

# IJFM

Int'l Journal of Frontier Missiology

The Journal  
of the International Society for  
Frontier Missiology

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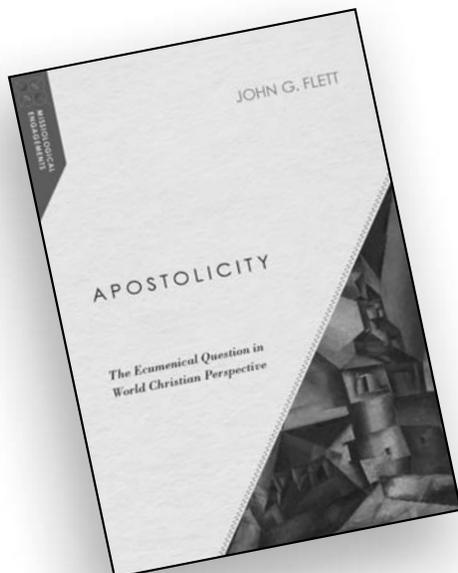
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## Ralph Winter and the Strategic Use of History

Forty years ago, Ralph Winter drafted the blueprints for a new mission agency focused on unreached peoples. Yet were it not for his historical imagination, Winter might never have conceived of the U. S. Center for World Mission. He intuitively drew on historical analysis as a tool for mission, trolling it for insights into the ways God had moved men of the past for His Kingdom purposes, and then welding those insights into practice. For ten years he taught the Historical Development of the Christian Movement at Fuller Seminary, always demanding that his students approach contemporary mission through historical lenses.

This crucial dimension of history in missiology was addressed in Dwight Baker's presentation last fall at the EMS/ISFM gathering (p. 5). Baker believes missiology to be an "interested" discipline,<sup>1</sup> one in which mission interests are a justifiable stimulus for our biblical, anthropological and historical study. While a good missiologist will guard the authenticity of the past, his mission concerns will shape how he ventures into history.

Winter made *use* of history. You couldn't work on projects with him without hearing frequent historical anecdotes. At meetings he would offer vivid historical interpretations as compelling rationales for his organizational ventures. History seemed to give Winter a certain outlook, an optimism that David Bosch so perceptively identified with the historicism of Kenneth Scott Latourette (whose volumes Winter assigned to his students at Fuller).<sup>2</sup> Bosch fit Winter's optimism into a modern Enlightenment paradigm of missiology, and the positivist, progressive spirit of modern times did seem to characterize Winter's use of the past.

Winter was actually a Johnny-come-lately to history. Those who entered the study of history through the humanities immediately felt something different about Winter's orientation. He was an engineer by training (Caltech), as were many of his post-World War II missionary colleagues. They were problem solvers, and the problems they faced in mission were the stimulus for Winter's historical craft.

One can miss important distinctions if Winter is pigeonholed in Bosch's paradigm. An evangelical historian like Winter had a countercultural view of purpose—God's purpose—which a modern epistemology jettisons from its historiography. As an engineer, he may have utilized a scientific method to assess causes and effects in his study of the past, but what he found he always

*Editorial continued on p. 4*

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interpreted as part of the *advance-ment* of God's kingdom. It was God's providential design that he expected to discover when he peered into history. Neither should one gloss over Winter's integration of anthropology into history. His doctoral work at Cornell oriented him more to the study of groups, tribes and social institutions than to individuals. He might have exemplified the "great man" theory in identifying the pivotal roles of a William Carey or a Saint Patrick, but it was their formation of mission institutions that he considered most vital. His mix of engineering and social science conditioned him to search the past for structures and how they might promote or inhibit the expansion of God's kingdom. His historical elaboration of two structures in God's redemptive mission was one of his seminal contributions to modern mission,<sup>3</sup> but it also influenced how he would design a mission organization if given the chance. Forty years ago, the chance arose and he took it—and it was his deep appreciation for history which helped shape that Pasadena agency (now Frontier Ventures).

The authors in this issue are conscious of history as they frame their present mission concerns. Steve Hawthorne has traced the journey of *frontier* missiology over a half-century (p. 23). Originally given as an address to the ISFM 2014 on the 40th anniversary of the 1974 Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization, Hawthorne surveys recent history to distinguish the essential features of a missiology that undergirds a mandate for the frontiers.

Other authors reflect the use of history in our encounter with other religious worlds. H. L. Richard surveys the choice of Sanskrit terms for God in Bible translation in the Hindu world (p. 11). A cadre of Japanese colleagues addressed the recent SEANET consultation on the emerging contrast between a post-tsunami evangelism and previous evangelical efforts to reach a Buddhist (and resistant) Japan (this portion is from their recent compendium reviewed on page 35). And Timothy Schultz's review of Robin Boyd (p. 34) offers a more accurate history of contextualization in the Indian church.

Our missiological interests in approaching history are obviously varied and selective, but an informed historical imagination remains a crucial dimension of mission practice. Winter's keen appreciation for history, combined with his engineer's mindset—one of creative problem solving—certainly proved that forty years ago.

In Him,



Brad Gill  
Senior Editor, *IJFM*

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Dwight P. Baker, "Missiology as an Interested Discipline," *Int'l Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 38, no. 1, (January 2014): 17–20.

<sup>2</sup> David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1991), 335.

<sup>3</sup> Ralph D. Winter, "Two Structures of God's Redemptive Mission," *Missiology* 2, no. 1 (1974): 121–39.

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The **IJFM** is published in the name of the International Student Leaders Coalition for Frontier Missions, a fellowship of younger leaders committed to the purposes of the twin consultations of Edinburgh 1980: The World Consultation on Frontier Missions and the International Student Consultation on Frontier Missions. As an expression of the ongoing concerns of Edinburgh 1980, the **IJFM** seeks to:

- ☞ promote intergenerational dialogue between senior and junior mission leaders;
- ☞ cultivate an international fraternity of thought in the development of frontier missiology;
- ☞ highlight the need to maintain, renew, and create mission agencies as vehicles for frontier missions;
- ☞ encourage multidimensional and interdisciplinary studies;
- ☞ foster spiritual devotion as well as intellectual growth; and
- ☞ advocate "A Church for Every People."

Mission frontiers, like other frontiers, represent boundaries or barriers beyond which we must go yet beyond which we may not be able to see clearly and boundaries which may even be disputed or denied. Their study involves the discovery and evaluation of the unknown or even the reevaluation of the known. But unlike other frontiers, mission frontiers is a subject specifically concerned to explore and exposit areas and ideas and insights related to the glorification of God in all the nations (peoples) of the world, "to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God." (Acts 26:18)

Subscribers and other readers of the **IJFM** (due to ongoing promotion) come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Mission professors, field missionaries, young adult mission mobilizers, college librarians, mission executives, and mission researchers all look to the **IJFM** for the latest thinking in frontier missiology.

# Aspects of the Role of History in Missiology

by Dwight P. Baker

*The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there.*

— L. E. Hartley, *The Go-Between*

*The past is never dead. It's not even past.*

— William Faulkner, *Requiem for a Nun*

The image of missiology as a three-legged stool has been a durable one, for the three legs of theology, history, and anthropology give the field strength and vitality.<sup>1</sup> On the one hand, the three fields complement each other, each supplying perspectives that the other two lack. On the other hand, the presence of the three fields suggests restraint and provides a corrective whenever some monodisciplinarian mounts a hobbyhorse and flogs it too hard, wishing to claim overly exalted preeminence for the role of his or her favored discipline. (I wish to state clearly at the outset that in using the three-field model I have no desire to restrict missiology to those three fields. Rather, as I sought to spell out in an earlier article, I see theology, history, and anthropology as markers or metonyms for an expansive array of disciplines and fields of study upon which missiology can and will draw with profit. Missiology is inherently interdisciplinary. It may be more than tripartite, but it becomes distorted and less than it ought to be if one of its three core fields is elided.<sup>2</sup>)

Recent years, however, have seen schools of world mission in the United States deliberately rob the missiological stool of one of its legs—despite the precipitous instability of a stool with two legs that are off center. Some mission schools have explicitly downplayed the contribution of anthropology to missiology, motivated, if one understands them correctly, by a desire to enhance the status of theology.<sup>3</sup> Others have more quietly demoted the standing of anthropology by simply omitting to hire missionary anthropologists as faculty or by permitting the positions of retiring professors to remain vacant.

Now a leading missiologically oriented anthropologist, a friend of mine, places before us a comment that questions the value of *history* for missiology. As a guide for missionary practice, he asks, what does history have to offer comparable to the clear and practical value anthropology supplies?

Framed that way—as a hostile weigh-in between those who ought to be partners and to be cultivating collegiality, a cause that is not elevated by casting

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*Dwight P. Baker served as associate editor of the International Bulletin of Missionary Research (2002–15). Prior to retirement he also served as program director and then associate director of the Overseas Ministries Study Center, New Haven, Connecticut (2002–11). Previously he was director of the World Christian Foundations study program at the U.S. Center for World Mission, Pasadena, California (1994–2001). He is coeditor, with Douglas Haywood, of Serving Jesus with Integrity: Ethics and Accountability in Mission (William Carey Library, 2010), an associate editor of Family Accountability in Missions: Korean and Western Case Studies (OMSC Publications, 2013), and coeditor, with Robert J. Priest, of The Missionary Family: Witness, Concerns, Care (William Carey Library, 2014).*

aspersions on others—this is surely a battle missiology does not need to fight. History provides substance, both as raw material and as reflection, in interaction with which mission theology arises, and it provides part of the means for critiquing various theologies of mission. Theology of mission itself feeds directly into the self-understandings and role expectations of missionary practitioners. So stated, mission history is germane to missionary practice by indirection. But it is even more directly germane. The practices of and virtues attributed to the likes of David Brainerd and William Carey, or to David Livingstone and Mary Slessor, or to John Mott, Roland Allen, and Jim Elliot, for that matter, feed directly into missionary motivation, self-conception, and practice, at least initially. (As might be expected, missionaries, at least older style career or lifetime missionaries, do grow, change, and mature over their years in service. See the reflections of senior missionaries to be found in the “My Pilgrimage in Mission” series that appears in the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*. Occasionally missionaries change enough to lead them to leave the missionary calling or even the Christian faith altogether.<sup>4</sup>)

Missionary history in its various forms has the potential to enlarge the outlook and conceptual equipment of missionary practitioners. It supplies furnishings for the mind that can sensitize and set off sparks of recognition, giving missionaries a wider field of vision and more acute insight. History in general and mission history specifically can be of direct value to missionary practitioners by helping to shape both the missionaries as individuals and the missionary community into better informed and thereby better equipped missional instruments. To alert and probing minds, history can be illuminating. This is true even though, for reasons to be discussed below, I concur that history cannot tell missionaries what to do except in the broadest of terms, for history does not offer “how

to” lessons or practical small-scale guidance. What it does do is to provide background for making such decisions.

The comment by my missiological friend appeared as a blog posting. Given opportunity, he might want to qualify his comment further or to reconsider the framing he gave to it.<sup>5</sup> After all, we are creatures of history; we are thoroughly and inextricably embedded in history, and so are the ideas, objects, enterprises, and endeavors we create, including missiology and the writing of history itself. The questions we ask, the things we think important, the apparatus, mental and physical, with which we cope with the issues of life arise from and are conditioned by our positioning in time and place, that is, historically. We can



hardly think to escape history, even if we felt that that might be a useful thing to do. We cannot jump out of our skins or extricate ourselves from history.

As noted, I have written elsewhere regarding the contribution anthropology makes to missiology and of the value anthropologists have as faculty members in schools of world mission.<sup>6</sup> In that article I was writing to affirm the three-discipline character of missiology, suggesting that missionaries and students of mission are ill-advised to acquiesce in the elision of anthropology—and, by extension, of the social sciences—from missiology. Anthropology is not a stepchild but a legitimate partner in the missiological conversation. But in

reaffirming anthropology’s role, I do not wish to see a shift to the other side and watch history be disenfranchised. In promoting the claims of anthropology, let’s not undercut the legitimate contributions made by the other two legs.

History, of course, needs no defense from me, and since my degrees are in other fields (anthropology, English literature, and theological studies), I probably would not be the person best equipped to come to its defense if it did. Instead, after citing the blog in question, I will suggest several reasons why we need, if anything, *more extensive* and *more intimate* knowledge of history, not less, even if history does not give us immediately applicable practical advice. Not least significant of these reasons, by any means, is that greater knowledge of history, including mission history, should lead to greater missiological humility. A modicum of acquaintance with mission history can temper our zeal with judgment and save us from uttering or repeating many foolish statements.

### *Questioning the Value of History for Missiology*

When my friend in early 2015 posed the question of history’s value for missiology, he did so as a discussion starter. He commented that he was not writing “out of strong convictions” on the subject. Rather, he stated that he was putting his “personal impressions” forward so as to provide those “with a stronger history bent . . . the opportunity to correct [his] biased perceptions as needed.” Fair enough: he was offering an observation or a judgment in the process of formation, with the request to be shown why he was in error, if someone thought that he was.

As is quickly apparent, part of the point to be established turns on the definition one gives to the term “missiology.” He writes:

One of the richest areas of scholarly research and writing about missionaries comes from historians and missiological historians. But little of this

research is explicitly and intentionally oriented towards usable knowledge by contemporary missionaries or people engaged in Christian mission (however one defines mission). Indeed, while the Yale-Edinburgh group meets each year with a focus on mission history, they explicitly insist that the papers being presented not be missiological. That is, the format is simply history—not oriented to contemporary practitioners of mission and the “practice of mission” (which is a defining characteristic of missiology). So while there are certainly some outstanding historians of mission who desire their work to be in service of Christian mission (such as my hero Dana Robert)—a large majority of mission history is not so intended or designed. And in my own view any research focusing on much earlier eras of history is less easily practical and applicable in the present—which I take as one defining goal of missiology. In that sense I take anthropology (which does of course for most of us include recent history) to more naturally serve as practical handmaid to the practice of Christian mission. Which is not to say that the historical should not be a core part of every missiologist’s education.

Then he asks if anyone might “wish to clarify, using concrete examples, how my impressions” of history’s “lack of practical and applied strengths” are in error. Is there, he asks,

any book by a historian that matches the practical applicability of Paul Hiebert’s . . . *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* [Baker Academic, 1985]?

### *What Might Be Lost*

One way to see what history contributes is to consider what might be lost if history were turned out into the cold. Besides some very good friends, some of the “richest areas of scholarly research and writing about missionaries,” as my friend’s blog note mentions, would go by the wayside. Those are a steep price to pay. But in the process of jettisoning history, we would also lose our grounding and frame of reference. Cut off

**A**s an intellectual discipline, missiology is not a self-contained field. It continues reaching out more and more widely.

from our own past, we would no longer know who we are, for we carry our past within us, as indeed do our words and language. In addition, we would lose an excellent instrument for humility.

### Loss of Grounding and Frame of Reference

In “Missiology as an Interested Discipline” I argued for differentiating between the expansive field of mission studies in general and the also broad but more specific subfield within mission studies called “missiology.” Missiology sees itself as committed and as being in the service of missionary practice. It is a species of reflection on missionary engagement carried out for the sake of correcting, improving, enabling, and enhancing missional practices.<sup>7</sup> On this point my friend and I concur.

But I would want to insist on the significance of missiology’s siting; it is situated within the framework of mission studies in general. It draws sustenance from those broader, more disinterested studies and is enriched by their findings. They provide one avenue for critique of missiological formulations and a guard against overreaching.

In the threefold interdisciplinary conception of missiology, there is robust interaction between the fields of theology, history, and anthropology. But mission—and so missiology—is dynamic rather than static. Therefore, I suggested standing the three-legged stool on its head and adding “a fourth leg, actually an axis, on the bottom,” thereby turning it into a top. To stand up, tops must spin. Otherwise they flop over and lie inert on their sides. The fourth leg on the bottom stands for missionary practice. To the picture must be added feedback loops, both horizontal and vertical. The spinning of the top represents the dynamic nature

of missiology, but so do the feedback loops. The horizontal feedback loops link the three fields and represent ongoing interaction among them. The vertical feedback loops represent the passage of data from the field so that they can be incorporated into ongoing missiological reflection and the flow of refinements in theory feeding back into practices in the field.<sup>8</sup>

As an intellectual discipline, missiology is not a self-contained field. It continues reaching out more and more widely. Missiology’s ambition is not limited simply to the role of offering practical advice on how missionaries can carry out their functions in the field more efficiently and effectively and thereby attain better results. It also aspires to make its contribution to the indispensable component of “understanding,” a component that is fundamental if the evaluative and refining activities to which missiology lays claim are to be realized. In the search for understanding of mission engagement, mission history is indispensable. The quest for understanding links missiology in a common pursuit with mission studies more broadly conceived. To forgo the quest for understanding as of value in itself would be a price beyond what missiologists should be willing to pay.

### Loss of Our Past Means to Lose Who We Are

We are, in part, our past. Without history, we no longer know who we are—as individuals, as families and communities, as a people, or as the people of God.

Remember the way that the Israelites in the Hebrew Scriptures continually recited their history:

A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in

number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. (Deut. 26:5 NRSV)

The Israelites constantly called to mind God's mighty acts in their behalf; they spoke over and over again about God's deliverances of them. By reciting their history, they reminded themselves of who they were. So must we if we are not to become psychic and spiritual orphans. The self-made person, cut off from family and bereft of history, is impoverished indeed.

We are all aware that physically, we are our past; genetically we are formed of the flesh and DNA our forebears have bequeathed to us. But more than that, we carry within us the inchoate legacy—psychic, cultural, and spiritual—of those whose lineage we carry forward. That legacy is on our tongues in the ways we pronounce vowels; it is in our way of standing and our stride and the way we go to the bathroom; it is in our hearts in what we value. The study of history enables us, to some degree, to stand “over against” those partial and imperfectly discerned legacies and to judge them and, in a limited way, to turn from them—or to affirm them, thereby making our heritage our own in a richer and fuller sense.<sup>9</sup>

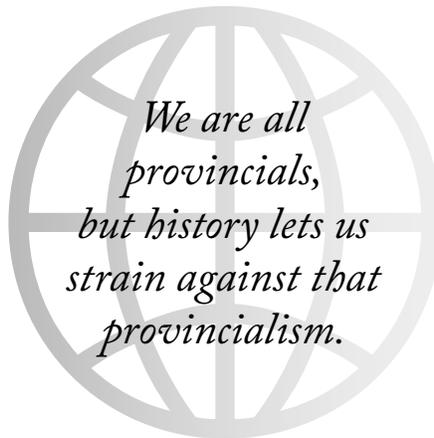
### Background and Equipage for Life and for Missional Decisions

As we study the Bible, still more as we seek to dwell within it and live with those whom we find populating it, we find in it a multiplicity that answers to the multiplicity that we find within ourselves. It is not just Walt Whitman who can say, “I am large, I contain multitudes” (“Song of Myself”).<sup>10</sup> So are we all; so do we all.

Part of the gain for those who are immersed in reading, studying, and memorizing the Bible from childhood is a mind that is furnished with an immense array of instructive persons, characters, and situations that can be drawn upon as examples, good and bad, when faced with new and demanding

choices or expectations. By trying them on for size, we can gain vicarious non-dangerous practice in assessing moral tests and challenges, and in weighing possible responses and courses of action. We can enter into and become part of an expansive family of heroes and some villains—and thereby gain a better idea of whom to emulate.

The point is that history offers similar opportunities to us. So does literature. So does living in proximity and familiar intercourse, to use an older idiom, with our neighbor. Without history we are trapped in the present or, worse, trapped in ourselves. We are all provincials, both temporally and spatially, but history lets us at least strain against that provincialism. We



may not all be able to travel widely, but through deepening our acquaintance with history—as also with literature—our mental horizons and the horizons of our souls can be expanded.

To a degree, history provides a laboratory in which alternate approaches to life, to politics, and to mission can be compared. Missiological reflection on what steps we ought to take would be immeasurably impoverished were mission history to be passed over.

### Loss of Humility

Mission history enables us to gain perspective on ourselves as persons, certainly, but it also lends clarity to our picture of our individual selves as instruments of mission. Mission history

sets our concerns and our grand “new” approaches for mission within a larger framework and serves to remind us that the new thing we are inclined to try has been tried before.

One thing that we find when we feel singled out and uniquely beset is the larger truth encased in Paul's reproof—or was it an encouragement?—that nothing has overtaken us that is not common to humankind (1 Cor. 10:13). We are neither all that special nor all that original, not as individuals and not as an era or epoch. Incidentals and the garb with which life is clothed change, but the poles around which our lives revolve are perduring. In mission thinking and practice, what about concerns for contextualization, or for not destroying cultures, or for respecting the work of the Holy Spirit in shaping the character the church will exhibit as it is formed in a new community of believers? Surely those concerns are distinctively modern; surely they are issues that have newly arisen in our day? Not so. Read the records of our Protestant missionary forebears of a hundred years ago and of two hundred years ago. They were concerned with the same issues, even if their language differed somewhat. In the late sixteenth century and into the seventeenth century, Matteo Ricci in China and the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Rome struggled with these issues. Gregory the Great in sending Augustine (the other Augustine; not the writer of the *Confessions*) as a missionary to Britain at the end of the sixth century addressed similar concerns.<sup>11</sup>

Did the Native American people to whom John Eliot in seventeenth-century “New England” found himself ministering need to become “civilized”? That is, did they need to adopt “our ways” (English ways, in this instance) of organizing life and knowledge, before they could become Christ's followers? Were English ways of framing discussions of spiritual realities a necessary prelude to religious

insight? Which comes first: Christianization or civilization? These questions, and issues related to them, were topics of formal and extended public literary debate during the formative period of the modern Protestant missionary movement in Britain and the United States at the end of the eighteenth and opening of the nineteenth centuries. They exercised the minds and pens of Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn, the preeminent U.S. and British mission thinkers and executives of the mid-nineteenth century. In the first half of the twentieth century, these topics found expression in the writings of Roland Allen. Current versions of this issue roil the waters of missiological discussion today.

If we were to forget the distinction between the sciences (thought of as cumulative; problem X has been solved and we can move on to a new puzzle) and the humanities (which constantly face anew the same issues albeit dressed in new clothes and regrouped in new configurations), we might be tempted to marvel at our own novelty. Here histories such as Jeffrey Cox's commendable volume, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700*, provide an excellent instrument for humility. A masterful review of its subject, Cox's book helps us to see how very much would be lost if mission history were to be cavalierly dismissed. Cox traces the complex interplay across three centuries of British missions between institutionalism and anti-institutionalism—between the building of mission stations, church structures, schools, hospitals, and so forth, grouping missional ministry and outreach around them, versus anti-institutional impulses. The tension between institutionalism and anti-institutionalism remains a constant; the context and forms in which it finds expression shift.

It is humbling to recognize that what we meet and what we have to offer are neither so new nor so novel or incisive or destined to be so effective as we

**H**istory helps us recognize what the real issues are and how to distinguish them from their shifting phenomenological trappings.

might desire. But we are called to be faithful in engaging in the task, using what is in our hand—and in our hearts and our minds, the instruments that we have—in the task before us. We do so knowing full well that we will never deliver the master stroke that overpowers our mortal enemy, Satan, and his minions. Christ, not us, is the Champion who has already accomplished that in our behalf. We are not likely to be credited with having been the designer of the next great “break-through” in mission. We act in the confidence that though she may plant and he or we may water, it is God who blesses and gives the increase (1 Cor. 3:7)—despite the feebleness of our halting and fragmentary efforts.

History, in sum, can help us to recognize what the real questions and issues are and how to distinguish them from their shifting phenomenological trappings that so frequently distract our gaze.

### *Point of Agreement*

There is a point at which I concur with the charge, cited earlier, that my friend's blog makes against history: history cannot decide questions of strategy or tell us in a given situation what we should do. It cannot give us precise directions for action. The past never maps directly onto the present or vice versa. Situations, times, circumstances, and means differ too widely. Discernment, thought, application, and hard effort on our part are required. But then, I do not find this inability to be a great loss, recommending as I do that the “strategies” we prepare should be small-scale, intended as a rough guide to our current concerns. Even while devising them we should consider them to be provisional and hold them lightly. We should be ready for them to be

disrupted and ourselves redirected. I suspect that we should always be wary of attempts to develop, still less impose, grand overarching strategies that try to wear a capital “S.”

Immersion through history in the experience and hard-won lessons garnered by others, however, can sharpen our perception. History can make us more alert to crux issues, can alert us to opportunities and to traps to watch out for. It can supply us with a feel for alternative means for addressing the crucial concerns we face in our day and our setting. Something similar is true of anthropology.<sup>12</sup> It is not a be-all and end-all for missiological concerns. It offers aid to persons of good will and provides perspective along the way. It can sensitize and raise some caution flags. It can provide some techniques for those willing to study them and learn to put them into practice, but it is not an assured path to insight and sensitivity in the field. Training and pre-field cautions are not to be held in contempt, but they will never make up for a failure in heart orientation on the part of the missionary. One seasoned missionary, who by the time we talked had earned a doctorate in anthropology, long ago told me, “The most obnoxious missionary I ever worked with had a master's degree in anthropology” (at that time not a common attainment among missionaries).

At one level, my blogging friend and I can be said not to disagree at all—which is not the same as to say that we fully agree. He can grant everything that I have said and still pose his “pin the butterfly to the cork board” question: Where is the book of mission history that stands on a par with Paul Hiebert's *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* in terms of applicable takeaway and formative advice for

mission practitioners? I can grant the import of his rhetorical skewering of history—after all, history is about a rather different thing than being a how-to book—and still contend that the contributions of history and of mission history are considerably wider and more fundamental than his posing of the issue seems to allow.<sup>13</sup> As for practical effect, it is hard to think of something more fundamental conceptually for missionaries or more consequential for missionary practice than the distinction church and mission historian Andrew Walls makes between proselytism and conversion, a distinction that grew out of his deep engagement with history.<sup>14</sup> It quite simply reorients missionary concepts and practice across the board.

Interestingly, despite the attempt to drive a wedge between anthropology and history (citing Paul Hiebert as exemplifying anthropology's superior value), it is Hiebert himself who states that though anthropology can tell us how things relate synchronically in the present, for meaning we must turn to history.<sup>15</sup> And his masterwork, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change*, is saturated with history.<sup>16</sup>

Christian faith, and therefore Christian mission, is inevitably and inextricably bound up in history. And it is so, in a richer and fuller sense than just that certain cosmically significant events—which they are—occurred in the early decades of the common era. Christian faith is formed by history and in history and, one can say, for history. Therefore, we do well to be informed about history—about that which has formed us and of which we are made—as we seek to live and speak and act responsibly in history for the glory of God, for the furtherance of his kingdom, for the praise of Jesus Christ, and for the spread of the Good News about the Lord of history, redeemer of humankind, savior of the world, and coming king. **IJFM**

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Earlier versions of this article were presented to the Northeast Region of the Evangelical Missiological Society, First Baptist Church, Flushing, New York, March 28, 2015, and at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Missiological Society, GIAL, Dallas, Texas, September 18–20, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> See Dwight P. Baker, "Missiology as an Interested Discipline—and Where Is It Happening?" *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 38, no 1 (January 2014): 17–20. As discussed by Kenneth Nehrbass, earlier formulations of what missiology is have at times consisted of quite expansive enumerations of subdisciplines called to play a role, e.g., see mappings of the field by Alan R. Tippett and Arthur F. Glasser; and in practice, missiologists have incurred debts to many disciplines. Nehrbass himself advocates shifting from a multilegged stool metaphor to the image of a dynamic river carrying within it the contributions of many tributaries. See his "Does Missiology Have Three Legs to Stand On? The Upsurge of Interdisciplinarity," *Missiology: An International Review* 44, no. 1 (January 2016): 50–65. I strongly concur regarding missiology's expansive interdisciplinarity, but for convenience I retain use of the stool metaphor.

<sup>3</sup> See the concerns expressed in Michael A. Rynkiewich, "Do We Need a Postmodern Anthropology for Mission in a Postcolonial World?" *Mission Studies: Journal of the International Association for Mission Studies* 28, no. 2 (2011): 151–69, esp. nn. 2–3.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Xi Lian, *The Conversion of Missionaries* (University Park: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1997), and Notto R. Thelle, "Changed by the East: Notes on Missionary Communication and Transformation," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 30, no. 3 (July 2006): 115–21. See also Elmer S. Miller, *Nurturing Doubt: From Mennonite Missionary to Anthropologist in the Argentine Chaco* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1995); and Kenneth W. Daniels, *Why I Believed: Reflections of a Former Missionary* (Duncanville, TX: Kenneth W. Daniels, 2009). Michael Lee's recent doctoral dissertation deals with the topic of evangelical missionaries who have left their calling. See Michael Hakmin Lee, "From Faith and Advocacy to Unbelief and Defection" (PhD diss., Trinity International University, 2015).

<sup>5</sup> For this reason I refrain from giving his name or information for locating the quotation.

<sup>6</sup> Baker, "Missiology as an Interested Discipline," 17–20.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Compare the observations of Daniel Jeyaraj at the Boston 2010 conference on the way that, following conversion to Christianity, members of oppressed castes in India have found in the Bible an alternate group memory that has enabled them to conceive of themselves and their future in new and liberating ways.

<sup>10</sup> Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself," v. 51, in his *Leaves of Grass*, www.gutenberg.org/files/1322/1322-h/1322-h.htm#link2H\_4\_0002.

<sup>11</sup> Gregory the Great, "Adapt Heathen Temples," in *Classic Texts in Mission and World Christianity*, ed. Norman E. Thomas (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995), 22.

<sup>12</sup> See Dwight P. Baker, "Anthropologists and Missionaries: Some Parts of the Picture," *Covenant Quarterly* 52, no. 2 (May 1994): 13–14.

<sup>13</sup> Quite adroitly, my friend has allowed himself an escape hatch by appending that, of course, students of mission need to learn mission history—in passing, as it were.

<sup>14</sup> Andrew F. Walls, "Converts or Proselytes? The Crisis over Conversion in the Early Church," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 38, no. 1 (January 2004): 2–6.

<sup>15</sup> Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1985); *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1994).

<sup>16</sup> Paul G. Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008).

The Use of History

# Speaking of God in Sanskrit-Derived Vocabularies

by H. L. Richard

**T**his paper presents a broad overview of a particular Bible translation issue in India, where most vernacular languages are rich in Sanskrit-derived terms. Different Bible translations have adopted different Sanskrit terms for key theological words, and this paper will focus on terms used for God in various vernacular Bibles. The purpose of the paper is not antiquarian, but to shed light on current translation concerns and in particular questions of best practices in communication in India today. Linguistic questions are, of course, vitally important in every mission field, so this discussion has repercussions far beyond India.

Sanskrit is central to the project of Bible translation in almost all the major languages of India, as it was also central in the development of modern linguistic theory (see Trautmann 1997, 131–132 for example). William Carey (1761–1834) is a central person for discussions of Bible translation in India. Carey, widely recognized as the father of the modern mission movement, lived in Bengal during the heyday of the Asiatic Society (founded in Calcutta in 1784) which promoted the knowledge of Sanskrit texts and Indic traditions.

Carey had learned Bengali during his first six difficult years in Bengal (1794–1800) and in 1801 became teacher (later professor, in 1807) of Bengali and Sanskrit at Fort William College in Calcutta (founded in 1800 to provide Indological education to Britons serving in India). Carey produced a Sanskrit grammar in 1806, followed by a translation of the New Testament into Sanskrit (1808) and then the Old Testament (1818). Specifics related to Carey's choices of terms for God will be discussed below.

## *Competing Terms across North and South*

Despite the centrality of Sanskrit, the dominant languages of South India belong to the Dravidian language family. The discovery of this Dravidian linguistic family can be traced to F. W. Ellis in Madras in 1816, but his

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theory remained virtually unknown until the 1856 publication of Robert Caldwell's *A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages*.<sup>1</sup> Since the Dravidian family of languages borrowed a great deal of terminology from Sanskrit, many terms from South Indian Bible translations are relevant for this study.

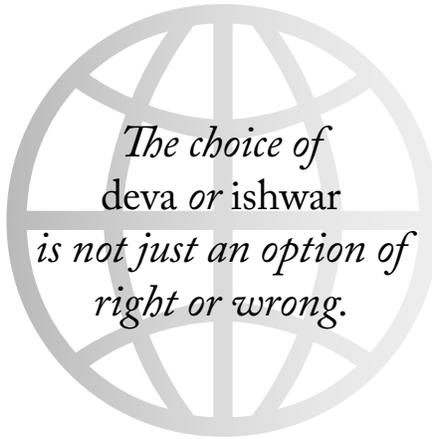
The first Indian Bible translation was into Tamil, the most important of the Dravidian languages, so this survey will begin with Sanskrit-based Tamil terminology. The Tamil New Testament was completed by Bartholomew Ziegenbalg in 1714. Ziegenbalg seems to have followed the great Roberto de Nobili in referring to God as *saruvēsuran*, a neologism compounding *sarva* (all) and *ishwar* (god).<sup>2</sup> This aligns with the standard usage in North Indian languages, as will be discussed below. However, Philip Fabricius, in his long-esteemed translation published in 1798 (NT in 1772), abandoned the pattern of de Nobili and Ziegenbalg and introduced *parāparan*, another Sanskrit-derived neologism developed from *para-apara* (remote-not remote), suggestive of transcendence and immanence.<sup>3</sup>

The 1871 Union Version of the Tamil Bible adopted *deva* as the fundamental word for God.<sup>4</sup> The earlier translators had used *deva* in various compounds but avoided the term alone as an inadequate word for God. The 1854 Telugu Bible (NT, 1818) also used *deva*. The use of *deva* is now standard across South India and has also appeared in Marathi and Gujarati Bibles; see below for analysis of this term. To complete the survey of translations into Tamil, the 1956 Revised Version and 1995 Common Language Version (*Tiruviviliyam*) shifted to using a non-Sanskrit-based Tamil term, *kadavul*, which did not find favor with most Tamil Christians (cf. Hooper and Culshaw, "the Union Version [*deva* for God] continues to serve a large section of the Tamil-speaking church," 1963, 78).<sup>5</sup>

Thus, Tamil Bible translation tells the story of two Sanskrit-based terms, *deva* and *ishwar*, in reference to God.

Despite a binary consideration of terms throughout this translation history, this paper would suggest that viewing *deva* and *ishwar* as right or wrong options is not the proper frame of reference for considering this translation matter. William Carey, who is by far the dominant figure in translations into North Indian languages,<sup>6</sup> rejected the option of *deva* and adopted *ishwar* in reference to God, which has been followed across most of North India. Amaladass and Young summarize Carey's approach:

The uniformity of terminology in Carey's translations of the Bible is far



from always evident on the surface, for there are numerous inconsistencies, but the terms he chose to denote other gods as opposed to *the* God of the Christian faith are invariable in the *Dharmapustaka* [Carey's Sanskrit Bible] and elsewhere. Whereas *theos* in the Greek New Testament is used both in the singular and the plural either in affirmation of the unitary existence of God or in denial of the existence of many gods, in the Sanskrit Bible the cognate *deva* always differentiates false gods from the true God, *Īvara* (or in the Old Testament *Yihua* for the proper name Yahweh or Jehovah). *Īvara* in the *Dharmapustaka* never occurs in the plural. True to his evangelical instincts, Carey could not bring himself to believe that the polytheistic connotations of the term *deva* could ever be

rehabilitated. In this respect his Catholic predecessors in the South of India were far more bold and accommodative, since they simply added strings of modifiers to *deva*, whenever they felt uneasy about it standing alone, so as to emphasize the transcendence of the God of the Christian faith over all the other *devas* whom the Hindus revere. (Amaladass and Young 1995, 38–39; italics in the original)

It should be noted that the southern associations of these two authors undoubtedly impacted their analysis (as the more northern associations of the present author have impacted mine).

Two word lists of Sanskrit terms are available that gauge the terminological diversity for God, and both demonstrate the basic North–South split between *deva* and *ishwar*. In 1957, J. S. M. Hooper published a comparative list of Indian terms for significant Greek theological words. Under *theos* (God) he indicated that seven languages used *ishwar* or a derivative thereof (Assamese, Bengali, Hindi, Oriya, Panjabi, Santali, and Sindhi). He likewise indicated that six languages used *deva* or a derivative thereof (Gujarati, Kanarese, Malayalam, Marathi, Sinhalese, and Telugu).<sup>7</sup> As discussed above, Tamil has translations using both. Muslim-related languages used *khudā* (Urdu and Pashtu, as well as in some Panjabi and Sindhi versions) and English translations used God. These comprise the seventeen languages in Hooper's survey (Hooper 1957, 86–87).

Secondly, in 1904, 1930, and 1965, the British and Foreign Bible Society published selections from languages in which they were distributing portions of the Bible. Appendix three of the 1965 version listed the terms for God in the various languages. In this list *deva* is indicated as being used in fifteen languages, including five in Indonesia and the major South Indian languages of Kanarese, Malayalam, Tamil, and Telugu with Sanskrit-based Marathi an outlier. *Ishwar* is indicated as being used in thirty-four languages,

including a few in Tibetan-related and tribal languages, as well as in the major North Indian languages of Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, and Panjabi. A further ten languages are listed for *parameshwar* (*param-ishwar*, supreme *ishwar*), including Oriya (British and Foreign Bible Society 1965, 184, 185, 188).

It is easy to find fault with both *ishwar* and *deva* as terms for the God of the Bible. In the case of *deva*, Hopper's word list and editorial analysis supported Carey's position, indicating "devan was considered unworthy, being normally used in Hinduism for any minor deity" (Hooper 1957, 86). Tiliander, in his outstanding study of Hindu and Christian terminologies, comments that the change to *deva* in the Tamil Union version of 1869 "was in fact a retrogressive step on account of the polytheistic taint attached to it" (1974, 132).

In the case of *ishwar*, a great historian of Christianity in India, Julius Richter, presented a different perspective as to why this term did not appeal to South Indian translators.

"Isvara," "lord," is also common to all the Indian languages, and is found in many compounds, but in philosophical terminology it is a much used technical expression for a phase of the lower Brahma in union with Avidya, i.e. it describes God as caught in the toils of Maya [illusion, contingent reality]; for Christian purposes, therefore, the word is useless. (Richter 1908, 270)

Hephzibah Israel provides another perspective on the terminological issues in Tamil in her outstanding study *Religious Transactions in Colonial South India: Language, Translation, and the Making of Protestant Identity* (2011).<sup>8</sup> She shows that a major motivation in the Tamil terminology discussions was finding a term that was *unfamiliar* to Hindus. *Deva* was a happy choice because no Hindus used it for the almighty God, thus the Protestant biblical associations would be attached to that term (108–110).

**T**ranslations with more linguistic sensitivity were rejected in favor of the now-familiar *deva*, which was a marker of Protestant community identity.

Another reason to particularly advocate the Sanskrit word *deva*, rather than the Tamil *kadavul*, was that everyone in India could use the same term for God (Israel 2011, 108). As this paper shows, that did not happen. Once *deva* became a distinctly Protestant term in South India, translations with more linguistic sensitivity and those using *kadavul* (as in the Tamil Revised Version of 1956 and Common Language Version of 1995) were rejected in favor of the now-familiar *deva*, which was seen as a marker of Protestant Christian community identity (113–114).

When such controversy and opposing views about these terms developed, it is no surprise that other terms were also considered. As early as the 17th century, the Jesuit Roberto de Nobili actually used *sivan* (Shiva) for some time, due to a root meaning of "goodness" (Tiliander 1974, 91), and William Carey flirted with the use of *om* to represent Yahweh (Amaladass and Young 1995, 39).<sup>9</sup> But these were fleeting experiments that took no root. More substantial suggestions of alternative terms included *brahman* and *bhagwān*.

### Exploring Alternative Terms for God

In 1992, Benjamin Rai in an analysis of words for God in North Indian languages suggested three options for translating God: *deva*, *ishwar* (or *param-ishwar*), and *bhagwān*.<sup>10</sup> Rai pointed out that "in North India Christians never use *Deva* to refer to the God of the Bible" (1992, 444). However, he also asserted that *bhagwān* as an alternative is an even worse option.

Perhaps because of this close association of the term *Bhagwan* with Ram and Krishna, none of the Bible translators in any of the four languages I am considering has translated the

word "God" by this term. Moreover, *Bhagwan* has sexual overtones. Besides these four languages, no other North Indian language uses *Bhagwan* in the Bible. Even in hymns and prayers, this term is strictly forbidden. (Rai 1992, 444)

Tiliander, however, after careful analysis of the associations of *bhagwān*, concludes that

It is a very expressive term to be used in presenting Christ to Hindus. It also deserves a proper place in the Christian vocabulary. It is too dignified a word to be reserved for the devotees of Vishnu and Buddha alone. (1974, 125)

The eccentric intellectual Nirad C. Chaudhuri shared a striking perspective on *bhagwān* as well.

The One God to which I am referring here is a Hindu form of the Christian and Islamic. The most common name under which he is referred to is *Bhagavan*. Though he is a personal God, he is never thought of or spoken about as an anthropomorphic God in a physical form. Actually, no physical form is ever assigned to him, though he is a full anthropomorphic psychic entity. He is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. He is personified compassion and justice at the same time.

The Hindus always turn to him when they are in trouble, in all their sorrows and suffering, but never when prosperous. They would say to others, God will show you mercy, God will judge your actions, or God will not allow this. No particular, individualized, anthropomorphic god of the old Hindu pantheon ever fulfilled this role with any Hindu. To the other gods of Hinduism, even when thought of as a supreme god, the Hindu looked with some confidence based on his right to ask for divine help, since through worship he was performing his part of the contract and giving the god his *quid pro quo*. But to this God, *Bhagavan*,

he appealed when he was wholly without any resource, yet he did so with complete faith in his mercy.

Nevertheless, this *Bhagavan* has never been worshipped, nor has he even become an object of regular prayer. St. Paul said to the Athenians that He whom they worshipped as the Unknown God was being proclaimed to them by him. To the Hindus the Unknown God was fully known, but never worshipped. In the whole religious literature of the Hindus there is no discussion of the nature of this God. Yet in one sense this undiscussed God is the only real God of Hindu faith. (Chaudhuri 1996, 149)

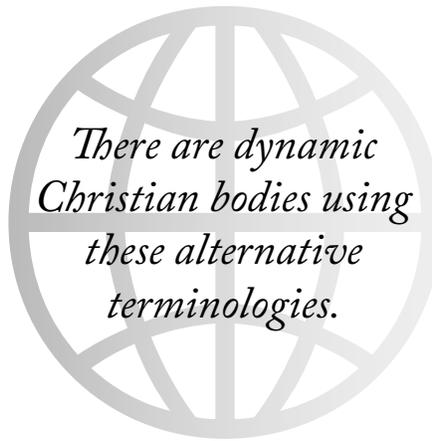
Despite Rai's adamant comments above against *bhagwān*, an English-Hindi glossary of theological terms included *bhagwān*, although it was oddly listed as an acceptable theological term for "Lord" rather than for "God" (Clark and John 1969, 47). Interestingly, for God an acceptable alternative term in Clark and John's glossary was *paramātman* (supreme spirit).<sup>11</sup>

Paul and Frances Hiebert present a case study in speaking of God in Sanskrit-derived vocabularies, and the options presented are *deva* and *brahman* (1987, 155–157). The bias of the paper is for *deva*, as *brahman* is too abstract a philosophical term. But Robin Boyd promoted the use of *brahman*, rightly stressing the need to speak in the highest of transcendent terms (1975, 233–236). Yet *brahman* is hardly used in normal speech, as Hindus are not nearly so philosophically inclined as some populist descriptions suggest. (Note how this point undermines Richter's criticism of *ishwar* quoted above. Richter focused on the technical philosophical meaning of the term, but this is very different from its common usage.) *Paramātman* carries some of the highest philosophical weight while also being more commonly used.

### *Affirming Linguistic Diversity*

To this day, criticisms of the North India-biased *ishwar* and/or South-India biased *deva* translations for God

continue to be heard. Yet the lesson from this historical review is not that one or the other was right or wrong. Rather the lesson is that alternative choices were made in a complex linguistic environment, and neither choice was ideal. Yet in the end there are dynamic Christian bodies using these alternative terminologies, indicating that in one sense it did not matter which term was used. The context and content of the Bible contributed to the refining of the meaning of these terms in their usage by followers of Christ.<sup>12</sup> An immediate corollary of this conclusion is that there needs to be greater freedom of expression—more linguistic diversity—in continuing to speak of God than is present in much of Indian



(and other international) Christian thought and speech.<sup>13</sup>

The sad reality is that there remains a great linguistic gap between Hindus and Christians in most of India's languages. To a large extent, this is due to narrow views of translation and to restrictive terminological choices in vernacular Bible translations. No Indian language has as illustrious a Christian history as Tamil, where geniuses of the likes of Constanzo Beschi and Fabricius experimented and innovated. Yet in concluding his survey of Tamil church history Hugald Grafe pointed out that

Interaction between Christianity and Tamil culture certainly issued in a sort of Christian subculture in Tamilnadu,

which became evident in a particular "church language" moulded by translations of texts from foreign languages as well as by the creativeness of Tamil for ecclesiastical purposes. (1990, 257)

A similar reality developed from William Carey's pioneering work, as diagnosed by Sisirkumar Das.

Bengali Christians are bilingual. They use standard Bengali both spoken and written in domestic, occupational and non-religious situations; but the language they hear in sermons and use in religious discourse is in the idiom we have called Christian Bengali, the father of which was Carey. Christian Bengali literature is little read outside the religious community in which it was born, but it must be noted that except where comprehension fails because of its sectarian content non-Christian Bengalis are able to understand it. Its peculiar style, however, has had little influence on other streams of prose literature, beyond the initial impulse that Carey's Bible gave to prose writing in the Bengali language. (Das 1966, 68)

Robin Boyd's expertise was in Gujarat, but he generalized this linguistic principle to all of India.

The Biblical vocabulary with which people are familiar from childhood tends to become firmly entrenched in their minds, and any move to change it is resented. So it comes about that in each language area Christians are prone to use a "language of Canaan" which non-Christians find difficult to understand and often positively misleading. (2014, 160)

This amounts to a conundrum far beyond the focus of this paper, raising multiple questions and challenges. But a conservative approach to terminology related to God has certainly contributed to a situation where Christians in India developed dialects that differ markedly from the heart languages of Hindus. A significant start towards better communication of biblical ideas to Hindus can be made by moving beyond the narrow confines of *deva* or *ishwar* as the only acceptable choices for speaking of God. **IJFM**

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Trautmann indicts Caldwell for not sufficiently acknowledging the work of Ellis, contributing to the continued neglect of the latter (2006, 74–75).

<sup>2</sup> Hephzibah Israel suggests the possibility that Ziegenbalg chose this term without influence from de Nobili based on his own understanding of Tamil Saivite usage (2011, 90).

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of *parāparan* and various theories related to the term see Tiliander 1974, 127 and Israel 2011, 92ff. De Nobili had at times used *parāparavastu* and was followed in this by Ziegenbalg; *vastu* indicates something that is real and substantial (see Amaladass and Clooney 2000, 223–4 and Jeyaraj 2006, 198–207).

<sup>4</sup> In Tamil there is a neuter signifier with the Sanskrit root *deva*, and the word is often used in the plural for many lesser gods. For Protestants, the term was changed to masculine singular, a use only found among Tamil Christians.

<sup>5</sup> See below for further comment on this. Israel 2011 is a major study of Tamil Bible translation and gives detailed analysis on this point.

<sup>6</sup> Carey's translations were of poor quality; I have analyzed this in a sister paper to this one, "Some Observations on William Carey's Bible Translations," forthcoming in the *International Bulletin of Mission Research*. For a broad statement supporting this, see Hooper and Culshaw 1963, 20.

<sup>7</sup> I believe it is an error that this list indicates Gujarati using *deva*; see the contradictory opinion in the list in the next paragraph. In a discussion with the Rev. Nicolas Parmar at the Bible Society of India, Gujarat, at Ellis Bridge, Ahmedabad on March 13, 2013, Rev. Parmar indicated to me that *deva* was once in Gujarati Bibles but was subsequently replaced with *ishwar*.

<sup>8</sup> See my analytical review of this outstanding work at [ijfm.org](http://ijfm.org), *IJFM* 32:4 (Winter 2015): 211.

<sup>9</sup> Technically, *om* is not a word but a mystical or liturgical syllable. It can and has been invested with meanings reaching literally from nothing to everything.

<sup>10</sup> Benjamin Rai, "What is His Name: Translation of Divine Names in Some Major North Indian Languages," *The Bible Translator*, vol. 43 no. 4 (1992): 443–446.

<sup>11</sup> A new Hindi New Testament under translation is introducing both *paramātma* and *bhagwān* into the text along with other designators for God.

<sup>12</sup> Howard K. Moulton stressed this point by quoting the Bible Society's *Rules for the Guidance of Translators*: "Every care should be taken to select the *highest* term for God that a language affords. The teaching of the Bible will by degrees *purify* and *raise* the ideas associated with the word used" (1962, 71, italics in the original).

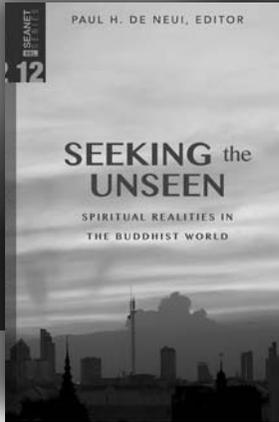
<sup>13</sup> The reflections that led to the research and writing of this paper were spurred by debates about Bible translations into Muslim languages. Some have suggested that an erroneous term for "father" or "son" could have devastating consequences, but the story outlined in this paper suggests that linguistic diversity and flexibility are the rule, and such a focus on a single term is linguistically misguided.

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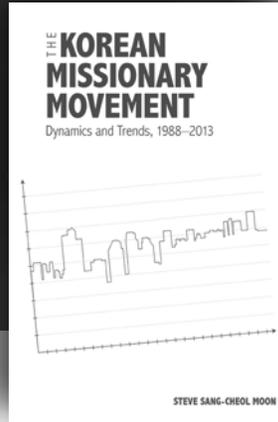
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Paul H. De Neui, Editor

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## The Korean Missionary Movement

*Dynamics and Trends, 1988-2013*

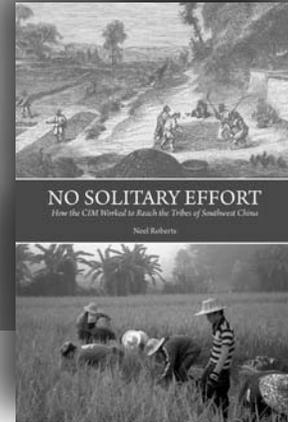
Steve Sang-Cheol Moon, Author

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## No Solitary Effort

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Neel Roberts, Author

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Neel Roberts (Author)  
WCL | Pages 191 | Paperback 2013

The Use of History

# A Post-3/11 Paradigm for Mission in Japan

by Hiroko Yoshimoto, Simon Cozens, Mitsuo Fukuda, Yuji Hara, Atsuko Tateishi,  
Ken Kanakogi, and Toru Watanabe

*Editor's Note: This article appeared in the most recent compendium in the SEANET series (12), Seeking the Unseen: Spiritual Realities in the Buddhist World (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2016, pp. 193–204) and is reprinted by permission (see advertisement on p. 16).*

**M**arch 11, 2014. We are sitting in a meeting room in northern Japan. The room is part of a temporary housing complex for those who lost everything in the 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami. Some friends of mine are holding a Bible study, and I think most of the people who have come are there out of gratitude for the aid they received.

After a very dull Bible study where the “teacher” kept on talking, people are randomly chatting over cups of tea. Suddenly one lady says,

Oh, by the way, the other day, something very interesting happened to me. I was feeling down, thinking about all the things that I lost in the tsunami. Then this Jesus that you talk about came to me and said, “Those things are gone, so do not worry about them. But in the future, there will be a clear river flowing for you.”

A man shows up at the house of some Christians who moved there right after the disaster and says, “Jesus appeared in my dream and told me to come to you.”

Another man, when he talks about his experience, says that God pulled him out of the water when he got swallowed by the tsunami. As he says the word “God,” he pulls out a necklace that he has on. It has a cross hanging on it. The combination of “God” and the cross is extremely unusual in Japan. Obviously, he recognizes that the God who pulled him out of the water has something to do with the cross.

The disasters which hit the Tohoku region on March 11, 2011, changed the physical landscape of Japan. But it is becoming clear that they also marked a change in the spiritual landscape of the country. In the past, missionaries had seen very little fruit for their efforts over many centuries. Now we are beginning to see a new understanding of mission emerging in Japan—one which God himself is initiating and leading.

One pastor who has been planting churches in the area described the change as “a kind of powerful force moving them on.” He refers to the current mission practice in Japan as being in a state of “paralysis”—shocked, standing still, and unable to move effectively. He realizes that God is calling us to have a paradigm shift. We need a paradigm shift to understand what God is doing right now and also to reach Japan at such a time as this.

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*The authors of this article are a team of Japanese mission leaders, each with a different resumé of mission experience. They worked together to integrate their experiences among the devastated population of post-3/11 Japan. This article is an edited version of their presentation to the SEANET consortium in Southeast Asia.*

### *The New Paradigm*

Much of the current practice of mission in Japan has not changed for the past two centuries of Protestant mission. Missionaries and pastors have first established churches as beachheads of the kingdom, and set them apart from the society that they have seen around them. They then—deliberately or inadvertently—positioned their churches as places of culture, learning, and spiritual purity. They sought to attract people into churches on the basis of these advantages. Those who came to the churches and wanted to understand the faith of their “hosts” would then be trained through Bible study until they professed faith themselves. After that, they would take a generally passive role as church members, mostly restricted to the attendance of Sunday services.

We could summarize the mission strategy to date under the following six areas:

1. Calling people to gather with us
2. Not being involved in the local society
3. Building a church separate from the local society
4. Creating encounters with the Bible
5. Missionaries talking about Jesus
6. Prioritizing an intellectual understanding of the gospel

To a certain extent this strategy has not been completely unsuccessful. There are around eight thousand Protestant churches established in Japan. Three hundred thousand people regularly attend Sunday worship (<http://church-info.org/html/churchmap.html>, site discontinued). However, the Japanese church has generally had an extremely limited impact upon the surrounding society (Furuya 2011, 138–39); Christian ministry has been primarily dependent on professional clergy, with little lay involvement (Braun 1971, 33). Demographic shifts have meant that such dependence has by now become unsustainable (Hastings and Mullins 2006, 19–23). The church population in Japan is in decline.

At the same time, we have seen a new engagement amongst some Japanese

Christians with the society around them. After 3/11, there was a huge outpouring of funds and volunteer work from all around the world to the affected region of northeast Japan. Even though the initial relief operation is over, it will take many years until the Tohoku region has fully recovered. Towns and villages in the area were effectively wiped out. The church within Japan has also been challenged to respond. Many Christians have moved into the area on a short-term or long-term basis, and at least one church has relocated to Tohoku.

Christians have developed long-term relationships with communities in Tohoku, and they have often found themselves involved in the work of rebuilding these communities. Rather



than attempting to establish a separate, parallel Christian Japan, these individuals have felt themselves called to live out their lives naturally as members of the kingdom within the existing Japanese society. In doing so, they have been brought into contact with those to whom God has already been speaking.

We could sum up this new paradigm along the same lines:

1. Being sent out to where people are
2. Taking our place in local society
3. Building the kingdom of God within that society
4. Creating encounters with God
5. Jesus himself speaking
6. Prioritizing an experiential understanding of the gospel

The first three items are what is now known as “missional church.” But from the perspective of the Japanese church, this is a complete change of direction from past practice. In particular, the third item is revolutionary. Japanese Christians have generally taken a separationist approach to the surrounding society and sought to create parallel, “clean” societal structures within the church. Now we are beginning to see Christians who understand their primary ministry as serving within existing societal groups to bring gospel transformation to that society.

In our experience, as Christians have taken their faith out into their daily lives, we have realized more and more that God himself, rather than missionaries and pastors, has been the agent of mission. God’s Spirit has been active in directly stirring the hearts of the Japanese people, appearing to them in dreams and visions, and leading them to himself. When we refer to “creating encounters with God,” we do not just mean directly inviting people to experience God in a supernatural way; we are also coming across many people who have already had such experiences and are looking for Christians to provide interpretation and understanding of them.

The combination of Christians involved in growing the kingdom of God meeting with ordinary Japanese who have been receiving supernatural encounters with God has formed a new paradigm for mission. The main activity of Christians working within this model is to discern the places where God is already at work, and to take part in the mission of God in Japan.

### *Spiritual Sensitivity*

Japan is a highly modernized society, but it would be a mistake to think of it as a secularized society. Only 25 percent of the Japanese population claims adherence to an organized religion (Lewis 2013, 310), but the observance rate of religious ritual is much higher (Kawano 2005, 2). Belief in supernatural power (fortune-telling, palmistry, spiritual apparitions, and so on) outside of the traditional religions is widespread (Lewis 2013, 163–90). Many

Japanese distrust Western conceptions of “religion” and would think of religion as unnecessary; at the same time, they would be comfortable with the idea of being connected with “heaven” (*ten*), as shown in the use of words such as *tenmei* (fate), *tenshoku* (vocation), and *tensei* (nature). It is commonly said that it is hard to express the concept of a monotheistic God in Japanese, but *Otentosama* (“Mr. Heaven”) has this connotation and was used in early Japanese Christianity as a translation of “god.” Rather than the Western God-sin-salvation approach, an appropriate form of evangelism to spiritual Japanese draws out the latent religiosity and the ancient veneration of “heaven” inherent in Japanese people and presents Jesus Christ as the object of their faith.

Recently five young mothers began a Bible study. Instead of taking them through the doctrines of Christianity or the life of Jesus, the facilitator began by asking how many of them had experienced God at some point in their lives. All of them put up their hands. The study proceeded by then showing them from the Bible the nature of the God who had already been talking to them.

On a separate occasion, one lady in Kyoto had a son who attended a Christian kindergarten. As well as telling her the Bible stories he had heard in school, he also told her about his dreams where he had talked with Jesus. He told her that he remembers being with Jesus before his birth. The lady herself had also heard from God when preparing the house for a family funeral. She did not need to become “converted” to Christianity; she and her family had already met with Jesus. As she began to read the Bible, she said, “I feel like this is what I always believed and what I always knew.”

Another lady had been heavily involved with the New Age movement and introduced herself as a spirit medium. The spirits she saw were apparently benign, but annoying. She wanted to be free from them, but had seen them her whole life and did not know what to do. When a Christian moved next door to her, he

**A**lthough Japan is a highly modernized society, it would be a mistake to think of it as a secularized society.

did not need to witness to her. Instead, she appealed to him: “I know that Jesus is with you because I can see his aura on you.” Her spiritual sensitivity allowed her to discern the Spirit of Christ within the Christian. Together, they experienced Jesus’ power over the spirits as described in the Gospels. After her baptism, she did not see the spirits again.

In fact, those very portions of the Bible which can feel uncomfortable and embarrassing within Western forms of Christianity—casting out demons, possession, visions, and miracles—can have direct, practical application to spiritually sensitive Japanese.

However, spiritual experiences and direct communication with God can be difficult to share with other Christians. The dominant form of Christianity in Japan is modernistic and rationalistic, and suffers from the “flaw of the excluded middle” (Hiebert 1982, 43). Missionaries have been uncomfortable and fearful of the spiritual side of Japanese life, and have wanted to ensure that converts stayed away from such things, so have spread a form of Christianity that is characterized by disengagement from and distrust of the spiritual realm. So the most likely response that Christians would give toward people who have seen Jesus would be either to ignore or not pay too much attention to the claim. They might say, “Well, you have to be careful with such things. So let’s just study the Bible together.” If appropriate follow-up is not given, new converts who have started off by experiencing Jesus will soon switch to simply reading about Jesus. When people just “read about Jesus” and try to live a Christian life, this tends to become just a religion or morality. How many purely “religious” and “moral” people do we have in churches! Hence, within this new paradigm of mission, an appropriate follow-up process is essential.

### Following Up

When someone initially claims to have seen a vision of Jesus, we should not necessarily accept this uncritically. First ask what he looked like and what he said. Many of my Muslim friends who have seen Jesus in visions and dreams all say something in common. They say that there was a sweet aroma. Those in Japan who have seen Jesus do not use the words “sweet aroma,” but they talk of light and hope that they experienced.

This is the first test. It is possible that whoever they saw was not Jesus. Remember, the angel of darkness also would like to speak to people. If we know what Jesus is like, we should be able to recognize whether what these people saw was Jesus or not. If this figure was dark and condemning, that is different from the Jesus I know. Jesus would condemn sins, but even when he does that, there is a sense of love and grace.

Affirm and confirm. I do believe that it is important to say to them that it is very natural for Jesus to show up and speak to us. Also, if it does seem that it was Jesus, I say something like, “That sounds like something Jesus would say.” If it did not seem to be Jesus, it is important to say something like, “Hmm . . . I am not sure if that was Jesus,” and explain what he is like in my life and in the Bible. This is helping the person grow in discernment, as well as providing more testimony to them.

Ask again what he said and ask how he or she responded to that. Interestingly, many of those who have seen Jesus in visions and dreams have had a change in their behaviour and in their lives because of their experience of Jesus. One man, after seeing a vision of the cross, started speaking to Jesus about everything—simply because “he answers.”

If the person has not done what Jesus had said, encourage him to do it.

Encourage the person to keep on walking with Jesus. “Walking with Jesus” is simply continuing to dialogue with Jesus. Encourage the person to keep talking to him and to listen to what he says and do what he tells him to do.

Mr. C is a community leader. He is an incredible servant and is very much trusted by the people of his community. He came in contact with Christians after the disasters, and that is how we met. We spent time together, first just hanging out. One day, he said that he had a migraine headache. One of us prayed for him. We left.

On our next visit, Mr. C said, “Oh, by the way, I got healed.” That was the signal for us; we went on to encourage him to ask Jesus some questions. We simply said that he loves talking to us. Would you like to hear what he wants to say to you? (At this point, I was afraid that we were getting too weird. Thankfully, my friend was not afraid at all.)

We suggested three questions to ask Jesus: “What do you think about me? What do you want me to do today? Is there anything I need to apologize for?” To my surprise, Mr. C did not hesitate at all. After spending a few minutes, we asked him what he heard. As he told us what he heard, we felt that it was surely Jesus who spoke these words. Within some of the house churches in Japan, these kinds of “questions for Jesus” are a simple form of daily devotion. They encourage people to connect directly to God and receive their answers from him (Fukuda 2012, 31).

As we asked him if he felt awkward at all doing this, he started to tell us what had happened a couple of days before.

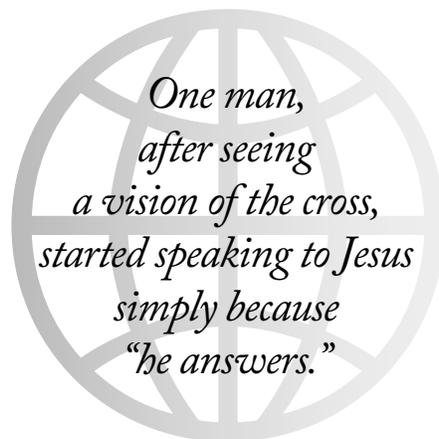
I got a call from my grandson who lives in a city about two hours away by car. He had some struggles, and he left his home and he wanted to come see me. He left his home by bicycle and got stuck along the way. I asked him where he was, but he did not know. He asked me to come find him. It was night, so I decided to wait until morning to go look for him.

Early next morning, I drove out to go find him. I knew that he would

not be travelling on a highway. As I drove along a regular road, I came to a point where the road split into two directions. I had no idea which one he would be on, and making a wrong decision would cost me several more hours.

At this point, I was very surprised to find myself saying, “Jesus, where is my grandson?” It was very strange, because I am Japanese and I am not a Christian at all. A Japanese would ask Buddha for help in times like this. But right after I said that to Jesus, I found myself choosing the road that most people probably would not take.

But as I drove on, I saw my grandson riding his bicycle. Because Jesus helped me find my grandson, I was sure that he would be able to talk to me. (Personal conversation with author)



This is a testimony of a man who would not normally be considered a “believer,” yet he was already communicating with Jesus. We asked him if he read the Bible. When we did, he got a little tense. Maybe this was a very uncomfortable question for him. But then he said that some of his friends sometimes include a Bible verse when they write to him. When he liked the verse, he would write it out on a big piece of paper and post it on his wall, pondering upon it day to day. Sometimes he wanted more and he went to his Christian friends and asked them to show him where those verses were in the Bible. This is one example of the hunger that we see in those unbelievers who have experienced Jesus supernaturally.

## Fellowship

An effective missional movement needs to continue to reach outwards. When it turns in upon itself, it dies. In the past, the typical response of Christians toward a person who has shown interest in Christ was to first invite him to church or events sponsored by the church. The idea was that the person would meet other Christians and become touched by the love and the kindness of Christians. They would have a nice meal at the church. Slowly they would get pulled into the Bible study group and the other programs at the church. Unfortunately, the initial experiences of fellowshiping with Jesus would gradually be replaced by Christian activities. God becomes replaced by Christianity, meeting Jesus with church meetings.

At the same time, we cannot deny the importance of fellowship with fellow believers. How do we make sure that the movement continues to reach outwards, and yet also allow for believers to encourage and strengthen one another? As this paradigm is still developing and we are still discovering how to work effectively within it, we can only offer some tentative suggestions.

One approach is to introduce someone who has heard from God to one person who understands this new paradigm. One person will continue to ask him what he has been hearing from Jesus and how he has been responding. They will pray together. Meet and pray with only one person? Is that enough? We would dare to say yes, if this one person has the new paradigm. Because one of the characteristics of those who experience Jesus supernaturally is that they cannot keep their mouths shut.

Mr. M is a local politician and mayor of his village. He saw a vision of the cross at one of the events that Christians hosted. I asked him if he had seen visions before. He said that he had. When I asked him about his visions in the past he said, “In my dream, I saw Buddha on my left shoulder and other gods on my right shoulder.” I asked what that meant

to him. He said, “I thought that my life is going to be all right.”

Then we asked him to describe the latest vision he saw.

As I was watching a pastor speak at this event, all of a sudden, I saw two groups of clouds. They caught my attention and I kept looking. I noticed there were two crosses in the clouds. I started shouting, “Look! Cross! Cross!” The pastor on the stage did not know what I was talking about. I thought that everyone else was seeing the same thing, but the other people thought that I had gone crazy. Finally, I climbed up on the stage and tried to grab the crosses, but then they disappeared.

We asked him why he tried to grab the crosses. He thought that they would bless him. After this he was given a concise Bible, and he now reads it every day, ponders on it, and writes down what he has learned in his notebook. When he leads a town business meeting, he speaks from the Bible. “There is so much good stuff in it!” he says. No one has taught him to do a “devotional,” and no one has taught him to share his faith, but he does it naturally because he simply loves it. Those who come to faith through a direct experience of God still need encouragement and training in how to read the Bible and to share their testimonies of how God has met with them. At the same time, they have a greater than usual enthusiasm to discover more about the God that has met with them.

And because their experience of Jesus is so real, these people are not shy to talk about it. They take it for granted that Jesus gets involved with our lives. This is definitely contagious. The people around will naturally want to experience the same wonderful Person. When they are in need, they will think of speaking to Jesus, because of what they heard from their friend. So before long there is a fellowship of believers of a new paradigm.

After Mr. M’s vision of the cross, we went back to his past vision and asked him how he interprets it now that he has seen this recent one. He said, “I

**T**heir conversion may not necessarily involve praying a sinner’s prayer—it may involve hearing the voice of Jesus and choosing to obey.

still have Buddha on my left shoulder and the other gods on my right, but now Jesus is on top.”

In his traditional Japanese house, he has a big Buddhist altar, and statues and pictures of other gods. Ebisu, the god of fishermen, is prominent. A Western, modernist approach would be to convince this man to renounce all his idols, break his connection with the temple and shrine, and destroy his religious past. Doing so would cut him off from his family, his communities, and the culture of his nation, which would make it very difficult for him to reach outwards with his new found faith. It also often requires a forceful act of persuasion on the part of the Christian worker. In the end, it is unclear whether he would be taking these steps to please God or to please the person witnessing to him.

In the case of Mr. M, however, it seemed like we didn’t have to force anything on him. He and his wife started talking to Jesus about everything after the vision. They now talk to Jesus when they get in a car to drive and when they are not feeling well. When they worry about something, they talk to Jesus. Jesus has started to displace the other gods in a gentle and natural way.

### Conclusion

God has begun a new season in Japan, where people start walking with Jesus in totally different ways than we have known or taught in the past. He is at work in mission, in ways that we cannot anticipate and where we can only strive to catch up. For these people who are experiencing God directly, evangelism may not necessarily be a matter of sharing a doctrine of salvation or explaining a set of beliefs. Instead, it is a matter of proclaiming to them the “unknown god” that they may already be worshipping (Acts 17:23). Their experience of conversion may not

necessarily involve praying a sinner’s prayer—it may involve hearing the voice of Jesus and choosing to obey.

These people will not renounce their idols because a missionary has persuaded them to do so; they will do so because God has won their hearts and fulfilled their needs to the point that old practices are no longer needed. They will not share their faith with others out of a sense of obedience to the Great Commission; they will do so because their experience of Jesus is so real to them that they would dearly love for those around them to partake in it. They will not read the Bible because they know that this is what Christians are expected to do; they will do so simply because the Person they have met is so wonderful that they want to get to know him more. **IJFM**

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The Use of History

# Essential Frontier Missiology: Its Emergence and Flourishing Future

by Steven C. Hawthorne

*Editor's Note: This article is a condensed version of an address delivered to the 2014 meeting of the ISFM in Atlanta, GA, on the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization.*

**F**orty years ago, in his Lausanne '74 address, Ralph Winter introduced a different paradigm of mission. What is most often remembered about that address was the focus on people groups instead of on countries. I would contend, however, that Winter offered more than a simple attention shift from nation-states to peoples. In his address and in the following few years, Winter brought three different perceptive ideas together and fused them in a way that soon became a single, operative paradigm. We rightly refer to this paradigm as “frontier missiology.” Four decades later it is fitting for us to reflect on how this way of seeing and doing mission has fared. I think if we are able to identify the essential core of Winter’s paradigm, we can better consider how frontier missiology might be refined, deepened, and furthered.

I will attempt to do three things: First, I will describe the emergence of frontier missiology as a convergence of three distinctive ideas. Then, I will identify a few developments of the frontier missiology paradigm, some of them of dubious worth, but others that indicate its abiding value. Finally, I will point toward some promising ways to continue developing and deepening essential frontier missiology.

## *The Emergence of Frontier Missiology: A Fusion of Three Ideas*

The headwaters of what would become known as frontier missiology were flowing long before the Lausanne Congress. For example, in 1972, a “Consultation of Frontier Missions,” was held with significant participation. The report of that gathering, called *The Gospel and Frontier Peoples*, edited by R. Pierce Beaver, shows that terms such as “unreached peoples” and “frontier missions” were in use well before Lausanne (Beaver 1972, 4).

Earlier yet, Donald McGavran had begun to give shape to what we now call frontier missiology. His emphasis on church growth was resolutely focused on observable and measurable outcomes of evangelism—most notably, that evangelized people were those who were incorporated into ongoing Christian fellowship.

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*Steven C. Hawthorne is the co-editor, along with Ralph D. Winter, of the book and the course called Perspectives on the World Christian Movement. He worked for years doing field research among unreached peoples in world class cities. His PhD from the School of Intercultural Studies at Fuller Seminary focused on biblical theology of mission. He now serves with a ministry called WayMakers to encourage sustained mission and prayer mobilization efforts in non-Western settings.*

The fruition, or outcome of evangelism, was always to be growing churches. With such an outlook on what the work of evangelism accomplishes, it became possible to think of doing sufficient evangelism to fulfill a global task instead of merely doing more evangelism.

This goal-oriented way of thinking found its way into the name given to the Lausanne Congress.<sup>1</sup> It was “The International Congress on World Evangelization” instead of repeating the name of the earlier 1966 “World Congress on Evangelism” in Berlin. Years later Winter would say,

Strategically, Lausanne changed one key word from Berlin: the World Congress on *Evangelism* of 1966 became the...International Congress on World *Evangelization* in 1974—the word evangelism being a never-ending activity, and evangelization being intended to be a project to be completed. Here in embryo, was the concept of closure. (Parsons 2015, 181)

At Lausanne '74 McGavran used his plenary address at Lausanne to declare evangelism as a goal-focused endeavor:

The goal of world evangelism is not merely “a church of Jesus Christ” in every nation. To state the task that way is to misunderstand it. The true goal is to multiply, in every piece of the magnificent mosaic, truly Christian churches which fit that piece, are closely adapted to its culture, and recognized by its non-Christians as “our kind of show.” (McGavran 1975, 101)

The basic elements of frontier missiology had been introduced before Lausanne, but at that Congress and in the years that followed, Winter fused three ideas into an operative paradigm.

### The Agent of Evangelization: Evangelizing, Same-Culture Churches

Moving beyond well-worn discussions of the day about the role of foreign missionaries amidst national workers, Winter claimed that local people—not just evangelists, but local church movements—were capable of doing a more powerful kind of evangelism than foreign

missionaries might ever be able to do. The most effective agent of evangelization was a movement of same-culture churches.<sup>2</sup> In 1974 Winter described them as “strong, ongoing, vigorously evangelizing denominations.” Sometime in the 1980s the term “church planting movements” came into use. These kind of church movements were so likely to sustain robust, relevant evangelism that the eventual evangelization of an entire people could be recognized as effectively accomplished by their presence.

### The Scope of Evangelization: Every People

Winter fused the idea of church movements as the *agent* of evangelism with a different way of framing the



*scope* of world evangelization: Instead of directing evangelism ventures toward countries or individuals, the task was best defined as accomplishing evangelization within and throughout every people group. Winter declared that the goal was “a strong, powerfully evangelizing church in every tribe and tongue” (Winter 1975, 216). Not only was this task something that could be finished; aiming at anything less would be tantamount to leaving entire peoples without effective gospel witness. It was never suggested that frontier mission was merely a tactical procedure, or “a people group approach” that would offer a quicker, slicker methodology. Defining the task in terms of people groups tended to highlight the

complexity and difficulty of evangelizing the remaining peoples.

### The Hope of Evangelization: Envisioning the Task Finished

Winter’s 1973 article, “Seeing the Task Graphically,” was actually a treatise on how to see the task *globally*. At the entrance to the Lausanne Congress a population clock steadily ticked upward, counting how many more individuals needed to be evangelized. Winter referred to it (Parsons 2015, 160–161), but this clock actually became an anachronism in his way of thinking. While every soul matters, what mattered far more were the peoples, regardless of how many persons there might be. In Winter’s mind another kind of clock was ticking relentlessly. We might call it a “*kairos* clock” or a “*kairometer*”—one that measures the movement of history toward its culmination. And that is the third idea, a forward-moving dynamism of hope that impels mission toward fulfillment.

Aiming to plant churches in ethnic contexts was not really a new idea to those touched by the church growth movement. I think that the most forceful new element of frontier missiology was Winter’s confidence that the entire global task must and will be finished within history.

I’m not the only one who found this the most inspiring and motivating dimension of what Ralph Winter was setting forth. He was saying, “After all these centuries, here is where we now stand. Look now at what lies ahead—we are almost finished!” Winter’s way of spinning out a great story was a tremendously significant part of the whole approach to frontier mission: an all-encompassing, multi-millennial story in which everyone felt that they were living in a larger, longer endeavor than the immediacies around them.

### Developments, Both Dubious and Definitive

In the years that followed Lausanne, Winter clarified and restated these basic strands of frontier missiology.

One of the most succinct articulations of frontier missiology was the watchword, first introduced in 1980 at the World Consultation on Frontier Missions, held in Edinburgh: “A Church for Every People by the Year 2000.”

be contained, tamed, organized, and executed with managerial skills, feasible goals, and measurable objectives. In my view, the epithet, “managerial missiology,” may have been an accurate description of some of the earliest

which sounded simplistic, as if people groups were bounded, discrete, changeless, and non-overlapping. In his portrayal of the “magnificent mosaic” of humanity, McGavran tended to talk about each piece as discrete,

In the watchword we see all three ideas (see top of left column):

**A Church:** *The agency of a culturally-appropriate movement of churches.*

**For Every People:** *The global scope, defining the task as reaching every people group.*

**By the Year 2000:** *The hope of finishing the task, culminating a great, rolling story.*

The strategic simplicity of frontier missiology in the late 1970s and early 1980s was vulnerable to misperception and misrepresentation. Some critics saw it all as simplistic, jingoistic, and little more than shallow pragmatism and sloganeering. But in practice, mission leaders and scholars tested the strategic simplicity of the ideas amidst the complexity of field realities from Morocco to Malaysia.

Winter and others made attempts to clarify and add nuance to frontier missiology so that it would prove itself in field operations and not merely serve as a provocative challenge in mission conferences or as a pitch for missionary recruitment. In the subsequent swirl of discussions there were a few fumbles and foibles—a few dubious developments that we can now recognize as such with the benefit of hindsight.

### Problematic Issues

Of the many miscues and missteps, several served to challenge and to clarify frontier missiology.

#### 1. Undercurrents of Colonialism and “Managerial Missiology”

To some in the global south, the practice of identifying and listing “target” distinctive people groups seemed to be animated by a “divide and conquer” colonial mentality. Many dismissed the notions of the “can do” Americans (Ralph Winter, Pete Wagner, Ed Dayton, Ted Engstrom, and others) who appeared to some non-Western leaders that they thought God’s mission could

efforts to present the idea of people groups. Ed Dayton, head of MARC, often described his efforts as helping to bring management expertise to accomplishing the goals of global mission. Conceding that some early articulations of frontier missiology may have been overly pragmatic can only help us to find the best framework that is as biblical as it is fruitful.

#### 2. Misunderstandings of Prioritization

At Lausanne ’74 Ralph Winter described cross-cultural evangelism among the peoples yet without church movements as the “highest priority.” Yet to many of that time, and still today, mission is always a matter of responding to the most urgent, pressing needs. Every missionary was then presumably responding to the most critical needs that they knew. Thus, there was predictable pushback on the claim of priority:

People in Mexico City are going to hell, too! We’ve got needs all over the world, so what gives you the privilege of calling your “unreached peoples” the greatest need? Why are those lost people a higher priority?

This still takes place today when unreached peoples are presented as desperately needy peoples. Unreached people groups are not the *neediest* peoples. They are the *remaining* peoples in the global task.

#### 3. Discrete Ethnic Units

At Lausanne ’74 McGavran’s own term for peoples was “ethnic units,”

but other leaders (especially those who were stewards of lists of peoples) acknowledged greater complexity, including significant subsets, associations, clusters, and networks. The forces of globalization, migration, and urbanization obviously scrambled any notion of detached, distinct, never-changing people groups. Yet, no matter how many nuances are factored into the defining of peoples, the misperception persists that frontier missiologists assume that their lists of “Unreached People Groups” (UPGs) are all discrete ethnic units, to be uniformly checked off the lists when reached.

#### 4. Mistakes in Mobilization

Some attempts to popularize frontier missiology introduced confusion in definition as well as conflicting lists and terms. It became tiresome in the early 1980s to hear jokes about finding “hidden” peoples. Initially, MARC’s list of peoples was an open-source kind of “wiki” ethnography to which almost anyone could suggest unreached people groups, introducing considerable confusion. An oft-mentioned example of a vaguely defined group was “night nurses in St. Louis.” A people group or not?

#### 5. Reverting to Geography

Luis Bush and the AD 2000 and Beyond Movement used the “10/40 Window” to campaign for closure. Many observers presumed that every advocate of frontier missiology was

also an exponent of the 10/40 Window. Yet Ralph Winter never advocated the 10/40 Window. He thought the concept was a setback because it emphasized geography over ethnicity. It shifted the focus back from “who” (the peoples) to “where” (the countries).

### 6. *The Timeline Toward AD 2000*

For a time, the concerted effort to precipitate collaborative action by the year 2000 seemed to work well to exploit millenarian enthusiasm. Those who were present at the Edinburgh event in 1980 will remember that the year 2000 seemed to be a generation away. In fact, the Edinburgh watchword was an intentional way to restate the Student Volunteer Movement rallying cry of “the evangelization of the world in this generation.” Yet as the 1990s progressed, it became clear, even to the most zealous mission leaders, that even if there were suddenly tens of thousands of new missionaries, there would not be time for them to pursue wise entry strategies of prolonged language and culture learning. The clock was ticking with more people groups on the unreached list than there were days remaining in the millennium. Accusations of sloganeering began to hit with full force. Most seasoned practitioners of frontier mission quietly backed away from trying to orchestrate closure by AD 2000 or any other date. The experience may have caused some to lose interest in pursuing a goal of closure. On the other hand, pressing beyond the artificial millennial finish line actually tempered the resolve of many to pursue frontier mission with a persistent, unhurried urgency.

### Proving the Paradigm

Even while these difficulties were unfolding there were other definitive developments that have tested, clarified, and proven the paradigm.

#### 1. *Increasing Biblical and Theological Depth*

For many evangelicals in the 1970s, an adequate biblical “basis” for mission had been largely limited to a catalog of verses in two categories: imperatives

(the “go ye” verses) and universals (texts on “all” or “every” nation, the “ends of the earth,” and others). But biblical scholarship in the 1970s and 1980s inclined evangelicals to follow methods of biblical theology that featured key themes such as the kingdom of God and the glory of God as seen unfolding throughout the scriptures.

Evangelicals gave heed to John Stott’s call at Lausanne ’74 to explore and to use the entire Bible as the best framework for mission (Stott 1975). In the past forty years, there have been several contributions towards a rich biblical theology of mission, some of them specifically focused on frontier mission. For example, the Abrahamic covenant to bring blessing to all nations had



been examined by John Stott in the 1970s. Christopher Wright continued and deepened those ideas in the 1990s (Wright 2006, 194–264). Walter Kaiser’s early work on the Abrahamic promise as the mandate for mission<sup>3</sup> encouraged Ralph Winter to anchor frontier mission in God’s promise to Abraham that his people were to become a blessing for all peoples.

John Piper’s biblical theology of the glory of God has become widely known, particularly in his book, *Let the Nations Be Glad!* (Piper 1993). It was developed with careful exegetical substance and theological depth, but with the practice and purpose of frontier mission always in view. There are

other examples, but without question, frontier missiology has found biblical footing and framing that is far more substantive than what was in use forty years ago.

#### 2. *Comprehensible: Easily Understood and Passed On*

The fundamental framework of frontier mission has shown itself to be something that makes sense to Christians all over the world. In recent decades, specialized marketing, mushrooming migration, and identity politics have magnified the commercial and political importance of distinctive peoples and social communities. Ethnic and socio-economic identities are more readily recognized as critical to gospel communication. And the related increase in numbers of churches worldwide which honor distinctives in culture—language, the arts, and music—is likewise more widely comprehended and valued.

Yes, there are subtleties, but they are not hard to clarify. For example, to “finish” the task actually refers to the end of the beginning of sustained gospel movements. The term “unreached” is often misunderstood as meaning that people have yet to hear the name of Jesus. The term actually has more to do with the absence of a following of Jesus in specific peoples. We’ve seen that such points of confusion are not difficult to straighten out. Frontier mission makes as much sense now as it did decades ago.

#### 3. *Proven by Sustained and Fruitful Efforts*

In the past forty years thousands of mission efforts have been directed toward unreached people groups. Some endeavors have been underway for decades. Some have borne much fruit while others have seen few people following Christ. But still these efforts keep going. We have witnessed a steady increase of maturity and practical wisdom, forged in the fires of opposition and hardship.

Of course there have been many failures, and even more diversions: workers start to work with a particular

unreached people, but instead soon find themselves helping the youth group at a long-established church, or something like that. But for all the setbacks, we have seen amazing perseverance by workers and the churches that send them. If frontier mission were just sloganeering, many more workers would have quit long ago. But people are sticking with it with remarkable verve.

### To Supersede or To Simplify Frontier Missiology?

Some have proposed alternative missiologies to replace or supersede frontier missiology because they view frontier missiology as dated idea from a bygone era. Considering alternative missiologies has moved me to respectfully disagree. Frontier missiology is not outdated, certainly not in the sense that it needs to be surpassed. I find that other missiologies do not compete, but actually complement, and are empowered by, frontier missiology.

#### *Alternatives Express and Extend Frontier Mission*

There are two candidate missiologies that are most often proposed as alternatives to frontier mission: urban missiology and diaspora missiology. When I've quizzed and read urban missiologists, asking them to tell me what urban missiology is all about, I usually hear something like,

You have to get right into the city. You've got to exegete your city. And that means finding out who is there. Explore the different relationships. Find out what makes the networks work. Discover the systems and cycles. Study the socio-political tapestries and mosaics of different groupings. Find out who is excluded or segmented from everyone else.

Such responses reveal the overlap with frontier missiology, including the emphasis on distinctive cultures, subgroupings, and communication networks. In both frontier and urban approaches, our task is to ensure that no set or network of people is overlooked.

**T**here are two candidate missiologies that are most often proposed as alternatives to frontier mission: urban missiology and diaspora missiology.

Likewise, with diaspora missiology, which begins with the abiding continuities of ethnic and communal identities. I've heard diaspora missiology called "frontier mission on steroids" because of its emphasis on tracking the scope and mobility of peoples and how the same families can hold to a multiplicity of identities. These communal identities serve as the same bridges of God long highlighted in frontier missiology.

#### *The Enduring Necessity of Frontier Missiology*

One of the most significant tests of frontier missiology took place on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Lausanne '74 consultation. This 2004 Forum for World Evangelization, held in Pattaya, Thailand, and sponsored by the Lausanne Committee, gathered more than 1500 participants from 130 countries in thirty-one mini-consultations, each one focusing on "critical issues confronting the church in the 21st century" (Claydon 2005, vii). Several of the thirty-one "Issue Groups" were indeed focused on broad topics related to mission, such as globalization, gender, religious nationalism, bioethics, and more. Other "Issue Groups" focused on mission activities such as media and technology, the arts, orality, theological education, and prayer. Still other groups focused on particular kinds of people, among them children, Muslims, "at risk" people, Jewish people, people with disabilities, and a few more.

Among the many groups covering this wide array of topics there was no group expressly focused on unreached people groups. I was told that this was by design by the organizers of the forum. When I asked one of the leaders why such a significant aspect of the Lausanne movement had been purposely omitted, he said something about wanting to be ready for the 21st

century. Dozens of leaders from many parts of the world had noticed this exclusion long before the event.

The focus of one group was "Hidden and Forgotten People." That particular group was supposed to focus on people with disabilities as well as people described as those who had "never heard the name of Jesus." Disabled people are of course often overlooked and well deserving of a full discussion. But instead, consultation planners insisted that any discussion about unreached people groups would have to be a piece of a broad conversation about ministry to disabled persons.

Several leaders, not wanting to diminish the importance of ministry to disabled people, and at the same time, adamantly passionate about completing the task among all peoples, organized a way for those focused on unreached people groups to meet separately. No rooms were available in the venue for this unofficial thirty-second issue group, so chairs were brought to a lightly-trafficked, top-floor escalator landing. Dozens of leaders found their way to this improvised consultation. In order to participate, most of them had to opt out of their expected places in other issue groups.

More than fifty people participated, most of them from non-Western lands. An agenda was planned and pursued with robust and invigorating discussions. The group called itself "Ministry among Least Reached People Groups." It was decided by the Forum organizers, with some consternation, that a report about unreached people groups could be offered to the general assembly, as every other issue group did. But its report would have to share time with Group 6, which had come to call itself "Ministry Among People with Disabilities."<sup>4</sup>

I hasten to say that after the 2004 Forum, the Lausanne Committee leadership consistently recognized unreached and unengaged peoples as an uppermost concern of many in world evangelization. The Cape Town Commitment clearly highlights this priority. I may have mistakenly recalled some of the details, but I mention this event as a telling demonstration of the enduring reality of frontier missiology. In the eyes of some academic and church leaders, even those who were dedicated to world mission as leaders in the Lausanne movement, the day of focusing on people groups in mission had long passed. By contrast, it was actually non-Western leaders and field practitioners who insisted instead that finishing the task among least-reached peoples was of enduring importance. For many it still remains the highest priority.

#### *Not the Sunset of Frontier Mission*

Therefore, let frontier mission thinkers and practitioners embrace and empower partnership with other missiologies. In my view, frontier missiology has proven its durative value. It is not going away. If something were going to replace it, I think we would have seen it by now.

We have good reason to refine, simplify and deepen our thinking and practice of frontier mission. Now more than ever. Why? If we are able to identify and cultivate what is essential, it will make frontier missiology more, not less, useful in diverse contexts of the ever-changing world.

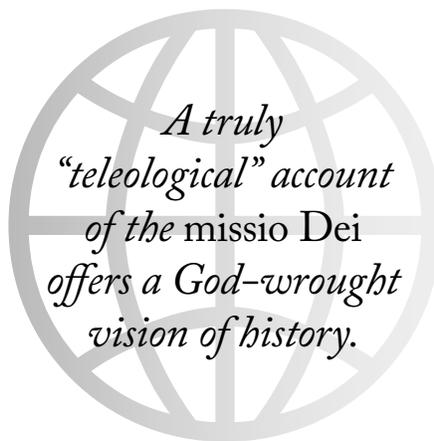
At this anniversary we stand at an important threshold. The testing and tempering of frontier missiology in the past decades should embolden us to refine, deepen, and refresh the practice of frontier mission and the theology that drives it. I would dare to say that we stand at the sunrise, not the sunset, of frontier mission.

#### *Toward an Essential Frontier Missiology: A Flourishing Finish*

To better extend, simplify, and strengthen frontier missiology, I want

to identify the core ideas of an “essential frontier missiology.” The word “essential” reminds us to look for what is germane, vital, and fruitful in diverse settings. I will describe these core ideas by pointing toward some helpful ways forward.

I propose that we refine and cultivate an essential frontier missiology that features three elements: (1) a *missio Dei* framework that is teleological but also relational; (2) a more ample theology of ethnicity; and (3) a “Christotelic,” embodied, transformative ecclesiology. These are the same three components that I claimed were fused by Ralph Winter 40 years ago, but we will examine them in reverse order.



#### *A Missio Dei Framework, Teleological and Relational*

By “teleological” I mean purposive. A truly teleological account of the *missio Dei* provides a God-wrought, all-encompassing vision of history. It is really a vision of God himself pursuing His purpose relentlessly through succeeding generations to the present day, and as promised, to the culmination of the age.

#### *A Teleological or Purposive Framework*

The most common formulations of *missio Dei* feature remembrances of the former deeds of God—his people-saving, justice-bringing, or peace-making activities. These are regarded as patterns of service, exemplified in Jesus, that the church is now expected

to continue or to copy. The difficulty with this model is that mission swiftly becomes a mode of compassionate activism. The goals of this way of mission are easily co-opted to advance different ideals or ideologies. Instead, we need a robust *missio Dei* formulation that calls for more than a mere *emulation of* Jesus’ example, but one that summons us to an actual *collaboration with* the living, risen Christ as he accomplishes his purpose.

I like Richard Bauckham’s little book *Bible and Mission*, in which he traces a triple trajectory in the Scriptures: blessing, revelation (or glory), and then God’s kingdom (Bauckham 2003, 27). These three strands are coherent, intertwining trajectories running throughout the Bible. Together they describe God’s pursuit of bringing blessing among all nations, worship of all peoples, and Christ’s lordship in all the earth. Bauckham notes that this narrative framework is a “non-modern metanarrative” in which there is not the domination of many by a privileged few. Rather, the one who gains ascendancy is one made worthy by his suffering for all (Bauckham 2003, 90). This distinction is critical for a post-modern context, where frontier mission can very easily seem to be a religious conquest of all peoples. Confidence to pursue his mission can be sustained with a full-blown biblical theology that focuses on the singular glory of the Lamb who was slain.

#### *A Relational Purpose*

I’ve already mentioned John Piper’s work, recognized for highlighting the glory of God in mission. He is rightly known for his single-sentence theology of mission, which is as beautifully teleological as it can be: “Missions exists because worship doesn’t” (Piper 1993, 17). Piper has helped us immensely by exhuming the Puritan theology of God’s glory that at one time was the central theological idea driving mission in pre-revolutionary, colonial America. Shortly after William Carey’s *Enquiry*

popularized the Matthew 28 commission, the doxological ideas of Jonathan Edwards came to have diminished influence.<sup>5</sup> In recent years, Piper, along with many others, has revived Puritan theology<sup>6</sup> and helped inspire widespread passionate zeal for the glory of God.

There is more to doxology and mission than just God's glory being known. Ultimately, God purposes to be loved. He cannot be loved unless he is known. God's purpose is marvelously relational. He has purchased people from every tribe and tongue to obey, serve, worship, and love him.

Such an approach to the *missio Dei* gives us a far better way of seeing and pursuing closure. Instead of ticking off line items on a list of UPGs, it can be our ambition to anticipate the joy of the Father to have his full family restored to him, some from every tribe and tongue. Closure then becomes a pursuit of relational fullness with God instead of merely a reduction of our list of people groups to zero. Mission is ultimately not our project to finish, but his purpose to fulfill.

Cameron Townsend said that the parable of the lost sheep (Matthew 18:12–14) guided the difficult decisions he made to launch Wycliffe Bible Translators. It's interesting that Jesus begins this parable by asking, "What do you think?" Surely he wants us to have the parable affect our thinking. If a man with 100 sheep finds that one of them has gone astray, he does not say, "Well, I'll take one percent less. It's an acceptable loss. We can allow for a little shrinkage." No. In the parable he leaves the 99 and goes for that one. Perhaps in frontier mission the only numbers we really need are 99 and 1. If there is still any people yet to be gathered back to God, then the seek-and-save mission continues.

*The Enduring Joy of Fulfillment Vision*  
Jesus spoke of the joy of anticipating the fulfillment of God's promise when he declared to some Jews, "Your father

**T**he God-oriented vantage point recognizes the distinctive worth of each of the peoples, and yet celebrates the beauty of all peoples.

Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad" (John 8:56).

The poetic structure of these sentences, with the double parallel of seeing and rejoicing, was framed in a chiasmic structure. That structure calls attention to the significance of the day of Christ. When he said, "My day," was Jesus referring to his three years of ministry? Or was he referring to present days, when his people co-labor with the resurrected Lord? Or was he speaking of the end of the age when he will return? Yes. I think it's all the day of Christ.

Four thousand years ago Abraham saw the coming day of Christ. He was counting stars, but in that night sky he saw the day of Christ, a day when multiplied millions from all the peoples of the earth would belong to the faith family. These would become the long-promised blessing amidst all peoples. The vision stirred him, moving his emotions with joy. He saw the day and said, "Bring it." He and Sarah died without receiving the promise, but the account says that they "welcomed" that day "from a distance" (Hebrews 11:13). If they could see the fulfillment of the promise from 4,000 years, perhaps we can lift our eyes and find ourselves moved with the same faith-filled joy.

I think that jealousy for God's glory, ablaze with the visionary joy of hope, can capture the hearts of entire generations and give them stamina to pursue costly work.

### A More Ample Theology of Ethnicity

The multi-culturalism of our day propounds the idea that all peoples are of equal worth. Within the limited bounds of secular worldviews, which is to say, devoid of a supreme deity who perceives and appraises all things, there can be nothing better than simple equality. But in truth, the peoples are

more than merely equal. They are precious in the sight of God.

### *Beyond Equality: Before God*

In his plenary address at Lausanne '74, Donald McGavran pointed out a way toward a more adequate theology of ethnicity for frontier missiology. He quoted a verse of scripture in which we see the peoples gathering to God as worshipers, each of the tribes, tongues, and kinship groups exhibiting the redeemed glories of their distinctive cultures. McGavran said,

God has no favorites among cultures. He accepts them all. We read in Revelation 21:26 that the "wealth and the splendor of the nations" shall be brought into the Holy City. Kings of the earth bring in all their splendor. In stream all the beautiful cultures of mankind; hour after hour, day after day, the glories of the nations march in. (McGavran 1975, 96)

Although McGavran is certainly correct about God having "no favorites among cultures," I think we could agree that God does have "favorites" in this sense: God considers each of the peoples to be his favorite people. I have three daughters. I have sometimes said that each one of them is my favorite daughter. How is that possible? Each of my three daughters is uniquely lovely and wise. Each of them can demonstrate family values, extend honor, and show the beauty of love in ways that are unique. Any parent can see why I can say that they are each my favorite daughter.

Considering how parents prize the unique love they receive from each of their children can help us appreciate God's delight in the redeemed glories of every culture and people. Such a God-oriented vantage point offers a way to recognize the distinctive worth of *each* of the peoples, and yet also to celebrate

the beauty of *all* of the peoples together, who have somehow been formed into one worshipping people in Christ.

### *All Nations and All Generations*

We see a similar perspective in Ephesians 2 and 3. Writing to Gentile churches in Ephesus, Paul begins 3:1 with “For this reason,” pointing to what he has said in chapter 2 about one global household of God’s people (2:19), worshipping God together as one great, global house of worship (2:20–22). In 3:14 Paul repeats the phrase, “For this reason,” and then says, “I bow my knees before the Father from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name.” The Greek term used for family in this text is *patria*, a term emphasizing lineages or groupings with generational depth.<sup>7</sup>

Paul considers the fatherhood of God as a far greater matter than the adoption of individuals as his children. Each one of the families that have any kind of generational depth is known to him. He has named each one. This means that each of them has a particular history, destiny, identity, and value. Each one of them is precious. No wonder the great prayer concludes with glory abounding to God, not only “in the church,” but also “in Christ” in a way that encompasses “all generations” (3:21). This may be something beyond what “we ask or think” (3:20), but we have more work to do—to inquire and to ponder—in recognizing how God works to culminate the ethno-history of every people. If he is the God of all nations, he must also be the God of all generations.

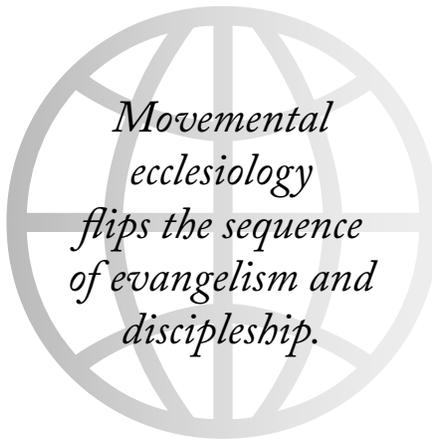
### **A Christotelic, Embodied, Transformative Ecclesiology**

Frontier mission is ostensibly focused on the presence or absence of church movements. Thus, churches are of highest importance. And yet there are significant gaps and weaknesses in frontier ecclesiology. Church growth teaching tended to emphasize the evangelistic potential of churches. In his Lausanne address, Winter persuasively claimed that near-neighbor, same-culture churches were

capable of a “more powerful” evangelism. A good many frontier mission thinkers and practitioners have tended to see churches in a utilitarian light, viewing the church as a means of mission, but not its goal. I think, however, we are now seeing some helpful developments that point toward richer, simpler theory and practice concerning churches.

The church is the instrument by which Christ accomplishes the goal of God’s mission. But the church is also the goal itself. It can be both goal and instrument because Christ himself is the living reality and end-accomplishing force of the church.

I use the newly coined word “Christotelic” to describe a growing reality—the



global church—that Christ himself will bring to maturity and cause to fulfill its purpose. The term “Christotelic” is composed of the suffix “-telic,” derived from the Greek word *telos* meaning end, goal, or purpose. The term Christotelic has the intended dual meaning that Christ is himself the goal, while at the same time, he is the one who accomplishes the fullness of God’s purpose. Once again, McGavran probably pointed us in a good direction by referring to people movements as “Christ-ward movements.”

### *“Movemental” Ecclesiology: The Embodiment of the Risen Jesus*

Many church planters consider churches as living entities that thrive and bear fruit by multiplying. Seen

as a living organism, the church is essentially the risen Jesus himself, joined with those who obey him in faith together. As communities of people obey Jesus together, they become, by his Spirit, an embodiment of Jesus.

Seeing the multiplying life of Christ abound amidst the simplest communities has given some church planters greater confidence in the sufficiency of the word of God and the Spirit of God. Christ himself guides and grows his churches in pioneer settings without the immediate oversight of foreign workers. We’ve recognized that such organic, simple life can be astounding—highly fertile so that cascading, multiplying movements flourish.

Without question one of the most significant developments in recent years is the recognition of the phenomenon of church planting movements (CPM), or, as many describe them, disciple making movements (DMM). As people obey the word of God by the Spirit of Christ in communities, new followers help others to obediently follow Christ. Movements often thrive and multiply rapidly. As we learn more about these movements, our ideas of church, evangelism, and discipleship are shifting. Some are groping for new terms for what we may come to call “movemental” ecclesiology.

Many mission leaders have to admit that they have been surprised by the reversal of the sequence of evangelism and discipleship. It has been customary for evangelicals to see evangelism as coming first, resulting in newly born again believers. Standard practice after evangelism has been to follow up with what is often called discipleship, with the goal of bringing about maturity and obedience to Christ. Movemental ecclesiology flips the sequence. The initial stage of discipling helps people to read or hear the scriptures in such a way that they are challenged to begin obeying Christ. As people learn to obey the word of God, many soon come to experience the joy of trusting and walking with Jesus along with

others. Having encountered Christ in a living way, it is not long before they confirm their repentance and confession of faith. Instead of evangelizing to produce disciples, we are discipling to accomplish evangelization amidst a community of people.

#### *A People of Blessing in the Midst of Every People*

Frontier missiology has groped for a way to show the immense value of missiological breakthrough in every people. Why are these new church movements of such paramount importance? What should we expect in reached peoples? What will happen in an evangelized world? What will all the newly planted churches in every people group actually do? What are they for?

It does not satisfy to respond to such questions with talk about making Jesus come back. As thrilled as anyone should be to anticipate Christ's return, we are people of promise who, like Abraham, rejoice to see that Christ's day has dawned. Already we have seen every kind of human flourishing when missionaries have been free to work (Woodberry 2009). There should be even greater anticipation for what churches might bring about as they are encouraged to become the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham: "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 22:18).

I've said elsewhere that

God intends that Christ-following communities become His long-promised blessing, bringing forth tangible realities of righteousness, peace and sustained evangelism for His glory. As God's people pursue this aspect of mission they seek to abound in good deeds in every dimension of life, society and the created order. (Hawthorne 2015, 1)

The Abrahamic promise can provide Christ-following communities with a rich identity as God's people in the midst of all peoples. Of course, following Christ often stretches or breaks relationships, even with close

**T**he biblical promises and stories of blessing may be the most ample biblical theology we will find for what we mean by transformation.

family members. But God does not require people to repudiate family ties and customs in order to follow Christ. Followers of Christ continue in the same ethnic and cultural identity of their birth. And yet they are different, pursuing justice and righteousness (Genesis 18:18–19), praying and laboring for the good of their neighbors, expecting that God will bring forth miraculous measures of transforming blessing amidst their communities.

I'm convinced the biblical promises and stories of blessing provide the best biblical theology for what we mean by transformation. The biblical idea of blessing touches every realm of life: economics, art, industry, agriculture, ecology, and more beside. Blessing refers to God's intended goodness—a God-desired fullness and a fruitfulness. For example, we see such blessing and transformation when the book of Genesis reaches its crescendo, where Abraham's great-grandson Joseph brings "great deliverance" and tangible blessing to a large part of the earth (Genesis 41:53–57, 45:7).<sup>8</sup>

The promise of blessing can embolden us to pursue a wide and abounding mission that brings about both good for the nations and glory to God. We may find ourselves delighting in so-called "regular" mission<sup>9</sup> as much or more than the instrumental stage of frontier mission. If anything, such hope strengthens our resolve to accomplish the strategic priority of church movements in every people since the inception of such movements is altogether necessary to bring forth the ongoing blessing and fruit of Christ's Lordship.

#### *A People of Worship Formed from All Peoples*

We need an ecclesiology that celebrates every local expression of church to be part of a global people of worship

before God. To form the needed theology of a worshiping people, we need to re-examine many themes and texts. For example, there have been many taking a fresh look at Acts 15 to help navigate contextualization issues.

At the council in Jerusalem, James' statement in Acts 15:14–18 provides a narrative framework, defined by biblical history and prophecy, in which to understand the work of God in the turning of Gentiles to serve the Lord. James claims that what God had done with Peter, and therefore also with Paul, was the beginning of a fulfillment of a long-awaited cluster of prophecies having to do with a later exodus, and a greater house.<sup>10</sup>

"God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name" (Acts 15:14). The exodus motif would have been clear to everyone by the expression that God had "concerned Himself" (Greek: from *episkeptomai*). This language is almost identical to God's announcement that he was initiating a deliverance from Egypt, "I am indeed concerned (*episkeptomai* in the Septuagint) about you and what has been done to you in Egypt" (Exodus 3:16, see also 4:31). By using the word "first" James was announcing that they were at the beginning, or the first stages, of a fulfillment of an anticipated season of history.

James declares that in the mission work of Peter and Paul, God had begun to accomplish a new exodus by the formation of a worshiping people (Greek: *laos*) constituted by persons from diverse peoples (Greek: *ethne*) for his name, or his greater glory. Then, in verses 15 through 18 comes a litany of allusions and quotations of four or five different prophets, particularly Amos 9:11–12, that together describe the raising up of a new house of worship.

Some scholars see one of the allusions as Jeremiah 16:12, which states that God-honoring Gentiles will someday “be built up in the midst of My people” (Bauckham 1995).

In this light, God was gathering peoples to become part of his people, giving them a way to worship God as holy, having been cleansed by the Holy Spirit himself (Acts 15:8–9) rather than by the strictures of proselytization (15:1, 5).

The model Paul declares in the letter to the Romans is virtually the same: that there would be a mutual reception, among Jews and Gentiles as worshipers together, not as becoming the same ethnicity, but honoring cultural differences and ethnic identities. The crescendo of Paul’s argument is that people of different ethnicity and styles of obedience would receive each other just as they had already been received by God as worshipers: “Therefore, receive one another, just as Christ also received us to the glory of God” (Romans 15:7). Paul supports the great hope that “with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (15:6) with another litany of prophecies (15:9–13). We would do well to follow the example of the early church to find our identity as God’s worshiping people in a great narrative defined by the unfolding story and hope of the scriptures.

*Centralizing the Son of God in Our Mission* Scripture calls us to “consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession” (Hebrews 3:1). We learn that our credal affirmation of truth, our “confession” of faith and hope, should first of all extol the risen Son as the magnificent Apostle, “faithful” to build and to preside over “the house of God” (3:2–6). He is the Apostle who forms a people from and within every people. Only by his faithfulness do his people become apostolic in the midst of their communities. This one is also our High Priest, even now gathering worshipers from every nation, serving

and sanctifying them so that they become a spectacle of God-loving glory in the earth. Let us consider him.

The living God has exalted him to be Lord and Christ of his kingdom. He is head of the church his body. He is the long-awaited seed of Abraham, causing the nations to flourish with blessing. He is the greater Son of David, now building a house made without hands, of which the latter glory will surpass any before. Let us consider him as we labor among the nations. Let us consider him as we work to deepen, to strengthen, and to reconfigure our missiology. Anything of worth will come *from* him, be enacted *through* him, and will come *to* him again in relational glory. **IJFM**

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>In private conversation, Winter told me that the word choice in naming the event reflected the influence of some of the faculty of Fuller’s School of World Mission.

<sup>2</sup>Winter’s assertion about the evangelistic efficacy of local churches was built on dozens of church growth studies done by others that had been supervised by the School of World Mission faculty.

<sup>3</sup>Ralph Winter learned of Walter Kaiser’s ideas about the Abrahamic promise in the late 1970s, which led to the inclusion of Kaiser’s 1981 article in the *Perspectives* volume (Kaiser, 1981, 25–34). As early as 1977 Kaiser had published the beginnings of what he would call “epangelical theology” (after the Greek word for “promise,” *epaggelia*) in which the Abrahamic covenant is of primary importance: “The scope of the seventy nations listed in Genesis 10, when taken with the promise of Genesis 12:3 that in Abraham’s seed ‘all the nations of the earth [viz., those just listed in Genesis 10] shall be blessed,’ constitutes the original missionary mandate itself” (Kaiser 1977, 98–99). See also “The Christian and the Old Testament” published in 1998 by William Carey Library, and the simpler, shorter work, “Mission in the Old Testament: Israel as a Light to the Nations,” published in 2000 by Baker Books.

<sup>4</sup>The disabilities group became “Group 6B” which meant the unreached peoples mini-consultation became “Group 6A.” Fifty people are listed as participating in the frontier mission group, but many

more participated. Kent Parks and Werner Jahnke were recognized as conveners and key authors of the report (Claydon 2005, 340–396). As I understand it, the Ethne to Ethne network, largely led by non-Westerners, found momentum in the relationships confirmed at the 2004 event.

<sup>5</sup>Historian Pierce Beaver has noted that “the glory of God” was “the prime factor which moved the missionaries” in early American, colonial-era mission endeavors (Beaver 1962, 217). Before the turn of the 19th century, the dominant motivation in American mission was *gloria Dei*. Beaver claims that key figures such as Cotton Mather, John Eliot, David Brainerd, and Jonathan Edwards all found primary motivation and theology of mission centered on the glory of God with hope for the coming Kingdom. But suddenly, soon after 1810 “*gloria Dei* as a motive vanishes almost overnight...and the all-compelling motive” became “obedience to Christ’s Great Commission” (Beaver 1968, 139–141).

<sup>6</sup>Piper is well aware that a mission theology that centralizes the glory of God revives some of the best Puritan convictions of Jonathan Edwards. See Piper’s *God’s Passion for His Glory: Living the Vision of Jonathan Edwards* (1998).

<sup>7</sup>What named lineages does Paul see to be in heaven? It is highly unlikely that the lineages “in heaven” are angelic. It is possible that they are peoples or tribes that have become extinct or in some way have been lost among the peoples dwelling on earth.

<sup>8</sup>See the article I co-authored with Sarita Gallagher, “Blessing as Transformation” in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*, Fourth Edition and also *Mission Frontiers*, <http://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/blessing-as-transformation>.

<sup>9</sup>Ralph Winter came up with the term “regular” missions to describe cross-cultural endeavors among people groups that had already experienced a missiological breakthrough. In these cases, the work that we could consider “frontier” missions is complete.

<sup>10</sup>There is a vast literature about the expectation of a “new exodus” among Jewish people at the time of Christ.

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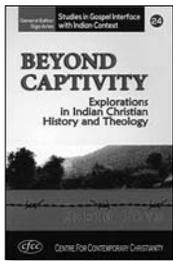
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# Book Reviews

*Beyond Captivity: Explorations in Indian Christian History and Theology*, Studies in Gospel Interface with Indian Context, by Robin Boyd (Bangalore, India: Centre for Contemporary Christianity, 2014, pp. 342)

—Reviewed by Timothy Shultz



*Beyond Captivity* by Reverend Robin Boyd is an important book for several reasons. It is first and foremost a collection of Boyd's own essays written over a span of more than 50 years, at a time when the "missionary era" was ostensibly coming to a close in India. This vantage point allows the reader to see inside Boyd's thoughts—someone who was an experienced and capable western missionary—about his own role within the Indian Church. Boyd's emphasis is clear: it is all about Jesus Christ. A large part of the book actually addresses how Indian people conceive of the person and work of Jesus Christ. In this way, Boyd makes the point that the gospel in India is about Jesus Christ and is not simply a Christendom-based religion complete with its own theology, history, ritual, and apologetic.

Secondly, Boyd goes to great lengths to describe the positive contributions made by the missionary community to the creation and growth of the Gujarat Church—a significant part of the Church in India. This point of view about missionary work in the Indian colonial context is strikingly different from the typical, widespread "western missionary as agent of oppression" interpretation. The revelation—almost always either forgotten, misunderstood, or taken for granted—is that missionaries did more than create churches, build hospitals, and found schools. Missionaries in India contributed to the very idea of modern education (and its functioning categories), including an emphasis on a science-based medicine within Indian civilization, not to mention biblical study, which is truly noteworthy.

Thirdly, Boyd reveals how Indians themselves participated brilliantly in the ministry of the gospel. This also runs counter to the academic "legend"—which has been accepted as fact—that manipulative missionaries planted and harvested rice Christians among the poorer classes of India. Boyd's work, taken together with the writings of Robert Frykenberg, Daniel Jeyaraj, and John C. B. Webster, show

that Indians were at the forefront of church growth in India and were not the British Raj equivalent of the despised New Testament tax collector.

Finally, it could be said that the real value of this book is Boyd's open-minded approach to significant and meaningful contextualization of the gospel of Jesus Christ into Indian and even Hindu forms. At the same time, Boyd shows how the controversies surrounding so-called "insider movements" versus "Christian conversion" are nothing new: contextualization was and actually still is at the heart of the gospel movement in India. The examples offered are taken from the literature that was created for the Church in Gujarat, where Boyd served. Clearly, there was a felt need for creating good literature that would support multiple points of view as ministry focus ebbed and flowed for more than a century.

There were three basic types of literature that supported three different philosophies of ministry. Contextualized literature that supported what we would today call "insider" approaches included: *Marks of a True Guru*—a description of how people can judge what a true guru was like; *Nakalanka Avatar (Spotless Incarnation)*—a collection of Hindu *bhajans* (or devotional songs) sung in local fairs that seemed to speak of an incarnation to come which sounded a lot like Jesus Christ; and *Hriday Gita (Song of the Heart)*—a gospel presentation done in a Hindu-cultural style.

There was also literature that supported a philosophy of ministry focused more on a Christian conversion-based approach in the form of various translated catechisms, dictionaries, theological works, and nearly every other type of Christian literature extant in Christendom. The majority of literature supported this ministry approach.

The area of music is one clear example of the simultaneous practice of these first two very different approaches to discipleship ministry. The *Dharmgita (Religious Songs)* and *Kavyarpan (Offering of Poems)* were both created in roughly the same decade. *Dharmgita* was a collection of translated hymns done in English metre while *Kavyarpan* was a version of the Psalms rendered in Indian metre. There were numerous other works for worship in each style done by both missionaries and Gujarati believers in Christ over many years. Boyd indicates that both approaches were effective within the emerging Church.

Another category of literature supported what seemed to be a third approach, namely a contextualized conversion approach, or a more Gujarat-based conversion. A set of commentaries was eventually written to support Gujarati pastors who led Gujarati churches "on the ground." These commentaries were not translated from European or North American books but were designed to support localized, and at least to some extent, contextualized local church ministry in Gujarat. There were also poems and songs created which

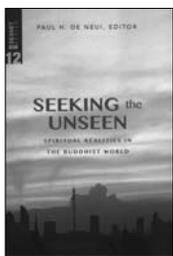
**B**oth Indian and non-Indian Christian leaders express frustration and strident disagreement over the recent trend of western missiologists importing an inappropriate emphasis on contextualized discipleship designed for Hindus.

were Christian versions of the Gujarati *garba* dance tradition. The impression this variety of literature gives is of differing philosophies of ministry being held in tension over time.

In conclusion, this valuable book provides a necessary corrective to a widely held point of view about contextualization and discipleship in the India mission context. Many Christian leaders, both Indian and non-Indian, express frustration and strident disagreement over what they believe to be the recent trend of western missiologists importing into India an inappropriate emphasis on contextualized discipleship designed for Hindus. *Beyond Captivity* examines evidence two centuries old, from the very outset of the missionary era in early 19th century western India. Here, in the literature designed by Indians and Western missionaries for the emerging Gujarati church, we discover that contextual worship, Hindu vocabulary and concepts to describe elements of gospel-centered Christian discipleship were struggled over and sometimes used. Hindu-friendly discipleship in India is nothing new. Boyd never says if there were any personal agenda or missiological conflict surrounding any of these points of view. If that is true, it speaks very well of both these (apparently) gracious non-Indians and Gujarati Christians.

*Seeking the Unseen: Spiritual Realities in the Buddhist World*, SEANET Series 12, edited by Paul de Neui (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2016, pp. 319)

—Reviewed by Brad Gill



The recent missiological emphasis on grassroots theology in our witness to the religious worlds of Asia will gain further momentum with the publication of SEANET's most recent compendium, *Seeking the Unseen: Spiritual Realities in the Buddhist World*. This annual consortium, whose focus on the Buddhist world has served up a steady diet of themes and publications over the past couple of decades, has now added a very strategic and practical anthology to our developing theology of religions.

Missiology is benefiting from a shift towards more global theologies. Systematic theologians are turning from the conventional questions in our Western canon and allowing

new questions from a pluralistic world of religions to engage their theological attention. With the growing global diaspora of peoples spilling over into Western communities, the common churchgoer is demanding a theologically sound way to relate to those of other faiths. With particular sensitivity to the spiritual dynamics of this inter-religious encounter, mission theologians are increasingly pushing the Holy Spirit (pneumatology) into the foreground of missiological concern. Witness, for example, Velli Matti Karkkainen's treatment of the Buddhist-Christian encounter and his attempt to reorient our traditional theological categories towards "the spirit-filled cosmos" and "the search for correlates between the Holy Spirit and conception of spirit in Buddhist traditions."<sup>1</sup> Amos Yong, another theologian of Pentecostal tradition, has written prolifically on the potential fruitfulness of a pneumatological missiology that is sensitive to the Buddhist-Christian interface.<sup>2</sup> And one hears of mission historians like Scott Sunquist recognizing the vital role of the Holy Spirit as the person of the Trinity who should lead our initial encounter with other religious worlds.<sup>3</sup>

Amidst this rising tide of theological interest appears the need for a more practical orientation in approaching the spiritual dynamics of Buddhist faith. SEANET takes on these complex spiritual realities, bridging theological and practical concerns of ministry. Contributors to this new compendium maintain this blend as they seek to discern how ministry will advance in a historically resistant Buddhist world. The editor, Paul de Neui, has arranged the articles into three sections: biblical, cultural and strategic. That said, all of the authors seem to work from the ground up, with that sense for the difficult conundrums which perpetuate and frustrate the transmission of the gospel in street level ministry. While the spiritual worldview of the Buddhist receives consistent treatment, the reader finds himself oscillating between Buddhist religious concepts and practical spiritual needs throughout the book. The overall balance of these 20 contributors makes this required reading for the mission candidate just entering the Buddhist world.

Three prominent perspectives forge this book into a manual for the apprentice in Buddhist ministry. First, it provides a global lens on a range of Buddhist contexts. Local context matters, and the contribution from a variety of settings gives this book a global authenticity. Certain themes repeat as you move from context to context, but each will wrinkle according to a local or national culture. Besides the multiple voices from Japan and Thailand, the tour continues through Mongolia (Smith), Vietnam (Nguyen), Sri Lanka (Somaratna, Caldera), Burma (Nyunt), and the Chinese

**B**y studying the diffusion of a scientific worldview, Koning was trying to assess what happens to the Thai Buddhist sense of reality (cosmology) under the impact of globalization.

world (Lim, Burnett). The different streams of Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism, as well as the interface between the Great Tradition and the folk expressions, are intertwined in local spiritual permutations as the reader moves through the book. Yes, Buddhism is a daunting complexity, but this book gives the reader a feel for certain spiritual facets in the prism of this transcultural faith. It can appear simultaneously incomprehensible and comprehensible—which perhaps is par for the course when ministering in a Buddhist context.

Secondly, the reader is exposed to different theoretical and spiritual vantage points. Many of the writers take a distinct methodological approach with its own set of theoretical grids and models. A view of these religious realities is offered from a more classical functionalist lens (Smith), but also from an archetypal and symbolic lens (Burnett). Several contributors chose to study Buddhist perspectives through a particular ritual: the almsgiving ceremony in Sri Lanka (Somaratna); Nat (spirit) worship in Burma (Nyant); ancestor veneration in Vietnam (Nguyen); and the rituals of blessing and destruction surrounding a Buddhist monastery (Burnett).

To understand how Buddhist spirituality influences Asian cultural practices, Silzer used the social theory of Douglas and Lingenfelter to identify how strong community values form a Buddhist concept of self. Koning's research, on the other hand, focused more on cultural change. She probed the impact of globalization and what she called the "reframing of spiritual realities in scientific terms." In particular, by studying the diffusion of a scientific worldview, she was trying to assess what happens to the Thai Buddhist sense of reality (cosmology). She describes the resulting ambivalence and tendency to moralize a once taken-for-granted spiritual domain. The combination of these methods and theoretical vantage points gives the reader a broad outlook on how to strategically approach any one local Buddhist context.

Thirdly, a decidedly strategic orientation permeates the book. The final section is dedicated to strategy, and ranges from the role of the "alongsider" in Thailand (Lambert) to the personal supernatural experiences of a post-tsunami Japan (reprinted in this *IJFM* issue, see p. 17). Peter Nyant gives a brilliant apologetic for Jesus as the Great Ancestor when dealing with the Nat (spirit) worship surrounding ancestor veneration. But as different as these strategic perspectives are, the cumulative force is to recommend greater discernment amidst Buddhist spiritual realities. Beyond the analytical and practical methodologies one senses the vital place of prayer, spiritual power and discernment.

In an anthology like this one, the strategic insight of a certain author will impress an individual reader, and this was certainly the case with this reviewer. SEANET as a network faces the unique challenges of reaching a Buddhist world, but at one point I clearly sensed the strategic importance of their linking with a broader missiological community. Alan Johnson, who still continues his long tenure in Thailand even while commuting annually to the USA for his teaching post, makes a seminal contribution to attrition studies in his article. Johnson addresses the common experience of Buddhists who experience a profound power encounter (signs, wonders, healing, provision) but who eventually fall away from the church. But instead of focusing on a more intensive study of his Thai Buddhist setting, he applies research out of Africa to this problem, and this comparative study of Africa and Asia allows him to suggest a theory. He asserts that the transcultural Buddhist world of Asia will more easily reabsorb and reinterpret the discouraged convert; this is contextually distinct from the primal religious world of Africa, where power encounters seem to have led to more sustained people movements and less attrition. Maybe Johnson's insight benefits from his commute between two worlds, but his research indicates that all grassroots animistic worlds are not the same. It hints at why the ministry amidst Buddhist spiritual realities has a long history of frustration. In my judgment, that insight alone is worth the price of the book. **IJFM**

### Endnotes

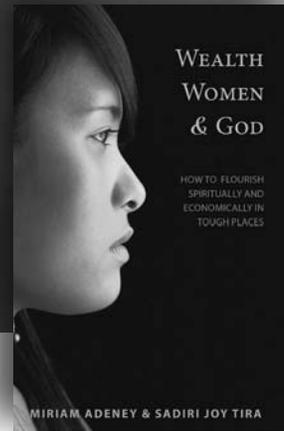
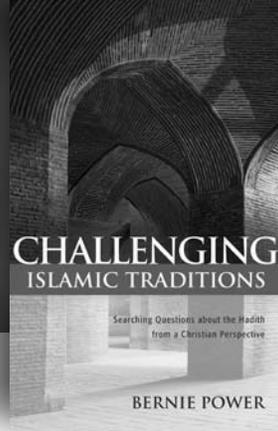
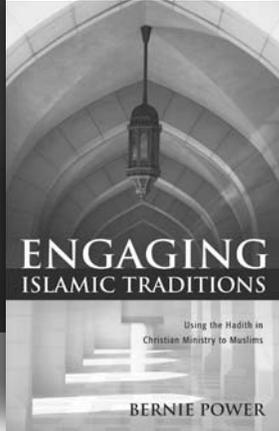
<sup>1</sup> Velli-Matti Karkkainen, *Spirit and Salvation* (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 2016), see especially pp. 159–172

<sup>2</sup> Amos Yong, *Pneumatology and the Buddhist-Christian Dialogue* (Leiden: Brill Academic, 2012)

<sup>3</sup> Scott Sunquist, *Understanding Christian Mission* (Baker Academic: Grand Rapids, MI, 2013): 259–268. His entire chapter is accessible online at [ijfm.org](http://ijfm.org/PDFs/IJFM/31_1_PDFs/IJFM_31_1-Sunquist.pdf), [http://ijfm.org/PDFs/IJFM/31\\_1\\_PDFs/IJFM\\_31\\_1-Sunquist.pdf](http://ijfm.org/PDFs/IJFM/31_1_PDFs/IJFM_31_1-Sunquist.pdf).



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# In Others' Words

*Editor's Note: In this department, we highlight resources outside of the IJFM: other journals, print resources, DVDs, web sites, blogs, videos, etc. Standard disclaimers on content apply. Due to the length of many web addresses, we sometimes give just the title of the resource, the main web address, or a suggested search phrase. Finally, please note that this January–March 2016 issue is partly composed of material created later in 2016. We apologize in advance for any inconvenience caused by such anachronisms.*

## Refugee Catastrophes

The death rate of refugees and immigrants attempting to cross the Mediterranean has soared dramatically in 2016. During the week of June 10 alone, an estimated 700 to 1000 people have perished at sea. The charts and graphs in the UNHCR's *Refugees/Migrants Emergency Response—Mediterranean* report tell 2016's sobering story. In addition, the North Africa–Italy route (with a majority coming from Africa) is chillingly more dangerous, making the odds of dying a staggering 1 in 23 compared to the still unacceptable 1 in 81 for the Mediterranean as a whole. For graphs showing the country of origin, click on the tab “Transit routes” at this link: <http://migration.iom.int/europe/>. Lastly, we recommend “Looking for a Home,” a special report on refugees and migrants in the May 28th, 2016 issue of *The Economist*.

## Historical Perspectives on Mass Migrations

For a distinctly secular but historical vantage point on today's mass migrations, see Robert Kaplan's “How Islam Created Europe” in the May 28, 2016 issue of *The Atlantic*. Kaplan's provocative analysis has already sparked controversy.

The Continent has absorbed other groups before, of course . . . But those peoples adopted Christianity and later formed polities . . . that were able to fit, however bloodily, inside the evolving European state system . . . Today, hundreds of thousands of Muslims who have no desire to be Christian are filtering into economically stagnant European states, threatening to undermine the fragile social peace.

Ironically, in a June 5, 2016 post, author Rod Dreher of *The American Conservative* quotes extensively from both *The Guardian* and *The Daily Beast* to the effect that thousands of Muslim refugees in Europe are actually converting to Christianity. He ends by saying,

Curiouser and curiouser. Who knows what God has planned for Europe. Wouldn't it be astonishing if the revival of Christianity there came through converted Muslim refugees, who remembered the kindness Christians showed them?

## Refugee Reflections

Extraordinary times call for extraordinary efforts. Don't miss Tim Stafford's “Cities of Refuge” in the May/June 2016 issue of *Books & Culture*, which was entirely devoted to immigration and refugees. For nearly three weeks, Stafford and his photographer traversed the hardest hit areas of Europe (Germany, Austria, Croatia, Serbia, and Greece) interviewing refugees directly. These firsthand accounts are beautifully written, poignant, and hard to put down. The issue includes two book reviews of note about refugees: David Neff's account of Nicholas Terpstra's *Religious Refugees in the Early Modern World* and D. L. Mayfield's “Do We Really Welcome Refugees?” Neff highlights some of Terpstra's research that relates to mass migrations in history:

Terpstra reports that the cities that received religious refugees and found paths to peaceful co-existence (though not toleration in the modern sense) prospered . . . Cities that were devoted to purity . . . closed their doors to refugees who were not like them, and thus became monocultural and “were left with smaller populations and economies.” The United States, France, Germany, and England are all struggling with questions of cultural and (to a lesser extent) religious identity as floods of migrants from the world's hot spots knock on their doors.

Mayfield reviews the book *Making Refuge: Somali Bantu Refugees and Lewiston, Maine* by anthropologist Catherine Besteman who did some of her early field work in Somalia. More evaluations like this one by experienced professionals are definitely needed.

Finally, Tae Sung's “The Study of World Religions in a Time of Crisis” (also in this same issue) is a perceptive interview with Jack Miles, editor of *The Norton Anthology of World Religions* (2015). In an aside, Miles notes that rising sea levels will send millions of Muslim climate-change refugees streaming into Hindu India. How will a BJP-run Indian government (influenced by Hindu fundamentalism) respond? Will there be a repeat of massive Muslim–Hindu religious violence like what happened in the Partition in 1947?

## Muslims Turning to Christ—An Update

The UK's leading Christian magazine, *Premier Christianity*, has published an article by David Garrison in its June 2016 issue entitled “Muslims Turning to Christ: A Global Phenomenon.” This short article is studded with personal vignettes from all around the world, culled from his first-rate interviews of believers from a Muslim background. Garrison, a trained historian (University of Chicago), was asked to research these movements five years ago. After three years of extensive travels (250,000 miles) and research, he published *A Wind in the House of Islam*—still very much a groundbreaking book two years out. **IJFM**

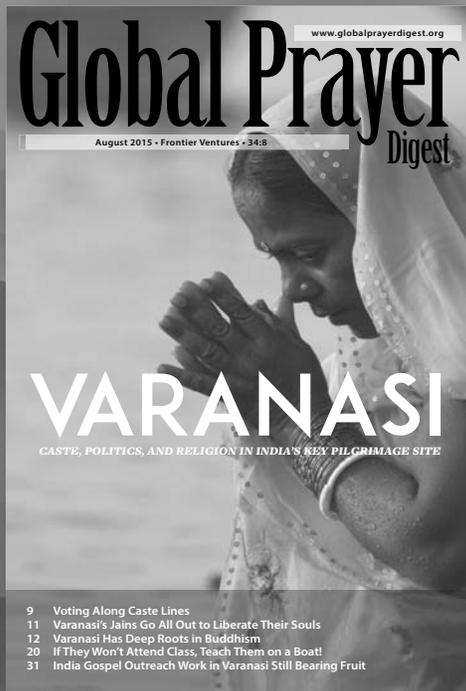


Whether you're a Perspectives instructor, student, or coordinator, you can continue to explore issues raised in the course reader and study guide in greater depth in **IJFM**. For ease of reference, each **IJFM** article in the table below is tied thematically to one or more of the 15 Perspectives lessons, divided into four sections: Biblical (B), Historical (H), Cultural (C) and Strategic (S). *Disclaimer: The table below shows where the content of a given article might fit; it does not imply endorsement of a particular article by the editors of the Perspectives materials.* For sake of space, the table only includes lessons related to the articles in a given **IJFM** issue. To learn more about the Perspectives course, including a list of classes, visit [www.perspectives.org](http://www.perspectives.org).

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Articles in **IJFM 33:1**

	Lesson 6: The Expansion of the World Christian Movement (H)	Lesson 7: Eras of Mission History (H)	Lesson 8: Pioneers of the World Christian Movement (H)	Lesson 9: The Task Remaining (H)	Lesson 10: How Shall They Hear? (C)	Lesson 12: Christian Community Development (S)	Lesson 14: Pioneer Church Planting (S)
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