Surprises, Sagacity, and Service

Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam have each exhibited a striking impulse to spread cross-culturally. These three religious traditions, with their 2,500-year, 2,000-year, and 1,400-year histories which began in Northeast India, Israel, and Arabia, respectively, have entered multiple and ever-changing cultural and sociopolitical contexts. The result has been a dizzying array of mutually interactive transformations. At the institutional level, these unfolding international histories have offered up startling surprises, especially when considered in light of their parochial and monocultural beginnings. Along the way and at the personal level, participants in the religions’ spread, both as messengers and as recipients, have been caught up short as well: no cross-cultural emissary worth her or his salt can avoid wrestling with unanticipated life patterns encountered in a setting recently entered, and no new adherent can fully anticipate the intricacies of cultural unscrambling and personal transformation inherent in embracing an imported religious faith.

Missionaries and their organizational supervisors have often sought to follow grand historical schemes involving a prophesied nirvana, millennium, or caliphate, usually in restored fashion. Within the modern Christian mission movement, visions of rulers and their subjects bowing the knee to the Lord Jesus Christ and of the worldwide establishment of a familiar-looking church fueled many zealous missionary endeavors—at least until the twentieth century’s brutal world wars and the subsequent breakup of European political empires. But just as earlier apocalyptic seeming destructions of Christian sociopolitical establishments were succeeded by fresh flowerings of wider Christian growth, so have we in our own times been witnessing the surprising blooms of an unprecedented worldwide garden of Christian communities that exhibit colors, shapes, and fragrances unanticipated by human sketchers of the mission landscape.

Continued next page
This worldwide sprouting of Christian growth has caught people off guard, due simply to our limited vision. I need to quickly add, however, that one of the glories of being human is our finitude. Try as we may to schematize the world’s history—past, present, and future—the reality is that we can never fully anticipate, much less comprehend or dictate, the entire historical outworking of anything, including religious developments. More than being merely a frustrating hindrance to the fulfillment of our fondly imagined unlimited potential, our limited capacity to foresee what lies ahead, to say nothing of knowing all things, carries within it the freedom and responsibility to discern a constructive way forward—and then to decide and to act accordingly. Longing for omniscience and pervasive predictability detracts from our Creator’s good gift of sagacity bestowed on those who have the courage to walk ahead wisely, albeit with uncertainty.

Throughout the enterprise of Christian mission, wisdom and discernment have been supremely important. Modern Christian missionaries could never have anticipated the full implications that living cross-culturally would carry for their children. Neither could ecclesiastical leaders of a century ago foresee the global demographic shifts in Christian adherents that have marked the past few generations. In particular, who could have predicted the explosive Christian growth in sub-Saharan Africa? With Christianity’s robust, if newfound, worldwide presence, Christian missionaries necessarily have encountered followers of other religious traditions—traditions that have not simply melted away, as some had predicted would happen—who have exhibited exemplary faith and practice rooted in centuries-old traditions. Christian theologians have thus had to wrestle in new ways with Christianity’s standing among the world’s religions. Christian researchers have also had to focus on unfamiliar arenas of scholarship, since new questions have arisen out of fresh encounters with a plethora of human contexts and cultures. The articles you will find here deal with these topics and more.

I wish to take special note here of Jan Jongeneel and his article in this issue. Jongeneel, professor emeritus of missiology, Utrecht University, the Netherlands, has served as a contributing editor for the IBMR since 1998 but will be retiring from that role at the end of this year. Jan has been a regular source of invaluable input over his fifteen years of service. I want to thank him as well for the personal encouragement he has been to me as I have assumed editorial responsibilities. Jan’s article in this issue on Hendrik Kraemer’s *Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*—published in 1938, the year Jan was born—is a timely reconsideration of how Christian theologians were wrestling, during the surprising 1930s, with the way the Gospel speaks to the world’s peoples. As many readers will know, Kraemer wrote this book at the request of the International Missionary Council for its 1938 World Missionary Conference, held at Tambaram, India. Hendrik Kraemer’s service and, more recently, Jan Jongeneel’s service exemplify the vital contribution that Christian scholarship provides to Christian mission in the world.

In the end, the glory of exercising sagacity in navigating surprises that come in Christian mission is further dignified by service. Participation in mission, while including planning and forecasting, essentially involves humbly serving God and others. We can now see, albeit still dimly, the surprising turns that Christian mission has taken over the past century. What especially is incumbent on each of us today is to discern our next steps and to exercise our God-given freedom to serve.

—J. Nelson Jennings

Cover image: Huibing He, *Wash Each Other’s Feet*, 1987, Chinese brush and ink on rice paper, 18” x 27”.

Robert J. Priest and Robert DeGeorge

Every ten years the International Bulletin of Missionary Research (IBMR) commissions a review of English-language dissertations related to Christian mission. As in the past, the focus in this update is on research doctorates (such as the Ph.D. or Th.D.), not on professional doctorates (such as the D.Min. or D.Miss.). The first two IBMR reviews, for the years 1945–81 (by E. Theodore Bachmann) and 1982–91 (by William A. Smalley), focused exclusively on dissertations from North America. By contrast, the next review, 1992–2001 (by Stanley H. Skreslet), considered English-language dissertations from around the world, as indeed the present update does. While previous reviews were accompanied by a subject index and a complete list of dissertation titles, the current availability of electronic databases and search engines makes inclusion of such a listing and index of less strategic value. However, as in the past, we provide an overview of patterns and trends in research related to missiology and Christian mission.

Establishing Criteria for Inclusion

As a first step in preparing this review, it was essential to articulate criteria for selecting dissertations that fit the parameters of this assignment. If we think in terms of concentric circles, the inner circle of dissertations to be included was relatively easy to identify. Missiology itself constitutes an academic discipline with its own history of ideas and debates, its own journals, professional societies, departments and chairs, and leading scholars. With reference to this inner circle of dissertations, rather than imposing a conceptual grid for what was allowed to count as missiology, we simply included all dissertations formally emerging from, or linked to, recognized missiological institutions. In practical terms, this meant that if a dissertation was produced for a school or faculty of missiology/mission studies, then we included it in our list. Alternatively, if a dissertation explicitly self-identified as missiological or interacted substantively with missiological thought, we included it as well. All dissertation titles submitted to the IBMR, but not including those involving professional degrees (such as the D.Min. or D.Miss.), were included.

If we consider the scope of missiology to include whatever it is that dissertations focus on within missiology programs, one finds a wide variety of foci. These include research oriented toward church planting and church growth, Bible translation, church-to-church partnerships or parish twinning, mission theology, business and mission, human trafficking, children at risk, development and poverty alleviation, as well as research focused on younger churches and their relations with culture, society, and other religions, and research with a missional focus on Europe and North America.

The very breadth of missiology makes it difficult to establish formal criteria on what counts as missiological. Many noted missiologists did doctoral work in missiology proper, such as Douglas McConnell, Scott Moreau, Roger Schroeder, and Titie Tienou. But missiology is also interdisciplinary and thus has porous boundaries. It draws from a variety of cognate disciplines, with leading missiologists bringing strengths from other disciplines to missiology. One thinks of Miriam Adeney, Paul Hiebert, Louis Luzbetak, Alan Tippett, Darrell Whiteman, and Steve Ybarrola from anthropology; Duane Elmer and James Plueddemann from education; Steve Ofut from sociology; Jehu Hanciles, Bonnie Sue Lewis, Dana Robert, Wilbert Shenk, and Andrew Walls from history; David Bosch from New Testament; Frances Adeney, Stephen Bevans, Darrell Guder, Robert Schreiter, and Charles Van Engen from theology; Charles Kraft, Eugene Nida, and Dan Shaw from linguistics/linguistic anthropology; and Robert Hunt, Terry Muck, Harold Netland, and J. Dudley Woodberry from comparative religions/philosophy of religion.

What distinguishes these scholars as missiologists, in comparison to many others in these cognate disciplines, is that they participate in missiological conversations and professional meetings, they ground their work theologically, and they direct their writing and teaching in the service of Christian mission.

But much of the subject matter of interest to missiology is also of interest in other disciplines. Thus hundreds of historians around the world share a research interest in the history of Christian missions, although only a minority of these historians would wish to self-identify as missiologists or to ground their work in an explicit commitment to Christian mission. On a smaller scale, the “anthropology of Christianity” has recently emerged as an exciting new arena of anthropological research, with a focus on the same societies and churches that missiologists have historically studied. Only a minority of anthropologists of Christianity, however, would self-identify as Christian, and even fewer as missiologists.

That is, there are clearly many dissertations in a variety of disciplines whose subject matter is directly related to topics treated within missiology, although the authors would not wish to be considered missiologists. We wanted also to include these dissertations in the outer concentric ring, though written by authors not explicitly missiological and thus involving somewhat more subjective judgments as to their inclusion. The following is a summary of criteria for inclusion that were employed:

1. Dissertations completed within departments of missiology or mission studies.
2. Dissertations reported to the IBMR.
3. Dissertations that explicitly self-identify as missiological or that include sustained interaction with missiology or with notable missiologists.

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4. Dissertations that focus on Christian missionaries, missionary institutions, mission-related practices, or mission theology.
5. Dissertations that focus on Christianity within North America or Europe (included only if they met one of the first four criteria above).
6. Dissertations that focus on Christianity in regions of the world besides North America or Europe, whether or not they met any of the first four criteria.

Resources for Compiling Our Data Set

As never before, dissertation information is available through online databases. Academic libraries, research organizations, and universities have collaborated to provide a research environment that is completely online and affords almost complete accessibility to scholarly dissertations worldwide. We began with the “Dissertation Notices” in the quarterly issues of the *IBMR* for the years 2002–11, which included 698 academic doctoral dissertations. Then we consulted *Proquest Dissertations and Theses: UK & Ireland* and *Proquest Dissertations and Theses: A&I* (an international database), which provided the largest and most comprehensive databases. These were less than complete, however, for regions outside of North America, Europe, and South Africa. So we extended the international scope of the data set by searching national databases from Australia (Council of Australian University Librarians),3 Hong Kong (HKLIS Dissertations and Theses Collections and the HKU Scholars Hub),4 India (Online Union Catalogue of Indian Universities and Shodhganga: A Reservoir of Indian Theses),5 New Zealand (NZresearch.org), and the Philippines (National Library of the Philippines),6 plus those available through WorldCatDissertations.7

We carried out keyword, phrase, and subject searches of these databases, using several dozen mission-related search terms, and then screened results in accord with the criteria summarized above. When some of the databases provided less than complete abstracts or lacked other information, Internet searches were conducted to assess whether the dissertation fit our criteria, and if so, to collect information relevant to the analysis provided in this article. In many cases, open access to the dissertation or its abstract was available through university library sites, Google Books, institutional web pages and/or social media, as well as personal websites. Eventually we arrived at our final list of 1,515 dissertations and entered the basic information upon which this analysis rests into our database (www.internationalbulletin.org/files/html/diss-list-2002-2011).

Dissertations by Country

Altogether we collected information on 1,515 mission-related dissertations, a 64 percent increase from the 925 recorded for the previous decade. These dissertations were produced in institutions located in twenty-three different countries, as shown in table 1.

A 62.4 percent majority of the dissertations were from the United States, which represents a slight drop from 67 percent the previous decade. The United Kingdom produced 15.2 percent of these dissertations, unchanged from the previous decade’s 15.2 percent. Australia went from just 1.5 percent of the total to 6.5 percent, and the Philippines went from no dissertations at all to 1.3 percent of the total. Altogether, Asia expanded to 3.9 percent, from 1.2 percent in the previous decade. With the recent addition of a significant number of seminary-based, English-language Ph.D. programs in Africa and Asia, it is likely that accelerated shifts from these areas will be evident in the next ten years.

Dissertations by Ethnicity of Author

The fact that no English-language dissertations were produced within South Korea does not tell us anything about what percentage of the total dissertations were produced by Koreans. Unfortunately, dissertation databases provide no explicit or consistent information on the nationality or ethnic identity of the authors. But author names provide one clue. And so, in consultation with several missiologists with relevant expertise,8 it was possible to achieve a consensus in the majority of cases on the ethnic identity of Korean and Chinese authors in our list based on their names. The dissertation focus often provided confirmatory support for this assessment of ethnic ancestry. The individuals whose names were understood as capable of being either Korean or Chinese, or whose identity was in doubt on other grounds, were investigated online, and in most cases we were able to learn the ethnic origins of the authors through information on the Internet, either correctly identifying them as Korean or Chinese or eliminating them as neither. Following this procedure—with a warning to readers that these numbers should be understood as approximate only—we calculate that 10 percent of these dissertations were written by individuals with Korean ancestry, and 4.4 percent were written by individuals with Chinese ancestry.

Again, while no English-language dissertations on our topic came from a Latin American country, and only two came from African countries other than South Africa, this tells us nothing about what percentage of authors were African or of Hispanic/Latino ancestry. Since many people of European ancestry are citizens of African countries, their names provide no clue as to their citizenship. But if we provisionally limit ourselves to dissertations with an Africa-related focus whose authors have names

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**Table 1. Mission-Related Degrees Granted, by Country**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>946</td>
<td>618</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China/Hong Kong</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1,515</td>
<td>925</td>
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Writers of European ancestry no longer have a near monopoly on the representation of others.
that are not European, Korean, or Chinese—for example, names such as Nzuuzi Mukusa or Godfrey Ndubuisi—we calculate that roughly 12.8 percent of all our dissertations were written by Africans with African ancestry. By a similar process, we estimate that 4.8 percent of our total count were written by those of Indian ancestry, and roughly 2.5 percent by individuals with Hispanic/ Latino ancestry. Clearly evident in these dissertations is the trend for people from around the world to be researching and writing about the church and mission in their own contexts, with writers of European ancestry no longer having a near monopoly on the representation of others.

Most dissertations (73.6 percent) had a stated geographic or culture-region focus. Table 2 shows the breakdown in terms of geographic focus in comparison with that of the previous decade. The largest increase was in dissertations focused on Africa. Half of these Africa-focused dissertations appear to have been written by scholars themselves originally from Africa. And roughly half of the Africa-focused dissertations centered on five English-speaking countries: Nigeria (40), Kenya (36), South Africa (35), Ghana (27), and Uganda (25). By contrast, 80 percent of all African countries appeared on the list only once or twice, or not at all.

Dissertations focused on Asia continued to compose over a third of all geographically focused dissertations. Roughly 60 percent of these dissertations were written by scholars who by nationality or ethnicity were Burmese, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Thai, or Vietnamese. And over two-thirds (72.9 percent) were concentrated on five countries: South Korea (109), India (93), China (54), the Philippines (27), and Japan (23).

The significant increase in dissertations focused on Oceania is largely due to work being done in the universities of Australia and New Zealand, which is where 85 percent of these dissertations were written. The relatively low proportion of dissertations focused on Europe and North America is partially because we required a higher threshold of inclusion to our database for dissertations focused here, as mentioned earlier. The decline in proportional attention to Latin America and the Caribbean merits attention.

Leading Degree-Granting Institutions

Table 3 shows the thirty institutions that granted ten or more academic doctorates in missiology in the decade. These institutions produced 54 percent of all dissertations on mission-related topics, while the other 46 percent were produced at another 296 institutions. The majority of these leading institutions are either in the United States or in the United Kingdom. As in the previous decade, Fuller Theological Seminary alone accounts for 10 percent of all dissertations in our list.

It is worth considering historical trends in relation to leading institutions. Because the first two dissertation reviews included data only on North American institutions, and since nearly two-thirds of all dissertations are done in North America, a closer look at trends in North America merits our attention. Table 4 lists the

### Table 2. Geographic Focus of Mission-Related Dissertations by Continent, by Percentage

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Column total exceeds 100% due to rounding.

### Table 3. Institutions Granting Ten or More Mission-Related Doctoral Degrees, 2002–2011

#### United States
- Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Ky. 47
- Biola University, La Mirada, Calif. 35
- Boston University, Boston, Mass. 35
- Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. 10
- Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind. 33
- Drew University, Madison, N.J. 12
- Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif. 151
- Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, Calif. 15
- Luther Seminary, Minneapolis, Minn. 18
- Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Memphis, Tenn. 11
- Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, N.J. 19
- Reformed Theological Seminary, Jackson, Miss. 16
- Regent University, Virginia Beach, Va. 13
- Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C. 12
- Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. 31
- Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Tex. 27
- Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Ill. 82
- University of California, Los Angeles, Calif. 13

#### United Kingdom
- Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, a Oxford, England 40
- University of Birmingham, Birmingham, England 45
- University of Cambridge, Cambridge, England 10
- University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, Scotland 33
- University of Leeds, Leeds, England 12
- University of London, London, England 19
- University of Wales, Cardiff, Wales 34

#### South Africa
- University of Pretoria, Pretoria 10
- University of South Africa, Pretoria 25

#### Italy
- Pontifical Urban University, Rome 21

#### Netherlands
- Utrecht University, Utrecht 10

* Doctorates at the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies (OCMS) were granted through the Open University, the University of Wales, and the University of Leeds. Thus, in this table, doctorates listed for the OCMS are also listed with their respective degree-granting university.
* The high number of dissertations from the University of Wales was somewhat misleading. With over 100,000 students, the University of Wales was recently the focus of controversy over its validation of “schemes of study” at roughly 130 centers and colleges around the world. In 2011 it announced it would close its validation programs, requiring institutions like the OCMS to forge other partnerships for accrediting their programs.
top ten schools in North America for each period of time as a way of examining trends. The top school, measured purely by number of academic dissertations produced, is listed as 1, the second as 2, and so on.

Several observations are worth making. First, many of the leading schools of an earlier era subsequently dropped off the map. For example, the Kennedy School of Missions of the Hartford Seminary Foundation, where many notable missionologists earned their doctorates (including Dean Gilliland, Charles Kraft, and Charles Taber), showed up as number 7 on the earliest list, despite having closed its doors in the 1960s. Columbia University, where Donald McGavran did his doctoral work, was number 3 on the early list but ceased to be a significant center for mission-related research in the 1980s. Indeed, with eight of the top ten schools currently seminaries, the only older university left in the top ten is Boston University, which is the only remaining “ranked top ‘global’ university that has missiology as a degree,” including a doctoral program in mission studies. While the growing focus on “world Christianity” at some universities (such as Emory and Baylor) may well place others on this list ten years from now, world Christianity is a somewhat different focus from Christianity as it is practiced in other American institutions ahead of it.

### Research Methods Employed

Dissertation abstracts often, though not always, provide information on the research methods employed. The majority of abstracts would have benefited from a clearer summary of method. In some cases, even abstracts were not available. But for 74 percent of the dissertations, enough information was available to code for the methodology employed, using a fairly basic coding system. Since abstracts did not consistently or clearly differentiate between purely interview-based methods and participant-observation methods, and indeed since many combined the two, these are coded together. Table 5 provides a breakdown in the percentages of dissertations using each method, including only the dissertations where it was possible to determine the methodology employed.

A variety of observations are possible here. First, it is worth noting that over 80 percent of the dissertations are empirically oriented, and not purely abstract or theological. Stanley Skreslet has suggested that many leading mission theologians are “prone to a preference for the abstract over the particular” and thus formulate definitions of missiology that “tend to obscure the broad scope of contemporary research on mission.” That is, if one looks at the subjects of missionologists’ dissertations, there is a mismatch between many of the textbook definitions of missionology and what actually happens at the cutting edge of dissertation research. Even if we limit ourselves to looking only at the inner circle of dissertations that are explicitly missiological, this conclusion appears to hold true. For example, if we examine dissertations written at schools accredited by the American Association of Theological Schools (ATS), only 23.4 percent are purely library based—that is, limited to exegetical, theoretical, and theological treatments. This is admittedly higher than the 11.5 percent of dissertations in other American institutions that are purely library based. But the majority are clearly focused on empirical research of historical or contemporary realities related to the ways in which Christians attempt to live out Christian mission, which is not to say that many of these do not also include theological considerations.

Only 4.8 percent of dissertations involve a primary focus on questionnaire-based research, although an additional 12.1 percent...
use mixed methods that include at least some questionnaire-based data. Overall, the amount and quality of the quantitative research coming out of missiological schools appears to be low. If one adds the mixed-methods dissertations that include interviewing or participant observation and the subset of historically oriented dissertations that make use of oral history interviews (4.2 percent) to the dissertations using only interviews and/or participant observation, fully 36.4 percent make use of interviewing and/or participant observation in their dissertations. And if we limit ourselves to ATS-accredited schools, this usage of interviews and/or participant observation comes to 48.8 percent of the total. A majority of these, in addition to the 7.3 percent from ATS schools that use primarily survey data, seem to have at least some instrumental focus on missiologically applied aspects of the research. That is, a high proportion of the more missiological dissertations seem to be framed intentionally as being in service to the doing of mission.

Historiographical dissertations are the largest group of dissertations. While they compose only 24.2 percent of dissertations from ATS-accredited schools, they constitute 58.6 percent of the dissertations from other schools. Many such dissertations focus on the subject matter of Christian missions, but without any theological framing or expressed commitment to instrumentally serve Christian mission. That is, many of these are written by secular scholars or by Christian scholars without an interest in formally linking their work to missiology as a field. The Yale-Edinburgh Group on the History of the Missionary Movement and World Christianity, for example, would include many such scholars doing research centrally focused on topics of relevance to this review, but explicitly framing their work as nonmissiological. Clearly, much of this is high quality scholarly work of great value to missiologists more broadly.

Considering only historically oriented dissertations, table 6 presents a breakdown in the periods of time being studied. The results are largely unchanged from the previous decade, when Stanley Skreslet extended a challenge for missiologists to redirect research efforts toward earlier eras of mission history. This is not to say that these periods do not receive a great deal of attention by historians and biblical scholars, but only that relatively little of this research explicitly focuses on missiological themes or missionary dynamics.

### Table 6. Time Focus of Historically Oriented Mission-Related Dissertations, by Percentage

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Postapostolic church (to 600)</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medieval (600–1500)</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early modern (1500–1800)</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern (1800–1945)</td>
<td>56.2</td>
<td>55.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late modern (after 1945)</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Both column total less than 100% due to rounding.

to music. Table 7 shows the disciplines or departments most frequently listed.

Most degrees (92 percent) in Intercultural Studies (ICS) were granted by ATS-accredited seminaries (such as Asbury Theological Seminary, Fuller Theological Seminary, and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School), with the remainder by Biola University. Each of these institutions has a strong focus on culture, often including anthropologists on their faculty. But despite the intentionally neutral nomenclature, they clearly intend their programs to be missiological. Doctorates are also granted in missiology or mission studies or world missions at a wide variety of institutions. But roughly twice as many doctorates were received in ICS as in mission studies, world mission, and missiology together. The dominance of the ICS nomenclature reflects the desire that graduates be accredited in settings that are not exclusively Christian. And yet these are, in part, theological degrees. Each of the ATS-accredited schools offering the ICS Ph.D. requires a prior theological degree for admission to its program and includes theological coursework in its ICS curriculum. As a group, they remain explicitly missiological. A similar rationale in nomenclature may partly underlie the split between degrees offered in religion or religious studies as against theology or theological studies. All of these departments or disciplines, as well as educational studies and psychology, were solidly present in ATS-accredited institutions, as well as in other institutions. By contrast, 100 percent of dissertations in anthropology, sociology, and English, along with 96.6 percent of dissertations done in disciplines or departments of history, were in non-ATS-accredited schools. Historically oriented dissertations at seminaries and divinity schools typically were located within disciplines or departments that were not exclusively historical. With history coming in second after ICS, we again see the centrality of history in current research related to Christian mission and world Christianity.

The 35 dissertations in anthropology reflect a new trend in a discipline that formerly discouraged research related to Christianity and Christian missions, but where the “anthropology of Christianity” is now a fertile and expanding new subfield of research, meriting careful attention by missiologists more broadly.

### Table 7. Top Ten Departments or Disciplines in Which Mission-Related Doctorates Were Earned

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Degrees Earned</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural studies</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History/historical studies</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission studies/world mission/missiology</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
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<td>Theology/theological studies</td>
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<td>Education/educational studies</td>
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### Gender and Missiology

We spent a good deal of time working to identify the gender of dissertation authors. We estimate that we were able to code with reasonable confidence the gender of 97.6 percent of the authors. Of these, 26.5 percent were women, and 73.5 percent men. And while 32.6 percent of authors at non-ATS-accredited schools were women, only 17.8 percent of dissertation authors at ATS-accredited schools were women, with 82.2 percent men. In the

Departments/Disciplines by Degrees Earned

While many of the dissertation records provided no information on the discipline or department within which the doctoral degree was granted, 65 percent did provide this information. Doctoral degrees were earned in a wide variety of fields, from art history to economics, folklore to geography, journalism to comparative literature, women’s studies to world Christianity, and French
top five ATS-accredited mainline Protestant institutions (Boston, Drew, GTU, Luther, Princeton), 25.3 percent of dissertations were by women, while at the five top ATS-accredited evangelical Protestant institutions (Asbury, Concordia, Fuller, Southern, TEDS), only 14.4 percent of dissertations were by women. Women composed roughly 30 percent of the Chinese authors, 18 percent of the Korean authors, and 12 percent of the African authors. Since more than half of all missionaries are women, and more than half of all church members around the world are women, these figures show a significant underrepresentation of women in missiology. Gender, we noticed, matters significantly in the way in which missiology is conducted. Only 2 percent of all male authors included a central focus in their dissertations on gender and/or on the lives of women, while 24 percent of female authors included such a central focus.

More than half of all missionaries are women, and more than half of all church members around the world are women.

Missiology, Mission Studies, and World Christianity

Missiology has historically had a close connection with the missionary movement and indeed has centrally focused on studying and serving this movement, not least by training those serving as missionaries. And missionaries have been understood as traveling to “mission fields”—geographic regions and/or ethnolinguistic groups that were clearly differentiated from “home” spaces and people, which were often presumed to be Christian.

This central concern to communicate the Gospel to unevangelized people continues to be one thrust within missiology today. Reflecting this concern, the World Christian Database employs a typology to categorize countries of the world as follows:

World A: countries where less than 50 percent of the people have been evangelized
World B: countries where at least 50 percent have been evangelized but where less than 60 percent are Christian
World C: countries that are at least 60 percent Christian

The countries of World A include 13 percent of the world’s population; those of World B, 56 percent; and those of World C, 30 percent.

One purpose of this typology is clearly to highlight the importance of attending to World A. But if we examine country-specific dissertations in the light of this typology, we discover that 54 percent of dissertations focus on the 30 percent of people living in World C. That is, over half of dissertations focus on the 30 percent of the world that is most Christian, with 43 percent of dissertations focused on the 56 percent living in World B, and less than 3 percent of dissertations focused on the 13 percent living in World A. Even if we consider only dissertations from ATS-accredited seminaries or from the three largest producers of dissertations in our list (Fuller, TEDS, and Asbury), only 3 percent of dissertations have a focus on World A. That is, these dissertations focus far more research on majority-Christian countries from World C, such as Ghana, Guatemala, Kenya, Philippines, or Uganda than on countries from World A, such as Algeria, Bangladesh, Nepal, or Senegal.

The following patterns appear to be present in the dissertations we examined:

- Much of the research focuses on world Christianity, with missionaries only partially in view, if at all. Especially in universities, a shift from mission studies to world Christianity is clearly evident.
- Within seminaries and formal missiology programs in North America, many doctoral students are internationals whose research is focused on the engagement of their own Christian communities with social, cultural, and pastoral matters.
- Even where dissertations focus on relatively unevangelized people, these people often are part of diaspora communities in regions where Christianity is stronger. Thus a dissertation may focus on the evangelism of North Africans living in France, or of Mongolians living in South Korea.
- With Christian mission increasingly conceptualized as being “from everywhere to everywhere,” an increasing number of dissertations in formal missiology programs focus on settings within Europe or North America. That is, missional engagement with Western settings appears to be a growing focus. The same tool kit of cultural analysis formerly applied by missionaries to distant places is now applied close to home. And the agents of mission in such settings increasingly include recent immigrants from abroad.
- Conceptions of Christian mission have broadened to include a wider variety of social concerns, with the “whole gospel for the whole person” increasingly central. Dissertations from the ICS program at Fuller Theological Seminary, for example, no longer focus exclusively on church growth but on everything from children at risk to human trafficking, racial reconciliation, or poverty alleviation. Similar trends are present across other seminaries.

In our increasingly globalized and diverse world, it appears that doctoral students find missiology programs well suited to helping them engage a diverse world across a wide variety of social settings, and with a wide variety of ministries and commitments in view. Would-be theological educators in India, Malawi, or the Philippines may find much of theological doctoral education in North America to be rather Eurocentric, with missiology or intercultural studies programs better suited to helping them research pastoral and theological realities related to witch accusations, polygamy, caste, reconciliation, Hinduism, or poverty and wealth. American ethnic or racial minorities with an interest in racial reconciliation are apparently finding intercultural studies programs suited to help them pursue their interests and callings.

In short, the fields of missiology, of mission studies, and of world Christianity are in transition. While there are continuities here, there is also change. But the story, at least as told through dissertations, is less a story of demise or retrenchment than one of expansion, revision, and reinvention.
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Notes

See new endnote 14.


8. We thank John Cheong, Clive Chin, Ethan Christofferson, Richard Cook, Minhee Jyun, Myunghee Lee, James Park, and Yi-Chin Swingle for special help in this matter.


11. Ibid., 100.

12. In addition to considering each name itself, a variety of other sources proved helpful. It was often possible to find the author name linked to the dissertation title with a picture and brief bio (including use of gender pronouns) on church/ministry organization websites, graduate university and student web pages, and faculty websites.

This search was helped by the fact that ProQuest often had links that identified authors’ current or past institutional affiliations. Facebook/LinkedIn searches also proved helpful for explicitly identifying gender, as did book/dissertation reviews. Abstracts and dissertation excerpts often provided an “acknowledgment” section where the name of a husband or wife was mentioned, thus providing a supplemental clue. Clearly, none of this secondary research gives complete certainty; when it seemed to us uncertain, we left the gender variable blank.


14. When the list of doctoral dissertations related to Christian mission for the years 2002–2011, on which the analyses and rankings in this article are based, was compiled, a number of dissertations from Biola University were inadvertently not included. They have now been added to the list, and the statistical analysis has been completely redone. Adjustments to percentages and totals, mostly small, will be found throughout the article.

The most notable change is Biola University’s move up in rank. It is now tied with Boston University for fourth place among schools in number of doctoral degrees granted related to Christian mission. Commendations to them. Opportunity was taken to make minor corrections to a couple other figures as well.

With this revision the list of doctoral dissertations analyzed has grown from 1,492 to 1,515. The entire list has been placed online and can be searched at www.internationalbulletin.org/files/html/diss-list-2002-2011.

For all citations and comparisons, please use the figures, percentages, and rankings of schools found in this revision of the article.

Erratum
After the October 2013 issue of the IBMR had been mailed, it was learned that a group of dissertations from Biola University for the years 2002–11 had inadvertently been omitted from the database used in preparing the article “Doctoral Dissertations on Mission: Ten-Year Update, 2002–2011.” See new endnote 14 above.

The missing titles have been added to the database and the statistical analyses recalculated. Corrected figures and percentages are found in the revised article that appears above.

The editors of the IBMR regret the error and request that all citations of figures, percentages, and rankings of schools be made using the numbers found in this revision.

Annual Index of IBMR Articles and Book Reviews Available Online
Beginning with this issue the annual index of IBMR articles, contributors, books reviewed, and book reviewers will be available online as a PDF file rather than in the printed journal each October. Go to www.internationalbulletin.org/about and click the annual index link (found in the lower left). The content of the annual index is also found in the online search database described below.

Established since January 2010 as an online journal with a published print option, the IBMR counts 15,212 subscribers in 198 countries (as of August 19, 2013). The online journal is a free resource available to mission scholars, practitioners, academics, students, and others interested in the Christian world mission, and is easily searchable online all the way from the current issue back to 1950 and its roots as the Occasional Bulletin from the Missionary Research Library. The current number of subscribers exceeds the highest previously recorded total for this journal—8,691 for the April 1987 issue.

To find any article, access the IBMR’s online index, located at www.internationalbulletin.org/search.

The IBMR database currently catalogs more than 4,200 entries—approximately 1,700 feature articles and 2,400 book reviews. Once you have found the article you want, log in to read it online. All articles and reviews are available in PDF format. Recent articles and reviews are available in HTML as well.

Registration (and logging in) gives full-text access to all IBMR articles and reviews, but it is not necessary to be logged in to use the online index. For example, to read or print “The Legacy of R. Pierce Beaver,” former editor of this journal, enter “Beaver” and “Legacy” into the Title/Search search box and select “All Words” at the right. You will be directed to the January 1990 feature article. Searching may be refined by year or range of years, by title, by document type, or by author. Search results may be printed for future reference.

The IBMR was established in 1950, and in 1981 it received its present title: INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN OF MISSIONARY RESEARCH.
Hendrik Kraemer’s *Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*: A Magnum Opus after Seventy-Five Years

Jan A. B. Jongeneel

This year we celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the conference of the International Missionary Council (IMC), held in 1938 in Tambaram, India. We also celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the publication of *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1938). This in-depth study on missions and non-Christian religions, worldviews, and ideologies was written by Hendrik Kraemer (1888–1965), professor of religions at Leiden University from 1937 to 1947, who had previously, from 1922 to 1937, served as a Bible translator and missionary in the Dutch East Indies, today Indonesia. Kraemer wrote this study at the request of John Mott, a Bible translator and missionary in the Dutch East Indies, today Indonesia. Kraemer wrote this study at the request of John Mott, then chairperson of the IMC. For the only time in mission history, a single volume written by a single person helped prepare for a great international conference.

*Christian Message* was reprinted about twenty times and was translated into German and Swedish—but it is not the most widely translated and printed missionary/missiological book of the twentieth century. This honor belongs to David J. Bosch’s *Transforming Mission*, published in 1991. *Christian Message*, however, surpasses *Transforming Mission* in dealing with the non-Christian religions, for while Bosch was a scholar of missions, Kraemer was a scholar of religions, especially Islam. *Transforming Mission* is a mission book that deals with developments inside Christianity, but *Christian Message* deals with all religions and all worldviews of the time. Moreover, *Christian Message* played a singular role in ending the optimism of the missionary movement of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century that one day the whole human community would embrace Jesus as its Master and Messiah, and the entire world would become Christian. In the period between the two world wars, *Christian Message* called the missionary movement back to reality. Kraemer wanted to replace the idealism of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century with realism—specifically, biblical realism. He argued that in a world in transition (a phrase used as the title of the first chapter of *Christian Message*), the missionary movement can be adequate and effective only when it takes into account pseudo-absolutes and secularism, as well as crises, revolutions, uncertainties, and disturbances, as the real context in which the Gospel must be proclaimed, without compromising in the struggle “against principalities, against powers” (Eph. 6:12 KJV).

This article does not deal with the Tambaram conference itself but is limited to a description and analysis of *Christian Message* and its reception. It focuses on (1) the essence of *Christian Message*, (2) the growth of post-Kraemer theology since the 1960s, and (3) the continued relevance of *Christian Message* since the 1960s. This article quotes from the 2009 reprint of *Christian Message* published in Bangalore, India, which contains my introduction and appendixes (revised and enlarged, as well as new ones), as well as a glossary, a bibliography of the books used by Kraemer to draft *Christian Message*, and an index of scriptural references in the text.3

My discussion draws on earlier Kraemer studies by various authors. It recognizes that Kraemer’s views are close to the dialectical theology of Karl Barth, known as the theology of crisis. I disagree with those scholars who describe Barth and Kraemer as conservative theologians.4 From a dogmatic point of view, such an interpretation is correct, but not at all from a missionary point of view. In 1914 Barth was the most progressive theologian of the West, opposing the German declaration of war that marked the beginning of the First World War and the support of that war by famous liberal theologians such as Adolf von Harnack. In the days before the Second World War, Kraemer was more progressive than the liberal philosopher of religion William E. Hocking. In *Christian Message* Kraemer unmasked the fateful link between Shinto and militarism in Japan. Barth’s and Kraemer’s prophetic approach to the ideologies and world religions of their days is, from start to finish, not conservative but progressive. They opposed the liberal understanding of progress, which they considered passé. In the words of *Christian Message*:

> Back to fundamentals . . . [to] a rethinking of missionary principles. . . . Recommending Christianity as the bringer of enlightenment and freedom, as a capital national and social tonic to make powerful nations, as the infallible guide to progress, has come to naught. It has even proved a great danger, because it rouses expectations and offers promises which often will not be fulfilled, and therefore necessarily entails disillusionment. . . . The spell of the erroneous identification of Christianity and the progressive West is broken, and, still deadlier, the prestige of Western culture has decreased enormously. (59–60)

**Essence and Purpose of Christian Message**

Kraemer was very afraid of reducing Christian missions to “sharing religious experience” and “social service,” as the liberals and the social gospel movement were doing. He feared that such reduction would lead to “the suicide of missions.” Instead, he argued, the entire missionary movement is obligated “to witness to the world of divine and human realities as revealed in Jesus Christ” (298–99). *Christian Message* is a great plea to replace the anthropocentrism then ruling Christian theology and Christian missions and to enthrone theocentrism and christocentrism. Moreover, *Christian Message* emphasizes that the Bible does not view God in an impersonal way—as the first cause of the universe or absolute mind—but as a holy person with whom we can communicate in personal and communal prayers and hymns. *Christian Message* is thoroughly personalistic: God is the holy, merciful, and loving Person who ultimately revealed himself to all human beings, not in nature or holy scriptures, but in the person and work of Jesus Christ. *Christian Message* profiles God’s personal disclosure in Jesus Christ, not only as the essence of the Christian faith, but also as the essence of Christian missions. In six continents the missionary movement is called to proclaim Jesus Christ as “the measure of all things” (146), “the ultimate

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Kraemer did not equate the non-Christian world with the non-Western world. He emphasized that paganism occurred not only in the East but also in the West.

willingness of Roman Catholicism to compromise with Shinto in Japan (403–4). Both Barth and Kraemer rejected compromise with “natural religion” and nationalism. They focused upon God’s revelation, which is a revelation of his “redemptive will,” his “saving will” (73). Mission is nothing but doing “the prophetic ethic of God’s will” (96). This ethic alone “places the world and all it contains under the judgment of God’s will and calls for strenuous and inspired action” (100).

According to Kraemer, the Christian message needs to be proclaimed “in the non-Christian world.” He did not equate the non-Christian world with the non-Western world. He emphasized that paganism occurred not only in the East but also in the West. In this regard he, like Barth, pointed to Communism, Fascism, and National Socialism (Nazism) in the West as intolerant and absolutist ideologies that replaced Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior with their own priests, prophets, saints, and mediators (15). Just as there is no continuity between Nazism and the Gospel (so Barth), so too the non-Christian religions in East and West cannot be viewed as “the preparation of the Gospel” (329). Christ is not the fulfillment of non-Christian aspirations; Christianity is not “the crown of Hinduism,” as John F. Farquhar had argued. The holy scriptures of Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Shinto cannot function as the Old Testament of the East (329). The Buddha, Lao-Tzu, and Muhammad cannot be considered to be like John the Baptist, who paved the way for Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the sole legitimate and ultimate Lord, the head of the new divine order of life (77, 81), who has no predecessors in the non-Christian religions except Moses and the Hebrew prophets.

An Outdated Volume? Post-Kraemer Theology

When a person has died or a worldview is considered outdated, we can talk about later views as being “post” that person or worldview. We thus speak of modernism and postmodernism, as well as of Barth’s theology and post-Barth theology, Kraemer’s theology and post-Kraemer theology, Bosch’s theology and post-Bosch theology, and so on.

*Christian Message* was published before the Second World War. Developments after 1938 are therefore absent from the text, such as postcolonialism, the rise of Pentecostalism and the evangelical movement, the growth of sub-Saharan Christianity, the foundation of the State of Israel in 1948, and postwar developments in world religions, especially in Islam. A thorough evaluation of *Christian Message*, however, will focus, not on what happened after its publication, but on the subject matter and ideas presented in 1938—what in *Christian Message* is outdated? what is still relevant?

Before the Tambaram conference, Indian theologians Panditpeddi Chenchiah and Vengal Chakkarai jointly published *Rethinking Christianity in India* (1938), which was the first publication with profound criticisms of *Christian Message*. Later Indian theologians such as M. M. Thomas and Stanley J. Samartha also studied Kraemer carefully. They agreed with some of his views and distanced themselves from others. Thomas coined the term “post-Kraemer theology” in a personal letter to Kraemer dated April 23, 1961:

Most of us owe a great deal to your theological approach and in fact therefore our attempt to criticise it is our struggle to transcend our own theological thinking so that we may provide for ourselves a post-Kraemer theological framework to enable us to do the constructive cultural tasks which are before us. This certainly is not denying the validity of the purification which your theology has performed for all of us in discriminating between God and idol.

In his reply, Kraemer expressed his regrets that he was not able to contribute personally to a post-Kraemer theology. Samartha, who used the term “post-Kraemer” only after Kraemer’s death, was sharper in his criticisms than Thomas, questioning the possibility or necessity of dividing the world into “Christian” and “non-Christian”:

With the passing away of Kraemer an era in the history of the theology of mission has ended. It was an era which, at its heights, was marked by aggressive certainty, unbounded enthusiasm, a sureness of direction and assured hope for the coming harvest. There is no doubt that Kraemer dominated the scene and, with his massive scholarship and real concern for the mission of the church, upheld many drooping spirits in Mission Boards. But times have changed. The clear-cut division of the world into Christian and non-Christian made in his Tambaram book is no longer valid. Today one talks about Christian faith and other faiths.

In 1971 Samartha became the director of the subunit Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies in the World Council of Churches (WCC). The name of this subunit contradicts the theological position of Barth and Kraemer, who used the term “faith” solely in connection with humanity’s response to God’s revelation in Jesus Christ. Samartha and others both within and outside the WCC viewed all non-Christian religions as belief systems, and their adherents as believers, as “neighbors of other faiths.” This major terminological shift can easily be linked with another shift in the 1960s. Kraemer had focused on religious and secular belief systems, that is, the –isms, whereas Samartha and like-minded theologians focused on the adherents, that is, the –ists. Kraemer evaluated the truth claims of all religions and worldviews “prophetically,” whereas Samartha treated people of other religions and ideologies “pastorally,” as fellow human beings and neighbors.

In 1988 the Commission of World Mission and Evangelism (CWME), the successor of the IMC, celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the Tambaram conference in the same hall as had
been used in 1938. After this large celebration, a small group of
individuals invited by the WCC gathered in Mahabalipuram,
India, to discuss Christian witness in today’s world.19 Present
were representatives of the CWME and the subunit on dialogue,
as well as some specialists, myself included. In the sometimes
vehement discussions, mission leaders such as J. E. Lesslie
Newbigin and Greek Orthodox Bishop Anastasios, moderator of
CWME, defended positions that were quite close to Kraemer’s
in Christian Message, whereas Samartha, Diana L. Eck (then the
moderator of the subunit on dialogue), and the Canadian
scholar W. Cantwell Smith viewed Christian Message as outdated
and therefore pleaded for a post-Kraemer theology, that is, a pluralist
model of theology. Following M. M. Thomas, I defended a middle
position. To me, Kraemer and Samartha are standing on opposite
banks of the same river, with each bank needed in order for the
Gospel water to run into the human community.14

Still Relevant: Classics Never Die

Since the 1960s many Christian scholars have viewed Kraemer as
outdated, but others regard Christian Message as a classic work, not
to be forgotten. At least three groups of people are still studying
Christian Message in detail.

First, within the field of religious studies, scholars view
Kraemer’s main works as still relevant to the phenomenological
study of religion. Utrecht scholar Jacques Waardenburg published
an anthology of religious studies in which he allotted Kraemer a
prominent position, writing, “The following books of Kraemer
are relevant to the study of religion: 1938 The Christian Message
in a Non-Christian World; 1956 Religion and the Christian Faith; 1960
World Cultures and World Religions.”15

Second, the Christian Message is still relevant to the study of
systematic theology and mission theology. Origen V. Jathanna,
a systematic theologian, is one of a new group of Indian scholars
who carefully study Kraemer. Jathanna’s excellent doctoral
dissertation at the University of Basel described and analyzed the
theological and missionary similarities and differences between
Kraemer, the Scottish missionary Alfred G. Hogg, the American
scholar William E. Hocking, and Jathanna’s compatriot Pandip-
eddi Chenchiah, evaluating their understanding of “the decisiveness
of the Christ-event” and “the universality of Christianity.”
Jathanna’s criticisms of Christian Message are similar to those of
Chenchiah, but he also appreciates Kraemer’s understanding of the
Christ-event, stating that Kraemer’s understanding of this
event as “all-decisive with regard to the God-man relationship
for the whole of humanity is sound, and is in accord with the
New Testament understanding of this event.”16

In 2004 George R. Sumner of Wycliffe in Toronto
called considerable attention to Kraemer in a work entitled The
First and the Last: The Claim of Jesus Christ and the Claims of Other
Religious Traditions. He carefully described and analyzed Chris-
tian Message and the Kraemer-versus-Hogg debate in the wake of
Tambaram. Sumner sympathized with Kraemer’s view that
one cannot move at once from non-Christian belief systems to
the truth of Jesus Christ. “Kraemer’s preference for Barth corre-
sponds with Kraemer’s strong insistence that the Christian must
have a firm and clear place to stand, [namely] . . . in the unique
revelation in Jesus Christ.”17

Finally, Christian Message remains relevant in the study of
practical theology and the praxis of the encounter with adherents
of other belief systems. In 2001 Tim S. Perry published a study
of Kraemer’s theology of religions in which he analyzed the
“radical difference” between Kraemer and his opponents and
defended Kraemer on theoretical and practical grounds against
their arguments.18 Armand Garon, a Roman Catholic priest, served
the mission of his church in Africa and encountered Muslims
there. He completed a Ph.D. at Saint Paul University, Ottawa,
with a dissertation on Kraemer’s theology of Islam,19 in which
he clearly presented the still-valuable views of the Christian
Message on primal religions and on Asian religions (Hinduism,
Buddhism, Taoism, Shinto).

Christian Message as Study Project

Thorough study of Christian Message and other Kraemer
publications continues in the West, as well as in Asia and Africa,
both in academia and in the mission field.20 Asian reception of
Christian Message is not limited to India but takes place also
in Indonesia. In addition to the unpublished dissertations of
Pieter D. Latuhamallo (Union Theological Seminary, New York,
1959) and I. Wajan Mastra (Aquinas Institute of Philosophy and
Theology, Dubuque, Iowa, 1970), Johannes L. C. Abineno wrote an
appreciative monograph in Indonesian commemorating the
hundredth anniversary of Kraemer’s birth.21 It is not possible to
list here all that has been published on Christian Message since
the 1960s or to indicate the areas where further investigation is
still outstanding. I refer to a survey of Kraemer studies between
1988 and 2002 by the Dutch scholar Christiaan G. F. de Jong,22
which includes references to published and unpublished stud-
ies of Christian Message and other Kraemer works that deal with
topics as varied as communication and syncretism.23 Two topics
are particularly worthy of future study: the views of Christian
Message on reality, realism (versus idealism), and realization (of
purposes set by human beings); and its emphasis on the personal
God, personalism, and personality, as well as on the –ists over
against the –ists.

During the seventy-five years since Christian Message, there
may have been scholars of religion with greater knowledge than
Kraemer of world religions and/or worldviews, but none sup-
ported the missionary enterprise more ardently than Kraemer
did. Similarly, in the past seventy-five years there may have been
missionaries with a deeper engagement than Kraemer in the
missionary movement, but none understood world religions,
worldviews, and ideologies as well as Kraemer did. Kraemer is
a model of both “massive scholarship” (Samartha) and massive
commitment to the missionary cause. This singular combination
has been a source of both inspiration and irritation. Today the
arguments for and against Christian Message are as many and
varied as they were seventy-five years ago. Christian Message
continues to function both as an eye-opener and as a stumbling
block.
Notes
5. Hendrik Kraemer, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World* (Bangalore: Centre for Contemporary Christianity [CICC], 2009). The page numbers in this reprint are the same as in the earlier editions. Siga Arles, director of CICC, gave permission for this volume to be reprinted in the CICC series of missiological classics and wrote the publisher’s note. To order this documented edition of *Christian Message,* contact Arles at arles@sify.com.
11. Klootwijk, *Commitment and Openness,* 41–43.
Denominationalism or Protestantism? Mission Strategy and Church in the Kikuyu Conference of 1913

Colin Reed

A century ago, in 1913, a conference held in Kikuyu, Kenya, sought to shape the future of Protestant missions there and thus the future of the growing church. The primary question was whether the young church in this African country, founded by the missionary agencies, should replicate the historic denominational churches of the West, or whether there should be a united Protestant church with no organic connections to outside bodies. Inadvertently, however, the conference opened a debate within the Anglican Church about its own nature and relationship with other churches.

The Kikuyu Conference of 1913 gave rise to discussion in church newspapers from India to the United States, yet it has now fallen into relative obscurity. Stephen Neill’s *History of Christian Missions* accords it a brief paragraph, ending with the statement that “the episode was of great value by reason of the education it gave to countless thoughtful people in the Church.” In contrast, Frank Weston, bishop of Zanzibar and one of the protagonists in the debate, saw the Kikuyu Conference as the most important conference since the Reformation.

The Conference at Kikuyu

On June 17, 1913, some sixty representatives of Protestant missionary societies met at the Church of Scotland mission at Kikuyu, not far from Nairobi, Kenya. The population of Kenya was still small—estimated at 4 million in 1913—and widely scattered. Missionaries, too, were few and scattered: John J. Willis, bishop of Uganda, recorded, “There is plenty of room for treble the number of men to work and still keep far enough apart to avoid friction.” In most areas, the church was still very young.

William Peel, the Anglican bishop of Mombasa, was elected chairman of the conference, and Willis, secretary. Both were missionaries of the Church Missionary Society (CMS), an Evangelical Anglican society. The first days were taken up with routine matters, but two items on the last day caused the ensuing storm of high feelings: first, a proposal drawn up by the conference for a “federation” of churches that would accords it a slightly fuller account. In their reports of the Kikuyu Conference, the CMS representatives were anxious to point out that they had never intended “an immediate union either of missionary societies or of native Churches,” knowing that such a plan would be “open to criticisms of haste and precipitancy” and would cut them off from their denominations back home and from the missionary societies that had sent them. They had in mind that at some future time there would be a united (Protestant) indigenous church, for denominations were not yet entrenched in Kenya. “No self-governing native Church exists,” Willis stated in his report to CMS, a reference to the ideal of the establishment of a self-governing, self-supporting, and self-extending church, which had been a fundamental aim of the society. But by 1913 in Uganda the Anglican Church already had a formal constitution in which missionaries and African clergy were equally members of the synod and its committees. Although Willis stated that there was as yet no self-governing native church in Kenya, there was a bishop, as well as “native” clergy—the first Africans had been ordained in 1885. The African clergy, though, were not part of the conference that planned for a future united church.

The conference’s immediate aim was “common membership,” which they described as allowing members of participating churches “all the privileges of membership as visitors” (italics in original) when in the area of another denomination. Such visitors would not have voting rights. The conference agreed on a common policy of preparation for baptism that involved a two-year period of instruction and probation and a “common form of Church organisation,” although churches would not have identical governance structures and patterns of ministry. The conference agreed on “Regular Administration of the two sacraments, Baptism and Lord’s Supper, by outward signs” and specified that baptism must be by water and in the name of the Trinity. It was agreed that the sacraments would be administered by “recognised ministers of the Church occupying the district.” There was to be no universal form for either the services of the Lord’s Supper and baptism or other services. Each denomination would use its accustomed form, and “visitors” would be welcome to participate, but it was hoped that a simple common order would be developed that would be acceptable to all. The overall basis of unity would be acceptance of the Holy Scriptures and the historic creeds. Agreement to these general proposals was given by representatives of the major missionary societies: the (Anglican) Church Missionary Society, the Church of Scotland Mission, the Africa Inland Mission (an interdenominational mission, represented by an American, Charles Hurlburt), and the United Methodist Mission. The smaller denominations did not sign.

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October 2013
Anglican Thinking at Kikuyu

In his report on the conference, Willis gave details of his thinking on the issue of non-Anglicans receiving the Holy Communion in Anglican churches. Christian converts from other churches who were not in an area of their own denomination should be admitted to the Anglican service. The responsibility of agreeing to this practice was great, said Willis, but the responsibility of refusing the sacrament to a Christian was greater. But Willis ruled out the possibility of a minister who was not episcopally ordained offering the sacrament in an Anglican church, for that would be against the principles laid down in the Lambeth Quadrilateral. The controversial possibility that Anglicans would receive communion in non-Anglican churches from clergy who were not episcopally ordained was not addressed specifically but was implicitly approved by the agreement that the sacraments would be offered by clergy of the denomination active in the relevant area.

The proposals also raised the wider question of the orders of clergy of other denominations. Willis drew attention to the fact that they were clearly used by God and that their ministry was fruitful and in that sense was valid. In Willis’s opinion, clergy of nonepiscopal churches could be invited to preach in an Anglican church, but only on the same basis as a lay reader—by invitation of the clergy, with the bishop’s approval. Willis accepted the view that, for Anglicans, ordination of the clergy would remain the prerogative of the episcopate. It seemed unlikely that the Church of Scotland Mission, for one, would agree to that position, yet they were willing to accept the federation and work toward union.

Then there was the final gathering of the Kikuyu Conference. According to the account of the two bishops, the Presbyterians had

Noteworthy

Announcing


A conference entitled Conversion, Caste, and Coexistence: Christianity in Southern India was held on September 29, 2013, in Dallas, Texas, hosted by the South Asia Research and Information Institute (SARI) and the Asian Studies Program at Southern Methodist University. Abstracts of the papers presented at the meeting can be found at www.sari.org/2013abstractsandbios.html.

The development and vitality of African Christianity are portrayed in a new two-part documentary entitled African Christianity Rising: Christianity’s Explosive Growth in Africa. Directed by filmmaker and author James Ault, the films record the daily lives of individual African Christians and the experience of worshipping communities in Ghana and Zimbabwe. According to Ault, the films are intended to be of particular relevance for church and school audiences. DVDs of the documentary, along with additional educational material, are available for purchase at http://jamesault.com/documentaries/africa-project/.

Detailed descriptions of archival collections held by thousands of libraries, museums, historical societies, and archives, primarily in the United States, are accessible through ArchiveGrid, whose database is now freely available at http://archivegrid.org. Researchers will find information about historical documents, personal papers, family histories, and other archival materials, as well as contact information for the institutions where the collections are kept.

Personalia

Appointed. Magdalene (Madge) Karecki, SSJ-TOSF, as president of St. Augustine College, Johannesburg, South Africa, effective January 2014. (St. Augustine, founded in 1999, is the only Catholic college in South Africa.) Karecki earlier spent twenty-one years working in South Africa, first with a congregation of Zulu Franciscan sisters, and later teaching at St. John Vianney Seminary and establishing the Office of Worship in the Diocese of Johannesburg. Upon returning to the United States in 2005, she became director of the Office for Mission Education and Animation in the Archdiocese of Chicago. President of the Association of Professors of Mission, she also taught missiology at St. Mary of the Lake University/Mundelein Seminary, Mundelein, Illinois.

Appointed. David Ro, as director of the J. Christy Wilson Jr. Center for World Missions at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, Massachusetts. The Center for World Missions seeks to foster a global vision within the Gordon-Conwell community and to equip leaders in the global church. Ro succeeds S. Douglas Birdsall, who on March 1, 2013, became president of the American Bible Society. Ro will continue to serve with OMF International, where his focus is on emerging Christian leadership in China, and with Lausanne International, where he is deputy director for East Asia.

Died. Justice Anderson, 83, pastor, missionary, and professor of missiology, December 29, 2012, in Fort Worth, Texas. Anderson, who was ordained at age nineteen, studied first at Baylor University, Waco, Texas, and earned his M.Div. and D.Th. degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. From 1957 to 1974 he and his wife, Mary Ann, were missionaries in Argentina, where Anderson served as church planter, seminary teacher, and Baptist church leader. He subsequently became professor of missions at Southwestern, where he directed the World Missions Center, founded in 1980, until his retirement in 1998. Anderson was the author of a number of books on missiology in both English and Spanish, including An Evangelical Saga: Baptists and Their Precursors in Latin America (2005) and a three-volume Spanish-language history of the worldwide Baptist movement, Historia de los Bautistas (1978–93).

Died. Joseph Donders, 83, educator, writer, and social
kindly offered them the use of a building, and they had invited all Christian people to share in the Lord’s Supper.

**Heresy Charges**

The response of Frank Weston, the neighboring Anglican bishop of Zanzibar, to news of the conference lit the fire. Weston was a missionary of the Universities Mission to Central Africa (UMCA, a “Catholic” Anglican Society). In an open letter to the bishop of St. Albans entitled “Ecclesia Anglicana: For What Does She Stand?,” Weston stated that the Anglican Church was not fit to send missionaries because of its internal “exceedingly chaotic system of Truth.” The actions of the two CMS bishops, according to Weston, were symptomatic of this chaos, and he charged them before the archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidson, with “propagating heresy and committing schism.”

There seems to have been an underlying assumption that the Anglican form would predominate.

Weston was a product of the Tractarian search for holiness. He had gone to Oxford in 1890 and to Zanzibar with the UMCA in 1898. Peel and Willis were inspired with the vision of holi-
For Weston, the conference was a triumph for Pan-Protestantism and a disaster for Pan-Anglicanism.

For Weston, the conference was a triumph for Pan-Protestantism and a disaster for Pan-Anglicanism. Weston’s concern over the implications of the conference, and also over the spread of modernism in Britain, led him to write his open letter to the bishop of St. Albans, which received wide publicity. In the letter he listed his objections to the Kikuyu proposals. Those proposals contained no insistence on the episcopacy or on the need for a priest to conduct Holy Communion, no mention of confirmation or ordination, which he termed sacraments, or of the Athanasian Creed specifically. Except in a general sense, he protested, “it does not know the Catholic Church and the Communion of Saints.” Specifically, he accused the two bishops of heresy “in their teaching of the meaning and value of Episcopacy,” which was to him the very esse of the church, God’s special gift to his body.

The Kikuyu proposals did not specifically address episcopacy, but it was certainly not eliminated by them. Weston later admitted that he had been misinformed; he had understood that the two bishops had already agreed to enter into a formal federation. There seems to have been an underlying assumption that the Anglican form would predominate, as Willis suggested in his report to CMS when he stated that the Anglican Church in Kenya had been the first in the field and was the largest denomination and the only one working in the cities. On its western border was the “self-governing” Anglican Church of Uganda. Willis recorded, “Therefore in any discussion of missionary policy it is natural to consider the Church of England should exercise a large influence.”

Episcopacy Affirmed

The archbishop of Canterbury corresponded with the three bishops and met separately with Weston and Willis in February 1914; Peel, who was in India, was unable to travel to England because of ill health. The archbishop concluded that there were no grounds to try the two bishops on the twin charges of heresy and schism and proposed to refer the matter to a Central Consultative Body set up by Lambeth (a conference of the diocesan bishops of the whole Anglican Communion every ten years, called by the archbishop of Canterbury whose official residence is at Lambeth in London). The unanimous final report of the Consultative Body and the archbishop’s response were published in April 1915. The Anglican Church was for the first time dealing specifically with the issue of Anglicans seeking intercommunion with other denominations, a landmark in the history of mission and of Anglicanism.

On the matter of federation, the reply of the Consultative Body emphasized three issues.

- In regard to clergy of other denominations preaching in Anglican churches, it took the view that it was the prerogative of the bishop to authorize anyone to preach, having considered the preacher’s qualifications. It felt that the Kikuyu statement did not sufficiently safeguard this position.
- Regarding admission of non-Anglicans to Holy Communion, it cited the rubric in the Book of Common Prayer on persons confirmed or desirous of confirmation but allowed that “the evidence is abundant to show that exceptions to the rule have been allowed in special cases.” Permission was at the discretion of the bishop and would be given only in exceptional circumstances.
- The Consultative Body was more definite on the issue of Anglicans being allowed to receive Communion in nonepiscopal churches, which it could not regard as “consistent with the principles of the Church of England.”

Essentially, while commending the good intent of the two CMS bishops, the council affirmed the nature of the Anglican Church as episcopal in keeping with the Lambeth Quadrilateral and ruled out any scheme of reunion that did not take its episcopal character into account.

The consultative council was clear that the Communion service held on the final day of the conference should not be seen as a precedent. Recognizing the “purity of its motive” and spirit of love, they refrained from making any judgment on Willis and Peel. The service had surely been “acceptable to Him to Whom it was offered,” even though it did not conform to the principles of the Church of England.

The archbishop of Canterbury’s response substantially covered the same ground as the consultative council, which it explicitly reiterated on specific points. His position satisfied neither the bishop of Zanzibar and his supporters nor the bishops of Uganda and Mombasa and theirs. Davidson did not go as far as Weston would have liked, for he would not regard all non-Episcopalian as extra ecclesia, but he clearly reiterated the position that episcopacy was what “we believe to be the right method of Church government,” warning that Anglicans had no liberty to contemplate a move away from that position. The statement noted that the two bishops concerned believed that they were acting in accord with resolutions of former Lambeth gatherings, and especially those of the 1908 Lambeth Conference. Therefore their intentions, if not their actions, were to be commended. He viewed the proposed federation as compromising Anglican unity by placing parts of the Anglican Communion under another authority, that of the proposed “Representative Council.”

On a different note, the archbishop’s statement drew attention to a vital missionary principle, namely, that the Gospel was incarnated in the very fabric of a society:

It is the paramount duty and privilege of those who are already Christians to promote the upbuilding of the Church of Christ.
among all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues. The Church so upbuilt must, in every land be, or become; what we call for shortness sake a Native Church, a Church, that is, into whose structure the characteristics of the people of that land are for the common good of the whole Church of Christ taken up and interwoven.

It is instructive to see that this position was articulated so clearly, particularly in view of the criticisms often made of missions for imposing their “home” culture, and of the Anglican Church for reproducing an English church.

The archbishop then referred the matter to the next Lambeth Conference, which, because of the war, did not meet until 1920. This conference slightly broadened earlier statements but still held episcopacy to be essential. The proposed federation in Kenya had received a death sentence, and a future united “native church” looked unlikely, at least for the time being.

New Proposals for Federation

A second Kikuyu Conference was held in 1918, after the devastation of the Great War, in which many Africans in Kenya and Tanzania and a number of missionaries were caught up. Tens of thousands of Africans died in German East Africa and beyond. Weston was invited to attend the 1918 conference, although not as a voting delegate, as he was from outside Kenya. Peel had died before this conference, and Richard Heywood was now bishop of Mombasa. Willis was elected chairman. Weston outlined his principles for reunion, stating that any union must be predicated on acceptance of episcopacy and episcopal ordination. His own recollections of the speech were that he started by laying down that the “existence of the Catholic Church of Christ, which he intended to be one universal brotherhood, must be acknowledged by all.” He then explained that episcopacy was of the essence and “the only form of ministry that can be historically justified.”

At the 1918 conference the nonepiscopal missions recorded their concern that a united church would be too broad to be united in heart and mind and might include some “who were really tending towards at least some doubt of the integrity of Scripture and the deity of our Lord.” Nor were they willing to accept a system that “failed to honour the authority conferred by their own Churches.” They were, however, willing to form a body in which different missionary organizations would cooperate in certain activities. In anticipation of such a suggestion, Willis and Heywood had prepared proposals for formation of a body that would allow common representation to government and united activity in providing educational and health services.

On the last day of the 1918 conference, the group formed the Missionary Alliance for Kenya, which included the Africa Inland Mission, the Church Missionary Society, the Church of Scotland Mission, the United Methodist Mission, and the British and Foreign Bible Society. The Bible society, however, subsequently withdrew, since it was not a church-founding organization. Hope for a future united church was dimmed but not lost. Perhaps the most influential activity of the Missionary Alliance in Kenya, and later in Tanganyika, was to establish schools that became significant in the education of African leaders and were an important factor in the preparation of Africa for independence from colonial rule. In 1926 the alliance became the Missionary Council for Kenya. Tanganyika followed suit in forming a missionary council, and these councils later became national councils of churches.

During the 1930s the Anglican, Presbyterian, and Methodist churches discussed plans for a union. In 1933 a committee drew up a proposal that closely followed the South India model and accepted the threefold order of ministry of bishops, priests, and deacons without questioning the validity of the orders of those presently ordained in nonepiscopal churches. Nor was it obligatory that the bishops be in the historic apostolic succession. The Second World War put those plans into abeyance. There were further moves in the 1960s, both in Kenya and Tanzania, but these foundered as denominational loyalties by then were strong. Pan-Anglicanism, Pan-Presbyterianism, and Pan-Lutheranism had won the day.

Observations

The Kikuyu Conference of 1913 is of contemporary interest for a number of reasons. In addition to the question of mission strategy, it contributed to the long debate on the organic unity of the body of Christ. It also had a part in the Anglican Church’s clarifying its own parameters and the fundamentals that it believed should be maintained in any scheme of unity, with the episcopacy as a prime factor. The Kikuyu conferences contributed to the development of structures for internal debate within the Anglican world. The Anglican Consultative Council, formed only during the 1968 Lambeth Conference and composed of representatives of all the “provinces” (or national churches) of the Anglican Communion, held its first meeting in 1971 at Limuru in Kenya, not far from Kikuyu.

In East Africa after 1913, Pan-Protestantism lost. Overall, the Kikuyu conferences helped to strengthen the concept of worldwide denominations at the expense of freestanding “mission church” federations. This outcome was largely a result of the internal disagreement in the Anglican Church, but other denominations shared the same fears of being severed from their roots. In the Indian subcontinent, in a different context, as is well known, the Church of South India followed a different path. A case can be argued for the value of each of these forms of church development, with God being sovereign over all.

In East Africa, a national church with historic and emotional connections to a wider fellowship has perhaps proved to be of strategic benefit.
Notes

1. The Church Missionary Review (CMR) covered the conference and its aftermath in great depth and published many of the documents. Articles from various journals are cited in CMR, April 1914, pp. 236–40.


8. Ibid.


12. The Quakers (Society of Friends), who had a mission in western Kenya, did not accept this policy.

13. Chadwick, “How It Arose and What It Did,” CMR, January 1914, p. 27.

14. These smaller denominations were the Seventh-day Adventist Mission, the Gospel Mission Society, the German Lutheran Mission, and the Friends Africa Mission (Quakers). German Lutheran mission societies worked principally in Tanzania, which was a German colony until World War I, and had little work in Kenya.

15. Willis, “The Proposed Scheme of Federation,” CMR, January 1914, p. 34.

16. The four guiding principles of the Lambeth Quadrilateral can be found at www.anglican.ca/about/beliefs/lambeth-quadrilateral.

17. The churches of North India, South India, and Pakistan found ways of overcoming this restriction; their pattern would later be discussed in East Africa.

18. Zanzibar was at that time an independent state ruled by Arab sultans under a British protectorate. The bishop was also responsible for work in the UMCA areas of the mainland of what was then German East Africa.


22. Weston, The Fullness of Christ, quoted in Maynard Smith, Frank, Bishop of Zanzibar, 165–66. Weston’s book was “an apologia for my attitude in the recent Kikuyu controversy, and the kernel of the Gospel which I have myself received and now try to deliver to my Diocese.”


25. Weston conceded that he might have been able to change his charge to “grave irregularities” but saw that concession as now irrelevant (Blood, History of the Universities Mission to Central Africa, 72).


31. The 1888 Lambeth Quadrilateral had laid down as one of the four foundations of Anglicanism, “the Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of his Church.” In 1920 Lambeth changed the wording to state that the “visible unity of the church” involved the acceptance of a ministry accepted by the whole Church, with “the commission of Christ and the authority of the whole body.” It concluded that the “Episcopate is the only means of providing such a ministry.”


34. Ibid., 154.
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Releasing the Trigger: The Nigerian Factor in Global Christianity

Allan L. Effa

As sixteenth-century European colonial powers established settlements and began to exploit the agricultural potential of their newly claimed colonies, a massive program of human trafficking was conceived, bringing slaves primarily from West Africa to the east coasts of North and South America. This forced migration continued for three hundred years, resulting in cultural encounters that profoundly shaped the emerging nations of West Africa to the east coasts of North and South America. This human trafficking was conceived, bringing slaves primarily from their numbers might warrant.14

Estimates of the number of Nigerians living abroad vary greatly, anywhere between 1.2 million and 20 million.4 West Africa provides almost as many migrants to Europe as the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa put together, while Nigeria is the single largest source of African migration to the United States.5 Coupled with economic hardships and limited opportunities, political instability, vigorous population growth, and interethnic violence have created a situation in which many Nigerians regard migration as the only viable option for a prosperous future. Those who manage to obtain visas to European or North American nations are usually highly educated professionals. About 10,000 Nigerian academics work in the United States.6 The Association of Nigerian Physicians in the Americas has over 4,000 members in the United States, Canada, and the Caribbean.7

Brown Oyitso, a leader in Nigeria’s Redeemed Christian Church of God, has been known to sketch a quick map of Africa and remark on the similarity of its shape to that of a revolver. He points out that “Nigeria occupies the position of the trigger,”8 an image that inspired the title of this article. I approach this explosive phenomenon by exploring three arenas in which Nigerian Christians are reshaping global Christianity: first, the growing Nigerian voice in mainline Christianity; next, the Nigerian evangelical missionary movement, particularly to Muslim nations; and finally, the development of Nigerian-led church-planting movements in Europe and North America.

The Nigerian Factor in Mainline Christianity

Over the past several centuries, missionary outreach efforts of nearly every major Christian denomination found fertile soil in Nigeria. Roman Catholics began to establish outposts in the late fifteenth century and by 2009 numbered more than 23 million baptized members in nine archbishoprics.10 Protestant missions began in earnest in the mid-nineteenth century. The Church Missionary Society of London trained and deployed freed slaves as evangelists in western Nigeria, resulting in flourishing Anglican and Methodist churches. Subsequent outreach by Baptist, SIM, Lutheran, and Christian Reformed missions gave birth to denominations with adherents numbering in the millions today. For example, the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA),11 a denomination spawned by the work of SIM International, counts some 6 million members in Nigeria.12 Nigeria’s 2.1 million Baptists constitute the third largest Baptist fellowship in the world, surpassed only by the number of Baptists in India and in the United States. More Baptist worshipers are found in Nigeria on any given Sunday than in Europe and South America combined.13 Yet, because of the autonomy of each Baptist denomination, Nigerian Baptists do not exert the influence on the worldwide Baptist body that their numbers might warrant.14

The strength of mainline Nigerian Christianity has been most evident in the Anglican Communion. It is fair to say that the very heart of the Anglican community has been transplanted to Africa. The Church of Nigeria alone, numbering about 19 million, accounts for 25 percent of all Anglicans in the world.15 The Church of Nigeria’s average church attendance is greater than that of the combined Church of England, Episcopal Church of the USA (ECUSA), and Anglican Church of Canada. Peter Akinola, the former primate of Nigeria, has become a leader among bishops of the Global South and one of the most outspoken opponents of the election of Bishop Gene Robinson, the first openly gay bishop in the ECUSA. Akinola founded the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans (FCA) in 2008, bringing together fellow primates who are committed “orthodox biblical Anglicans” with an “unambiguous stand for the historic faith.” The leaders of the FCA represent over half of the practicing Anglicans in the worldwide communion.16 Kwame Bediako observed that “if the Anglican Communion is to continue as a world-wide fellowship of independent churches and provinces, it is evident that it will be shaped in a decreasing manner by the processes at work and the choices made within the circles of Western Christianity.”17 In effect, a shift in the seat of power and influence is happening as the “African factor” finds its place in global Christianity.

Among the millions of scattered Nigerians are Anglicans who have settled in the United Kingdom and North America.

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Peter Brierley has shown that the influx of Christian immigrants is the primary factor contributing to the recent rebound of church attendance in England. More than 8 percent of all churchgoing Anglicans in England are identified as “black,” a category that includes people of Caribbean origin as well. Between 1998 and 2005 the number of black Anglican churchgoers rose 25 percent, from 58,200 to 72,700. During the same period, white Anglican church attendance continued to decline. In light of the influx of Nigerians to the United Kingdom, in 1980 the Church Mission Society established the Nigerian Chaplaincy, which ministers to Nigerians and assists churches in reaching out to and receiving Nigerians.

In order to address the spiritual needs of Nigerian Anglicans in the United States, Akinola established the Convocation of Anglican Nigerian Churches in America. A major impetus for its establishment was the perception that the ECUSA was drifting away from biblical moorings. In 2006 the name was changed to Convocation for Anglicans in North America (CANA) in order to show that the convocation welcomed and sought to meet the spiritual needs of disaffected American Episcopalians as well. CANA then consecrated Canon Martyn Minns, in an installation service in Abuja, as its first missionary bishop. Minns is a conservative American bishop from Virginia, and through his influence, the network has grown across the continent. In effect, a new Anglican fellowship of parishes has been formed under Nigerian sponsorship in twenty-seven states and two Canadian provinces.

The decline in priestly vocations in Europe and North America has also led some denominations to draw upon the spiritual resources of Southern churches like Nigeria’s. This is particularly true of the Roman Catholic Church. African priests are even being brought to serve in Ireland, in a remarkable reversal of mission. About one-sixth of the priests currently serving in American parishes have been imported from other countries. Hardly a single diocese in Canada does not depend in some way on foreign priests. There is a growing presence of African clergy in predominantly Caucasian Anglican and Methodist churches as well. While some focus on ministry to specific African ethnic groups, others are involved in significant intercultural ministries. Jacob Olupona cites the example of an Igbo (southern Nigerian) priest in southern Miami who serves a Catholic Spanish congregation. There seems to be an increasing trend to rely on African clergy to help revitalize mainline parishes in Europe and North America.

In a remarkable reversal of mission, African priests are even being brought to serve in Ireland.

Nigerian Factor in Evangelical World Missions

While most Nigerians leave their homeland to seek improved education and economic opportunities, there is another motivation for diaspora, particularly within evangelical circles. Evangelicals in Nigeria number approximately 49 million, which is about 30 percent of the total population. Their growing sense of mission is fueling a church-planting movement that has already placed Nigeria among the world’s top missionary-sending nations. In fact, for every missionary that Nigeria receives, five are sent into intercultural ministries, many to other countries.

One of the earliest missionary agencies developed in Nigeria is the Evangelical Missionary Society (EMS), the missionary arm of the ECWA churches. Currently, more than 1,200 missionaries serve with EMS among unreached people in Nigeria as well as several surrounding African countries.

Missionary agencies have emerged with little fanfare or recognition outside of Nigeria. The Nigerian Missionaries Association brings together 150 Nigerian missionaries working in Cameroon for the purpose of fellowship and mutual encouragement. The Nigerian Evangelical Missions Association (NEMA) was formed in 1982 as an umbrella organization that now serves ninety-five member agencies with 5,200 missionaries deployed in fifty-six countries. Besides operating a training center for missionaries, the association brings agency leaders and missionaries together to encourage them and to work toward common goals.

At NEMA’s Executive Congress held in November 2005, the leaders adopted a formidable faith-challenging goal. Inspired by the vision of the Chinese church to send 100,000 Chinese missionaries to the countries along the Silk Road from China to Jerusalem, the Nigerian mission leaders resolved to launch Operation Samaria, also known as Vision 50:15. The goal is to mobilize 50,000 Nigerians over the next fifteen years to take the Gospel through the North African Islamic nations and meet the Chinese missionaries in Jerusalem. Already church-planting teams have been deployed in fourteen of the thirty-one countries encompassed by this vision.

The NEMA leadership believes that Nigerian Christians have been uniquely prepared for such a task because of their ability to persevere under economic hardship and their long acquaintance with persecution and clashes between Christians and Muslims. Clearly, commitment to this task will require much sacrificial giving on the part of Nigerian believers and an even greater degree of partnership between denominations and mission agencies.

Reverse Mission: Nigerian-Initiated Churches

The following statement directed in 2009 to leaders of Europe’s national and regional ecumenical councils aptly describes the phenomenon we consider in this concluding section:

Today… the mainstream of the missionary movement goes from the South to the North, from the poor to the rich world; from the margins to the centres of power, from below upwards. . . .

Today, it is mainly due to the enormous streams of migration that the Gospel is being carried all over the globe. Much of the time it happens spontaneously, in an unorganized way and beyond the control of the headquarters of our mission agencies.

West African Christians who have migrated to what were once great missionary-sending lands have often found themselves disappointed by the quality of Christian life encountered there. They compare the Western world to the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel’s vision, stripped of power and vitality by the forces of secularization. Although African migrants come primarily for economic reasons, they show a growing sense of mission to bring the Gospel anew to the people of the West. For this reason, today some 1,500 missionaries from fifty nations serve in the United Kingdom, many coming from African countries.

While some diaspora Africans have found a spiritual home in the mainline and evangelical churches of Europe and North America, the Nigerian Factor in Evangelical World Missions demonstrates a growing trend to rely on African clergy to help revitalize mainline and evangelical churches in the United States and Europe.
America, numerous Nigerian-initiated churches have been springing up in recent years. These churches fall within two broad categories. The first category consists of European or North American branches of churches that originated in Nigeria, some of which, particularly in the United Kingdom, date back as early as the 1960s. Examples include the Aladura Church, Deeper Life, and the Redeemed Christian Church of God, founded either by small groups of immigrants who came together and eventually organized themselves as congregations, or through intentional missionary outreach efforts by church-planting missionaries sent to work among Nigerian expatriates. The second category comprises independent churches started by Nigerians in Europe, some of which have subsequently established branches in Africa and other parts of the world. Both types of churches are helping to change the face of European and North American Christianity and are part of a growing global mission force.

Churches originating in Nigeria that have spread to the West. The most remarkable example of Nigerian churches that have spread beyond Nigeria is the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG). The church traces its origins to the ministry of Josiah Akindayomi, an illiterate but powerful preacher who left the Cherubim and Seraphim Church and founded the RCCG. A strong missionary mandate characterized the church from its beginning, but it was not until 1981, when Enoch Adeboye assumed leadership of the church, that the movement began its explosive growth, leading the RCCG to be described as the fastest-growing Christian movement in the world. Within Nigeria itself there are at least 2,000 parishes of the RCCG, with around 5 million adherents. The Holy Ghost Services held on the first Friday of every month at Redemption Camp, forty-five kilometers northeast of Lagos, draw between 800,000 and 1.2 million worshipers. Their covered conference grounds can accommodate a million people. The church’s ministry includes a university, a movie studio, satellite television, and a Wi-Fi Internet provider. The church’s vision for growth is staggering; its mission statement declares its purpose to be:

- To make heaven.
- To take as many people [as possible] with us.
- To have a member of RCCG in every family of all nations.
- To accomplish No. 1 above, holiness will be our lifestyle.
- To accomplish No. 2 and 3 above, we will plant churches within five minutes walking distance in every city and town of developing countries, and within five minutes driving distance in every city and town of developed countries.
- We will pursue these objectives until every Nation in the world is reached for the Lord Jesus Christ.

The worldwide distribution of such a young denomination is simply astonishing. Currently there are congregations in ninety countries, including China and Pakistan. Over 100,000 members are reported within London and the English Midlands. Some of the larger RCCG churches in England and North America are known as the House of Praise Network. The denomination claims 600 churches in the United States and Canada, with its largest presence in Texas, where more than 80,000 Nigerians live in the city of Houston. RCCG is building a multimillion-dollar national headquarters and conference complex (Redemption Camp) on more than 600 acres of farmland eighty kilometers northeast of Dallas. The RCCG worldwide satellite TV network is based in Dallas, under the name Dove Media, with plans to expand to a companion Spanish-language network. Ajibike Akinkoye, the chief executive of Dove Media, says, “We didn’t bring this church to the United States to be another Nigerian church. . . . Christianity in America has become a lifestyle, not a transforming way of life. . . . There is a vibrancy in Africa. We are offering that gift back to America.”

Churches in Europe started by Nigerians. An example of churches founded in the West by Nigerians is the largest African-initiated church in the United Kingdom, London’s Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC). Founding pastor Matthew Ashimolowo came from Nigeria as a missionary and launched the congregation with 300 members in 1992. Until recently the main worship facility was located on a 9.5-acre site in Hackney, but it had to relocate to make way for the 2012 Olympics. A permanent site is being developed to accommodate the 12,000 people who attend the weekend worship services. In addition, seven branch churches are present in London and the surrounding regions, one of which is French-speaking. Another thirteen “Sunday Morning Chapels,” which are worshipping groups of fewer than 100 adults, meet under the KICC banner. The headquarters church boasts within its membership a “vibrant cultural influence” from forty-six different nations. The heart of KICC’s goal of ministry expansion is to share the Gospel with the 11 million residents of London, but it also includes a vision to establish “city churches around the world.” Currently the KICC has branched out to Ireland, South Africa, and Namibia, and it has four congregations in Ghana and thirteen in Nigeria.

Another example of a European-based Nigerian-initiated church is the well-known Embassy of the Blessed Kingdom of God for all Nations (God’s Embassy) in Kiev, Ukraine. What distinguishes this church-planting movement is that while it is under Nigerian leadership, it is occurring in a part of the world where there are very few African immigrants. This church in central Kiev is the largest Christian congregation in Europe, with 25,000 adult members, of whom 98 percent are Europeans.

Sunday Adelaja, pastor of God’s Embassy, left his homeland shortly after his conversion to Christ at nineteen years of age. He went to Belarus to study journalism at the University of Minsk, where he earned an M.A. degree. He became fluent in Russian and grew increasingly burdened for the spiritual needs of the former Soviet republics. His first attempts to begin a ministry in Ukraine faced indifference and racial prejudice. After seeking God’s direction, he turned his efforts to the most neglected and desperate segments of Ukrainian society: drug addicts, prostitutes, alcoholics, people with criminal records, and those who had been cast out by their families. Adelaja sought to bring these broken people hope and personal transformation through the power of the Holy Spirit. From a small house church meeting in Adelaja’s rented flat in 1994, a congregation grew that has reached into all segments of Ukrainian society, including the mayor of Kiev and prominent businesspeople. The priority of ministry to people
with social and psychological needs continues to be a central part of the mandate of God’s Embassy.

The church’s stated aim is to “transform the whole of Ukrainian society and, through that, to have an impact on the whole of Eastern Europe and beyond.”4 This goal is accomplished by planting churches and by dedicated social action. The church claims that it now has 700 branch churches in thirty-five countries. It operates 217 rehabilitation centers for alcohol and drug addicts, as well as educational institutions, orphanages, and nursing homes.46 While Adelaja now serves as the pastor-leader of the global ministries of God’s Embassy, his wife, Abosede Adelaja, is the main pastor of the original city-center church in Kiev.47

As with other successful African-initiated churches in the West, the church is independent, charismatic, and intentionally international or global in both its make-up and its reach. It is a church characterized by faith-filled vision, reliance on the power of the Holy Spirit, belief in the power of the Gospel to change lives and offer a bright and prosperous future, and a missionary passion to extend the kingdom of God around the world. Like megachurches in the United States, these successful Nigerian-initiated churches are dominated by a dominant leader whose name and leadership style have strongly contributed to the branding of each church.48

Conclusion

This brief survey of the Nigerian factor in global Christianity has highlighted some of the gifts that the Nigerian diaspora offers to the rest of the world. Particularly, we see a mission in reverse taking place as the vitality and vision of African Christianity not only finds a foothold in Europe and North America but also challenges the very expression of Christianity in those continents.

Notes

8. Murphy, “The New Missionaries.”
9. For lack of a better term, I use “mainline” to identify churches with origins in Europe or North America, in contrast to African-initiated churches.
11. ECWA previously stood for Evangelical Churches of West Africa. The change of name testifies to a broader and more dynamic missionary vision.

The success of these African-initiated churches will likely depend on at least four factors:

- their ability to reach out to and enfold the next generation born and raised in the secularized post-Christian West
- their commitment to become truly international congregations
- the degree to which they become contextualized to European and North American realities and are able to reach mainstream members of society
- their ability to retain spiritual vitality and integrity while experiencing growth in influence and financial resources

Mainline “mother” churches in the West are being challenged to biblical faithfulness and evangelical fervor by influential “daughter” churches such as those of Nigeria. The rudiments of what may prove to be a spectacular missionary explosion from Nigeria to some of the most unevangelized nations of the 10/40 Window are taking shape. The model of partnership among diverse agencies and the dependence on prayer and sacrificial giving from churches that by Western standards would be considered very poor are creating a new paradigm in the history of the missionary movement. Finally, as the West African–initiated churches engage in mission, we catch a glimpse of these churches’ potential for leading post-Christian Europeans and North Americans back to a living, transforming faith in Jesus Christ. As Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu observes, “The revival of a Christian presence in the northern continents may turn out to be one of the areas in which Africa might make some of its greatest contributions to the global village in the new millennium.”49

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29. See ter Haar’s report on African-initiated churches in Holland, in Halfway to Paradise, 1.


32. Murphy, “The New Missionaries.”


34. Murphy, “The New Missionaries.”


Majority of Immigrants to the United States Are Christians

An extensive report by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life finds that during the 20-year period from 1992 to 2012 an average of about 1 million immigrants have been admitted to the United States annually.1 At the beginning of this period, an estimated 68 percent were Christian, a proportion which dropped to 61 percent in 2012.

The report adds that, “Over the same period, the estimated share of green card recipients who belong to religious minorities rose from approximately one in five (19 percent) to one in four (25 percent).” This includes growing shares of Muslims (increased from 5 to 10 percent) and Hindus (3 to 7 percent), while the share of Buddhists is slightly smaller (7 to 6 percent). “The portion of legal immigrants who are religiously unaffiliated (atheist, agnostic, or nothing in particular) has remained relatively stable, at about 14 percent per year.” The change in their geographic origin over time is shown in the accompanying graphic.

Further, “The United States has a total of about 43 million foreign-born residents. Roughly three-quarters of them are legal immigrants, and a quarter is in the country without legal permission. The religious makeup of the legal permanent residents is quite different from that of the unauthorized immigrants.”

Specifically, “Of the approximately 11.1 million unauthorized immigrants living in the U.S. in 2011, an estimated 9.2 million (83 percent) are Christians, mostly from Latin America.

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Lost in Transition: Missionary Children of the Basel Mission in the Nineteenth Century

Dagmar Konrad

Starting in 1828, the Basel Mission, one of the largest Protestant missionary societies of the nineteenth century, sent missionaries to India, Africa, and China, primarily from Württemberg, Germany, and from Switzerland. These missionaries believed their call was to be “in the service of the Lord,” and they neither planned nor expected to return home. Their wives, the so-called mission brides, also accepted this future.

Officially, future missionaries were forbidden to have contact with women during their seven-year training period in the Mission House, and the marriage ordinances of the Basel Mission stated that missionaries could not marry until they had served in the field for two years. Marriage proposals were made from abroad, sometimes to several women in turn, who might be known to the missionary only through intermediaries or as sisters of colleagues. In line with Pietist beliefs, many women interpreted a marriage proposal from a missionary as a call from God; emotional or physical considerations were not voiced openly. Yet to commit to wedlock with a missionary meant committing to a new life in a foreign country and to the challenges of a different culture and language, a tropical climate, and insufficient medical support, not to mention the possibility of an early death.

The women and men who traveled to the tropics in the nineteenth century came from Pietist mission circles that were part of the broader transregional Pietist network. They kept in close contact, often paid visits to one another, and met up at annual mission festivals. Networks of “friends of the mission” also provided support, including shelter, as the missionaries traveled to the field. In distant lands the “mission family” included all members of the Basel Mission who lived in a certain geographic region, who became a substitute for one’s extended family in the European homeland.

Missionary children were also part of this wider mission family. The Basel Mission’s children’s ordinance of 1853 required that missionary children be sent back to Europe. Like their parents, these children also immigrated, but they did so by returning to the country their parents had left, where they lived in a children’s home run by the Basel Mission or with relatives. Both parents and children found themselves in a cultural context that was remote but contained traces of something familiar.

At the Mission Station

The missionary family overseas was supposed to function as a model of the European ideal of married and family life. Children, and having many children, had a social significance in many cultures that directly contributed to the reputation—and acceptance—of missionary couples. For the wives of missionaries, however, pregnancy was mostly associated with distress and fear. There were few doctors, and the women normally supported each other the best they could through pregnancy and childbirth. Sickness, understood in Pietist fashion as a test from God, is a dominant presence in letters. In numerous cases, the child or mother, or both, died during childbirth; in fact, the majority of couples experienced the loss of at least one child. The one-year-old twin children of Wilhelm and Luise Maisch died of a tropical illness in 1910. Wilhelm recorded in his diary how missionary couples tried to come to terms with the death of their children, finding comfort in their faith. The following words are typical:

Missionary people need, even more than normal Christian folk, a cross to bear and to suffer, it is only then that they will become the blessed creatures of God’s workmanship. The death of missionary children in the heathen world is also a homily. The only son of the Mandarin recently died of a baffling disease in the town of Yunon. The pain caused the father to bang his head against the wall until blood appeared, and the mother wanted to take her own life in desperation. How else are they able to bear this agony, other than to believe they are born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead?

The Ayah

An ayah, as indigenous nursemaids were called throughout the British Empire, was indispensable in a missionary family. The nursemaid gave the missionary wife social status and also time to devote to missionary endeavors, whether sewing lessons on the veranda or time-consuming work in a local girls’ school. The missionary’s wife was officially designated “helper for her husband,” an expression that hardly portrays the range of tasks she might take on. The mother’s relationship with the ayah was ambivalent, however, for it swung between fearing that her children would become too closely bonded with the nursemaid and a dependency on the ayah, with whom she worked closely, a juxtaposition Elizabeth Buettner has also noted in her study of colonial India.

Although nursemaids often were Christianized—they were recruited from mission girls’ schools, where they learned the European ways of homemaking—their presence provided an intercultural encounter for the missionary children, who lived to an extent between cultures, between the strict Christian approach...
of their parents and an indigenous culture with “heathen” elements. Their shared language might further the child’s attachment to the ayah. Immanuel Pfleiderer, a missionary to India, wrote in a letter to his parents in the south of Germany, “Thus the child grew up bilingually; from the native maidservant, the child was permanently listening to Tulu, and from the parents, German. Experience shows that such children normally learn the native language more quickly and easily than German.”

An Idealized Childhood

Reflecting on their childhood experiences in the Tropics, the children of missionaries often recalled a distant Arcadia. Frieda Mühleisen, who grew up as the child of a missionary in southern India at the beginning of the twentieth century, recalled,

At that time, India was a dreamland for children. The coconut trees on the shores of Tellithery, different ones in our garden on the Nettur hills, the splendid colors that the sun left in its trail behind the western skies, the roaring of the ocean’s waves on the rocky shores, which we could hear in the silence of the night from our small beds—all really just a dream in the memory. We had a very friendly relationship with our servants. Sudany, our nursemaid, who slept on her mat on the veranda at night and wore her hair in a long knot, went on walks with us children in the evenings.10

Rosina Widmann similarly depicted her childhood in Africa in the middle of the nineteenth century:

An orange tree alleyway started in near proximity to our house. It stretched past the houses of the native west Indian, black Christians and continued until it reached a point close to the water spring. What a romantic place it was! How I loved to go there with our girls, a good half-hour away from our house, to collect some water! It was our nearest well. Just before one went to cross over to the spring, there was a bench under the last two orange trees.11

The romanticized nature of such memories is made evident by comparison with diary entries and letters of parents, which record that many children suffered with diarrhea, fever, and rashes, looked pale, and faced life-threatening diseases such as yellow fever and blackwater fever. Reports of the worries and dilemmas facing parents are numerous. Inadequate educational opportunities, the unhealthy climate, and the “heathen influence” to which the children were exposed in the mission field meant that it was preferable for children to be brought up in Europe, the Christian way.

Separation

Mothers often went to great effort to ensure that their children had a spiritual foundation that would provide them with a protective shield for their life without their parents. Children started their religious education at the earliest possible age. Bible stories were told, and psalms and hymns were learned by heart, in the indigenous language if the children could not speak German. Letters sometimes contain examples of attempts to come to terms with the impending separation. Missionary wife Elisabeth Pfleiderer wrote in her recollections of India in the 1880s, “My little son still wants a few songs sung to him in the evenings. He doesn’t know that every verse is a stab in the heart for me. After all, he’s just a mission child. Then I always pull myself together and think to myself that I shouldn’t be moaning before anything has happened.”

The emotional impact for the child might depend on whether he or she was the first to be separated from the family, or following in the footsteps of a sibling.

The pain of separation for both parents and children came with “working in the vineyard of the Lord.” Maria Hermelink, who was in India from 1877 to 1893, depicted her son’s fears, and her own, over the impending separation from his parents: “The prospect of having to leave his father and mother is hard for him, and so he cries bitterly and asks whether his father and mother are going to die. [He mourns,] I can’t bear it, and I want to die, too. Yes, I want to kill myself.” This quotation might initially sound like someone threatening suicide, but if we examine it more closely, we realize that the child’s thinking is a logical consequence of a religious upbringing. From an early age children were confronted with death and dying in Bible stories. They were told again and again that there would be a reunion, if not here, then in the hereafter. He could only be reunited with his parents if he also died.

Some children traveled with other missionaries returning to Europe, leaving their parents behind in the mission territories; in other instances parents and children spent a home leave together in Europe, with the parents then traveling alone back to the mission field. The latter alternative appears to have been less painful for the parents. On her return to Cameroon Johanna Lutz wrote, “It hurts much more when children are sent away to a foreign and faraway world than when they are left behind well provided for and cozy in a little place that one has seen oneself before departure overseas again.” The emotional impact for the child might depend on whether he or she was the oldest child and therefore the first to be separated from the family, or whether the child was following in the footsteps of an elder sibling. Yet whatever the place in the family, the sense of separation and alienation was likely great. Letters suggest that a “taken away” child was frequently soon followed by a new baby in the family—a “substitute child” or “child of solace” who could fill something of the emotional gap created by the departure of an older sibling.

Care of missionaries’ children cemented relations within the wider mission family. Children traveled to Europe via this transnational network, and the mission family in Europe and the mission family overseas were bound together by communication through, with, and about the children. The second annual report of the mission children’s educational commission, issued in 1854, vividly substantiates this global network in its description of the transportation of twenty-four children from India:

In Boulogne, which was their point of destination after an eight-day stay in England, there were friendly people willing to offer helping hands; loyal friends of the mission reserved accommodation in Paris and paid all expenses—in Strasbourg, too. Even the railway officials were doubly attentive and helpful. On April 24 the steam engine rolled through the gates of Basel with all the
lively and cheerful children and their attendants and brought us
the cherished fosterlings, who from now on had been entrusted
with our love and care by the Lord.\textsuperscript{15}

A rather different experience on the part of the children
is described in private sources. Rosine Widmann writes, “I
remember the first time I walked into the girls’ home very well.
I was overwhelmed with homesickness.”\textsuperscript{16} We also hear of
the children’s emotional reactions: “During the Christmas holidays,
Heinrich’s heart started to overflow with self-pity; when everyone was in bed, he
started to wail and cry, so bitterly and loud
that the girls didn’t know what to do.”\textsuperscript{17} The
culture shock felt by historic missionary
children has marked similarities with the
experiences of so-called third culture kids
of modern missions.\textsuperscript{18}

\textbf{A Home in Europe}

In 1853 the first group of children trans-
ported home together were accommodated
in an apartment in Basel under the supervision of Wilhelmine
Culmann. With the establishment of the children’s home in
1859, the children were divided by gender, with a boys’ institute
and a girls’ institute. Culmann resigned in protest at the splitting
up of families. Her successor, Constantia Scholz, became
head of the girls’ home, where she was both methodical and
strict. A system of houseparents in the boys’ home, typical of
boarding schools, was intended as a substitute family. A child
was addressed as “son” or “daughter.” Boys were to call their
houseparents “mama” and “papa.” Until 1880, girls were to call
Constantia Scholz “aunt.” After that the girl’s institute was also
led by houseparents, called “mama” and “papa” by the girls as
well. The mission children’s home was intended to be a home,
and not just a temporary residence on the model of a boarding
school, whose pupils returned to their family homes during
vacations. \textit{Home} is a key term here. Missionary children had
their first home with their parents and then a second home in
distant Europe with substitute parents. The letters of missionary
children also suggest the existence of a third home, a religious
home providing emotional protection, in the form of psalms and
prayers that had been learned by heart, to which they turned at
times when they missed their parents the most.

Many children arrived in Basel able to speak only poor
German or even no German at all. Rosine Widmann, who came
from Ghana to Basel in 1864, could communicate with only four
of the twenty-five girls in the girls’ home, since the other twenty
girls came from mission fields in India and spoke only Indian
languages such as Tulu, Kannada, Malayalam, and Hindi, or
spoke German. The self-reliance and other capabilities she had
developed in Africa, including reading and writing in Twi, were
now of no use to her, she later recalled.\textsuperscript{19} Her linguistic difficul-
ties initially attracted teasing, and she was dependent on others
to explain the foreign culture in which she now found herself.\textsuperscript{20}

\textbf{Out of Sight, Out of Mind?}

Many children sent home from the mission field lived, not in the
children’s institute, but with relatives. Elise and Friedrich Eisfelder
spent almost thirty years in India, from 1885 to 1913. Their first
child died at the age of six months. On a visit home, they left their
two other children, Hermann (age five) and Caroline (three), with
the children’s grandparents. Family life now revolved around
letter writing. Most of the letters that Elise wrote to her children
were full of admonishment and behavioral rules, but her words
also suggest that she felt guilty about leaving her children with
their elderly grandparents.

Elise and Friedrich participated in a nineteenth-century form
of distance learning. Theirs was time-delayed parenting, for letters
took up to two months to arrive at their destination, limiting the
impact of the instructions they contained. Such contact appears to
have been instrumental in bridging the ever-growing gap between
parents and children. The letters sometimes contain the words
of the children as originally spoken—Caroline, for example, had
said, “For my mother, I’m her daughter, and for my father, his
sweetheart, and [for you, I’m] your granddaughter,”\textsuperscript{21} referring
to her grandmother who was writing the letter—but even these remarks belonged in the past by the time they were read by the children’s parents for the first time. Yet the illusion of family life, participation, and closeness was being maintained.

Children sometimes remained “little ones” in the minds of their parents, even as they grew older. Clothilde Dörr’s children were growing up in the care of relatives and had sent her a photograph when, in 1864, she wrote from India, “You’re really curious as to whether we still recognize you? Just imagine! Hardly at all, for you look quite different from how we remember you. You’re wearing the long dresses that we weren’t accustomed to, which also make you look a lot older.” She continues by suggesting, “The next time you have a photo made, wear your summer dresses and white stockings, not the black ones, and don’t forget that. Otherwise, you’ll make yourselves look older to us, don’t you agree?”

As the children grew older, the wording, themes, and content of their letters changed, and so too did the emotional engagement of parents and children. In the children’s letters, their parents slowly become abstract entities, even strangers. Parents attempted to overcome this distance by writing of their children’s early years in the mission field. Their letters formed a paper umbilical cord as they told of incidents involving their children, described the rooms in which they had lived, and reported on their former nursemaids. The estrangement troubled parents. Johanna Lutz, a missionary’s wife in Cameroon, wrote of her daughter to a female friend, “When and how will we see her again, and how then will her feelings be toward us, her parents? How often does one hear of the notion of parents and missionary children becoming alienated, coupled with a certain reluctance and not being able to get along together?”

Objects intended to maintain the bond between parent and child—dried fruit, birds’ feathers, special foodstuffs, and sea shells, for example—were sent to the children in Europe as keepsakes from their overseas homeland. The children also sent objects to their parents, often schoolwork, needlework, handicrafts, or drawings. Such achievements were intended to document progress at school and were commented upon by parents in detail, with both approval and criticism. Unlike the objects sent by the parents, those sent by the children sought not to preserve the past but to serve as signposts to the future. They document the children’s development, from first awkward attempts at writing with adult guidance to elegantly composed and neatly written letters; from childish matchstick men to elaborate landscapes; from clumsy attempts at sewing to delightfully embroidered and decorative tablecloths or pincushions.

Words and objects were the only means of bridging the distance between parents and children, yet they could also serve to remind all concerned of that very divide. Missionary children might not see their parents for many years, and it was not uncommon for one or even both of their parents to die in the missionary territory before they could ever meet again. The children were left in no doubt about the priority of their parents’ missionary work. Sophie Hasenwandel wrote from India to her daughter Emilie, “Do not think about our visiting. We are part of the mission in Tulu country, for we wish to serve the Lord for as long as he deems necessary.”

The children remained in the mission house until their confirmation at the age of fourteen. Some girls then attended a girls’ grammar school, but many temporarily became domestic help for families until they married and could set up their own homes. Boys might continue in education or learn a trade, which gave them some form of security for two or three years at least. The change was more marked for girls, as they moved to new homes. The Christian idea of a “migratory life” with “no permanent homeland on earth” was embodied for both parents and children in a life marked by transitions and temporary stays. The final transition would bring a “permanent homeland” and reunion in another world. Sentences Johanna Ritter wrote to her daughter demonstrate that the otherworld or almost parallel world was very real for people in those times and that they placed much hope in it. Writing from India to her daughter Else at the time of her ninth birthday, she observes, “Of course it would be much more pleasant if we were able to be with you, or you with us, but this is not possible at the moment, and so the least we can do is think about each other and beg the Savior that he be kind enough to bring us together in heaven. Oh, how beautiful it would be there!” These are typical phrases that are frequently encountered in correspondence between parents and their children.

Parents and children feared becoming strangers. Friedrich Eisfelder wrote to his daughter shortly before his final return to Europe from India in 1912, “You’ll probably no longer recognize me after I’ve returned home and come across you in the street. Of course, it is also questionable whether I’ll recognize you if you should unexpectedly come across me anywhere in the street.” Such fears were very real. Telling of his childhood spent in the Kinderhaus (children’s house) of the Basel Mission up to 1945, Werner Hungerbühler recalled, “One day, my brother and I had to wear our Sunday clothes on a normal working day. Uncle and Auntie muttered something about our parents, who would perhaps soon be coming home and to whom an up-to-date photograph of us would have to be sent so that they will be able to recognize us when they see us again.”

Conclusion

Of the 213 girls who grew up in the Basel Mission girls’ home from 1853 to 1910, 40 (18.8 percent) married missionaries; of the 293 boys, only 13 (4.4 percent) followed in the footsteps of their parents and went on to become missionaries. The young women, who probably had less leeway in deciding their future, were more likely to remain part of the mission than the young men. Like their mothers, they accepted the “call of God,” which meant that they in turn would be separated from their children. Their lives remained characterized by transitions between continents and cultures, and by everything that was lost in these transitions.
Notes

1. The article is based on an ongoing research project funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation entitled “Das entfernte Kind—Missionskinder der Basler Mission im 19. Jahrhundert” (“The distant child—missionary children of the Basel Mission in the nineteenth century”).


3. I differentiate between “missionary family,” meaning a given missionary’s immediate family, and the “mission family,” which refers to all the mission personnel in a given region.


5. The higher status of women who were mothers, and in particular mothers of many children, is noted in Ulrike Sill, Encounters in Quest of Christian Womanhood: The Basel Mission in Pre- and Colonial Ghana (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 214.

6. Diary of Wilhelm Maisch, China, 1907–24, private collection. Throughout, translation from the German is by the author. The term “private collection” refers to collections possessed and kept by the descendants of the missionaries. Access to these sources is only possible by contacting the families.


11. Diary of Rosine Heidenreich, born Widmann, Ghana, 1853–64, p. 7, private collection. Writing when she was 35, Heidenreich wrote in retrospect about her childhood as a private memory and dedicated her diary to her husband, a Swabian pastor.


17. Diary of Maria Hermelink, Mangalur, India, p. 21, January 4, 1887.

18. Since the 1950s, so-called third-culture kids have been the subject of research in relation to immigration and intercultural education. The term was coined by anthropologists John and Ruth Hill Useem for children who develop their own “third culture” that is independent of the cultures of their parents, from whom they are separated, and also independent of that of their host countries. See John Useem and Ruth Useem, “The Interfaces of a Binational Third Culture: A Study of the American Community in India,” Journal of Social Issues 23, no. 1 (1967): 130–45. Literature on the topic is abundant. See, for example, Faith Eide and Nina Sicel, eds., Unrooted Childhoods: Memoirs of Growing Up Global (Yarmouth, Me.: Intercultural Press, 2004), and Debra Rader and Linda Harris Sittig, New Kid in School: Using Literature to Help Children in Transition (New York: Teachers College Press, 2003). For the process in a missionary context, see Jeannie Moessn-Stevenson, Theological Dimensions of Maturation in a Missionary Milieu (Basel: Peter Lang, 1989). The research project from which this article stems also examines processes of transculturization as experienced by mission children raised at an overseas mission station but who later were separated from their parents and went through adolescence in Europe. Their experience appears to be analogous with that of today’s third culture kids.

19. Diary of Rosine Heidenreich, p. 11.

20. This sense of alienation is common to both third culture kids and mission children, who in interviews repeatedly describe how everything they had learned became “of no use to them at all,” as expressed by A. Künne, a thirty-four-year-old former missionary child. A seventy-two-year-old woman who was the child of missionaries in China reported that she and her siblings were regarded as “mentally retarded” by teachers and neighbors because they lacked knowledge of the language of their European homeland; see Rosmarie Gläsle, unpublished manuscript. My research project is focused mainly on historical sources. These interviews, conducted in addition, provide a point of comparison for records found in archives.


22. Photographs were important in the private domain as visual memorabilia, but mission photography also documented both the foreign culture and the work in the mission. On dealing with historical missionary photographs today, see Paul Jenkins, “On Using Historical Missionary Photographs in Modern Discussion,” Le Fait Missionnaire 10 (2001): 71–89.


25. Such evidence allows us to consider whether transculturality can be maintained by objects of a material culture. It is noteworthy that, as adults, former mission children still identified themselves by the mission context of their parents—as Chinese, Indian, or African, for example. This approach would also have been taken in the nineteenth century to categorize children at the children’s institutes.

26. Basel Mission Archive: QT-10.6,8, bundle of letters belonging to Hasenwandel, India, 1876–85; Bettigeri, March 27, 1885.

27. Johanna Ritter, letter from India to her daughter Else (Germany), March 28, 1889.

28. Letter from Friedrich Eisfelder, India (Summadi), to his daughter Caroline (Germany), September 30, 1912.

My Pilgrimage in Mission

John C. B. Webster

I was born in New York City on July 14, 1935, the third of Leslie T. and Emily deForest Webster’s four children. I grew up in Scarsdale, New York. My father died as I turned eight. Four years later, when my mother married Harold T. White, we moved to Bedford Hills, New York. Both in Scarsdale and in Bedford Hills I grew up more outside than inside the church. Only its music touched me, and I cannot say that I grew up believing in God.

Things changed when I went to Amherst College (1953–57) in Amherst, Massachusetts, where I had to face up to coming-of-age personal identity questions: Who am I? What is the purpose of my life? On what should I ground my personal code of ethics? My father and older brothers were in medical research; my own professional interests lay somewhere else yet to be discovered, and I had to find my own way rather than stick to the well-trod family path. I majored in psychology and history. College friends got me interested in the Christian Association, the campus Protestant fellowship. I took an introductory course on Christianity and a philosophy of religion course, both taught by James A. Martin Jr., who became a mentor to me in considering the ministry. Not only did Christianity now make sense to me, but it also helped me answer my identity questions. I worked for a summer at a church in Holyoke, Massachusetts, joined the Congregational church in Amherst, and later transferred to the Bedford Presbyterian Church near my home. Its pastor, John Cartmell, was both a source of encouragement and a very positive model of pastoral ministry.

Attending Union Theological Seminary in New York City (1957–60) proved to be the decisive educational experience of my life. Under the influence of the great James Muijburg and biblical theology, I quickly came to realize that the Christian faith was not what I thought it was but was ten times more exciting! My theological outlook was also shaped by Reinhold Niebuhr and John Bennett. Three years of fieldwork in the East Harlem Protestant Parish, a formative cross-cultural experience, made me see the local congregation from a missional and not just a pastoral-care perspective. I also had an Indian roommate who convinced me to continue my travels on to India after spending the first part of the summer of 1958 visiting my Japanese college roommate in Kyoto. Last but by no means least, I married Ellen Purdy in December 1959. I left Union committed to parish ministry in the United States, but believing that a more extended cross-cultural experience in which I could sort out what in me was Christian from what was just conventional American was still necessary to prepare me for that ministry.

India

I chose Lucknow, India, where I could do an M.A. in history in two years. An Indian acquaintance arranged for me to serve also as supply pastor of the English-medium Lal Bagh Methodist Church (1960–62). I was invited to teach a comparative religion course in the moral and religious education program at Isabella Thoburn College and to serve as staff adviser of the Lucknow City chapter of the Student Christian Movement as well. During the summer between my two years there, I attended a consultation, “Christian Participation in Nation-Building,” led by M. M. Thomas, which helped me relate my Christian faith to the larger realities of Indian life. So I had more than just a two-year exposure to the challenges India posed to Christian life and mission; I became involved, intellectually and practically, in trying to address those challenges.

Out of this involvement came my call to missionary service in India. It took the form of an invitation from the principal, Dr. Ram Singh, to serve as chaplain and lecturer in history at Baring Union Christian College in Batala, Punjab. After a year in the United States, which included appointment by the United Presbyterian Church in the USA and missionary orientation, Ellen and I arrived in India in May 1963 with our baby daughter, Elizabeth. Our second daughter, Marilyn, was born a year later.

Batala is located about eighteen miles from the (West) Pakistan border, and so, during our two five-year terms there, we were caught up in both the 1965 and the 1971 Indo-Pakistani wars. In 1966, following the first of these wars, the Indian state of Punjab was partitioned so as to create the new states of Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. The new Punjab became a Sikh-majority state. Baring College was affiliated initially with Panjab University in Chandigarh, but in 1969 it was transferred to the newly created Guru Nanak University in nearby Amritsar. As faculty members at an affiliated college, we had the job of preparing students for the annual examinations set and graded by the university.

Although my responsibilities as chaplain and as lecturer in history were quite different from each other, in retrospect both seemed inspired by a single integrating purpose coming from that earlier consultation on Christian participation in nation-building. When I arrived at Baring College in July 1963, it, unlike many Christian colleges at the time, did not have a moral and religious education program. Educational planners, however, wanted general education programs introduced because they considered the existing curriculum to be too narrow. I designed and recruited faculty belonging to all the faith communities within the college for a program that combined both emphases: introduction to the religions of India for the first-year students, introduction to the sciences for arts students and to the arts for science students in the second year, a course on social change in India and its inherent value conflicts for the third-year students, and an introduction to the problems of Indian democracy for final-year students. As I explained at the time, “The purpose we have given to our program is basically twofold: to make our students consciously aware of some of the changes taking place in India today and to give them an opportunity to develop their attitudes, consider their ambitions, and evaluate their philosophy of life in the light of their new awareness of what is happening to them and to the world in which they must live.”

This same aim influenced my teaching of Indian and Western history. The university’s external examinations encouraged memorization rather than critical thinking, and I became actively involved in trying to change this emphasis. With the encourage-
ment and help of Ganda Singh, a prominent Sikh historian, I organized a three-week workshop at Punjabi University in Patiala in 1965, the purpose of which was to introduce young college teachers to modern methods of historical research and to decide how best to develop these skills in their students. This workshop taught me how to do historical research. It proved to be so successful that I organized another larger one at Panjab University in 1966 and shared in the leadership of a third one in Baroda in 1967. I was particularly pleased when a history professor at Delhi University introduced me to a friend as “a missionary in a double sense; Webster is also a missionary for good history.”

Between 1968 and 1971 I did my doctorate at the University of Pennsylvania in South Asia Regional Studies, with a concentration in history. My thesis, “The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth-Century North India,” was later published in revised form. Through this work I learned how to be a social historian of Christianity in India, and my eyes were opened not only to the importance of caste in Indian life but also to the caste backgrounds of the North Indian Christian community. My thesis also introduced me to Hervey DeWitt Griswold (1860–1945), a missionary-scholar whose example inspired me to be one, too.

Soon after we returned to Batala (1971–76), Ram Singh asked me to become director of the college’s Christian Institute of Sikh Studies. Founded in 1967, the institute was devoted to research, interfaith dialogue, educating the Christian community on Sikhism, and publication. I recruited a core team of Clarence McMul- len, a sociologist, and Maqbul Caleb, the college chaplain. We sponsored some excellent dialogues, especially “Popular Religion and Caste,” which argued that as the Indian churches were mostly Dalit in social composition, our theology should be directed toward them with their inward and outward struggles in mind. I offered some suggestions both historical and constructive.

### The United States

Relocation began with a two-year stint as visiting professor of church history and world mission at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (1981–83). My course work required a broadening out well beyond my India specialization. Attending meetings of the American Society of Missiology and the Association of Professors of Mission helped me do that. Both Ellen and I were also in demand as “mission speakers,” where we faced the challenge of explaining our denomination’s mission policies to congregations who viewed mission solely in terms of evangelism, especially to “unreached people groups.” That missionology, it seemed to me, provided a new rationale for the old practice of keeping control of mission in Western hands so as to avoid the inconveniences of partnership in mission with sister churches. I was a strong advocate of partnership. It had been the right thing to do in India, and I had devoted much of my energy there to strengthening churches for a multifaceted mission. Since conspiracy theories were rife about decisions being made by our “New York Office,” I turned to history to show how partnership with churches ecclesiastically independent of us had become not merely politically correct but necessary if those churches were to have a credible witness in newly independent countries.

The next step in relocation was a one-year stay at the Stony Point Center in New York while waiting for a call. My pilgrimage in mission was furthered there by the formation of the Association of Presbyterian in Cross-Cultural Mission. While I was pressed into becoming its president (1984–94), the initial driving force behind the association was Sara Scotchmer. The Northern and Southern Presbyterian churches had just reunited to form the Presbyterian Church (USA), but its mission structures and priorities had not yet been decided upon. The association presented itself as the “voice of missionary experience,” and my role was to poll our membership periodically to hear what that voice was.

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our mission was, and how the building was going to further that mission. We joined with a local nonprofit to use it for adult day care on weekdays as a joint mission and changed our name to Crossroads Presbyterian Church. Our best financial campaign brochure was entitled “For the Sake of Community.”

During those nearly ten years as a pastor (1984–94), Ellen and I divorced, a real dislocation, and I married Penny Rabe, who shared my commitment to mission. I wrote a brief history of (Northern) Presbyterian global mission policy and taught occasional courses on mission and evangelism at Union Theological Seminary in New York. I also visited India in 1983, 1987, 1990, and (with Penny) 1992. In 1987 I gave a brief presentation on my earlier research on Dalit Christians to a small gathering in Chennai. At the end of a lengthy discussion, I knew I had to write their history, a book that changed the direction of my life.

The Dalit Christians: A History was set in the context of Dalit rather than of Christian history. Soon after it appeared, it was reviewed—first at a seminar devoted to it hosted by my good friend and prominent Dalit theologian Arvind Nirmal, and then during a workshop on methodology for church historians, for which the book was used as a case study. Through them Dalit Christian history soon became an elective course in the Serampore curriculum. It also led Bishop M. Azariah to invite me to return to India to work in the Madras Diocese of the Church of South India. When the negotiations were complete, I resigned as pastor and became a diaconal worker of the Worldwide Ministries Division of the Presbyterian Church (USA), doing scholarly work three months a year in India and spending the rest of the year at home.

India and the United States

Bishop Azariah and I had planned two projects requiring field research. The first was on being a pastor to Dalits, which involved nineteen pastors as both subjects and coresearchers. The other, on Dalit Christian women, was carried out by fourteen Dalit Christian women within the diocese. Both were, to the best of my knowledge, the first studies on their respective subjects. In both, as well as in subsequent workshops and retreats with clergy and church workers, my experience as a pastor at Crossroads proved to be an invaluable asset. A special focus in follow-up workshops has been on preaching to Dalits and the search for an appropriate homiletic.

Another important aspect of my work in India was the result of an invitation by Henry Thiagaraj, a leading Dalit activist, to start a newsletter that would educate the international public on Dalit struggles and issues. Penny and I published the twelve-page Dalit International Newsletter three times a year (1996–2006), which offered news items, short articles, and opinion pieces. The newsletter put me in touch with Dalit activists and intellectuals in many parts of India. I also taught two Dalit-based courses at Union Theological Seminary in New York.

Although my work during this period was focused largely on the Dalits, I was active also in other areas. I updated an earlier book on how to study history; this required considerable rewriting and restructuring because both the field and I had changed so much between 1977 when the first book came out and 1997 when the rewrite appeared. I completed my volume on Christianity in Northwest India during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, first as an independent work and then in an abbreviated version for the Church History Association of India’s multivolume history of Christianity in India. My latest book, Historiography of Christianity in India (2012), brought together my interests in research methodology and the history of Christianity in India.

Back in the United States, I had to find a new church home after having resigned as pastor of Crossroads. I chose the Shiloh Baptist Church, a Black church in New London, Connecticut, where I had two friends. In time I found a niche in its adult education program, first as a participant and then as one of the teachers. I also became more active in my presbytery, the Presbytery of Southern New England, especially after retirement in 2001. Ours is a small presbytery that covers a wide spectrum of theological views. It has struggled to maintain its unity while considering gay ordination and marriage within its own membership. As moderator for a year and as cochair, first of its committee on ministry and then of its executive committee, I have been in the thick of our efforts to enable ministry and to become a missional presbytery in what have been very challenging times.

Penny and I have also been deeply involved as facilitators of
a rather unusual partnership in mission within our presbytery. It began when one of our pastors visited the Presbytery of São Paulo of the Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil (IPIB), which expressed an interest in a partnership. Since we Americans tend to think of partnership in terms of giving instead of receiving, I asked what we needed from them that we did not already have. The answer was a missionary in Fall River, Massachusetts, where our churches could not reach out to many of the inhabitants who spoke Portuguese. We asked the IPIB to send us a missionary to start a new church among Portuguese speakers. This they did, and in time Christ Is Life Presbyterian Church became a member church of the presbytery. When the founding pastor left to pursue doctoral studies, the IPIB sent another missionary, who in time became involved with Portuguese-speaking inmates held in nearby correctional facilities while facing deportation. In 2011 he resigned his pastorate to devote himself full-time to what has become the Presbyterian Immigrant Ministry, a ministry based on Bible study groups through which inmates can minister to one another. Recently the IPIB voted to make a significant regular financial contribution to this ministry.

Looking Back

Several things have struck me in reviewing this narrative. First and most importantly, the Epistle to the Ephesians has provided the biblical vision which has undergirded and directed my pilgrimage in mission. It is God’s purpose to unite all things in Christ; the Church is an instrument and a foretaste of that unity. Second is the important role personal relationships have played in presenting me with specific calls at different moments in my life: a Japanese and an Indian roommate, an Indian Christian visiting the United States who made arrangements for us in Lucknow, meeting Ram Singh at a consultation—and the list goes on. In determining whether these calls were from God, I used good stewardship of past experience as an important criterion. A Dalit Jesuit friend paid me a great compliment in calling me a “Dalit mirror” who helped Dalits see themselves more clearly.

Finally, I must admit that I still have not sorted out what in me is Christian from what is conventional American. India has shown me how deeply my American upbringing has programmed me. I am who I am, and when crossing borders of nationality, race, or economic circumstance, there is little point in pretending to be what I am not. I am culturally and psychologically a white American male. In addition, I am a Christian and a missionary, two morally ambiguous identities in our present-day world. Those chosen identities have placed me in relationships and partnerships that not only have been means of grace and truth for me but also have broadened my capacity for empathy and ministry with those who are different, and so liberated me from captivity to my identities of birth and culture, for which I thank God.

Notes

4. Dalit, best translated “oppressed,” is the label now used for those people born into castes long considered untouchable. About 95 percent of all Punjabi Christians are from Dalit backgrounds.
5. The Senate of Serampore College governed the academic life of its (non–Roman Catholic) affiliated colleges.

Guidelines for Contributors

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The Legacy of Theodor Grentrup

Paul B. Steffen

Theodor Grentrup of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) planted seeds of twentieth-century Catholic missiological research and cultivated them with so much passion and intellectual engagement that we continue to enjoy the fruits of his work. His contributions to missiological research were invaluable, in particular as in his lectures and publications he argued strongly for the rights of missions, peoples, and minorities. No other Catholic scholar of his time—primarily the two decades before the Second World War—was so intensely concerned for the cultural rights of minorities and indigenous peoples.

On October 9, 1893, Theodor Grentrup entered the motherhouse of the Divine Word Missionaries in Steyl, a small village near Venlo, in the Netherlands. The record he filled in that day notes, “I was born on May 25, 1878, in Ahlen, in the parish of Neuahlen in the diocese of Münster. I went to a primary school in Ahlen, where I received the sacrament of Holy Communion on April 4, 1891, administered by Fr. Grabe, the assistant parish priest.” His parents came from families of Westphalian weavers. Grentrup was the oldest of seven children. After attending primary school until age twelve, he transferred to the Latin school in his hometown, where for the next three and a half years his studies included Latin, French, and Greek.

Early Years in the SVD

Academic life in the SVD motherhouse in Steyl was full of exciting challenges for the young Grentrup, who demonstrated both intellectual passion and a natural ability to learn. In 1896 he transferred to St. Gabriel’s mission house in Maria Enzersdorf, near Vienna, Austria, where he studied philosophy and natural sciences for three semesters under the prefect of students, Wilhelm Gier, who later became superior general of the SVD and played a significant role for Grentrup for many years to come. When, at age twenty, Grentrup began his novitiate (spiritual formation year) as a Divine Word Missionary, Gier was novice master. Grentrup recorded, “The novice Grentrup showed outstanding intellectual gifts and was a model of unpretentiousness and modesty.”

Grentrup professed his final vows on October 20, 1901, and was ordained an SVD missionary priest in February 1902.

Teacher and Scholar

Grentrup’s intellectual gifts caught the eye of his superiors, and immediately after his ordination he became a faculty member at St. Gabriel’s, beginning his teaching career as a lecturer in philosophy. Two years later he was given the chance to study in Rome at the Angelicum and at Gregorian University; in only two semesters he earned his doctorate in canon law at the Angelicum. In 1905–6 he was on loan as a lecturer to the diocesan seminary in Nepi-Sutri, where he used the opportunity to acquire a solid knowledge of the Italian language. He returned to St. Gabriel’s to teach philosophy but was also assigned as a substitute professor of canon law. Canon law would become his specialty and the centerpiece of his scholarly work, with a particular focus on mission law and sociology. In 1909 he gave up teaching philosophy and until 1920 concentrated on teaching canon law.

Grentrup’s earliest academic article, published in 1913, appeared in the first Catholic missiological journal, Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft (Journal of missiology), which Joseph Schmidlin began in 1911. His article focused on the definition of mission, which Grentrup understood theologically as systematic activity carried out with the aim of spreading the church of Christ among pagans and those who do not believe in Christ. Citing canon law, he asserted, “In terms of ecclesiastical law, mission countries are those where the ecclesial hierarchy has not yet been established.” This article “prompted a discussion that lasted for years,” remarked the mission historian Johannes Kraus. Grentrup’s contribution to that debate, Kraus notes, was not only fifteen further essays in the same journal but also a large number of essays, some written in response to specific current political circumstances, in publications ranging from the Archiv für katholisches Kirchenrecht and Theologie und Glaube to the Ostdeutschen Pastoralblatt and Christ Unterwegs, not to mention his work for the Berlin diocesan magazine and his contributions to the journal for homiletics Haec loquere et exhortare. He would also make significant contributions to the encyclopedia of the Görres Society, the Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche (both to its earlier edition of 1930 and its later edition, which began to appear in 1957), the American Encyclopedia (article entitled “Negro Education”), the British Encyclopedia (“Racial Problems”), and the Catholic Encyclopedia for Japan, which was edited by the Jesuits.

After dealing with the issue of marriage between white and colored people in the colonies in a number of articles, Grentrup in 1914 produced his first book, on the same subject. In Die Rassenscheiden in den deutschen Kolonien (Racially mixed marriages in the German colonies), he pleaded with pedagogical wisdom for support for such couples. From 1916 to 1918 he taught four semesters of mission law, which he developed using the critical notes, was not only fifteen further essays in the same journal but also a large number of essays, some written in response to specific current political circumstances, in publications ranging from the Archiv für katholisches Kirchenrecht and Theologie und Glaube to the Ostdeutschen Pastoralblatt and Christ Unterwegs, not to mention his work for the Berlin diocesan magazine and his contributions to the journal for homiletics Haec loquere et exhortare. He would also make significant contributions to the encyclopedia of the Görres Society, the Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche (both to its earlier edition of 1930 and its later edition, which began to appear in 1957), the American Encyclopedia (article entitled “Negro Education”), the British Encyclopedia (“Racial Problems”), and the Catholic Encyclopedia for Japan, which was edited by the Jesuits.

In 1920 the Fifth General Chapter of the SVD elected Wilhelm Gier as superior general and Theodor Grentrup as one of the four general councilors. At age forty-two Grentrup was the youngest member of the general leadership team of his mission society. Gier introduced a new arrangement that made each councilor responsible for certain missions and areas; Grentrup was assigned the position of secretary for studies and charged with care for the society’s missions in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and Japan. Apparently unsatisfied with his work and experiences on the General Council, in 1924 he resigned and moved to Berlin in order to pursue his academic research.

In 1925 Grentrup’s paper on mission law “Jus Missionarium”...
was printed in Steyl. After a preliminary discussion of concepts and sources and a shorter first part about rights and duties related to the proclamation of the faith, Grentrup dealt in great detail with the legal position of missions in relation to civil and international law in specific countries. When Gier presented this work to Pope Pius XI in an audience on April 6, 1925, the pope sent his greetings to Grentrup and commented, “It is very good that this has become a topic of a scientific presentation.”

Joseph Schmidlin called this study “a compilation, exemplary and exhaustive in its own right, marking essential progress in this new field and dealing courageously with the problems posed therein.” Only the first volume of this extensive three-volume project appeared; according to one account the second volume was lost after being left on a Berlin subway train, and the changing political context dampened Grentrup’s desire to return to the project.

In 1928 a book by Grentrup on mission law was published in German under the title Die Missionsfreiheit nach den Bestimmungen des geltenden Völkerrecht (Freedom of missions according to the provisions of the applicable law of nations).

One reviewer noted that although this work in part repeated material already published in Jus Missionarium, it was particularly valuable for all practitioners of mission for its explanation of the contemporary context and its discussion of the implications of recent treaties with their new understanding of freedom of religion according to international law.

Another notable scholarly contribution by Grentrup was his article “Die Stellung des Kirchenrechts zur nationalen Eigenart und zum Gebrauch der Muttersprache in der Seelsorge” (The status of canon law in relation to national character and to the use of the vernacular in pastoral care), which appeared in 1926 in the yearbook of the Reichsverband für die katholischen Auslandsdeutschen (German federation of Catholic expatriates). Initially, his book Nationale Minderheiten und katholisches Kirchenrecht was to have been produced in the publishing house of the SVD in Steyl. When the publishing manager demanded a number of changes, Grentrup resisted, arguing as follows:

The SVD cannot free itself from facing these questions, which, at the deepest level, are connected to a principal concern of all missionary activity, that is, the issue: What is our relationship to foreign nations, to their mores and customs, their culture and language? Personally, I have been led to this field through my studies in mission law. Everywhere we struggle for a clear position regarding the intellectual goods that other individuals and whole nations consider valuable. The egoism of individuals and whole races, which appreciates and values what they possess and at most marvels at that which the stranger values without ever falling on their knees before it, is one of the most terrible enemies of peace in small and in great matters.

Grentrup undertook a number of extensive expeditions to better familiarize himself with the situation of ethnic German communities, for he wished to base his writing not only on older or contemporary literature by other authors but also on his own studies and experiences of the local situation. His travels to ethnic German communities in Czechoslovakia, Carpathian Ruthenia (today part of Slovakia and Ukraine), Poland, the Baltic states, and South Tyrol contributed to his 1928 work Die kirchliche Rechtslage der deutschen Minderheiten katholischer Konfession in Europa (The ecclesiastical law of the German Catholic Christian minorities in Europe). His educational journey of 1927 to the Banat Swabians in Romania and the ethnic Germans in Serbia’s Vojvodina was financed by the foreign ministry in Berlin. Before 1939 he journeyed with similar purpose to Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay. Unfortunately, the records of his foreign travels fell victim to the devastation in Berlin in 1945, during which the convent of the Grey Sisters, where Grentrup lived, was destroyed.

In his lectures at the Hochschule für Politik (Academy for politics) in Berlin, Grentrup treated in particular the relationship between the church and education. In 1929 he received a second teaching assignment: Catholic missiology at the Oriental Seminar at the University of Berlin. He lost the first teaching position in 1933, immediately after the takeover by the National Socialists; he retained his second lecturing post until 1938. Having been removed from his position at the University of Berlin, Grentrup was free to carry out field research in China. In 1927 he had given a lecture on the recent challenges to mission work in China. That lecture had been published and was translated into Dutch and English, but his intensive study of the legal situation and problems faced by Catholic missions and the Catholic Church in China enabled him, in 1933, to publish a revised and well-documented article in the American Ecclesiastical Review that developed and updated the topic.

In his obituary of Grentrup, Johannes Beckmann notes Grentrup’s much-decreased output under the Nazis after 1933. In 1936 Grentrup published an article entitled “Rassenmischung und Rassenmisch-ehe” (The mixing of the races and racially mixed marriages) in Schönere Zukunft. He concluded that marriages between Europeans and Africans can have a harmonious outcome if they are accompanied by a good intellectual and spiritual environment, which would have a positive influence on the self-formation of mixed raced people. His position was immediately attacked by Eugen Fischer, an academic who supported official Nazi ideology. Although Grentrup’s subject was so often German minorities, it was their status as minorities, not as Germans, that was the core of his interest.

Mission Theology and Missionary Law

According to Grentrup, “The Propagation of the Faith is a categorical imperative for the Church. Nor has this anything to do with fanatical agitation, or with hierarchical ambitions.” The roots of this dynamic are found in the Gospel itself:

By a necessity of its being, the Gospel of Christ must labor until it completes its course round the world, until it permeates all mankind. The protectors and representatives of the Gospel are no more than the instruments of this striving, this ceaseless urge. To engage in missionary work is an elementary moral duty of
quoting at length: which give the flavor of his missiological thinking, are worth and spoke of the strength of indigenous Christians. His words, missionary endeavor. His response was practical and profound in mission lands of the personnel and the material necessities of problems from without, the introduction into and the maintenance introduction: “There are problems within the Church, from out of which her deepest identity,” the very argument Grentrup had put forth evangelizing as “the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity,” the very argument Grentrup had put forth in this article from 1933. Grentrup continued by noting the challenges of evangelization: “There are problems within the Church, from out of which the men and the means of mission work must come forth. And problems from without, the introduction into and the maintenance in mission lands of the personnel and the material necessities of missionary endeavor.” His response was practical and profound and spoke of the strength of indigenous Christians. His words, which give the flavor of his missiological thinking, are worth quoting at length:

There can be no doubt that nationalism is a living problem in the missionary Church of China. The action of the Holy Father shows us the direction in which a solution is to be sought. It cannot possibly come by withdrawing all the foreign priests and bishops at this time. Such an occurrence would be a misfortune for Christianity in China. Not only would the penetrative force of Christian propaganda among the pagans be dulled, but the existing Christianity would run the risk of extinction. For the flock would be without the required number of shepherds. The missions in China will, for a long time to come, need the help of outsiders. But the Chinese element must be given a progressively larger part in the administration of church matters. Prudent foresight demands that the young Church of China be given a Chinese backbone, one strong enough to withstand the possible attacks of an exaggerated nationalism. . . . But, it may be asked, do the Chinese really possess the intellectual, moral and personal capabilities required of spiritual leaders? Do not their phlegmatic, conservative-passive natures lack the energy indispensable for mission labor? We shall hold to the belief that a people which has produced important philosophers, artists, statesmen, generals, bank directors, etc. can also give Christianity prudent and energetic leaders.25

His response was practical and profound and spoke of the strength of indigenous Christians.

Evaluation of Grentrup’s Academic Contribution

During the two decades between World War I and World War II, Grentrup’s lectures and publications about linguistic and religious minorities were widely acclaimed. His influence has been summarized by Horst Rzepkowski:

The Swiss missiologist Johannes Beckmann also considered Grentrup one of the pioneers of missiology, noting in particular that in the years between 1913 and the start of World War II, Grentrup became one of the keenest collaborators of the Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft.

Grentrup’s individual case studies about mission law that succeeded his first publications of 1914 were followed by the first volume of Fuss Missionum. Beckmann wrote that this foundational text of Catholic mission law, “written in an easily flowing Latin . . . can be regarded as a cornerstone of the new Catholic science of missiology.” He continued, “It is neither judicial nor casuistic, but primarily judicial-historical,” noting that the work continued along lines established by mission theoreticians and colonial lawyers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.30 Addressing Grentrup’s lifelong work, Fritz Bornemann records that “Fr. Grentrup lived his research” and was always focused on people and their legal protection.31

The War Years and Postwar Refugee Apostolate

Theodor Grentrup survived the war in Berlin, where he served as chaplain to the Sisters of St. Elizabeth of Neisse, known as the Grey Sisters. The building in which they lived was hit by three firebombs and five grenades. Writing in 1958 in celebration of Grentrup’s eightieth birthday, Uta Creutz noted, “Fr. Theodor Grentrup never lost courage. He always remained modest in his demands and just in his judgment. Unperturbed, he persevered in his destroyed Fatherland, in the besieged, conquered, and burning Berlin that suffered severe hunger. He did not complain but prayed, sought counsel, consoled, and helped.”26

Grentrup’s academic interests continued to center on mission law, canon law, and international law, with a special concern for linguistic, cultural, and religious minorities. After World War II, while still living as chaplain of the Grey Sisters in Berlin and continuing his work as author, researcher, and pastor there, he turned his attention to German refugees and displaced persons or migrants, looking at their situation from the viewpoint of an expert in ecclesiastical and international law. His last independent publication was a commentary on the apostolic constitution Exsul Familia (1952), in which he addresses issues of migrants and refugees.27 But his outlook reached beyond the limits of the law; he wrote also as a pastor, with concern for the spiritual life of the affected people. His final work, a completed manuscript dealing with the history of Christianity in the Baltic countries, remained unpublished.
The Person and the Pastor

In the early years of his priestly profession in St. Gabriel’s, Grentrup devoted himself to the neighboring parish in Neu-Mödling; later, when he was transferred to Berlin, he offered regular services on Sundays. “Grentrup was not only in Neu-Mödling on Saturdays and Sundays, but also during the week. Pastoral care meant for him the activity of the church and the involvement in social work for the many families of workers who lived there.”32 A list of Grentrup’s articles as of spring 1937 featured sixty titles, among them twenty-four articles in the Berlin diocesan newspaper from the years 1934 to 1937. Most of these writings are closely related to his area of specialization, but we find also meditations for the feast of the Assumption of Mary and for the feast of the Epiphany.33 His dedication to the vernacular in sermons, religious instruction, prayer, and confession was also very much appreciated. Writing of Grentrup’s pastoral work, which lay close to his heart, Beckmann adds, “When the war and postwar suffering afflicted the country, Grentrup was a most sought-after and most helpful pastor. The focus of his care was now the millions of refugees, and in their service he exhausted himself.”34 Kraus comments, “Meanwhile Fr. Grentrup had definitely not become a mere detached lawyer and historian; ultimately all his efforts aimed at pastoral care.”35

Grentrup was very sensitive to what the nineteenth-century German Catholic theologian Alban Stolz termed “moods of the soul,” as we can read from his pamphlets Hoffen und Vertrauen (Hope and trust) (Würzburg, 1948) and Liebe und Gemeinschaft (Love and community) (Würzburg, 1949).36 Kraus, a friend and fellow member of the SVD, described Grentrup’s human and pedagogical qualities: “His lectures remained memorable, say his listeners. He was always thoroughly prepared and sometimes used light irony, often humor, but never became unpleasant or hurtful. In his printed legacy you will never find a harsh word, even when he discusses polemical topics.”37

Death took the quill from the hands of the indefatigable Theodor Grentrup after he had exhausted himself physically. Although some of his works have lost their topical and historical importance because of the catastrophes of the years from 1939 to 1945, we can still apply to him words of the imprisoned missionary Paul, “I did not run in vain or labor in vain” (Phil. 2:16). Theodor Grentrup died, aged eighty-nine, on October 11, 1967, having completed a full and fulfilling life in the service of his fellow human beings.

Selected Bibliography

Works by Theodor Grentrup


Works about Theodor Grentrup


Notes

1. Generalate Archives of the Society of the Divine Word (Societas Verbi Divini), Rome, Section Founder’s Archive, Nationale 111987, no. 30a: Theodor Grentrup; this and all subsequent translations from German into English are by Paul B. Steffen.


5. Johannes Beckmann, “Drei verdiente Pioniere der Missionswis-
Eighty-Seven Percent of Christians Live in 157 Christian-Majority Countries

The Pew Research Forum has examined the status of the world’s major religions, including what religious groups are in countries where they are in the majority. The groupings below provide the details:

- 97 percent of all Hindus live in the world’s three Hindu-majority countries: India, Mauritius, and Nepal
- 87 percent of all Christians are found in 157 Christian-majority countries
- 73 percent of Muslims live in the 49 countries where they are the majority
- 71 percent of religiously unaffiliated live in six countries where they are in the majority, with China being by far the largest
- 28 percent of Buddhists live in the seven countries where Buddhists are in the majority

Note
The Production of Knowledge in and of Africa: A Review Essay

Esther E. Acolatse

What are the contributions of Africans to missionary activity on the continent? In what ways were the nineteenth- and twentieth-century missionaries pioneers in the field of modern science, from anthropology to linguistics, medicine, and zoology? Why were their reports, in occasional booklets or in monographs, the only source of knowledge about Africa available to the North Atlantic world? These and multiple other questions are addressed in this impressive volume. Eleven essays, framed by an introduction and conclusion, offer an opportunity to review the historical accounts of missionary work in Africa, reassess its important role in present-day academic disciplines and in the various methodological approaches to Africa, and perhaps attempt a reparation for the actions that have marginalized the contributions and agency of African peoples in the production of knowledge about themselves.

Perhaps nowhere are the above claims more evident than in chapters 3 and 8. The former, John Cinnamon’s treatment of fetishism and totemism, introduces readers to the life and work of “two Africanist missionaries,” Robert Nassau and Henri Trilles, and their insights and contributions to “anthropological knowledge production about African religious practices” (105). These insights clue us into the scientific debates of their day and show their continuing contemporary relevance for anthropological studies. They also underscore the invaluable role of African informants for fieldwork. These scientific observations, as we see in Harries’s chapter, “Natural Science and Naturvölker: Missionary Entomology and Botany,” make evident a striking similarity between the rudimentary scientific findings and reports of these earliest missionaries and those of the Africans themselves.

Likewise chapter 8, in which Walima T. Kalusa explores Christian medical discourse and praxis, deals a telling blow to the often erroneously held assumption about the supremacy of Western medicine to that of traditional African healing practices in the colonial outposts. His analysis shows that the relationship between the two was not as unambiguous as is often assumed, both then and even now, since Western physicians were sometimes compelled to employ traditional healing practices in their work (248). The coupling of Western medicine with Christianity no doubt contributed to the unfortunate situation, since Christianity aimed at eradicating any practices it envisaged as pagan, as the efforts to cure pneumonia and the epidemic of tropical ulcers purely through Western medicine indicate (254). In the turn to “think black” (262), a new, integrated approach sought to incorporate African traditional healing practices, a religious replication of British indirect rule in Africa that proved effective. The result undercut overt missionary aversion to aspects of African medicine and enabled the rise of a hybrid of African religious healing rituals couched in Christian parlance (263), which is still observable in many clinics and hospitals today. It is thus not uncommon to encounter doctors and nurses congregated near the nurses’ stations of the various floors for devotions that include prayers and singing before starting customary rounds. But what is further of prime importance—and a question that needs to be addressed but is not taken up in Kalusa’s essay—is how the myth of the dominance of Western medicine has perendred, especially in the cities. The paradox of the popularity of missionary medicine despite its inefficacy in treating diseases and offering healing, when a synthesis of the two modalities was perhaps the surer way to proceed then and now, continues to be an issue that plagues most of African health care delivery.

The above oft-repeated ideas about the ambivalent attitude toward African religiocultural ways gain additional clarity in Dmitri van den Bersselaar’s chapter, which is based on the work of an “unfashionable ethnographer” (136), as he calls him: the Anglican George Thomas Basden. Basden worked mainly among the Igbo of Nigeria, and van der Bersselaar’s portrayal of Basden’s shifting attitude toward the Igbo in tandem with Basden’s ambiguous feelings about “the disappearing Igbo tradition” (150) indicate the ongoing fine line between what was observed as supposedly savage customs, which he saw as needing eradication, and the customs and religiocultural identity markers that he thought could be retained. The question is whether Basden’s two-sided sentiment had any real possibility of realization then or now, given the missionary agenda and given that African religion and custom are integrally unified—they are a way of life and not simply a banal “performance” or acting out of specific rituals. Van der Bersselaar also points out that Basden took a stand against railroading the Igbo people into following the dictates of foreign government policy, asserting that only what the Africans chose for themselves would endure. This attitude toward the Igbo points to tensions in his relationship with the colonial administrative offices and no doubt was a cause for their unfavorable assessment of Basden’s work. In light of his above stances, it becomes difficult to unearth the reason for the facelessness of Basden’s African informants and his lack of attention to the clear ethnic distinctions of the various African peoples, despite years of living among the Igbo. Is van den Bersselaar’s own account perhaps a little ambiguous in its tone as well?

The following chapter by David Maxwell, “From Iconoclasm to Preservation,” with its turn to the more evangelical/ Pentecostal missionaries and missionary activity, shows an aspect of missionary activity on the colonial frontier not often explored—namely, competitiveness between missionaries from various denominations, which could become antagonistic and perhaps work in the favor of the colonizing empires. Intermissionary squabbles and competition between Catholics and Protestants also reveal some of the hidden themes of dismissive attitudes toward the role of African informants in missionary

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The Spiritual in the Secular: Missionaries and Knowledge about Africa.

Edited by Patrick Harries and David Maxwell.
knowledge about Africa. The missionary of note in this essay is
William Burton, whose aversion to aspects of African religion,
which he saw as religious fraud, resulted in “numerous bonfire
meetings,” (157) at which artifacts and other witchcraft para-
phernalia were burned. Maxwell tells of Burton’s shift in attitude
after a long period of immersion in Luba culture and study of
their language, proverbs, and folklore. This shift, along with
a more ready attention to cultural norms, provided the much-
needed impetus for missionary contributions to the burgeon-
ing field of African theology and religious studies (157). And
while Burton seems to be marginalized from anthropological
circles, which Maxwell seems not to care about (85), Burton’s
insight into aspects of Luba culture, especially the role of the
vernacular in reaching the people (the native evangelists were
more able to reach the hearts of the people than were the white
superintendents), is testimony to the role of the mother tongue
in the propagation of the Gospel. This observation recalls Lamin
Sanneh’s insight that translatability is at the heart of mission.
The importance of the mother tongue for propagation of
the Gospel is further underscored by Erika Eichholzer’s essay,
“Missionary Linguistics on the Gold Coast,” in which attention to
learning of the vernacular, despite initial difficulties in learning a
tonal language, had a huge payoff, as demonstrated in Johannes
Christaller’s example with the Twi language among the Akan
of Ghana. One needs to point out the drawback of choosing one
dialect among several regional ones for purposes of missionary
work, since it at least creates an unintended linguistic hierarchy
among a group by making a particular dialect the lingua franca
and to some extent frustrates the goal of hearing the Gospel in
one’s own mother tongue. It is not coincidental that focus on the
mother tongue and on learning it forged a unique bond between
missionary and native. This chapter is the only one in which there
is an acknowledged and almost mutual collaboration between
natives and missionaries—between Daniel Asante and Johannes

For good or ill, African ways of being and knowing continue to exist next to Western ones.

Dieterle and, later, Johann Christaller. Christaller’s contributions
to linguistic endeavors were well noted in scholarly circles; he
was “twice awarded the prestigious Prix Volney … by the Institut
de France” for his work in building a foundation for the “future
scientific study of West African languages” (97).

But to return to Maxwell’s chapter, we find there an uncover-
ering of the conflictual nature and the distinctions between the
Catholic missionaries and the newer Protestant enterprises in the
colonies. Maxwell’s prime example in the chapter in this regard
is the Belgian colonial enterprise. The Belgian colonial powers
described the Protestant missions as “poor petit rentiers,” look-
ing on them with suspicion as ones whose brand of missionary
work “animated by zealous lay adepts had a tendency toward
independence” (164). The rise of the various ethnically based
African initiated churches, which were spearheaded by the
Kimbanguist movement in the 1920s and now dot most of sub-
Saharan Africa, confirms the kind of autonomy and a breakdown
of the hegemonic Belgian state feared by the colonial masters.
We have a very important testimony to what can be achieved
when missionaries empower native converts if we consider the
effort to follow what came to be known as the Venn principle
in mission work.

In conclusion, this is a very important volume of essays.
Together, they paint a rich picture of the mutual influence of
Western mission work in Africa in the nineteenth and twentieth
centuries. This collection aims to portray the mutual dependence
between the European missionaries and the Africans in all
spheres of endeavor. In this task alone, the volume has justified
its existence. But perhaps beyond this, in reviving interest in
the work of nineteenth- and twentieth-century missionaries, in
reconsidering “the understanding of the history of both human
and natural science in Africa” (29), the essayists in this collection
have unwittingly raised anew the question made famous by the
postcolonial theorist Gayatri Spivak: Can the subaltern (here,
Africa) speak for herself and not merely through the medium
of the missionary?

For good or ill (depending on one’s perspective), African
ways of being and knowing continue to exist next to Western
ones. After two centuries of missionary contact, they continue
to resist complete assimilation. What is the way forward to a
real mutuality in knowledge about Africa? This question is all
the more pressing, given the notable paucity of black African
contributors to this volume. Perhaps the photo that graces the
cover of the volume prophesies the way forward.
Meet World Christianity

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Book Reviews

Jacques Dupuis Faces the Inquisition: Two Essays by Jacques Dupuis on Dominus Iesus and the Roman Investigation of His Work.


William Burrows succeeds splendidly in achieving the announced purpose of his book: “to give Father Jacques Dupuis, S.J. a posthumous chance to answer his critics in a way that he was denied during his lifetime” (xi). His critics were found mainly in the corridors of the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), then under the command of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger.

Dupuis’s “answer” is clearly delivered in two documents that could not be published before his death but that he entrusted to Burrows: one a detailed counterargument to the CDF’s accusations, the other a stinging criticism of the Vatican’s/Ratzinger’s Dominus Iesus, much of which, Burrows points out, was “universally . . . taken to be a condemnation of Dupuis” (3).

Burrows, a long-time friend and publisher of Dupuis (at Orbis Books), admits upfront, “I am a partisan on his behalf” (xvi). In abundant personal detail (sometimes too abundant!) on his meetings and conversations with his friend, Burrows enables us to understand how much Dupuis personally suffered under the authoritarian, secretive, and sometimes dishonest treatment he received from the CDF. “‘Tragedy,’ in my opinion, is not too strong a word to characterize what happened between Roman authorities and Jacques Dupuis” (17). Indeed, it does look like an inquisition!

In these two documents, Dupuis pleads “not guilty.” In doing so, he makes clear not only his rock-solid fidelity to his Roman Catholic tradition but also his nuanced creativity in showing how that tradition can make room for a genuine dialogue with other religions.

• On Christology: While God’s saving revelation in Christ is final, full, unsurpassed, and unsurpassable, it is also incomplete, not fully achieved, qualitatively but not quantitatively full. A “reciprocal though asymmetrical complementarity” therefore exists between Christianity and other religions (86).

• On pneumatology: Though inherently related to the risen Christ, the Spirit is neither “dependent on” nor “exclusively bound to” the incarnate Word and cannot be considered merely as the “vicar” or a “function” of Christ (90).

• On ecclesiology: Here, Burrows believes, was the “CDF’s main problem” with Dupuis, namely, that he argued against an ecclesial idolatry that would make the church as important as God and held “outside the church no salvation” to be an “infamous axiom.” (55–56).

In the end, the CDF reduced its verdict on Dupuis from “erroneous” to “dangerous.”

For anyone interested in comprehending both the obstacles and the potential of a Roman Catholic theology of religious diversity and dialogue, this book is a gift.

—Paul F. Knitter

Paul F. Knitter is Emeritus Paul Tillich Professor of Theology, World Religions, and Culture at Union Theological Seminary, New York.

Christianity, the Papacy, and Mission in Africa.


When I was exploring graduate programs in African church history, several individuals lamented, “Oh, if only you could have worked with Richard Gray!” From his perch at the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London, Gray shaped a generation of students working on Catholic mission history in Africa. Scholars of Christian mission should be grateful to Lamin Sanneh for compiling a collection of Gray’s finest essays into a single accessible volume.

Reflecting Gray’s long-standing interest in the region, Christianity, the Papacy, and Mission in Africa offers particular insight into early Catholic missions in Kongo. In turn, Gray links the Kongolese story with broader narratives in Europe and beyond, such as the Vatican’s efforts to link Ethiopia and Kongo or distance itself from the Portuguese padroado. Far from being passive recipients of a European religion, Kongolese Catholic leaders emerge here as active agents who helped initiate several key missiological developments, such as the 1622 founding of Propaganda Fide.

The second half of the volume considers later case studies such as Franciscan missions in eighteenth-century Sudan, papal-colonial tensions in nineteenth-century Africa, and the twentieth-century development of Small Christian Communities. To my mind, the best essay in the volume is “Christianity, Colonialism, and Communication in Sub-Saharan Africa.” In a mere eleven pages, Gray masterfully interweaves the key aspects of the Christian story in modern Africa, including the leadership of African actors, the colonial revolutions in communications and literacy, and Christian missions’ successful integration of local concerns with evil, suffering, and healing.

A few aspects of the book could be stronger. At times essays reproduce language verbatim from other chapters. Published in 1971, the chapter on Southern Sudan seems dated. One also wishes that the volume included some of Gray’s last unpublished works. Whatever these shortcomings, one hopes that Christianity, the Papacy, and Mission in Africa will introduce a new generation of mission scholars to a dozen of the previous generation.

—J. J. Carney

J. J. Carney is Assistant Professor of Theology at Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska.
Jews, Christians, and the Abode of Islam: Modern Scholarship, Medieval Realities.


Jacob Lassner, professor emeritus of Jewish civilization and professor of religion and history at Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, is well known for his previous historical works on interfaith relations in the Islamicate realm (the term “Islamicate” comes from the historian Marshall Hodgson and refers to areas of life, not strictly in accord with Islam’s religious tenets, in which nevertheless Muslims were culturally dominant). This book combines his expertise in this topic with a discussion of how non-Muslim scholarship has accommodated Islam and contributed to the cultural interaction among the Abrahamic faiths. His thoughts and analysis are presented in a series of essays, which are divided into medieval and modern.

Within the first set of essays Lassner outlines the development of European interest in Islam from the Crusades to the contemporary age. This outline is followed by a review of the response to Orientalism, the critique of which is not limited to Muslim or Arab quarters. Lassner’s detailed and thoughtful summary of what he calls Occidentalist responses to Orientalism is supplemented with his own answers to many of its arguments. The style of this section betrays his skepticism towards critics who “tend to be more at home with the ideas of Antonio Gramsci and Michel Foucault than those of the great Muslim authors writing in the heyday of Islamic cultural achievement” (91). Rather than limiting his overview of Orientalist critique to Edward Said and his followers, Lassner also describes the varied responses to Western scholarship on Islam arising from the 1977 Islamic World Conference on Education (105–11) and the continued engagement of Arab Muslims in Western academic institutions with both Orientalism and Islam itself, referring to Mohamed Talbi (114–19) and Tariq Ramadan (124), among others.

The second set of essays covers the interaction among Jews, Christians, and Muslims in the Islamicate realm, from a review of Muhammad’s encounter with the Jews of Arabia to the Muslim interaction with Jews and Christians in the Islamic Middle Ages. Despite negative portrayals of non-Muslims in theology and popular discourse, Lassner argues that non-Muslims enjoyed relative freedom throughout most of this period. He uses the examples of the translation movement and medical science to demonstrate the cultural symbiosis that flourished among the faith groups.

Lassner ends his work with a question: Can the creative symbiosis of the past be restored (285)? Although he does not offer an answer, his engaging presentation of two extremely complex fields and his skill in weaving the two together provide a sound introduction for any reader with a similar query.

—Antonia Bosanquet

Antonia Bosanquet is a doctoral candidate at the Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies, Freie Universität Berlin. Her research focuses on the rulings of Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya for non-Muslims living in the Abode of Islam.
The First Thousand Years: A Global History of Christianity.


Wilken’s *First Thousand Years* is a masterful historical narrative that reads like a novel. Wilken states in his introduction that the book is written for the “general reader who may have little background in the history of Christianity” (4). The general reader will certainly find pleasure in his writing while more experienced readers will find themselves intrigued and challenged. By utilizing the biblical text, along with secondary sources and archeological finds, Wilken portrays the story of Christian history in a way that stirs one’s visual imagination and invites the reader back in time to walk the Stations of the Cross at the original sites, to roam the halls of Basil’s hospital, and to stand beside Zachariah as he says goodbye to Jerusalem during its seizure by the Persians. Wilken brings to life the development of theology, including the councils in which definitions were debated. He takes the reader to the last moments of martyrs and into the artistic world of the catacombs. Understanding that church history is missions history, he journeys with the reader through the global expansion of the church by including important historical developments and cultural adaptations from all around the world, including Asia, Egypt, Ethiopia, and China.

Wilken’s treatment of Islam is a helpful addition to this historical text. He not only surveys the expansion of Islam and how that expansion interacted with and influenced the course of Christian history but also provides a clear account of the rise of Muhammad and the religion itself. As readers progress through the narrative, they are presented with the major objections that Muslims have to Christianity, a largely misunderstood aspect of the interactions between adherents of the two religions.

The manuscript intentionally forgoes notes and citations in order to improve readability. The index and list of recommended readings are helpful, but I often found myself looking for a citation that was not to be found. My understanding would have been aided as well by a few more visuals interjected into the context of the narrative. Despite these minor criticisms, however, Wilken has written a very useful text that is suitable for the general reader, for the college or graduate student looking for a clear overview, and for the pastor searching for a concise review. I highly recommend it to anyone at any level.

—LouAnn Stropoli

LouAnn Stropoli has recently worked as Research Associate at the Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell. A Congregational minister, she has taught in the United States, India, and Cambodia.

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Domestic Frontiers: Gender, Reform, and American Interventions in the Ottoman Balkans and the Near East.


Following recent studies by Heather Sharkey, Ussama Makdisi, and Hans-Lukas Kieser of American missionaries among Christians of the Middle East, Barbara Reeves-Ellington explores how New England women sought to reform Orthodox Christians in Bulgaria and Istanbul. The missionaries’ largest influence, perhaps predictably, was not religious. Orthodox Christians redeployed domestic ideals to build platforms for resistance to Ottoman authority. Both Orthodox Christians and, as Selim Derin-gil has shown, the Ottoman government were prodded to offer female education to offset the Protestant threat.

*Domestic Frontiers* is organized in five chapters. Two chapters describe the missionaries’ adaptation of New England pedagogy to western Asia, not only in teaching young women in homes and boarding schools but also through the great missionary institution of the printing press. Martha Jane Riggs’s *Mother’s Manual*, which called for maternal influence in “the future of the Bulgarian nation” (90), was published in four languages. Another chapter focuses on conflict surrounding Maria Gencheva, a girl whose residence in a mission school provoked Bulgarians to attack it. Gencheva later became an important translator and missionary, but contests for her allegiance precipitated the establishment of local boarding schools designed to reinforce Orthodox theology and instill Bulgarian values. A fourth chapter shows the impact of the arrival of single female missionaries, some from the liberal Oberlin College, who challenged domestic ideals and male authority by traveling and living alone, professing doctrines of Christian perfection and women’s rights, and hosting a Bulgarian minister and his English wife, whom conservative missionaries condemned for miscegenation. Missionary Anna Mumford, expelled from the European Turkey Mission, defiantly established an independent girls’ school. The last chapter studies the struggle over curriculum and funding of the Constantine Home, established in 1876, which was unique in the Ottoman Empire in providing a college education for Orthodox Christian and Turkish women. (In 1890 it became the American College for Girls, now a high school.)

As its title might suggest, photographs in *Domestic Frontiers* capture female missionaries as wives and mothers. But the book shrewdly reveals that American women in the late Ottoman Empire also challenged the missionary ideal of the Christian home. Its usage of Bulgarian sources is also commendable, though these seem only to confirm what American Board records reveal about the racial and cultural blinders that most missionaries wore.

—Timothy M. Roberts

Timothy M. Roberts is Associate Professor of History at Western Illinois University, Macomb, Illinois. He previously taught at Balkent University, Ankara, Turkey.

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Maya Exodus: Indigenous Struggle for Citizenship in Chiapas.


On December 22, 1997, paramilitary forces murdered forty-five members of the Catholic political association called Las Abejas (“The Bees”) in the village of Acteal in the highlands of the state of Chiapas in southern Mexico. Adding to the pathos of this grisly event was the fact that Las Abejas, unlike many neighbors who had joined the revolutionary
Zapata movement, had been working toward peaceful solutions to human rights issues and local political problems. In *Maya Exodus* anthropologist Heidi Moksnes elucidates many of the complex religious, social, cultural, and political issues that long had hidden the real history and meaning of the massacre. Since Moksnes did extensive research in 1996 and 1997 in Chenalhó, the municipio (county) where Acteal is located, and then returned for more research in the 2000s, she is one of the few outsiders able to put the events of 1997 in their proper context and to understand the ways in which the massacre influenced later actions of Las Abejas.

At heart, this is a story of division and redivision. Starting in the 1950s, Protestant conversions began to break the monopoly of the traditional syncretistic religion among Chenalhó’s Tzotzil Mayas. In the 1960s the arrival of catechists from the Catholic diocese of San Cristóbal de Las Casas introduced a liberationist version of Catholicism that gradually won adherents over the following years. The two new groups fractured the municipio, not just in the obvious religious sense, but also socially and politically. Moksnes focuses her attention on the Catholics, who developed a set of religious practices based on Bible study and prayer, in contrast to the traditionalist religion’s focus on rituals and devotion to saints and indigenous divinities. The Catholics soon also included significant political and moral critiques of the local government and the ruling party. In 1992 catechists and other involved Tzotzil Catholics formed Las Abejas to protest a specific local injustice, but the organization quickly adopted a broad stance and active program in favor of human and indigenous rights. A volatile situation in the municipio became more severe in 1994, when many Catholic residents of Chenalhó joined the Zapatista Army of National Liberation, which had used military force to take over several towns in Chiapas. As many members of Las Abejas had warned, direct action against the state provoked a violent reaction. The horrible irony of the ensuing Acteal massacre was that the paramilitaries, apparently also men from Chenalhó, chose to kill the peaceful Las Abejas, while the more militant Zapatistas managed to escape.

Moksnes does an excellent job of untangling the many strands in this sad tale, but greater attention to similar divisions and political developments in other indigenous communities in Mexico and other Latin American nations would have helped readers make more sense of the political Catholicism in Chenalhó.

—Todd Hartch

Todd Hartch teaches Latin American history and World Christianity at Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, Kentucky.

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Cleansing the Cosmos: A Biblical Model for Conceptualizing and Counteracting Evil.


In this well-informed and well-researched work, E. Janet Warren makes a powerful contribution to the ongoing discourse on the complex problem of evil. She breaks new ground in considering both how we should think about evil and how we should speak of it. Drawing from multidisciplinary sources, Warren...


Developing Indigenous Leaders is a resourceful contribution toward constructive mission strategies and methods for those working to develop indigenous leaders in Buddhist Asia. It is volume 10 of the SEANET series, a largely evangelical missiological forum that meets annually in Thailand to tackle issues relevant to mission and church life in predominantly Buddhist areas. Edited with an introduction by Paul De Neui, the book contains ten chapters written by seasoned local and international practitioners from across Asia.

Each chapter can be read independently, yet several important convergences bind the collection together. The first is that God is working in innovative ways in the far recesses of unreached Buddhist strongholds to raise up leaders who know the cultural context. The collection assumes that, to be successful, each program for developing indigenous leaders must start with contextualization, in which potential leaders are exposed to God’s Word “in ways that are culturally and educationally appropriate
debate imagery, she develops metaphors of cleansing, ordering, and boundary-setting to conceptualize and counteract evil. In this process, she emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit and minimizes the ontology of evil. It seems clear that Warren’s model incorporates concentric circles and considers evil peripheral to divine reality or to personhood.

Underlining the importance of her “cosmos cleansing” model, Warren remarks on the need for “an integrated approach that is thoroughly biblical and soundly theological” (26). Warren’s work is an excellent contribution to the ever-expanding discourse on the perennial and complex problem of evil. Practically, we continue to live in a world where evil is prevalent, frequently violating its boundaries and intruding upon divine reality and human responsibility (287). In the power of the living Christ, however, evil not only can be conceptualized and counteracted but also can be faced and rendered powerless. This is the reality of faith by which the believer lives, waiting in hope of the eschaton.

—Isaiah Majok Dau

Isaiah Majok Dau is the General Overseer (Presiding Bishop) of the Sudan Pentecostal Church, Juba, South Sudan. He is the author of Suffering and God: A Theological Reflection on the War in Sudan (Paulines Publications Africa, 2002).


There is more than a faint whiff of Adolf von Harnack in this book. For Harnack, the overarching narrative of early Christianity—from its humble beginnings in a Palestinian milieu to the Constantinian church awash in Greek culture—was a narrative of decline. The draconian Hellenic spirit corroded the original Gospel of Jesus into an institutionalized religion that produced, among other things, creeds that Jesus could not possibly have sanctioned. This too is Geza Vermes’s story: how the historical Jesus, a charismatic Jew from Nazareth, was disfigured into the Nicene God of imperial Christendom.

The book begins with the charismatic Judaism of Jesus and Palestinian Christianity. This Jewish phase of Christianity was focused on God, not Jesus. Jesus was a wonder-working Galilean sage and prophet, not a divine figure, and he asked for self-surrender to God, not “intellectual acrobatics” (236). Yet within a few decades of Jesus’ death, the Christian movement lost its way. Enter its Gentile phase, which Vermes judges to have been an unsuccessful acculturation. He fingers the usual culprits, beginning with Paul and John, before turning to a succession of Christian figures in the second and third centuries. All of these contributed to the rearrangement of Christianity into a creedal, belief-oriented religion that asserted the divinity of Jesus and correspondingly lost sight of the “existential spiritual legacy of the Jewish Jesus” (234). The catalyst for this transformation was Hellenistic philosophy and mysticism. Vermes draws his narrative to a close with the Nicene creed and its dogma that the Son of God was no longer an inferior divinity to the Father, as was customary in pre-Nicene theology, but homoousios—of the same substance—with his Father. Jesus would not have endorsed this creed, and neither should Christians today (242–44).

This book is accessible and spirited, but also problematic. It is replete with dichotomies that have long since been complicated in the scholarship (doing/believing, charisma/dogma, Jew/Greek, piety/philosophy, history/theology). Its overarching narrative is also too simple. Jesus’ Palestinian milieu was already Hellenized, and Gentile Christianity would maintain a charismatic, anticonformist dimension long after Nicaea. No one, I suspect, will deny Vermes’s contention that the identity of Jesus was a fluid and often disputatious topic in early Christianity. Far more contentious, however, is the central claim that high Christology is wrong because it was not endemic to Palestinian Christianity. Other Christian and Jewish scholars have argued for precisely the opposite (e.g., Larry Hurtado, Lord Jesus Christ [2003] and Daniel Boyarin, The Jewish Gospels [2012]).

—Peter W. Martens

Peter W. Martens is Assistant Professor of Early Christianity in the Department of Theological Studies at St. Louis University, St. Louis, Missouri.
for them to hear, understand, use, and reproduce” (36).

Many chapters focus on thinking outside the matrix of formal training institutions, which are sometimes viewed either as impractical for locals or as inadequate and disruptive to efforts to foster contextually competent indigenous leaders. As a potential corrective, Alex Smith calls for full-scale reform of curricula, which must be retooled to fit indigenous situations and learning patterns. J. N. Manokaran makes a case for both “nonformal” training (such as modular courses and distance education) and “informal” training (such as modeling and mentoring) that would be more beneficial for Neo-Buddhists in India. Working in the Isaan region of Thailand, Carolyn Johnson builds on pervasive patron-client social structures to make a case for the effectiveness of the mentor-apprenticeship model of leadership training. Other chapters apply the mentoring model to church planting and growth, emphasizing conversion within the local religious context.

As is common for a collection of this kind, there is significant overlap. The book could benefit from a longer introduction and sections connecting significant themes. Yet it provides a first step for creative strategizing and showcasing successful examples of leadership training. For those interested in developing indigenous leaders in Asia, this book will prove useful and applicable.

—Eva M. Pascal

Eva M. Pascal, from the Bay Islands of Honduras, served four years as lecturer in religion at Payap University’s McGilvary College of Divinity, Chiang Mai, Thailand.


What is the experience of the large number of missionaries from the Global South? Cross-Cultural Mission: Problems and Prospects is a collection of papers given at the fourth symposium held by the Asia-Pacific Association of Mission Researchers (ASPAMIR) of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD), an international Roman Catholic missionary order. This volume, edited by Indonesian missiologist Raymundus Sudhiarsa, addresses the topics of cross-cultural mission and missionary formation, as well as several specific mission issues from the perspective of mission-sending countries in Asia and Papua New Guinea (PNG).

The three chapters of part 1 study the experience of SVD missionaries from the Philippines and Indonesia working outside their countries of birth. The research—based on data from mission directories, interviews, and questionnaires—is focused on the issue of early-returning missionaries. The most extensive study, found in chapter 3, is the collaborative effort of five researchers and is based on the responses of almost eighty Indonesian missionaries. Part 2 addresses cross-cultural formation. Chapter 4, written from the perspective of missionary orientation programs in PNG, provides the underlying principles, while chapter 5 focuses on the cross-cultural dynamics and multicultural context of mission in India. The three chapters of Part 3 address key...
mission issues in Asia: fundamentalism, interreligious dialogue, and globalization.

The unique contribution of this book is its sociological approach to the study of the cross-cultural experience of Asian Catholic missionaries. The volume’s particular focus on the phenomenon of early-returning missionaries and on the necessity for appropriate cross-cultural preparation is also relevant for other mission-sending organizations. Critically speaking, a couple of the studies would be improved by increasing the quantity of the data and the depth of the analysis and proposed responses—comments also made by several authors themselves. On the whole, however, the book represents the application of sociological and missiological expertise to the very practical issues of missionary preparation and retention.

—Roger Schroeder

Roger Schroeder is the Bishop Francis X. Ford, M.M., Chair of Catholic Missiology at Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, and coauthor with Stephen Boons of Constants in Context (Orbis Books, 2004).

The Jon and Jean Bonk International Fellowship Fund

Dr. Jonathan J. Bonk retired July 1 as executive director of the Overseas Ministries Study Center and editor of the International Bulletin of Missionary Research. Anticipating that leadership transition, the OMSC Board of Trustees in 2012 launched a substantial scholarship initiative—the Jon and Jean Bonk International Fellowship Fund.

Dr. J. Nelson Jennings, OMSC executive director as of July 1, says the initiative “will enable beleaguered Christian leaders to come to OMSC from challenging situations. Currently we have to turn away many worthy candidates due to lack of funding.” The fund will provide friends of the Bonks, OMSC alumni from around the world, and others who have admired their ministries from afar a “concrete way of honoring Jon and Jean on the occasion of their retirement,” adds Jennings. Jon and Jean have wanted to find a way after they retire and return to Canada to perpetuate their longtime commitment to serving marginalized church leaders and missionaries who live and minister in places where it is extraordinarily difficult and sometimes dangerous to be a follower of Christ.

Working alongside Jon and Jean Bonk has been such an honor and inspiration. Their leadership, vision, compassion, strength, and patience, a rare combination of traits, have served the Bonks and OMSC very well. The Jon and Jean Bonk International Fellowship Fund—www.omsc.org/bonk fellowship—is a crowning glory to their ministry. In keeping with their humble spirit, this fellowship is a benefit to others. It will enable those who serve the risen Christ in difficult, oppressive, and challenging circumstances to enjoy the unique opportunities for renewal offered by OMSC. I invite you to join many good people who are truly grateful for the Bonks by making this dream come true. —Dr. David Johnson Rowe, president, OMSC Board of Trustees

Read the latest Jon and Jean Bonk International Fellowship Fund newsletter and view the video online. For details, go to www.omsc.org/bonk fellowship or contact Dr. J. Nelson Jennings, OMSC executive director.

OVERSEAS MINISTRIES STUDY CENTER

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The Centenary Celebration of American Methodist Missions: The 1919 World’s Fair of Evangelical Americanism.


Voices from the Fair: Race, Gender, and the American Nation at a Methodist Missionary Exposition.


These two volumes provide a comprehensive study of a fascinating event in American Protestant missions that is not widely known and is hard to imagine today. The author is director of the Methodist Library and coordinator of Special Collections at Drew University, Madison, New Jersey.

In the summer of 1919 American Methodists (North and South) sponsored an enormous missionary exposition at the Ohio State Fairgrounds in Columbus, in an effort to educate American Methodists on foreign and domestic missions, to show that the church was working to convert the world to Christ, and to solicit support and encourage missionary vocations. It was the Centenary Celebration of American Methodist Missions, described as a “Methodist World’s Fair.” The three-week event attracted over one million visitors, including 10,000 clergy, who were able to visit over 16,000 exhibits representing thirty-seven different countries in eight large pavilions to view the peoples, religions, landscapes, and artifacts of countries where Methodist missionaries were working in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the United States.

In addition to the exhibits and demonstrations, there were lectures, parades (with elephants and camels), pageantry, and motion pictures. There was also entertainment, including a Wild West Show, a Ferris wheel, fireworks, and Methodist Church–sponsored restaurants along the midway. This exposition has been described as a “high water mark” for “muscular Christianity” in the United States, never to be repeated (13).

Voices from the Fair includes a selection from the many lectures at the exposition. Besides church leaders, “governmental leaders, civil rights activists, and military veterans including William Jennings Bryan, Alice Paul, and Sergeant Alvin York” gave addresses (2). Special attention was given to racial issues, women’s issues, prohibition, and universal suffrage, in addition to missionary expositions. The book includes thirty-five photos of major speakers.
As a United Methodist missionary historian, I consider these volumes a gift to be treasured.

—Gerald H. Anderson

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

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**Missional God, Missional Church: Hope for Re-evangelizing the West.**


Ross Hastings is associate professor of pastoral theology at Regent College, Vancouver. His first book, *Missional God, Missional Church* argues that the church gathered in worship must also be scattered and engaged in the world. This missional understanding, Hastings believes, is missing in many traditional evangelical and emerging churches.

In four introductory chapters, Hastings considers the Western church’s tendency for cultural entrapment or cultural disconnection, and he emphasizes the importance of Trinitarian theology for mission. Exploring John 20:21, he argues that churches can become missional communities by experiencing the same shalom Jesus imparted to his disciples with the words, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you” (19). Part 1 examines the church discovering shalom in the resurrection and redemption of the crucified Lord (chaps. 5–8). Part 2 describes the church disseminating shalom as it participates in God’s mission through the Holy Spirit, who empowers the church to pronounce forgiveness (chaps. 9–12). Emphasizing the triune God’s relational nature, Hastings challenges the evangelical–social justice dichotomy and purely spiritual, individualistic soteriology. In his missio Dei theology, the church reflects incarnate sentness and pneumatic gathering as it works for the full restoration of humanity. This sacrificial service offers the postmodern West a nonhegemonic metanarrative of hope.

Rather than offering a comprehensive analysis of Western society, the book presents a theological understanding necessary for revitalizing Western Protestantism. It draws from the work of Lesslie Newbigin, David Bosch, and Darrell Guder but focuses mostly extensively upon Karl Barth. Hastings also incorporates a rich array of others, including patristic literature, John Calvin, Jonathan Edwards, Miroslav Volf, and Orlando Costas. Women’s voices are less prominent, but Hastings’s interpretation of human sexuality and gender as the locus of God’s image is worth consideration. His case for a theology of work is likewise relevant for Western readers. Hastings might have balanced his general characterization of Western society with attention to particular North American or European contexts and the growing world church presence in the West.

For Hastings, mission is the communal endeavor of all members of the church, yet the book primarily targets Christian leaders, who must convey this understanding to the wider church. Pastors and scholars should welcome this effort to acquaint evangelical and emerging-church audiences with contemporary discussions of missional theology. The book will make its greatest contribution as it helps the missional church concept take root in this new territory.

—Deanna Ferree Womack

Deanna Ferree Womack is a doctoral candidate in mission, ecumenics, and history of religions at Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey.

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**OMSC Senior Mission Scholars**

Each semester the Overseas Ministries Study Center welcomes a Senior Mission Scholar who provides leadership in OMSC’s Study Program and is available to residents for counsel regarding their own mission research interests. Seasoned scholars, internationally renowned instructors, cutting edge seminars, and an ecclesiastically diverse resident community make OMSC the place to be for renewal of mission skills and vision.

**Dr. Volker Küster—Fall 2013**

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

**Dr. Mary Mikhael—Spring 2014**

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


Jason Ananda Josephson’s book on the “invention of religion” is an informative, well-argued, and stimulating discussion of an important topic that should be fascinating to anyone interested in religion in modern Japan or religion in any historical or cultural context. Having said that, I must offer some caveats. The blurb on the back cover claims that “throughout its long history, Japan had no concept of what we call ‘religion.’” This claim is simplistic and misleading. Who, for example, is meant by “we” in this claim? Nineteenth- and twentieth-century European scholars of religion? Contemporary academic pundits? The general Western public? “Religion” has been redefined and redefined in the modern West as well, and as the author himself shows, there is no monolithic definition or understanding of “religion” anywhere. Yes, the Japanese binome shakkyō was created and redefined in the late nineteenth century in Japan for various cultural and political purposes, but so were the binomes shakai and ren’ai, but that does not mean that Japanese had no concept of what “we” call “society” or “romantic love” before Japan opened to the West in modern times. And as the author himself points out, the title of the book could “almost as easily have been ‘the invention of the secular in Japan’ or ‘the invention of superstition in Japan’” (252)—or, I might add, Japanese modifications of “the invention of religion in [modern] Europe.” Fortunately Josephson is much more circumspect and careful in the text itself, offering broad-ranging information and insights that contribute to the study of religion in general (as well as other cultural and social issues), not just in Japan. Space constraints do not allow for details here, but this is a remarkable and worthy contribution, for which we should be grateful, showing our gratitude by continuing to discuss these crucial issues.

—Paul L. Swanson

Paul L. Swanson is a Permanent Research Fellow at the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture, Nagoya, Japan, and editor of the Japanese Journal of Religious Studies.

Foundations for Mission.


Over the years, many books with the titles “biblical” or “theological” foundations for mission have been published. Foundations for Mission, however, is distinctive in encouraging readers to think of the role of “experience” in the study of mission. From the rise of global Christianity in the latter half of the twentieth century, a new agenda for Christian missions has emerged because of the shift in the content of, means of, context for, and attitude in mission (6–7). This shift requires missiologists and mission practitioners to reflect on the basis for mission in a new, broader manner: not merely biblical and theological, but also experiential. The book is the fruit of ongoing collaboration following the Edinburgh 2010 centennial commemoration of the 1910 World Missionary Conference. Eighteen selected essays by twenty-two contributors are presented from various theological traditions (Roman Catholic, Orthodox, mainline Protestant, evangelical, and Pentecostal), as well as multiple cultural backgrounds, with contributors from Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. This reflection on the theme of foundations for mission has the purpose of reexamining Christian mission at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The four essays in part 1 explore the role of experience in the understanding of mission, offering insight from mission practices in particular contexts: socioeconomic, marginalized, historical inquiry, and relation to God. Part 2, also with four essays, asks how the Bible is read, who reads it, and what biblical texts are read in the field of doing mission. Part 3 explores how each theological tradition affects the understanding of mission within the framework supplied by the missio Dei. Part 4 shows how the three elements work together and looks at mission understandings and practices. In the concluding section, editors Emma Wild-Wood and Peniel Rajkumar suggest emerging issues and seek out future paths for mission by evaluating and synthesizing the book’s essays. This noteworthy book gathers key reflections and diverse perspectives within the framework of the three founding elements of the missio Dei. Wild-Wood and Rajkumar’s evaluation of the essays is to be commended for peering into the future study of mission and insightfully describing the interconnected themes present in the contributors’ essays. All in all, the book is a useful resource for reflection on the foundations for Christian mission.

—Masanori Kurasawa

Masanori Kurasawa is President and Professor of Missiology, Tokyo Christian University, Japan.

Faith Seeking Understanding: Essays in Memory of Paul Brand and Ralph D. Winter.


In Faith Seeking Understanding, editor David Marshall (Ph.D., University of Wales, with previous publications on Christian encounters with world religions, apologetic challenges of the Jesus Seminar, and the reasonableness of faith) weaves together apologetic considerations and biographical insights into the lives of Paul Brand and Ralph Winter, both of whom had a strong impact on twentieth-century missions. Commenting on the title, Marshall references Anselm’s love for climbing mountains and notes that through the latter’s medival life journey, “We similarly begin to see what ‘faith seeking understanding’ might mean . . . a lived solution to the urgent intellectual challenges of our own time” (2).
Through his labors, Paul Brand, a missionary physician who served leprosy patients (mostly in India and North America), effectively turned the conundrum of evil into a reasonable affirmation of revealed truth. Winter challenged Christians to engage lostness, especially the most unreached of the world. Yet his wife’s demise from the ravages of cancer absorbed his later years as he sought a theological understanding of disease. Marshall expresses doubt about Winter’s conclusions.

The book frames the themes into four major sections: “Tutors,” “Christ in Culture,” “Christ in History,” and “Christ in Philosophy and Science.” Each tracks the lives of these men in their missions commitments and apologetic challenges. Interviews, insights from those with lifelong associations with both men, and reflections from leading thinkers mark the sections. Marshall’s reasonable conclusion—“Faith is humble because it is hungry and desires the bread of truth . . . [it] is the goal we seek in our journey of faith” (4)—should prove valuable for understanding both Brand and Winter.

—Keith E. Eitel

Keith E. Eitel is Dean of the Roy Fish School of Evangelism and Missions, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.


This timely book reviews the historical development of the contemporary ecumenical movement and particularly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) from the 1960s to the present. Instead of a merely historical account, Jonas Jonson, a Lutheran bishop in the Church of Sweden, reviews the complexity of the whole ecumenical map and examines in what ways the vision and role of the WCC are changing.

The story begins with the WCC’s fourth assembly, in 1968, held in Uppsala, Sweden, which symbolized a new hope for unity among Christian traditions (including Orthodox and Roman Catholic) and for Christian international cooperation for justice and peace. Unfortunately, later events showed that this ecumenical vision was difficult to fulfill. In the past half century, the WCC has been seriously challenged by internal forces, such as the growth of the Fourth Church (fundamen-
talist evangelicalism and the Pentecostal movement), the southward shift in the centers of growth of the global Christian population, and the endless dialogue seeking unity among diverse faith traditions. External forces, among them globalization, terrorism, and interreligious tensions, have also posed challenges. All these caused the WCC’s prophetic voice to weaken and lose focus. In addition, the decline of liberal Protestant Christianity led to significant loss of support for the WCC. As a former active ecumenical leader in the WCC and as a member of close ecumenical partners (i.e., the Lutheran World Federation and the Church of Sweden Mission), as well as his academic profession of mission studies, Jonson provides an insider’s sympathy, joined with critical self-reflection on the WCC’s current difficulties and its weakened witness within global Christianity.

This privileged position, however, leads to the limitation of the book, namely, its alignment with WCC-centered ecumenism. My background is that of an independent church. I have been working with the local ecumenical movement and also with the ecumenical network of Asian women, and I am not satisfied with a WCC-based ecumenism. As the author says, “common experience and praxis” (157) are more important for building up our ecumenical spirit. So it is important to build up diverse local ecumenical praxes and to link such experience globally. This is probably our alternative vision for today and tomorrow.

—Wai-Yin Christina Wong

Wai-Yin Christina Wong is a Ph.D. Candidate in Interdisciplinary Studies, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California. Her major disciplines are Christianity in China, Chinese Women’s History, and Asian Feminist Theology.


With the publication of “In a Single Garment of Destiny”: A Global Vision of Justice, an important de-centering of the American civil rights narrative is taking place. In this notable collection, editor Lewis V. Baldwin shows Martin Luther King Jr.’s vision of justice to be much broader than just the confines of the American civil rights movement. As Baldwin notes from the outset, King is known almost exclusively as a “southern civil rights leader” or an ‘American Gandhi” (xix), yet the sermons, letters, and lectures included in this volume reveal a civil rights leader well acquainted with the complex and malevolent nature of the links between colonialism and segregation, poverty and racism, and violence and economic injustice.

For example, the road evangelism must take, King told the European Baptist Assembly, is not simply to build schools and hospitals but to “demand that their governments act as though the financial and technical resources entrusted to them belong to God . . . for the care of God’s children wherever they may be in need” (20). He declared at a benefit for South Africa, “The time has come for an international alliance [of nonviolence] of peoples of all nations against racism” (42). King understood the war in Vietnam as “a cruel manipulation of the poor” that would spread around the world until America underwent a “revolution of values” (167, 177).

The most compelling contribution this volume makes is revealed in the encounters with some of King’s most familiar phrases such as “the fierce urgency of now” and “injustice anywhere as a threat to justice everywhere.” Read through the prism of King’s global conscience, these words made famous in the American civil rights struggle are a potent reminder to scholars engaged in the study of global missions that we are, indeed, tied into “a single garment of destiny.”

—Mary Kay Schueneman

Mary Kay Schueneman is Visiting Assistant Professor of Religion at Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont, and Settled Pastor at First Congregational Church of Cornwall, Cornwall, Vermont.

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Kraft, Marguerite G.
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Renewing the Evangelical Mission.

Redford, Shawn B.
Missiological Hermeneutics: Biblical Interpretation for the Global Church.

Scott, Basil.

Sivalon, John C.

Tieszen, Charles L.
Christian Identity amid Islam in Medieval Spain.

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