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New Christian Universities and the Conversion of Cultures

Joel A. Carpenter

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READERS OF THIS journal are quite familiar with one of the great trends of our times: Christianity's place in the world has taken a seismic shift to the global south and east, and this momentous change is being driven mainly by rapid church growth and by renewal movements in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Those familiar with current developments in education likewise know of another huge trend, the unprecedented expansion of higher education, worldwide, even in very poor nations. It may seem surprising, given Christianity's historic role in fostering education, that more inquirers are not asking what these two trends might have to do with each other.

These trends do converge, and the results are striking. A recently conducted study of Christian higher education worldwide discovered that new Christian universities are rising across the globe. Over the past thirty years, at least one hundred seventy eight of them have come into being, with forty six arising on the African continent alone.[1] These new, faith-based universities make up a tiny sub-trend in the larger field of international higher education, but they raise intriguing questions about the relationship of gospel and culture in the new Christian heartlands where they are at work. The new Christian universities come on the heels of awakenings, revivals and burgeoning church growth. They also ride the twin waves of ever-expanding

1 Perry L. Glanzer, Joel A. Carpenter, and Nick Lantinga, 'Looking for God in the University: Examining Trends in Global Christian Higher Education', *Higher Education*, 61:6 (2011): 721-55. To track current results in this very dynamic field, see the project's database at www.iapche.org.

Joel Carpenter *(MA, PhD, Johns Hopkins) is the director of the Nagel Institute for the Study of World Christianity at Calvin College. He was previously provost of Calvin College, director of the Religion Program at the Pew Charitable Trusts, He has also taught at several colleges and was director of the Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals at Wheaton College. He is the author of* Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism *(Oxford, 1997); and the co-editor with Lamin Sanneh of* The Changing Face of Christianity: Africa, the West, and the World *(Oxford, 2005). His latest book is* Walking Together: Christian Thinking and Public Life, in South Africa *(ACU Press, forthcoming).*

demand for higher education and the desires of revived Christian people to bring God's blessings to the lands where they live. Yet these uncommon schools face powerful pressures to conform their education to the economistic norms of our age.

In North America there is a vigorous discussion about the history and mission of Christian higher education, but very little has been said about the role of Christian universities in the faith's new heartlands of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. One prominent Christian thinker, however, has been asking how Christian thinking relates to the 'demographic transformation of the Church'. Andrew Walls, the eminent Scottish historian of missions and world Christianity, is eager to see the burgeoning Christian movements of the global South and East make greater progress in what he calls 'cultural conversion', of working the gospel down deep into the very roots of cultural identity. He identifies this work as a long-term and deeply scholarly task, and he calls today's Christian thinkers to take up this work. Believing scholars need to engage 'the thought processes of a whole civilization'.[2] While Walls lays this task first at the feet of theology, he recognizes that it is the proper work of Christian thinkers in every field of inquiry and action.[3]

So we need to ask: how vigorous is Christian scholarship in the new Christian universities that we see arising in Africa, Asia, and Latin America? Are new Christian universities showing a lively concern for Christian living and Christian witness in their host societies, and how does this concern translate into scholarly activity? What ideas and values are shaping these new universities' priorities and structures? What might get in the way of gospel-and-culture intellectual work? And what might be done to help such work flourish?

I The Worldwide Growth of Higher Education

In North America, the byword in higher education is 'crisis'. We hear of the crisis of ever-rising costs, the crisis of educational purpose, the crisis of the professoriate, or the crisis of the for-profit, corporate invasion of higher education. I do not want to belittle these concerns, which play into the very centre of our story today, but outside of the North Atlantic region, higher education is expanding at an astonishing rate, and the main crisis in higher education is how to meet the huge and growing demand worldwide for a university education with anything resembling university-quality teaching and learning. A second crisis follows closely on the first, and that is how to answer the 'for what?' question: what are the proper aims and purposes of higher education? The forces driving the first global crisis and the second one are remarkably similar.

2 Andrew F. Walls, 'Christian Scholarship and the Demographic Transformation of the Church', in *Theological Literacy for the Twenty-first Century*, ed. Rodney L. Petersen, with Nancy M. Rourke (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 172.

3 Walls, 'Christian Scholarship', 166.

A Massification: Expanding to Meet Huge Demand

Today we are witnessing a historic shift in higher education's social role. Here is how the authors of a sociological study put it: 'In 1900, roughly 500,000 students were enrolled in higher education institutions worldwide, representing a tiny fraction of 1 per cent of college age people…. By 2000, the number of tertiary students had grown two-hundredfold to approximately 100 million people, which represents about 20 percent of the [university enrollment age] cohort worldwide.'[4]

Those totals and percentages mask some huge disparities, however. In India, for example, there has been a very rapid growth in higher education, but India currently enrols only about 13 per cent of its relevant age group in higher education. The average across Africa is only about two per cent. In South Korea, by contrast, more than 40 per cent of traditional college-age young people are enrolled. In the United States, the number is about 34 per cent. Whatever the relative reach of higher education in each country, the historic growth curves are remarkably similar in all parts of the world, rich and poor. Even in sub-Saharan Africa, the most educationally disenfranchised region of the world, the growth curve for higher education continues to bend upward, decade by decade.

It is not difficult to imagine why the growth is taking place. Tertiary education is no longer expected only of elites. It is becoming a necessary basis for ordinary work in many realms today. The expansion of higher education thus reflects a radical change in the way the world is structured. We are seeing that a 'world dominated by more traditional elites', such as 'landowners, business owners, and [the heads of] political and military machines', is being replaced by one dominated by a new set of elites, and their status and authority comes to a large extent from 'schooled knowledge'. This historic change is occurring not only in rich and powerful countries like our own, but also in poorer countries as well.[5] In this new form of society, both the learned professions and more ordinary office work require increasingly specialized knowledge. These opportunities are expanding rapidly, and because they address these basic social and economic needs, universities are becoming central national institutions, not just the enclaves of the elite.

B Unstoppable Demand and Unbearable Systemic Strain

As societies and economies worldwide are changing in knowledge-driven ways, demand for access to higher education continues to grow. In much of the world, the dominant assumption regarding higher education has been that it serves broad public purposes. Therefore the government was obliged to provide it. It has become clear, how-

4 Evan Schofer and John W. Meyer, 'The Worldwide Expansion of Higher Education in the Twentieth Century', *American Sociological Review* 70:6 (December 2005): 898.

5 Schofer and Meyer, 'Worldwide Expansion', 917.

ever, that in most of the world governments cannot expand higher education fast enough to meet this demand.[6] University systems in Africa, Asia and Latin America have been strained and damaged as campuses are being forced to accommodate more and more students. Meanwhile the professoriate is experiencing parallel strains. In many countries, the percentage of teaching staff holding the relevant terminal postgraduate degrees has declined.[7] Even in rich countries with mature higher education systems, government support for higher education is contracting even while enrolments continue to expand.

C A Change in Values: Privatization

At the same time that higher education is under huge pressure to accommodate more students, it is experiencing a sea change in values. Since ancient times, higher education has been a craft, plied by highly skilled intellectual artisans, and imparted from one generation to another in highly personal ways. It is a process of formation, not just the processing of information. It involves acquiring perspective and discernment and sound habits of mind and intellectual work. But now this long time pattern of teaching and learning is under assault for being too inefficient.

Also since the early years of the university, two basic sets of aims and values have been driving the enterprise. On the one hand are the 'liberal' or liberating values driving studies in the arts and sciences. They exist for the sake of making fresh discoveries and creations, for discerning what is true and worthy and what is not, and for inheriting humanity's store of wisdom and cultural achievement. On the other hand there are the more concretely 'practical' values driving studies in the professions and technological fields: for attaining the knowledge and skill needed to become a competent practitioner, and for engaging in practices that will make one's community flourish and prosper. Both of these sets of values were put into a larger frame called 'the public good'. Universities equipped graduates to serve the community. These two basic aims were in fact secular adaptations of the Christian vision of higher education: to serve the glory of God and the welfare of the earthly city.

In recent decades, however, we have seen these governing values become reduced and constricted. Contemporary policy makers are constructing ever narrower understandings of the purpose and value of higher education. Basic discovery research is fine, under this reasoning, if it can be related directly to efforts that boost the economy. And what one needs to know to be competent in practice as a professional or a technician is being pushed more and more into a skills-based orientation, and away from

6 Philip G. Altbach and Jane Knight, 'The Internationalization of Higher Education: Motivations and Realities', *Journal of Studies in Higher Education* 11:3/4 (Fall/Winter 2007): 290-305.

7 Philip G. Altbach, 'Center and Peripheries in the Academic Profession: The Special Challenges of Developing Countries', in *The Decline of the Guru: The Academic Profession in the Third World*, ed. Philip G. Altbach (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 1-22.

broader perspectives and understanding. The belief that professionals and technicians might need critical thinking, or a broader sense of life's contexts and dimensions beyond the job, or wise judgment in order to do what is right and do no harm, are being downplayed while claims grow that the technical aspects of the job itself demand all of the educational time.

Educational time and expense are increasingly under pressure from the cost-cutting metrics of the corporate world. There is something like an 'industrial revolution' occurring, by which higher education is being thought of as a product, something capable of being rationalized and streamlined in production and traded like other commodities.[8] The logic of this process points to higher education as something that individuals acquire to enhance their own benefit. If higher education is as much a private benefit as a public good, why should its support come so heavily from public coffers?

In times when even wealthy western nations have been facing increasing pressures to control public spending, this economistic approach has gained a great deal of support. In middle-income and poorer nations, the natural desire to 'build the nation' also has led to a narrowing of vision and value for higher education. All over Asia, observes Philip Altbach, a leading scholar of international higher education, the humanities and social sciences are experiencing rapid declines. The traditional, 'public good' roles that these fields provided—'cultural analysis and critique, the interrogation of science and culture, and the preservation of knowledge—have been largely pushed aside'.[9]

These fields are sent to the margins because the massive demand for higher education is pressuring higher education systems to provide the programs students most want, and what they most want are courses that will lead most directly to lucrative employment. All of the budgetary pressure runs against keeping the humanities and social sciences programs that are less in demand. So we see the values of higher education shifting from public good to private gain, from formation to information, and from perspective and judgment to skills and techniques. This shift is driven by a seemingly insatiable demand for more access to higher education, and a decreasing ability of governments, in rich nations as well as poor ones, to pay for it.

II The Big Surprise: the Global Growth of 'Private' Higher Education

In response to these pressures and demands, we are seeing the rapid growth of private higher education around the world—or at least outside of western Europe. While in the United States there is a long tradition of privately founded colleges and universi-

8 David Noble, 'Technology and the Commodification of Higher Education', *Monthly Review* 53:10 (March 2002): 26-40.

9 Philip G. Altbach, 'Globalization and Forces for Change in Higher Education', *International Higher Education* no. 50 (Winter 2008). *International Higher Education* is published online at http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/avp/soe/cihe/

ties, in many parts of the world, non-governmental universities are relatively new, and they come as quite a surprise.

A New nongovernmental players

In China, for example, where there was no non-governmental higher education from 1950 to the 1980s, now about ten per cent of total enrolments are in that sector; and in Latin America, the regional average for private higher education is about 45 per cent of total enrolment. Africa had a tiny percentage of non-governmental higher education before 1990, mostly in schools for Christian ministry. But today, in a number of African nations, the enrolment percentage is about 20 per cent.[10] In Ghana, for example, there were just two private universities in 1999, but only a decade later there were eleven, plus another nineteen private polytechnic institutes. Their students total 28 per cent of national tertiary enrolments.[11]

B Commercial orientation, including for-profit universities.

Non-governmental colleges and universities are not news in the United States; today they make up nearly 60 per cent of the institutions and 23 per cent of the enrolments. The big news in the USA is the rise of for-profit colleges and universities, which now represent about 7 per cent of the total enrolments, and about one third of all private college enrolments. The largest of these is the University of Phoenix, which in 2010 enrolled 455,000 students nationwide, up from 25,100 fifteen years earlier.[12] This for-profit model is emerging all over the world. Laureate Education, Inc., a publicly traded American corporation, now operates fifty-five institutions around the world, enrolling 600,000 students.[13]

C Common traits, according to PROPHE

Over the past decade, an organization at the State University of New York at Albany has been analyzing this remarkable worldwide trend. Its name is the Program of Research on Private Higher Education (PROPHE).[14]

10 Daniel C. Levy, 'An Introductory Global Overview: The Private Fit to Salient Higher Education Tendencies', PROPHE Working Paper #7 Program for Research in Private Higher Education, University at Albany, State University of New York, September 2006.

11 Kajsa Hallberg Adu, 'Ghana: Private higher education on the rise', *University World News*, 28 June 2009. This publication is found online at http://www.universityworldnews.com.

12 Robin Wilson, 'For-Profit Colleges Change Higher Education's Landscape', *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 12 February 2010, A-1, A-16.

13 'Media Design School Joins Laureate International Universities Network; New Zealand's Top Institution of Higher Education in Digital Design,' press release, 14 February 2011. Laureate International website: http://www.laureate. net/NewsRoom/Press-Releases/2011/02/MediaDesign-SchooljoinsLIU.aspx See also Ann I. Morey, 'Globalization and the Emergence of For-Profit Higher Education', *Higher Education* 48:1 (July 2004): 131-150.

14 Daniel C. Levy, 'Analyzing a Private Revolution: The Work of PROPHE', *International Higher Education*, Spring 2005.

PROPHE engages an international network of dozens of scholars, and they have found eight prominent characteristics in the new private universities.[15]

1. Working the Margins

Private higher education rarely comes as part of a nationwide effort to plan and develop higher education. It tends to arise more spontaneously, to address needs and demands not met by governmental and traditional independent higher education. It has come as a surprise wherever it has arisen. Increasingly, after the fact, governments are scrambling to impose quality standards and accountability mechanisms on private higher education.

2. Addressing Access Needs

The most commonly performed educational role of private higher education is to provide access to higher education that the state is unable to meet. The new private institutions are rarely students' first choices; they often are the fall-back options when students don't get into state institutions.

3. Offering Little Research or Postgraduate Study

Higher education is an integrated system that needs a supply of qualified scholars to discover new knowledge and to convert it into solid educational materials and teaching. Private institutions worldwide rely on scholars from other institutions to develop ideas; they hire some curriculum writers to provide classroom materials. The teaching is done largely by adjunct or part-time instructors. If the new private universities offer post-baccalaureate programs, they tend to be for professional job fields, not for basic research. So these institutions feed off the larger system of creating knowledge, but do not feed back into it.

4. Cutting Costs and Focusing on Jobs

Private higher education tends to feature courses that are most in demand for immediate transfer into jobs. They offer various business majors, the information technology services end of computer science, and other commercial fields, such as hotel and tourism management. These programs are cheap to offer and they do not demand elaborate facilities like the experimental sciences or engineering. Likewise, these privates do not feature arts and humanities courses, which need good studios and libraries, but offer fewer direct career tracks.

5. Going Light on Cultural and Social Service

The new private higher education tends not to feature programs such as social work, nursing or teacher education, which require internship sites and which provide community service. Likewise, the new privates tend not to make culture or share it with the community, via art galleries, orchestras or drama programs.

6. Part-timing Professors

Private institutions tend not to retain full-time professors. Part-timers are

15 Daniel C. Levy, 'The Unanticipated Explosion: Private Higher Education's Global Surge', *Comparative Education Review* 50:2 (2006): 217-240.

more likely. In Latin America, where they are called taxi-cab professors, quite a few are state university faculty members who are picking up extra work. In the USA, the new for-profits disaggregate professors' tasks and feature instructors who use pre-developed materials and bear no responsibilities outside of the classroom.

7. Taking Orders from the Boss

Whether they are legally not-for-profit entities, proprietary businesses, or multi-site corporations, the governance structures in the new privates tend to be more authoritarian than is usually the case in state institutions or older church-founded institutions. The new privates are often run like a business. Faculty co-governance and student input are much less likely.

8. Narrowing the Mission

In sum, the new private universities tend to depart from the traditional higher educational aims, such as providing a cultural legacy, engaging in moral character formation, learning critical analysis and inquiry, or developing an ethic of service. The aims reduce down to this: equip the student with the knowledge and skills required to be certified into a particular line of work. Doing anything more, claim its advocates, costs too much, and is irrelevant to the main mission.

III New Christian Universities

A Worldwide Movement

Within the scholarly literature on private higher education, there is very little being said about a trend within the trend—the rise of new Christian universities. About ten years ago, by means of some rather quick networking and web surfing, I found 42 evangelical Protestant institutions that had been established since 1980.[16] Thanks to some careful and exhaustive work over the past two years, we now know that the evangelical Protestant institutions that I discovered are part of a larger movement, both Protestant and Catholic, that has resulted in the founding of 178 new universities outside of North America since 1980, and 138 of these were founded since 1990. Here are some highlights of the research:

- Africa has been a hot spot, with 46 new Christian institutions founded since 1990.
- In Europe, the main action has been in the formerly communist nations, where 17 of the 19 Christian universities formed in the past 20 years have been planted. There are only two recently founded Christian universities in Western Europe: one is Liverpool Hope University, a Catholic and Anglican joint venture in England; and the other one is the University of Ramon Llull, a Catholic institution in Spain.
- In Asia, we see a variety of trends, led by Indian churches,

16 Joel A. Carpenter, 'New Evangelical Universities: Cogs in a World System or Players in a New Game?' in *Interpreting Contemporary Christianity: Global Processes and Local Identities*, ed. Ogbu U. Kalu and Alaine Low (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 151-186.

which founded 18 new Christian colleges during the 1980s and 13 more since 1990.
- In South Korea, there are dozens of Christian universities, including some new ones that now enrol several thousand students.
- Minority Christian movements in Indonesia, Taiwan and Thailand also have new Christian universities.
- All told, there are 25 new Christian universities founded since 1990 in Asia and Australia.
- In Latin America, 32 new Christian universities have arisen since 1990; 15 of them are Protestant.

In sum, Christian higher education is a dynamic worldwide movement, enlisting Christian scholars and communities of support to do something fresh in higher education. In Europe, Christian educators are building communities of learning that come out from under a pervasively secular academic shadow. It is an exciting time of fresh beginnings, under a worldwide variety of situations, each with unique opportunities and constraints.[17]

The most dramatic site for Christian university startups today is sub-Saharan Africa. In Nigeria, government chartered private universities now number 41, and 21 of them are Christian.[18] Some have become substantially sized institutions in a very short period of time. Bowen University, which grew out of a small Baptist teacher training college in Iwo, southern Nigeria, officially opened its doors in 2002 with fewer than 500 students, but today it enrolls nearly 10,000.[19] Not all institutions have seen such dramatic growth, but of the 27 African Christian universities for which we have recent student enrolment numbers, 18 currently educate more than 1,000 students.[20]

B After the Awakenings: A 'Now What?' Moment

So what is prompting the rise of these new Christian universities? On every continent the story is somewhat different, but in very general terms, Christian university building is in part a response to the same trend that is prompting the rise of private universities of all sorts: the relentless growth of demand for higher education in the face of public constraints in higher education spending.

In African contexts, the higher education crisis has been made even more critical by its extremity. Government education budgets were racked first by

17 Perry Glanzer and Nick Lantinga, 'Tracking Global Christian Higher Education', research report presented at the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities' International Forum, Atlanta, Georgia, USA, 26 February 2010. Reports and data from their study are available at http://www.iapche.org/ at the tab, 'Research.'

18 Elizabeth Archibong, 'Nigeria Gets Seven Additional Universities', *NEXT*, 22 October 2009, found at http://234next.com/csp/cms/sites/Next/Home/5472553-146/story.csp#

19 For more information, see the Bowen University website: http://www.bowenuniversity-edu.org/home.php

20 Perry L. Glanzer, 'Examining the Worldwide Growth of Christian Higher Education', draft article in possession of the author, Baylor University, February 2010.

falling commodities prices in the 1980s, then by IMF and World Bank directives to reallocate government spending in the 1990s, and throughout these decades, by on-going serious leakages in revenues because of widespread corruption. In many nations, civil disruptions and even civil wars brought higher education to near-halt. Many African universities have been crowded far beyond their capacities while they starved for budget resources. Frequently they have been focal points of civic unrest, with entire academic years lost to faculty or student strikes. And in eastern and southern Africa especially, universities were hotspots in the HIV/AIDS pandemic. So it is no wonder that educationally minded people, whether in religious communities or other networks, have taken the initiative to provide alternatives.[21]

So are Christian universities merely riding this wave of secular privatization, or might there be some dynamics internal to the Christian movements that prompt the founding of new universities? Several historians of modern Christianity have seen echoes in this movement of something that happened in the United States in the mid-nineteenth century, in what was then the American West, roughly the territory stretching from the Appalachian Mountains to the Mississippi River, and southwest into Texas. This was a time of major cultural organization, when the young nation was moving, said American historian John Higham, from a state of boundlessness to consolidation.[22]

It was a time also when, in the wake of the Second Great Awakening, American evangelicals, led by the Methodists, were 'organizing to beat the devil'. Out of this era of rapid western settlement and church growth came a wave of new institutions—missionary agencies, Bible and tract publishing firms, social reform movements and institutions, and academies and colleges.[23] These new Christian colleges, according to historian Timothy Smith, 'were the anvil upon which the relationships between the people's religious traditions and the emerging political and social structures were hammered into shape.'[24]

So once again, it seems, in many

21 On the multiple crises of African higher education, much has been written, but see Demtew Teferra and Philip G. Altbach, 'African Higher Education: Challenges for the 21st Century', *Higher Education* 47:1 (January 2004): 21-50. On the privatization of higher education in Africa, see Wycliffe Otieno and Daniel Levy, 'Public Disorder, Private Boom? Inter-sectoral Dynamics Illustrated by the Kenyan Case', PROPHE Working Paper #9, Program for Research in Private Higher Education, University at Albany, State University of New York, July 2007.

22 John Higham, 'From Boundlessness to Consolidation: The Transformation of American Culture, 1848-1860,' in *Hanging Together: Unity and Diversity in American Culture*, ed. Carl Guarneri (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2001), 147-165.

23 Donald G. Mathews, 'The Second Great Awakening as an Organizing Process', *American Quarterly* 21 (1969):23-43.

24 Timothy L. Smith, *Uncommon Schools: Christian Colleges and Social Idealism in Midwestern America, 1820-1950* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana Historical Society, 1978), 5-6.

places around the world, new Christian movements and denominations are coming out of a season of awakenings and facing a 'now what?' moment. People have experienced personal transformation, and have shared the good news with many others. Churches have been planted and are growing. Many good works and the agencies to drive them have resulted. But Jesus has not come back yet. So now what? Shall Christians just do more of the same? But these Christian movements are not in the same social place that they once were. In many societies they have a new salience where they were once marginal and nearly invisible. With new status comes a new responsibility.

The second half of the gospel mandate, after spreading the good news of personal salvation and baptizing those who accept it is what Walls calls the conversion of cultures. The mandate is to teach the nations about God's larger plan of redemption. So in addition to founding community development agencies, publishing and media outlets, health clinics, women's associations, youth groups, and, in some cases, political movements and parties, Catholics and evangelicals alike are going into education. They are developing hundreds of primary and secondary schools, seminaries, and indeed, universities.

IV Is Christian Higher Education 'Private?'

What are we to make of this trend? Are these Christian groups resorting to higher education for Christian purposes, that is, to make good on commitments to deepen Christian living and Christian witness in broad cultural terms? In some respects, the answer is quite positive. I think of a report from the Rev. Dr. Musiande Kasali, a distinguished theologian and educator who left a well-established theological seminary in Nairobi to found the Christian Bilingual University of the Congo. This new university is in Beni, the city in eastern Congo that was at the epicenter of the recent civil war. Kasali reports that

> 'the government, the Church and the whole nation are now faced with enormous challenges to rebuild their nation after years of war, poverty and neglect.... The time has come for the people of God to rise up and be agents of a life giving transformation.' So the university started its academic year, Kasali reported, by holding a public consultation on 'the role of the Church in nation building'.[25]

There is no comprehensive study available on the mission and vision of Christian universities in the global South or East, but it is remarkable how often that nation-building language appears. It is evidently a rather common aim for higher education in Africa and Asia, where building or rebuilding one's nation is very much on educators' minds, and often is a government mandated university mission. But might Christians mean something deeper by this phrase? To what extent

25 David Kasali, *Congo Initiative–Université Chrétienne Bilingue du Congo (CI -UCBC) Annual Report* (2007-2008), p.3. Found at the website of the Congo Initiative, a U.S. based support corporation for this university. http://www.congoinitiative.org/view.cfm?page_id=48

do new Christian universities apply their faith to a public role? Or do they simply follow the privatization of purpose and values that drives the new secular private universities?

The more that new Christian universities resemble the secular privates, one might argue, the more problems they will have in generating what Professor Walls calls a 'sense of Christian vocation to scholarship'. So, are the new Christian universities structured like the more commercially and technically oriented private institutions that springing up all over, or are they distinctly different? Current scholarship does not drill deep enough in any one place to get definitive answers, but here are some impressions.

A Some differences

In some important ways, most of the new Christian universities look rather different from the secular, commercially oriented private ones. Recall that the new secular privates tend to fashion their course offerings to match the job structures of the business world. They don't teach much basic science, music or philosophy. But in Chile, one researcher found, the five new Catholic institutions founded since 1980 had more comprehensive course offerings than the secular privates, and they communicated a broader humanitarian purpose.[26] A researcher from Thailand found a similar pattern among Catholic and Protestant universities in her country.[27]

Another point of concern: the new private higher education relies on part-time instructors rather than developing professorial expertise of its own. In Kenya, however, the more mature Christian higher education institutions such as Daystar University and the Catholic University of Eastern Africa have higher percentages of full-time professors than do the state universities.[28]

How about course offerings in the new Christian universities—is their main idea of how to help 'build the nation' pretty much confined, like the secular privates, to supplying more business workers and computer technicians? Using information gathered from the global survey mentioned above, we examined the main courses of study of all the new African Christian universities where such details were available. Of the 62 institutions across the continent where we had data,

- 51 showed a broader array of course offerings than just commercial or technical 'market-driven' fields—or those plus Bible college courses.
- Among the Catholic institutions,

26 Andrés Bernasconi, 'Does the Affiliation of Universities to External Organizations Foster Diversity in Private Higher Education? Chile in Comparative Perspective', *Higher Education* 52:2 (2006): 303-342.

27 Prachayani Praphamontripong, 'Inside Thai Private Higher Education: Exploring Private Growth in International Context', PROPHE Working Paper #12, Program for Research in Private Higher Education, University at Albany, State University of New York, September 2008.

28 Otieno and Levy, 'Public Disorder, Private Boon?' cited above, p. 4.

> the tally was 13 with academic breadth to two without it; among the Protestant schools, it was 38 with breadth and nine without.[29]

These are quick tallies, based on rather surface-level information. But compared to the secular private universities, Christian institutions, by and large, seem mission-driven to be more comprehensive. It also appears that the older and stronger the cultural tradition of the church, the more likely that its universities are going beyond commercial studies, or commercial plus Bible and theology. Thus there were stronger patterns of comprehensive studies among Catholic institutions than among Pentecostal ones.

B Some similarities, too

Even so, it appears that the most fully developed curricular areas, and presumably those most heavily enrolled in many of the new Christian universities, are the commercial fields. Indeed, all of the new African Christian universities offer these fields but few offer a comprehensive array of programs across the arts, sciences, social sciences and humanities. They show other signs of fairly shallow educational development as well, such as very little evidence of a research emphasis. Contact with a number of these schools leads me to believe that like the new secular privates, they tend to be rather top-down and authoritarian in governance. Many of them rely quite heavily on part-time instruction. And frequently their libraries and laboratories are scantily equipped.

But let us be fair about these observations. Some of these patterns and traits are fairly common to African higher education more generally. The new Christian universities are no worse off than many of the state universities in facilities and services, and in many cases, they are much better. One has to wonder whether some of the lack of educational breadth and depth we see are functions of an early developmental phase.

Will these institutions look different as they mature? We see some indications by looking more closely at two African Christian universities that are fairly well developed now: Babcock University, the Adventist institution in southern Nigeria, and Bowen University, the Baptist institution in the same general region. They do look more solid than younger institutions. Babcock, with a legacy of Adventist teacher training and healthcare ministries, has a very broad and comprehensive curriculum, plus a set of general education requirements that apply to all degree programs. This latter feature is rather unusual in Africa.

Bowen University, by contrast, has a much stronger emphasis on agriculture and business, but is also strong in the natural sciences. Yet it offers only two social science fields, and it has no humanities or arts faculties at all. Surprisingly, there is no faculty of theology, either. I do not know how such an institution can contribute to the process of Christian thinking and cultural conversion that Professor Walls calls us to engage.

In other ways, both universities do seem Christian mission-driven. Both

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29 Again, see Glanzer and Lantinga's research reports and institutional profiles at http://www.iapche.org/

put a heavy emphasis on the Christian quality of campus life, and they have a heart for outreach in surrounding communities. But in the great academic and intellectual centre of these enterprises, where does critical and creative Christian thinking happen? At Babcock, there are built-in places for it to happen in the curriculum. If there are any such Christian intellectual strongholds inside of Bowen, they do not show up in public documents.

So while the idealism, courage and energy of these new Christian communities is heartening, they are worrisome as well. As we have seen, there are tremendous pressures to reduce education to gaining knowledge and skills for a station in the workplace. In developing countries, where funds are scarce and the need for knowledgeable workers is great, governments relentlessly push for business and technology education over all else.[30] Moreover, Christian movements often arise out on the margins of society, and it is a fundamental matter of social justice for them to equip people to prosper. The Bible's vision of prospering, however, includes far more than commercial work and the creation of wealth.

C Making Higher Education Christian

If there is one message that one would hope to leave with our creative and intrepid new colleagues in Christian higher education, it is this: the very structures of what we do academically have values driving them. The Christian vision of peace, justice, and the full flourishing of people and place is more ably considered and conveyed within the older and broader models of university education than by the relentlessly focused new models of market-driven higher education. So we have to ask: what is it that makes higher education Christian? How do Christian universities advance the gospel's transformation of culture? With all the pressures that exist in the world today to reduce, commodify and instrumentalize higher education, how can we place much hope for new flowerings of Christian thought within fragile and vulnerable new Christian universities?

Professor Walls saw these formidable pressures at work a decade ago on the Euro-American scene. He saw a pervasive degrading of higher education's nobler ideals in favour of private interest, so that 'the universities thus find themselves the pensioners of global capitalism'. He did not spare theologians from his exposure of this new wave of intellectual corruption, and he called for its cleansing, for a 'reorientation of Christian theology to Christian mission, a return to the ideal of scholarship for the glory of God, a return to the ideal of the academic life as a liberating search for truth'.

Walls voiced little hope that this renewal would come from within the western academy, but perhaps, he said, 'it will be in the non-western world that the scholarly vocation will begin anew and a new breed of scholars arise who, working in community, will break the chains of Mammon and

30 In some ways, South Africa, with its relentless drive for economic growth, epitomizes this trend today. See, e.g., Christine Winburg, 'Undisciplining Knowledge Production: Development Driven Higher Education in South Africa', *Higher Education* 51:2 (March 2006): 159-172.

throw off the impediments of careerism.'[31] But alas, we have seen that private interest and career focus powerfully shape many new Christian universities.

So what are we to do? Not long ago, at a presentation of these ideas to an international forum in Christian higher education, the question came out in very poignant terms. A professor from Guatemala arose and said,

> I am from a university founded by evangelicals 40 years ago. We wanted to honour the Lord in higher education, and we wanted to serve the needs of our people. But today, we are exactly the kind of private university you describe. Most of our professors are part-time, and not Christian. We teach mostly business and technical topics, and the idea of a Christian worldview or a Christian perspective on our subjects is unknown. But some of us wish that we could become a Christian university once again. What can we do?

There are, in fact, Christian professors and Christian university leaders all over the world who are asking that question. For some, there is still plenty of opportunity to build their universities into communities of Christian thinking and culture making. For others, the die may be cast, but they as individuals want to make a difference for the gospel's sake. Whatever the relative strengths of Christian universities worldwide, they are now worldwide. There are Christian institutions of learning in places where none existed twenty years ago. More are coming, for certain. Despite the daunting structural problems they face, it is difficult to believe that the Lord has enabled so many of them to spring up, only to see them all turn over to the forces of Mammon. How can they be transformed and transforming, by the renewing of their minds?

By God's grace, an organization exists to encourage and strengthen Christian educators and their universities worldwide. It is the International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education (IAPCHE), and its main mission is 'to serve Jesus as Lord by fostering, worldwide, the development of integral Christian higher education through networking and related academic activity'. Today there are 65 member institutions worldwide, and nearly 900 individual members. IAPCHE's forté is the formation of faculty and educational leaders, and it offers many resources, published and online, and regular regional seminars. IAPCHE institutions come from all over the world, some young and some quite old, some quite adept at gospel-and-culture encounters, and others quite new at it and wondering what can be done, given their context and current framing. But they go at it together, North and South, East and West. IAPCHE shows quite clearly what can be done by banding together for the purpose of asking gospel-driven critical questions and posing creative alternatives in higher education.

IAPCHE's influence is evident in the remarkable ferment at one of its South Korean member institutions, Handong Global University. Handong was driven, in that development driven nation, to become the Christian MIT of

31 Walls, 'Christian Scholarship', 174-175.

East Asia. Yet there was virtually no place in the curriculum for Christian reflection, critique and creativity. Thanks to interaction with IAPCHE colleagues, that issue is being addressed at Handong now. I think too of some of the remarkably fresh and creative thinking by Dutch members of IAPCHE. They serve at one of the newer Christian technical universities in the Netherlands, where their teaching drives them to consider what a Christian approach to professional practice should mean.[32] And one of the sharpest critiques of the commercialization of higher education that I have heard came from IAPCHE's current board president, Dr. José Alcántara Mejía, a professor from Mexico.[33] So networking to share ideas and build a body of Christian thought and strategies is one powerful thing that Christian scholars can do.

What else might be done? Professor Walls poses the idea of developing communities of scholarship that are more attuned to the realities of intellectual life within the southern continents, or on the margins of the northern secular knowledge industry. He speaks of modelling them after the Indian *ashram*, 'a community of people living a simple life of worship and study together'. Walls alludes to some outstanding examples of such agencies already at work in the global South and East, thinking no doubt of the Akrofi-Christaller Institute in Ghana, or the Institute for Asian Church and Culture in the Philippines.

However, he adds that 'the Christian *ashram* could arise in a pre-existing institution', thus prophesying, perhaps, the rise of Christianity and culture study centres in the global North as well. The idea is to refocus the Christian scholarly life with a more disciplined, collegial, and pioneering spirit, not dependent on large institutional frames or big money, and free to pursue a dual orientation, toward biblical and Christian thinking, and toward the local culture.[34] What Walls envisages, he has said more recently, is not unlike the monasteries of early Europe.

But we should not give up on the broader vision of a Christian university. Great things can happen in a comprehensive Christian institution of higher learning that is devoted, as one of Professor Walls' favourite theologians, Origen of Alexandria, put it, to bringing 'every trend of existing philosophy and science into Christian service'.[35] That is the vision at Calvin College, where I work. And it is the dream of many a new university, serving under much more adverse conditions.

What a powerful thing it might be, then, for like-minded Christian universities to make common cause, side by side, worldwide. Gerald Pillay, the vice-chancellor of Liverpool Hope Uni-

32 Bram de Muynck, Johan Hegeman, and Pieter Vos, eds., *Bridging the Gap: Connecting Christian Faith and Professional Practice in a Pluralistic Society* (Sioux Center, Ia.: Dordt College Press, 2011).

33 José Ramón Alcántara Mejía, 'Transculturalizing the Humanities in Christian Higher Education', 101-112; in *Christian Higher Education in the Global Context*, ed. Nick Lantinga (Sioux Center, Ia.: Dordt College Press, 2008).

34 Walls, 'Christian Scholarship', 181-182.

35 Walls, 'Christian Scholarship', 167.

versity, a robust, recently merged and reorganized Christian institution in England, observed that Christian universities 'may find their allies less in their own country than among like-minded institutions in non-Western societies. It is even more likely that there would be mutual benefits in coming together across continents and… forming a global alliance to support their mission and values.'[36]

Such work, Professor Pillay goes on to say, needs to be rather subversive, because in the West, universities have become dominated by pecuniary values and a managerial mood. Christian universities, by contrast, are called to restore wholeness by nurturing fully orbed communities of scholarship and learning. We have much re-framing to do, in every field of inquiry and practice, and we do it swimming against the current. Whether we are in Seoul or Sao Paulo, Lagos or Grand Rapids, we are all outside of Christendom now, and the main political and economic tides flow in adverse directions.

According to Professor Walls, however, Christian intellectuals have done their best work when they cross boundaries, moving out of their customary haunts, taking risks, entering other worlds, becoming vulnerable once again as basic learners, and making their way as guests, on someone else's turf and terms.[37] Repeatedly, some of the most creative Christian scholarship of all time has come from such tenuous situations. May it be so once more, by God's grace.

36 Gerald Pillay, 'Education as Mission: Perspectives on Some New Opportunities,' in *Mission in the 21st Century: Exploring the Five Marks of Global Mission*, ed. Andrew Walls and Cathy Ross (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2008), 172.

37 Walls, 'Christian Scholarship', 170.

Wesley as a Pastoral Theologian
Pastoral Theology in the Context of the doctrine of Perfection
David B. McEwan

Wesley as a Pastoral Theologian examines Wesley's life from his time in Oxford to the point at which he becomes the leader of the Methodist Movement and beyond and demonstrates that he was a theologian concerned more with the living relationship between humanity and God than with an academic comprehension of propositional truths about God.

David B. McEwan is Academic Dean and Lecturer in Theology at Nazarene Theological College, Brisbane, Australia

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