To get lost is to learn the way.” Or as we might amplify this African proverb, “To get lost and realize it is to learn the way.” In my own experience, after four years of our family’s life and mission work in Japan, it began to dawn on me that, on a level deeper than the oft-reported cuisine and constant bowing, I did not understand Japan. This jikaku, or emerging self-awareness, was humbling, to say the least. But that realization was at least a step toward understanding life in the complex, nuanced, and profoundly different Japanese world. Becoming culturally and linguistically lost awakened me to my virtual blindness and deafness to what earlier had seemed relatively clear.

An astounding number of biblical characters grew in understanding God, the world, and themselves through “getting lost” in the wilderness wanderings of cross-cultural experience. Pivotal figures such as Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, David, Jeremiah, Joseph and Mary, Simon of Cyrene, Paul, Priscilla and Aquila, and Peter stand out as examples of cross-cultural displacement, each encountering a new language and painful maturing. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah—those strapping young Israelis in exile, intensively instructed in the language and literature of the Babylonians, and even renamed Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—surely “got lost” and, as a result of God’s mysterious dealings, gained understanding in “every aspect

Continued next page
of literature and wisdom" and, in Daniel’s case, “insight into all visions and dreams” (Dan. 1:17). Christian history is replete with countless similar examples—take St. Thomas Aquinas’s zigzags through the cultures of Italy, France, and Germany—of people who learned the way of following Jesus through cultural displacement. Spiritual maturity often involves a deepened understanding of deity and created reality, accompanied by an unraveling of one’s subconsciously assumed cultural security.

In this issue of the IBMR, George Sabra provides an enlightening analysis in his “Christian Mission in the Wake of the Arab Spring.” In this article he appeals to the worldwide Christian community to assume an attitude of humble uncertainty about expatriate missionary initiatives in today’s sociopolitically volatile Middle Eastern settings—and to “support Middle Eastern Christians and enable them to carry on their mission.” Adapting the African proverb above with missiological language, we could say that we eric folks looking in from the outside must listen to emic voices like Sabra’s to learn the way of Middle East mission.

Speaking to those of us who advocate the necessity of missiology as an academic discipline, John Roxborogh prescribes a healthy sense of precarious lostness tied to the firm understanding that the validity of missiology lies, not in the discipline’s intellectual superiority or lack of dependence on other disciplines, but in “the validity of mission, in the importance of the questions [missiology] addresses, and in the intercultural perspectives it brings to the issues of the day.” Sarah Hinlicky Wilson uncovers the cultural longings underlying the imaginatively gripping writings of C.S. Lewis, leading to her conclusion that “the necessities and complications of cultural translation are solved not by evasion but by confrontation.” Put differently, readers find life’s ways illumined by profound authors through getting lost in literature’s webs of cultural intricacies—then somehow hacking through those webs en route to further clarity for living in the world embraced by our missional God.

The explicitly missionary studies of this issue also point to the pedagogical value of venturing through cultural dislocation. David Scott unveils how Methodist missionaries’ personal experiences contributed to needed adjustments in their own and other Westerners’ multifaceted assumptions about Southeast Asian geography. The Scottish missionary Campbell Moody, as Kazue Mino recounts, learned the way of Jesus and mission through sustained, discombotulating life and service in the unforeseen twists and turns of Japanese-occupied Taiwan. Mary Mote’s moving autobiographical account of her pilgrimage through unexpected transformations provides another photo album of discipleship nurtured through disorientation. Emma Wild-Wood’s and Ian Welch’s biographical studies of Apolo Kivebulaya and Caroline Phebe Tenney Keith are further examples of divine-human interactions in the midst of life’s unpredictable messiness.

This issue’s cover image, They Who Hear, Follow, by Sri Lankan artist Nalini Jayasuriya, helps to depict the insightful dictum above that “to get lost is to learn the way.” Thankfully, God’s Spirit is a faithful and proven Guide to those who listen amid the wilderness wanderings of cultural displacement.

The wide range of the IBMR’s gifted contributing editors helps to guide this journal through the multiple byways of worldwide mission studies. We extend a special welcome to our newest contributing editor, Dr. J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, Baeta-Grau Professor of African Christianity and Pentecostal Theology and director of the Center for the Study of Christianity in Africa at Trinity Theological Seminary, Accra, Ghana.

—J. Nelson Jennings

Cover image: Nalini Jayasuriya, They Who Hear, Follow, 2004, mixed media on cloth, unstretched, 21½” x 29.”

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Christian Mission in the Wake of the Arab Spring

George F. Sabra

As a Christian and as a citizen of a Middle Eastern country, I write here about the plight—and hope—of Middle Eastern Christians in the wake of the Arab Spring, which has engulfed and roiled the region. I present my concerns in four steps: (1) the situation of Middle East Christians, (2) the nature of the so-called Arab Spring, (3) religion as the key to understanding the Middle East, and (4) the focus needed for Christian mission in the Middle East today.1

The Christian Presence in the Middle East

Christian communities in many countries of the Middle East are suffering from decline in numbers because of emigration, low birth rates, and, in some places, persecution. In many countries there is actual (if not also legal) discrimination and marginalization.

When one looks at the present physical and statistical situation of Middle Eastern Christians and traces the developments that brought about this situation, one has to admit that on this level the picture looks bleak. The dramatic change in numbers is alarming. A glance at the historical development shows that at the end of the Crusader era in the late thirteenth century and as a result of severe persecution and arbitrary and cruel treatment of the Christians of the region at the hand of one Islamic dynasty in particular, the Mamluks, the Christians of the Near East started to decrease rapidly in numbers and influence in society.

When the Ottoman Empire took over the lands of the Fertile Crescent and Egypt in the early part of the sixteenth century, Christians constituted about 6–7 percent of the total population of the region. The Ottoman period, which lasted for 400 years, until the early twentieth century, was a period of stability for Christian communities. The Ottomans officially recognized the various Christian confessions, gave them a certain measure of protection, and provided them with state protection. In 1914, toward the end of the Ottoman period and on the eve of World War I, Christians in the Near East constituted about 20–25 percent of the total population.

Today, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, Christians in the Fertile Crescent and Egypt have seen their numbers return to only 6–7 percent of the total population of the region.2 There are many reasons for this decline, the most important among them being the significantly lower birthrate of Christians and the widespread and continuous emigration of Christians. Sociologists have shown that since the middle of the nineteenth century, one-third of all Middle Eastern Christians have left the region, going mainly to the West.

Clearly something major, unique, and exciting has been happening in the Arab world today.

The Arab Spring

The future does not look bright, given the facts of the past and the recent present. But what about the so-called Arab Spring, the major upheaval that began in December 2010 and is still taking place in some Arab countries today? Does it promise anything different and better for the Christians of the region?

Clearly something major, unique, and exciting has been happening in the Arab world today. Protests, demonstrations, and uprisings in many Arab countries are demanding real change. Three aspects of these protest movements have a potential impact on the Christians of the region.

First, the uprisings and protests have been everywhere primarily calling for democratic changes, for freedom, for the overthrow of dictatorships and political repression. The Arab peoples in Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, and other countries want freedom from state repression—they want to breathe! Of course, they all denounce corruption and have social demands, but they consider these to be the outcome of repression and dictatorship and lack of democracy. The main cry, therefore, is for freedom, not bread; for democracy and human rights before anything else. This call for freedom and democracy was quite significant and promised a positive outlook for all people there, but especially minorities, including the Christians of each country.

Second, the protests and uprisings did not, by and large, employ the traditional discourse of political street movements in many Arab countries of the last five decades or so, namely, the anti-Western and anti-imperialist, anti-Zionist rhetoric. This element is not completely absent, but it is not the main driver of the movements. In fact, in many places, such as Libya, the West was asked to intervene and help. In Syria, the opposition has practically been begging the United States, Europe, and NATO to support them not only politically but also militarily, even calling for direct Western military intervention. This is also significant because the Christians of the region have always been suspected of being pro-Western, and whenever the West did anything pro-Israeli or anti-Arab, the Christians of the region were placed in an uncomfortable position. Today, instead, the struggle in the Middle East is largely Muslim versus Muslim—Muslim peoples against Muslim leaders/rulers, and more destructively, Muslim Sunnis against Shi’ites. Actually, however, this Sunni-Shi’ite struggle is a far more dangerous threat to Middle Eastern Christian existence than some imagine; it threatens to engulf and do away with any Christians remaining in the region.

Third, in most, if not all, of the countries where protests are taking place, whether they have succeeded in overthrowing the old regimes (Tunisia, Libya, Yemen, and Egypt) or so far have failed (Syria, Bahrain), the repressive regimes, although clearly Islamic, had actually suppressed Islamist movements and even

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persecuted them. The various salafi and takfiri groups, and any extremist Islamic groups, were suppressed or at least kept under strict control by the regimes. This was true of Iraq’s Saddam Hussein, of Egypt’s Mubarak, of Tunisia’s Bin Ali, of Yemen’s Saleh, of Syria’s Assad (both father and son), also of Libya’s Qaddafi, and others. In the countries where there are Christians, this has meant that either the Christians were allies of the regime, for it protected them from the more extreme Islamists, or they saw no advantage in changing the regime. It guaranteed their existence and safety, and in some cases their prosperity. Especially in countries where a minority ruled or rules the majority (Iraq, Syria), the regime has viewed Christians as valuable allies. When the people in these countries rose up and began protesting, the Islamists were among those fighting for freedom and demanding change. So the Christians have been alarmed, wondering, Are we heading for democracy and freedom for all, including Christian minorities, or are we heading toward a more Islamic society and regime? The experience in Iraq has not been encouraging at all. Since the American-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 and until today, and although a dictatorship was toppled in that country, over sixty churches have been attacked, more than one thousand Christians have been killed, and over one-half of Iraq’s Christians have fled the country.3 The coming to power of the Muslim Brethren in Egypt in the 2011 elections, along with strong salafi wins in those elections, confirmed the fears of Christians. Even though the regime of the Muslim Brethren has been overthrown, the fate of Christians does not seem to have improved. Since the removal of Mohammad Morsi, the Islamist president, forty-two churches have been attacked, seventy-two churches burned down or looted, and many Christians killed. It was not the Christians who removed Morsi, but the predominantly Muslim Egyptian Army; nevertheless, the Christians paid the price. And what has been happening in Syria does not bode well for the future of Christians in that country or in the region as a whole. Since the protests started in 2011, forty churches have been damaged or destroyed, over one thousand Christians have been killed, two prominent bishops have been kidnapped, and hundreds of thousands of Christians have been displaced within and outside Syria.
Can we blame Middle Eastern Christians if they cannot see the bloom of a spring anywhere in sight? Religion: Key to Understanding the Middle East

Christians clearly are facing serious challenges in the Middle East today. The outcome of the Arab Spring so far makes evident that the main issue is Islamic resurgence. Is this a new situation? A new context for mission? Not really. It is an old situation that reappears in different forms throughout history. The main source of identity and the main driver of events and mover of souls in the Middle East has always been something religious. Many have misunderstood this reality, especially Western politicians, policy makers, and historians.

The genius of the Middle East is religion. The Lebanese philosopher and diplomat Charles Malik (1906–87) put it this way:

The peoples of these lands [Near East] did not create in science and philosophy, in the arts of beauty and the arts of self-government. The greatest science, the greatest philosophy, the greatest art and the greatest forms of government matured elsewhere, and nobody comes to the Near East to study them and bask in their splendor. . . . Shabby and unworthy as the Near East may be in these earthly-human achievements, it has been reserved to it to storm the heaven itself and open its doors. If it did not create in science and philosophy and the arts, it has been granted—if I may say without blasphemy—to create God, or, more correctly, God has chosen to reveal Himself in it, and therefore to create it as well as its history—through the suffering and trials of its peoples.4

To analyze the causes of problems and challenges in the Middle East and to suggest solutions that rely merely on political, social, and economic factors and components is to miss the whole point. Of course, all these dimensions are necessary and helpful; but without grasping the central religious component, one has not understood the Middle East.

The fundamental issue facing Middle Eastern Christians. The real and formidable challenge facing the Christians of the Middle East concerns this religious character of the region. The challenge is not that there are religions other than Christianity, not that there is religious fanaticism (hardline religious fundamentalism), for this comes and goes. The real challenge is how the different and differing religions and religious groupings perceive one another, how they relate to one another, how they envisage living with one another, how they relate to power and authority—in other words, how their worldviews can coexist with one another.

The Christians of the Middle East are a very diverse group. Historically, they have different origins and experiences; doctrinally, they are not one; culturally, they are varied; liturgically, they are diverse; politically, they live in different contexts and do not share the same outlooks; socially, they do not all belong to one class. Yet what all Christians and all churches have in common in the Middle East, what unites them all today, despite their huge variety and religious and political differences and disagreements, is that they have been under Islam in one form or another since the seventh century and thus their future is inextricably linked with the future of Islam. This, in my view, is the source of the most crucial and decisive challenge facing the Christians of the Middle East. Again I quote Malik, who wrote prophetically in the 1950s, long before the surge of religious revivals and Islamism: “Whither the Near East’ is ultimately, for the most part, ‘whither Islam.’ . . . [This] question concerns not only the Moslems, but the entire world. For Islam is a vigorous force in the world and therefore much depends on its development. . . . And for the Christians of the Near East it is obvious that this is a peculiarly crucial issue. The fate of Islam is in a certain sense their fate.”5

Kenneth Cragg echoed the same idea in the 1990s in his book The Arab Christian, concluding that the future of Middle Eastern Christians “has to be on Islam’s terms.”6

Whither Islam in the Middle East? This question lies at the root of the challenge facing Christians. I fully realize that Islam is not one uniform phenomenon today, that there is pluralism in Islam, that Muslim societies and countries are not all identical. But no one can deny that Islam is the umbrella under which the whole Middle East has lived for the last fourteen centuries, and
that a revived Islam, in one form or another, is currently gaining political and social ground in many countries and societies, especially in the countries that have recently undergone major transformations and changes. This broad question encompasses several issues now facing Islam.

- Is Islam moving in the direction of making it possible for non-Muslim minorities to coexist in complete equality with the Islamic majority?
- Will some form of separation between religion and state be possible in Islam? In other words, will the possibility of real change develop in Islamic societies?
- Will freedom of conscience, not just freedom of worship and practice of religion, be accepted and acknowledged in Islamic societies, so that people of different convictions, and not only religious convictions, will be able to exist as equal citizens with equal rights?
- Will all persons in Islamic societies and countries have the freedom to change their beliefs and convictions? If freedom of conscience is not respected, acceptance and openness to the other is ultimately impossible.
- Is Islam moving toward the possibility of real and fundamental self-criticism? Will questioning and critically discussing one’s identity, traditions, and the holy ever be acceptable?
- Will the Islamic doctrine of revelation remain one that identifies God’s final and complete revelation and will with the literal content of a seventh-century text that is considered the source of all subsequent legislation and that is valid for all aspects of life?
- Will reform and renewal and progress always elevate the past, a supposed Golden Age, as the ideal in matters political, social, and economic?

There is change in some Islamic countries of the Middle East today; a huge process of transformation has begun. It is difficult to predict its outcome, but what can be seen so far is not very encouraging for non-Muslims in Islamic societies. What began as movements of liberation and reform and democracy have for the most part been overcome—some say usurped—by Islamist forces that do not seem to promise a new direction for Islam. This is true particularly in Tunisia and Egypt, and perhaps also in Syria. The rise of religious fervor, the increasing Islamization of society and politics, and the growth and proliferation of hardline fundamentalist religious movements do not bode well for Christians.

If the situation remains as it is in Islamic countries and no serious attempt is made to face the above questions, then the future of Christians and their mission in the Middle East is grim indeed. It is true that Christians living among Muslims have known great prosperity in the past and have enjoyed a measure of tolerance and acceptance that the historical record of European Christian treatment of minorities—Jews and others—cannot match. Nevertheless, mere tolerance is not enough. To avoid grappling with the above questions will mean the persistence of Christian bleeding that has been going on for centuries and will continue until one day Christian existence in that region becomes of interest only to historians and archaeologists. No wonder, then, that Christians in that region are very concerned—nay, obsessed—about their survival. For some it is a luxury to think about mission when their very existence is daily at stake. Nevertheless, we Middle Eastern Christians need to go beyond the survival issue as the only issue at hand. Every time I hear fellow Christians in the Middle East obsess about survival or I catch myself being preoccupied with survival, I am put to shame by the words of Jesus, “For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it” (Mark 8:35).

Christian Mission in the Middle East Today

What ought Christians to do in the face of this situation as they reflect on their mission and ponder their future? What is the Christian mission in the context that I have just described? Let us first of all be clear on whose mission we are talking about: Christian mission to the Middle East, or the mission of Christians in the Middle East? As for the former, Western mission to the region has not really learned the lessons of history, for its adherents still go there and attempt to convert Muslims, totally oblivious of the Christian presence and role there, or even viewing Middle Eastern Christians as though they too were just a field of mission. I am not saying that the nineteenth-century mission was a mistake, but I am saying that something should have been learned from that experience.

The stated aim of that missionary endeavor was to evangelize the non-Christian peoples—Jews and Muslims—of the Near East. The foreign missionaries soon discovered that there were Christians in that region of the world and that evangelizing non-Christians, mainly Muslims, was a most difficult affair. To begin with, the Near East was under the Islamic Ottoman Empire, wherein it was against the law to convert Muslims (it still is in all of the countries except Lebanon). Evangelizing and trying to convert individual Muslims here and there was a long and arduous task, and not so rewarding. Within a short time the Protestant missionaries decided to concentrate their efforts on reviving Eastern Christians, mainly the various Orthodox churches, so that these in turn could evangelize their fellow Muslim compatriots. The original aim of the mission was not to create new Protestant ecclesiastical bodies but to awaken and revive already existing Eastern churches. For about a quarter of a century the American missionaries intentionally refrained from setting up new Protestant churches, restricting themselves to spreading the Scriptures and renewing individuals. Eventually, the “revived” Eastern Christians who were attracted to the Protestant way could not continue to remain in their own Eastern traditions; and after 1846, missionary policy changed to become one that accepted the setting up of organized Protestant church communities alongside all the other churches that already existed in the East.

What lessons can we draw from this brief sketch of mission to the Middle East, especially insights that are relevant to the discussion of mission in the wake of the Arab Spring? One point

Even dialogue with Islam cannot be done effectively and fruitfully by simply jumping over Near Eastern Christians, who have lived with, among, and under Muslims for centuries.
stands out sharply for me: it was not really a setback or a failure when the foreign missionaries changed their policy of converting Muslims to one of renewing Eastern Christians so that these Christians would do what the missionaries could not do. The foreign missionaries unconsciously landed upon a truth that has proved itself over and over again in the Middle East: you cannot have access to Muslims and Islam in the region while completely bypassing the local Christians. Many in the ecclesiastical and missionary West have realized and appropriated this point, but not all. Even dialogue with Islam cannot be done effectively and fruitfully by simply jumping over Near Eastern Christians, who have lived with, among, and under Muslims for centuries. Their experience and contribution are essential. Have all the subsequent missionary waves from the West, including those coming today, learned and accepted this truth? I do not think so, and this is a problem for Near Eastern Christians. But those who have learned from the past and who still want to have a mission to the Middle East have realized that such a mission must support and cooperate with the Christians of the region, not bypass them.

In fact, there is mission in the Middle East, in the midst of the Arab Spring, which can be done only by the Christians of the region. Christian mission is the same yesterday, today, and forever—to witness to the love of God as revealed and embodied in the life, teachings, and destiny of Jesus Christ. In the Middle East today, the mission of Christians there is to continue to participate with the Christians of the region, not bypass them.

The concrete challenge facing Christians in the Middle East and their mission of Islam as the dominant characteristic of the Arab Spring, the challenge to this mission in the Middle Eastern context today is how to pursue and strengthen this cooperative, nonantagonizing relation to Islam and Muslims. In conclusion, I am arguing that the proper role and mission of Middle Eastern Christians is to support Middle Eastern Christians and enable them to carry on their mission. Middle Eastern Christians are called specifically to “salt” Islam. For its part, world Christianity as a whole is called to make sure that the region is never emptied of its salt.

Notes
1. This article is based on a lecture given at the Overseas Ministries Study Center, New Haven, Connecticut, on December 6, 2013.
2. In 2012 the total population of Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Israel, Jordan, and Iraq was about 160 million, of which an estimated 10–13 million were Christians.
3. The figures and statistics presented here and in what follows are based on Reza Aslan, “The Christian Exodus: The Disastrous Campaign to Rid the Middle East of Christianity,” Foreign Affairs, September 11, 2013.
7. This section is based heavily on an unpublished address, “The Situation of Christians in the Near East,” which I delivered in Frankfurt on April 24, 2009, at the annual synod meeting of the Evangelische Kirche in Hessen und Nassau.
8. The story of why the policy changed has been told and discussed by Habib Badr, “Mission to ‘Nominal Christians’: The Policy and Practice of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions” (Ph.D. diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1992).
10. Such commitment would include, for example, support for long-standing middle institutions of civil society and Christian agencies of social transformation, as well as churches, Christian universities, and seminaries.
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Missiology after “Mission”?

John Roxborogh

Missiology acts as a gadfly in the house of theology, creating unrest and resisting complacency, opposing every ecclesiastical impulse to self-preservation, every desire to stay where we are, every inclination toward provincialism and parochialism, every fragmentation of humanity into regional or sectional blocs. . . .

Missiology’s task, furthermore, is critically to accompany the missionary enterprise, to scrutinize its foundations, its aims, attitude, message and methods—not from the safe distance of an onlooker, but in a spirit of co-responsibility and service to the church of Christ.

—David Bosch, Transforming Mission

One effect of the success of the theological project to place mission at the center of the church’s self-understanding has been that the language of mission has gained currency across the theological disciplines and in the life of many churches. This affirmation of the missionary nature of the church has had its own theological dynamic as well as being encouraged by missiology, by the domestication of missiology in the language of missional churches, and by the role missiology earlier played in debates over social action and evangelism. Though the language of mission is widely invoked, however, it seems to me that its currency is not secure. If people tire of hearing about mission, as they may well do, or if frustration arises when the undifferentiated invocation of mission solves neither the problems of the world nor those of the church, what will be the future of missiology? What might missiology after mission look like?

The theological imperative for Christian mission, certainly, and the need to reflect critically on what that means remain, whether the word “mission” is popular or not. Long-standing questions, however, about the relationship of missiology to theology and to the practice of mission require attention if the discipline is to survive and thrive as an arena in which necessary discussions about the life of the church in society can take place. In today’s world the audience for missiology and mission studies also lies in the public square, within the secular university, and among people of other faiths. Missiology competes with ethics, theology, and history as a creative space for addressing the issues of the day. It competes with other disciplines in secular environments as an open environment for critical analysis of what Christians are doing and have done in the world.

In discussing the place of missiology in the theology curriculum, David Bosch noted that “the basic problem . . . was not with what missiology was but with what mission was.” Yet this aspect of the problem was actually an asset. In the second half of the twentieth century, missiology benefited from being concerned with subjects that were hotly debated. People looked to missiology to provide support for one view or another: social justice and evangelism, ecumenism and outreach, mission agencies and missionary-minded churches, a moratorium on missionaries, issues of inculturation, contextualization and syncretism, evangelism or dialogue, and relationships with people of other faiths. It was when those differences appeared to have been largely resolved—or ownership of their resolution shifted to others—that further thought about the genius of missiology again became urgent. Despite its achievements, the formal study of Christian mission can still feel itself under threat.

As long as mission raised issues churches wanted addressed, some difficulties could be ignored that again need to be faced. The place of missiology in the seminary is one. Bosch noted that the historical division of theology into biblical studies, systematic theology, church history, and practical theology, allowed no self-evident place for a subject that championed the intentions of God, the purpose of the church, and the challenges of engaging with culture and religion. Problems of definition and the structuring of knowledge and learning, however, are common to all academic disciplines. As missions gained support, the option of creating specialist teaching positions at least gave a voice to missiology, whatever these theoretical issues. But once either major issues surrounding mission were believed to be clearly understood or mission became simply an accepted dimension of theological disciplines in general, the presence of specialist missiologists was no longer a felt need. Since it is an aim of missiologists to be clearly understood and to encourage the acceptance of a mission dimension in other theological specializations, the discipline’s demise might be seen as just the inevitable result of success.

Yet the sense is that the lack of renewal of teaching positions in missiology and mission studies is not about success at all, but rather of failure. That the missionary dimension of the theological disciplines has good theological warrant is recognized, but in practice a shared understanding about what a missionary dimension actually required others to do differently has been difficult. In my own experience, when colleagues in biblical studies and theology set students the same questions as I did in mission studies, I was not sure whether to rejoice at the affirmation of mission or to feel redundant. When disciplines are differentiated, they need also to be connected—and some issues, like this one, just need to be worked through, acknowledging the perspectives brought by different disciplines and the differing life experiences of the teachers involved, including the characteristically multicultural context out of which missiologists operate.

Another difficulty is psychological. The impression that missiologists exist to tell other people what they ought to be doing is difficult to avoid. A range of evangelistic temptations, from arrogance to quietism, apply also to missiology in its witness to its own place in the world. These temptations are problems which missiology is expected to know something about. The self-understanding Bosch articulates may be inspiring for those who identify with missiology, but it is difficult to believe that gadflies should expect to feel welcome anywhere much. Maybe some personalities fit the gadfly persona quite well, but—whatever may be said about humility and service—having a desire to “critically . . . accompany the missionary enterprise” is a hard sell if one wants to win friends with mission practitioners, never mind many theologians.

But the answer does not lie in denying the truth in Bosch’s
The past half century has seen consistent efforts to restore the centrality of mission in the church’s thinking.

Missiology: A Success Story?

The past half century, at least, has seen consistent efforts to restore the centrality of mission in the church’s thinking and to establish missiology and mission studies as respectable academic disciplines. In 1952 the Willingen meeting of the International Missionary Council found in the formulation of *missio Dei* an answer to the problem of the theological location of mission. If mission was understood as outreach across frontiers, should it be located in the agencies or in the being of the church, or somewhere else? By locating mission in the nature of God rather than the activity of the church, Willingen managed to solve, theologically if not practically, the problem of where responsibility for mission lay.

The formulation has proven robust. It is now difficult to conceive of any other foundational theological statement about Christian mission. And simply on the scale of being useful, *missio Dei* rates highly. The solutions it facilitated addressed dichotomies between social and evangelistic dimensions of mission that had appeared enduring, and its reception across denominational divides has been extraordinary. It provides Catholics and Orthodox, as well as conciliar, Pentecostal, and evangelical Protestants, with significant missiological language in common. The scope of valid Christian mission is now seen to be bounded only by the range of interests God has been revealed as having in the world.

Fears that—upon the integration in 1961 of the International Missionary Council with the World Council of Churches (WCC)—mission would be swallowed up by church may not have been realized, but assumptions about what constitutes mission were quickly and strongly challenged. But by the time *Transforming Mission*, David Bosch’s magnum opus, appeared in 1991, at least a formal Trinitarian theological basis of mission found a common voice across Protestant and Catholic traditions, though differences of emphasis and pockets of hostility remained.

In 1972 the International Association for Mission Studies (IAMS) and in 1973 the American Society of Missiology (ASM) came into being to provide open and committed communities of scholarship. Both entities represented a cordial and scarcely restrained joy of discovery across liberal, evangelical, and Catholic divides. The emphasis on respectful exchange of views rather than negotiated conformity contributed to an emerging consensus. The tools of a respectable international academic discipline were gradually put in place with these associations, their journals, and an expanding range of serious publications.

Mission studies provided models of critical analysis that were less likely to be marked by idealized piety or guarded defensiveness and gave permission to explore the complexities of cultural and religious interaction. When books like Barbara Kingsolver’s *Poisonwood Bible* (1998) and critical studies of Christianity and colonialism later appeared, they were seen as essential texts rather than dangerous literature.

The contrasts, while they lasted, in missiological emphasis and in missionary and political vision between mainline and evangelical Protestants, as reflected in the WCC and the Lausanne movement, helped to fuel the study of missiology and its overlapping parallel, mission studies. People looked to missiology to provide the answers they wanted.

As denominations in the West struggled, missiology promised answers to the question of what we needed to do: help critique church growth and promote church renewal, ensure that social action is based more on theology than on politics, claim the identity of being missionary by our very nature, wrestle with our understanding of other faiths so that respect and evangelism go together. Missiology seemed equipped to develop theologies of religions and the distinctions needed if struggles with syncretism and contextualization were to deal with real dilemmas, not unspeakable foes. Missiologists could help mission agencies adjust their policies to the new demographic of Christianity as a non-Western religion.

In 1992 James Scherer and Stephen Bevans introduced the first of their three volumes *New Directions in Mission and Evangelization* with an overview “Statements on Mission and Evangelization, 1974–1991.” The end date of 1991 was easy to explain—it was close to the present and the year of David Bosch’s *Transforming Mission*. But why 1974? One possibility is that that was the year of the International Congress on World Evangelization, held at Lausanne. The Lausanne Covenant may have needed updating virtually from the time of its drafting and the consensus behind its formulation may have been fragile, but it remains one of the core influential missiological statements of the twentieth century.

In the aftermath of Lausanne, numbers of evangelical and conciliar missiologists worked to resolve the differences in perspective of their traditions. In the early 1980s some still saw the contrast as a crisis, yet a decade later the degree of accommodation between the polarizations of social action and evangelism was astonishing. In *Transforming Mission* Bosch documented both: on the one hand, the starkness of the contrast in 1980 between the Melbourne meeting of the WCC Conference on World Mission and Evangelism and the Lausanne Consultation in Pattaya, and on the other hand, the terms of an emerging ecumenical paradigm evident in the CWME’s San Antonio meeting in 1989 and that of Lausanne in Manila, also in 1989. Were the parallels to the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War just coincidence?

If that much had been achieved, the theology of religions was...
still a challenge and the story of global Christianity remained to be corrected by the inclusion of parts of the world with which missiologists could claim some familiarity. Treatment of many ethical and theological issues required intercultural skills that others appeared to lack. Someone was required to facilitate meeting with the people of other faiths who migrated to the West. Those who taught missiology could feel useful, and they could also point to a number of success stories:

- Whatever the frustrations, missiology had facilitated dialogue between mission theory and mission practice, giving value to the ideal of “reflective practitioners.”
- Missiology had contributed to breaking down the polarization between social action and evangelism.
- Missiology had encouraged cognate disciplines to ask missiological questions, for example, biblical studies reading the Bible as a missionary text needing to be read in a missionary context—even if the relationships between Bible and mission and between theology and mission remained complex.
- Missiology had encouraged Christian anthropology and seen a reduction in tension between missionaries and anthropologists.
- Missiology had faced the flaws in the theology of church growth, while allowing its questions and concerns to continue to stimulate.9
- Missiology had helped to ensure that religious studies and interreligious dialogue were grounded in the experience of lived religious traditions.

Missiology under Threat?

Alongside the degree of recognition that missiology has enjoyed, however, are some worrying signs. If the rhetoric of mission has grown stronger, it can also appear fragile. Should the popular or scholarly use of the language of mission falter, what would happen to missiology? Can there be missiology after mission?

**Problems and anxieties.** I see a number of concerns. I am not sure that the resolution of the fears of 1961 about mission being swallowed up by church have not landed us with the converse problem of the church being swallowed up by mission. Familiarity with the language of mission makes everyone an expert, and it may also breed contempt. Missiologists may find they are no longer wanted even if they are still needed. The debates around which a generation of missiologists garnered their energy, learned their trade, and proved their worth do not generate much excitement anymore. Contextualization, a missiological child of the 1970s and earlier championed, has proved difficult at home and abroad and has in places been disregarded by those it was intended to help in their quest for cultural authenticity. Yet its relevance in every culture has never been greater. Despite promising exceptions, it is also not clear where the next generation of missiologists with firsthand cross-cultural experience is coming from. Can our inherited curricula allow contemporary interest in lived religion and popular culture, including digital culture, to be translated into missiological discourse?

Redrawn maps of global Christianity continue to struggle to find a place around the theological table for all major cultural blocks to participate as full partners. Theologically, we seem to have moved successively from Western hegemonies, to black, feminist, and Latin American liberation theology, to a choice between reinvigorated Western theologies and an African, hence non-Western, paradigm for all. Asia’s theological voices seem, despite a strong heritage, to need a new generation of creativity. Oceania is problematic—called on to illustrate other people’s theories about what ought to be going on and uncertain how to do justice to its Polynesian, Melanesian, and European narratives. All these theologies have places at the table of our understanding of God, and missiology might be better placed than it sometimes feels to broker a conversation of equals.

Some of the recurring anxieties that surfaced at IAMS conferences I attended from 1988 to 2012 as well as at a number of ASM meetings during the 1990s seemed to me to have less to do with a prevailing concern for the theology of religions than with anxieties about a different set of “others”—that is, our fellow colleagues in the mission enterprise. Conversations easily turned to such points as the following:

- How can we convince colleagues in the academy and seminary that mission is God’s and therefore is the most important topic in the curriculum and deserving of better resources? How do we establish and maintain the idea that missiology is a scientific discipline?
- What part can we play in the missionary reanimation of the church, convincing it that it should live up to its identity and should reinvigorate its missionary commitment? What role do we have in helping all the players understand that the indices of missionary commitment have profoundly changed?
- How can we convince missionary pragmatists and mission agencies that there are missiological questions they ought to be thinking about?
- How do we convince theologians that mission is “the mother of theology” without appearing to be wanting to tell them what to do?
- How do we sustain a creative relationship between theology and praxis?

**All these theologies have a place at the table, but missiology might be better placed than it sometimes feels to broker a conversation of equals.**

The need for definition. Despite its importance, and the measure of consensus about mission, reaching an agreed-upon definition for missiology has been an elusive goal. In 1987, at the meeting of the Association of Professors of Mission, James Scherer noted that “those of us who teach and do research in this area need closer agreement on what missiology is [in order] to be able to pursue our goals in a collegial manner given both the interdisciplinary nature of our subject and the interconfessional stance we have purposely adopted.”10

Historically, Europeans have sought to make the study of missions a science in order to gain academic recognition—and this has proved important to missiology generally—yet neither the American Society of Missiology, founded in 1973, nor its journal, *Missiology*, ventured to define “missiology,” other than
to indicate that it included practically anything of interest or relevance to mission, itself undefined.

In 1978 Johannes Verkuyl related missiology to “the study of the salvation activities of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit throughout the world” and traced its development through a detailed historical and bibliographical survey. Missiology was complementary to all the theological disciplines, but its perspective was global and its emphasis distinctive. Alan Tippett, the first editor of Missiology, was more concerned to allow contributors to define their own terms and asked readers to respect that freedom. In 1999 Laurent Ramambason proposed that missiology should be defined by the activity of those who were seen to be doing mission, which grounded missiology in the lives of actual people and the reality of praxis even if he like others left Christian mission itself undefined. Scherer’s writings and Jan Jongeneel’s ongoing concern to establish the elements of missiology that can properly be called academic, however, have helped bring some rigor to the task.

I myself find it helpful to also consider some simple working statements, even if a full treatment is anything but simple. Tippett’s invitation in the first issue of Missiology noted earlier is important. Accepting the dynamic nature of language as do scholars generally and acting in the midst of the context and range of options of our work, we have both to survey the field and to take responsibility for our own view of the situation. The statements below are unremarkable, except that I am concerned to define the term mission as a concept before addressing its usage in relation to the church outside of itself. I use the phrase “outside of itself” to signal a distinction between valid internal foci of the church and external ones, however intimately these are connected. We have to navigate the double sense of the word “mission,” applying both to specific areas and tasks and also to overall purposes. Like Andrew Kirk I understand that the mission of the church “encompasses everything that Jesus sends his people into the world to do.” It, however, “does not include everything the church does or everything God does in the world.” Hence I wish to affirm that the church does have a missionary nature without saying that mission outside of ourselves is God’s only purpose for the church.

- As a concept, the idea of mission refers to a particular purpose, task, or responsibility as well as to an overall purpose. By extension it can refer to a means by which the task is carried out.
- The purpose of the church “this side of heaven” includes worship, community, and Christian mission.
- In discussion of God’s purposes for the church, Christian mission primarily refers to the purpose of the church outside of its own community.
- Missiology is the study of Christian mission and the issues that arise through commitment to it across and within the cultures of the world. It includes the theology that gives rise to mission, the effect of mission on theological understanding, and the interconnectedness of mission with other dimensions of the life of the church.
- Mission studies take their focus from the critical study of Christian mission in society and history, including its social and cultural effects.

Mission and the church? Andrew Walls has highlighted the importance of mission studies for theology and church history if the church is to understand how it got to be where it is today. His argument is as prescient today as ever, though the “structural problems” he refers to seem to lie more in a failure of other disciplines to recognize the scope and implications of missiology than in problems internal to mission studies itself. A theological appreciation of the importance of mission is not the same thing as coming to terms with its intercultural implications and its relativization of the Western tradition.

At the same time, efforts to champion an overriding sense of God’s purpose for the church run the risk of theoretically overstating the role of mission in the life and nature of the church. Such efforts can complicate relationships with other disciplines in the theological academy, while failing to achieve the aim of energizing churches that are preoccupied with liturgy, morality, and politics—if not finance and survival. I cannot see a sustain-able commitment to mission that is not rooted in worship, and I cannot see sustainable worship that does not pay attention to liturgy. I can see a church tired of being driven by a missionary identity it does not comprehend or feel inspired to fathom. Mission is a grace inspired by love, not a burden imposed by some sort of theological or semantic accident.

Independence or integration? The desire to integrate missiology with other theological disciplines takes theology seriously, but it may blur the contribution that each has to make to our overall understanding of the mind and purposes of God. Relationship and integration are not the same thing. Bosch considers the integration model to be theologically preferable to independence or to being subsumed under an existing discipline, but he recognizes that other disciplines do not understand what it is about missiology that they are expected to incorporate. Bernhard Ott is one who has worked through what a mission-centered curriculum might look like, having in view an institution that places a high value on training for mission. More recently John Corrie’s Dictionary of Mission Theology also places a high value on integrating mission and theology:

Missiology should not be seen merely as an outpost of theological investigation, compartmentalized in the curriculum and tacked on alongside biblical theology, hermeneutics, ecclesiology and so on. It is rather that all theology is intrinsically missiological since it concerns the God of mission and the mission of God. This means that all theological categories are inherently missiological and all missionary categories are profoundly theological.

It seems to me there are problems here as well as fine inten- tions. There is a lot of room between being “merely . . . an outpost” and being part of every aspect of the entire theological enterprise. Are those the only alternatives, or is this an instance of Bosch’s gadfly in action? Do we not also say in missiology that truth is discovered on the edge, in liminal positions, in places of dissonance and discontinuity? Journeys of integration are not the only ones to be on in the mission of the church, and mis-
siology is not the only theological discipline able to contribute to an integrated vision of theological formation for churches, faculties, and individuals. In any case, does integration really bring us closer to the ideal that missiology is looking for, or does it create a different problem—a loss of distinction between valid theological subdisciplines?

James Scherer regarded the attempt to correlate missiology to every “discipline in the theological encyclopedia, not to mention the social sciences,” to be a priori self-defeating. “Missiology must find a way to be holistic, integrative, inclusive, and complementary to human learning without becoming exhaustive.”29 Categorization and the formulation of distinctions may be overdone, but the principles of rational analysis are not of themselves an Enlightenment failure. In fact, they are a necessary task if we are to talk meaningfully about anything. Though missiology often reminds the church of the importance of what goes on at the margins, it should not be a mere outpost of theology—but neither should any other dimension of theological thought be disconnected from the whole.

Conclusion

Can there be missiology in a context where interest in mission appears to have faltered? Absolutely, though it may require addressing some questions of failure on the part of missiology and not just of the church. Did missiology overreach itself by its claims for mission to be about what was central to the will of God and the nature of the church? Possibly, but it was a risk that had to be taken. Are we tarnished by a shift from church growth as concern for lost people to schemes for the salvation of the church presented under the guise of concern for saving the world? Maybe, but they go together and we too are concerned for the church not just the world. Have statements such as “the only reason for gathering the church is mission” failed to make space for our need for prayer and driven away commitment to Christian outreach more than they have inspired a new generation?21 Possibly, but there are situations where the spirituality of the church is not in question as much as its commitment to mission.

The validity of missiology continues to lie in the validity of mission, in the importance of the questions it addresses, and in the intercultural perspectives it brings to the issues of the day. In a sense, missiology has to believe in itself even when others may not. Being under threat is hardly new in its history. Whatever its context, however, missiological witness to God’s mission, like direct witness to Christ, never ceases to need to earn the right to speak.

Notes

1. In meetings of the American Society of Missiology and through the pages of Missiology, International Bulletin of Missionary Research, and elsewhere, others have been reflecting on the nature of missiology and its future. This article is a contribution to these ongoing conversations. An earlier version was presented as John Roxbrough, “From Edinburgh 1910 to Edinburgh 2010—Witnessing to Christ Today: Perspectives from Aotearoa New Zealand” (ANZAMS Symposium, Laidlaw College, October 30–31, 2009).


10. James A. Scherer, “Missiology as a Discipline and What It Includes,” in Scherer and Bevans, New Directions in Mission and Evangelization, 175.


17. Bosch, Transforming Mission, 492.


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Salvaging C. S. Lewis’s The Horse and His Boy for Mission and Cultural Awareness

Sarah Hinlicky Wilson

In recent years the Chronicles of Narnia, C. S. Lewis’s beloved children’s series, have come under attack for their alleged sexism and racism, and indeed for the very Christian faith to which the stories analogically witness. The most famous of these attacks is Philip Pullman’s essay “The Dark Side of Narnia,”1 accompanied by his own counterseries entitled His Dark Materials.2 Such criticisms amount to little more than tossing pebbles at a fortress, at least as far as the books’ popularity goes. The cult of Lewis, iconic as the ultimate convert from atheism, continues unabated, and the Chronicles remain beloved even by those who explicitly reject the faith that gave rise to them.3

Christian commentators have offered their own nuanced critiques of Lewis’s imaginative world, acknowledging his historical context and limitations while offering counterpoints from within his own writings to address his weaknesses. I would like to contribute to that effort here by examining the fifth of the seven Chronicles, The Horse and His Boy (hereafter HHB), with a missional lens.4 By missional I mean paying explicit attention to the assumed or asserted relationship between faith and culture. Though the movement of the Gospel through cultures is intrinsic to the Gospel itself (Matt. 28:19), as witnessed especially in the Book of Acts and Paul’s sojourns among the Gentiles, this process has rarely been acknowledged, much less given a central role, in the theological task. Without self-conscious reflection on the challenges of cross-cultural proclamation, many historic Christian mission efforts have taken a tacitly imperial approach to culture. But mission is not imperial in and of itself. Lewis’s HHB is a perfect example of the dangers of an unacknowledged theology of culture; at the same time, it exhibits certain insights toward its own self-correction.

An Outlier in the Chronicles

HHB stands apart from the other six Chronicles in a number of ways. It is the only story-within-a-story: the plot unfolds within the reign of the four Pevensie children, a period that otherwise receives only a brief description at the end of the first book, The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe. Though these four children, now on the brink of adulthood with many years’ experience as kings and queens behind them, come from our world into Narnia, they are not the protagonists in HHB. Children of our world star in every other one of the Chronicles, but the heroes of HHB are Shasta, a poor white-skinned boy growing up among the dark-skinned Calormenes to the south of Narnia, and Aravis, a genuine Calormene girl of noble descent, along with the two Narnian horses that find them, Bree and Hwin.

Furthermore, almost all the action of HHB takes place outside of Narnia. This is not utterly unprecedented. The same is the case in The Voyage of the Dawn Treader and The Silver Chair, but in those two volumes the inhabitants of the other lands are by and large not human, and the few humans in them are white and mostly Narnia-friendly. In HHB, however, the inhabitants of the foreign land are another and mainly hostile race of humans, the aforementioned Calormenes. The climax of the story is not a homecoming, actual or expected, to Narnia, but rather a homecoming to its neighboring and culturally identical white nation of Archenland. In HHB, more than anywhere else in the Chronicles, Lewis depicts an alternate human culture with values alien to Narna’s. King Miraz and his fellow Telmarines in Prince Caspian may have forgotten or ignored Aslan, but their culture was still shaped by his heritage and indirectly benefited from it. The land of Calormen, by contrast, has never had direct contact with Aslan, and its culture is shaped by the worship of Tash (a human-like creature with a vulture’s head and four arms) and associated minor deities.

Narnia vs. Calormen (or Is It England vs. Arabia?)

Lewis is no Tolkien, though, and neither Narnia nor Calormen represents a serious effort at creating a totally unique imaginary culture. Narnia is basically medieval England, and Calormen is basically medieval Arabia. As Rowan Williams observes in his insightful study of the Chronicles, “The Calormenes talk like characters in the ‘Arabian Nights,’ with an effect that can be both comic and threatening, and they are clearly the dangerous ‘other’ where Narnia is concerned. . . . [T]he cultural world of the Calormenes is unmistakably Arab, and their relation to Narnia is that of mediaeval ‘Saracens’ to Christendom as reflected in the literature of the period.”5 Williams tries hard to acquit Lewis of the accusation that the Calormenes are a bigoted portrait of Muslims, despite the Arabian flavor and other details such as
the Calormenes’ currency being the crescent. Williams’s principal evidence is that Tash is one of many gods and has human descendants, whereas Islam is nothing if not monotheistic and is opposed to any “son of God.”

It is doubtful that Lewis was undertaking any serious polemic against Islam in the Calormenes, but it is also doubtful that he ever paid enough attention either to the details of Muslim belief or to the culture of actual Arabs to be able to pull off an accurate satire. It does not matter what Muslims or Arabs are really like; all that matters is that the Calormenes evoke feelings of disgust and contempt in Lewis’s readers, with their unspoken biases against Middle Eastern culture and religion. The Calormenes’ very name suggests their Southern foreignness—they are “colored” men or maybe “hot” men (calor being Latin for “heat,” with cognates in other Romance languages)—and it does not take much for the reader to see that they are exotic, brutal, and unwholesome.

This is a successful narrative tactic, creating a sense of holy collusion between the author and his presumably northern European (or white American) audience. The story opens with hospitality does an eavesdropping Shasta learn the truth. The visitor offers to buy Shasta as a slave, to which the host protests, “This boy is manifestly no son of yours, for your cheek is as dark as mine but the boy is fair and white like the accursed but beautiful barbarians who inhabit the remote north” (5). Lewis knew no more of adoptive psychology than he did of Muslim theology, for he reports that Shasta reacts to the news with calm relief: “He had often been uneasy because, try as he might, he had never been able to love the fisherman, and he knew that a boy ought to love his father” (7).

Lewis’s point here, though, is not whether there can be genuine bonds of affection in adoptive relationships but rather the inextinguishability of the call of blood.” Shasta can let go of his false father and Calormene life easily because he never really belonged there and has only been waiting for the chance to return to his true home. When he meets Bree, a Narnian horse, he confesses, “I’ve been longing to go north all my life.” Of course you have,” said the Horse. “That’s because of the blood that’s in you. I’m sure you’re true northern stock.” (12). Much later, an Archenlander sees Shasta riding and declares to the king, “The boy has a true horseman’s seat, Sire. I’ll warrant there’s noble blood in him” (149). Even the food calls forth Shasta’s true nature. His first Narnian breakfast comprises bacon, eggs, mushrooms, hot milk, toast, and coffee (never mind that coffee, in our world, is a foodstuff with Middle Eastern/African origins!). “It was all new and wonderful to Shasta for Calormene food is quite different. He didn’t even know what the slices of brown stuff were, for he had never seen toast before. He didn’t know what the yellow soft thing they smeared on the toast was, because in Calormen you nearly always get oil instead of butter” (167). The delight is not so much in going from the food of poverty in Calormen to the food of wealth in Narnia, but in going from “foreign” food to “natural” food. Nature utterly trumps nurture, or at least cultural upbringing.

Cultural Superiority of Narnia (or Is It England?)

If the primary point were that one must reside culturally in the land of one’s own blood, then the counterpart story of Aravis the Calormene girl would not work at all. Aravis, contrary to her “blood,” is more than happy to leave Calormen, and by the end of the story we learn that she and Shasta get married, so she will spend the rest of her days as the queen of Archenland. But the movement in this direction is acceptable, because an even greater truth than the call of blood is the innate superiority of Narnian/Archenlander culture, a fact demonstrated repeatedly in the course of the story.

For example, Shasta is immediately taken with the delightful party of Narnians that he meets in the Calormene capital of Tashbaan. They are easygoing, friendly, and lovely, unlike the stiff, hierarchical, power- and wealth-hungry Calormenes. Again, the plot point concerns the transition not from an unloving family to a circle of friends but from an inferior and “foreign” culture to a superior and innately fitting one. Throughout HHB, Calormen entertains the idea of expanding its imperial reach to Narnia, which the reader is to fear and abhor—even though the Narnian king Caspian had done exactly that on behalf of his own country in The Voyage of the Dawn Treader. But of course Narnian culture is intrinsically just, merciful, and innocent, so the corresponding empire will be the same. Narnians value freedom, but in Calormene perspective “free” means “idle, disordered, and unprofitable” (108). Tashbaan smells of “unwashed people, unwashed dogs, scent, garlic, onions, and the piles of refuse which lay everywhere” (52), but superior Narnia has no cities at all, only an idyllic harmony between the creatures and the land. (The threat of Calormene cities and technology arises again in The Last Battle and necessitates an apocalypse before Narnia has to figure out how to deal with sewers, offices, and immigrants!) Calormen has no talking animals and would treat them badly if it did, but Narnia is full of them, free and flourishing.

The superiority of Narnian culture is most evident in its treatment of women. Two sister queens reign alongside the two brother kings, and there is no doubt that Lucy is the human ideal in all of the Chronicles—in many ways, despite the absence of a nativity story, she is the analogue to Mary. Narnian women are free to marry or not as they please (though obviously the marriage of any one of the Pevensies before their return to their usual English lives and ages would have been rather awkward). By contrast, the Calormenes are brutish. Aravis, who cannot be much more than thirteen or fourteen years old, is engaged by her father to a sixty-year-old hunchback who looks like an ape, prompting her to run away from home. Queen Susan’s decision to decline Calormene prince Rabadash’s offer of marriage elicits the latter’s ugly desires to kidnap her, humiliate her, and force her into a marriage that will be more like slavery.

Given Lewis’s well-known tone-deafness to matters concerning women, it is surprising and commendable that he managed to acknowledge the reality of sexual violence in his stories. That sexual violence is a feature of the inferior foreign
culture only, however, exposes the missional problem. Rabadas may promise the women of Narnia as prizes of war to his soldiers, but the reader simply cannot imagine High King Peter of Narnia indulging in rape or prostitution after the successful completion of a campaign against the giants.

In short, HHB neatly divides all the goods and ills of human civilization and assigns them to respective cultures. Narnia is all goodness; Calormen is all wickedness. The genre of fantasy regularly indulges in such extremes in order to teach the distinction between good and evil and need not be criticized as such. But the very obvious correlation between Narnia and Christian England, on the one hand, and, on the other, Calormen and (probably Muslim) Arabia creates an acute moral and missional problem. Shasta’s longing to go “home” to Narnia (or Archenland) is meant to be a Christian analogy: it points to our desire to leave this pilgrim life on earth, where we feel out of place, and find our true home in heaven. But to depict this spiritual insight through competing earthly cultures is a much more doubtful enterprise. Lewis’s original title for the book, “Narnia and the North,” after a frequent refrain of the characters, all too aptly expresses the cultural attitude he takes.8

The problem becomes even more evident in the sequel to HHB, The Magician’s Nephew, which tells the creation story. There, the localized kingdom of Narnia is equivalent to the entire world. Aslan calls Narnia alone into being; it is only subsequent to the “fall” that non-Narnian places and cultures develop within Narnia. Thus the protological and eschatological true culture of divinity is Narnian, and in between those temporal endpoints the most divine even of the fallen cultures is Narnia’s. Williams observes, without intending criticism, that “the kingdom of Narnia is itself the ‘Church,’ the community where transforming relation with Aslan becomes fully possible.”9 Since Lewis’s intention was to reveal Christian truths outside of their usual form, this was an attractive and unexpected way to approach ecclesiology. Instead of the perhaps off-putting culture of the church, an entire community whose every piece and detail is brought under Aslan’s reign is presented to readers in attractive form. On its own, as in The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, the strategy works. But when Narnia is set against another human culture, it takes on the qualities of proselytism. If Aravis wants to be in fellowship with Aslan, she will have to change cultures and “convert” to Narnia/Archenland.

The Ironies of Narnia vs. Calormen

Here we approach one of the deep operational ironies of the Chronicles. Narnia is already a missional translation of the Gospel! European readers are faced with the fact that the idiom and imagery of the Bible are broadly Middle Eastern and specifically Jewish. Narrative epics concern patriarchs, slaves, nomads, mul-

tiple wives, judges, and prophets. The settings are deserts, cities, and mountains. Parables are illustrated with sheep and goats, fish, wheat, vineyards, and olive oil (that stuff you get instead of butter in Calormen!). Such things are not utterly foreign to North Atlantic readers—in part because Christianity itself imported knowledge of them—but they are not the “natural” language of either the earth or the culture. The Bible fits much more naturally into Calormen than into Narnia.

In an alternative vision, the Chronicles’ opening tale of The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe re-images the Gospel story into the fairy-tale idiom of northern Europe, with deep forests, long winters, a stone table and knife in place of a cross, knights armed with sword and shield, and the flowers and foods of the wholesome North. (It is probably no accident that the delicacy that corrupts Edmund is Turkish delight.) Through the imagistic translation, the Gospel story is no longer an alien one of far away—of a strange hot world where itinerant preachers can be subject to horrifying public execution—and therefore no longer a story that can neither accuse nor redeem northern readers. I believe that this as much as anything accounts for the profound popularity of the Chronicles with European and American readers. We should recognize that, on some level, Lewis’s avowedly “proteoevangelical” work was meant to bridge the cultural gap.

But because self-conscious attention to the challenge of cultural translation has never been central to the theological process, Lewis could not recognize the implicit counterpart of his efforts: that the cultural setting of the actual Bible and Gospel got(roundly denigrated in his retelling! Aslan so obviously has no place in Calormen—and there is no suggestion that Aslan ever made any effort to meet his creatures there. There were rumors in Calormen of the Lion, but he was nevertheless universally despised by the Tash-worshippers. The Middle East may have been Moses and Jesus’ culture, but Calormen is definitely not Aslan’s culture.

And the irony is only redoubled when we consider that the deep structure of the Chronicles is in fact astrological, a Christianized appropriation of Greco-Roman mythology and its planetary motifs, which was once long ago a significant rival to faith in Christ. If Jupiter, Mercury, and Venus—whether as planets or gods—can be baptized, why not Calormen? Why not Tash?10

The Salvageability of Calormen (or Is It Islam?)

Much has been made by Lewis’s fans of the salvation of Emeth, a Calormene soldier and devotee of Tash, in the eschatological story of The Last Battle, since it suggests that Lewis allowed for the possibility that believers in false gods could, through divine mercy, be drawn into the heavenly kingdom. A Calormene might be an “anonymous Narnian.” But Emeth’s entry into glory is into the newer, bigger, greater Narnia. He remarks on arrival there, “By the Gods, this is a pleasant place: it may be that I am come into the country of Tash,” and he marvels over the flowers and trees. But he expresses no longing for a newer, bigger, greater Calormen. At the very end of the book we learn that there is such a place, but within the logic of the Chronicles, it is unfathomable that any of the Narnians or even Emeth himself would want to go there. Conversion to Aslan logically entails conversion to Narnian culture, so it is only “further up and further in” to Narnia.

The more striking concession of Lewis to the salvageability of Calormene culture and religion is in HHB itself. At the end of the story, the proud, wicked, lustful Prince Rabadas has failed
in his attack on Archenland, but Aslan gives him the opportunity to repent. Rabash refutes, and so he is turned into a donkey. But he still has one last hope. “‘You have appealed to Tash,’ said Aslan. ‘And in the temple of Tash you shall be healed’” (211). Aslan instructs Rabash to stand in front of the altar of Tash in Tashbaan at the Great Autumn Feast. If he does so, he will be restored to his human state, though in full view of everyone there, so he will not be able to escape public knowledge of his humiliation. After that, Rabash will be required to stay within ten miles of Tash’s temple for the rest of his life or he will turn into a donkey again, and this time without reprieve.

This is not exactly the Gospel. But it is, at least, a merciful law enacted through Aslan’s greatest rival and with Aslan’s permission. The plot point opens up a space for other religions and their place in the divine plan. At the same time, though, it reinforces the cultural division of Aslan from anything that is not Narnian. Aslan cannot restore a Calormene in Calormen. Only Tash can do that, even if only under Aslan’s watch.11

Why Still Read The Horse and His Boy?

It may well be asked at this point if HHB itself is a salvageable book. Certainly it is. The point of HHB is not, in fact, to make any of the cultural claims that I have elucidated here. They are incidental to the heart of the story, which, as with all the other Chronicles, illustrates aspects of the Christian faith with charm, wisdom, and a satisfying yarn. Much of HHB concerns the mysterious operations of Providence. Early in the story the children are frightened by lions in hot pursuit, but later we learn that it was really only Aslan making sure they would find each other. Later Shasta is alarmed by another lion hanging around the tombs by night, but again we find out that it was only Aslan protecting him. Even when Aravis is attacked by a lion and receives ten deep scratches down her back, she later learns that it was Aslan forcing her to share in the punishment she carelessly left her slave girl to face. Hwin the horse gives voice to a remarkable sentiment of spiritual self-giving when faced with Aslan for the first time: “‘Please,’ she said, ‘you’re so beautiful. You may eat me if you like. I’d sooner be eaten by you than fed by anyone else’” (193). And HHB is the one place in the Chronicles where Lewis makes any allusion to the Trinity: “‘Who are you?’ asked Shasta. ‘Myself,’ said the Voice, very deep and low so that the earth shook: and again, ‘Myself,’ loud and clear and gay: and then the third time, ‘Myself,’ whispered so softly you could hardly hear it, and yet it seemed to come from all round you as if the leaves rustled with it” (159).

These are the deep themes of HHB and ought to be honored as such. The difficulty lies in the cultural choices made in order to present these themes in an accessible manner. Unacknowledged, they distract from the truth of the Gospel, which Lewis held much more dearly than the superiority of England. But even the obvious problems with its cultural depictions make HHB valuable. The necessities and compulsities of cultural translation are solved not by evasion but by confrontation. HHB offers the opportunity to think through, already with children, the movement of the Gospel through different cultural settings. The sheer discomfort that the book evokes is a lesson in itself. Williams notes that Lewis’s ultimate goal was “to do justice to the difference of God, the disturbing and exhilarating otherness of what we encounter in the life of faith.”12 We can appreciate and benefit from this profound insight of Lewis’s, and can extend it to where he could not, in the encounter between cultures, driven by the mission of the Spirit to all the ends of the earth.

The plot point opens up a space for other religions and their place in the divine plan.

Notes


4. Citations here are taken from C. S. Lewis, The Horse and His Boy (New York: Macmillan, 1970). I am assuming the order of writing and publication, rather than the chronological order within the stories themselves, as the preferable way to read the Chronicles and understand their relationship to one another.


6. One interpreter of HHB remarks, “The ‘racism’ arguably implicit in his portrayal of the Calormenes in The Horse and His Boy and The Last Battle is a literary Orientalism suitable to the romance genre in which Lewis is writing, rather than a political or anthropological view. Though this no doubt has its own problems, it is a distinct stance” (Judith Wolfe, “On Power,” in The Cambridge Companion to C. S. Lewis [Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2010], 179). I think this reading is correct. It is not racial superiority but cultural superiority that underlies Lewis’s vision, though I doubt very much that he would have recognized this attitude as such or approved of it in himself had it been brought to his attention.

7. Being myself a white adoptive parent of a nonwhite child, I was startled to rediscover this detail in reading the book out loud to my child—and even more startled to realize it had never even struck me at all the many, many times I had read the book before. Not surprisingly, that experience was the genesis of this article.


10. See the field-changing study by Michael Ward, Planet Narnia: The Seven Heavens in the Imaginations of C. S. Lewis (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2008). Mercury governs HHB, as Ward convincingly demonstrates, though he does not deal with the Arabian cultural imagery of HHB (nor would such be his intention).

11. This raises the possibility that “all paths lead to God” theories of world religions are actually reacting against what they assume to be the cultural proselytism entailed in conversion to Christianity. But in asserting the equality of all religious options, they may be inadvertently confirming the proselytism rather than fighting against it.

The Geographic Imagination and the Expansion of Methodist Missions in Southeast Asia

David W. Scott

Missionary work by the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC), a denomination from the United States, began in Southeast Asia in 1885, when William and Marie Oldham started a mission in Singapore. From this origin, the Malaysia Mission spread throughout Southeast Asia, establishing work in Singapore, Penang, peninsular Malaysia, Borneo, Java, and Sumatra, as well as maintaining nominal oversight of mission work in the Philippines during the early years of Methodist work there.

While missionaries referred to this entire region as Malaysia, that term did not correspond either to the boundaries of the modern-day nation-state of Malaysia or to any political boundaries of its day. Instead, “Malaysia” was a flexible term based on linguistic and anthropological notions, and as such, it was capable of being defined and redefined in the Methodist geographic imagination in ways that aided the spread of Methodist missions in Southeast Asia. Defining Malaysia justified the existence of a Malaysia Mission, validated expansionist ambitions by the Malaysia Mission, and set Malaysia in relation to other MEC missions.

Conveying Information about Malaysia

The process of defining Malaysia for Methodists began with information about the land, climate, flora, fauna, and people of the region. Such information helped supporters in the West construct an imagined Malaysia in a way that drew them into the region and helped cultivate their support for the mission. Authors of books on the Malaysia Mission were explicit about their intentions to gather support for the mission through publishing information about the region. As Bishop John F. Hurst explained in the introduction of Methodist globetrotter Martin Van Buren Knox’s travelogue, “The author of this work aims to bring the country to us here at home, that we may better understand the absolute need of bestowing our best gifts of missionaries and gold for its redemption.”

Providing the right balance of information could be tricky, however. James Thoburn, pioneer of Methodist missions in India and presiding bishop of the Malaysia Mission for many of its early years, described the origins of his book India and Malaysia: “During the visit to America . . . the idea was first suggested of writing a book on India and Malaysia large enough to give the most needful information on so vast a region, and yet concise enough to satisfy the wants of the great mass of readers who have not time to study all manner of details.” William Cherry, longtime missionary printer for the Malaysia Mission, reviewed William Oldham’s book India, Malaysia, and the Philippines by noting its purpose: “We are often asked for a good book to send to ‘the folks at home’—a book that takes account of what missionary work is doing, that is not a mere travellers’ guide book on the one hand, nor on the other, a mere annual report. This is the book.”

Informing Americans and other missionary supporters about Malaysia was an important task for the mission, in part because knowledge about Malaysia was often sorely lacking. W. H. Morse, writing for Gospel in All Lands, ventured, “Although so long known to Europeans, Malaysia is one of the least understood of Asiatic lands. It is no exaggeration to say that even Thibet, ‘the terra incognita of Asia,’ is well known in comparison.” Perhaps that ignorance explains why in 1896 a “prominent minister” could write quite mistakenly in Methodism’s Christian Advocate that there were no Protestant missionaries in Malaysia.

Even if Westerners were aware of Malaysia, it might be lumped together with India or China. Bishop Frank Warne commented in 1894, “Singapore has impressed me as being very unlike India, Burma, or any other place which I have ever seen. With many in the West there is an idea that to be in the mission field is to be in about the same kind of circumstances and surroundings, and they base all their judgments on this assumption.” Because of this lack of knowledge, Malaysia often took a back seat to other mission fields, especially China and India, which absorbed most of the Western interest in Asia. Malaysia was even frequently surpassed in terms of interest and monetary support by other smaller missions, such as Korea, Liberia, and its own daughter mission, the Philippines. Education about Malaysia as a region was seen as a means of combating this second-class status and enabling the continuation of the mission.

Information missionaries distributed about Malaysia was often American lay members’ first introduction to knowledge of these countries the mission sought to serve. Mission historian Dana Robert writes, “The woman’s missionary movement, in dialogue with women missionaries around the world, was the chief means by which ordinary American church women gained information on non-Western religions, cultures, and women’s issues around the world in the early twentieth century.” One might add geography to that list of areas of new information.

Defining Malaysia

Not only was knowledge about the region of Malaysia in short supply in the United States, but often the very name was unfamiliar as a geographic designation. Thoburn recorded in 1892, “The name Malaysia is not often found in standard geographies, and I can remember having seen it only once on a map. The region which it designates has neither natural nor political boundaries to separate it from adjacent countries; hence it is only in recent years that an attempt has been made to give it a distinctive name.” This lack of understanding of Malaysia as a geographic term was an opportunity as well as a hindrance for Methodist missionaries. It left them free to define the word to their advantage.

When Thoburn and other Methodist missionaries gave the name “Malaysia” a distinctive meaning, they usually did so by tying it to the Malay people. Missionary John Denyes’s definition in his 1905 book about the Malaysia Mission made the connection between Malaysia and the Malay clear:
Malaysia, the home of the Malay, or brown man, lies to the southeast of Asia, between Indo-China and Australia. It includes the Malay Peninsula and the larger half of the islands of the Eastern Archipelago. The principal islands of this group are Sumatra . . . Java . . . Celebes . . . Borneo . . . and all the hundreds of lesser islands and islets which appear so insignificant upon the map, but which are in reality countries capable of supporting a large population. The Philippine Islands are properly a part of Malaysia. . . . New Guinea and the islands lying to the east of it belong rather to Polynesia than to Malaysia; for the people, the animals, the birds, and even the plants show a marked departure from the types found in Malaysia.

Thoburn, William Oldham, and mission supporter Mary Isham all gave similar definitions, Isham including “French Indo-China” in the list of Malay lands as well. This definition was a maximal definition of Malaysia that went beyond the lands actually occupied by the Malaysia Mission, which was never active in the Celebes or French Indo-China.

The definition was based on the work of the British ethnologist and biologist Alfred Russel Wallace. Wallace, who is most famous for his work on evolution, spent eight years in Southeast Asia and proposed that a line could be drawn dividing the region into the lands of the Malay peoples and those of the Papuan peoples. Thoburn and, we can assume, other missionaries too were familiar with Wallace’s work, and their definition of Malaysia corresponded to his delimitation of the lands of the Malay race. Methodist missionaries did not accept all of the racial theory associated with Wallace’s work, but it still influenced their geographic thinking.

That Methodist missionaries defined Malaysia in terms of the Malay race is in some ways odd. Not only did the Malaysia Mission never work in all of the territories included in this definition of Malaysia, but it also did only limited work among people groups included in the category of Malay. Early missionary efforts among Malays in Singapore petered out quickly, and efforts among Javans, BatakS, Dyaks, and Ibans (all included in the category of Malay peoples) came well after the Methodist definition of Malaysia was established.

Nevertheless, defining the area of their work by the extent of the Malay peoples had advantages for Methodist missionaries. The foremost of these benefits was the large extent of the territory. It gave the mission room to grow. Such a definition also superseded political boundaries that might have limited that growth. As William Oldham wrote, “Some British geographers prefer the term ‘Malaya,’ but as other British writers mean by this term only the Malay possessions under the British flag, it becomes confusing to apply it to all the Malay speaking lands over which many flags float.” Oldham did not want his mission confined to only those lands over which the British flag flew, which was a relatively small area at the time the Malaysia Mission began, in 1885. Using the term “Malaysia” instead of “Malaya” implied a scope of work not confined by imperial borders.

**Geography and Missionary Expansion**

Since the boundaries of “Malaysia” were drawn broadly and vaguely, the Malaysia Mission could discern an implicit mandate to spread itself throughout Southeast Asia. A sense of geographic expansion was basic to Christian mission in the nineteenth century and to the domestic activities of the MEC. The geographic drive that had always been a part of U.S. Methodism was exported to the rest of the world through missions and missionary leaders such as Thoburn, an expansionist par excellence. Oldham once commented on Thoburn, “He has always seen in continents.” This expansionist ideology combined with the broad geographic definition of Malaysia to fuel missionary desire to increase the Malaysia Mission’s geographic reach. Numerous missionaries used language that suggested geographic expansion was God’s expectation for the Malaysia Mission. Interestingly, only male missionaries spoke in such a vein, perhaps revealing a distinction between how males and females constructed understandings of geography and divine will.

Such expansionist aspirations date back to early in the history of the Malaysia Mission. After supervising the inaugural meeting of the Malaysia Mission Conference in 1891, James Thoburn exalted, “We are thus extending the work both eastward and westward, and I could easily perceive when the conference was about to adjourn that the brethren all seemed inspired with a new and holy ambition to move forward and achieve great results in our magnificent field as they saw these brethren chosen for advanced work.” Methodist bishop Cyrus D. Foss, after visiting the Malaysia Mission in 1899, explained that, while the Northwest India Conference had the “swing of conquest,” the Malaysia Mission had the “genius of expansion.”

Missionaries found such desires for geographic expansion easy to justify theologically. In his overview of the Malaysia Mission, John Denyes defended the mission by saying, “But it is not the spirit of mere adventure or the desire for ‘some new thing’ that prompts this reaching out after new territory. Rather it is the ambition of Paul.” A few pages later, he was able to disclaim any agency on the part of the missionaries in the process of expansion; rather, it was entirely God’s doing. He wrote, “But it has not been according to any plan of the missionaries to enter upon so many different fields. They have merely followed the leadings of Providence into the open doors.” Flexible definitions of geography such as those employed by the Malaysia Mission made it easier for missionaries to perceive open doors.

**Geographic Connections and Distinctions**

The process of defining Malaysia also involved establishing connections with and distinctions from other geographic entities. Those perceived geographic relationships shaped the Malaysia Mission’s administrative relationships with other MEC missions in ways that Malaysia missionaries tried to use to their advantage. The Malaysia Mission had begun as an offshoot of
Methodist work in India. Because of this historical connection, India and Malaysia were often treated as a unit in the Methodist imagination. Work in Malaysia was initially part of the South India Annual Conference, an annual conference being a basic administrative unit for Methodists. When the Malaysia Mission Conference was created in 1891, thus separating it from the South India Annual Conference, it was made a member of the MEC’s Central Conference of Southern Asia, a central conference being a grouping of several annual conferences in the mission field. The Central Conference of Southern Asia included the Indian Annual Conferences, as well as those of Burma and Malaysia. “Southern Asia” was meant to be a more inclusive term for what had previously been the Central Conference of India.21 The term invited mission executives, mission supporters, and missionaries themselves to think of what might otherwise be disparate geographic areas as a unit.

Yet there was pushback against this understanding of geographic union from early on. When William Oldham successfully argued that the Malaysia Mission be organizationally separated from the South India Annual Conference of the MEC in 1887, he cited the difference in populations and the distance between India and Malaysia as among the reasons for the split.22 The missionaries of Malaysia continued to chafe at the bonds that tied them to India even after that separation. In an anonymous paper entitled “Our Relation to the Episcopacy,” written by a Malaysia missionary in 1902, the author opined, “We desire to dissolve the partnership that has so long been carried on under the name of ‘India and Malaysia,’ or more recently under the less definite and still less recognitory term, Southern Asia. We have served long enough as a tail to the great Indian kite. We are tired of being regarded as a suburb of Calcutta.”23 In 1911 the Malaysia Annual Conference presented a resolution to the Central Conference of Southern Asia that declared, “Owing to the dissimilarity of our problems and the geographical distances that prevent a fair degree of cooperation, we consider it desirable that the Malaysia Conference should no longer be under the jurisdiction of the Central Conference of Southern Asia.”24 The Malaysia Mission requested that they be given their own missionary bishop instead. The Malaysia missionaries sought to redefine geographic boundaries in a way that would afford them greater freedom in addressing their unique challenges and greater episcopal support in doing so.

Given the large number of Chinese who lived in Malaysia and were church members of the Malaysia Mission, it is perhaps surprising that there was never more of a geographic connection between Malaysia and China in the Methodist imagination. Nevertheless, historical forces were sufficient to keep Malaysia tied to India for the first twenty-five years of the mission. When the Malaysia Mission presented its petition to be separated from the Central Conference of Southern Asia, connection to China was one of the alternative administrative arrangements suggested. While the Malaysia missionaries ultimately wanted to become their own independent field, the request to affiliate with China followed upon the belief that “Malaysia is as much a Chinese Mission field as any part of China, except that we do not limit our activities to the Chinese.”25 Here again, ethnographic ideas impacted geographic concepts.

The MEC General Conference eventually responded to the Malaysia Mission’s petition in 1920 by putting it together into a new central conference with the Philippines Annual Conference rather than joining it to those of India or China.26 Such a decision was the natural result of over two decades’ worth of efforts on the part of the Malaysia Mission to establish a connection between itself and the Philippines. This process had begun when it became apparent that American occupation of the Philippines following the Spanish-American War, in 1898, would open the Philippines to Protestant mission work. Before scouting for the beginning of Methodist work in the Philippines, Bishop Thoburn, in a letter to Missionary Society corresponding secretary A. B. Leonard, wrote prophetically of the relationship between Malaysia and the Philippines:

They [the missionaries of Malaysia] insist that the Philippines belong to the Malay division of the archipelago, which is undoubtedly the fact, and Manila is now as clearly within my jurisdiction as Bombay or Calcutta. . . . In the long run it will not do to attach the Philippines either to China or India. A great island empire is growing up in this region, and it will always have interests and issues of its own. In the course of time we can have an annual conference in the Philippines, and another down here [in Malaysia]. These two will naturally affiliate together.27

This supposed natural affinity between Malaysia and the Philippines had several bases. Methodist missionary to the Philippines Homer Stuntz reflected ideas shared by others when he described Filipinos as “the Christianized descendants of the Malay invaders who swept into the Philippines several centuries ago on commercial and missionary errands.”28 Since the definition of Malaysia depended on the presence of Malay peoples, this view of the Filipinos provided strong reasons for uniting Malaysia and the Philippines. There were political reasons for combining the two as well. The missionaries of Malaysia hoped that having such a promising mission field as the Philippines under their administration would increase their power and resources.29 While the Malaysia Mission was given initial oversight of the Philippines, it was not long before distance led the Philippines to become their own Mission Conference in 1905. Still, the idea that the Philippines and Malaysia were connected persisted, resulting in the appointment of a joint bishop for the two missions even after their separation and culminating in their pairing in the Southeast Asia Central Conference in 1920.

Conclusion

By using geography to justify its extension across physical distance, the Malaysia Mission acted similarly to other global systems.30 Much has been written about the connection between geographic imagination and imperialism,31 but there was also a connection between geographic imagination and capitalist expansion.32 Even the expansion of ethnic networks could be tied to notions of geography, as seen in the migration of the Chinese throughout Southeast Asia, which was facilitated by the concept of Nanyang, the Southern Seas.33 In this collaboration between geography and the expansion of human systems, the discipline of geography and other sciences were both expansionist global systems themselves and tools used by other expanding global systems.34 European scientific investigation was taking increas-
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ing notice of other areas of the world at the turn of the twentieth century. Geographic and scientific explorations were conducted for their own sake, but the information thus generated helped justify imperialist, capitalist, and missionary ambitions.

Such constructions of geographic understandings of foreign lands and their peoples have been critiqued as a process of Orientalism, of knowledge for the sake of domination. Yet important distinctions must be drawn among the geographic concepts constructed by imperial, capitalist, and missionary endeavors. All were Western, expansionist ambitions, but toward different ends. While the first sought to subjugate and the second to exploit, All were Western, expansionist ambitions, but toward different ends. While the first sought to subjugate and the second to exploit, missionary efforts sought to incorporate the other into common bonds of religious fellowship. While these varying geographic interests occasionally coincided, often they did not.

Moreover, Methodist understandings of geography in Southeast Asia were not merely imposed. Rather, they were developed through interactions with the land, its indigenous peoples, and other foreigners (European, Indian, Chinese, and others) who came to the region. While Methodist geographic understandings of Malaysia were imaginative, they were also connected to reality. The construction of a Methodist missionary geography of the region functioned like all other geographic endeavors: it engaged some aspects of reality and overlooked others. Certainly, Methodist missionaries highlighted those features that were useful for their purposes, but geographers have done the same since the beginning of the craft. The point, then, is not to condemn missionaries for exercising their geographic imaginations but rather to recognize when they did so, and to what ends.

Notes


6. Untitled article, Malaysia Message, June 1896, p. 86.


11. Thoburn, India and Malaysia, 483; William F. Oldham, Malaysia: Nature’s Wonderland (Cincinnati: Jennings & Graham, 1907), 7; Mary Isham, Valorous Ventures: A Record of Sixty and Six Years of the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society, Methodist Episcopal Church (Boston: n.p., 1936), 336.


13. Thoburn references Wallace several times by name in the chapter entitled “Malaysia” in India and Malaysia. The similarity between Thoburn’s definition and that of other Methodist missionaries suggests that they too were familiar with Wallace’s work.

14. Wallace and the missionaries alike defined the Malay race by physical, cultural, mental, and moral criteria. While the missionaries displayed some prejudiced views of the Malays, Thoburn and Oldham took pains to contradict other prevailing Western stereotypes; see Thoburn, India and Malaysia, 494; William F. Oldham, India, Malaysia, and the Philippines: A Practical Study in Missions (New York: Eaton & Mains, 1914), 27–28.


17. J. M. Thoburn to J. O. Peck, April 11, 1891, in Methodist Episcopal Church, Missionary Files: MEC, Correspondence, 1846–1912 (Wilmington: Del.: Scholarly Resources, 1999).


20. Ibid., 30.


25. Untitled article, Malaysia Message, March 1911, p. 42.


27. Thoburn to A. B. Leonard, February 10, 1899, in Methodist Episcopal Church, Missionary Files.


30. For more on the relationship of geography, geographic imagination, and European expansion, see Warwick E. Murray, Geographies of Globalization (London: Routledge, 2006); Denis E. Cosgrove, Apollo’s Eye: A Cartographic Genealogy of the Earth in the Western Imaginariation (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2001); and Neil Smith, American Empire: Roosevelt’s Geographer and the Prelude to Globalization (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2003).

31. See Anne Godlewska and Neil Smith, Geography and Empire (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 1994). Such themes are particularly well documented for Britain (Jonathan Scott, When the Waves Ruled Britannia: Geography and Political Identities, 1500–1800 [Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2011]) and Russia (Mark Bassin, Britannia: Geography and Political Identities, 1500–1800 [Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999]).


William cross-cultural encounters in the course of Christian mission often occasioned conflict between foreign missionaries and local people, these interactions also led missionaries to a renewed awareness of Christianity. As A. Hamish Ion pointed out in his examination of British missionaries in the Japanese Empire, missionaries, as members of a minority group in a foreign society, were liable to try to control their environment by emphasizing their cultural superiority over “heathen” foreigners. In her case study of Walter Dening (1846–1913), however, Helen Ballhatchet demonstrates that there are also noteworthy examples of missionaries whose views on Christianity and missionary activity were changed through their attempt to capture the meaning of Christianity for those who received it.

For the influence of the mission field on perceptions of Christianity, the case of Campbell N. Moody (1865–1940) is suggestive. Between 1895 and 1924 Moody, a Scottish missionary of the English Presbyterian Mission (EPM), worked mainly in colonial Taiwan. Stimulated by interactions with Taiwanese people, Moody consciously criticized “the Western eye,” that is, a viewpoint that tends to perceive the ethnic and religious other through negative stereotypes. Examination of Moody’s literary works and his personal correspondence written during his early years as a foreign missionary, between 1895 and the 1910s, throws light on how he formed and articulated his attitude toward sociopolitical and religious issues through interaction with Taiwanese people, then under Japanese rule.

**Mission Activities**

Campbell Naismith Moody was born in 1865 to a Free Church family in Bothwell, Scotland. A graduate of the University of Glasgow and the Free Church College, Glasgow, Moody started working in 1890 as a home missionary in Gallowgate, an impoverished district in Glasgow. In 1895 he joined EPM and sailed to Taiwan, which had been occupied by the Japanese earlier that same year. He was also involved in missions in Singapore (1901–2). After he married Margaret Rintoul Findlay in 1907, they worked together in Taiwan (1908–9, 1915), Australia (1909), and New Zealand (1909–14). Margaret suffered poor health and died in 1915 in Taiwan. In 1921 Moody married Margaret Christian Findlay (Caotun, 1900), Toa-siaN (Dashe, 1905), and Ji-lim (Erlin, 1924).

From the beginning of their Taiwan mission in 1865, EPM missionaries mainly worked among Minnan-speaking Chinese-Taiwanese, as well as with the Pepo. Minnan is one of the most widely used Taiwanese vernaculars, and the Pepo, or plains tribes, are indigenous peoples who have actively assimilated Chinese-Taiwanese cultures and languages. In Taiwan EPM stressed medical and educational activities in their Christian missionary endeavors. They opened a dispensary as soon as the Taiwan mission was established. Then in 1877, after concentrating staff in Taiwan-fu (present-day Tainan) to form the Mission Council, which became the headquarters of the Taiwan mission, they founded a theological college to train Taiwanese evangelists, followed by a middle school in 1885 and a girls’ school in 1887. Local mission stations were established in southern and central Taiwan, and missionaries made occasional visits to preach or baptize candidates.

While another missionary, William Campbell (1841–1921, active in Taiwan 1871–1917), and Moody in particular were known for articulating the virtues of station visiting and street preaching, some EPM missionaries in Taiwan did not regard these methods as particularly effective, which frustrated Moody. He expressed his feelings in a personal letter, writing that, with the exception of Campbell, the missionaries in Taiwan-fu “treat po-to [open-air evangelism] with a sort of mild scorn.” Nevertheless, with Chiang-hoa (Zhanghua) in central Taiwan as a base station, he continued to practice street preaching and supported the establishment of more than ten mission stations in mid-Taiwan, including churches in Lok-kang (Lugang, 1897), Chhau-tun (Caotun, 1900), Toa-siaN (Dashe, 1905), and Ji-lim (Erlin, 1924).

Moody was also well known for his simple lifestyle, exemplified by his wearing worn clothes, eschewing the use of rickshaws, and traveling third-class. Lim Hak-kiong (1857–1943), a Taiwanese evangelist and later minister who worked with Moody in the Chiang-hoa region, described him as follows:

He was not a rich person. He was frugal, and wore ragged clothes. When his mother sent him Western clothes, he sent them back to her. For he did not want people to think he was hard to approach. He ate frugally too. Once, a cook bought a slice of core for him but since he wanted to avoid luxury, he made the cook sell the fish back. Thus he lived thriftily, and spent what he received before God and contributed them to churches.

Moody consciously tried to maintain close contact with Taiwanese people and adopted some of their practices in order to carry out missionary tasks. When he engaged in street preaching, he often did so with one or two Taiwanese evangelists, whom he typically let take the lead. Moody also adopted Lim’s methods for gathering crowds, using musical instruments such as drums, gongs, and bugles. To gain an audience, he would cry, “Where the children of God have gone!,” employing a method widely used in Taiwan when people were searching for lost children.

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in busy parts of towns and villages. Moody’s personal letters home clearly show that he adopted a strategic approach to his work, and it is likely that he made use of information concerning the methods of the China Inland Mission (CIM). In 1898 he mentioned in a letter that he was curious about the CIM and admired its missionaries for being “rather better at preaching than other missionaries are” because of their “intimate contact with the people, and constant evangelistic efforts,” including living and dressing according to native custom.

Colonialism and Negative Stereotypes

From 1895 into the early 1900s, those involved in the Taiwanese armed resistance against the Japanese often hid among unarmed civilians, leaving Japanese officials unable to distinguish between “robbers” and “good people.” In a letter to his former co-worker in Gallowgate, Moody censured the Japanese army, believing them to “bring these troubles on themselves” by “taking little care to distinguish between guilty & innocent,” which gave reason for innocent civilians, who had not previously fought against Japanese forces, to turn to revengeful resistance. At the time, criticism of the Japanese for their harsh treatment of the Taiwanese was fairly common. The publication in English of several articles condemning “the savage and relentless severity” of the Japanese triggered anonymous correspondence from a missionary stationed in Taiwan-fu who discussed the 1896 massacre perpetrated by the imperial army in Yunlin, mid-Taiwan.

By 1907, when Moody published his first literary work, The Heathen Heart, he had come to focus on the broader problems of cross-cultural interaction, including the sense of superiority over the colonized people exhibited by both Japanese and Western colonialists. Furthermore, he noticed that Christian missionaries, himself included, could similarly hold themselves to be superior to non-Christians. As Moody reflected, disregard for “heathen” people was often based upon a negative stereotype that viewed them as being morally backward. Such attitudes were not uncommon among EPM missionaries in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; Chinese-Taiwanese were described as unsympathetic and as severely “demoralised” people, with their “adulteries” and their “woeful” and “foolish” idolatry. Significantly, the connection between lack of Christian faith and moral backwardness was also made in contemporary Scottish society, from which many EPM missionaries came. Against the background of rapid urbanization and the widening social divide, the emerging middle class came to have an important place in many Scottish congregations, with a popular assumption that poverty and moral shortcomings were interrelated products of an individual’s “spiritual failure.”

By the 1880s this self-justifying tendency was being criticized by church members themselves, exemplified by A. B. Bruce (1831–99), a professor at the Free Church College who had greatly influenced Moody during Moody’s days as a theology student. The contact between Bruce and Moody suggests that Moody’s opposition to negative stereotypes, which was cultivated by his educational experiences, was partly self-critical.

Moody recognized that he shared the negative image of the moral shortcomings of heathen people. While resident in Singapore he once came to the aid of an elderly man who was drowning in a drain. None of the many Chinese people gathered around dared to help, for fear that the Malay police would charge them with assault, which brought Moody close to breaking out “in righteous indignation.” Immediately afterward, he learned that the elderly man had been pushed into the drain by American marines. Moody was “compelled to burn in silent shame,” for he recognized that, in feeling “righteous” anger, he had shared the common assumption that the Chinese were heartless people. Moody observed, “Thus East and West were one in heartless self-regard”; heartlessness could not be solely attributed to particular ethnic groups.

Moody noticed that his negative images of the cultural other were also the product of simple linguistic misunderstandings. In a letter to a friend dated 1899, he describes how he and Taiwanese evangelist Chheng encountered the body of a Taiwanese man who had been shot dead by Japanese police officers. They learned that the victim had told the soldiers that he came from Lam-tau (Nantou), a hotbed of resistance, and the Japanese officers had jumped to the conclusion that he was taking part in criminal activities. During a sermon at a mission station, Chheng referred to the incident as “a laughable matter.” Moody expressed his great shock at the Taiwanese people’s severely “callous” attitude toward the sufferings of others. But in 1931 he added to a copy of this letter, “This hardly does justice to the irony of Chinese ‘laughable.’” Presumably, the word Moody translated “laughable” was kho-chhio in Minnan Taiwanese, which means funny but can take on very cynical and contemptuous overtones. Considering that Moody acknowledges the shy but “honest, and kindly” Chheng’s commitment as a Christian worker in The Saints of Formosa (1912), it is probable that he had recognized his misunderstanding much earlier than 1931.

In his interactions with Taiwanese people during open-air evangelism, Moody had many opportunities to shed his negative images of non-Christians. His personal letters record that he often was “struck with the kindness and affection” Taiwanese children showed to each other, and he expresses the thought that there was less domestic violence against women in Taiwan than there was in Scotland. At times Moody described experiences that made him puzzle. He witnessed David Landsborough (1871–1957, active in Taiwan 1895–1939), a medical missionary, receiving counsel from a non-Christian woman who was dying from the surgery he had performed on her, “very considerably” urging him not to distress herself over the matter. Moody records that the patient and her family had shown kind and sincere concern for Landsborough and himself and reflects, with a certain sense of discomfort, on their own stumbling, unsuccessful attempt to “say something about the Savior” to the patient so that she would make a confession of sin before her death.

His experiences in Taiwan played a part in inspiring Moody to believe that a rethinking of the true meaning of Christian mission was necessary, as he recorded in The Heathen Heart:

Of course it would sort with our prejudices to represent the Heathen Chinese as the slaves of every vice, without natural affection, unloving and unloved, oppressing and oppressed, their minds crushed with gloomy superstition, living in perpetual fear, no hope beyond the grave. It would be satisfactory
to the Christian preacher to convince himself that the Gospel was as light shining in deepest darkness, a balm for intolerable sores, a comfort for unspeakable distress. But these things are not so.21

Thus, through his experiences in missionary fields, Moody had come to articulate his recognition that the heathen, or people of different ethnicity and religion, also have hearts and that the moral superiority of which contemporary Christians tended to be so self-righteously proud was by no means the essence of Christianity. This journey of self-recognition is well represented by the title of his work The Heathen Heart.

**Relationship with Taiwanese Evangelists**

Meanwhile, Moody’s attitude and behavior toward Taiwanese evangelists were significantly influenced by his close contact with Taiwanese evangelists. Most of the Presbyterian Taiwanese evangelists of the late Qing and colonial period were students or graduates of the theological college,22 and some of them had been encouraged by missionaries to become involved in mission activities. Taiwanese ministers Liao Tit (1889–1975) and Koeh Tiau-seng (1883–1962), who were baptized by Moody and who more than once went out with him to do open-air evangelism, recollected how as adolescents they had been influenced by Moody’s attitudes as a Christian evangelist.23

But these Taiwanese Christians also deeply impressed Moody. In particular, Lim Hak-kiong, who frequently went out visiting stations with Moody and became his good friend, played a significant role in shaping Moody’s thoughts about Taiwanese people. Moved by Lim’s personality, Moody depicts Lim in an especially affectionate way in his literary works. He was careful, however, not to simply romanticize Lim and other Taiwanese Christians. Moody, who was used to “Scotch” ways of carrying out a Communion service, frankly acknowledged his cultural shock on witnessing Lim’s and Taiwanese converts’ “prosaic” way of organizing the service.24 After both observing the Taiwanese context and referring to several historical documents on church lives in the Western world, however, he balanced his initial impression of the Taiwanese Christians’ attitude, stating that “the reverence and decorum to which we are accustomed” were unfamiliar not only to Taiwanese Christians, but also to people of earlier generations in Christian lands.25

At times, Moody’s close interactions with Taiwanese evangelists led him to take action that did not conform to the Mission Council’s decisions, as in the case of his management of salaries for Taiwanese evangelists. During the late Qing and early colonial era, wages for EPM’s Taiwanese employees were fairly low. Moody noted that in the 1880s, missionaries’ domestic helpers received 10 or 12 shillings a month, but Christian preachers 12–20 shillings,26 and the records of the Mission Council show that in 1900 they decided to pay Taiwanese preachers monthly salaries of between 4 and 12 dollars.27 Also, the earnings of church employees were generally lower than the earnings of people in other occupations. Moody recorded that in 1906, when a Taiwanese Sawyer Kho Bin (1881–1959) changed employment to become his domestic helper, his monthly income fell from a pound to 12 or 14 shillings.28

Against this background, as both Lim Hak-kiong and Koeh Tiau-seng recollect, Moody “secretly helped evangelists in hardship” by giving them part of his own income on top of their fixed salaries.29 Moody’s management of salaries for Taiwanese evangelists in the Chiang-hoa region appears to have raised concern among some members of the Mission Council, for minutes of the council show traces of tension between Moody and the council, and between the council and the Foreign Missions Committee (FMC). On February 1, 1906, the council called attention to the fact that “certain preachers in the Chiang-hoa region did not receive salary according to the scale agreed upon by the Council, and Mr. Campbell was instructed to communicate with Mr. Moody on the subject.”20 It was reported on July 4 the same year that Campbell had received Moody’s reply about the issue, but Moody left for furlough and the subject was not discussed until his return to Taiwan two years later. On October 28, 1908, urged by the Foreign Mission Secretary in a letter, the council noted the need for an early attempt for “understanding” and that they should “confer” with Moody about the matter, but the discussion was postponed again.21 The issue remained unresolved, for at the end of 1908 Moody revealed to the council that, because of his wife’s illness, he had already sent FMC his resignation and was preparing to leave Taiwan.22 Until their return to Taiwan in 1914, Campbell and Margaret Moody worked temporarily in Australia and New Zealand.

Moody’s six-year absence did not discourage him from continuing his support for Taiwanese evangelists. Koeh recollected that in the aftermath of the First World War, as he faced great difficulty maintaining his family of six on a monthly wage of 14 yuan, Moody suddenly visited, asked him to join village evangelism, and insisted on offering him 80 yuan for accepting the job.23 These individual actions were part of Moody’s strategy to ensure that Taiwanese preachers were in a position to practice their mission activities, but they also resulted from his own consciousness of the unequal status of Taiwanese and foreign workers, which was closely intertwined with his reflections on missionaries’ sense of superiority over the Taiwanese. As Moody’s second wife, Peggy, pointed out, he felt uneasy about the undeniable contrast between the living expenses afforded the missionaries in comparison to those received by the Taiwanese. He stated that “to come as the representative of Jesus Christ, and yet to live like a rich man, moving from place to place in a chair, this sort of thing oppresses and perplexes one.”24

**Reaffirmation of Christian Mission**

Moody was candid in assessing the people and the sociopolitical context in colonial Taiwan, and thus he was aware of the problems surrounding the attitudes of the colonialists and Western missionaries, which set them above the ethnic and religious other. Personal encounters with thoughtful non-Christian Taiwanese made him especially critical of the negative stereotypes of the “heartless heathen” that Western Christians, including himself, tended to hold, and he was led to denounce the self-justifying assumption that the essence of Christian mission lies in a moralizing influence on non-Christians. That Moody’s attitude toward Taiwanese was connected to his concern about the issue of missionaries’ self-esteem is exemplified by his response to the income gap between foreign and Taiwanese Christian workers.

This change in Moody’s perceptions of heathen people and Christian mission led to his religious quest for the true significance of Christianity, both in principle and in practice. First, in the 1910s and 1920s, in order to denounce the assumption that the essence of Christianity is its moralizing influence and to reaffirm a truly Christian quality, Moody carried out a comparative study of the early church and contemporary Taiwanese churches. As a result, he articulated, in both his English and Minnan Taiwanese
literary works, the crucial importance of “justification by faith alone,” particularly in highlighting the error of Christians who hold self-justifying attitudes. Second, in the 1930s the plight of the Jewish people in Europe and the problem of Japanese nationalism in Taiwan led Moody to consider the meaning of Christianity in the face of suffering. The result was his sympathy for the anticolonial nationalism of the Taiwanese people, an attitude that was most distinctly expressed in his children’s book *The Mountain Hut* (1938). In this work Moody describes the calamity of Taiwanese society in the early years of Japanese occupation, telling the story of a Taiwanese resistance leader who became a fugitive for twenty years. Moody’s personal experiences in his early years as a foreign missionary had played no small role in altering his perceptions of the ethnic and religious other and of Christianity itself, and they inspired him to continuously rethink and reaffirm the fundamental meaning of being a Christian.

**Notes**


4. Carbon copies of Moody’s personal correspondence written during 1897–99, with some additional notes by Moody, are archived in the Museum of Church History, Tainan Chang Jung Senior High School, Tainan, Taiwan, the former middle school established by EPM (hereafter MCH Tainan).

5. Campbell N. Moody to Jeannie Renfrew, September 25, 1898, MCH Tainan.

6. Hak-kiong Lim, “Koo Mui Kam-bu Bok-sue Sio-toan” (In memoriam the late Rev. Moody; in Minnan Taiwanese), *Tai-oan Kau-hoe Kong-po* (Taiwan church news) 666 (July 1940): 11; repr. as *Taiwan Jiaohui Gongbo Quanlan: Taiwan Di-yi-fen Baolue* (The complete Taiwan church news collection; the first newspaper in Taiwan; in Minnan Taiwanese), vol. 14, 1939–1940 (Tainan: Taiwan Church News, 2004).


15. A. B. Bruce, “The Kingdom of God,” in *Christianity and Social Life: A Course of Lectures* (Edinburgh: Macniven & Wallace, 1885), 1–16. For Bruce’s influence on Moody, see Peggie C. Moody, *Campbell Moody: Missionary and Scholar* (Tainan: Taiwan Church News, 2005), 102–4. Peggy C. Moody’s biography of her husband was not published until 2005. It was then published in Taiwan with a translated author name (Pogi Hong) and title (Xuanjiao Xuezhe Mei Jianwu), but with the content in its original language, English.


19. Campbell N. Moody to friends, June 20, 1898, MCH Tainan.

20. Campbell N. Moody to Mary Ewing Naismith, June 30, 1898, MCH Tainan. (Naismith was Moody’s mother).


22. At the college, students learned the liberal arts such as mathematics or geography as well as the catechism and Bible reading, in both Peh-oie-ji (POJ) and Chinese characters. POJ, or “colloquial-letters,” is romanized Minnan Taiwanese and was widely used in EPM mission literature in Taiwan. After graduation, the students would prepare to be ordained as ministers by carrying out mission activities and taking regular examinations.


31. Ibid., 947, 950.

32. Ibid., 952–53. The following records of the Mission Council also suggest tension among Moody, the council, and FMC: council chair Campbell’s disapproval of Moody’s manuscript of POJ commentary on Romans (ibid., 883); strong protest of the council at FMC’s decision to prolong Moody’s furlough because of his illness (909–10); the council’s reprehension for FMC’s “repeatedly singling out one member of the Council [presumably Moody] for preferential treatment” (950–51).


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My Pilgrimage in Mission

Mary Motte

I was to share with you some photos to describe what my pilgrimage in mission looks like, I would first choose a picture of a child watching her mother plant seeds, then an image of a person choosing a path to follow, then one of fireworks bursting in unimaginable designs, and finally a group of welcoming Muslim women. Belonging to the Roman Catholic tradition of Christianity, I was exposed early in life to the stories about Jesus, Mary, and missionaries. I grew up in a strongly Roman Catholic family, with parents who were loving and hardworking. I had an aunt, the daughter of a Methodist pastor, who was also kind and loving and who, my mother always reminded us, truly lived her Christian faith and her love of Jesus, especially in her charity for all. So without much formality, the door was open to looking beyond our Catholic reality, well before there was much, if any, attention to relations with other Christians. Then I would consider how the images that flow from these photos have held, and still hold, the challenge of encounters that have significantly created a profound shift in being missionary.

Planting Seeds

It was a spring afternoon in 1943; I had turned six the previous December. My mother, my younger sister and brother, and I were in our yard. My mother, who loved the earth and gardening, was on her knees teaching us how to transplant flower seeds. Earlier that afternoon I had watched a film about the life of Jesus at our Catholic school. That afternoon as I watched my mother and listened to her instructions, the black earth elicited the image of the suffering Jesus I had seen in the film, and I made a decision in the silence of my heart that I would give my life entirely to God. I have no further recollection of that afternoon. Many years later the image would occasionally return to me, and gradually I have become aware of how that very brief moment set in motion my steps toward a missionary life. Even now it suggests a theological reshaping of this journey that I have only gradually realized.

A few years later the visit to our school by a Maryknoll priest to speak about mission stirred an interest in missionary life, awakening a vague memory of planting seeds that spring afternoon. Our class received a monthly copy of the Columban missionaries’ magazine. Included in a story about their work in Burma was a photo of some Columban priests with a group of Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (FMM). The picture intrigued me, since I was then living in Providence, Rhode Island, and the text under the photo noted that the sisters had a house in North Providence, just to our north. Switching gears, I looked for the page of jokes always included in the Columban magazine, which we fifth-graders enjoyed immensely—for us, it was the whole purpose of our subscription!

Somewhere around that time I read a story about Damian of Molokai and the missionaries who went to Hawaii and worked among lepers. The story featured a rather brave sister who, in her care for the lepers, contracted the disease herself. Thinking about that sister did stir up some genuine ideas about giving my life for Jesus, and at the same time provoked some element of mischief in my mind. I really hated people asking me what I was going to be when I grew up, and I had one aunt in particular who always asked me that question. The next time she asked, I replied with great confidence that I would be a missionary and would go to work with lepers. Sheer horror erupted on her face. Now I knew exactly how I would answer any further inquiries about my future! Yet something of that more foundational idea of giving my life over to God was not completely absent.

Choosing a Path

In my teens the idea of being a missionary sister was still in my head, as was the thought of falling in love and getting married. As a freshman at Emmanuel College in Boston, I found myself in a class with some FMM student sisters preparing for mission. My friends and I were careful to be polite, but not too friendly with them, lest our companions think we also were going to become sisters. In the back of my mind was the thought of giving my life to God as a missionary. The point when I would need to make a choice was drawing closer. At the end of my first year of college, I decided that I would indeed become a missionary. So rather than return to Emmanuel for my second year of college, I began an intensive preparation to become a Franciscan Missionary of Mary.

The years of initial training in a new way of life passed happily and quickly. Already in those years I experienced the profound internationality of the FMM, with its richness of sharing in a variety of cultures. After my first profession I was sent to work with children. I quickly found this work to be very difficult. It took a long time before I realized how these challenges were stretching my limited sense of mission and my identity as a missionary. During this time I became more proficient in reading French and had the precious opportunity to delve more deeply into the life and writings of Mary of the Passion (1839–1904), foundress of the FMM. I was sent back to college to complete my bachelor’s and master’s degrees. With these studies completed, I prepared for my final profession. After a short stint of clerical work, I was sent for further studies at Boston College, from which I received my Ph.D. in educational research (1972), followed by postdoctoral work in mission theology.

Images of Surprising Designs

Vatican II was unfolding, and like a beautiful fireworks display, fresh and startling ideas burst into an array of new ways of thinking. I was elected to be part of the delegation representing the U.S. province at the 1972 General Chapter of the FMM in Rome. This experience began a new phase in my missionary pilgrimage. I found myself entering more deeply into the meaning of being a woman called to religious life and mission as an FMM in the post–Vatican II church. In Rome I worked with amazing FMM women who came from many different places in the world, some of whom had much more experience than I, and some of whom were my contemporaries. The meaning of friendship and being
sister overtook my life in new ways. Among the many insights that burst upon me, I learned of the profound impact of the 1968 Medellín Conference in Colombia, Latin America, from Justina Fanego, FMM, who was a delegate to that Chapter from Paraguay. During a pause one day we were both on a terrace of our house in Grottaferrata, Italy, above a garden of olive trees and roses. Justina put her hand on my shoulder and told me the importance of the vision at Medellín and the gift of liberation theology.¹ She sowed seeds in my mind of a beautiful vision about commitment to the poor, living frugally, and living together with other FMM members in small communities close to the people. My ideas of being a missionary began to fall apart and to reshape—a process that would continue over some years, finally completely replacing all ideas I previously had about going to bring something others did not have. I discovered that the world was neither desirous of nor waiting for what we could offer from the United States or the Western world.

As with so many other Catholic congregations at that time of renewal, our work at the Chapter was enormous as we listened to one another and as we struggled to move away from a monolithic image of who we were as FMM. We found ourselves walking toward an image that captured life and energy from the most diverse spaces of the earth, merging into a dynamic wholeness that was rooted strongly in the vision of Mary of the Passion at the beginning of the institute. In the midst of all our work, I discovered that my commitment to contemplative prayer before the Eucharist was becoming a deeper experience. Through this expression of our FMM life, we each offer ongoing praise to God, holding those to whom we are sent as missionaries as God’s beloved people. I was becoming more sensitive to the “other,” learning to see each person as a gift. In spite of some very human reactions, glimpses of these realities made me realize I was on a path to discovering the presence of God in a whole new way.

Muslim Women Who Welcomed Me

My next missioning was to be part of the FMM community in Rome. My first assignment was to work in a team with two other FMM sisters to begin the process of drawing up new Constitutions, the rule of life for FMM. We did not foresee that this task would evolve into a very long project that would involve many other members of FMM and several years of work. It developed from the orientations for religious women and men given by Vatican II, particularly in Perfectae caritatis,² the decree on religious life. Because of the council’s directive for religious women and men to return to the sources and discern the founding charism of each specific institute, many studies were carried out by the religious congregations at this time.

Along with participation in sessions in France, Switzerland, and Italy on the life and writings of Mary of the Passion, I was sent to Lebanon during the summer of 1973 as part of this overall experience of deepening my understandings of our FMM life. For part of the time I was sent with three other sisters to the village of Ain, in the mountains outside the city of Beirut. Here, in a totally unexpected way, I experienced a profound transformation of what it means to be a missionary. My responsibility in the community was to obtain drinking water each morning. This water was piped in from Beirut to the villages. Every morning at a certain time, the water would be turned on, and we would collect it from a small pipe in the ground just outside the compound of a Muslim family. An older woman and about five younger ones came to meet the two of us who showed up on the first morning after our arrival. Intro-

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In the Aftermath of Welcome

Sometime in the late summer of 1973, I left Lebanon. As a mission resource person at our general offices, I became involved in SEDOS,³ whose membership represented the various Catholic missionary orders. Among the new orientations that came from Vatican II was the recognition that every baptized person is, by virtue of the baptism itself, responsible for mission. There were also issues related to the proclamation of the Gospel concerns and fears about inculturation and dialogue with persons of other faiths. All of these points were worrisome to congregations uniquely dedicated to foreign mission work. SEDOS was deeply involved in trying to discern the meaning of mission after Vatican II. This intensive research led to a seminar in 1969 on the future of mission.⁴ By 1979 the question of the future had emerged with greater force. One often heard the question, Is there a future for mission? Involvement of the laity and of Christians from other traditions was not the concern of many at this time. The growing number of challenges led to a 1981 SEDOS seminar on the future of mission.⁵ Justice in the World, a document issued from the Synod of Bishops in 1971, was an important resource, especially with its insight that justice is constitutive to preaching the Gospel. Following this synod, on December 5, 1975, Pope Paul VI issued the apostolic exhortation Evangelii nuntiandi (Evangelization in
the Modern World). This document addressed the interaction of the Gospel message in society, taking up issues of culture and dialogue in new ways.

In its two-year preparation period for this second seminar, SEDOS invited experts especially from its member congregations to work on the various themes impacting and questioning mission. Developments related to liberation theology, interreligious dialogue, inculturation, ecumenism, and proclamation were shifting the questions raised about missionary activity toward a more inclusive way of seeing. Building relationships and learning from and entering the domain of others became the way to live and communicate the Gospel message. Local expertise within Asia, Africa, and Latin America brought insights to the 1981 seminar that would have been lacking if participants had been exclusively from the Western world.

Unexpectedly, I was sent by my religious congregation to be one of four Roman Catholic consultants to the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) of the World Council of Churches. The three other consultants were from the Marist Missionary Sisters, the Society of Jesus, and the Divine Word Missionaries. The first meeting I attended was a gathering of CWME in Wuppertal, Germany. I felt totally ignorant standing in unknown space. I did not know Reformation history, but in this gathering, I experienced how its development fostered dynamic biblical insight and strong missionary conviction among the commission members. Despite my ignorance, the group welcomed me warmly. One evening while in Wuppertal, the CWME was invited to a presentation by an elderly Lutheran pastor. He told us about the group of pastors in Wuppertal, including himself, who had signed the Barmen Declaration,’ resisting Hitler during World War II. This experience transfixed me, contributing to my transformation on this pilgrimage in mission.

Following the commission gathering in Wuppertal, I found myself among the Roman Catholic delegation to meetings in Melbourne, Australia; in San Antonio, Texas; and in Vancouver, Canada, as well as others. I met many persons with profound faith convictions, many of whom lived in very challenging circumstances. I remember one pastor from an Asian country who came to our gathering with great difficulty and who was certain the Modern World. This document addressed the interaction of the Gospel message in society, taking up issues of culture and dialogue in new ways.

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that he would be arrested when his return flight landed. And yet he came, driven by the need to give witness to the Gospel truth being lived in that place. Such dynamic missionary motivations wove new dimensions into my pilgrimage. Most important, gestures of simple friendship drew me forward into another level of spirituality and into new realizations of the meaning of God’s love, wisdom, and ongoing action in our midst and in our collaboration. At times there were confrontations that forced me to look in directions I did not choose. There, too, God’s grace was not absent, and I discovered a new way of seeing that emerged through the protagonist. These new realizations focused on receiving rather than giving, replacing any vestiges of missionary domination.

In 1982 I was in Washington, D.C., working with others at the U.S. Catholic Mission Office to prepare for a national mission conference to be held in Baltimore, Maryland, in March 1983. Throughout the preparations for this gathering and in the various stirring presentations that followed during the conference, we energetically welcomed insights piercing our missionary consciousness in still new and demanding ways.

Attention focused on comprehending our missionary calling and its integral relation to justice and the place of the poor. As I write these words, many faces come to mind, but in a very special way I see the faces of two sisters: Helen Scheels, MM, and Mary Louis Lynch, MMS. I recall the awakening I experienced as I grasped how Maryknoll sisters and Medical Mission sisters were inserted in the city of Baltimore, placing their missionary energy at the service of justice in situations where all semblance of justice had disappeared. With all that their ministry demanded, they still gave themselves without reserve to find lodging for hundreds of poor missionaries from around the United States so that they also could participate in the Baltimore conference.

In the following years I have been involved in ministries within my congregation that required various ecumenical collaborations at local, national, and international levels, as well as with the American Society of Missiology, Association of Professors of Mission, and International Association for Mission Studies. The Overseas Ministries Study Center and the International Bulletin of Missionary Research have also

Personalia

Appointed. Frans Dokman, as director of the Nijmegen Institute for Mission Studies (NIM), Nijmegen, the Netherlands, on October 1, 2013. The focus of the center, founded in 1993, includes developing and transmitting knowledge for missionary organizations and faith-based nongovernmental organizations involved in development and diversity. Dokman, whose area of expertise is the role of religion in international management, succeeds Frans Wijsen, director since 2001, who has become dean of the Faculty of Theology at Radboud University, also in Nijmegen.

Geoff Tunnicliffe, secretary general and CEO of the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA), will step down from these positions when his current term ends in December 2014. Tunnicliffe was elected in 2005 and will have served two five-year terms. The WEA, founded in 1846, is a global ministry that works with local churches and represents 600 million evangelicals worldwide. The International Council of WEA has begun the process that will lead to the selection of a new secretary general.

Died. H. T. Maclin, 88, missionary, educator, and pioneer mission-board administrator, April 14, 2014, in Decatur, Georgia. Following graduate studies at Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas; Yale University, New Haven, and Hartford Seminary, Hartford, both Connecticut; and École Colonielle in Brussels, Belgium, Maclin, with his wife, Alice, went as a Methodist missionary to Belgian Congo, where in the 1950s he was director of a teacher training institute and taught in the seminary at Mulungwishi. In 1960 the Maclins were reappointed to Nairobi, Kenya, where Maclin organized and directed the All Africa Conference of Churches’ Christian Communications Training Institute. In 1964 he was named Knight Grand Commander of the Humane Order of African Redemption by President Tubman of Liberia. After returning to the United States in 1972, Maclin served as field representative for mission development in the Southeastern Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church. In 1983 he became the founding president of the Mission Society for United Methodists, where he served until he retired in 1991; he continued on the board of directors and as consultant to the society until his death. Maclin’s publications include The Faith That Compels Us: Reflections on the Mission Society for United Methodists, the First Decade, 1984–1994 (1997).
been part of my ecumenical collaboration through serving on the Board of Trustees, the Research and Planning Committee, and other undertakings. The research and studies I began at the FMM Chapter of 1972 have continued in many different ways up to the present time. In 1987 our U.S. province opened a Mission Resource Center in North Providence, of which I became a staff member, along with Josephine Iozzo, FMM, and Alma Dufault, FMM. In 1999 I went to the Bronx and spent the next eight years in service for our U.S. province.

After some time of work at the international level and a personal sabbatical, I was sent again in 2009 to the Mission Resource Center, continuing a missionary ministry of collaboration, research, and writing. I worked together with other FMM members in various kinds of programs aimed at developing responses to the new issues emerging in mission, as well as helping sisters from different parts of the world to prepare for sending to or being received for mission and for ongoing formation of our missionary vision for FMM.

**Conclusion**

More than forty years have passed since I received that welcome from the Muslim women in 1973. I often think of them and the unfolding moments of that encounter. Much has happened over these years, and I sometimes wonder what that experience has meant for each of them. I know that their welcome and the way they so generously shared everything they could with me have been major influences that have shaped my path in mission. I realize more deeply that the source of mission is in the action of the triune God, which we experience especially through the incarnation—the sending of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity into our human situation.

As 2013 was drawing to a close, Pope Francis issued his first apostolic exhortation, *The Joy of the Gospel*, affirming that “with Christ joy is constantly born anew” and that “the Church is herself a missionary disciple.” Speaking of ecumenical relations, he comments, “How many important things unite us! If we really believe in the abundantly free working of the Holy Spirit, we can learn so much from one another! It is not just about being better informed about others, but rather about reaping what the Spirit has sown in them, which is also meant to be a gift for us.”

I recognize with joy how my understanding of being a missionary has changed into the image of a missionary disciple. This has happened because of my repeated encounters with Jesus both in the Scriptures and through the ways many persons have opened the significance of this encounter in their lives and mission. But how slowly I have learned to welcome, to receive, to recognize how God loves each person and all of creation. My pilgrimage has gradually led me to awaken to the fact that “Jesus didn’t say to Peter and to his Apostles, ‘Know me!’ he said, ‘Follow me!’”

**Notes**

1. The Second Conference of Latin American Bishops was held August 26–September 6, 1968, in Medellin, Colombia.
6. In May 1934 at Barmen, Germany, representatives of the Reformed and Lutheran traditions adopted six articles of faith, now known as the Barmen Declaration, rejecting any interpretation of Christianity based on racial theories. Karl Barth was its major writer and theologian. See www.sacred-texts.com/chr/barmen.htm.
A Biography of Apolo Kivebulaya

Emma Wild-Wood

Apolo Kivebulaya—the “Pathfinder,” “Greatest of Africa,” “Apostle of the Pygmies,” and “African Saint” —was, as these titles of some of his biographies suggest, much admired by a British missionary public in the mid-twentieth century. A Church Missionary Society (CMS) teacher from the year of his baptism in 1895, he left his native Buganda to work in the kingdom of Tooro and in the Ituri Forest until his death in 1933. He was ordained as a deacon (1900) and priest (1903) in the Anglican Church and became canon of Namirembe Cathedral (1922). The widespread Baganda conversions were seen as a great missionary success story, in which Apolo epitomized and exemplified what CMS missionaries had prayed for: a native agent who showed lifelong commitment to the spreading of the Gospel and a willingness to sacrifice personal comfort and advancement for this goal. English biographies identified Apolo so closely with the missionary endeavor that he was largely forgotten as scholarly and missionary interests changed. From the 1960s onward, the emphasis on inculturation encouraged a focus on Christian leaders who had formed African churches distinct from missionary tutelage. Their independent communities were considered to be authentically African in a way that mission churches could not be. Yet Apolo’s work of preaching, teaching, praying, church planting, and training of evangelists is remembered in Uganda, where praying, church planting, and training of evangelists is remembered in Uganda, where various churches and schools are named after him and he features in textbooks on Christian education from primary to A levels.1 The Province de l’Eglise Anglicane du Congo regards him as its founder and commemorates the anniversary of his death every year in Boga.

Early Years

Apolo’s early life remains obscure, although he recorded that he was born in Singo between 1864 and 1870 and that his parents were Samueri Salongo Kisanzi, of the Nvuma clan, and Nalongo Tezira Singabadda, of the Ngabi clan. He was named “Waswa,” meaning “first boy of twins,” for he had a twin sister who died in infancy. He was briefly married, until his wife also died suddenly. He may have learned traditional healing practices from a relative. He probably fought for the Ganda side of Ganda politics or another. He probably fought for the Ganda side of Ganda politics or another. Apolo’s appointment as “church teacher” in Tooro (formerly spelled Toro) in September 1895 was linked with the political influence of the Ganda. The evangelization of Buganda’s neighboring kingdoms has been understood, to a greater or lesser extent, to have been propelled by Ganda imperialist ambitions in a complex and often tense partnership with British colonial and missionary interests. The kingdom of Tooro had seceded from Bunyoro in the 1830s and had allied with Buganda in the 1890s to maintain its independence from Bunyoro. The king, Daudi Kasagama, who owed the retention of his position to the Ganda and the British, requested evangelists from Buganda. In such a situation the decision by the Mengo Church Council, chaired

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by Apolo Kaggwa, to respond to this request from Tooro was a political act. CMS and the White Fathers had made an informal agreement that Tooro would be a Catholic area, but the Anglican bishop, Alfred Tucker, condoned the church council’s decision on the grounds that it was made by the local church and not the mission agency. Apolo was among the second group of evangelists to go to Tooro with the support of Ham Mukasa.

The Tooro elite in Kabarole had a keen interest in becoming church readers. However, there was a false start to Apolo’s work when the overzealous colonial official, Captain Ashburnham, assumed that Apolo, his fellow catechists, and the king were involved in gun-running. Kasagama escaped to Mengo, but Apolo and two other teachers were arrested, imprisoned, and then returned to Mengo. Ashburnham was reprimanded for his heavy-handedness, Kasagama was baptized, and Apolo was released without charge. In March 1896 he returned to Kabarole, and later he was sent to the Konjo at Nyagwaki, in the Rwenzori foothills. This was the first of many postings, as CMS teachers were regularly moved from place to place. It also demonstrates the royal patronage of Christianity. The Konjo were considered part of the colonial kingdom of Tooro, although they had a distinct language, customs, and polity. They had sheltered the queen mother when she had fled Banyoro raids, and as a sign of her gratitude she sent them an evangelist.

Apolo’s next posting, to Boga (formerly spelled Mboga), was likewise integral to regional political relationships. King Tabaro of Boga on the western Semeliki escarpment visited Kasagama to develop relations to mitigate against the vulnerability of being on the edge of the rapacious Congo Free State. He was introduced to the spiritual novelties of Christianity and was encouraged to accept specialists of its technicalities. In December 1896 Apolo joined Seduluka Zabunamakwata, replacing Petero Nsguba. The response to their teaching was swift and positive: inhabitants of Boga learned to read and were catechized, and the first baptisms of Boga Christians took place in April 1897.

The speed of early acceptance of Christianity in Boga is often overlooked because of the prominence in missionary literature given to Apolo’s persecution story, in which his life was threatened and he was taken to Fort Portal and imprisoned for several months before being released. The story is often recounted as a tale of good religion fighting bad superstitions, and of perseverance in adversity. Yet one may also interpret Tabaro’s attack on Apolo as that of a leader who was caught in new circumstances, unsure how best to act for his people, and conscious that his spiritual role in the community was undermined by a new class of specialists. Apolo was invited back by Tabaro once he was released, and Tabaro was baptized in April 1898, taking the name “Paul.” Apolo’s diary suggests that these events were a turning point in his ministry, in which he acknowledged the power of prayer and the ability of God to aid him.

God strengthened me and I did not get weak in Our Lord’s work. But God helps those who believe in him for I believed and he rescued me. And he also hears the prayers of his people as the Ganda—his people and I saw. For I always feared that in those places to which I was sent, those people may not like Jesus Christ. They believed when I prayed and they turned back as soon as I stopped praying.

Boga would remain an important place in Apolo’s life, perhaps because of the dramatic events he experienced there. But in August 1899 he was sent to Kitagwenda in Tooro, before being recalled to the central mission station at Kabarole/Fort Portal. He was ordained deacon on December 21, 1900, benefitting from Tucker’s policy of early ordination for those who demonstrated good service to the church, regardless of a lack of formal theological education. During 1901 he was based for a few months at Butiiti, the most significant mission in Tooro after Kabarole. By the end of the year, however, he moved back to Kabarole, and it is his work there that Fisher describes so effusively:

Of our good friend Apolo and his work one cannot speak too highly. He . . . is a great teacher and a true soul winner. He is very keen to learn and spends all his spare time in self-improvement of some kind or other. The Thirty-Nine Articles he committed to memory in less than a month, and on receiving the [prime minister] of Buganda’s new history of that country stayed up all night reading it, so good was the feast of new literature.

Fisher’s words not only describe a dedicated deacon of the Native Church of Uganda, but also indicate what attributes European missionaries considered exemplary and the way in which Apolo educated himself as an Anglican and as a modern Ganda. The image of Apolo Kivebulaya so gripped by Kaggwa’s history of Buganda kings—the first of a number of Kaggwa’s books that drew upon the history and customs of the Ganda—that he was unable to put the book down suggests that he was imbuing ideas on nationhood and good citizenship; such ideas drew on a contemporary Ganda and Christian interpretation of the past in order to steer a progressive course to Christian modernity. Other accounts describe his attention to Paul’s missionary journeys, which he saw as an example for his own itinerations. Apolo’s attention to the Thirty-Nine Articles provides the background to his daily practice of corporate prayer and his commitment to the participation of others. Fisher provides the following vignette:

I can hear him all hours of the day, teaching hymns, praying with the people and doing true pastoral work. At sunrise and at sunset he gathers everyone around, including passers-by to join him in morning and evening prayer, using the psalms for the day. He reads his own verse in a loud voice and the congregation’s in a low voice, just to encourage those not quite sure of the words, never forgetting the “Gloria” which they sing for all they are worth. The great advance of the work at Butiiti has been entirely due to his industry, zeal and holy life. I am deeply thankful to have such a fellow-worker.

Apolo inculcated Anglican norms in Kabarole, performing daily offices and encouraging others to participate. He also introduced innovations: the services appear to have taken place in the open air or his house, not in church, and he taught the words as he went. In Boga he took over the sacred drum to call people to Christian worship. The picture Fisher paints of Apolo fits with the history of Ganda influence in the western kingdoms. By 1900, however, Tooro public opinion was turning against Ganda involvement in the kingdom. Yet Apolo appears to have been unaffected by growing resentment and was wholeheartedly supported by the Tooro Church Council. Although his biographers often suggest he was unconcerned with politics, his work demonstrates a deliberate respect for and interest in the lives and customs of those among whom he worked. His involvement in translation, for example, shows that his life in Tooro and his Protestant biblicism caused him to take different approaches from those of many of his Ganda and missionary peers.
Apolo had begun work on a primer, catechism, prayer book, and Gospel of Matthew in Nyoro. He argued for the whole Bible to be translated into Nyoro. This issue, however, was controversial. Protestant missionary belief in the importance of vernacular translations for evangelism was balanced by concerns about the specialized and time-consuming nature of the work. In Uganda it was also influenced by concerns over political and ecclesiastical unity and the assumption of a hierarchy of languages and cultures. It seemed to many Europeans that Luganda and the Ganda were superior conductors of Christianity to be used in other parts of the protectorate. Apolo Kivebulaya and H. E. Maddox, who

took over the translation work, both disagreed firmly with this idea. In 1900 they petitioned the CMS secretaries in London for support in translating the Bible. Maddox, in his letter, identifies Apolo as the translator of Matthew's gospel and describes him as “the most influential missionary” in Tooro. Apolo’s letter argues from his own experience as reader and evangelist.

When I went to Toro, I taught them in Luganda but they could neither hear nor understand what I told them, and I also did not understand them. . . I then saw it right to learn their language. . . I put in much effort to teach them religion in Luganda . . . but when they read the book in Luganda they could not understand it and their hearts were not ready to get saved. . . I remembered that we, Ganda, were at first taught Kiswahili but I never understood what they were teaching. When I read alone, I never understood, but when they brought the Luganda book I understood fully. . . I want with all my heart the Old and New Testament in Lunyoro.

He knew literacy was highly valued and that literacy in one’s own language was much easier to achieve. Apolo’s petitioning for a Nyoro translation shows that he distanced himself from the ambitions of his compatriots and stood against the wishes of the Mengo Church Council, which was arguing for greater use of Luganda. His probable involvement in the translation of Mark’s gospel into Konjo (1914) and his initiative to produce a primer and Gospel of Mark for the Mbuti (1933) demonstrate the importance he placed on vernacular translations. In this last translation he and his team almost certainly worked from the Nyoro Bible (1912) he had argued for, not the Luganda translation.

We prayed saying, “O God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we put forth to you this person so that you may do to him whatever you wish, whether to take him away or to let him live and convert him, for if you don’t interfere he is going to lead many astray and kill them.” In this God the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit helped us, and Chief S. Kalemesa died soon after. These prayers were carried out in the year 1916, and in August he fell sick and he died. Then God helped us and we got a Christian King. . . At present many people have been converted and they regularly come to church and they confess their sins, and in all these things it is God who helps us.

The missionary calling beyond one’s own people and place was further illustrated in Apolo’s life by his more permanent association with Boga and the Ituri Forest from 1916. He continued his role as cultural broker and mediator of ideas, introducing a Christianity that was entwined with entangled Ganda and British ideas of advancement and progress, yet doing so in a way that resonated with those to whom he preached. The Boga area had seen considerable disruption. The colonial boundaries were disputed until 1910, when Boga’s position on the west side of the Nile-Congo watershed made it Belgian territory, subject to a colonial authority that prioritized Belgian Catholic missions. It lost its position as a significant trading post of ivory and rubber and was reduced to a small village at the periphery of a vast colonial country. The Belgian authorities were wary of British influence and often delayed CMS requests for access, although Apolo was permitted to work there.

In 1916 he gave up a year’s sabbatical in Buganda to return to the village because he had heard that the Christians were discouraged and their numbers were dwindling. His diary for this year and the following one have some unusually detailed passages, suggesting that the events were significant for his continued commitment to Boga. He found the small Christian group much depleted and returning to polygamy, beer drinking, and the traditional practices he had preached against. They were intimidated by Sulemani Kalemesa, installed by the Belgian authorities as subchief of Boga, who accused them of having British colonial sympathies. In Apolo’s account Kalemesa is presented as cruel, autocratic, and lacking true faith; his rule is spiritually detrimental. Apolo calls on the power of the Almighty, and his prayer for the downfall of Kalemesa is answered.
affection for them, for he enjoyed spending time with them and
listening to their stories.

During this time he also developed a school at Boga, emphasizing particularly the education of girls. He itinerated
with groups of young people, whose strong personal loyalty
to him was instrumental in the flourishing of the church after
his death. He worked hard at cross-cultural relations, making
friends with peoples his fellow Baganda looked down upon.
Yet he maintained expectations of modernization and change
that had been significant in the conversion of Baganda since the
arrival of Alexander Mackay of the CMS in 1878. By 1931 Apolo
had developed a network of small Anglican congregations within
a radius of a three-day walk from Boga. He was responsible for
42 churches, 58 native teachers, and 1,426 baptized Christians,
among six ethnic groups.19

In 1933 Apolo entered the hospital in Mengo and was
discovered to have a terminal illness. He made a final visit to
Boga and requested that he be buried there in a way contrary to
Ganda custom: with his head pointing away from his homeland
and into the forest. His simple grave can be found next to the
cathedral. While the details of his burial has been variously
interpreted, his return to Boga is generally understood as a
mark of his continual self-sacrifice.20 On hearing of his death
in 1933, the Uganda standing committee minutes noted the fol-
lowing: “To know him was to love him…. He was the genuine
apostle of the type of St Paul…. he was emphatically one who
has hazarded his life in the service of the Lord Jesus…. His
gentleness, his sympathy, the transparent sincerity of his life,
and the domination of his will over his ageing body presented
an outstanding example of the grace of God in a chosen vessel.”21

Conclusion

Apolo has been praised for apostolic saintliness and ascetic
spirituality, yet such plaudits can overlook the significance of
his life as lived in the midst of a rapidly changing society.
The role of emerging colonial polities and Apolo’s alliance with the
elites in Buganda and in Tooro form part of the development of
a particular Christian tradition. Like other missionaries, Apolo
Kivebulaya was an agent of social and cultural change who was
part of complex, shifting interreligious dynamics, operating across
disputed boundaries and adapting Christian belief and practice
to historical contexts. He worked in remote places among peoples
who were despised by their neighbors. He was loved and honored
by the communities who accepted his preaching and established
churches. They appreciated his tireless itineration and his interest
in them. Yet his influence was rarely limited to the local. He was
a regional actor entangled in transnational projects to which he
contributed and the perceived benefits of which he transmitted
to others. He demonstrates a comprehension of Christianity as a
religion that is both locally and personally focused and connects
beyond human boundaries of ethnic groupings and state borders.

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Caroline Phebe Tenney Keith—Episcopal Church Missionary and Letter Writer in Shanghai

Ian Welch

In the nineteenth century, Western decorum dictated that the proper place for a woman was in the home, where she would either be married or assisting in caring for a family, or in a caring job such as teaching or nursing. Many single women chose instead to leave comfortable lives for the vagaries of missionary work among the “heathen” overseas who had not asked them to come and mostly ignored them. The letters of Caroline Tenney (1821–62), a single woman missionary who traveled from the United States to Shanghai in 1850, reveal life situations experienced by many nineteenth-century women both at home and in missionary service. Caroline was an avid letter writer. In 1852 she reported that, after nearly three years in China, she had written 325 letters to more than fifty individuals, and that she had received nearly 200 letters. Six years before she went to Shanghai she had written to a friend: “It is seldom necessary for me to ask pardon for negligence in writing, because I generally love to write as well as most people love to read letters. Letter writing is to me what daily intercourse with friends is to others—my happiness: and in some cases it has seemed almost necessary to my life, as it has certainly been to my comfort.” Letter writing, she suggested, was essential not just to her daily life but also to her very well-being.

Preparation

Caroline Phebe Tenney was born in Newmarket, New Hampshire, on May 13, 1821.4 Her parents, who both died in 1838, attended a Congregationalist church as noncommunicants, but her father, a lawyer, later joined the Unitarians. Caroline Tenney followed in Congregationalist church as noncommunicants, but her father, a lawyer, later joined the Unitarians. Caroline Tenney followed in her father’s footsteps, and her brother, William, became a Unitarian minister. In October 1837 Caroline graduated from Adams Female Academy, in Derry, New Hampshire, and subsequently attended a Baptist seminary in Charlestown, Massachusetts. Through the 1840s she worked as a governess and schoolteacher as most people love to read letters. Letter writing is to me what daily intercourse with friends is to others—my happiness: and in some cases it has seemed almost necessary to my life, as it has certainly been to my comfort.

Conversion and Missionary Appointment

In the midst of emotional turmoil, Caroline, who had become an Episcopalian in 1846, experienced an evangelical conversion. She wrote to her brother of “the holy peace, the joyous hope, the patient endurance, the deep sense of sin, the sense of God ever present, the humble yet firm confidence, the sweet submission, the entire devotedness, the ardent aspirations for holiness, the adoring views of God’s character and government, the conscious and living union with Christ.” By October 1849 she was actively pursuing the idea of being a “missionary to the heathen” in order to escape from “hours of anguish.” She recognized that her brother did not think her suited for missionary work, but she responded by declining that she had received “peculiar training,” while also acknowledging that she had not married and had not formed close personal relationships.

Caroline Tenney was a reader of the Episcopal journal of Missions, that had issued a call for two female teachers for the Episcopal Mission in Shanghai. This appeal lingered in her mind.
She wrote of how her attitude changed as she contemplated applying for a missionary teaching position with the Episcopal mission in China: “Once, when I heard of friends who enjoyed the love of parents or husband, who were surrounded by luxuries and agreeable society, I felt discontented, and thought my lot a hard one. Now I can truly say, as I have heard such things, I have felt an emotion of gratitude and pleasure even, that God had spared me the dangers and responsibilities of such a position. I no longer hunger and thirst for what I once thought necessary to my happiness [.i.e., marriage].”

On November 15, 1849, Caroline met with William Lewis, rector of the Church of the Holy Trinity, Brooklyn Heights, New York. Lewis was an enthusiastic supporter of the Shanghai Mission and arranged for her to meet P. Pierre Irving, secretary of the Episcopal Foreign Missions Committee. Her teaching experience and the mission’s urgent need for a single woman teacher were a perfect fit. By March 1850 she had been approved as an Episcopal missionary, with the financial support of Holy Trinity’s Ladies Benevolent Society.

A Teacher in Shanghai

In March 1850 Caroline left New York with five other missionaries of various denominations. A full 119 days later, the group arrived in Shanghai, having traveled via the Indian Ocean, Java, and Hong Kong. Her first task was to study Chinese with a Chinese teacher for three hours each afternoon, following a contextual method developed by William Jones Boone, leader of the Episcopal China Mission and the first bishop of the Anglican tradition in China. She described the experience in a letter to her brother: “His method is eminently practical. I began Monday, August 5th, to study the Creed, and to repeat it. I shall get it perfectly this week. Next week, the Confession and Lord’s Prayer, and so on. This gives me a vocabulary of words, which I can combine every day with others.” A month after her arrival, she told her brother, she had declined marriage to a minister, a widower with a little boy. She was now fully occupied, for three hours each morning, teaching in English in the Boys’ School; but she was looking forward to the opening of a Girls’ School, and she repeated the bishop’s mantra that it was vital to provide suitably educated girls for eventual marriage to the students in the Boys’ School.

The lives of Protestant missionaries in China were intimately shared, irrespective of nationality and denomination, as reports of missionaries in Shanghai make very evident. Caroline Tenney was far removed from everyday Chinese life. Unlike male missionaries, foreign women lived restricted lives, unable, for example, to travel independently outside the mission compound. Episcopal women from the United States usually attended church in the mission chapel in Hongkou, the New American settlement to the north of the established British settlement of Shanghai, or in Holy Trinity Church in the British settlement, an Anglican church attended by English-speaking expatriates where the American Episcopalians rented a pew.

She wrote of her shock at the difficult lives of so many of the Chinese in the early 1850s. The Taiping Rebellion (1850–64), a civil war between the Qing government and Chinese rebels, was raging. Shanghai was flooded with refugees, with many people starving and beggars everywhere. The condition of children was especially upsetting for a sensitive teacher. The challenges she encountered left her with a sense of “utter weakness.” She saw the world around her through the lenses of biblical texts and the life experience of a middle-class American woman, summing up her understanding in writing to Lewis that “here there is no light, no knowledge of better things.”

Distance from home and a sense of isolation were common themes in nineteenth-century missionary correspondence. News from home took up to six months to arrive. Caroline described the death of her brother’s wife, who had been ill when she left the United States, as her own particular trial since she have become a missionary. Her brother’s letter informing her of his wife’s death had taken four months to reach her. She wrote to Lewis of the tyranny of distance: “It is impossible to describe the peculiar distress of such intelligence to one at such a distance. The time that intervenes between the writing and the reception of such letters, has either removed or increased the affliction of the loved friend. Thoughts of sorrow, that we know not of, or, knowing, could not have soothed, torment the imagination.”

Another common theme of missionary correspondence was the frustration of dealing with Chinese women. Caroline was no exception, writing home that “the minds of the women—that is to say, certainly of the class seen by missionaries—seem distressingly vacant and frivolous and impure. . . . It is difficult to find a mind, and another difficulty is to touch the heart and moral sense.”

She soon established herself as a successful teacher in the Boys’ School, although she disliked the housekeeping functions associated with everyday care of the boys: “My duties here . . . to teach three hours a day in English, to have a constant supervision of half the school [i.e., twenty-five or thirty boys] and to provide their clothing, and to attend to the giving out their clean clothes every Saturday.”

Marriage to Cleveland Keith

Marital prospects, once viewed as unlikely, reemerged, producing a “period of the most severe agony” in her life. Caroline seemed to have problems assessing the men to whom she was attracted. “The object of her affections was a very brilliant and fascinating young man; but, as afterward appeared, unstable, erratic, and lacking in moral soundness.” She subsequently became engaged to Cleveland Keith, a deeply committed Christian and fellow missionary, who saw her as “an earnest-minded” woman whose aim was to do right and be useful. She worked, her future husband said, as if a “steam engine is after me.” For her part, she said Keith as “no meteor-like, impulsive genius” and “slow in coming to a decision.”

Caroline Tenney and Cleveland Keith were married by Bishop Boone on April 27, 1854, in the mission chapel at Hongkou. She commented on the “air of elegance” at the event; the reception, attended by sixty people, was enhanced by the band of the USS Susquehanna. The couple took a six-week honeymoon, which was spent largely with the missionary community at Ningpo. It was Caroline’s first break in four years and followed a year of intensive work and study. Once back in Shanghai, she preferred the quiet company of her husband. She wrote to a friend that Keith had a “sensitive, shrinking nature, which would avoid contact with the world, and, when wounded, if not too severely, retires into itself. . . . Mr. Keith is one who loves home, as the sweetest refuge in the world.”

Ill Health and Decline

In August and September 1854 Caroline recorded that, although she was enjoying better health than most of her female colleagues, she was not well, a result, she believed, of overwork in the school and also dyspepsia. A month later she reported that her husband had been seriously ill for over a month. The following year she wrote to her brother’s second wife that she felt that now, in
her thirties, she was about one-third as strong as she had been a decade earlier and mentioned that she was looking forward to her thirties, she was about one-third as strong as she had been.

Now a thoroughly enculturated Episcopalian, she informed her friends and relatives of the superiority of liturgical worship. To her brother she wrote, “I believe that a Christian character modelled from early youth by the teaching of the Prayer Book, and inspired by its reverent, humble, trusting, joyful, filial spirit, is more likely to be a beautiful and symmetrical one than that trained in any other school.” Her opinion may have reflected the influence of her husband, who favored a more formal style of worship than did most of his clergy colleagues.

Her health continued to decline, and in May 1856 she wrote to a friend, “It hurts me to lift a chair, or even a heavy plate . . . it is hard to be sick. But I hope I shall be able to resign life, health, and comfort into the hands of Him whose purposes are all of wisdom and love.” That same month she told a friend in New York that she would visit the United States soon, hopefully early in 1857. She also wrote that her dyspepsia, coupled with increasing bouts of diarrhea, had reached a stage where she ate only dry bread, plain steak or chicken, and a little chocolate. Everything caused excruciating pain. It is possible that she was suffering from irritable bowel syndrome.

The couple left Shanghai for the United States on January 1, 1857. During the two years they spent in various parts of the country, Caroline’s health improved, but she did not recover fully. They returned to Shanghai, arriving on October 19, 1859, and resumed their mission duties more or less where they had left off two years previously. They discovered over the next years, however, that, because of the American Civil War, they could no longer receive letters or funds from home, and the mission was in effect closing down, with its property being sold to provide living expenses.

Although Cleveland was in good health, Caroline’s health was again failing; she and her husband took medical leave in Japan, arriving in Kanagawa in March 1862, aware that they would never return to Shanghai. While in Japan and already suffering acute diarrhea, she was thrown from a horse, and a hemorrhage began that continued unchecked. She also experienced severe ulceration of her mouth and tongue. Her condition was likely cancer-related.

The couple left Japan for San Francisco, arriving on June 27, 1862. At that point, Caroline was unable to walk. She died on July 10, and her body was laid in a receiving vault in a local cemetery, pending transport for final burial in New York. Cleveland traveled east by ship, but on the way the ship sank, and his body was never recovered. The following year, Caroline’s body was brought by ship to New York. A service was held in Holy Trinity Church, Brooklyn Heights, from which she had left for China thirteen years earlier. On May 14, 1863, she was buried in Greenwood Cemetery, Brooklyn, New York.

Notes

1. Caroline Tenney’s letters were edited by her brother and published as Memoir of Mrs. Caroline P. Keith: Missionary of the Protestant Episcopal Church to China, ed. William C. Tenney (New York: D. Appleton, 1864). The engraving of Caroline P. Tenney Keith in this article comes from the frontispiece of Tenney’s letters.

2. Caroline Tenney (henceforth CT) to Mary Plumer, October 29, 1852, in Memoir of Mrs. Caroline P. Keith, 175. Subsequent citation of letters from Memoir appear in parentheses after their date.

3. CT to Margaret E. (Mrs. William T.) Cutter, August 21, 1844 (21).

4. Useful comparisons can be drawn between Tenney and Lydia Mary Fay, also from the United States and also an Episcopal missionary to China. See Ian Welch, “Lydia Mary Fay and the Episcopal Church in China” (New York: Dunlap, 1922). Caroline affirmed her belief in Wesleyan sanctification in a letter to William on February 8, 1851 (117).

5. CT to William C. Tenney (henceforth WCT), August 31, 1848 (55).

6. CT to Mrs. Sumner, July 15, 1848 (50).

7. CT to WCT, July 21, 1848 (53).

8. CT to Mrs. Sumner, December 23, 1854 (226).

9. CT to Mary Plumer, January 2, 1851 (114).

10. CT to Mary Plumer, July 21, 1851 (123–31), quotation on 124. This long letter deals with almost every possible criticism of the lifestyle of missionaries. It highlights the gap between foreign businesspeople and missionaries in China.

11. CT to WCT, July 21, 1848 (74). Caroline affirmed her belief in Wesleyan sanctification in a letter to William on February 8, 1851 (117).

12. CT to Mary Plumer, October 29, 1849 (69).

13. CT to Mrs. Sumner, October 29, 1849 (68).


15. Tenney praised the journal with enthusiasm once in Shanghai; see CT to William Lewis, December 19, 1850 (103).

16. CT to WCT, December 13, 1849 (78).

17. Roscoe C. E. Brown, Church of the Holy Trinity, Brooklyn Heights, in the City of New York, 1847–1922 (New York: Dunlap, 1922). Caroline described Holy Trinity Church (now St. Ann and Holy Trinity) as “considered the handsomest in the United States”; CT to WCT, December 13, 1849 (80).

18. CT to William Lewis, August 9, 1850 (92). Caroline later said that she had memorized 400 characters and expected to be able to read and write 1,000 by the end of the year; CT to Mary Plumer, February 15, 1851 (117).

19. CT to WCT, September 29, 1850 (94).

20. CT to Mrs. Oliver H. Gordon, September 11, 1850 (98).

21. Ibid. (102).

22. CT to Margaret E. Cutter, September 18, 1850 (100).

23. CT to Mrs. Oliver H. Gordon, November 15, 1850 (102).

24. CT to William Lewis, December 19, 1850 (105).

25. Ibid. (109).

26. CT to Mrs. Oliver H. Gordon, May 5, 1851 (120).

27. CT to Mary Plumer, April 19, 1851 (213).

28. Memoir, 154, 155. The missionary she eventually married, Cleveland Keith, remarked that Caroline withdrew into herself following this episode (ibid., 204); Caroline described the episode as one of “sharp anguish” (ibid., 206).

29. CT to WCT, September 19, 1853 (204).

30. CT to WCT, November 17, 1853 (208).

31. CT to WCT, October 3, 1853 (207).

32. CT to Mrs. Sumner, December 23, 1854 (227).

33. CT to Margaret E. Cutter, September 2, 1854 (217).

34. CT to Mrs. Sumner, December 23, 1854 (230).

35. CT to Almira Osborn, November 1, 1854 (225).

36. CT to Mary Plumer, October 7, 1854 (220).

37. CT to Mrs. William C. Tenney, August 1855 (238).

38. CT to William Lewis, November 30, 1855 (242).

39. CT to Isabel Caroline Tenney, aged 11, daughter of William C. Tenney and his first wife, January 1856 (246).

40. CT to Charlotte Goodridge, October 29, 1854 (220–24).

41. CT to WCT, December 17, 1861 (334).

42. CT to Mrs. Sumner, December 23, 1854 (229).

43. CT to Charlotte Goodridge, May 1, 1856 (251).

44. CT to Mrs. Oliver H. Gordon, May 10, 1856 (253–57).

45. CT to Isabel Caroline Tenney, January 1862 (343); CT to Mary Plumer, from Kanagawa, Japan, May 8, 1852 (357).
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Book Reviews

Reading a Different Story: A Christian Scholar’s Journey from America to Africa.


This is a beautiful book that begins by telling stories of Susan VanZanten’s childhood days in an insular Dutch Calvinist community in the Pacific Northwest and ends by briefly celebrating the stories of the acclaimed Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. The narrative between is a memoir of a Christian literature professor’s intellectual and personal development through graduate school and four different Christian colleges in the United States. While not a work of literary criticism, this well-written book nonetheless provides the reader with glimpses of a scholar’s love of literature as it turned from American novelists Faulkner and Melville to African writers Gordimer, Coetzee, Achebe, and others. Readers unfamiliar with these works—American or African—are given just enough of a taste of VanZanten’s appreciation for them to want to investigate them further.

Theological seminaries, Christian colleges, and other educational institutions in the Global North still struggle to reconfigure their curricula to take into account the southward shift of world Christianity. VanZanten’s intellectual autobiography provides a set of signposts for such reconfiguring. As befits a memoir, these signposts are of a personal rather than a prescriptive nature, but they are helpful for academics in North America and elsewhere who find themselves at institutions that, amazingly, still largely teach Christianity as though Africa, Asia, and Latin America were mere footnotes to a Mediterranean and European story.

Graduate students and younger faculty members at North American Christian colleges will find VanZanten’s book especially helpful as a way of reflecting upon their own growth as scholars and teachers. Struggles to overcome the anti-intellectualism and sexism found in the evangelical subculture are recounted in this book, which will surely give solace to Christian students and faculty alike who face similar challenges today at many institutions. One also learns the history of how Christian colleges in North America slowly grew in their curricular appreciation of world Christianity. As a graduate of one of those institutions, I had little knowledge of the curricular struggles going on some twenty years ago when I took a course on African literature. Today, I regularly assign works of fiction by Shusako Endo and Chinua Achebe in my history of world Christianity courses. I have VanZanten and other teachers like her to thank for the gift those works continue to be for myself and my students.

For all its strengths, this book will not resonate as well with scholars less influenced by the culture of American Christian colleges of the past half-century. For such persons this memoir will still be informative, however, even if the mostly Reformed interlocutors with whom VanZanten engages—Jacques Ellul, Arthur Holmes, Abraham Kuyper, Francis Schaeffer, Nicholas Wolterstorff, and others—may seem foreign to them.

As new Christian colleges and universities are established and grow in the Global South, and especially in Africa, I wonder how VanZanten’s book will be received in the future and in places not as far away as they once were thought to be. Curricular changes of a different sort will need to take place there too, and yet another “different story” will need to be told.

—Benjamin L. Hartley

Benjamin L. Hartley is associate professor of Christian mission and director of United Methodist studies at Palmer Theological Seminary, the seminary of Eastern University, in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania.


During the year 2010 several international conferences commemorated the centenary of the epochal 1910 World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh. Four of these—in Tokyo, Edinburgh, Cape Town, and Boston—were truly international and outstanding. The book 2010Boston: The Changing Contours of World Mission and Christianity captures what transpired in Boston. All of the commemorative gatherings endeavored to reflect the current demographics of world Christianity, but 2010Boston was distinctive for its focused attention on students. Convening in November, the last of these four events, it had the opportunity to take stock of the other conferences as well. The student focus of the conference was underscored by the two primary sponsors of the event—the Boston Theological Institute, one of the world’s oldest and largest theological consortia, and the Center for the Study of Global Christianity, at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. This focus highlighted “the inseparability of students, theological education and missions” (xviii).

Divided into four parts, 2010Boston treats the world Christian movement, mission in the twenty-first century, student perspectives, and reports and conclusion. The section on student perspectives encompasses such topics as African-Americans in relation to missions in Africa and the rise of faith-based organizations. The final section features a review of the conference from a student perspective and a review of the other Edinburgh 1910 conferences. The book ends by including the worship guide that was used in the conference’s multiple locations.

Todd Johnson presents a helpful review of Edinburgh 1910 in comparison with the status of global Christianity in 2010. Dana Robert examines the critical, positive role students played in global missions in the period 1810–2010. Angelyn Dries sheds light on Catholic missions, and Brian Stanley evaluates the vision, as well as the blindness, of Edinburgh 1910. The book highlights other well-known
academics as well, including Athanasios Papathanasiou, Peter C. Phan, Ruth Padilla DeBorst, Brian McLaren, and Daniel Jeyaraj. But the last word belongs to the students who participated, thereby representing “a critical mass of young people gathered in one place, [enabling] creative intellectual stimulation, spiritual formation for mission, and dynamic and outward looking social contexts.” One can hope that they were inspired to “transform the world in their own generation” (25). As significant as the gathering was, the students left with many questions unanswered, which calls for ongoing conversation.

2010Boston is a helpful addition to the growing literature on mission and world Christianity.

—Casely B. Essamuah

Casely B. Essamuah serves as the global missions pastor, Bay Area Community Church, Annapolis, Maryland. He is coeditor of Communities of Faith in Africa and the African Diaspora (Pickwick Publications, 2013).

Culture Change in Ethiopia: An Evangelical Perspective.


As with a flowing river, change is culture’s only constant. This volume is a primer on culture change, with specific reference to postimperial Ethiopia. The first chapter offers a brief survey of the wrenching changes that have swept, tsunami-like, over Ethiopia’s political, social, and religious landscape in the period extending from Haile Selassie’s attempts at modernization after World War I through the 1974 Marxist revolution and its aftermath.

One challenge confronting the author is the necessity of generalizing complex and variegated contexts. In the case of Ethiopia, with ninety mother tongues and as many distinctive cultural groups, the nationalist fiction of a collective “we” is challenging to maintain beyond the monodimensional surface of its map. A succession of feudal emperors, culminating with Haile Selassie, tried to foster and reinforce a sense of common Ethiopian identity by imposing Amharic as the lingua franca and by creating a formidable military establishment with the assistance of the United States. But this thin veneer could not conceal the deep cultural dissonances and the shallowness of officially authorized memory. The author therefore treads carefully when he speaks of “cultural leadership values” (chap. 3) and “cultural leadership patterns” (chap. 4). He is on surer ground when he reviews the impact of Haile Selassie’s modernization program in chapter 5, and the influence of American and Soviet ideologies on Ethiopia’s modernization and homogenization efforts. In many ways chapters 6, 7, and 8 are the most original and insightful chapters in the book. Here, the author deftly analyzes the dynamic influences and tension-fraught intersection of powerful religious and ideological streams upon Ethiopian peoples and their defining cultures. The book, written in a highly personal style, will probably be most useful for undergraduate students of Ethiopian church history who share the author’s evangelical perspective.

—Jonathan J. Bonk

Jonathan J. Bonk, a senior contributing editor, is executive director emeritus and senior mission consultant, Overseas Ministries Study Center, New Haven, Connecticut.
Health, Healing, and the Church’s Mission: Biblical Perspectives and Moral Priorities.


This book provides a contemporary American Christian perspective that scholars interested in cultural studies of healing and medicine will find useful. Swartley’s work engages several issues of possible interest for non-Christian audiences and those outside of theology and religious studies.

First, Swartley shows that Christian healing has been dynamic and that the Bible’s “voice on healing is not monovocal” (15). He situates Christian healing historically and contemporarily (in the United States) within social and political relations—between Christians and non-Christians, as an issue that divided Christian sects, and in the relationship between citizen groups and states. Second, Swartley shows that many Christians in the United States, a nation equipped with so many medical technologies and pharmaceuticals, are continually reconfirmed in their faith in biblically inspired healing by their encounters with biomedicine. He argues that Christians, in constituting an ethical community, should seek to shape the American health care reform debate through engaging issues such as economic inequality and the importance of service over self-fulfillment in healing.

These insights and questions emerge especially in the later chapters. After an introduction in which Swartley writes candidly about his personal experiences of illness and reliance on Christian prayer and teaching, the book is divided into three parts. The first demonstrates the centrality of healing in Christian thought, showing that the Old and New Testaments, as well as the church as a community, uphold healing as a theological and practical priority. The second part, devoted to exploring health care, historicizes mutual-aid practices of the Anabaptist tradition, global missionary evangelism, and witnessing within the Christian community. The third part offers a considered reflection on economic and moral emphases in current and future American health care reform, a topic that often descends into partisan representations that pit government and citizens against each other in a tense or needly relationship. Swartley cites examples of historical payments to physicians and contemporary ethical challenges faced by medical workers. For example, he does not cite the standard hot-button politicized examples of contraception and abortion provision but instead focuses on personal conflicts such as lying to insurance companies to get coverage for poor patients (231).

Swartley has brought together important themes—such as Christian missionaries’ views of non-Western healing practices and disability in the Bible—in a coherent essay on healing in the mission of the Christian church, but some topics are left unexplored. Chapter 8 on Christian missions mentions the fact that medical missions were an important vehicle for the conversion of non-Christians but does not delve into the topic, considering, for instance, comparisons between Christians’ experiences of illness and healing (such as his own) and the experience of the not-yet-converted inquirer or seeker. He discusses the example of Mennonite women medical practitioners serving in global missions when they were not admitted to practice in the United States, but he does not analyze the impact of such service on either Christian communities at home or in foreign fields (238).

Swartley rightly reminds American readers: “We must convert our thinking about what health care is and why it exists. Let’s not forget history and what it teaches us about the church’s primary role in health care” (195). He has shown that Christians have found inspiration in the example of Jesus and the Scriptures, while acknowledging differences of orientation toward healing within the Christian community. Yet Swartley has also shown Americans that they are not the only ones who have brought healing to others. His account of two Nigerians visiting and praying with his wife in the hospital is memorable; these strangers to the United States did not want her to be alone at a weak moment. Such stories offer both secular and religious readers much to ponder.

—Shobana Shankar

Shobana Shankar is assistant professor of history at Stony Brook University, SUNY.

Asia in the Making of Christianity: Conversion, Agency, and Indigeneity, 1600s to the Present.


The story of the conversion of a community or an individual to Christianity draws the attention not only of theologians but also of scholars from wider fields, since it involves a complex array of changes in society as a whole. Asia in the Making of Christianity is a welcome addition to the existing literature on the topic for a number of reasons. First, a wide variety of countries are covered in one volume, which confronts readers with multiple issues and perspectives and allows for comparison and exploration of emerging patterns. Second, the contributors to the volume focus on the perspective of converts themselves— their struggles, inspirations, and perceptions—rather than those of missionaries, while not neglecting wider sociopolitical situations. Third, the volume establishes that, in the Asian context, the changes entailed by Christian conversion have occurred in both directions. Conversion has not been a one-way process, with Christianity being the only agent of transformation. The introduction to the book clearly and convincingly argues the above points, and the contributors, by and large, address the key aims of the project with careful scholarship.

The chapters on China examine the translation of religious terms used to convey key Christian concepts as a process of reconfiguring religious experience rather than as a superficial adoption of Christian understandings from the West. The Indian cases present struggles of higher-caste individual Hindus to relate Christian faith to Hindu religiosity and tradition. They show how conversion involves ambiguity between Christianity as a faith and as a catalyst for modernity. The contributors argue that the transition from indigenous religions to Christian- ity has been a matter of assimilation as a result of careful consideration, rather than an abrupt departure from the past, and that in the process converts provide creative and pertinent theological insights for Indian churches. Whereas the Japanese case examines the conversion of two Buddhist priests to Christianity in their search for faith, raising the question of
enculturation versus commitment, the chapter on Korea discusses the moral struggle between politics and religion as shown in the life of a Catholic layperson who was a key leader of the independence movement and who assassinated the Japanese resident-general of Korea. Conversion as discussed in the chapters on Burma, Bangladesh, and Thailand raises challenges of the understanding and reinterpretation of both Christianity and the religious traditions in these three societies.

Though some chapters may vary from the thrust of the volume as set out in the Introduction, and though some do not quite fit into the part of the book to which they are assigned, this volume provides rich insight into various theological, philosophical, sociopolitical, and religious perspectives on the Asian interpretation and embrace of Christianity.

—Sebastian Kim

Sebastian Kim is professor of theology and public life at York St. John University, York, U.K.

Western Christians in Global Mission: What’s the Role of the North American Church?


Now that the church in the Majority World has become a missionary sending force, where do North American churches and their missions efforts fit? Paul Borthwick probes this question in this book aimed at evangelical audiences and focused on local-church involvement in global mission. Throughout the pages of this volume, he shares insights and practical advice gained over decades of interaction with churches in North America and Christian leaders from around the world.

Borthwick opens with a brief overview of our globalized world, with its increasingly young and urbanized population. Next he explores the strengths and concerns of the North American church and contrasts these with those of churches in the Majority World.

Though world conditions have changed, Jesus’ call to compassion remains constant. North American Christians do have a part to play in God’s work unfolding around the world, but they need “to learn to participate from a platform of servanthood rather than power” (104). Instead of providing models, Borthwick offers guiding questions for building relationships based on friendship. North American Christians need to assume a posture of humility in order to grow into what Borthwick calls “purposeful reciprocity” (128), in which they will be able to learn from their brothers and sisters in the Majority World. The form that mission involvement by North American Christians takes will emerge from the relationships that are formed as Majority World churches share their testimonies and their understanding of ministry in their context.

Borthwick acknowledges that issues of control present the biggest challenge in mission partnerships. His work would have been strengthened by conversation with a broader range of Christian traditions—for example, ecumenical Protestants, who have used a partnership model for mission for decades. Also, issues of accountability should not be ignored, if the goal of mission partnerships is for all involved to grow in faithfulness.

—Karla Ann Koll

Karla Ann Koll is professor of history, mission, and religions at the Latin American Biblical University, San José, Costa Rica.

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July 2014
Celebrating a Century of Ecumenism: Exploring the Achievements of International Dialogue.


This book surveys the developments and challenges for ecumenical relations in the last hundred years, with some detailed examination of specific topics. This combination gives it the quality of being a road map for the future, making it thought-provoking for interested readers, including ecumenical scholars.

The early chapters discuss the overall achievements of multilateral dialogue. Here the contributors are refreshingly honest. See, for example, Wesley Ariarajah’s discussion of the achievements and limitations of the World Council of Churches (chap. 2). Such critical honesty clears the way for hope. This tone is clear also in Mary Tanner’s analysis of Faith and Order. The second part charts a series of detailed accounts of bilateral dialogues. While this book is about the merits of dialogue, it also serves as an incentive for action—moving, as Tanner puts it, from “library shelf . . . to being woven into the fabric of our lives and relationships” (20).

Peter Bouteneff observes that to date the fruits of ecumenical work often fail to reach beyond those who have already “signed up” for the project. The achievements of recent ecumenical efforts, however, should not be underestimated. Two observations stem from these achievements: first, there is a sense of new confidence in what engagements of this kind can produce. Second, the book itself has the feel of both looking forward to the possibilities ahead as well as back in celebration of past achievements. In so doing, the chapters encourage readers to engage more deeply with Christians of different traditions. Cecilia Robeck (chap. 11) notes that ecumenical dialogue has taught him more about his own Pentecostal faith. John Radano’s book reminds us that in such ecumenical engagements with the other, we discover more about ourselves and actually become better equipped to strive for the unity of the church.

—Catriona Laing

Catriona Laing is associate curate of St. Barnabas, Dulwich, London, and a member of the Inter-Faith Theological Advisory Group for Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

From Times Square to Timbuktu: The Post-Christian West Meets the Non-Western Church.


The shift of Christianity’s demographic center from the Northern to the Southern Hemisphere has occasioned further diversification of the faith along theological, institutional, and political lines. In From Times Square to Timbuktu, Wesley Granberg-Michaelson speaks from his ecumenical convictions and experience to call the global church to unity. If globalized Christianity is fractured Christianity—Granberg-Michaelson cites estimates that there are currently over 40,000 denominations—and if the North-South divide has become the preeminent boundary marker in world Christianity, then the ecumenical movement needs a new vision and focus. Providing that vision and focus is the purpose of this short book.

Granberg-Michaelson sets the stage for his proposal by surveying the world Christian demographic, denominational, and ecumenical terrain. As the title hints, a special emphasis of the book is on the realities of global migration, though Granberg-Michaelson is actually interested in how migrants bring new forms of Christianity from places like Timbuktu, the statistical center of Christianity in 2010, to Times Square. He is also concerned to identify the various ways world Christianity is divided and to label these divisions as disobedient and sinful.

The bulk of the book is occupied by Granberg-Michaelson’s evaluation of the past, present, and future of the ecumenical movement. While canvassing a variety of global efforts, he gives sustained attention to the World Council of Churches, the Global Christian Forum, and possibilities for local and congregational ecumenism. Writing on the eve of the WCC’s Tenth Assembly, in Busan, Korea, Granberg-Michaelson is at his most concrete when outlining steps for that body to face the new global realities. His advice for congregations—embrace migrants, antiracism, and charismatic worship—is welcome but necessarily more programmatic.

From Times Square to Timbuktu is a valuable interpretive statement of recent trends in world Christianity by a Northern Hemisphere ecumenical leader, and it should be read by anyone interested in how those trends intersect with ecumenical issues. It would also make an excellent introduction to world Christianity for congregational study groups.

Granberg-Michaelson’s vision for the ecumenical movement is to prioritize shared global fellowship, worship, and mission over interminable debates about doctrine and homosexuality. Ecumenical visions that downplay doctrine are hardly new, and it is uncertain that this one can overcome the limitations of past proposals.

It may be necessary to specify the place of doctrinal discussion in global ecumenism, as well as to clarify that not all Christian differences are sinful. Ecclesial diversity, as this book well demonstrates, may also be a sign of the Spirit.

—Jamie Pitts

Jamie Pitts is assistant professor of Anabaptist studies, Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana.

The Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism: The Age of Billy Graham and John Stott.


With this his latest work, Brian Stanley, professor of world Christianity at the University of Edinburgh, makes a first-rate contribution to IVP Academic’s valuable History of Evangelicalism series. The five volumes of the series address the intellectual and social history of the rise, expansion, dominance, diffusion, and disruption of evangelicalism between 1700 and 2000. Of value as a series, the individual volumes are well able to stand alone. Students interested in modern religious history and evangelical movements in the modern age, as well as those inquiring into the roots of evangelicalism and its reach into world Christianity, will benefit from Stanley’s judicious analysis of evangelicalism’s geographic, cultural, and theo-
logical life during the second half of the twentieth century.

Stanley’s discussion of evangelical Christianity’s strong missionary focus, “one of the most powerful religious forces on the globe” (25), makes the book particularly valuable for students of Christian mission history. Stanley tells this vibrant and complex story effectively, narrating evangelicalism’s revival-punctuated growth from its religious roots in North America and Europe to its fruits in the Majority World, and to its boundaries and questioned identity at the start of the twenty-first century. Especially noteworthy for students of mission history will be accounts of evangelicalism in a global context (chap. 1), mission, evangelism, and revival (chap. 3), the 1974 Lausanne Conference and engagement with the Majority World (chap. 6), and the rise of new charismatic and Pentecostal movements (chap. 7). Stanley concludes with thoughtful observations on what the twenty-first century may hold for evangelicalism.

—Adam Baron

Adam Baron is a postgraduate student of modern religious history at King’s College London, U.K.

No Continuing City: The Story of a Missiologist from Colonial to Postcolonial Times.


Theologies of believers are often closely related to their biographies. This autobiography of Alan Tippett, written as a gift to his wife, Edna, for their fiftieth anniversary, provides a good example. The book offers an account of a voracious reader, researcher, writer, and teacher. Tippett was above all a Methodist minister and missiologist, drawing upon his missionary experience, which motivated him to be constantly searching for a holistic approach to mission in cross-cultural contexts. To address this need, he equipped himself as an anthropologist and ethnohistorian. He dedicated his life to training missionaries, using the tools these broad perspectives offered for understanding the changes that hitherto-colonized nations around the globe were undergoing in moving into the postcolonial situation. His teaching career included a decade as professor of anthropology and Oceania studies at Fuller Theological Seminary’s School of World Mission, in Pasadena, California.

Struggling to establish himself as a Methodist minister in Australia, Tippett arrived in Fiji in 1941 as a foreign missionary. Only thirty years of age, he was immediately appointed as missionary superintendent over 7,000 church adherents in 78 preaching places. Though he could not speak a Fijian language (109), he was expected to supervise 8 ordained Fijians, 48 catechists, 18 village teachers, and 398 local preachers. Colonialism was still strong, and colonized people were accustomed to accepting the leadership of foreign missionaries without questioning. But the experience was an eye-opener for Tippett that presented a challenge to work toward a postcolonial era of mission. He devoted the rest of his
life to pursuing that vision by learning the languages, cultures, and worldviews of the people he served and engaged with in Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Ethiopia, and Papua New Guinea. Tippett summarizes his contribution as follows: “If I have made any worthwhile contribution to missionology for the postcolonial era, . . . I have aimed at bringing anthropology as a science, the Bible as a record of God and humanity in relationship, and Christian mission as its medium for demonstration until the end of the age, together in a missionology adequate for the post-colonial era” (428–29).

When Tippett wrote of the postcolonial era, he was thinking of it in a narrowly political and socioeconomic sense of changes that were expected to come after the end of colonialism. Understandably, since he concluded writing in 1978, the new genre of postcolonial studies that emerged in the last decades of the twentieth century still lay in the future. Edward Said’s Orientalism did not appear until 1978, and postcolonial studies have progressed beyond the transfer of political power and formation for independent nations with the purpose of engaging the legacies of colonialism’s discourses and social structures. Postcolonial studies have made inroads into Christian mission studies and theologies. They challenge Christian communities in the Southern Hemisphere that continue to hold uncritically onto structures and management styles inherited from the historical denominations. In spite of the attempt of Christians to indigenize Christianity, people of other faiths in some regions still see Christianity as a legacy carried over from colonialism embedded in the old matrix of colony-commerce-Christianity.

As a child of his time, Tippett viewed non-Western cultures on the whole as needing to be redeemed by Western Christianity. A self-identified evangelical, he had difficulty with emerging ecumenical mission paradigms such as dialogue and Christian presence, and he was concerned about syncretism. His commitment to Christian mission as he understood it, however, was commendable, and he is an exemplary witness to those who wish to be missionaries. His narrative echoes with the stories of a number of missionaries who left the world to pursue that vision by learning the languages, cultures, and worldviews of the people they served and engaged with.

When Missions Shapes the Mission: You and Your Church Can Reach the World.


Unfortunately, these subtle evangelical nuances could feed myopic preconceptions that would undermine the purpose of inspiring a global perspective on Christ’s expanding kingdom.

—Robert L. Gallagher

Robert L. Gallagher is associate professor of intercultural studies, and chair and director of M.A. Studies, Department of Intercultural Studies, Wheaton College Graduate School, Wheaton, Illinois.

Theology of Mission: A Believers Church Perspective.


Best known for his work on ethics and especially for his defense of pacifism, John Howard Yoder taught theology of mission from 1964 to 1983 at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, in Elkhart, Indiana. Since Yoder planned to have the lectures transcribed and printed for his students’ use, the course was recorded twice. The transcription and printing, however, did not occur, and the tapes were lost for more than thirty years. The editors of the present volume transcribed tapes from the 1973 course along with the nine lectures that still exist from the 1976 course, thus fulfilling Yoder’s original plan. While Yoder’s insights on mission are valuable, the lectures are dated and reflect the situation when he delivered them, especially the theories of mission prevalent then. One can only wonder how Yoder would have modified them in light of the last forty years.

The great value of the book is Yoder’s thorough defense of and advocacy for the believers church model by which he means a gathered church of committed members. Standing firmly in the Anabaptist tradition, he bemoans the Constantinian shift, which moved primitive Christianity from a voluntary organization to an organ of the state. In Yoder’s reading of Paul’s missionary work, Paul planted churches only in areas where there were existing communities of prepared people, namely, synagogues. Not that he thinks that all members of synagogues converted to becoming Christ
followers, but that those who left the synagogue, along with believing Gentiles, became a new community of faith. This gathered community model is worked out in a consistent manner, though he strains to describe the expansion of the church before the Radical Reformation, since for Yoder the presence of a group of believers in a missionary environment is necessary for the Gospel to advance. He therefore baptizes the monastic movement, albeit reluctantly, as the gathered community from which mission occurred.

This theme of the new community of faith, rather than the activity of an individual missionary, being the missionary presence runs like a red thread throughout the book. When, after 400 pages, he arrives at his method of mission, “migration evangelism,” the reader has been prepared to understand that only a community can effectively carry out the command of Christ to disciple the nations “as you go.” Indeed, the editors include as an afterword a pamphlet with this title that spells out his missionary method. Scattered throughout the book are illustrations that come from his missionary work in Europe after World War II and particularly his time doing relief work in Algeria, then French-controlled.

Yoder makes a strong case for community in mission and the sending of teams rather than solitary missionaries to plant churches. What is lacking, however, is reference to the work of the Holy Spirit in animating these communities of faith, which are witnessing primarily by their presence and lifestyle rather than by a demonstration of spiritual power. Also missing is an acknowledgement that these communities of faith can become ghettos rather than beacons of the Gospel to advance. He therefore seems hesitant regarding “making disciples of all nations.” The lectures are worth reading for their consistent Anabaptist approach to mission.

—James J. Stamoolis

James J. Stamoolis, a former missionary to South Africa, is the author of monographs and articles on the missionary work of Eastern Orthodox churches.

Missionary Methods: Research, Reflections, and Realities.


This book is a compilation of some of the papers presented at the 2012 annual conference of the Evangelical Missiological Society, commemorating the publication of Roland Allen’s book Missionary Methods: St. Paul’s or Ours? (1912). The authors of the papers agree that the foundation of any missionary methodology must first be biblically and theoretically sound; then adding insights gained through missiological studies—anthropology, linguistics, history, and so forth—brings us...
to the development of a methodology. In the introduction, Payne points out that “while the kingdom ethic we proclaim never changes, our contexts do change. And with changing context comes the reality of changing methods” (xix).

Robert Gallagher examines aspects of Paul’s missionary methods and at the same time critiques Allen’s views; he offers a more expansive hermeneutical approach, yet agrees with Allen on the work of the Holy Spirit in missions. Rob Hughes goes on to expand on Allen’s understanding of the centrality of the Holy Spirit in missions. John Cheong’s paper concludes the first part by presenting a reassessment of various views on incarnational models and incarnational methodology, with particular reference to John’s gospel.

Gary Corwin’s paper opens the second part of this book with an examination of North American missionary methodology during the last one hundred years, taking a close look at the various ideologies that have influenced missionary work. David Hesseltine’s paper concludes the discussion on praxis, with a brief review of contextualized preaching about the wrath and judgment of God. A look at the rise of orality in mission practices, by Anthony Casey, brings the reader to consider an often overlooked area, that of reaching peoples whose culture and history are steeped in oral tradition.

The final chapters are case studies: Joel Thiessen’s examination of missionary endeavors in the multi-ethnic reality of Canada today, Robert Bennett’s paper on reaching animistic societies, John Mehn’s paper on training church leaders in Japan, and Mark Williams’s analysis of missionary methods among the Muslims of the Philippines.

These papers, along with Ott’s challenging conclusion, give the reader much food for thought and make a valuable contribution to the study of missionary methodology.

—Penelope R. Hall

Penelope R. Hall, a Canadian, serves as a consultant for theological studies and theological libraries in the Majority World. She served as a missionary/Bible translator in South Vietnam (1966–75) and in Ecuador (1978–88), with some months spent in Malaysia, Thailand, India, Ethiopia, Central America, and Europe.


Written by an expert on Korean Christianity, this long-awaited book discusses various issues significant in the surprising and sudden emergence of Korean Christianity. With a style that is both impassioned and meticulous, The Making of Korean Christianity is an expanded and updated revision of the author’s Ph.D. dissertation, with the addition of a new chapter on saviors.

Writing from the perspective of world Christianity, the author describes the earliest encounter between the Christianity of the missionaries and the traditional religions of Koreans as one of transmission and appropriation. Through the missionaries’ theological ingenuity in adding a monotheistic flavor to Hananim, the ancient Korean name of a heavenly god, the Christian God successfully became part of this book with an examination of North American missionary methodology during the last one hundred years, taking a close look at the various ideologies that have influenced missionary work. David Hesseltine’s paper concludes the discussion on praxis, with a brief review of contextualized preaching about the wrath and judgment of God. A look at the rise of orality in mission practices, by Anthony Casey, brings the reader to consider an often overlooked area, that of reaching peoples whose culture and history are steeped in oral tradition.

Finally, I note that, although Oak describes diversity among the missionaries, he tends to describe national Christians monolithically. Also, he could have given more attention to Japanese Christianity in the region, not just Chinese Christianity. He discusses insightfully the formation of early Korean Christianity but could have given more attention to the more complicated issue of its legacy. There were inconsistencies in transliterating Chinese characters, as well as some confusion in the distinction between shamanism and folk religion. Finally, he does not specify why he selects the years 1876–1915 as the scope of his coverage.

—Kyo Seong Ahn

Kyo Seong Ahn is associate professor of historical theology, Presbyterian College and Theological Seminary, Seoul, Korea.

Proclaiming the Peacemaker: The Malaysian Church as an Agent of Reconciliation in a Multicultural Society.


The Peacemaker is of course Jesus, but it is also the church in mission called to proclaim the Peacemaker. Yet in the immediate sense, the church itself is the audience for the message of peacemaking as an integrative motif in biblical missiology, and the proclaimer is the missionary-author writing back to the churches he served. It is not easy for expatriate prophets to find an appropriate voice, and thus it is significant to note that Peter Rowan’s role and message have been endorsed by important Malaysian church leaders. The foreword by Vinoth Ramachandra also provides astute observations about how thoughtful people of other faiths are likely to perceive what is going on. Peacemaking is no game for the politically, or the theologically, naive.

A classic missionary dilemma is that of being an outsider who seeks to balance proclamation with affirmation of what is already there. Rowan is in this sense a classic missionary. His Northern Irish background gave him a sense of urgency. His decade of involvement in the Malaysian church and its social constraints helped him to see the need for a fresh conceptualization of mission, be aware of the importance of presenting peacemaking in terms an evangelical constituency might accept, and understand the impossibility of saying anything helpful without a thorough knowledge of the complex interplay of religion, ethnicity, and politics that Malaysia presents.
Books that begin life as theses do not always shift genres well, but Proclaiming the Peacemaker may be an exception. There is still some evidence of the Ph.D. eggshell, but Rowan makes us nearly forget the origin of this book by his gift for clear and systematic analysis. I could be spared some of the asides affirming the significance and quality of writers he quotes, but others in his intended audience may find these reassuring. The potential for the book’s impact lies not just in its message but in its suitability as a teaching text—and not just in Malaysian contexts.

—John Roxborough

John Roxborough is an honorary fellow at the University of Otago Department of Theology and Religion, Dunedin, New Zealand, and formerly lecturer at Malaysia Theological Seminary, Seremban, Malaysia.

Paul through Mediterranean Eyes: Cultural Studies in First Corinthians.


Most travelers who sail the ocean of studies that harbor at Paul’s Corinth have approached from the West (31). Kenneth Bailey sails from the Mediterranean to explore how Middle Eastern Christians have understood 1 Corinthians (19). He has “three basic concerns”: first, to demonstrate the impact of Hebrew rhetorical style on Paul’s composition (19, 39, and Appendix 1); second, to show that Paul’s use of metaphor creates, not merely illustrates, meaning (19, 30); and third, to use “translations of 1 Corinthians into Syriac, Arabic and Hebrew” to address textual and rhetorically critical questions (19 and Appendix 2). In this review I will sample Bailey’s treatment of Isaiah 28, his handling of Paul’s body metaphor, and his use of Oriental versions of the Bible to discern the meaning of 1 Corinthians.

Bailey draws on the work of James Kugel to categorize several types of parallelism from the “heightened prose” of the prophets. Isaiah 28:14–18 illustrates a combination of these forms. Bailey sees a pattern that he calls “the prophetic rhetorical template” (39–40). A glossary (527–29) provides helpful definitions of terms such as cameo, which refers to “clusters of . . . one or more Hebrew parallelisms” that form the “building blocks” of homilies (527). Bailey applies this template to “Paul’s hymn to the cross” in 1 Corinthians 1:17–2:2 (72). A “seven cameo ring composition” is framed by three groups of additional cameos on either side. At the top, Paul writes that he was sent “to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom” (1:17 ESV). At the bottom, he underscores “I . . . did not come . . . with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified” (2:1–2). Paul’s references to the Gospel and human eloquence are inverted to highlight his essential message within the frame: “we preach Christ crucified” (1:23a) (72–101).

In 1 Corinthians Paul gives the material reality and metaphor of the body great weight. While Bailey rightly refers to parables in the prophets, the constitutive use of metaphor is not peculiarly Middle Eastern. Indeed, the parable of the body was a common trope of Greco-Roman political rhetoric. Bailey sees clearly that Paul related the physical body of the Christian to the social body of Christ. Both bodies are “for the Lord” (6:13, 15, 19) and are indwelt by the Holy Spirit (6:19; cf. 3:16–17). Physical bodies and their gendered nature are not evil, nor are they
unimportant. Indeed, they are eschatologically significant. "Human sexuality . . . is part of the inner core of the whole person called the body, and that body will be raised. [So,] sexual immorality is a forcible separation from Christ and . . . destructive to the body / church" (185, 195). Bailey sees Paul combating the Cynic-Stoic ideal of self-sufficiency by calling each member of the body to demonstrate “the same care for one another” (12:25). Striking a chord that resounds throughout Bailey’s work, he draws attention to “the strong tendency . . . for each tradition to become self-sufficient and say to the rest of the Christian world, ‘We don’t need you! We have our language, liturgy, history, theology, tradition and culture. All we need, we find within ourselves’” (343).

With Paul through Mediterranean Eyes, Bailey nourishes the joints of Christ’s social body. Perhaps he is a joint, a Western-become-Middle-Eastern Christian. Moreover, he has crossed the isthmus at Corinth to deliver the gems of Syriac, Arabic, and Hebrew texts into the hands of Western sojourners. For example, “the Arabic [of Ibn al-Sari’s translation of 1 Cor. 15:44] reads Yuzra’ jasad nafsani (it is sown a personal body). . . . The Arabic form nafsani has to do with humanness. [The word] ruhani, has to do with the Spirit. . . . A physical person who is ruhani is a Spirit-filled physical person. One or both of these key words appear in twenty of the Syriac, Arabic and Hebrew versions . . . and in none of them are there any overtones of a ‘disembodied spirit’” (465–66). The material “body of a person,” sown in death, will be raised, filled, and directed by the Holy Spirit. Jesus’ own Spirit-filled physical and social body is the model. Paul swam in the briny cultural waters of Hellenistic Judaism structured by Roman power. Bailey stresses that Paul’s arm and pen stroked in parallel with Israel’s prophets.

——Gregory R. Perry

Gregory R. Perry is associate professor of New Testament and director of the City Ministry Initiative, Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri.

Formation for Life, Just Peacemaking, and Twenty-First-Century Discipleship.


Twenty-two writers contribute to this volume of nineteen essays. Each chapter develops a different theme related to just peacemaking. The essays, with several additions, were contributions at a conference cosponsored by Fuller Theological Seminary’s Just Peacemaking Institute and the Lord’s Day Alliance.

In his fine foreword Richard Mouw sets the tone, viewing the fourth and sixth of the Ten Commandments—Sabbath worship and not killing—as foundational. He suggests that every week as believers gather for worship, they would do well to view their meeting as a renewal of commitment to the Decalogue—that is, as worship centered in the holiness of God with a commitment to justice.

The book is presented in two parts. The first section is energized by accounts of just peacemaking. The second section is a description of the practice of a new paradigm for peacemaking. Stassen introduces that section by presenting ten practices for just peacemaking that are mostly derived from the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5–7). These ten practices inform the presentations for the second half of the book. Each is grounded in specific teachings of Jesus. Each practice is also a practical commentary on the principles of the WCC-sponsored Decade to Overcome Violence (138).

The practices are understandable and practical: nonviolent action; independent initiatives; conflict resolution; acknowledging responsibility, human rights, sustainable economic justice, international networks, United Nations, reducing weapons, and joining groups. Imagine the foment in a study group viewing such practical commitments through the lens of the Sermon on the Mount!

More attention in the opening pages about the organization of the book would have been helpful; that said, it is a very readable tome. This book is not a “can do” announcement. Rather, it is a humble quest for Christ-centered praxis with the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in just peacemaking.

——David W. Shenk

David W. Shenk is a global consultant with Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM). A globalist, author, and teacher, he leads the EMM Christian/Muslim Relations Team, Peacemakers Confessing Christ.

Asian Politics and Ecumenical Vision: Selected Writings of Feliciano V. Cariño.


Asian Politics and Ecumenical Vision is a posthumous collection of writings by Feliciano Cariño, whose overarching concern was to present an authentic, living, Asian theology to make Christianity more relevant to Asian people. Cariño’s theological reflection includes the actualization of Christian faith in the context of the political dictatorship of his own country, the Philippines; challenges arising from the Asian reality of religious plurality and poverty; and the role of Christianity in Asian countries facing globalization.

The editors arranged Cariño’s writings into four groups. The articles in part 1 emphasize the importance of formulating a living theology in Asia that goes beyond Western-ready-made theologies so as to be legitimate and relevant to Asian people. In part 2 we see Cariño struggling to articulate the role of the churches in the rapidly changing political, economic, social, and religious geography of Asia. Part 3 displays Cariño’s passion for the building of a better society and for enlightening Asian Christian intellectuals for that task. In part 4, Cariño, sensing the impact of globalization in Asia, asks Asian churches to be more positive as agents in keeping up with global trends and to forge a new future of Asian peoples.

Readers may find the articles in each part to be loosely connected, since they were prepared as lectures in various settings, but the book as a whole clearly shows a development in Cariño’s theological stance and his perceptions of major issues in the Asian theater. His consistent concern, as for many Asian theologians, was to give the Christian Gospel reality as an actual belief held by Asian people in such a way that Christianity would make sense to them.

Cariño’s articles faithfully represent the struggles Asian theologians went through in articulating authentic Asian theology from the 1960s up to the early 2000s. During this period many Asian theologians attempted to de-Westernize theology in Asia. Cariño contributed significantly to this discourse, and we can feel his struggles on each page. One aspect of his thought that I would cautiously point out is that Cariño’s emphasis on praxis may be misperceived to be ideological and partisan rather than a genuine Christian effort for social and political improvement. But that would be to misread him. Unfortunately, in most Asian countries praxis-oriented church movements have
often faced resistance from the typically conservative religious consciousness of Asians.

This book well captures Cariño’s authentic Asian struggle to bring the Gospel to Asian people. Readers will benefit from the insights of an Asian theologian-practitioner who sought to be faithful both to Christian truth and to Asian reality.

—Moonjang Lee

Moonjang Lee is senior pastor of Doorae Church, Seoul, South Korea. Previously he taught at Trinity Theological College, Singapore; University of Edinburgh, Scotland; and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, Massachusetts.

The Rebirth of Latin American Christianity.


Latin American Christianity has undergone drastic changes in the last sixty years, moving from a predominantly Roman Catholic, clergy-dominated religion to a panorama of diverse lay movements, charismatic groups, Pentecostalism, mass evangelism, and prophetic voices demanding justice and human rights in the midst of political repression. In an astute analysis of how Latin American Christianity has been transformed since 1950, Todd Hartch attributes this rebirth to five significant movements: that of witnesses and evangelists, the prophetic movement committed to the poor and oppressed, the Pentecostal and charismatic movement, the ascent of the laity, and the recognition of the universality of their religion and subsequent missionary expansion. He convincingly documents how Protestantism, primarily Pentecostalism, has grown exponentially throughout the continent, but not at the expense of Catholicism, for the rise of Protestantism has served as a catalyst for Catholic revitalization.

In addition to exposing the rapid growth of Spirit-filled religion focusing on speaking in tongues and faith-healing, Hartch aptly documents the transformative role of base ecclesial communities (CEBs) and new ecclesial movements (NEBs), which are largely formed and led by laity and which offer an alternative for Catholics confronted by the growth of Pentecostalism.

After 500 years of receiving missionaries, Latin American church organizations are now sending their own missionaries around the globe and in many cases are being very successful. Brazil’s Universal Church of the Kingdom of God serves as one example of how an indigenous religion has been exported and adopted in other countries. Since it has experienced a rebirth, Latin American Christianity is quite different from what it was in the mid-twentieth century.

—Ronald A. Whitlatch

Ronald A. Whitlatch serves as mission interpreter, working with the United Methodist Church General Board of Global Ministries. He served as a missionary pastor in Argentina (1983–2001).


It is a courageous person who writes a book on a new subject area. Timothy Yates has previously published on the history of Christian missions, but now he seeks to explore the mission to the indigenous people of New Zealand, though

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without the background of extensive knowledge of New Zealand history in particular. Rather than base his work on secondary literature with a little work in the archives, he has taken an opposite path. This book is thoroughly grounded in the missionary correspondence of the CMS and, to a lesser extent, the missions of the Wesleyans and the Society of Mary. Its weakness, however, is its limited knowledge of local historiography. As a result, the text is rich with detail but offers no new insights on its subject matter. Missions get a bad press in that historiography, but this book does not offer a corrective.

It might have been different. Missions histories have offered rich insights on the history of the new Christian nations, but Yates acknowledges that his approach is traditional narrative history—and at times the narrative seems lost in colorful detail. The book concludes with chapters on indigenous agents and on conversion, along with an appendix reviewing a recent book by Richard Quinn. But these pages do not really make sense of what was distinctive about the mission to New Zealand. Yates has provided a clear and accurate narrative, but 200 years after the first missionaries, a very secular society needs a stronger explanation of the place of missions in its history.

—Peter J. Lineham

Peter J. Lineham, professor of history, Massey University, Auckland, New Zealand, is the author of No Ordinary Union (Wellington, N.Z., 1980), Bible and Society (Wellington, N.Z., 1996), and Destiny (Auckland, N.Z., 2013).

Environmental Missions: Planting Churches and Trees.


As an environmental policy researcher, erstwhile forest manager, and practicing Christian, I was excited when this volume hit my desk. I commend the author for his commitment to his faith and to the earth. But sadly, the book disappoints on a number of levels. The most significant problem is its restricted evangelical-centric approach. The author declares himself to be a “radical evangelical Christian” (96), which he seems to confuse with orthodox evangelicalism—believing that an opportunity to spread the Gospel should never be overlooked, whatever the cost. Here the cost is the grounding in a broader understanding of environmental mission and ministry. With more than a quarter of the book constructed around evangelical theology, it makes for chaotic—and at times offensive—reading. Where, for example, is the moral virtue in trying to convert a dying Hindu (106), or the connection to eco-theology?

The author is also ecologically confused. He offers tirades against the logging of old-growth forests, yet he characterizes our secular existence on earth as a wilderness or wasteland and God’s kingdom as a garden—surely a metaphor for the taming of nature? One is pleased to see the author make linkages to global environmental initiatives such as the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change. But Bliss would have benefited greatly from adopting a more ecumenical approach, for a rich and by now extensive literature examines many of his themes in a far more credible and nuanced manner, dealing with topics such as the nature of contemporary earth care, environmental stewardship, and “green” ecclesiology and missiology.

Here I would recommend Clive Ayre’s recent book Earth, Faith, and Mission: The Theology and Practice of Earthcare (Mosaic Resources, 2014). Faith, like the planet, needs to be diverse to survive, and a single denominational approach is essentially a monoculture.

—Tim Cadman

Tim Cadman, a licensed Anglican lay minister in New South Wales, is a research fellow, Institute for Ethics, Governance, and Law, Griffith University, Queensland, Australia.

Dissertation Notices


Ham, Robert T. “Migrant Domestic Workers, the Church, and Mission.” D.Miss. Pasadena, Calif.: Fuller Theological Seminary, 2013.


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Ms. Barbara Hüfner-Kemper, psychotherapist and United Methodist missionary, White Plains, New York, helps participants walk through common experiences of stress. She asks, “What does stress do to the brain and the body and how can we find a healthy response?” Cosponsored by United Methodist Church General Board of Global Ministries. $95.

September 29–October 2 (Monday–Thursday)
HOW TO DEVELOP MISSION AND CHURCH ARCHIVES.
Ms. Martha Lund Smalley, Yale Divinity School Library, helps missionaries and church leaders identify, organize, and preserve essential records. $175.

October 6–9, 2014 (Monday–Thursday)
THE INTERNET AND MISSION: GETTING STARTED.
Mr. Wilson Thomas, Wilson Thomas Systems, Bedford, N.H., and Dr. Dwight P. Baker, Overseas Ministries Study Center, in a hands-on workshop, show how to get the most out of the World Wide Web for mission research. $175.

October 20–23, 2014 (Monday–Thursday)
NURTURING AND EDUCATING TRANSCULTURAL KIDS.
Ms. Janet Blomberg, Interaction International, and Ms. Elizabeth Stephens, of Libby Stephens: Humanizing the Transition Experience, help you help your children meet the challenges they face as third culture persons. $175.

October 27–30, 2014 (Monday–Thursday)
BUILDING BRIDGES WITH HINDUS IN DIASPOR.
Dr. Atul Y. Aghamkar, OMSC senior mission scholar, South Asia Institute of Advanced Christian Studies, Bangalore, India, will discuss Hindu migrants’ beliefs, practices, and perceptions about Christianity, and suggest ways Christians might relate with Hindus. Cosponsored by Greenfield Hill Congregational Church, Fairfield, Connecticut. $175.

November 10–14, 2014 (Monday–Friday)
REVIVAL IN CHRISTENDOM AND THE (RE-)EMERGENCE OF WORLD CHRISTIANITY.
In a period when the vision of Protestant Christians barely extended beyond Europe and the eastern seaboard of America, a series of movements of radical spiritual renewal in different countries brought a drastic change of perspective, eventually contributing to the shaping of World Christianity as we now see it. Professor Andrew F. Walls, University of Edinburgh, Liverpool Hope University, and Akrofi-Christaller Institute, explores the relation of the Pietist and early Evangelical movements to the missionary movement from the West, and how activities originally directed to Christian societies in the West had abiding effects far beyond those societies. He delivers OMSC’s tenth Distinguished Mission Lectureship series—five lectures with discussions. Cosponsored by Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and The Mission Society. $175.

November 17–20, 2014 (Monday–Thursday)
HEALING THE WOUNDS OF TRAUMA: HELP FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS.
Dr. Harriet Hill, Trauma Healing Institute of the American Bible Society, helps participants use Scripture and basic mental health principles to find healing of emotional pain and equips them to help others. Cosponsored by First Presbyterian Church, New Haven, Connecticut. $175.

December 1–4, 2014 (Monday–Thursday)
THE GOSPEL OF PEACE IN DYNAMIC ENGAGEMENT WITH THE PEACE OF ISLAM.
Dr. David W. Shenk, Eastern Mennonite Missions, explores the church’s calling to bear witness to the Gospel of peace in its engagement with Muslims, whether in contexts of militancy or in settings of moderation. Cosponsored by Eastern Mennonite Mission and Mennonite Central Committee. $175.

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