Ministry & Theology in Global Perspective: Contemporary Challenges for the Church

Don A. Pittman, Ruben L.F. Habito, Terry C. Muck, eds.

Grand Rapids, MI: Wm.B. Eerdmans, 1996. 524 pp., Paperback

Reviewed by J. Nelson Jennings, Tokyo Christian University, Chiba

Certain works demand a prominent and accessible place in any theological library. *Ministry & Theology in Global Perspective: Contemporary Challenges for the Church* belongs to that category. More than a sit-down read, it is a reference work that speaks to a wide range of issues in our globalized context for Christian ministry. Pittman, Habito and Muck themselves represent a spectrum covering mainline Protestantism, Roman Catholicism and Evangelicalism. As editors, they have assembled an even broader group of contributors who represent all continents, both early (e.g., Justin Martyr and Augustine) and more recent periods of Christian history, as well as various religious perspectives. Such a range is in accord with the comprehensive coverage the editors have attempted to provide for readers interested in ministering in relevant ways heading into the twenty-first century.

After a stimulating introduction describing "The Global Context for Ministry," the first part of the book seeks to work "Toward a Christian Theology of Religions." The bulk of Part I is a compilation of readings from well-known writers representing "Pre-Twentieth-Century Christian Views," "Contemporary Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Views" and "Contemporary Protestant Views." To have in one volume such a varied lineup of household names on this vital subject is helpful to anyone seeking to formulate his own views on world religions.

Part II then takes the reader through a set of questions and issues dealing with "Mission and Ministry." The essence, reason, subject, object, location, method, and enemies of mission are considered in various forms by such figures as Pope John Paul II, Lamin Sanneh and David Bosch. The book's third part explores ministry in relation to "dialogue," moving in turn through "The Why and How of Dialogue," "Fruits of Dialogue," and the "Tasks for Interreligious Cooperation." The index for subjects and names, as well as one for scriptural references, will facilitate use of the book on an ongoing basis for particular concerns and topics.

We all live in an increasingly globalized world. Even so, many of us in the Christian faith still find it difficult, on the one hand, to grapple with the new challenges brought on by globalization and, on the other hand, to benefit from the worldwide forum for dealing with those new challenges in innovative ways. This volume compiled by Pittman, Habito and Muck should prove to be a valuable tool for helping us overcome stubborn provincialism, as well as for enabling us to draw on the wealth of resources available for the furthering of Christian ministry.

Salvationist Samurai: Gunpei Yamamuro and the Rise of the Salvation Army in Japan

R. David Rightmire

Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 1997, 166 pp.

Reviewed by Patrice Van Hyle, Tokyo

R. David Rightmire, recognized as a major interpreter of Salvation Army history and theology, received his Ph.D in historical

theology from Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Having spent much of his own youth in Japan as the son of Salvation Army officers, Rightmire is in a unique position, due to his language ability and cultural sensitivity, to write the first scholarly book in English on Gunpei Yamamuro, the "Salvationist Samurai." Through his use of previously untapped Japanese materials from archives and libraries in Japan, England and the United States, the author contributes significantly to a global understanding of the Salvation Army, of Japanese religious history and the history of Christian mission. The character of Salvation Army Commissioner Gunpei Yamamuro, organizer, evangelist, writer and theologian, is portrayed through captivating accounts that bring to life not only the individual but also the surrounding social and political climate that existed in Meiji and pre-World War II Japan.

Chapter one opens with a description of the Meiji era in Japan (1868–1912). This "enlightened era" (2) was a time of modernization and political reform following Japan's 200-year self-imposed isolation from the outside world. The 1870s brought a "permissive attitude toward Christianity" (4) on the part of the Japanese government due to the latter's desire to gain acceptance among Western nations and to eradicate unequal treaties with Western powers. It was a period of social upheaval and transition as Japan found itself exposed to many new ideas from the West.

In the midst of this great expansion towards the West, the first contingent of Salvation Army officers, made up of missionaries from England, New Zealand, Australia, Ireland and America, arrived in Yokohama on September 4, 1895. Sent by Salvation Army founder General William Booth, the Salvationists immediately adopted the Army's "native policy" (15) employed in other mission territories. Commanding officer Colonel Edward Wright explained the policy in an interview granted soon after arrival, "We shall adopt Japanese means, Japanese dress, and the Japanese mode of life...it is our intention to live as the common people of Japan live" (16). Although the initial period of the Army's mission in Japan was difficult due to "misguided attempts at identification with Japanese culture" (16), within the space of twelve years the Salvation Army rose from relative obscurity to national recognition, proving particularly adept at "culturally adapting its mission to the needs of Japan's emerging industrialized society" (xiii). This was for the most part due to the efforts and insights of Gunpei Yamamuro.

Chapter two focuses on the main character of the book, Gunpei Yamamuro—his family background, spiritual search and eventual aquaintance with and induction into the Salvation Army. Born the eighth and last child of a peasant farming family in 1872, it almost seems that from the time of childhood, Yamamuro's path was predestined. His first name, Gunpei, means "soldier of peace" in English (19). Moreover his pious mother, particularly interested in having her son lead a life dedicated to the service of humankind, made a solemn vow to abstain from eating eggs ("the best source of nourishment available") in return for God's blessing of Gunpei with maturity and usefulness (20). From early on, Gunpei was attracted to the ideals of self-denial and self-discipline and after a spiritual exploration and subsequent disillusionment with the tenets of Confucianism, he realized that "the source of power to overcome his human weaknesses was to be found in Christ" (24).

Yamamuro's concern for the spiritual welfare of the lower classes in industrialized Meiji Japan steadily grew and caused him to clash with Christian leaders of the day who seemed to dwell more on theological and intellectual doctrines that appealed to a privileged elite. Upon reading the Salvation

Army manual "Orders and Regulations for Soldiers," written by William Booth, Yamamuro's life-long search for a practical Christianity reached an end. Gunpei was convinced he had been providentially led to the Army so that his "life's ambition and consecration—the preaching of the salvation of God to the common people"—might be realized (35). "An organization that deliberately embraced poverty must be pure and that was part of the Salvation Army's attraction for me," wrote Yamamuro (36). He was accepted as a cadet in 1895 and in 1896 was commissioned as a lieutenant, becoming the first native officer of the Salvation Army in Japan. In 1899 Gunpei married Kiye Sato, a highly educated woman of noble birth who was also greatly attracted to the Army's method of mission and ministry to the poor. Kiye aided Yamamuro in his literary work as well as in his social crusades until her death in 1917.

The following three chapters highlight the religious career of Gunpei Yamamuro and the simultaneous development of the Salvation Army in Japan. It is the premise of this book that Gunpei's personal influence on the Army—his moral, intellectual and literary contributions, enabled it to flourish and attract supporters from all strata of Japanese society, from the emperor to the homeless squatter living on the street. Yamamuro's fame spread in 1897 when he was appointed editor of the Army publication *War Cry* (*Toki no koe*). Yamamuro immediately began using colloquial Japanese to reach poor people, discontinuing the use of classical Japanese. Within five years, circulation exceeded ten thousand copies biweekly. "Thus it became Yamamuro's task to clearly communicate the Army's message and mission to the people of Japan" (47). Of all his literary works, Gunpei's *Common People's Gospel* (*Heimin no fukuin*), published in 1899, had the most widespread appeal and was considered by Christian social reformers to be "a masterpiece of religious literature in the Meiji era" (59).

Gunpei Yamamuro's gifts as a communicator and public speaker were not confined to Japan. Travelling all over the world as an invited guest, Yamamuro became known for his powerful addresses and moving sermons "drawing large crowds and winning numerous converts" (55). He was also a staunch defender of abstinence from alcohol and organized the Japan National Temperance Movement. His anti-prostitution campaign of 1900 challenged an institution with deep roots in Japanese society and risked the lives of many Salvation officers who valiantly fought against the "evils of licensed prostitution" (83). In one year alone, thousands of women responded to Yamamuro's invitation, fled from the brothels and sought asylum in Salvation Army rehabilitation homes.

All in all, under the leadership of Gunpei Yamamuro, the Salvation Army in Japan increased from 110 corps and 270 Japanese officers and cadets in the 1920s to 147 corps and 500 Japanese officers and cadets in the 1930s; averaging several thousand Japanese converts annually. The Army, known as the "Yamamuro sect" (51). expanded its ministry to prison work, children's homes, slum posts, prostitute's and run-away girls' rescue homes, cheap lodgings for the poor and unemployed and hospitals. The last two chapters of the book deal with the relationship between the Salvation Army in Japan and state authorities, including the emperor, and describe how a positive spirit of collaboration between the two entities enabled the Army to freely pursue its mission goals and aims until the outbreak of World War II. During the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905), the Japanese government sought unity at home, thus putting "Christian loyalty to the state" to the test (108). While boosting national consciousness, the war confronted Japanese Christians with the issue of national allegiance. Visiting sick

and wounded Japanese soldiers in military hospitals and ministering to the families of Japanese soldiers killed in the war, the Salvation Army effectively demonstrated its "loyalty to the nation" (108) during the Russo-Japanese War. Following Japan's victory the Army opened an employment bureau for war veterans, the first of its kind in Japan, again manifesting its service to both "God and emperor" (108, 109). In 1907, a time when military men were heroes of the day, General William Booth visited Japan. The Japanese public viewing him as a representative of Great Britain, Japan's alliance partner, "turned out by the thousands to see and hear him wherever he went" (112, 113).

Moreover, Booth became the first Christian clergyman, foreign or Japanese, to be granted an imperial audience with Emperor Meiji. Thus it was clear that the "state officially recognized the Army, viewing it as an organization useful in combatting the social evils of industrialized Japanese society as well as promoting respect for the emperor and national morality" (110). Imperial recognition led other branches of the government to support the Army in the form of subsidies at the national, prefectural and municpal levels. By the mid-1920s, ten percent of the Army's social work budget was paid for by government subsidies. In return, the Japanese government enlisted the help of the Army in welfare projects, such as distributing rice to the poor after the Tokyo rice riots of 1918, training urban families in agricultural skills and opening homes for the children of leper parents. Following the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923, the Army mobilized an emergency relief program similar to the one it had led during the Tōhoku famine of 1905–1906, thereby "winning the hearts and acclamation of many Japanese" (99).

In 1926 Yamamuro was appointed territorial commander of Japan, making him the second non-Western officer to hold such a post in the Salvation Army and the first to reach the rank of commissioner. According to Rightmire, the remarkable growth of the Army during the early twentieth century owed much to Yamamuro's ability to infuse the Salvation Army in Japan with "a spirit of nationalism." His article, "Bushido and the Salvation Army: Some Lessons from the Japanese Samurai," likened the Army's missiological methods and message to the traditional code of the samurai warrior outlining the virtues commonly held by both: "loyalty, bravery, perseverance, self-denial, obedience, honor and sacrifice."

Unfortunately the 1930s in Japan saw the rise of ultranationalism and the apparent "incompatiblity of a dual allegiance to both emperor and general" (153). Japan's imperialistic expansion, propelled by nationalistic fervor, heightened the vulnerability of Japanese Salvationists who wanted to maintain "both international and national commitments" (155). Because of its British connection, the Army quickly came under suspicion from superpatriotic groups, including the press, while dissension broke out within its own ranks. Some factions wanted to cut off ties with England; others led by Yamamuro advocated a more moderate stance. Attempting to quell opposition to the Army's policy of internationalism, Yamamuro in 1937 wrote a tract "Defense of the Salvation Army's Stand," but this proved insufficient to reestablish unity within the Army. Yamamuro died of pneumonia just months before the Army was dismantled in 1940, at which time police raided territorial headquarters in Tokyo, arresting and imprisoning 30 Japanese Salvationists for espionage. The Army was forced to sever its ties with Britain, the *War Cry* was discontinued and, three years later, the state disbanded the Army altogether and confiscated its property.

In 1956 the Japanese government named Gunpei Yamamuro one of the "greatest social workers in Japanese history" (164). I consider this book, written to commemorate

the Salvation Army's centennial celebration in Japan 1895–1995, as required reading for all Christian missionaries in Japan and Christian historians.

Christian Missions and the Judgment of God (Second Edition)

David Macdonald Paton
Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996, 114 pp.

Reviewed by John E. Schmidt, Kobe

Christian Missions and the Judgment of God, first published in 1953, has come to be considered one of the classic works on modern mission. In it Paton speaks to the church's task of living out the Great Commission and raises provocative questions regarding Gods role in the Communist expulsion of missionaries from China. This book is now available in a new edition, which includes not only the entire original text but also an added introduction, a biography and a bibliographical section.

This new edition seems to be an oddly proportioned book. Paton's original work is short, only 67 pages long in the current edition. However, the biography (written by his son, David M. M. Paton) and the introduction (written by Bob Whyte) expand the book by an additional 36 pages, over half the length of the original work. Although helpful in a limited way, introductory material of this length is an unwelcome delay to entering the discussion of the main text.

Paton's work itself is still fresh and challenging. Although his focus is upon China in particular, and his original intended audience Anglican, there are few points in the book that seem parochial or inapplicable to a broader context. Far from it, modern readers will likely find much in this book that directly addresses issues in their own national or denominational context.

Paton divides his subject into three chapters: "The Christian Mission Today," "Missions under Judgment" and "Looking Ahead." In the first chapter Paton presents a theology of mission and looks at political events of the day (particularly in China) through this Christian lens. He calls us to a faith that is not so much a series of propositions but one that is a record of what God does for the salvation of the world. Since all of the world (and not just religious life) is God's the turbulent processes of history are the scene of the unfolding of the purposes of God.

> (God's) world is one world. But because he is greater than we can conceive, his workings will not be highly intelligible; because we are sinners, they will be to us frequently both disconcerting and uncomfortable; and because all the universe is his, he will be found in the secular as well as the religious world, in Communist China as well as in Oxford or Tunbridge Wells. He will, in fact, appear to us in judgment; and the executors of his judgment may surprise us.

Paton then asserts that God's judgment is being executed upon the church by political movements that are anti-Christian. Their harsh condemnation and persecutions are instruments of Gods wrath and will cleanse the church of much of what has been hindering obedience. In the long run this cleansing expresses the mercy of God, as well.

The second chapter focuses on the problems attending Christian missions that have brought on God's judgment. While acknowledging that there is much good in the mission efforts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, he unblinkingly focuses on the weaknesses. Chief among them lies the claim that Christian missions have been far too much a part of the imperialist aggression