

Mission, Violence and Sufferingⁱ

by

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On March 2, 2011, the Pakistani government minister for minorities, Shahbaz Bhatti, was shot dead outside his mother's home in Islamabad. He was 42 years old and had been a courageous opponent of Pakistan's blasphemy laws and the injustice and intolerance which they encouraged. Bhatti was a Roman Catholic who had experienced a spiritual awakening as a young man which led him to dedicate his life to the service of other people, especially the poor and oppressed, in imitation of Jesus Christ. He founded a political party called the Christian Liberation Front in 1985 while studying for a postgraduate degree in political science. He was a man who, in a context of violence and great danger, had a vision; he believed that Pakistan could become a beacon of tolerance and harmony and to this end, in his own words, he wanted 'to make this world beautiful by delivering a message of peace, togetherness, unity and tolerance'. After his death a taped message was discovered which he had recorded in the knowledge that his life was in danger. This is what it said:

The forces of violence, militant banned organizations, the Taliban and pro al-Qaida, they want to impose their radical philosophy in Pakistan and whoever stands against their radical philosophy, they threaten them. . . . When I'm leading this campaign against sharia law, for the abolishment of the blasphemy law and speaking for the oppressed and marginalised persecuted Christian and other minorities, these Taliban threaten me, but I want to share that I believe in Jesus Christ, who has given his own life for us. . . . *I know what is the meaning of the cross* and I'm following the cross and I'm ready to die for a cause. . . . I'm living for my community and the suffering people and I will die to defend their rights so these threats and these warnings cannot change my opinion and principles. I will prefer to die following my principle and for the justice of my community rather than compromise on these threats.ⁱⁱ

I know what is the meaning of the cross! That statement, made by one of the bravest of Christian martyrs in modern times, has haunted me ever since I first read it and I want to suggest

that it serves to highlight what is perhaps the central issue with regard to Christian mission in our troubled world today.

The death of Christ lies at the heart of the Christian faith and constitutes the very core of its missionary proclamation. Paul could sum up his gospel in the statement, ‘we preach Christ crucified’ (1 Cor.1:23), before underlining the absolute centrality of the cross by telling the Corinthians, ‘I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified (2:2). And yet the same apostle is clearly aware of the possibility that the *meaning* of the doctrine of the cross may be distorted in a manner which perverts and undermines the unique message of the gospel. Thus, he warns of the danger – present from the very beginning – that ‘words of *human* wisdom’ can domesticate the message of the cross and leave it ‘emptied of its power’ (1:17). The history of Christian mission across two thousand years provides us with tragic examples of just such perversions, and the temptation to use the language of the cross without knowing its *power* remains very real in the divided and broken world of the twenty-first century.

Mission and the Cross

I grew up singing hymns written by some of the great mystical theologians from the Middle Ages in Europe, most notably those of Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1153). Here is an example:

Jesus, the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills my breast;
But sweeter far Thy face to see,
And in Thy presence rest.

O hope of every contrite heart,
O joy of all the meek,
To those who ask, how kind Thou art!
How good to those who seek!

Jesus our only joy be Thou,
As Thou our prize shalt be;
In Thee be all our glory now,
And through eternity.

This is language which expresses a deep, spiritual devotion to Jesus and reflects the writer’s awareness of the nature of Christianity as a way of life involving contrition, humility and meekness. Much later in my life I was deeply shocked to discover that the man who penned

these beautiful words of heartfelt love for Jesus, was also a leading preacher of the crusading armies which marched across Europe to engage Muslims in fierce fighting for the ownership and control of the Holy Land and Jerusalem! Bernard of Clairvaux, hymn writer and a preacher who devoted more than eighty sermons to the theme of love in the Song of Solomon, was also an advocate of holy wars against Muslims and promised the Christian crusaders who fought in these battles the remission of their sins! Christian soldiers were offered what amounted to a deal: in exchange for their military actions, they would receive both temporal and eternal blessings.

This “good deal”, to which repeated reference is made not just in crusading songs but also in the works of such distinguished preachers and theologians as Bernard of Clairvaux, was just part of the package of benefits which knightly participants hoped to acquire in joining the crusade.ⁱⁱⁱ

How could this be? The answer to this question is deeply disturbing since it involves an example of precisely the perversion of the meaning of the cross of Christ with which, as we have seen, Paul was so concerned. The English word ‘crusader’ is a translation of the Latin term, *crucesignatus*, which means literally ‘signed with the cross’. As is well known, the crusaders were indeed marked with the symbol of the cross; they wore it on their armour and it was engraved on their weapons, so that their battles were understood to be an extension of the conflict in which Christ had engaged and which brought him to the death of Calvary. Another preacher of the Crusades, Jacques de Vitry, said that just as Christ had been honoured after taking up his cross, so those who ‘wear the same garments that their king wore and are signed with the same mark’ will be greatly honoured. They, their wives and children, and even their dead parents, will be ‘absolved from punishment of their sins in this world [and in eternity will be] safe from the tortures of hell, in the glory and honour of being crowned in eternal beatitude’.^{iv}

Here is a strange historical irony: in the twenty-first century it is Muslim Islamists who have shocked people across the Western world by their very public commitment to acts of terror and violence and the belief that martyrdom in a sacred cause will be rewarded with the blessings of Paradise, and yet we discover precisely such beliefs prompting Christians to violence nine-hundred years earlier, convinced that they had a contract with God which assured them of the blessings and rewards of heaven. This is far from being the only example of the ways in which the negative features of a contemporary non-Christian religion can be shown to have been present at an earlier stage in the history of the Christian tradition.

However, there were other Christian voices during the period of the crusades which called for a radically different approach to the Muslim world. The most famous of course, was Francis of Assisi who in 1219 travelled with the crusading army into Egypt, not in order to

sanctify violence, but with the intention of showing an alternative way of relating to Muslims. Francis went with one companion into the camp of Sultan al-Kamil in order, as one study has put it, to 'wage peace on Islam'. The dialogue which took place between the Sultan and the unarmed Francis was cordial and resulted in Franciscans being welcomed in this Muslim kingdom, on the condition that they did not cause discord by speaking against Muhammed or the Qu'ran. When in the light of this experience, Francis later drew up the Rule for his order, it contained his mature thinking on mission to Islam. Permission to engage in such witness was to be given only to those Franciscans whom superiors could affirm as 'suitable to be sent'. In other words, the Franciscan Rule clearly recognised the sensitivities at this missionary frontier and the need to *exclude* certain people whose approach to mission and to Muslims was contrary to the way of Jesus Christ. Friars who crossed the cultural frontier with Islam were to 'conduct themselves spiritually', which meant not provoking arguments or strife, and being subject 'to every human creature for God's sake'. This last phrase comes from 1 Peter 2:13, which is an apostolic instruction with clear political implications, requiring submission to ruling powers. In the era of the crusades this is a remarkable requirement since it clearly indicates that Christians are to respect and obey Islamic laws when they reside in Muslim territory! The most challenging aspect of the approach of Francis of Assisi to Islam, made all the more remarkable given the spirit of his age, concerns his imitation of Christ in the actual practice of the *love of ones' enemies*. Ida Glaser identifies the questions which this poses to Christians at the missionary frontier with Islam:

The challenge to Christians today is whether we too will see our discipleship in terms of helping to establish and defend a political entity, or whether we will walk in the way of compassion and mercy of the Jesus we meet in the New Testament. [I]t is only as we face this Gospel challenge that we can begin to take Christ-honouring roles in determining the policies of both Church and state in relationship to the range of challenges presented by Islam.^v

The Franciscan requirement of respect for, and obedience to, Muslim authority when resident in territory governed by Islamic law brings us to another example of Christian missionary practice in which this same principle was followed. We move forward some 600 years to 1807 and to Yorubaland, in what is now Nigeria. A boy born in this year was named Ajayi and, according to a story told later, was devoted at birth to the service of Olurun, the high god of the Yoruba. When the boy was 13 years old his community was raided by Fulani Muslims and he was led away captive, eventually being sold to Portuguese slave traders at the coast. We may imagine the distress of this young man, the image of the burning houses of his home town, and the slaughter of the old people judged unfit to be traded as slaves, seared into his memory, and the fear of the unknown future as the Portuguese ship on which he now found himself, set sail for the Atlantic Ocean. However, in April 1822 the slave ship was intercepted by a British naval squadron and Ajayi was taken, along with thousands of other homeless,

disoriented Africans who had been released from slavery, to the newly founded colony of Sierra Leone. We know little of his early experience in this new community which was shaped by missionary Christianity and Western models of education, but after three years he was baptized by an Anglican missionary and given the name, Samuel Crowther. He became one of the first students at Fourah Bay College in Freetown, an institution which offered the first university degrees to students in tropical Africa and had a huge influence in subsequent years.

The story of Samuel Ajayi Crowther's life and ministry is truly extraordinary and we cannot retell it here. He was ordained into the Anglican ministry in 1843, pioneered a mission in his native Yorubaland at Abeokuta, and played a key role in the translation of the Bible into Yoruba, a translation which 'set new standards for later African translations'.^{vi} Amazingly, during his missionary work among the Yoruba, Crowther was reunited with his mother and sister from whom he had been so brutally parted thirty years earlier and they were among the first people to be baptized in Abeokuta. In 1864 Crowther became the first African to be ordained as an Anglican bishop, but what is of most interest to us is his encounter with Muslims, especially during a famous mission on the Niger which brought him into contact with the Emir of Ilorin in 1872.

Previous attempts to evangelize Muslims in Sierra Leone had convinced Crowther that merely to present doctrinal claims and counter claims about contentious issues invariably ended in shouting matches and achieved little or nothing of any value. Consequently, he undertook deep and sustained study of the Qur'an and looked for points of contact between it and the Bible. His discussions with Muslim hosts in the court at Ilorin are a model of dialogical mission, and they concluded with the Muslim ruler requesting Crowther to pray for the Emir and his people. Here surely is an amazing event; the man whose early life had been so brutally disrupted by Muslim raiders, now standing as the representative of Christ before an Islamic court and asked to pray for them! Crowther, as a good Anglican, turned to his Prayer Book and found a 'Prayer for the Queen's Majesty'. He explained however that when the prayer was used in territory beyond the sovereignty of Queen Victoria, her name was to be replaced 'by the name of the sovereign in whose dominions we are living'. In other words, it could be used as a prayer for the Emir and his court, and the Muslim ruler was given the assurance that Christians within his territory would pray for him in these terms! Here is an extract from that prayer:

O Lord, our heavenly Father, high and mighty, king of kings, Lord of lords, the only ruler of princes, who dost from Thy throne behold all the dwellers on earth, ...we beseech Thee with Thy favour to behold our most gracious Sovereign Lady, Queen Victoria [here read: the Emir of Ilorin]; and so replenish her [him] with the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, that she [he] may incline always to Thy will, and walk in Thy way....^{vii}

This prayer met with the approval of the Emir! There is, of course, a tragic end to the

story of Samuel Ajayi Crowther because, at the end of his life, a new generation of British missionaries arrived in West Africa and treated the aged bishop with contempt and disdain. He died in 1891 a broken man and his example of both indigenous African mission and a pioneering, cross-culturally sensitive approach to witness to Muslims was swept away and forgotten. We should honour his memory today since, as Andrew Walls says, his Niger Mission ‘represents the first sustained missionary engagement with African Islam in modern times’.^{viii}

Mission, Conversion and Culture

While both Francis of Assisi and Samuel Crowther provide us with models of peaceful engagement with Islam, motivated by love and given practical expression by wisdom and humility, both men were also absolutely clear that their calling was to bear faithful witness to Christ. In other words, they sought and prayed for the *conversion* of their hearers, recognizing that if they could bring Muslim rulers to recognise Jesus Christ as Lord, their evangelism would impact the wider community. Conversion has remained central to the goal of the Christian mission, but it has been understood in many different ways, not all of which have been helpful at the sensitive frontiers where different faiths meet and clash. I want then, in the remainder of this article, to consider what biblical conversion actually involves, and how this understanding of conversion may help us in the practice of mission in our troubled world.

The critical turning point in the history of the early church as this is told in the book of Acts, is the event which has come to be known as the ‘Council of Jerusalem’. This meeting was convened as the result of the success of Paul’s Gentile mission, which provoked a reaction among Jewish believers in Jesus who wanted to impose the requirements and traditions of the Law of Moses on the flood of pagan converts now turning to God. The same issue had arisen earlier when, to his great surprise, Peter had found himself on previously unknown territory in the house of the Roman centurion, Cornelius. Unlike Paul, Peter did not set out to evangelize pagans, but rather found himself – against his will – on the new frontiers of mission where surprises abound and inherited theological presuppositions no longer work! The discovery of ‘a large gathering’ of Gentiles all eager ‘to listen to everything’ God had to say to them (Acts 10:23-33), leaves Peter astonished. However, he learns from this experience and confesses that his previous prejudices had to be abandoned in the light of the discovery that ‘God does not show favouritism but *accepts people from every nation who fear him and do what is right*’ (10:35). Peter’s sermon on this occasion was interrupted by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, resulting in uncircumcised Gentiles speaking in the tongues of Pentecost and praising God. It is as though God himself intervenes to sweep these people into his kingdom before Peter and his companions can make something other than, or additional to, faith necessary to conversion. Later, when the apostle is arraigned before the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem and sharply criticized for having social contact with the uncircumcised Gentiles, his defence is to say: *God did it!*

By the time we reach Acts 15, the situation has changed in two ways: the conservatism of Jewish believers appears to have hardened, while the numbers of Gentile converts has swollen into a flood. Peter's Gentile believers could be accommodated by conservative Jews as exceptions to the general rule, but now something of a completely different order is taking place, as Paul and Barnabas report that God has 'opened the door of faith to the Gentiles' (14:27). That is to say, they are now turning to Christ *en masse* in a way which threatens to overturn Jewish practices hallowed by centuries of tradition and apparently authorised by divine revelation! This was, in the language used in modern mission studies, a *paradigm change*, a move across a cultural frontier which seemed to be creating a new way of being Christian. Little wonder then that it provoked such fierce debate. The crucial turning point in that debate comes with the statement of James, the leader of the Jerusalem church, that 'we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God' (15:19). There is both great wisdom and profound insight in this statement and it contains an implicit warning that the guardians of established traditions of faith may erect *cultural* barriers which become insurmountable obstacles for people from other contexts *who are already being drawn to Christ*. The statement of James can be regarded as the apostolic foundation of a valid cultural *pluralism* within early Christianity; in other words, the New Testament recognises the authenticity of different cultures and permits and encourages people to confess and obey the gospel within their own worlds, rather than requiring them to abandon all that is loved and familiar in order to find Christ *in somebody else's cultural world*.

This crucial event in the history of the early church highlights the central place of *conversion* in the Christian mission, but it also provides us with a definition of what this actually means, and clearly distinguishes it from other ways of presenting the claims of Christ at the frontiers between cultures. If the decision taken in Jerusalem involves the acceptance of cultural pluralism within Christianity, it also means that the alternative possibility, of imposing cultural uniformity, *is to be rejected*. Andrew Walls has pointed out the difference between *proselytism*, which is what Jewish believers were arguing for, and *conversion*, which meant turning toward Christ from within the convert's own world and discovering what discipleship would mean from within this new cultural situation. Here is Walls' important description of the distinction between these two ways of doing mission:

This distinction between the convert and the proselyte is of fundamental importance. If the first Gentile believers had become proselytes, living exactly the lifestyle of those who brought them to Christ, they might have become very devout believers, but they would have had virtually no impact on their society; they would effectively have been taken out of that society. In fact, it was their task as converts to convert their society; convert it in the sense that they had to learn to keep turning their ways of thinking and doing things – which of course were Greek ways of thinking and doing things – towards

Christ, opening them up to his influence. In this way a truly Greek, Hellenistic type of Christianity was able to emerge. Not only so, but that Hellenistic Christianity was able to penetrate the Hellenistic intellectual and social heritage.^{ix}

The central issue which this raises for ‘mission in a troubled world’ now becomes clear: *do we understand and practice mission in the light of the apostolic principle that converts must be encouraged to turn to Christ from within their own cultural worlds, or have we actually reverted to a form of proselytization in which one way of being Christian is imposed on other people, divorcing them from their societies and so closing down the opportunity for the penetration of cultures different from our own?* I suggest that the verdict of history is that the radical model which we find in the New Testament has frequently been ignored, replaced by mission in an imperialist mode as the conquest and suppression of other cultural worlds. This has been the case even when evangelists have used the *language* of conversion, since this terminology has frequently been accompanied by the practice of proselytism, so that ‘converts’ were required to accept faith in Christ in precisely the forms in which this was already known to the missionaries.^x The critical issue then becomes whether we can return to the apostolic example today, and what this might mean in practice at the crucial frontiers of our time with both the culture of modernity and economism, on the one hand, and with Islam on the other? What would it mean at these frontiers to heed James’ judgement in Jerusalem two thousand years ago, that ‘we should not make it difficult’ for post-Christian secularists in a globalized world, or for Muslims, whether in Europe or Africa, ‘who are turning to God’?

The Pathway to the Other Side

The historian Theodore von Laue, discussing the growth of religious and cultural barriers in an increasingly violent world, poses the following pertinent question: ‘How is it possible to establish common ground with strangers across the barriers of cultural incomprehension and ingrained political hostility? *How can one get to the other side?*’^{xi} When those words were written in 1987, von Laue was already describing a world in which peoples around the globe were being ‘compressed against their will into an inescapable but highly unstable interdependence laced with explosive tensions’.^{xii} In the intervening period those tensions have increased as the gulf between the rich and the poor has widened, millions of people have become displaced and homeless, and the barriers between nations, or between people of different ethnic origins or religious beliefs *within* nations, have grown taller and more difficult to cross. How is mission to be done in this troubled and increasingly violent world?

Let me offer in conclusion some principles, or guidelines, to those who seek the pathway to the other side. *First*, the ‘other worlds’ which lie beyond the boundaries of culture and religions are always likely to be places where surprises await those who come from outside. This was, as we have been reminded, the experience of the apostle Peter whose preconceptions

of Roman pagans were blown away by the discovery of a centurion who was ‘devout and god-fearing’ and whose regular prayers to heaven were clearly heard and answered. The story of Peter and Cornelius in Acts 10 reminds us that God is always ahead of us in mission; we do not introduce him to places and people completely unfamiliar with his presence and grace, but rather discover in a multitude of ways evidence of prepared ground in those works of the Holy Spirit that are not dependent upon us. We noticed above how Samuel Crowther discovered a Muslim ruler who was able to say ‘amen’ to a prayer taken from the Anglican Prayer Book. But could this also happen the other way round? Might we find Muslim prayers which breathe the spirit of longing for fellowship with God, to which *we* could say ‘amen’? Here is such a prayer, taken from a Muslim devotional manual:

I have naught but my destitution
To plead for me with Thee.
And in my poverty I put forward that destitution as my plea.
I have no power save to knock at Thy door,
And if I be turned away, at what door shall I knock?
Or on whom shall I call, crying his name,
If Thy generosity is refused to Thy destitute one?
Far be it from Thy generosity to drive the disobedient one to despair!
Generosity is more freehanded, grace wider than that.
In lowly wretchedness I have come to Thy door,
Knowing that degradation there finds help.
In full abandon I put my trust in Thee,
Stretching out my hands to Thee, a pleading beggar.^{xiii}

But there is a further lesson to be learned from Peter’s mission to Cornelius in that it serves as a reminder that we must not take ourselves too seriously in mission! There is *humour* in this story, and we are meant to smile when we hear the apostle repeatedly confessing his confusion and difficulty in trying to work out just what God was up to! It seems to me that mission has an element of *clowning* about it, and when we recognise our foolish mistakes, both in our preconceptions about God’s ways and in our prejudices about other people, we may need simply to laugh at ourselves.

Of course, what we are describing here is what has been called in theological language the *missio Dei* – the ‘mission of God’. The tragedy of so much frantic evangelistic activity is that it reduces mission to a human project which we own and control, failing to recognise that we are simply given the privilege of sharing in a mission initiated by God, and pursued by him in ways which defy human perception or anticipation. We are dependent upon the Lord, but the reverse is not true and, as Paul makes clear to the Romans, we should never forget ‘the kindness and sternness of God’, because our failure to do mission in a manner reflecting his

kindness, will expose us (as it did the Jewish people) to the sternness which removes us from his work and finds others who are in tune with God's own heart (Romans 11:22-23).

The *second* principle of mission for travellers to the 'other side' concerns the importance of an informed and sensitive understanding of the social, historical and religious factors which may have caused a negative reaction to evangelism. I have elsewhere suggested that we need to ask whether Muslim hostility to Christianity is always a rejection of the gospel, or whether it often expresses a defence against forms of Christianity involving precisely a kind of syncretism with secular modernism? *Mission never takes place in a historical, cultural vacuum, but is always influenced by factors which often lie hidden from view, such as negative collective memories of disturbing events in the past, or social, political and economic factors which may profoundly influence the perception of those who are the bearers of the message of Christ.* We communicate with words and what we say and how we say it is supremely important, but the act of communication also involves non-verbal elements which are at least as important as the correct articulation of the message in language. It is possible to say the right things, but to say them with such anger, or arrogance, or with such complete disregard for their reception, that the manner of the presentation drowns out the truth of the message. Or even more seriously, it is possible to speak truly of Christ, the humble, suffering servant, who had 'no place to lay his head', and for this message to sound completely hollow when brought by people whose lifestyles display their comfortable and privileged existence in a world marred by so much poverty and suffering. It is not only Muslims, but non-Western Christians who have frequently challenged the way in which mission has involved the bringing of a whole package in which the liberating message of the gospel has become fused with alien cultural elements which threaten to overwhelm and displace ancient, local traditions. More than thirty years ago, Rene Padilla expressed precisely this concern in a message to the first Lausanne Congress in 1974 which still comes to us with prophetic power:

The problem is that one version of culture-Christianity, with an inadequate theological foundation and conditioned by "fierce pragmatism" . . . should be regarded as the official evangelical position and the measure of orthodoxy around the world. . . . Under the Spirit of God, each culture has something to contribute in connection with the understanding of the Gospel and its implications for the life and mission of the church. [Western] culture-Christianity should not be allowed to deprive us of the possibility that we all – whatever our race, nationality, language or culture – as equal members in the one body of Christ, "attain to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph.4:13).^{xiv}

This brings us, finally, to the *third* principle for those who seek to journey 'to the other side'. In our troubled world we will need to disentangle the good news of Christ from the various cultural wrappers in which it has been contained, but this will only be the prelude to

the more challenging task of making the gospel itself available both within the Islamic world *and* to millions of people in the post-Christian West who now belong to a culture which was once, in some sense, ‘Christian’, but has turned away from faith. All that we have said earlier concerning the frontier with Islam also applies to that other, deeply challenging frontier with unbelief, shaped by the secular-humanist worldview which is now such a fundamentally important element in the world scene. At this frontier too there is need for real understanding of the causes of the choices made by people who have consciously abandoned faith, as well as the sense of alienation of later generations who live with the personal and social consequences of secularism, even as they confess, like young people in post-Communist Eastern Europe, ‘We have forgotten that we have forgotten God’!^{xv} However, those who move across this frontier and offer true and faithful friendship to people ‘on the other side’, will also discover that the God whose very existence may be denied *is not absent from this territory*. Here too we may meet our ‘Corneliuses’ whose pursuit of love and passion for justice may put us to shame and undermine many of our preconceptions. And here too, the recognition of the factors which led to the rejection of Christianity will need to be carefully explored and sympathetically understood. Only then can the task of ‘translating’ the message of the gospel afresh for the world we have described begin.

ⁱ This material was first presented at the Theological Education in Africa (TEA) conference held in Bukuru in May 2012. It will be published as part of a book with the title *The Kindness of God: Christian Witness in our Troubled World* by Inter-Varsity Press in 2013.

ⁱⁱ An obituary notice for Shahbaz Bhatti was published in *The Guardian*, 11 March 2011. Italics added.

ⁱⁱⁱ Jeremy Johns, ‘Christianity and Islam’ in John MacManners (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 172.

^{iv} Quoted from Ida Glaser, *Crusade Sermons, Francis of Assisi and Martin Luther: What Does it Mean to “Take up the Cross” in the Context of Islam?* Crowther Centre Monograph, 14 (Oxford: Church Mission Society, 2008), 8-9.

^v *Ibid*, 32.

^{vi} Andrew Walls, ‘Crowther, Samuel Adjai (or Ajayi)’ in Gerald Anderson (ed.), *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions* (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 1998), 160-161.

^{vii} The quotation is reproduced in Andrew Walls, ‘Africa as the Theatre of Christian Engagement’, 145. This article, along with another, ‘Samuel Ajayi Crowther (1807-1891)’ are both to be found in his *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2002) and have been drawn upon in this section.

^{viii} Andrew Walls, ‘Samuel Ajayi Crowther’, 161.

^{ix} Andrew Walls, ‘From Christendom to World Christianity’ in *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History*, 68.

^x The history of modern missions from the West contains many examples of confusing conversion with proselytism, as the tragic end of Samuel Crowther's life and ministry discussed above shows. However, that churches of African origin have made the same mistake can be seen from the language used by the President of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN), who declared in 1993 'We will take over the whole of Africa'. There is a clear echo of the imperialist model of mission in this statement. See Paul Freston, *Evangelicals and Politics in Asia, Africa and Latin America*, 186.

^{xi} Theodore von Laue, *The World Revolution of Westernization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 366-367.

^{xii} Theodore von Laue, *ibid.*, 7.

^{xiii} Constance Padwick, *Muslim Devotions: A Study of Prayer-Manuals in Common Use* (London: SPCK, 1969), 218.

^{xiv} Rene Padilla, 'Evangelism and the World' in J.D. Douglas (ed.), *Let the Earth Hear His Voice. International Congress on World Evangelization, Lausanne, Switzerland*, (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1975), 140-141. I have changed one word in this quotation: Padilla spoke of 'American culture-Christianity' and I have preferred to describe this more broadly, and consistent with the critique of Newbigin earlier in these studies, as 'Western'.

^{xv} A former student of mine, Mike Edwards, reported this statement made by secular young people during a series of conversations with a group of Christian peers in a city in eastern Germany. This dialogue focussed on issues concerning identity, meaning and moral values and resulted in surprises for the young Christians who made the journey 'to the other side'.