

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 God's 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 God's 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

of the West. Missionary rights and freedoms in China were the result of treaties extorted from unwilling Chinese authorities. Most missionaries maintained a Western standard of living, and church leaders became those who had attained the means to acquire a Western education and outlook. Institutions mimicked their Western counterparts. Ultimately, whatever the desires of the missionaries were, their actual policies precluded the development of a dynamic, self-governing church. This multifaceted failure became the root of the criticisms leveled against the church by the communists in China. More importantly, this failure brought on the judgment of God.

The final chapter focuses on the future prospects for missions. China is seen as an extreme example of a global trend. Paton sees increasing restrictions in store for the traditional patterns of mission that depend on Anglo-Saxon power and benevolence. In general, missionaries have not taken the transitory nature of their enterprise seriously enough. Although evangelism and the witness of the church extend to the last day, this doesn't mean that missionary work extends to the last day. The purpose of mission work is to establish the church throughout the world; when this has been done, the task of mission is complete.

Since the task is to build the church, numerous conversions are not enough; instead there must be a focus upon vigorous indigenous ministry. Patterns for surfacing and equipping local leadership should be simple, practical and suited to the local situation, not simply mimicking the institutional structures of the missionary-sending church. Churches must be treated as equals and direct cross-fertilization of younger churches (without the intermediary influences of London or New York) needs to flourish. There are roles for the missionary in the future but they will be different from the dominating, westernized roles of the past.

Reading this book 45 years after its creation, I find it is still applicable to the late twentieth-century church. I especially found Paton's theology of mission to be fresh and insightful. He also gives a much needed exhortation for us to be willing to see the problems in modern mission in relation to God's sovereign purposes: We must always assume God is on our side. While these insights challenge us even now, most of the practical observations and suggestions that Paton makes would be quite familiar to anyone who has read current missiological literature. Modern mission thinking has basically adopted the values Paton advocated, such as the need to break from Western dominance in mission. But that doesn't mean we live it out nearly well enough. I repeatedly felt the sting of Paton's prophetic message as I reflected on the churches here in Japan. Many of the sins of the fathers have been adopted and institutionalized within the indigenous church today. A half a century later, *Christian Missions and the Judgment of God* still calls missionaries and indigenous church leaders not only to change what they say, but what they do.

Hibakusha Cinema: Hiroshima, Nagasaki and the Nuclear Image in Japanese Film

Edited by Mick Broderick

London: Kegan Paul, International, 1996,
252 pp.

*Reviewed by Patrice Van Hyle,
Tokyo*

Mick Broderick, currently completing a Ph.D in apocalyptic narrative, works for the Australian Film Commission in Sydney. In this anthology, Broderick has compiled and edited a collection of eleven critical essays on the subgenre of *Hibakusha* Cinema (Japanese movies made in response to the atomic