

Gerald H. Anderson, ed., *Witness to World Christianity: The International Association for Mission Studies, 1972-2012* (New Haven, CN: OMSC, 2012). xi + 227 pp.

This history of the International Association of Mission Studies (IAMS) encompasses essential developments and issues in contemporary Christian world missions. Promoting the scholarly study of practical topics related to missions and intercultural theology, the organization stands on the cutting edge of global missiological research. The IAMS is an interdenominational and interdisciplinary society with a worldwide network including 400 scholars and an executive committee with members from countries across every continent. Gerald Anderson is a Methodist minister and director Emeritus of the Overseas Ministries Study Center in New Haven, Connecticut. Anderson served as president of the American Society of Missiology (1973-75) and the IAMS (1982-85).

The first part of this work uncovers the origin and development of the IAMS. Anderson brings the reader along a journey beginning with the inaugural conference in Driebergen, Netherlands in 1972. Subsequent conferences have been held around the globe, including Germany, Costa Rica, the United States, India, Zimbabwe, Italy, Argentina, South Africa, Malaysia, Hungary and Canada. Since its founding, the IAMS has been devoted to a variety of missiological themes, among them being the issues of secularization, pluralism, political and economic order, spirituality, and migration. It has transformed from a largely Eurocentric, white, male organization, to what is today a multicultural association with a strong membership of women and a formidable reach to regions of the Global South.

The book includes three addenda from respected scholars in the field of world missions studies. The first is by John Roxborough, convener of the IAMS Documentation, Archives, and Bibliography study group (1992-2005). Roxborough's contribution centers on the archival history and resource credentials of the organization. The second addendum is by John M. Prior, coordinator of the Biblical Studies and Mission project since 2004. Prior concentrates on the relationship between biblical and intercultural scholarship. The final addendum by Christoffer H. Grundmann examines the IAMS Healing/Pneumatology study group. His assessment concludes that the nonacademic character of practices, such as healing and the discernment of spirits, has contributed to a new way of "nonpartisan" missiology, one that overcomes particular theological and cultural preferences.

IAMS owes its success to the strength, dedication, and creativity of the association's leadership. Although structural

weaknesses exist, including shifting allegiances among host communities and some academic institutions, there is an optimistic future for the organization. This is due in large part to the reach of the IAMS by virtue of its *Mission Studies Journal*, newsletter, and study groups, each committed to the critical study of world missions. The IAMS remains devoted to the task of “recording the present and recovering the past” (135). The result is an organization fit to exceed the expectations of contemporary missions and evangelistic initiatives. The IAMS can look forward to new opportunities as it advances global missions’ scholarship on both the local and international level.

Witness to World Christianity provides a window into the heart of an organization that is changing the course of missiological studies for the twenty-first century. The strength of this work is Anderson’s succinct, yet detailed overview, which draws on a host of first-hand periodical and archival sources. This book will appeal to scholars, students, and interested laypersons alike seeking a perspicacious, informed treatment of an organization on the frontlines of world mission’s research today.

Reviewed by Paul J. Palma, Ph.D.
Regent University
Virginia Beach, VA, USA