that underlay the older missionary movement has to give way to a concept much more like that of Christians within the Roman Empire in the second and third centuries: parallel presences in different circles and at different levels, each seeking to penetrate within and beyond its circle.”48 This view captures current realities. Contemporary migration is “a network-driven phenomenon, with newcomers naturally attracted to the places where they have contacts and the buildup of contacts facilitating later moves to the key immigrant centers.”49 Accordingly, in contrast to European-style linear structures, the emerging non-Western movement “is cellular, travels along pre-existing social relations, rests on charismatic leadership, communicates in songs and signals, and understands the human person in his or her relationship to community.”50

**African Christian Migrants**

Predictably, South to North movement draws on established links between former colonies and former colonial states. From the 1980s the volume of African migrants to Europe rose dramatically as, convulsed by escalating conflicts and crises, the continent spewed out a steady flow of economic refugees and asylum seekers. In Britain, the European country with the longest ties to modern African Christianity, the establishment of African immigrant churches dates to the early 1960s, and they now number up to 3,000 congregations.51 These churches are also mushrooming in unprecedented fashion throughout continental Europe, where the number of African Christians are thought to be in excess of three million.52

African migration to the United States in significant numbers is a more recent phenomenon. But here too all indications are that the number of African Christians is on the rise. Up to 1965, restrictive immigration laws stemmed the tide. But in the wake of the 1965 Immigration Reform Act, ethnic diversity in U.S. society increased markedly, reflecting greater immigration from Asia and Latin America.53 The United States also received thousands of African immigrants, the majority from Nigeria.

To be sure, Africans constitute a small, if growing, percentage of all immigrants to the United States.54 How many of these are Christians remains anybody’s guess, but if the growing number of African immigrant churches is any indication, the ratio may be fairly high. The earliest migrants tend to be relatively well-educated, skilled, productive, and highly motivated, and studies indicate that a sizable majority of African immigrants are highly educated professionals. The requirement of basic levels of skill and education for legal immigration to the United States also fosters this prevalence. We know that a good proportion of Christians fall into this category, if only because Christian agencies have historically played a significant role in Africa’s educational development.

The notion that the growth of Christianity in the southern continents is fueled by contextual pathologies is simplistic. Poverty and innumerable hardships are factors, but charismatic or neo-Pentecostal movements (the most dominant expressions of African Christianity) often originate among, and draw a significant proportion of their membership from, the educated, the youth, and upwardly mobile groups. Incidentally, the emergence of these movements coincides with the upsurge in migration, and the new charismatic churches are often connected to international or global networks that facilitate migrant movement. Also, their leaders are the most likely to adopt a vision for the evangelization of the West.

In western Europe the rise of African immigrant churches and other non-Western Christian congregations has been dramatically visible because of the stark contrast between the dynamism of new immigrant Christian groups and the often moribund tone of the traditional churches. Even the secular press has taken notice: “Missionaries Arrive to Save ‘Heathen’ Britain” was the provocative title of an article that appeared in the London Sunday Times on July 1, 2000; “evangelists from Latin America and Africa now hold crusades in cities like London and Berlin,” testified Kenneth Woodward in a more in-depth treatment of the trend in Newsweek.55 Academic interest is not lacking either. In probably the most detailed study to date, the Dutch scholar Gerrick Ter Haar asserts: “Just as European missionaries once believed in their divine task of evangelizing what they called the dark continent, African church leaders in Europe today are convinced of Africa’s mission to bring the gospel back to those who originally provided it. Thus, many African Christians who have recently migrated to Europe, generally to find work, consider that God has given them a unique opportunity to spread the good news among those who have gone astray.”56

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**In Britain, African immigrant churches now number up to 3,000 congregations.**
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A similar pattern is becoming evident in the United States. Diversity of Christian expression and competing forms of worship are not new phenomena in America, but, generally speaking, the new Christian immigrants are expressing their Christianity in languages, customs, and independent churches that are almost as foreign to Americans as other religions. While many immigrants adapt their religions to the social conditions of the host country, there is already some suggestion that the overall impact is what we could call the de-Europeanizing of American Christianity.

The Nigerian-based Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), founded in 1952, is now headed by Rev. E. A. Adeboye, a former mathematics professor. A fully international movement, the RCCG numbers 5,000 parishes in 80 countries. It is the largest African Pentecostal church in the United States, where it currently has 82 parishes. "The United States has become very slack," noted one of its pastors at a recent convention, "so God is making us bring worship and praise to them." Like many immigrant churches, it is primarily a place for African immigrants to form a community and preserve homeland traditions. But although its congregations tend to be predominantly Nigerian, the church evangelizes aggressively, attracts African-Americans, Anglo-Americans, and Hispanics as members, and emphasizes a global vision.

The majority of African immigrant churches (AICs?), however, are single autonomous units often established by individuals or groups who found North American alternatives too pallid for their liking. The Calvary Worship Center in Burnaby (Canada) is led by a young Ghanaian pastor, Samuel Awusu, who has a Ph.D. from Trinity College. Founded with four members in 1992, the church now has an average weekly attendance of 160. In keeping with Awusu's vision for the formation of a multinational Christian community (a house of all nations), membership is 45 percent African and 40 percent Anglo-Canadian. Services are held in English with French translation, but the worship and ethos are vibrantly African. Almost all the African members are migrants, and membership increase is mainly through informal contacts and networks. The combination of African leadership and conscious multinationalism makes this church a powerful tool of mission in a context where church membership has been in steep decline for decades.

In both North America and Europe, these new immigrant Christian groups embody a fresh and vital spirituality that is likely to have an impact far beyond their immediate sphere of witness and influence. Ter Haar correctly surmises that they provide "a new outlook on the relative positions of Christians from Europe and Africa, reflecting the changed relations and the beginning of what seems to be an irreversible trend." Even so, a great deal will depend on how much the second and third generations follow in the footsteps of the first. For now, these churches are often among the fastest growing precisely because they reproduce or exhibit the same vitality and dynamism that are present in the homelands of immigrant members. African churches in particular are renowned not only for their irrepressible religiosity and deep spirituality but also for their evangelistic zeal.

Typically urban-based and dependent on social networks, immigrant initiated churches often become veritable centers of transmigration or transnationalism, effectively bridging North and South Christianities.

This non-Western missionary movement, as I have termed it, is still in its early stages. Its long-term significance and impact remain to be seen and need to be more thoroughly researched from a global perspective. One of the chief features of the history of Christian missions is that theoretical formulation and formal strategy typically lag behind actual missionary enterprise. Questions about the assumptions, models, and even theology that will characterize the emerging non-Western missionary movement may not be fully answered for some time. Institutional forms are emerging (prominently so among Latin American-based Pentecostal movements in the United States), but as yet this movement remains, for the most part, informal and even anonymous—evocative of John Fairbank's astute observation that "the missionary in foreign parts seems to be the invisible man of . . . history." One thing is certain: missionary movement is often a history-making force, and these new movements will help define the face and future of global Christianity.

Notes
8. See Mittelman, *Globalization Syndrome*, p. 59; also Ferris, *Beyond Borders*, pp. 130–31. This figure represents about 8 percent of the population of sub-Saharan Africa.
11. Ibid., p. 139.
12. Ibid., p. 79. For similar arguments, see David Held et al., *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics, and Culture* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Press, 1999), pp. 303–05.
16. Ibid., p. 25. Africa had half of Europe's population in 1950; by 2025 its population is projected to be three times that of Europe.
19. The recent electoral defeats and reversals of fortune experienced by far-right political parties with an anti-immigration stance in Austria, France, and Holland complicate analysis.
23. Ferris, Beyond Borders, p. 131.
24. The term "brain circulation" is deemed more appropriate in cases where immigrants constantly move back and forth between home and host country. A recent survey of Chinese immigrants in Silicon Valley revealed that 50 percent of those surveyed return to the home country at least once a year on business, and 5 percent do so at least five times a year. See Special Report, "The Longest Journey," p. 12.
27. For increasing numbers of people, notes John Tomlinson, "the comforting, familiar character of the cultural settings [they] routinely move amongst conceals the influences of distant social forces and processes" (J. Tomlinson, Globalization and Culture [Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1999], pp. 106–7).
29. See Alejandro Portes, "Immigration Theory for a New Century: Some Problems and Opportunities," in ibid., p. 29.
32. The same claim, however, might be made for Buddhism.
34. Ibid., pp. 16–25.
39. Ferris, Beyond Borders, p. 94.
42. See Massey, "Why Does Immigration Occur?" p. 35.
43. An exception to this generalization is South Korea, which is experiencing rising prosperity and decreasing population growth but which is currently the second greatest missionary-sending nation (behind only the United States).
44. Consider, for instance, that between 1789 and 1828 the revenues of the largest benevolent societies in America (including mission societies) were $2,813,550, compared with total expenditures by the U.S. government for the same period of $3,585,534 (Wilbert Shenk, ed., North American Foreign Missions, 1810–1914: Theology, Theory, and Policy [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, forthcoming]).
46. Terms like "segmented assimilation" are increasingly used to signal the fact that contemporary migrants, who are heavily concentrated in urban areas, increasingly defy conventional wisdom (and standard assimilation theory) by resisting complete assimilation, even up to the third generation. The experience of transmigration is only one reason for this resistance. For a discussion, see Portes, "Immigration Theory," pp. 29–30; Roger Waldinger, "Strangers at the Gates," in Strangers at the Gates: New Immigrants in Urban America, ed. Roger Waldinger (Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 2001), pp. 1–29.
49. Waldinger, "Strangers at the Gates," p. 3. It is also worth noting that the 1965 Immigration Reform Act in the United States (discussed below) favored immigrants with kinship ties to permanent residents or citizens; see Roger Waldinger and Jennifer Lee, "New Immigrants in Urban America," in Strangers at the Gates, ed. Waldinger, pp. 33ff.
57. Ebaugh and Chafetz, Religion and the New Immigrants, p. 14. These authors allude to a 1998 estimate that reported 3,500 Catholic parishes where Mass is celebrated in Spanish; 7,000 Hispanic/ Latino Protestant congregations nationwide, most of them Pentecostal and/or evangelical; and (by 1988) 2,017 Korean Christian churches and 700 Chinese Protestant churches in the United States.
61. It is now common, reports ter Haar, to see African missionaries preaching in public places in the major cities of Europe (Halfway to Paradise, p. 2).
The story of the churches and missions in Northeast India is complex. Diverse ethnocultural groups inhabit the region, and a variety of ecclesiastical traditions have come there to establish churches. To comprehend the life and activities of the churches, one must have a sense of the rich ethnic background and the manifold religious characteristics of the region. Because my aim is to portray the missionary efforts and accomplishments of Christian churches in the region, I emphasize the contributions of the indigenous Christians. This is not in any way to discount the valuable contribution of Western missionaries but to highlight the role of the churches as they exist today.¹

The Region, the People, and the Religions

Bordered in the north by Bhutan, Tibet, and China, in the south and southwest by Bangladesh, and in the east and southeast by Myanmar, the region known as Northeast India lies in the far eastern corner of the country. Linked to the rest of India by a small strip of land, the region has seven states: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura.² At the time of India’s independence in 1947, all but the states of Northeast India were part of Assam. The states of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland were carved out of Assam in the 1960s and 1970s.

Northeast India displays a distinctive geoethnic character.³ About three-quarters of the region is covered by hilly terrain, and one-quarter consists of plains. So-called tribes live in the hill areas, and Sanskritized or Hinduized nontribals reside in the plains. According to the 1991 census, more than 71 percent of the region’s population lives in the plains of Assam, and about 14.5 percent in the four tribal hill-states of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland.⁴ The nontribal communities consist mainly of the Hinduized (or Sanskritized) indigenous communities and of Hindu and Muslim immigrants from other parts of India and Bangladesh. Linguistic and cultural compositions of the region are extremely diverse; “no one even knows precisely how many languages are spoken.”⁵ From the matrilineal societies of Garo and Khasi-Jaintia to the warring tribes of the Nagas and Kukis, from the varying Sino-Tibetan cultural features to the great Indic cultural system, the societies of Northeast India display a staggering cultural variety.

The religious composition of the region roughly parallels its geoethnic character. With the exception of Arunachal Pradesh, the vast majority of the people identify with one of the “six major religions of India”: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, and Sikhism. While almost all the tribal people in the so-called tribal states of Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland are Christians, the number of Christians among the nontribal people in the plains of Assam, Manipur, and Tripura is relatively small and insignificant. The accompanying table, tabulated from the 1991 census report, shows the religious composition of the seven states of Northeast India.⁶

From the table, we can notice several things. With the exception of Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura, the tribal people are largely Christian, and the nontribals are largely non-Christian. Among the hill-states, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya have a good number of “other” religious persuasions. The census report identifies these as indigenous religions, often referred to as animism, found mostly in the rural areas. In terms of religious composition, Arunachal Pradesh can be said to be the most mixed in the region. According to Chander Sheikhar Panchani, three religions are harmoniously coexisting in Arunachal Pradesh: Hinduism in the foothills, animism in the central stretch of the hills, and Buddhism in the higher Himalayan frontiers.⁷

Christian Churches in Northeast India

The total Christian population of Northeast India, which is roughly 4.3 million, accounts for 22.7 percent of Indian Christians. With roughly 1.2 million, Meghalaya has the most Christians; Tripura, with 47,000, has the fewest. Although Roman Catholic missionaries had made a few visits at an earlier date, the Protestant mission bodies first established mission work in the region in the mid-nineteenth century. Until the independence of India, mission agencies respected a comity arrangement. Although the continuation of comity became impossible, with the result that no one denomination now has exclusive “rights” to any particular territory, the heritage of comity has remained among Protestants, with most major denominations strongest in the territories where their mission forebears operated.

The three largest Christian groups are the Baptists, the Roman Catholics, and the Presbyterians. The Baptists, who arose from the work of Baptists from the United States, are now organized under the Council of Baptist Churches in Northeast

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³ INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN OF MISSIONARY RESEARCH, Vol. 27, No. 4
India (CBCNEI) and dominate Nagaland, the Garo Hill district of Meghalaya, the larger part of the Manipur hills, and pockets of Christian communities in Assam. Until the middle of the twentieth century, the Catholic presence was more or less confined to Assam and Meghalaya. Since then, the Catholic Church has been rapidly spreading in other parts of the region. The Presbyterians, stemming from the Welsh Presbyterian (formerly Calvinistic Methodist) Church mission, have organized themselves as the Presbyterian Church of India (PCI) and dominate the Khasi-Jaintia district of Meghalaya, the relatively thickly populated northern Mizoram region, the Cachar district of Assam, and part of the Manipur hills. According to F. S. Downs, 43 percent of Christians in the region in 1990 belonged to CBCNEI, 26 percent to the Roman Catholic Church, and 23 percent to PCI.

The British Baptist Missionary Society established the Baptist Church of Mizoram in southern Mizoram. Historically and denominationally related to the Mizoram Baptist Church are a few independent churches in the southernmost district of Mizoram. In Tripura the evangelization process begun by the Mizo Christian community was later joined and continued by the New Zealand Baptist Mission under the name Tripura Baptist Christian Union. In the Brahmaputra valley of Assam, other Baptist mission agencies, namely the Australian Baptist Mission and the Baptist General Conference of America, have also been working, and from them the North-Bank Baptist Association has come into being. Following their immigrant-members from southern Bihar (now Jharkhand), the Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Santal Mission also established churches and were involved in evangelistic work among tea garden laborers in Assam. Perhaps surprisingly, the Anglican presence in Northeast India is meager; indeed, there has been no significant mission effort by any of the Anglican mission agencies.

**Evangelization of Northeast India**

Notable evangelization took place in the nineteenth century only in the area of present-day Meghalaya. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Meghalaya (divided into the districts of Garo Hills and Khasi-Jaintia) had the only significant Christian presence. Although quite a few Assamese had converted to Christianity, their number was insignificant in relation to the overall population. In other parts of Northeast India mission work made headway only in the twentieth century.

**Assam and Meghalaya.** At the invitation of David Scott, the first British commissioner of Assam, the Serampore Mission started rather small-scale mission work by opening a school in Guwahati (Assam) in 1829. The school was closed in 1836, by which time another school had already been opened in Cherrapunji (now Meghalaya). Following the amalgamation of the Serampore Mission with the Baptist Missionary Society in 1837, the second school was also closed, and the Cherrapunji mission was abandoned in 1837. Around the same time, in 1836, the American Baptist Mission arrived in the northeastern part of Assam with the intention of reaching China. When they were unable to move beyond the region, the missionaries gradually turned their attention to Assam itself, adopting it as a field in 1841. Christian growth among the Assamese was slow, and the missionaries were frustrated. The only sign of success in Assam was among the tribal residents.

In 1847 Francis Jenkins, the successor of David Scott as the commissioner of Assam, opened a school in Goalpara near the Assam–Garo Hills border that enrolled a number of Garo boys. After they completed their studies, two Garo boys, Omed Watre Momin and Ramkhe Watre Momin, converted to Christianity. This decision was the result of reading a tract, probably prepared by the Serampore Mission, that one of them found in a dustbin. They were baptized in 1863 at Guwahati. When the American Baptist Mission was unable to find missionaries for Garo Hills, the two resigned their jobs, proceeded to Garo Hills, and began evangelistic work among their people amid severe opposition. When American Baptist missionary Miles Bronson finally visited them in April 1867, he found thirty-seven Garos ready for baptism and, after baptizing them, formed the first Garo church and ordained Omed to be the minister of the church. The organization of a Garo Baptist Church was followed by the adoption of Garo Hills as the mission field of the American Baptist Mission.

The earliest Khasi converts were introduced to Christianity by Krishna Pal of the Serampore Mission. They were from the foothills of Khasi-land (now part of Bangladesh) and were baptized in 1813. After the abandonment of the Serampore Mission's station in Cherrapunji, the Khasi and Jaintia hills (now part of Meghalaya) came to be adopted by the Welsh Missionary Society, which sent its first missionary, Thomas Jones, in 1841. As in other places of Northeast India, reduction of the language to written form and formal education at the primary level became the preliminary and basic means of evangelism. The growth of Christianity was slow in the early years, and opposition was often violent. There were only twenty Christians at the end of the first decade (1841–51). The standard of church membership was high, and the missionaries made no haste in baptizing new converts. Numerical growth began only from the last two decades of the nineteenth century.

The commitments of early Khasi converts are worth mentioning. Some women converts in the matrilineal society lost their rights of inheritance, and some prospective chiefs, such as U Borsing of Cherrapunji, sacrificed their thrones because of their Christian profession. The zeal to evangelize their own people began early and soon developed into the creation of the Home Mission at the end of the nineteenth century. By 1940 as many as twenty-four new churches were planted, with more than 2,500 new converts, through the work of the Home Mission. Khasevangelists contributed greatly in the evangeliza-
tion of the Khasi-Jaintia hills, but also in cross-cultural evangelism. In the history of Christianity in Mizoram, for instance, the Khasi contribution is noteworthy. Along with the first Welsh missionary, D. E. Jones, was Khasi evangelist Rai Bhajur, who gave up a high-rank government job and good salary to serve in Mizoram at a minimal income.  

Nagaland. Various factors, including a promise of “harvest,” conflict between some missionaries, and a lack of response from Assamese, led to attention being drawn to the Ao-Nagas, one of the sixteen Naga tribes of present-day Nagaland. The names of missionaries, D. E. Jones, along with Khasi evangelist Rai Bhajur, came and replaced the Arthington Aborigines Mission. He entered Manipur in January 1894, where they labored for about three and half years. Because of differences in mission goal with their sponsor, Arthington, Lorrain and Savidge then offered the area to the Welsh Mission, which had earlier planned to adopt the district. The first Welsh missionary to Mizoram, David Evan Jones, along with Khasi evangelist Rai Bhajur, came and replaced the Arthington missionaries in 1897. When the southern district of Mizoram was transferred to the Baptist Missionary Society, the two pioneer missionaries returned to Mizoram as the first two Baptist missionaries in 1903. The first baptized Christians received their baptisms in 1899 under D. E. Jones. A third mission society, the independent Lakher Pioneer Mission, came to work among the Lakher tribe in the southernmost part of Mizoram from 1907. The church planted by this mission came to be called the Independent Church of Maraland.

Motivated by Clark’s example, other mission stations were opened among the Angami-Nagas, and for a brief period among the Lotha-Nagas. Although C. D. King, the pioneer missionary among the Angami-Nagas, who started his work in 1879, had the advantage of the British administration’s protection and support, no visible fruit could be seen immediately. By the end of the nineteenth century, there were almost no Naga Christians outside the Ao tribe. The drastic reformation in the Ao church in 1894 considerably reduced the number of Christians. A later renewal movement occurred through the work of Caleph, a young native convert. Along with his Assamese friend Biney, Caleph led evangelistic preaching tours, which greatly helped the growth of Ao communicant members in the last years of the nineteenth century. In the first half of the twentieth century, another phenomenal growth came about among the Sema-Nagas. Through what Puthenpurakal calls “a chain of reaction,” lay native evangelists carried on the work of evangelization, leading to what he calls a mass movement among the Semas.

While the growth of churches among the Aos, which began in the early 1950s, was gradual, the growth among Semas and Lothas, dating from the 1930s, was impetuous and spontaneous. The hard resistance by Angamis also began to break down from the 1930s. The major growth of Christianity among these tribes, as well as the initiation and growth among other Naga tribes, began after the independence of India in 1947 and continued after the missionaries left Nagaland in the early 1950s.

The contribution of Naga Christians to the evangelization of Nagaland is enormous. As early as 1898 the missionary report on the Ao-Nagas said, “All our churches are now self-supporting.”

What may be called mass evangelization among the Semas was done mostly by indigenous evangelists. From 98,068 in 1951, the number of Christians in Nagaland rose to 1,057,940 in 1991. The Christian percentage of 87.47 in Nagaland is the highest in India. The fact that the major expansion of Christianity took place in the second half of the twentieth century, when all foreign missionaries had left Nagaland, is a clear witness to the role of Naga Christians themselves in the evangelization of their own land.

Mizoram. The pioneer missionaries to Mizoram, J. Herbert Lorrain and F. W. Savidge, belonged to a private missionary agency called the Arthington Aborigines Mission, founded, funded, and directed by Robert Arthington, Jr. The two reached Mizoram in January 1894, where they labored for about three and half years. Because of differences in mission goal with their sponsor, Arthington, Lorrain and Savidge then offered the area to the Welsh Mission, which had earlier planned to adopt the district. The first Welsh missionary to Mizoram, David Evan Jones, along with Khasi evangelist Rai Bhajur, came and replaced the Arthington missionaries in 1897. When the southern district of Mizoram was transferred to the Baptist Missionary Society, the two pioneer missionaries returned to Mizoram as the first two Baptist missionaries in 1903. The first baptized Christians received their baptisms in 1899 under D. E. Jones. A third mission society, the independent Lakher Pioneer Mission, came to work among the Lakher tribe in the southernmost part of Mizoram from 1907. The church planted by this mission came to be called the Independent Church of Maraland.

As in other places of Northeast India, it was the first converts who made headway in evangelizing their own people. Khuma, one of the first two Mizo converts, is said to have visited almost all villages in Mizoram with a simple message of invitation to each individual he met and each house he visited: “Believe in Jesus Christ.” In a letter dated November 17, 1902, Jones wrote, “Today six young men went out two by two, to the North, to the West, and to the East to preach the Gospel throughout the land.” By 1903 the small congregation appointed four evangelists, supporting them with a salary of three rupees each. Starting in 1910, a group of Mizo evangelists, employed by a certain Watkin Roberts under the Thadou-Kuki Pioneer Mission, was sent across the border to Manipur and Tripura, becoming cross-cultural evangelists.

A series of revivals in the first four decades of the twentieth century became most instrumental in converting virtually the whole Mizo tribe to Christianity. The revivals also indigenized Christianity, bringing about a distinctly Mizo faith. Teams of lay converts affected by the revivals went about sharing their revival experience with their fellow tribe members, spreading Christianity from village to village.

Manipur, Tripura, and Arunachal Pradesh. The two princely states of the region of Northeast India during the British colonial rule—Manipur and Tripura—did not welcome missionaries. William Pettigrew, the pioneer missionary in Manipur, was from the Arthington Aborigines Mission. He entered Manipur in
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February 1894 and started his work among the Meitei people, the nontribal residents of the Manipur valley. Political conditions later compelled him to move to the hills, where he worked among the Tangkhul-Nagas. Pettigrew changed his denominational affiliation from Anglican to Baptist and joined the American Baptist Mission, which adopted him as its missionary and Manipur as its field. Slow and steady was the progress of mission work among the Kukis. The early converts, including some from the Kuki tribes, then took their new faith to their own people. Because of his active involvement in political and other secular activities, Pettigrew was unable to do much mission work. Because of the political restrictions, only a few other missionaries were permitted to enter Manipur, and the major evangelistic work was done by native workers. The first Kuki to become Christian was Ngulhao, who was instrumental in the conversion of at least 334 persons. Similarly, it is reported that efforts of the first Thadou-Kuki convert, Nehesh, led to the founding of the first church among his people. The same was true with the Zeliengrong-Nagas and Mao-Nagas of northern and northwestern Manipur. Large-scale growth of Christianity among these tribes took place after the First World War.

The independent Thadou-Kuki Pioneer Mission, founded by Watkin Roberts with the help of Mizo Christians, came to work in southern Manipur. This new nondenominational agency, staffed entirely by native workers mainly sent from Mizoram, established itself in the area. When in 1919 this agency extended its work into the neighboring states of Assam and Tripura, it changed its name to North-East India General Mission (NEIGM). Because of conflict and dissension within the mission and clashes with other Protestant missions over allegations of a breach of the comity agreement, NEIGM could not continue its work. In 1922 the mission was suspended from the comity of Protestant Foreign Missions in Bengal and Assam.

Tripura has the fewest Christians in Northeast India mainly because it did not permit missionaries until 1938. The earliest Christian presence in the state, and subsequent mission work, began with Mizo immigraions to the northern border area of the state in the early part of the twentieth century. While the state was closed to foreign missions, pioneering work began with Mizo Christians settling in the state. A missionary supported by the Mizo Christians started evangelistic work in 1917 among one of the Tripuri tribes called Darlong. The NEIGM sent a missionary to work among the Mizo immigrants in 1918 and among the Darlong tribe in 1919. Other NEIGM missionaries followed, most of them becoming pastors and teachers.

In the meantime, the New Zealand Baptist Mission, which was working across the border in present-day Bangladesh, succeeded in gaining permission to work in Tripura in 1938. Gathering about one hundred Christians, mainly Garos and Kukis residing in the state, the New Zealand Baptist Mission formed the Tripura Baptist Christian Union (TBCU) in December 1938. Until the last missionary left Tripura in the early 1970s, TBCU was led by missionaries of the New Zealand Baptist Mission. The Darlong Church joined TBCU in 1940, as did the Mizo Church, then called Jampui Presbytery, in 1944.

The present Arunachal Pradesh, known in the past as North East Frontier Agency, has a long but insignificant interaction with Christian mission activities. Its remote location and ethnolinguistic diversity have kept it from significant interaction with outsiders, including Christian missions. Significant mission work, mainly by Christians from other states of Northeast India, began only in the 1960s, and the 1970s saw signs of significant Christian presence in the state.

Roman Catholic Church in Northeast India. Unlike Protestant missions, the Roman Catholic Church in Northeast India has no particular territory of operation. The first missionary society assigned specifically to the region, the Foreign Missaries of Milan (PIME), came to the region briefly in 1872, but because of a jurisdiction dispute, no tangible work was done. From 1889 the region was reassigned to the German Society of Catholic Education, popularly known as Salvatorians, who began "Catholic missionary work proper" in the region. During the First World War the German Salvatorians were repatriated, and the work was entrusted temporarily to the Belgian Jesuits (1915–22), until the charge was handed over to Salesians of Don Bosco in 1922. The Salesian Brothers were joined by Salesian Sisters in 1923.

While numerical growth of Christians was slow under the Salvatorians, the pace of growth picked up with the Jesuits, and then there was major growth from the first decade of the Salesians' work. Until Indian independence Catholic mission work was confined almost exclusively to present-day Assam and Meghalaya. After independence, however, the Catholic Church experienced spectacular growth in Northeast India. Some new orders joined the effort, strengthening the work together with diocesan clergies. From 70,000 in 1945, the Catholic community grew tenfold to 700,000 in 1990. From the Assam plains and Meghalaya, the Catholic Church soon moved out to Manipur and Nagaland, where it has been enjoying rapid growth.

The Churches' Missionary Activities Today

The popular prayer guidebook Operation World comments enthusiastically about the Mizo people, noting that "Mizo missionaries in India and beyond number over 2,000—one of the highest sending statistics in the world." The Mizos' contribution is unique, but churches in other states of Northeast India have also been making significant contributions to the overall Christian missionary effort. As we have seen, the indigenous peoples have played a crucial role in evangelizing the region. Passion for mission is ingrained in the very lifeblood of the region's Christianity, and almost all denominations take the mission task seriously.

The history of Northeast India after independence has been plagued by various political insurrections. With a variety of political demands, a number of insurgent groups have revolted against the government of India. In state after state, foreign missionaries were expelled and banned, under suspicion for having played clandestine roles in these movements. No foreign missionary has been permitted in the region since the early 1970s. This turn of events has challenged, and even compelled, the churches to enhance their indigenous missionary endeavors. The missionary zeal displayed from the beginning received new impetus as concerted missionary efforts arose among the churches after foreign missionaries left the region.

In Mizoram all the mainstream Protestant churches have been actively engaged in mission work. From the Presbyterian Church Synod, 968 mission workers have been sent out, including 375
so-called missionaries and 470 “native workers” or “evangelists.” They serve in various places and also in partnership with other churches or mission agencies. Together with 182 missionaries under the Home Mission project working inside Mizoram among the non-Mizo (non-Christian) people, the total adds up to 1,150. According to the official church report of the Baptist Church of Mizoram in March 2002, there were 418 mission workers (187 “missionaries” and 231 “native workers” or “evangelists”). The Evangelical Church of Maraland (formerly Independent Church of Maraland) in the southernmost part of Mizoram has about 60 mission workers of its own, besides a few others in partnership with the Indian Evangelical Mission. Furthermore, the church has a vibrant counterpart church on the Myanmar side of the border, which has as many as 54 mission workers. The Isua Krista Kohhran Lairam, an independent church that came into being as a result of a split in the Mizoram Baptist Church, also gives its main attention to Myanmar. It has as many as 80 missionaries working mainly in Myanmar, plus a few in Bangladesh and in other parts of India.

Whereas local congregations in Mizoram have traditionally worked closely with the central governing office, the case is different with churches in other parts of the region. Each congregation in the Khasi Presbyterian Church Synod and the Naga Baptist Church Council, for example, is more or less independent. This fact has a bearing on the collection of information on their mission activities. In the case of the Nagas, the Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC) was formed in 1937, under which the Home Mission Board was created in 1960. The latter was transformed into the Nagaland Missionary Movement (NMM) in 1971 to become the representative missionary body of the NBCC. However, many Naga missionaries are not affiliated with NMM, and most congregations engage in mission work independently or as associations of regional or ethnic churches.

In Manipur, churches under the former NEIGM and the Manipur Baptist Convention (a member body of the CBCNEI) have been actively engaged in mission work, especially among the non-Christian Meiteis in Manipur valley, since the early 1960s. In 1980 the Manipur Baptist Convention appointed a full-time “evangelistic secretary” to coordinate the churches’ mission activities. Although MBC as a body has only 15 mission workers, church conventions under MBC are making notable contributions. The mission secretary of the Kuki Baptist Convention, using the Annual Report of Manipur Baptist Convention, 2000–2001, reports that there are as many as 576 mission workers employed by various churches. Of these, 234 belong to churches under the Manipur Baptist Convention. The remaining 342 belong to various independent churches, some of which were the products of the former NEIGM and the Presbyterian Church in Manipur.

To account for the present mission engagement of the Khasi-Jaintia Presbyterian Church is extremely difficult, for the Synod’s report gives no information. The church’s mission work came to light in a recent interview, however, which revealed that the Synod has sent out 40 cross-cultural missionaries: 9 directly commissioned and supported by the Synod, and the remaining 31 by local churches and district committees in the Synod. These missionaries are working in various parts of Assam, Uttar Pradesh, and Nepal. The interviewees estimated that not less than 300 other mission workers—mainly supported by presbyteries—are working inside Meghalaya. Thus, we can estimate that about 350 mission workers belong to the Khasi-Jaintia Presbyterian Church. In addition, the Garo Baptist Church (of the CBCNEI), a mission-minded church from its inception, has been making its contributions on a relatively smaller scale. Other Protestant churches, some of them indigenous, are also engaging in mission work. At least 70 missionaries are estimated to have come from these other Protestant denominations in Meghalaya.

Arunachal Pradesh has been the leading recipient of missionary activities of Northeast Indian Christians. Beginning in the 1960s, but especially in the early 1970s, notable conversion to Christianity took place among some of the tribes of the state. Some people, especially among the dominant Adi tribe, considered Christianity and the modernizing (or Westernizing) tendency associated with it as a threat to their traditional identity. A cultural renewal movement that began in the 1960s was correlated with anti-Christian activities. This development contributed to Christian persecutions, which intensified in the 1970s.

Elsewhere in India two northern states, namely Orissa and Madhya Pradesh, enacted anticonversion acts under the name of the Freedom of Religion Act and were involved in legal defense of the acts in the Supreme Court. The legal battle ended in 1977 with the Supreme Court’s verdict supporting the acts of the states. A year later, a similar law called the Indigenous Faith Act was enacted by the Arunachal Pradesh state. Conversion, which is defined as a renouncing of indigenous faith and adopting another faith or religion, was banned by this act. Buddhism and the Hindu Vaishnava sect, both of which are nonindigenous, are included among the indigenous faiths listed, which reveals the religious motives behind the anti-Christian cultural revival movement. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and other fanatic Hindu groups are thought to be behind the anti-Christian movement and persecutions. Despite such opposition to Christian mission, Arunachal Pradesh has experienced the highest growth in percentage of Christians during the last two decades. From 0.79 percent in 1971, the Christian presence in the state increased to 4.32 percent in 1981, and then to 10.29 percent in 1991.

Concluding Observations

This review of church-mission dynamics in Northeast India leads to a number of observations. First, one is struck by the localized character of mission activity. From the early history of Christianity in the region, sharing the Gospel with one’s neighbors has been a constant. Depending on the strength of Christianity in each state, priority has always been given first to mission within one’s state or territory (i.e., to home mission). When one looks at the overall missionary program, the main recipients of

Arunachal Pradesh has the highest percentage of growth of Christians.
the missionaries’ efforts are within the Northeast India region itself. Although states like Manipur, Tripura, and Assam are the major recipients of missions, these states have also sent their own missionaries. The geoethnic characteristics described above also play a role here. Missionary work is directed mainly from the Christian tribal areas in the hills to the non-Christian plains areas. The main exception is the state of Arunachal Pradesh, which is the only tribal hill-state dominated by non-Christian religions.

A second area of interest is the role of Christianity in the modernization, or Westernization, of the tribal people. Colonial rule, Christianity, and education are the main agents of change or modernization of the tribals. The missionaries’ contribution in the field of education is significant. They reduced most languages to written form, imparted a basic civic sense to the people, and introduced formal education, thereby opening windows of knowledge to the tribal people that have enabled them to interact with the wider world. The missionaries were also given great opportunities. In Mizoram, for instance, the colonial government left the entire educational work in the hands of the missionaries. On their part, however, missionaries gave utmost attention to evangelism, for which education was preparatory. In most cases, Protestant missions gave almost exclusive attention to primary education, the main motive being to help people read the Bible. Finally, an observation on the understanding and practice of mission is in order. A dominant militaristic triumphalism permeates the sense of mission among the Christians of Northeast India. They have understood mission simply as evangelism, and evangelism mainly as verbal proclamation, and all as a battle for Christ to conquer new lands as an extension of God’s kingdom. This emotional spirit of conquest, which suits the mind-set of people who were traditionally warring people, also steers them to adopt an imperialistic mode of mission practice. Thus, the missionary enterprise in Northeast India typically gives little attention to cultural awareness and sensitivity. Conversion and church planting are the dominant goals of the mission enterprise, and all other activities are seen as aids to these ends. The success of missions is measured by the number of baptisms and churches planted. No critical and moral examination or theological reflection is allowed to interfere with this missionary enterprise. A wide breach between critical theological thinking and mission practice thus exists, and theological education has yet to make an impact on the various missionary endeavors.

Notes

1. I am indebted to David Scott, a friend and former colleague, who read an earlier version of this article, for his comments and suggestions.
2. These seven states are often referred to as the seven sisters. Some suggest that the recent birth of the state of Sikkim has produced an eighth sister. Since Sikkim, slightly removed territorially, is too recent an addition, I do not consider it as part of the region in the following discussion.
6. At the time of writing this article, the 2001 census report on religion was not yet available.
8. Downs, History of Christianity in India, p. 69 n. 15.
9. Ibid., p. 80.
12. Ibid., p. 188.
14. This was the original name given in 1840. The name was changed to Welsh Calvinistic Methodist’s Foreign Missionary Society in 1843. For convenience sake, we will use its popular name “Welsh Mission” henceforth.
15. Downs, History of Christianity in India, pp. 73–74.
18. Ibid., p. 242; Downs, History of Christianity in India, p. 73.
24. Ibid., p. 104.
27. Downs, History of Christianity in India, p. 108.
32. For a detailed treatment of the revivals and their contribution to Mizo Christianity, see Lalsangkima Pachuau, Ethnic Identity and Christianity: A Socio-Historical and Missiological Study of Christianity in Northeast India, with Special Reference to Mizoram (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2002), pp. 111–43.
33. Sainaithanga, Mizo Kohkan Chanchin, p. 21.
35. Ibid., pp. 37, 39.
37. Ibid., pp. 68–82.
43. Ibid., pp. 8–23.
51. Downs, *History of Christianity in India*, p. 120.
53. For further study on insurgency and Christianity in Northeast India, see Pachuau, *Ethnic Identity and Christianity*, pp. 29–58, 145–75.
57. These figures are calculated from the list of mission workers in different places, entitled “Evangelical Church of Maraland: Mission Field Liata Hriatuupa Zydua Moh List” (circulated by the church).
60. Ibid., p. 35. The life and works of the NMM from 1970 to the mid-1990s are briefly described in “The Formation of the Nagaland Baptist Council,” in *From Darkness to Light* (Kohima: Nagaland Baptist Church Council, 1997), pp. 117–28.
61. Author’s telephone interview with Hevukhu Achumi on June 29, 2002, in Bangalore.
63. The statistical report was conveyed to the author in the form of an e-mail letter dated August 16, 2002.
64. Author’s interview with David M. Syiem, pastor of Khasi Congregations outside Meghalaya in Northeast India, and Lyndan Syiem, a faculty member of Thomas Jones School of Mission and Evangelism, July 21, 2002, at the United Theological College, Bangalore, India.
66. Ibid., p. 488.
69. Ibid., pp. 104ff.

The Latourette Initiative for the Documentation of World Christianity

Yale Divinity Library is pleased to announce a proactive program to preserve and provide access to the documentation of world Christianity. This program, called the Latourette Initiative for the Documentation of World Christianity, provides funding for the microfilming of published and archival resources documenting the history of Christian missions and the life of the churches in the countries to which the missionaries were sent.

We welcome proposals from libraries, archival repositories, mission agencies, and others with collections of such documentation for projects that would help carry forward the work of the Latourette Initiative. We are particularly interested in ways that the Latourette Initiative might provide “seed money” that would leverage other resources to preserve and provide access to this documentation.

The Latourette Initiative for the Documentation of World Christianity is named for Kenneth Scott Latourette (1884–1968), who served as the D. Willis James Professor of Missions and World Christianity at Yale Divinity School. He was instrumental in changing the focus of the Day Missions Collection at Yale from a resource for training missionaries to a collection documenting the history of Christian missions. The endowment he established to further the work of the Yale Divinity Library provides the funding for the Latourette Initiative.

For more information on the Latourette Initiative or to discuss a possible project, please contact:

Paul F. Stuehrenberg
Yale Divinity Library
409 Prospect Street
New Haven, CT 06511

paul.stuehrenberg@yale.edu

Please include a description of the collection, where it is located, the state of its organization, and the physical condition of the documents.

—Paul F. Stuehrenberg
Librarian
Yale Divinity School
“Blessed Reflex”: Mission as God’s Spiral of Renewal

Kenneth R. Ross

“R”eally quite suddenly in 1963, something very profound ruptured the character of the nation and its people, sending organised Christianity on a downward spiral to the margins of social significance. So argues the historian Callum Brown in his provocatively titled recent book, The Death of Christian Britain. He describes a great change in the relation of the British people to the Christian faith that they had, by and large, espoused for more than a thousand years:

In unprecedented numbers, the British people since the 1960s have stopped going to church, have allowed their church membership to lapse, have stopped marrying in church and have neglected to baptise their children. Meanwhile, their children, the two generations who grew to maturity in the last thirty years of the twentieth century, stopped going to Sunday school, stopped entering confirmation or communicants classes, and rarely, if ever, stepped inside a church to worship in their entire lives. The cycle of inter-generational renewal of Christian affiliation, a cycle which had for so many centuries tied the people however closely or loosely to the churches and to Christian moral benchmarks, was permanently disrupted in the “swinging sixties.” Since then, a formerly religious people have entirely forsaken organised Christianity in a sudden plunge into a truly secular condition.1

This experience, through which most of us have lived, Brown goes on to illustrate not only with the familiar, relentless downward trend in all the statistical indicators of participation in church life but also, perhaps more important, by showing how markedly the population has departed from what he calls the “discursive domain” of Christianity.2 With this decline in mind, the literary critic A. N. Wilson also observes that there has occurred an epochal change in the relation of the British peoples to the Christian faith: “Now that the habit of learning the old Christian stories and prayers has all but died out, now that Christianity has turned itself back into a sect, there really seems to be no future. There will be Christians in the next generation, but we can be safely certain that there will be no next generation—that came to an end with the generation of T. S. Eliot.”3 So serious is the demise of Christian faith, in Wilson’s judgment, that he is led to predict that “Christianity will decline because Christians themselves no longer believe it to be true.”4

These two voices, among many others, suggest that we are entering a period when Christian faith has become peripheral, sectarian, and irrelevant to the construction of reality in which the British population is engaged.

One of the most ironic features of this sudden and dramatic collapse of Christian faith among the people of Britain is that it has occurred just at the point when British Christianity has registered what might well be judged to be its most spectacular success. Over the many centuries when Christian faith was deeply embedded in British institutions and popular culture, the churches had very limited impact beyond the shores of the United Kingdom. In the last two centuries, however, and particularly in the second half of the twentieth century, there has been a great response in many different parts of the world to the Christian Gospel introduced by missionaries from Britain.

To look no further than Scotland, we can say with certainty today that the number of those worldwide whose profession of Christian faith arises, directly or indirectly, from the work of Scottish missionaries far exceeds the total population of Scotland itself. Indeed, there are at least five Presbyterian churches worldwide owing their origins to Scottish influence and the work of Scottish missionaries that are today much bigger than the Church of Scotland itself;5 while there are also similarly originated movements of Christian faith that have happily flowed into strong united churches. Just as the church in Scotland has begun to crumble at its historic center, so on the various edges of its most far-flung missionary outreach, it has experienced a period of unprecedented growth and expansion.

The irony is compounded by the fact that the overseas missionary involvement, which has proved to be by far the most significant religious contribution that Scotland has made to the world, has always been a hand-to-mouth enterprise, a minority pursuit, rather on the fringe of the life of the church, lightly regarded by most of its mainstream leadership. Andrew Walls, a previous St. Colm’s lecturer, has commented on this anomaly: “The missionary movement is arguably the single most important event in the history of Western Christianity; certainly no other so profoundly altered the form of Christian presence in the world. Scotland played its full share within that movement. But while the Scottish perception of missions has sometimes (not always) been a high one, it is hard to escape the conclusion that the missionary project, whether forwarded by the abundance of the rich or the tithes of the poor, was always a peripheral one, always on the edge of the home church’s vision, always the direct concern of the few.”6

From a Christian point of view, it is difficult to reflect on this remarkable development without referring to the Pauline texts that speak of God’s topsy-turvy mode of operation. “The foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength. . . . God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are” (1 Cor. 1:25, 27–28 NIV adapted).

In keeping with the church’s own tradition of largely ignoring its overseas missionary engagement, contemporary critics such as Brown and Wilson make practically no reference to this dimension of the church’s life when they analyze its demise. You would certainly never guess from reading their work that they have lived through one of the great ages of expansion in the history of the Christian church or that this vigorous church growth was apparently ignored by agents of a Western church that is in supposedly terminal decline. In this respect, they reflect a common perception of Christianity in British society today. An important purpose of this article is to register the little-appreciated fact that, while British Christianity is apparently crumbling in its historic heartlands, in many of the new contexts around the world into which it has been transplanted, it is undergoing rapid, sustained, and vigorous growth.

Our task is to go further, however, and to ask whether any kind of fruitful relation is possible between the vigorous growth

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Kenneth R. Ross is General Secretary of the Church of Scotland Board of World Mission, based in Edinburgh. Formerly he was Professor of Theology at the University of Malawi where he taught from 1988 to 1998.
and the virtual collapse. Is there any way in which the growth on the periphery could reinvigorate the center?

A survey of Christian history might not, at least at first sight, be very encouraging. For Christianity appears to be not a very centrist kind of religion. Whereas most other religions have continued to be organized around their historic centers, Christianity has proved to be a pilgrim sort of faith—at its best when it is on a journey, crossing a frontier, entering a new context. Neither the fall of Jerusalem nor the fall of Rome in the ancient world brought about its demise. For although these had been significant centers, the Christian faith was already advancing across new frontiers by the time they were imperiled. It could readily be argued that it is quite typical of Christianity that, when its longtime European home is becoming inhospitable, it has already set off on a fresh journey and has been embraced by the peoples of the great southern continents on an unprecedented scale. On this analysis it could well be that modern Europe will share the fate of such earlier centers of Christian influence as North Africa or Turkey, which nurtured the faith in its early centuries but which today are largely bereft of Christian presence. The renewal of Christian faith occurring in non-Western societies is already leading to the establishment of new centers of Christian thought and action. It may be that the destiny of the church in Europe is simply to continue to be a steadily ebbing backwater within the onward flow of world Christianity until it has practically disappeared.

There is, however, another possibility. Just as Paul was driven by the vision that the weakened church in Jerusalem could be helped by the vigorous new congregations emerging in such places as Philippi (see Rom. 15:25-29; 2 Cor. 8:1-4), so it may be that the new life on what were once seen as the fringes will prove to be the source of renewal for today’s European church. What would have to happen for the renewal of the faith among the younger churches to have an invigorating effect upon the ancient, and allegedly dying, churches of the West? What would the Western churches have to do in order to be hospitable to such a movement and to promote it? I suggest that three steps would have to be taken.

Recognize That Mission and the Mission Field Have Completely Changed

To begin with, it would be necessary to recognize the integrity of the Christian faith of the younger churches of the south. Having been for centuries the repository of Christian faith and its authoritative expositor, the Western church must undergo a mental revolution if it is to recognize that Christianity’s center of gravity has shifted to the south. David Smith has commented, “The perplexity experienced by many European churches today is related to the struggle to come to terms with the fact that the real centers of Christian life and growth are now located in the non-Western world. Long established habits of thought and practice based on the assumption that the churches of the West occupy center-stage in the purposes of God must be abandoned in the light of this new reality. We find ourselves standing in the wings, witnessing others take the lead in God’s still unfolding drama of redemption.” This recognition is a big step for Western Christians to take. Ultimately, however, they have no choice. Having encouraged and enabled others to receive the Gospel on their own terms, the Western missionary must be prepared for the faith to find a new form and idiom. The cat is out of the bag. As Lamin Sanneh comments, “When one translates [the Gospel], it is like pulling the trigger of a loaded gun: the translator cannot recall the hurtling bullet. . . . The center of the religion shifted to the particular culture that was being addressed.” Having offered the faith to others, Western Christians must be prepared to live with the consequences of their passionate engagement with it; and with the reality that the outcome has often proved to be quite different from that which was anticipated. As Dana Robert has remarked, “Ultimately, the most interesting lessons from the missionary outreach during the Western colonial era is what happened to Christianity when the missionaries weren’t looking, and after the colonizers withdrew.”

The outcome, on a global scale, is that both the nature of the church and the structure of its mission have undergone an irreversible change. As Andrew Walls observes, “Christian faith is now more diffused than at any previous time in its history; not only in the sense that it is more geographically, ethnically and culturally widespread than ever before, but in the sense that it is diffused within more communities. The territorial ‘from-to’ idea that underlay the older missionary movement has to give way to a concept much more like that of Christians within the Roman Empire in the second and third centuries: parallel presences in different circles and at different levels, each seeking to penetrate within and beyond its circle.”

This conceptual shift involves not only a new humility on the part of the church in the West but also a new form of missionary engagement. It involves a new kind of missionary, with particular qualities. This need was recognized by Simon Barrington Ward when he reflected on what the new missionary situation meant for the Church Missionary Society: “We could never really escape the continuing concealed colonialism. But at least we must recognize now, wholeheartedly, that in so many ways we must decrease that others may increase. The world missionary task must be tackled by Christians from all the churches acting together and no longer by one-sided initiatives from or within the West. . . . We knew we must be smaller and more selective. But our goal was to help send, bring, and place the most creative and redemptive ‘people in mission’ we could find in situations where they could open the way to a deeply pervasive, spiritual renewal. Only people who are constantly being changed can bring change to others.” Gone are the days when Christian mission could be confused with the extension of Western influence or when the Christian missionary could be the epitome of dogmatism and inflexibility.

Recognize That We Are Always the Recipients as well as the Agents of Mission

A critical point to recognize in the new missionary paradigm is that all are addressees as well as agents of mission. The best missionaries have always recognized this reality. It is God’s mission. God is always the authentic subject of mission, and human involvement is always first as addressee and only then as agent. The untold story of the missionary movement is that it was the missionaries who were converted, as time and again they
came to an enlarged and a deepened understanding of the Gospel through their experience of encounter with another culture and context. This story remained, unfortunately, largely a secret, and the church at large was little aware that it was being transformed, or at least had the potential for transformation, through the encounter with others and their apprehension of the Gospel. Even after a generation when "partnership" has been the governing paradigm in the practice of mission, few members of the church in Scotland appear to have a vivid expectation that they will be on the receiving end of evangelization through engagement with church and mission elsewhere.

The thinking of many is still governed by a nineteenth-century linear model of mission, where it is all about the transference of something from here to there. Willem Saayman has pointed out that "in such an understanding the 'sending' church acts only as starting point and provider of personnel and resources. The 'sending' church in its essential nature, though, can be left totally untouched by the process." By contrast, Saayman proposes that "the process and progress from church to mission to church should rather be seen as cyclical, and specifically as an ascending, never-ending spiral. From the very beginning, therefore, the progress is not in a straight line away from the 'sending' church to some far-away unreached 'mission field', but rather curving back to it throughout." When I was visiting a Highland Presbyterian recently, one of the elders remarked to me that he regretted that we now have fewer missionaries serving in Africa because they made such fine ministers when they came back! He had detected that the outreach of the Church of Scotland in other parts of the world had "curved back" and had an invigorating effect on the church in Scotland.

In times past this "reflex" occurred through the exploits of missionaries and the contribution they could make when they returned to their home country. That dynamic has not disappeared, but it is complemented by two significant newer movements. The first of these is the migration of people from areas of church renewal and growth to areas of church decline. It is

Noteworthy

Personalia

Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, Massachusetts, appointed Daniel Jeyaraj as the Judson-Defrietas Associate Professor of World Christianity, effective July 1, 2003. He is editor of Dharma Deepika, a South Asian mission research journal.

Paul-Gordon Chandler, president and CEO of Partners International, Spokane, Washington, resigned to become rector of the Anglican Church of St. John the Baptist, Cairo, Egypt. He is the author of God's Global Mosaic (2000). The new president/CEO as of August 2003 is Jon Lewis, vice president of research and planning for Mission Aviation Fellowship, where he served in various positions for twenty-six years, including as a missionary pilot in Africa.


Died. Paul T. Lauby, 78, missionary scholar and administrator, May 18, 2003, in Madison, Wisconsin. Born in China of missionary parents, he served with Wycliffe Bible Translators in Papua New Guinea, in international mission administration, and with the English Language Institute in China from 1966 to 1987; he also was vice president and director of Urbania Mission Conventions for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship from 1987 to 1997. After leaving InterVarsity, he was the director of Middle East Media and then founded Leadership Development International, which started a Christian university in China.

Died. Robert Edward Harlow, 94, cofounder of Emmaus Bible College, now located in Dubuque, Iowa, and founder of Everyday Publications, Inc., March 10, 2003, at home in Frostproof, Florida. Harlow wrote more than fifty books, including Come and Dine: New Testament Readings for Every Day (1976). His Can We Know God? (1958) was the first of a series of books he wrote in simple English. It has sold some 500,000 copies in more than a dozen languages. A native of Toronto, he was also a missionary in the Congo.

Died. Daniel Joseph Harrison, 62, missionary and agency administrator, May 18, 2003, in Madison, Wisconsin. Born in China of missionary parents, he served with Wycliffe Bible Translators in Papua New Guinea, in international mission administration, and with the English Language Institute in China from 1966 to 1987; he also was vice president and director of Urbania Mission Conventions for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship from 1987 to 1997. After leaving InterVarsity, he was the director of Middle East Media and then founded Leadership Development International, which started a Christian university in China.

Died. William ("Bill") R. Bright, 81, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ, July 19, 2003, in Orlando, Florida. A California businessman, he became a Christian in 1944. While studying at Fuller Theological Seminary, he founded Campus Crusade in 1951 as a ministry to students at the University of California at Los Angeles. From that beginning, the organization has grown to a staff of 26,000 people in 191 countries, with 68 special ministries and projects that reach almost every segment of society. In 1957 he summarized the Christian message into 77 words, known as the "Four Spiritual Laws." The feature-length "Jesus" film was released by Campus Crusade in 1979. Since then it has been seen by more than five million people in 236 countries, and translated into more than 700 languages. Bright was the recipient of the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion in 1996.
The movements of African Christianity now increasingly making their presence felt in Britain are characterized by Roswith Gerloff as follows:

African missions do not distinguish between the spiritual and the material. They base evangelism on spiritual empowerment, as well as on social care for people. Different from European style linear structures, African missions travel along pre-existing social relations such as family, friendship, village or island community, and trade and work comradeship. They rest on charismatic leadership, communicate in songs and signals, and understand the human person in his or her relationship to community. Therefore faith becomes the light, reliable and comforting baggage in the process of migration and crisis. It testifies to a God who wanders with people through the wilderness. It believes in mutual respect and sharing. It turns the personal commitment of witnesses into a vehicle for being the gospel to be proclaimed.16

Is it possible that this surprising new movement of Christian

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Silliman University in the Philippines, where at various times he was senior pastor of the University Church, dean of the divinity school, vice president of the university, and acting president. From 1969 until retirement in 1989 he was head of the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, which works with nearly one hundred institutions in nine countries, including China. His books include Sailing on the Winds of Change: Two Decades in the Life of the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, 1969–1990 (1996) and A Man Without Guile: The Life of P. T. Chandi (1998).

Died. Ype Schaaf, 73, a Netherlands Reformed minister and journalist, on August 16, 2003, in Dokkum, Netherlands. He served with the United Bible Society in Africa, 1959–68. Following his return to the Netherlands, he became assistant general secretary of the Dutch Bible Society, later becoming chief editor of Friesch Dagblad, a daily Christian newspaper, and secretary of the missionary journal Wereld en Zending (World and mission). Until the end of his life, he devoted his time to Africa, especially to the Bible in Africa and theological publications by Africans in Africa. He is best known for his book On Their Way Rejoicing: The History and Role of the Bible in Africa (1994).

Announcing

The Church Meets the Muslim Community: An Anabaptist Consultation on Islam will be held October 23–26, 2003, at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Virginia. The featured speakers will be Dudley Woodberry, John A. Lapp, Lamin Sanneh, and Chantal Logan. For details, including suggested reading, visit www.emu.edu/churchandislam.

The Centre for Mission Studies at Union Biblical Seminary, Pune, India, will hold its tenth annual mission consultation January 15–17, 2004, with “Nationalism and Hindutva: A Christian Response” as the theme. Contact: Mark Laing, cms@ubs.ac.in or visit www.ubs.ac.in/cms/cms.html.

The English Department of Peking University, Beijing, and the Daniel R. Grant Center for International Studies of Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, Arkansas, are cosponsoring a conference Missionaries and Translation: Sino-Western Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Times, 1840–1950, to be held May 23–25, 2004, at Peking University. For information, go to www.obu.edu/intstudies.

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, in Deerfield, Illinois, will host a consultation on missionology June 21–22, 2004, with the theme “Doing Theology in a Globalizing World.” The consultation will honor Paul G. Hiebert, distinguished professor of mission and anthropology at TEDS. Contact: Craig L. Ott, associate professor of mission, cott@tiu.edu.

In September 2003, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California, renamed its School of World Mission to School of Intercultural Studies. Dean C. Douglas McConnell also reports expansion of the school’s offerings in Islamic studies with the addition of Evelyne Reisacher and Joseph Cumming to the faculty, and the availability of a new concentration, Mission to Children at Risk.

New possibilities for missiological research in Norway are now available at the Norwegian School of Mission and Theology, Stavanger. The school has received government accreditation to offer the Ph.D. in theology with a concentration in missiology.

Thirty-four Anglican theologians from twenty-two countries met May 13–16, 2003, at Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts, to establish a voluntary network of Anglican Contextual Theologians. The network will provide a forum for multiple theological voices within Anglicanism to be heard and will advance resources for theological education and leadership formation for the Anglican Communion. For details, visit www.anglicancommunion.org/acns.

The first National Missionary Congress of the Roman Catholic Church in Brazil drew more than 400 participants in July 2003. Discussion of mission at the congress gave particular attention to poverty, diversity, and martyrdom. The congress, held at the initiative of the National Missionary Council, was scheduled in preparation for the Second American Missionary Congress and the Seventh Latin American Missionary Congress to be held in November 2003 in Guatemala City.

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mission may prove to be a spiral of renewal? Could the old “mission fields” of the “Third World” provide the springboard for a fresh evangelization of the West?7

One of the most fascinating features of this new missionary paradigm is that, by and large, it is mission from the poor to the rich, from the periphery to the center in the global economy. What excites the Christian imagination about this development is that, after the long years when the Evangel was compromised by being intertwined with imperial power and economic exploitation, it is now restored to the poor and marginalized, who were its original agents. Marveling at the fact that it was despised Galileans who first preached the Gospel that eventually won the allegiance of the mighty Roman Empire, James Engel and William Dyrness attempt to translate this history into contemporary terms and suggest that “a good illustration would be to suppose the gospel would spread from the poorest of the poor in Africa to Wall Street in New York, the Miracle Mile in Chicago or the seats of power in Washington, D.C. Perhaps the gospel would capture the hearts of itinerant day laborers in Nigeria and spread by traders throughout Africa. Eventually one of them is assigned to an embassy in Washington, D.C., and starts a small fellowship that acts like an igniting spark.”18 As a matter of fact, this kind of evangelistic movement is already happening. Certainly it would stand out as one of God’s surprises if today’s asylum seekers were to prove to be the agents of renewal for faith and life in the West!

The second great trend that we must notice is moving in the opposite direction. Just as migration is bringing non-Westerners into the West as never before, so Westerners are traveling and being exposed to the non-Western world on an unprecedented scale. In 2000, 47 million people took flights out of the United Kingdom, and this number is currently increasing by 5 percent per year. Even if only a modest proportion of these travelers encounter vibrant new expressions of Christian faith in the course of their travels, this exposure would be a significant expression of mission in our time. Furthermore, the arrival of the Internet has vastly increased the contact that people have with distant parts of the world. If, of the 400,000 e-mails sent every second, only a tiny proportion contained material of missional importance, we stand to prove that this Internet phenomenon will be an increasing nuisance. But for creative agencies, ways are already being found to encourage and support these activities as additional species and types of Christian relationship and development.”21 Not least of the reasons for undertaking such adaptation is the fact that exposure to the youthful vigor of Christian movements elsewhere may be the spark that ignites a renewed experience of faith for a new generation of Westerners.

Cultivate the Sense of Adventure That is Essential to Authentic Christian Mission

There can be little doubt that the second half of the twentieth century was a time of rapid cultural change in Britain or that this period included a marked recession of Christian faith. So much so that Andrew Walls has remarked that “western Europe has become a prime area, perhaps the prime area for identification as a mission field. It would be easy to adapt some of the nineteenth-century descriptions of the need of the heathen—the ignorance of religion, the immorality, the proneness to warfare, the inhumanities and injustice widely accepted in society—as a stirring call to
Christians of the southern continents to undertake the salvation of the west." From a slightly different angle Lesslie Newbigin made a similar observation when he remarked that "the attacks on [the liberal, secular democratic state] from powerful new religious fanatics are possible only because its own internal weaknesses have become so clear: the disintegration of family life, the growth of mindless violence, the vandalism which finds satisfaction in destroying whatever is comely and useful, the growing destruction of the environment by limitless consumption fueled by ceaseless propaganda, the threat of nuclear war, and—as the deepest root of it all—the loss of any sense of a meaningful future." At the same time, just as the nineteenth-century missionaries had to learn, often the hard way, that the societies in which they found themselves were not all bad and that indeed they often had much to teach the missionary, so it will be a surprise if the postmodern Western societies do not possess, besides their obvious decadence, features that will make possible a new, revealing, and energizing appropriation of the Gospel of Christ. Is not such a new cultural frontier one that excites the Christian imagination? If there is one thing the Christian church should have learned from its long history, and particularly from the great age of expansion over the last two centuries, it is how to engage with a new cultural context. As David Smith has pointed out: "It should be possible for churches possessing two centuries of accumulated experience and expertise in cross-cultural missionary endeavour to discover faithful and creative ways of ensuring that Christ becomes a living option for a generation shaped by postmodern culture." Among the lessons learned from this experience would be the confidence that Christ is translatable, that new language is not threat but opportunity, that there is need to take risks, to be ready for the Gospel to be seen in a new light, to be willing to let the terms be set by the "receptor" community. In the missionary's experience of learning a new language and seeking to communicate the Gospel in that new language, there were invariably two stages. The first was one of frustration, where the missionary was painfully aware of his or her inability to communicate the gospel message in accustomed terms. The second stage was the gloriously liberating one when the missionary realized that the new language was opening up all kinds of new insights into the meaning of the Gospel, sometimes turning received understandings upside down. To reach that second stage it was necessary for the missionary to enter deeply into the language and culture, to esteem it, to come to love it. Only through such experience will the faith be commended to the peoples of the West in the new cultural context into which they have entered. But you reach that stage only when you have the missionary sense of adventure that takes you to the vulnerability of a new place with the confidence that the Gospel of Christ can be translated into the native idiom.

We began with Callum Brown's claim that organized Christianity in Britain has been sent on "a downward spiral to the margins of social significance." I have attempted to suggest that there is evidence of another movement, which should not be discounted by anyone seeking to take a longer view: mission as what Willem Saayman called "an ascending, never-ending spiral." Today, as we survey the wreckage of a once-strong church in the United Kingdom and observe the vigorous new growth of Christianity in the non-Western world, this contrast should not be a source of despair or demoralization. On the contrary! There can be a renewing force channeled from the latter to the former: mission as God’s spiral of renewal! It takes effect as we recognize the changed reality, open ourselves to engagement with the other, and engender the confidence that the new cultural frontier is not impermeable to the Gospel of Christ but rather represents an opportunity to rediscover Jesus Christ and make the Gospel a living option for the peoples of Britain in the twenty-first century. Were these three dynamics to take effect, then it may transpire that the obituary of Christianity in Britain was published prematurely.

Notes

2. See, e.g., Brown, Death of Christian Britain, p. 195.
5. Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Presbyterian Church of Korea (TongHap), Presbyterian Church of Korea (HapDong), and Presbyterian Church (USA). See Jean-Jacques Bauswein and Lukas Vischer, eds., The Reformed Family Worldwide: A Survey of Reformed Churches, Theological Schools, and International Organizations (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999).
13. Oral testimony, Presbytery of Dunkeld and Meigle, Pitlochry, May 1993, p. 573. In another article Walls makes a similar point in reviewing Owen Chadwick's Victorian Church: "Chadwick's work reveals that the British missionary movement at its height was only peripheral to the Victorian church. One of the features of the nineteenth century Western Christianity that most determined the

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My Pilgrimage in Mission

Jacques Dupuis, S.J.

I was born on December 5, 1923, in Huppaye in the province of Brabant, Belgium. I come from a well-to-do family with a long tradition of liberal professions. My father was an engineer who later became chief manager of an important factory of heavy metallurgy. My mother came from a family with a tradition of notaries. In his professional work my father was very demanding on himself and on others; he was a perfectionist who did not tolerate mediocrity. But he was at the same time very human in his dealings with more than a thousand subordinates, and an example to them of professional honesty and conscientiousness. He was extremely just in his dealings with all and, notwithstanding the high demands he made, managed to endear himself to those under his direction. My mother was nothing short of a saint. Her meekness, attention to all, and boundless generosity made her an ideal mother. I always thought that my parents complemented each other wonderfully well. They managed to build a most closely united family. We were four children; each other very closely in age and were really educated together; the younger brother followed me by seven years.

Though born in Huppaye, I spent the whole of my youth in Charleroi, in the province of Hainaut, which was in those days one of the biggest industrial centers of Belgium, called the black country because of the many coal mines and factories, with their mountain-like heaps of coal refuse and blast furnaces forming the horizon. This is where my father exercised his profession. This is also where in 1929, at the age of five, I entered the Jesuit College du Sacré-Coeur, where I would spend twelve years of schooling—six in primary school and six in the humanities, or secondary school. All I know I have learned from the Jesuits: at the College du Sacré-Coeur to begin with, and with the Jesuits later when I joined the Society of Jesus. At the Jesuit College I received an exquisite education. The six years of Greco-Latin humanities were especially rich in academic as well as cultural pursuits. The students and the Jesuit fathers who were teaching them enjoyed excellent human relations, amounting to a deep friendship. This setting influenced my vocation. I developed at once a priestly and a Jesuit vocation in the most natural fashion. Both came together and were practically inseparable.

Eventually I joined the Society of Jesus in September 1941, during the war and under the German occupation. The first years of training were hard, especially with the restrictions and precarious conditions imposed by the war. Those years consisted in two years of novitiate done in Arlon, two years of classical studies in Namur, and three years of philosophy in Louvain. During those years I developed the wish to go to India as a missionary. No one is ever sent to the “foreign missions” who has not clearly expressed to the superiors a desire to go and work there. I had been for a long time attracted to India because of its rich cultural and religious heritage, but without thinking from the beginning in terms of a missionary vocation. Gradually, however, I began to think that God was calling me to that precise vocation. I informed my superiors of my desire to enroll for the Calcutta Mission of the society. I was confident that the authenticity of my vocation would eventually be confirmed by the superiors’ approval of my request, and I rejoiced greatly when they notified me of their approval.

Growth in India

In December 1948 I said farewell to my family and proceeded to my destination in our Calcutta Mission. The departure was very painful, less for those who went than for those who stayed. As far as I was concerned, I was seeing my dream fulfilled and my vocation followed, however hard it was to depart. It was much harder and more painful for the family that one left behind. In those days a vocation for the foreign missions in India meant that one left family and country once for all; there would be no return. The bridges were being burned. And so, when the time came, I said farewell to my father (my mother had already died), expressing my trust that we would meet again in heaven, when and if both of us got there. I expressed the same hope when I took leave of my brothers and my sister.

Arriving at Calcutta produced a cultural shock. Enormous
crowds of people were walking the streets of a city that was already then the most crowded city of the country; the sick and the dying were lying on the streets, whom the sisters of Mother Teresa, walking the streets two by two every morning, would come and pick up, to bring to a home where they could die a dignified death. But there was too, especially among the poor and the underprivileged, in the slums and in the backyards, an enormous potential of human solidarity and mutual help. In an immortal manner Collins and Lapière have described in The City of Joy this unique character of Calcutta, where concord, mutual comprehension, and charity seemed to be the privileged gift of the poor and the needy. There was also an immense human and cultural heritage to be discovered slowly, and a rich historic past on which this heritage was built. From the outset I was conquered by this city of contrasts, which I then supposed would become my home for the rest of my life.

My first station in Calcutta was in the school department of our Jesuits' Saint Xavier's College, which numbered more than a thousand students in the school and several thousand in the university college department. For two years I taught subjects, in English, totally unfamiliar to me and for which, through hard work, I kept myself from day to day one lesson ahead of the students: such courses as the history of England and of the British Empire in India, or else of English literature. The time when the school programs would be thoroughly revised, to be adapted to the Indian culture and situation, had not yet come. This situation contrasted with the ideas I had already formed in my mind about adaptation to local culture, which would later be called inculturation. But I had to make the best of it. More interestingly, the course of religion for the Christian students (who were a small minority) and of "moral science," as it was called, for the others, were entrusted to me in the higher classes. This responsibility was much more congenial and gave me an opportunity to try my hand at the subjects that would later become my life's work. Between teaching catechism and lecturing in theology, there is continuity with a difference, as there should also be, in another sense, between teaching human values on a natural plane and deepening them through a religious faith. I had the sense that our teaching, especially of such topics, should refer much more to the Indian religious tradition than was yet being done.

On the occasion of these classes and through human contacts with the "non-Christian" students, as they were called, I had the opportunity to discover the richness of human gifts as well as the depth of cultural and religious endowments that they carried in themselves and that they had learned from their family education and the religious tradition to which they belonged. Such contacts belied the trite negative ideas that still remained prevalent in the West about the worth or lack of worth of the other religious traditions. From the outset of my life in India, I was determined to deepen my familiarity with the religious patrimony of the country and, later, as a student of theology, to give special attention to the problem of the relationship between the Christian faith and the other religious traditions of the world. How could one make sense of the universal mission of Christianity for the whole world without having thereby to depreciate and undervalue the significance of the other religious faiths for their adherents? My vocation as a theologian of religions and of religious pluralism was already coming to the fore.

I did my licentiate in theology in India from 1952 to 1955 and later proceeded to Rome, where I obtained the doctorate (1957–59) with a thesis entitled "The Spirit of Man: A Study on the Religious Anthropology of Origen" (published in French). I then returned to India, where I started teaching theology, first in Kurseong, in the Himalayas, and later in Delhi. My first years of teaching coincided with the years of preparation for the Second Vatican Council (1959–61) and those when it took place (1962–65). The council constituted an enormous challenge in all spheres connected with theological training and teaching, starting with the liturgical reform that was being initiated, passing on to a new notion of the church, from a perfect society to the people of God, and a reversal of perspectives on the mystery of the church, from pyramidal and hierarchical to communal and sacramental; more important still, perhaps, in the Indian context, there was a new attitude toward the other religious traditions, recommending dialogue and collaboration. It would take time to assimilate all these new insights and to sort out their concrete applications, yet there was a desire not to waste time in making a start but rather to forge ahead. Growing attention came to be given in teaching and in pastoral and liturgical practice to the religious traditions of India. They were integrated on the theoretical level into the various subjects of which the theological curriculum was made up, and on the practical level into common worship. During all that time, from 1959 till 1984, I became involved on the national level of the Catholic Church in India in programs of theological and liturgical renewal in the Indian context, attending national seminars and congresses and helping to draft liturgical texts adapted to the Indian context.

Broadened Responsibilities in Rome

The work in India was interrupted by my sudden transfer in 1984 to the Gregorian University of Rome, where I became a regular member of the theological faculty. I had been in India thirty-six years when my transfer to Rome was decided. I had never wished or even envisaged the possibility of leaving India, where I had come to live, to work, and to die. However, my superiors thought that my services would be better employed in the universal context of a Roman university. I obeyed as I had learned to do as a religious and a Jesuit.

I have said many times, and continue to think today in the light of what I have seen and lived thereafter, that my exposure to the Indian reality has been the greatest grace I received from God as far as my vocation as a theologian and a professor is concerned. One cannot live thirty-six years in India without being deeply affected by the experience. This is already true at the level of sheer human reality. By sheer numbers it is no longer possible to think that the future of the world lies on "this" side; it belongs, whether we like it or not, to the so-called Third World, and especially to the Asian continent. It is enough to think that the population of China and India together make up today over 2 billion people out of the 6 billion that cover the earth to have our scale of values revised and our own claims redimensioned. The world tomorrow will be very different from that which we have known in the past; it has already changed enormously and is destined to change even more.
The grace of my exposure to the Asian reality becomes more evident if one thinks in terms of the rich, ancient cultural heritage of such Eastern countries as India and China. One cannot but admire the exquisite beauty of ancient Hindu temples and Buddhist monasteries. The artistic patrimony of those and other traditions that nourished the spiritual life of the people I was meeting on my life’s journey. I had gone to India with the prejudices enshrined in our Western civilization and even in our Christian tradition. We thought we were the best, not to say the only ones, where civilization is concerned; we also had it engrained in us that Christianity was the only “true religion” and therefore the only one with an unquestionable right to exist. Not in the sense that there were no human values to be found in the religious life of the people we met and in the religious traditions to which they belonged—we had happily got beyond a purely negative appraisal—but these values were at best the expression in the various cultures of the universal aspiration toward the Infinite Being, innate in human nature itself. In the course of time, I came to realize that such a position was untenable and that we would have to revise our premises altogether. The religious traditions of the world did not represent primarily the search of people and peoples for God through their history but the search of God for them. Theology of religions, which was still taking its first steps, would have to make a complete turn from a Christian-centered perspective to one centered on the personal dealings of God with humankind throughout the history of salvation.

In this perspective the religions became the “gifts of God to the peoples” of the world and could not but have a positive significance in God’s overall plan for humanity and a saving significance for their members. With this discovery, the challenge for a theology of religions became how to combine the Christian faith in Jesus Christ the universal Savior with the positive meaning in God’s plan of salvation of the other religious traditions and their saving value for their adherents. My entire theological work thereafter has wrestled with the need to overcome the apparent either-or dilemma between these two affirmations and to show that, far from contradicting each other, they are complementary, if one succeeds in going beyond the appearances. So even while I was still teaching in India, my literary production was centered on this key problem; it would become even more so after my transfer to Rome, despite the distance imposed by the new circumstances and by the passage of years. I think I have been able to formulate a theological perspective that makes sense of both affirmations, and I have developed it gradually with greater precision and a more secure foundation in the Christian revelation and tradition. My efforts, however, remain partial and open to improvement; theology is never ended. It is clear, though, that the theology I have developed and the teaching I have imparted are very different from what they would have been without my Indian exposure. My mind and my intellectual makeup have been turned on their head by the experience.

Comparing my teaching experience in Rome with the one I had enjoyed in India, I found there was, on the one hand, something to regret from the past and, on the other hand, something new that was welcome. In India I had the privilege of close contact with Indian students in theology, as they were rediscovering their cultural roots and asking radical questions on issues that they were living personally at a deep level in their own life: the relationship between their Christian faith and the religious traditions of their ancestors, to which in some cases their families still belonged. Close contact with them in such situations was a deep experience; it was also a powerful incentive to forge ahead with a thorough reconsideration of the meaning of other religious traditions in God’s plan for humankind. But the much larger audience that I found in Rome for my courses on religions and on Christology was also a powerful incentive to try to meet the expectations that the students were placing on me. The cosmopolitan character of the audience, which always included a large number of nationalities, was another source of inspiration. It gave me the feeling that what I would manage to convey could spread to all continents and so be multiplied. And I often have been able to verify that this multiplication was in fact happening.

**Interreligious Dialogue and the Mystery of Christ**

Whether in India or in Rome, I have always tried to share with my students what I have personally experienced of the faith, and especially of the person and the mystery of Jesus Christ. Throughout my teaching career, I taught the course on Christology, which I considered a great privilege. I can say sincerely that over my forty years of teaching, trying to deepen my understanding of the mystery of Christ has been a continuous passion. It also helped to enrich my own personal relation with the Lord. If, as I hope, I have been able to convey to the students my passion for Jesus Christ and helped them to increase their own love for the Lord, I will consider myself fully rewarded for my labor. The course on the theology of religions was of course closely related to Christology. I have always been convinced that the mystery of Jesus Christ is of necessity at the center of a Christian theology of religions. I always combined both very closely, as my publications amply show. Over the years I discovered that, far from endangering faith in Jesus Christ, a positive approach to the other religions helps to discover new depths in the mystery. This correlation is also something I hope to have been able to convey to my students.

In the course of time, I developed a concept of theology as hermeneutics (interpretation), which could no longer proceed along a priori dogmatic lines in a merely deductive manner but would first be inductive, starting from the experience of lived reality and the questions that the context raises, thereafter to search for answers in the light of the revealed message and tradition. Theology was becoming interpretation in context, and this understanding involved a reinterpretation. Such a way of theologizing was much more problematic than had been the traditional way, which followed a purely a priori and dogmatic method. It did imply some risks and dangers, against which one had to guard oneself carefully. But it seemed also to be the only way of doing theology that would really meet the concrete reality of the world in which we are living. Where the theology of religions was concerned, it meant that those could not claim to

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**My own faith has been deepened through dialogue with the religions.**

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engage in it seriously who had not been exposed at length to the concrete reality of the other religious traditions and of the religious life of their followers.

The danger is often expressed that the practice of interreligious dialogue and, even more, the new theology of religions that is in the making is detrimental to Christian faith and risks leading to doctrinal relativism and indifferentism. Some want to reaffirm the “Christian identity” against such imminent dangers. The objection comes from people who have never been in serious contact with the reality of other religions or even met persons who practice them sincerely and profoundly. Those who, on the contrary, have made the effort at a true and sincere encounter with others have had their faith strengthened in the process and deepened by the experience. I would count myself among this number, in more than one way. To begin with, the shock of the encounter forces us to rethink various prejudices and exclusivist positions, as though God had revealed himself and was present only in the Judeo-Christian tradition. A purification of the faith is necessary to divest it from preconceived ideas. There can also ensue a simplification and an enrichment of the faith, which will reach fuller maturity. Enrichment, I say: Through the experience and testimony of the others, Christians will be able to discover at greater depth certain aspects, certain dimensions, of the divine Mystery that they had perceived less clearly and that have been communicated less clearly by Christian tradition. Purification, at the same time: The shock of the encounter will often raise questions, force Christians to revise gratuitous assumptions and to destroy deep-rooted prejudices or overthrow certain overly narrow conceptions and outlooks. I may testify that my own faith has been purified and deepened through the process of dialogue and familiarity with the religions and their members.

It is in this perspective that my books find their place. The challenge consists in asking whether and how Christian faith in Jesus Christ the universal Savior is compatible with the affirmation of a positive role of the other religions for the salvation of their members, in accordance with the one salvific plan designed by God for the whole of humankind. I, among others, give a positive answer to the question and build my argument on data from both the revealed Word of God and the Christian tradition. Not all theologians, however, are disposed to agree with such a positive assessment of the religions of the world. Nor has the church’s central doctrinal authority welcomed the thesis without expressing strong reservations, as illustrated by the discussions and the controversy generated by my 1997 book Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism. Yet I remain persuaded that the thesis of this book is important to the church for the exercise of its mission to the world, and to the world itself, in this age of universal dialogue among peoples, cultures, and religions. The church is duty bound to recognize in a spirit of gratitude to God the divine endowments enshrined in the other religious traditions, even as it is bound to proclaim to the world what God has done in a decisive manner for humankind in Jesus Christ.

The Legacy of Robert Henry Codrington

Allan K. Davidson

In the preface to his book The Melanesians: Studies in their Anthropology and Folk-Lore (1891), Robert Codrington wrote, “One of the first duties of a missionary is to try to understand the people among whom he works.” He himself reflected a deep commitment to this value. Over his many years with the Melanesian people, he gained a deep knowledge of their society, languages, and customs through a close association with them. Codrington was careful, however, in making claims about his understanding, quoting with approval the words of the Methodist missionary Lorimer Fison: “When a European has been living for two or three years among savages he is sure to be fully convinced that he knows all about them; when he has been ten years or so amongst them, if he be an observant man, he finds that he knows very little about them, and so begins to learn.”

Codrington and the Melanesian Mission

Codrington was born in 1830 in Wroughton, Wiltshire, England; both his father and his paternal grandfather were Anglican clergymen. Codrington attended Charterhouse from 1845 to 1848 and then Wadham College, Oxford, graduating with a B.A. in 1852 and an M.A. in 1856. He was elected to a fellowship at Wadham, which he held from 1855 to 1893. Ordained a deacon in 1855 and priest in 1857, he served as a curate to Edmund Hobhouse in Oxford. Hobhouse became the first bishop of Nelson (New Zealand), and Codrington followed him out to New Zealand, serving at Collingwood for eighteen months from 1860 to 1861 and then at Waimea. Codrington was a moderate High Churchman. He was not impressed with colonial society and found himself very much at home working in the Melanesian Mission. Codrington was not an ambitious man, declining both the post of first bishop of Dunedin and the missionary bishopric of Melanesia after Patteson’s death.

The Melanesian Mission, inaugurated in 1849 by the Anglican bishop of New Zealand, George Augustus Selwyn, was unique in its missionary approach. The mission “was a mixture of pragmatism, given . . . [Selwyn’s] inadequate financial and human resources, and romantic idealism associated with his vision,” which was “to make my diocese the great missionary centre of the Southern Ocean.” Working in the Solomon Islands and the northern islands of what is now known as Vanuatu, Selwyn recruited young men and later young women to come back to New Zealand for training, with the hope that when they returned home, they would become evangelists among their own people. From the outset the mission took a positive approach to Melanesians and their society. Selwyn rejected the evangelical language and attitude of his age, which condemned people as “vile,” “poor heathen,” or “perishing savages.” John Coleridge Patteson, who was consecrated as the first missionary bishop of Melanesia in 1861, built on this approach, writing that “every single man, because he is a man, is a partaker of that
The mission was noted for its egalitarian ideals and innovative approach to mission, but it had its limitations. Faced with the huge diversity of languages in Melanesia, it opted to use English. From the outset, there was a strong desire to create a “native church” in Melanesia. The emphasis on the common humanity shared by all people, which is a fundamental aspect of Christianity, was thus applied in the mission's context.

Codrington served as headmaster of the Melanesian Mission school on Norfolk Island from 1867 to 1887. The school was intended to reduce the distance between the Melanesian islands and the mission base, as well as to escape the colder Auckland climate. Initially, Codrington thought of his residence at Norfolk to “those ancient monasteries in the N. of England or in Germany you may read of where there is a good deal of education going on side by side of labour, and two kinds of education viz. the Christian civilizing of savages & the learning of divinity by advanced students.”

Codrington took his fair share in the running of the institution. “Somehow,” he wrote in 1869, “I never have time for anything now being chief cook, having 23 pupils, and a pupil teacher to coach up, and the younger clergy also twice a week.” He frequently complained of not being able to find time to read.

Codrington’s letters helped fuel public outrage over the labor traffic.

Although he had been offered a parish in England in 1869, he had no desire to leave Norfolk Island, as “one certainly gets attached to the people[,] a little to the place but not much.” On top of his teaching responsibilities, Codrington designed the dining hall, which seated 140, acquainted himself with printing, taught some students to play the harmonium, and made wedding rings for the Melanesian brides and plum puddings for the community wedding breakfasts. In addition, he experimented with photography, sketched when he could, and enjoyed gardening.

When Bishop Patteson was killed in 1871, Codrington became head of the mission, a post he held until J. R. Selwyn was consecrated in 1877. This position added considerably to Codrington’s administrative responsibilities. In one letter, he mentioned having received seventy letters and written thirty-five in reply, along with a report. Another burden was the oversight of the building of St. Barnabas’s Chapel, which well-wishers in England saw as a fitting memorial to Bishop Patteson. Codrington entered into a lengthy correspondence over the problems with hiring stonemasons and carpenters on Norfolk Island. With no one available to carve the caps and bases for the marble shafts, Codrington set about the task himself, writing, “I never tried to carve stone & am afraid. Besides I have so little time.” He was not impressed that Patteson’s cousin and biographer, the novelist Charlotte Yonge, decided to donate a pipe organ for the chapel, “which we don’t want & which will ruin us to get here & make a place for it, and after all will be but seldom used at the best, and probably never really used up to its capabilities.”

There are few reflections in Codrington’s letters about the underlying purpose of the mission, apart from vague references to people being “Christianized.” Conversion for Codrington was seen in terms of changes in people’s way of life. After two weeks’ residence at Mota, where George Saravia, the first Melanesian deacon, worked, Codrington reflected that “the great fact is that there is now a native missionary among his own countrymen, who can well be trusted to teach them sensibly and according to native ideas.” He did not expect the island to “be Christian yet awhile,” although it might be “nominally so in a very short time.”

Codrington was especially critical of the impact of labor recruiters for Queensland and Fijian sugar plantations in the Melanesian islands, referring to their activity as “the slave trade.” He was appalled at the deception the traffickers used and the depopulation and destabilization that their activities were causing. In his view, the laborers who returned to their islands “come back much worse than they went.” Reflecting his prejudices against the worst aspects of colonial society, he complained that “the low kind of Europeans are a worse lot in every way almost than the ordinary savages—what the real value of their civilization is[,] is a very difficult question to determine.” Codrington believed that Patteson’s death at Nukapu was a Melanesian payback or revenge killing because of the activity of what he called slavers, who had forcibly taken away five young men from the island.

Pioneering Linguistic Research in Melanesia

Codrington made five voyages to the islands, including several lengthy stays at Mota, and wrote up and illustrated journals of his experiences there. He loathed sea travel and disliked island food, although he confessed, “A fortnight at Mota is worth a fortnight’s sea sickness.” The expertise he developed in the Mota language was considerable. He was involved in translating portions of the Bible for liturgical and teaching purposes. The mission did not place a high priority on completing the translation of the whole Bible, and Codrington did not finish it until 1912. In 1875 he wrote that he had translated the historical parts of the Old Testament, and “when that is in print I shall not see it
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necessary to do any more translation into Mota," preferring to begin work in one of the Solomon Island languages. In 1898, while he was translating the Prophets, he complained, "I am not altogether in favor of translating obscure passages & parts of the scripture until a fair number of natives can make something out of them. . . . In a mission with a great number of tongues, I shd think it better to get the New Test. complete in ten of them, before getting the Old Test. complete in one."24

While Mota was the common language, students were grouped with missionaries, who were encouraged to learn languages from different areas in Melanesia. Codrington endorsed Patteson's approach, believing that Melanesians "must teach their countrymen in their own tongue, and by their own tongue they must be taught." In the same way the layperson "must be preached to in his own language, and in his own language he ought to pray."25

Patteson gained a reputation as a prodigious linguist and shared some of his early work on Melanesian languages with Friedrich Max Müller, the noted Oxford Sanskrit scholar and linguist. In 1865 Müller encouraged Patteson to make a systematic study of Melanesian languages, arguing that "savage languages alone can show how far languages can change." He sent to Patteson, via Codrington, who was visiting England, Edward Tylor's recently published *Researches into the early history of mankind and the development of civilization* (1865), along with his own review of it. Müller suggested, "It will show you how valuable accurate, trustworthy observations of the habits of savages are for many important inquiries."26

Patteson, who was too preoccupied with the demands of overseeing the mission to undertake detailed philological studies, encouraged Codrington to engage in linguistic work.

**Conversion for Codrington could be seen in changes in people's way of life.**

Codrington's researches culminated in *The Melanesian Languages*, published in 1885. In the same year he was awarded an honorary D.D. from Oxford. Codrington included in his book a comparative examination of seventy words in forty Melanesian languages and the study of the grammar of thirty-five different languages. Most of his research was carried out among the students at Norfolk Island "by the medium generally of the Mota language" and reflected the contacts they provided him with the central Melanesia societies.27 It was a notable achievement, given the heavy demands placed on him.

Codrington was faced with trying to understand both the bewildering multiplicity of languages in Melanesia and the physical and cultural diversity among the peoples. In a lengthy letter in 1874 to the German anthropologist Georg Gerland, he identified what he called "possibly [a] modern Polynesian element" or "pure Polynesians" living at places like Bellona, Tikopia, and Nukapu within the Melanesian area. He noted considerable difference between "the Banks' islanders and New Hebrides people" when compared with those living in the Solomon Islands. In distinguishing people, he referred to practices prevalent in some areas such as head-hunting and "native art and industry." Codrington distinguished between Melanesians in the Solomon and Santa Cruz's groups who chewed betel nut and those to the east who drank kava. He identified two major language groups, the Melanesian tongues, which were marked by considerable differentiation but with "a general unity of language at bottom," and the Polynesian languages, which were "characterized by unchangeableness" or similarity.28 The recognition of two major language families in Melanesia—what are now called the Austronesian (the Polynesian languages) and the non-Austronesian (or the older Melanesian languages)—fits in well with later philological understanding.29

George W. Stocking has indicated that although Codrington was in touch with "evolutionary anthropology" through his contacts with Edward Tylor, whose lectures he attended in Oxford in 1883, Codrington "never really became a convert to evolutionaryism."30 Codrington was a no armchair theorist like Müller, Tylor, and Gerland, with whom he corresponded. Before field-based anthropology and its development as a professional academic discipline, missionaries were among the best informants regarding other peoples, their cultures, and their languages. Missionaries' long-term residence and their commitment to learning people's languages made them participant-observers in societies and cultures that they were seeking to modify. Codrington was among the most accomplished of the nineteenth-century missionary scholars who contributed significantly to the early growth of anthropology through their ethnographic and philological researches.31

**Pioneering Anthropological Insights**

In *The Melanesians*, which was his major contribution to anthropology, Codrington indicated that his approach was "as far as possible to give the natives' account of themselves by giving what I look down from their lips and translating what they wrote themselves."32 The adoption of an evolutionary framework and use of social Darwinism by anthropologists led them to see gradations among people from savagery to civilization, with inherently racist overtones. Codrington avoided these conclusions, retaining a positive approach to Melanesians. Referring to a book by Edward Tylor, Codrington noted that he "gives credit most deservedly as most people don't, to savages for having plenty of brains. He quite confirms what I always have said that savages are wonderfully like other people."33 Following his reading of John Lubbock's *Origin of Civilization and the Primitive Condition of Man* (1870), Codrington concluded that "the savages of the scientific man receded [sic] farther and farther from my experience, and my belief is that if you could get the evidence of people who really know and live with those savages who are considered the lowest[,] you would find that the savages of the very low type does not exist in the world."34

Codrington was critical of the armchair theorists, complaining that "scientific men fit their evidence to preconceived ideas of what savages ought to be."35 While he thought Julius Brencley's "general views are good" in his travelogue about the Pacific, Codrington described it as "one other example . . . of what I find everywhere that a traveller puts his own notions into the actions or work of savages and then the philosophers at home quote him as an authority."36 Codrington was open to acknowledging his own biases and was conscious of the difficulties an outsider had in trying to understand a society and people different from himself, describing how "every one, missionary and visitor, carries with him some preconceived ideas; he expects to see idols, and he sees them . . . . It is extremely difficult for any one to begin enquiries without some prepossessions, which, even if he can communicate with the natives in their own language, affect his conception of the meaning of the answers he receives. The
questions he puts guide the native to the answer he thinks he ought to give."

The Melanesians was a considerable achievement of scholarship. Codrington describes in great detail, with multiple examples from the different areas familiar to him, Melanesian social regulations and behavior, religious and spiritual dimensions, the stages of life and rites of passage, material aspects, dances, music, and games. The significance of Codrington's work lay both in his descriptions and in his development of his own theoretical framework.

The most influential contribution Codrington made to anthropology was in his identifying "the belief in a supernatural power or influence, called almost universally mana." In a footnote Codrington refers to a quotation that Müller makes in his 1878 Hibbert Lectures drawn from one of Codrington's letters, in which Codrington described mana: "There is a belief in a force altogether distinct from physical power, which acts in all kinds of ways for good and evil, and which it is of the greatest advantage to possess or control. This is Mana."38 Mana for Codrington was "that invisible power which is believed by the natives to cause all such effects as transcend their conception of the regular course of nature, and to reside in spiritual beings." This power could be used negatively or positively, making "rain or sunshine, wind or calm, to cause sickness or remove it, to know what is far off in time and space, to bring good luck and prosperity, or to blast and curse." Mana is something a person has; it can be gained, increased, or lost.39 The effect of mana, Codrington wrote, lay in people's belief in the efficacy of the prayers, offerings, charms, and rituals used to convey and acquire it, shrewdly observing that "it is not only in Melanesian islands that whatever confirms a belief is accepted and whatever makes against it is not weighed."40

What Codrington does not explore is how far Christianity was seen as offering access to a new form of mana. Certainly the confusion between the Christian Gospel (i.e., the message) and the cultures brought by the missionaries (the medium, particularly their material possessions) created considerable confusion as Melanesians sought the mana of the new teaching in order to acquire the mana of the material goods that would give them increased status in their own society. Melanesian cargo cults must be understood within the conceptual framework of the Melanesian world, which Codrington began in his work to reveal. Darrell Whiteman, making a "crude paraphrase" of Codrington, indicated that "without mana there is no salvation; salvation, of course, being an abundance and success in all the possibilities of human life."41

The lasting value of Codrington's work was in drawing from firsthand informants and from his own experience in the islands insights into Melanesian life and customs and placing them in a coherent interpretative framework. As Whiteman observed, however, "Western scholars, including Codrington, have made far more of it [mana] philosophically and intellectually than would Melanesians," to whom "mana is related to results obtained, and not to an abstract concept upon which is hung a philosophical argument."42

The Missionary Approach to Melanesia

Building on the foundations of Selwyn and Patteson, Codrington developed an approach to Melanesian society and missionary work that others were to extend. Walter Ivens and Charles Fox stood in the Codrington missionary/scholar tradition. Fox wrote of Codrington that he had "a great reputation as a philologist and anthropologist far beyond Melanesia. . . . In deep insight, sound judgment and at the same time originality of ideas he stands very high."43 The Selwyn-Patteson-Codrington approach encouraged a form of "inculcation" of Christianity in the Melanesian Mission before the word was coined, although that inculcation had distinctive Anglican characteristics.44 The missionary strategy of bringing young people to Norfolk Island, however, did not result in the rapid evangelization of their home islands.45

Sara Sohmer has identified the intellectual background and missionary approach of the Melanesian Mission that contributed to its nonjudgmental approach to Melanesian society in the nineteenth century.46 Codrington can be identified as sharing these factors. He was not only open to the "new developments in philology, ethnology and comparative mythology" but engaged in the "careful examination of sources," was willing "to utilize different types of evidence," and had "an enlarged sense of historical time and a strong preference for the comparative." For Codrington, "the universality of Christianity formed both its greatest innovation and the theological basis of mission."47

In 1887 Codrington retired from the mission, returning for a brief period in 1892, when he worked with John Palmer in producing a Mota dictionary. He was a vicar of Wadhurst in the Diocese of Chichester from 1887 to 1893, a prebendary of Chichester Cathedral from 1888 to 1895, and served for twenty-five years as a lecturer at Chichester Theological College.48 In 1902 he delivered the Wittering Lectures at the cathedral on the presentation of Christianity to "savage" peoples. His last major publication was his entry "Melanesians" in Hastings's Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics.49

Codrington was reluctant to write about his own life and work. He was "rather horrified" to find that a journal of an island voyage he had sent to his brother was published.40 He objected to the idea of writing an autobiography on the grounds that he had no wish to obtrude himself on the public, that he would "say so much about other people," including Melanesians, who could not read what he said, and because "it would be always doubtful whether what I was writing was true." He regarded his translation work as "decent" but was aware "that there are not ten people in the world who know whether it is good or bad, not 100 white men who know that it has been done. This knowledge does not puff one up much."41

Codrington died on September 11, 1922, a few days short of his ninety-second birthday. The Times in its obituary said of him that "his name will be remembered as the Apostle of the Pacific, soundest of scholars, kindliest of teachers, most practical of friends. There was among us no better theologian, no profounder philologist. A truly wonderful personality, a great man, a saint and a gentleman. . . . Never was master more loved, venerated, and obeyed. Sons of chiefs thronged his school, and he was like the venerable Bede in his power of teaching and learning."52

An anonymous manuscript containing a tribute to Codrington says of him that "it was his personality which made him wonderful, far more than his mastery of theology and every other branch of knowledge. . . . He was one of that great and inspiring community the Society of great people[,] adopting from choice an active career, as a missionary, a universal scholar and a philanthropist, he was distinguished for his place among these unselfish apostles of civilization and Christianity. . . . He was the most remarkable man I ever saw."53

In his description of Robert Henry Codrington, missionary scholar Fox said, "If Patteson was the Apostle of Melanesia, Codrington was its Teacher. Saint and Doctor are titles that rightly belong to him."54
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Signs amid the Rubble: The Purposes of God in Human History.


Lesslie Newbigin was one of the premier missionary and ecumenical statesmen of the twentieth century. He was a prolific writer, focusing largely on the interaction between the Gospel and human cultures.

The present volume, edited by Geoffrey Wainwright, Robert Earl Cushman Professor of Christian Theology at Duke Divinity School and also Newbigin’s biographer, is a collection of previously unpublished lectures given over a span of fifty-five years.

The first set of four lectures, entitled “The Kingdom of God and the Idea of Progress,” was delivered in 1941 at the United Theological College in Bangalore, India, very early in Newbigin’s missionary career. He shows astonishing maturity of insight as he spells out the bankruptcy of “progress,” the central value of modern Western culture and its secular eschaton. Without God, the arguments that supposedly support the idea of progress are shown to be circular and vacuous. Along the way, Newbigin shows that many Christians are seduced by the idea, so that “the popular Christian doctrine of the Kingdom of God, interpreted as meaning the progressive realization of good in the life of the world, is simply a Christianized version of the secular idea of progress” (p. 21). This is, in essence, the social gospel. Other Christians are preoccupied with their individual destiny on the other side of death. Newbigin argues that both the kingdom of God and individual salvation stand on the other side of death and resurrection. As in better-known writings, he makes some epigrammatic affirmations: “Belief in eschatology without belief in a literal eschaton is like belief in religion without belief in God” (p. 34); “There is no straight line from here [the present world order] to the Kingdom” (p. 47).

A second set of three lectures was delivered as the Henry Martyn Lectures at Cambridge University in 1986. Here, in “Authority, Dogma, Dialogue”; “Conversion, Colonies, Culture”; and “Church, World, Kingdom,” Newbigin deals in his characteristic manner with several critical topics. While acknowledging the abuses of some missionary work, he insists on the necessity of preaching the Gospel, as well as engaging in social action.

The final pages of the book contain two short addresses Newbigin gave in 1996 at the World Conference on Mission and Evangelism in Salvador de Bahia, Brazil. Here he deals with the Gospel and the human cultures to which it is addressed.

Newbigin is always logical and lucid, almost always persuasive, and often deeply moving. This small book is a gem worthy of joining his other works.

—Charles R. Taber

Charles R. Taber, a contributing editor, is Professor Emeritus of World Mission at Emmanuel School of Religion, Johnson City, Tennessee. He was a missionary in the Central African Republic and a translations consultant of the United Bible Societies in West Africa.

Christian Missionaries and the State in the Third World.


This volume contains twenty-one essays by outstanding historians. With the exception of one article about Colombia, all deal with countries of Africa or the Caribbean. They show how missionaries of various Christian denominations have related to the state in its different forms: precolonial kingdoms, slave-owning plantocracies, colonial administrations (in particular, settler colonialism), and independent governments. The late Adrian Hastings once wrote that historians tend to be geared to the Protestant missionary dynamic, rather than the Catholic, and this generalization holds true of this symposium. Catholics, however, do have their place in the book as the dominant religion in Haiti, Colombia, and Eritrea and as missionaries in Uganda, Kenya, and Sudan.

Missionaries, both mainstream and nonmainstream, sometimes have confronted official policies and at other times have lent them support. In general, colonial governments sought to use the ethnic status quo for their own purposes, usually to divide and rule. In most cases, however, missionaries wanted things to evolve according to their own understanding of Christianity, especially where marriage customs, the status of women, or the goals of formal education were concerned. Missionaries were frequently deemed subversive, especially where slavery was countenanced by authority, or where African-American missionaries were linked to Marcus Garvey’s Universal Negro Improvement Association. Presbyterians campaigned openly and successfully against the Central African Federation, and the Watchtower agent, Joseph Booth, indirectly helped to trigger the Nyasaland Native Rising of 1915. It is a pity that no essay deals with the ambiguous situation of French Catholic missionaries under an anticlerical regime in French West Africa.

In an introductory essay, the editors struggle to bring all these varied experiences together in an outline of Christian missionary history, and they draw a telling conclusion: Christian missionary endeavor has been of immense importance in reshaping social and economic life in these states—but the missionary era is far from over.

—Aylward Shorter, M.Afr.

Aylward Shorter, M.Afr., is Principal Emeritus of Tangaza College in the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi, Kenya, and former president of the Missionary Institute London.
The View Across the River: Harriette Colenso and the Zulu Struggle Against Imperialism.


Harriette was the eldest child of William and Sarah Colenso. Born in England in 1847, she moved to South Africa in 1854 when her father was appointed bishop of Natal. The bishop became one of the most notorious figures of the Victorian church. Deposed as a heretic by Bishop Robert Gray of Cape Town, Colenso appealed to the British Privy Council. He won the legal battle and remained bishop in Natal until his death in 1883. But his relations with the rest of the Anglican Church in South Africa were irreparably broken.

Bishop Colenso’s great work was to espouse and promote the cause of the Zulu people, whose interests he linked with that of the royal house (the Usuthu). Harriette proved as stubborn and persistent a campaigner as her father, and it is her significance for Zulu history that is the central core of this superb biography by Jeff Guy, already the biographer of the bishop and the historian of nineteenth-century Zululand. Harriette’s political apprenticeship was as secretary to her father. After his death she took over his advocacy of the Zulu cause to the British authorities. It was a critical time as the Zulu struggled to come to terms with the loss of their independence in 1879, the destruction of the kingdom, and its division into thirteen chiefdoms, as well as the death in mysterious circumstances of King Cetshwayo, at Esheevo, the center of the British administration of Zululand.

From the family home at Ekukhanyeni, near Pietermaritzburg, Harriette embarked on a tireless campaign of writing to the British officials in South Africa and in London, mastering the political debate, using her fluent Sizulu to articulate Zulu concerns, defending the rights of Cetshwayo’s young successor, Dinuzulu. Harriette made the journey for the first time “over the river” (the Tugela, which divided British Zululand from the colony of Natal) to attend the trial of Dinuzulu and other Usuthu at Esheevo. She became an indispensable adviser and strategist. She visited Dinuzulu during his exile in St. Helena and accompanied him on his return to Zululand in 1898. This is where the biography ends, though Harriette lived on until 1932 and became active in prison, hospital, and legal reform in South Africa.

Guy’s achievement rests on his unrivaled knowledge of nineteenth-century Zulu history. Additionally, he gives a wonderfully vivid portrait of Harriette as a person, struggling with financial problems at home and to keep the family together (she had two unmarried sisters), struggling even more desperately to provide continuity for the alternative church that her father had instituted in Natal. It is fitting that recently the (Anglican) Church of the Province of South Africa has voted to rescind the excommunication that had been pronounced on her father, recognition though belated of his great service to African people. Harriette is a figure of comparable stature, and this biography gives her the recognition that she richly deserves.

—Kevin Ward

Church: Community for the Kingdom.


John Fuellenbach, S.V.D., who teaches theology at the Gregorian University of Rome, brings together the fruit of contemporary biblical and theological scholarship on the kingdom of God and the church in the service of global mission. The main sources and tone are Roman Catholic, but Protestants will also find his study both stimulating and helpful.

In the author’s view, “Today the church faces two big challenges: (1) how to make the kingdom of God understood in the different cultures of the world; and (2) how to live Jesus’ own life principles of love, justice, and compassion in a world where the poor are getting poorer and the rich few are getting richer” (p. xiii).

Fuellenbach begins by looking at the kingdom of God, the central message of Jesus. The kingdom of God is a broader concept than the church. The kingdom represents God’s plan for the world, for the whole of humankind. The church is the community of God’s people, centered in the joyful message of salvation in Jesus and an instrument of God’s kingdom. But God’s kingdom transcend the interests and experience of the church.
The first part of the book deals with the church (and kingdom) in Scripture and in the documents of Vatican II. The second part begins with a review of the emergence of a truly global church in the twentieth century and goes on to discuss a variety of models of church: as community of disciples, institution, communion, sacrament, herald, servant, basic ecclesial communities, and a contrast society (proposed by Gerhard and Norbert Lohfink). He sees the last two as providing the best models for the future of the church.

Fuellenbach's magisterial study concludes with an application to the mission of the church in the twenty-first century and beyond. Despite its Catholic orientation, the author draws on evangelical and mainstream Protestant scholarship, as well as from his own tradition. Most will not quibble with the idea that God may well save people outside of the church (but not outside of Christ), but the idea that "every human person, no matter what his or her faith and religion, may effectively be saved by following his/her own religion and conscience" (p. 1) will be judged by most evangelical missiologists as going well beyond the implications of 1 Timothy 2:4-5 and Titus 2:11.

---W. Ward Gasque

W. Ward Gasque is President of the Pacific Association for Theological Studies and Executive Director of the Center for Innovation in Theological Education, Seattle.

William and Catherine: The Life and Legacy of the Booths, Founders of the Salvation Army.


The authors of this biography lead Lifeway Ministries of New Zealand. Their aim is to inspire, not to present an objective study of the lives of William and Catherine Booth of the Salvation Army. While they draw on one primary source (the Booth letters in the British Library), their purpose is to extol the Booth's soul-winning passion. Six chapters deal with the Booth's lives before 1878, when they founded the Salvation Army. Five chapters cover 1878-1912: to Catherine's death in 1890, and William's "promotion to glory" in 1912. The book is hagiography.

There are gems of inspiration, but few new insights into the Booth family or the urban home mission they founded in London's East End in 1865 that has grown into a Christian imperium of approximately 1 million soldiers. The authors rely heavily on biographies, particularly one by journalist Richard Collier, The General next to God (1965). There are few references to recent scholarship.

For those seeking inspiration, this book fills the bill. For penetrating histories of the Booth's evangelic-social programs, better sources would be recent academic studies by John Coutts, Andrew Mark Eason, Roger J. Green, Glenn K. Horridge, Norman H. Murdoch, Clark C. Spence, Lillian Taiz, Pamela J. Walker, or Diane Winston. The standard biographies are two-volume studies by Harold Begbie and St. John Ervine. There are also a number of biographies written by and about members of the Booth family.

---Norman H. Murdoch

Norman H. Murdoch is Professor of History at the University of Cincinnati and author of Origins of the Salvation Army (Univ. of Tennessee Press, 1994).

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The Global Impact of the Wesleyan Traditions and Their Related Movements.


This book, number 14 in the Pietist and Wesleyan Studies series, is based on papers from a conference on the global impact of Methodism sponsored by the World Methodist Society, held at Asbury Theological Seminary in August 2000.

Donald Dayton begins by reminding readers that the Wesleyan tradition originates from classical Christian heritage, including Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Protestantism, Puritanism, and Pietism. With such an eclectic origin, Wesleyanism forms a powerful tradition overflowing the denominational banks of Methodism. This study, then, celebrates the various strands within Christianity influenced by Methodism.

Major thematic areas covered include the relationship of Pauline missions to parachurch missions; Wesleyan missionary theology in the works of Richard Watson; the Catholic and Protestant, but predominantly missionary, roots of Latin American Methodism; the Methodist leanings of some African Initiated Churches; and, finally, a discussion of Wesley's works in Latin America and the Methodist Archives and Research Centre at the John Rylands University Library of Manchester. Church historians should be delighted with the review of dates, names, and foreign and indigenous missionaries in Korea, Japan, and Australia.

The articles, though, tend to overemphasize "personal holiness," obscuring the social holiness of the Wesleyan heritage. Topics not covered include music, African-American heritage, and the transnational identity of Wesleyanism.

This volume makes it amply clear that what may be distinctly Methodist very often does not come from conference directives. The practitioners' devotion breaks down institutional boundaries. Global Impact leaves one with the impression that many more articles could have been added to it.

Nevertheless, this is a great addition to the literature on the Wesleyan movement, one that set the precedent for modern-day Pentecostalism and African Christian Independeency.

—Casely B. Essamuah

Casely B. Essamuah, a Methodist minister from Ghana, currently serves as Minister of Missions at the historic Park Street Church, Boston, Massachusetts.

Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions.


In Beyond the Impasse, Pentecostal scholar Amos Yong proposes a fresh methodological approach to a theology of religions that is more firmly rooted in pneumatology, thereby restoring a more explicitly Trinitarian framework to a discussion that has often been framed solely by Christological and soteriological considerations. The argument he proposes is as follows: For Christians to insist that a theology of religions be framed by Christological categories may position us quite well defensively to mute the claims of other religions, but it is less effective in a more offensive engagement that acknowledges that the particularity of the "Word made flesh" (John 1:14) must also be balanced by the universality of the

“Spirit poured out on all flesh” (Acts 2:17). Yong is convinced that the inclusion of the Filioque by the Latin church has caused the West to subordinate the Spirit unduly to the Son, thereby weakening a full-orbed Trinitarianism and causing the West to be less inclined toward perceiving the Spirit’s work in non-Christian faiths. In contrast, Yong invokes Irenaeus’s metaphorical reference to the Son and the Spirit as the “two hands of the Father” (p. 43). Yong explores how we might discern how the hand of the Spirit may have extended God’s presence and activity in non-Christian religions.

In the final analysis, the author’s proposed thesis stands or falls on the basis of the development of a trustworthy set of
criteria that can empower the church to discern the presence of the Holy Spirit versus the presence of demonic and destructive spirits that may be present in the life and thought of the adherents of non-Christian faiths. After setting forth a brilliant exegetical basis for spiritual discernment, his proposed threefold criteria (divine presence, divine absence, and divine activity) are, in the end, too ambiguous to provide the assurance that such an ambitious project demands. Even Yong concedes that "discerning the spirits will always be inherently ambiguous" (p. 160). Indeed, far from Christology imposing "categorical constraints" (p. 167) on the church, the Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325 (264 years before the Filioque controversy) established that Christology provides the only truly objective basis for evaluating competing truth claims, whether those claims emerge from Arians or Buddhists, or from intra- or inter-religious dialogue.

Nevertheless, Yong is to be commended for the humility and caution with which he has issued this prolegomena to the more extensive theological project that he proposes.

—Timothy C. Tennent

Timothy C. Tennent, Associate Professor of World Missions and Director of Missions Programs at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, Massachusetts, is the author of Apostolicity and Unity: Essays on the Porvoo Common Statement.

Apostolicity and Unity: Essays on the Porvoo Common Statement.

Through the Porvoo Common Statement the Anglican churches of the British Isles entered into a covenant relationship involving full mutual recognition with the majority of the Scandinavian and Baltic Lutheran churches. This book, published ten years after this agreement in the Finnish city of Porvoo, seeks both to introduce the thinking behind that statement and to contribute to constructive and critical debate about it.

The first nine essays set out in a predominantly factual way the intentions of the statement and what has happened in the different churches. Eight theological essays in the second part mostly wrestle with the positive way it handled long-familiar Faith and Order tangles over apostolicity and episcopal succession, while the four contributors in part 3 reflect on how Porvoo thinking can affect the wider ecumenical scene.

As in all collections of essays, the significance of the individual articles varies. The final four all reveal how dismayingly limiting is the conditioning of the church contexts from which they come. IBMR readers will especially welcome the strong concern of the African contributor for joint ventures in the missionary proclamation of the Gospel, as well as the essay by Bishop Furberg of Visby, Sweden, who alone addresses directly the mission demands facing Christians in today's Europe, in line with the brief but unmistakable mention of these issues in the statement.

The most mind-blowing essay is the one analyzing the complacent debate in Denmark, leading to the decision of its bishops that the statement could not be accepted. Of the theological essays struggling with the complexities of...
apostolicity, the one by the editor struck me as particularly significant—though it hardly prepares one for the news, only a few months after publication, that he has become a Roman Catholic. (According to *Ecumenical News International*, March 5, 2003, Tjørhøm's conversion was "definitely not an act of protest against the Lutherans.")

—Martin Conway


Dora Yu and Christian Revival in Twentieth-Century China.


Silas Wu, professor emeritus of Chinese and Japanese History at Boston College, has written an earnest but ultimately unsatisfactory brief life of Dora Yu, one of the leaders of the Christian revival movement of the first quarter of the twentieth century. He writes from the perspective of Christian revivalism, so there is no attempt to give a full biography; rather, the book relies mainly on Dora Yu's 1916 personal testimony written in English in an effort to portray the manifestation of God's will through her life.

While such an approach to the "seemingly esoteric, mystical and riddle-like episodes in Dora Yu's testimony" (p. xii) can be justified, that does not apply to the gaps, omissions, and digressions that make up much of this study, especially as the author intends his discussion of the social context to reflect critical historical methodology. These weaknesses undercut his claim that Yu was central to the revival movement and was indeed the foremost Chinese evangelist of the early part of the century. At the end of the book, he notes that Yu's work was confined mainly to China's coastal cities and was among the upper classes. Wu criticizes her lack of concrete proposals and dismisses the work she was most devoted to, her female training ministry, as a kind of "supporting service" to denominational churches. His assessments are simply not proven.

At best, this work will serve as the basis for further research on the life of a fascinating woman and an era of Chinese Christianity that Wu rightly notes was dominated by female evangelists. How and why this happened, Dora Yu's role in this phenomenon, and why women "suddenly stopped their public ministries" (p. 227) after 1927 are extremely important subjects that deserve much fuller study.

—Margo S. Gewurtz

Margo S. Gewurtz is Professor of Humanities and Master of Founders College, York University, Toronto, Canada. A Canadian, she has published numerous essays on Canadian missionaries in China and their Chinese partners.


This excellent study accomplishes far more than its modest title suggests. Ruth Compton Brouwer, chair of the History Department of King's College, University of Western Ontario, analyzes the
Introducing Latino/a Theologies.


In this valuable and unique pioneering work, Miguel De La Torre and Edwin Aponte share their own journeys in order to introduce the Latino/a experiences as theologies. The methodology used is very helpful, particularly for those of us who teach U.S. Hispanic/Latino theology in mainline seminaries to a predominantly Anglo student body.

The book offers basic information to an audience that often knows little about a minority that is growing very fast in the United States. The six chapters and the annotated bibliography make the book an

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missionary careers of three Canadian women in the twentieth century. She examines how Dr. Chone Oliver, Dr. Florence Murray, and Margaret Wrong moved beyond the traditional gender separatism of "woman’s work for woman" toward modern professional standards. Each worked primarily with men: Oliver as a force behind the Christian Medical College, Vellore, India; Murray as mentor to Korean doctors at Severance Hospital and other locations; and Wrong as head of the ecumenical agency for promoting African Christian literature. Each was a major figure in twentieth-century mainstream Protestant missions, and none has received proper scholarly treatment until now.

While framed as a case study in changing gender relations, Brouwer’s book is also a fascinating examination of missions and modernization in the late colonial period, and of professionalism in mission. She shows how cross-national and cross-gender professional relationships nourished nationalist elites and indigenous modernizers. The first chapter of the book is the best succinct overview of the state of mainline missions in the interwar years—a period of internationalism and optimism about ecumenical mission structures. Brouwer upholds her usual high standard of scholarship, with meticulous research in archives, interviews, and varieties of missionary literature.

This book is groundbreaking in several ways. First, it shows the positive side of how missionary women’s attitudes progressed beyond gender-separate models. Second, it corrects one-sided intellectualist pictures of mission history that focus only on mission theory in neglect of mission practice. Third, it illuminates the mainline “liberal” construction of important social institutions of modernization, an element of missions that often gets downplayed in studies of both evangelization and secular social change. Fourth, it shows the central role played by Canadian missionaries in ecumenical missions during the twentieth century. I recommend this book to everyone with a serious interest in mission history.

—Dana L. Robert

Dana L. Robert, Truman Collins Professor of World Mission, Boston University School of Theology, is author of American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice (Mercer Univ. Press, 1996) and editor of Gospel Bearers, Gender Barriers: Missionary Women in the Twentieth Century (Orbis, 2002).
indispensable tool for those who want a real map of Latin American theologies and their relation with key issues like ecumenism, postmodern thought, new world order, gay and lesbian topics, and the environment, all of which are challenging our theologizing and our faith practices.

The authors present four perspectives that are very relevant in doing contextual theology today. They start with the particular (personal journeys) but end with the universal (new ecumenism). Second, our Hispanic religiosity is presented within the complex world of religious practices and experiences like cuarenterismo, espiritismo, and santería, which exist primarily within a popular religion that is very dynamic, fluid, and unsophisticated. Our people live their faith in a quasi-magic world so difficult to understand by us academicians and traditional pastors.

Third, these writers remind us that we bring a strong colonial heritage but are not determined historically by it: Our destiny as a people challenges our imagination to struggle daily for a future of freedom and dignidad. Finally, the authors offer their own testimonio as a hermeneutical tool for our pastoral practices.

I recommend the book to teachers, pastors, and laypeople as we continue in our journey of faith as Latin Americans. To non-Latinos/as the authors extend a warm invitation to dialogue and solidarity.

—Carmelo E. Álvarez

Carmelo E. Álvarez, Affiliate Professor of Church History and Theology at Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, Indiana, is a missionarity consultant for the Common Global Board Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the U.S. and Canada and the Latin American Coordination of Pentecostal Churches, with headquarters in Maracaibo, Venezuela.

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The Challenge of Bible Translation: Communicating God’s Word to the World.


This important collection of articles on the "disciplined art" of Bible translation is published in honor of Ronald Youngblood upon his retirement. As a scholar of biblical studies and languages, Youngblood has particularly been associated with Bible translation and, more specifically, with the highly successful New International Version (NIV). As with any edited collection, the articles vary in quality and potential popular interest. The volume's eighteen articles, written by twenty friends and colleagues, are divided into three thematic units: six address issues in the theory of Bible translation, six focus on the history of Bible translation, and six concern the practice of Bible translation.

In the introduction, Glen Scorgie outlines various assumptions that unite the articles. First, the collection is evangelical, infused with a high view of the Bible and the conviction that Bible translation is crucial to the life of the church. Furthermore, the writers assume that translation across cultures and generations is possible; that translation, though complex and always imperfect, produces substantial results; and that functional equivalence is the best theoretical framework in which to practice Bible translation.

This collection also contributes to the debate among conservative English-speaking Christians concerning gender inclusiveness and Bible translation. The fact that Zondervan is also publisher of
the NIV and Today's NIV should not be missed. Readers gain insight into the processes behind the translation of the NIV through two articles dedicated to the topic.

The editors' goal was to produce articles that would enhance the general public's understanding of the task and not just serve translation specialists. Though the focus of this significant volume is on translation of the Bible into English, much applies to other languages as well.

—John R. Watters

John R. Watters, Executive Director of Wycliffe Bible Translators International, served in Africa for twenty-six years and participated in translation of the New Testament for the Egjigham people of southwest Cameroon and southeast Nigeria.

Acquainted with Grief: Wang Mingdao’s Stand for the Persecuted Church in China.


The author, a faculty member at Trinity Theological College, Singapore, based this book on his Duke Divinity School Ph.D. dissertation. Wang Mingdao (1900–1991) is certainly one of the towering figures in modern Chinese church history. Harvey is justified in choosing him as a figure around whom to construct an interpretation of Chinese Protestantism under Communist rule. This study, however, is less a biography of Wang than it is a dissection and interpretation of Wang’s great nemesis, the leadership of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM), the organization formed in the early 1950s to bring all Protestants under Communist party direction.

Wang, a prominent independent Beijing fundamentalist pastor, was respected by many Chinese Christians for his integrity, and his refusal to join the TSPM in the 1950s was well known. Therefore the party, through the TSPM, brought terrific pressure to bear on Wang. After an initial failed attempt to discredit him, the authorities finally arrested him, forced a confession of political transgressions (which he soon recanted), and imprisoned him for over twenty years. He survived and in 1979 was released unbowed, in moral victory over his TSPM opponents.

This is a rather black-and-white study with Wang as a paragon of the faith and the TSPM as modernists who were drawn by theological compromise into worship of the nation, finally reshaping the church and its doctrines to fit the political demands of the day. Harvey is relentlessly trenchant in his criticism of the TSPM leaders of the 1950s and those he considers their Western academic apologists, speculating that they would have rationalized the Nazi takeover of the German churches in the 1930s. But he also has some very sensible comments and suggestions for surmounting the divisions between Protestants today and for depoliticizing the TSPM. In all, a very worthwhile study, despite some minor historical inaccuracies and lack of an index.

—Daniel H. Bays

Daniel H. Bays is Professor of History and Director of the Asian Studies Program at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan. He is coeditor, with Grant Wacker, of The Foreign Missionary Enterprise at Home: Explorations in North American Cultural History (Univ. of Alabama Press, 2003).
Despite Good Intentions: Why Development Assistance to the Third World Has Failed.


Dichter, an anthropologist with some overseas experience, has written a difficult book. The case is made that development is complex, multifaceted, and open-ended and therefore not susceptible to management by objectives. The case is made that development projects over the last fifty years have been less than a story of unqualified success. The case is also made that the poor would be better off with assistance than supported. A list of statistics around today. But the presentation ignores other statistics that show that since the 1960s, infant mortality has halved, life expectancy has risen (except in Africa, where HIV/AIDS has reversed the upward trend), and twice as many people now have access to clean water.

First, the contention that development assistance has been a failure is more assumed than supported. A list of statistics is presented in the introduction that shows that there is an awful lot of poor people around today. But the presentation ignores other statistics that show that since the 1960s, infant mortality has halved, life expectancy has risen (except in Africa, where HIV/AIDS has reversed the upward trend), and twice as many people now have access to clean water.

Second, responsibility for the supposed failure of the development community is also not established. While Dichter offers valid criticisms of mistakes, mistaken methodologies, and failed projects, he does not help us discern whether the failures occur because the entire enterprise is ill conceived or whether, as I would argue, they provide evidence of learning through honest acceptance of failure on the part of the World Bank, NGOs, and others.

It is particularly disappointing that no option other than the dustbin is presented. Apparently the poor are to be left to their own cultures, geographies, governance, and initiative, and they will develop when they develop. Alex de Waal has taken that position on humanitarian responses, and now Dichter does the same for development. This Darwinian view of development is disappointing, particularly for the poor.

—Bryant L. Myers

Bryant L. Myers is Vice President of Development and Food Resources for World Vision International.

Malay Muslims: The History and Challenge of Resurgent Islam in Southeast Asia.


This book provides an introduction to the Malay Muslims in Southeast Asia, the largest ethnic Muslim community in the world. Writing as an experienced missionary with more than forty years' experience in the Philippines, Robert McAmis provides a history of the penetration of Islam, its influence, and the history of Christian-Muslim relations. Noteworthy is the attention given to the traditions and customs of the Malays. In recounting the recent Islamic resurgence, McAmis pleads for Christian-Muslim dialogue, understanding, and cooperation. The extensive bibliography (42 pages) is an excellent resource for further study.

There are some inaccuracies to note. The ruling coalition group is the National Front, not the National Party (p. 83). Anwar Ibrahim was charged in 1998, not 1999 (p. 87). After 1996 Canon Batumalai was no longer the dean of Seminari Teologi Malaysia (p. 121), and the seminary is located in Seremban, not Kuala Lumpur (p. 121). On p. 88 Batumalai's writing should be in 1994, not 1944.

In discussing Islamic resurgence in Malaysia, McAmis fails to highlight the numerous Islamization programs implemented by the government since the early 1980s, widely recognized as the period of significant Islamic resurgence. The author also appears not to be familiar with the works of Christian scholar Ng Kam Weng on the Islamic resurgence or with Batumalai's latest work on Islamic resurgence published in 1996 (pp. 121-22). It is also unfortunate that there is no interaction with the extensive scholarly publications by Muslim scholars in the Malay language.

These criticisms are not meant to detract from what is clearly a good introduction for those who have no prior knowledge of the Malay Muslim world.

—Kar-Yong Lim

Kar-Yong Lim is a master of theology candidate at Seminari Teologi Malaysia, Seremban, Malaysia.

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A former president of the International Association for Mission Studies, Dr. Chun teaches at Ewha Womans University, Seoul, Korea. She was a professor in the Department of Christian Studies until 2000, when the university named her dean of the Graduate School of Theology.

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March 15–19
Unbound by Time: Isaiah Still Speaks. Dr. William L. Holladay, Andover-Newton Theological School, discusses the historical and theological background to important texts in the book of Isaiah and how they fit into Christian proclamation. Cosponsored by Maryknoll Mission Institute and held at Maryknoll, New York. Eight sessions. $140

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Christian Approaches to World Religions. Dr. Timothy C. Tennent, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, offers an evangelical perspective that calls for honest engagement and fruitful dialogue with adherents of other faiths. Cosponsored by the Baptist Convention of New England and Greenfield Hill Congregational Church (Fairfield, Conn.). Eight sessions. $125

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Culture, Interpersonal Conflict, and Christian Mission. Dr. Duane H. Elmer, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, helps Christian workers strengthen interpersonal skills and resolve conflicts among colleagues, including host-country peoples. Concludes Thursday. Cosponsored by Black Rock Congregational Church. Eight sessions in four days. $125

April 13–16
Evaluating Cross-cultural Missions: A Korean Case Study. Dr. Chun Chae Ok, Ewha Womans University, Seoul, Korea, and an OMSC Senior Mission Scholar in Residence, draws on the rapidly growing Korean missionary movement to offer criteria for assessing different approaches to cross-cultural mission. Cosponsored by United Methodist Board of Global Ministries and Wycliffe International. Four morning sessions. $90

April 19–23
China’s Social Transformation: Crucible for Religion and Church Today. Sr. Janet Carroll, M.M., U.S. Catholic China Bureau and an OMSC Senior Mission Scholar in Residence, asks how Christians in China can evangelize Chinese society while remaining true to their faith. She addresses complexities and ambiguities for mission arising from the Chinese quest for new spiritual and ethical/moral moorings. Eight sessions. $125

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Personal Renewal in the Missionary Community. Rev. Stanley W. Green, Mennonite Mission Network, blends classroom instruction and one-on-one sessions to offer a time of personal renewal, counsel, and direction for Christian workers. Cosponsored by Mennonite Mission Network. Eight sessions. $125

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