

North American Doctoral Dissertations on Mission: 1945-1981

E. Theodore Bachmann

Introduction

An older generation still recalls how epoch-making for the perspectives of historiography was Kenneth Scott Latourette's *History of the Expansion of Christianity*,* whose seventh and final volume—fittingly entitled, "Advance through Storm"—appeared in 1945 as World War II was ending and a new era beginning. Earlier perspectives were changing and horizons widening as successive conferences on world mission accentuated the global outreach, the imminent rise of indigenous churches, and the mobilization of persons in many lands who were volunteering for the missionary task. Latourette's own aborted experience in China (1910-12), when illness made him a "detained volunteer," rerouted his career but also gave him a vision. It overarched all his subsequent activities as it gave global significance to the local and fitted the local into an international design.

The pace of history is relentless. Its course since 1945 appears the more accelerated because of the immense changes obliterating the familiar and daring the untried. In his compelling synopsis, Ralph D. Winter's *The 25 Unbelievable Years* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1970), has updated the Latourette perspective. But again, Winter's work already lies more than a dozen years behind us. Not only so. The very nature of the Christian mission is to reach out and by the power of the gospel to create change; a change itself subjective to the reactive environment.

When, during my last year at theological seminary, I came upon the first volume of Latourette's monumental opus (1937), it captured my imagination. Five years later, this one and the successive volumes became embodied in my teaching of church history with a missionary dimension. I marveled at his amassed sources and judicious use of them; at his interrelating of individuals and continents; at his fitting the fragments into the ever extending mosaic of mission. At times I was impatient with what appeared an uncritical assessment or an unfortunate omission. But these occupational hazards underscored for me, as for others, the essential interdependence of scholarship amid the astounding complexity of the Christian world mission.

In quantity, if not always in quality, missionary research has advanced greatly since 1945. Well may we marvel at Latourette's vast reading and marshaling of references; a majority of these works are housed in Yale's Day Missions Library—one of the greatest of its kind. Today, however, we must marvel at an ensuing phenomenon: the vast production of graduate doctoral dissertations bearing in one way or another on the Christian mission. In these academically disciplined exercises lies an enormous accession of information. Much of it is undoubtedly a contribution to the body of knowledge of and about Christian mission in other continents as well as our own. But these works are scattered and a tally of them is elusive.

Some time ago Gerald H. Anderson lured me into attempting a compilation of doctoral dissertations in the field of mission as well as in areas adjunct to it. The degrees involved include the

Ph.D., Th.D., S.T.D., plus an occasional Ed.D. The more recently devised professional degrees, notably the D. Miss(iology) and the D. Min(istry), have grown increasingly profuse. Many of the thesis and dissertation projects associated with these degrees also represent important contributions to knowledge, but they are not included here.

This present list is only a beginning. It cannot pretend to have covered the field and captured every eligible title. Besides, it would have been fascinating to provide some sort of annotation for each entry so as to hint more broadly at the nature of the research topic. Present space requirements, however, have imposed limits. The data for each entry are fivefold: author, title, degree, year, and institution. The listing is alphabetical by author. A topical/subject index is included.

The purpose of this compilation is multiple: (1) to supply an inventory of graduate dissertations from North American graduate schools that are relevant to Christian mission; (2) to identify such dissertations as may be required for scholarly undertakings; (3) to show what has already been done and thus to minimize duplication of effort; (4) to encourage further research; (5) to lift the sights of the user beyond individual performance to a panoramic view of what has already been done; and (6) to disclose a global dimension of the People of God as set purposefully within the human family.

Because it was agreed that the end of World War II would be a good chronological starting point, this listing runs inclusively from 1945 through 1981, a period of thirty-seven years. Out of a total of 934 entries, almost half (462) were produced during the single decade of the 1970s. And, at the pace set in 1980 and 1981, the decade of the 1980s promises to yield a similar number. This burgeoning output certainly does not support the widely-held view that mission and missiological studies are waning concerns of our era. (The number of dissertations produced during the decade of the 1970s was 20 percent greater than the number produced in the previous two and a half decades, 1945 through 1969!)

Twelve percent of the authors are women (112). Twenty-three seminaries and 122 universities appear in the list, giving a total of 145 institutions.

Twenty-eight institutions granted ten or more doctorates in the course of the thirty-seven years covered in the listing. Of these, ten institutions granted 25 or more, while of these ten, three granted 40 or more. The three institutions at the top of the list are Boston University, with 54, the University of Chicago, with 49, and Columbia University, with 42. The twenty universities that granted ten or more doctorates account for 387 dissertations, while all universities together account for 678. The latter figure represents almost 73 percent of the total—a remarkable index of the level of interest expressed by the North American university community in the world Christian mission. At the same time, the twenty-three seminaries in the list, that account for less than 16 percent of the institutions, produced more than 27 percent of the dissertations

Number of Doctorates, by Decade

1945-49	49
1950-59	123
1960-69	211
1970-79	462
1980-81	89
	934

*References to Latourette are from "Kenneth Scott Latourette: Historian and Friend," by E. Theodore Bachmann, in *Frontiers of the Christian World Mission since 1938*, edited by Wilbur C. Harr (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), pp. 231-80.

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(256). The two seminaries that granted the greatest number of doctorates are Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville, Kentucky, with 37, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary at Fort Worth, Texas, with 35. As indicated in the index, the subjects most frequently treated—in addition to studies related to geographical areas such as Brazil, China, Japan, India, Korea, Mexico, Nigeria, and the Philippines—are: American Indians, missions to; Baptists; Biblical studies; Catholic church and missions; Education, Christian; Liberation theology; Social ethics, Christian; Southern Baptists; Theology of mission; and Theology of religions.

As in other areas of graduate study, research in mission is intended to contribute to the body of useful knowledge. A Latourette requires successors, as do those many lesser known but diligent and indispensable scholars. Yet everyone knows that all too often the doctoral dissertation seems like the end of the line instead of a way station en route to still abler and, indeed, lifelong performance. Young Latourette's dissertation—published in 1917 by Yale University Press—treated "The History of Early Relations between the United States and China, 1784-1844." That got him under way, and eventually his scholarly endeavors girdled the globe.

Concerning the resources used in the compilation of this list, first place clearly goes to University Microfilms International, in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Its multivolume *Comprehensive Dissertation Index* reaches from 1861 to the present. The use of its volumes covering history, religion, and cognate subjects has been augmented by computer printouts from a DATRIX II search of the 730,000 dissertations and theses in the *Comprehensive Dissertation Database* at University Microfilms, using selected key words. Even so, as experience with this dissertation project has shown, some exquisitely titled works, like small fish, have slipped through the linguistic net.

Additional resources have included the MARC listing of *Studies in Missions: An Index of Theses on Missions* (Missions Advanced Research and Communication Center, Monrovia, California, 1974). "Recent Dissertations in Religion" in *Religious Studies Review*, published quarterly by the Council on the Study of Religion (Waterloo, Ontario), has reported since 1976 on dissertations completed in doctoral programs in religion at schools belonging to the Council on Graduate Studies in Religion (CGSR). Back volumes of the CGSR's *Dissertation Title Index* listed dissertations from 1952 to 1977. Dissertation titles from 1940 to 1952 were published as a supplement to volume 18 (1954) of the *Review of Religion*.

My hearty thanks go to Gerald H. Anderson who commissioned this project—for his kindly persistence, ongoing helpfulness, and cheerful patience. I am grateful also to Dan Bowell, a librarian at the Graham Center and Buswell Memorial libraries, Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois; also to Philip Quanbeck, for taking time from his own doctoral work at Princeton Theological Seminary to lend a hand; to Robert Coote at the Overseas Ministries Study Center for proofreading and preparation of the index; and not least to Mercia, my wife, for her assistance in pulling it all together. Any sins of omission or commission are, of course, my own. If there is ever to be a new and enlarged edition—and if related listings are to be undertaken—amendment will be made. *Soli Deo Gloria*.

In 1978, E. Theodore Bachmann completed a term of nearly five years in Geneva, Switzerland, as editor of Lutheran World, the quarterly journal of the Lutheran World Federation. Before going to Geneva he served as executive for theological education of the Lutheran Church in America. Prior to that he taught for sixteen years in Lutheran seminaries in the United States and Brazil. He is the author of Lutheran Churches in the World (Geneva: LWF, 1979), and did the English translation of Heinrich Bornkamm, Martin Luther in der Mitte seines Lebens (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983).

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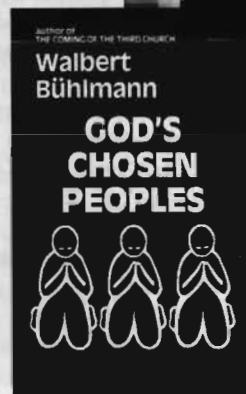
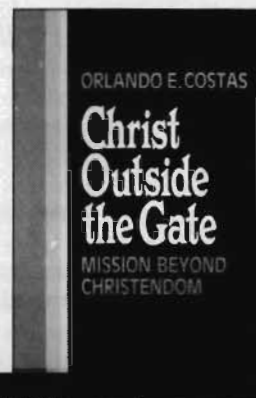
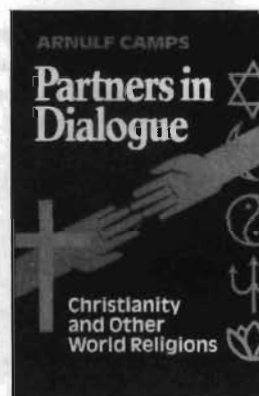
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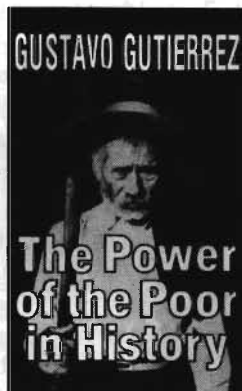
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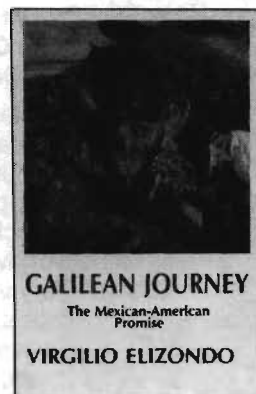
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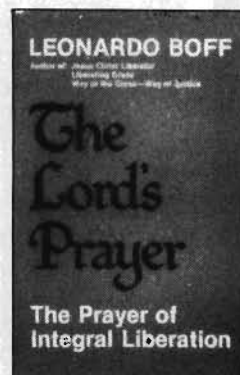
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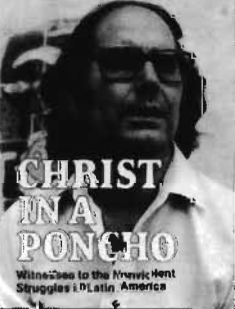
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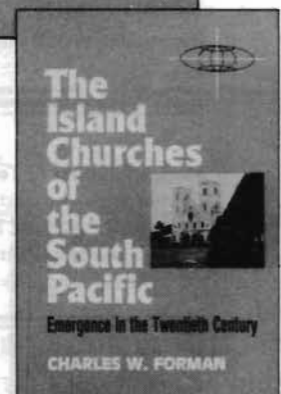
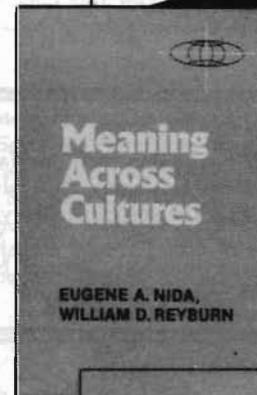
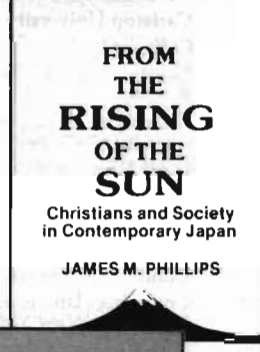
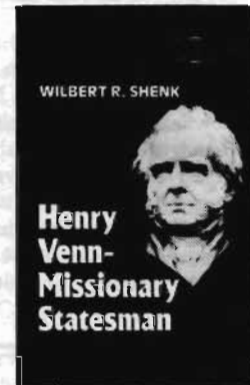
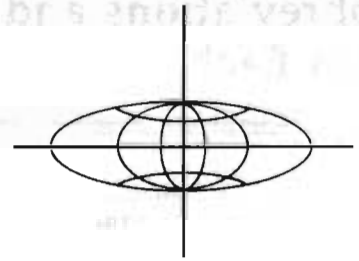
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