

Working Papers Of

The American Society Of Missiology
Volume 2

**Third
Wave
Mission/
Migration**



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Third Wave/Migration



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— ASM —

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Third Wave Missions/Migration

Edited by
Robert A. Danielson
William L. Selvidge



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Introduction

ROBERT DANIELSON

In 2015 the American Society of Missiology addressed various issues in the changing nature of missions in today's world. Two primary aspects seemed to develop from the various papers on this subject. First, the rise of short term missions and other new models of mission have developed in what is called Third Wave Missions, so that how the Church is doing the work of mission is changing. Second, given the rapid globalization of the world we live in, migration has changed the nature of the communities in which we do mission, so the context of mission has been shifting at the same time as our models of mission have shifted. Transmitting the gospel effectively requires in depth knowledge in both of these areas.

This volume of the working papers opens with a critical examination by Brian M. Howell of how our preparations for short term missions actually shapes the theology of mission of the team and the local church. Mike Gable and Mike Haasl then reflect on a Roman Catholic view of these changing models of mission. PrabhuSingh Vedhamanickham and Luther Jeom Ok Kim both bring Asian reflections on Western mission practices to the table as helpful critiques for moving beyond mission from worn-out colonial models to embrace new views of partnership. Finally, Allison Norton and Frank G. C. Sauer present fascinating case studies of migrant influenced mission in the West, both in Europe and in the United States. As migration brings Christian migrants from Asia, Africa, and Latin America into the traditional centers of Christianity, it is bringing new life and new questions about what mission is and how it is accomplished.

In this work, we are presenting a new endeavor of the American Society of Missiology. During annual meetings, many professionals, practitioners, and students present informative papers in a variety of different areas. Often these papers are works in progress, not quite ready for publication, or are ideas looking for professional feedback. Sometimes these papers are just areas expressing the many side interests of the presenters. In most of these cases, these works will not be published as formal articles in *Missiology: an International Review* or other academic journals, but they still represent excellent ideas and works in progress that can stimulate the missiological community. To keep these ideas alive and active, the ASM has decided to launch a series of volumes entitled "working papers." These papers have been presented at the annual meeting and the authors have polished them based on feedback received at the annual meeting, however these papers have not been peer-reviewed and should still be read in that light. They represent current

ongoing academic thinking by current and rising missiologists and are presented here to encourage ongoing academic debate and critical thinking in the field of missiology.

Short Term Mission as the Undiscovered Country:

Anthropology and Missiology in the 21st Century

BRIAN M. HOWELL

DOI: 10.7252/Paper.000063

INTRODUCTION

Third wave missions – these contemporary phenomena of decentralized, *ad hoc*, and informal relationships between so-called Western churches and those in places traditionally understood to be the “mission field,” – are unquestionably interesting, perhaps confounding, potentially exciting, and possibly problematic. I originally proposed a paper to explore one aspect of this phenomenon – namely short term mission – and discuss how the practices of STM are contributing to changing conceptions of mission. I will still present part of that argument, but even as I prepared the paper I realized that there is another point emerging from my recent research that goes to the larger question of how we study third wave missions and get a handle on this phenomenon.

I am pleased to be on a panel such as this, in which people have deployed a variety of methods and theoretical frames to explore such diverse and dynamic phenomenon as STM, congregational partnerships, diasporic mission, sister church relationships, and the views of receiving communities on these. At the same time, I want to argue that in order for missiologists to understand these decentralized practices, and more importantly, to dig beneath the surface of explicit attitudes and ideas to the cultural forces at work, we need to employ traditional anthropological field work along with sophisticated cultural theory. Through an example of a church-based short term missions program, I want to demonstrate, first, how the institutional arrangement and cultural context work together in the practices of the congregation to shape the mission theology of the participants. But this ethnographic argument is, for my purposes today, primarily for the purpose of demonstrating how this understanding can only be gained through the kind of close-in ethnographic field work of anthropology interpreted through a theoretical framework that can hold the various influences in view together.

To work through these two aspects of the paper, I’ll start with my research on STM. This is work that has, for the most part, been presented in more detail in my recent book. In my relatively short presentation today, I won’t be able to flesh out the data in detail. What I hope is clear, however, are the ways anthropological theory and ethnographic methods combine to permit an understanding of these phenomena unavailable through other methods and theoretical frameworks.

PART I – STM AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF MISSION

My research on STM grew out of my observations of students at Wheaton College. Many of them had gone on STM trips prior to coming to Wheaton (and many more during their time at Wheaton.) What struck me as I heard them talk about these trips was how similar their narratives were, regardless of where their trips had taken them. Similar phrases – “They were poor but happy,” “I went to serve, but ended up being the one who was served” – were delivered in a narrative of transformation – “It totally changed my life” – that followed a similar narrative arc regardless of the country, and seemingly regardless of the length of the trip.

As I first considered investigating this phenomenon in 2004, I found that there was very little social scientific research on the phenomenon. However, there were fairly large academic literatures on similar forms of travel, namely tourism and pilgrimage that made clear connections between expectations, narratives, and experiences. Throughout these works, scholars have argued that the experiences of travel are subsidiary in their affects to the expectations and narratives produced prior to travel. What constitutes a site/sight for the tourist, or how one is to approach and be affected by a pilgrim shrine, are virtually predetermined through guide books, word of mouth, and media portrayals of the places to which tourists and pilgrims are going (Skinner and Theodossopoulos 2011; Hutnyk 1996; see also, Kaell 2014). What has become clear in the anthropologies of tourism and pilgrimage, then, is that to understand how tourists and pilgrims engage the places they go, and how they interpret the experiences they had while in those places, anthropologists must begin not with the places themselves but with the travelers and the ways these travelers pre-construct their experiences.

It was this idea that guided my own research on short term mission in 2005. I began not by hanging out in the places where short term missionaries traveled, but by being with the short termers before they left. I joined the team before they were a team, going through the interview process, meeting with the team members in their first meeting in Wheaton, and joining them throughout the preparation period. Naturally, I also accompanied the team on the trip and participated in all the post-trip events, as well as re-interviewing them in the year following the trip. But the most formative part of the trip, I argued in the book, was the preparatory phase. And it was not, for the most part, the explicit teaching the students received that most shaped their understanding of the trip of “mission” and their expectations

for the trip. Rather it was the embodied activities in which we engaged. In the complete study, there were a number of events I noted as particularly meaningful. Let me give one of these to illustrate what I mean by the embodied formation that shaped us and our theology in ways that could not be uncovered through distanced research techniques alone.

The Interviews:¹

With the cooperation of a large congregation in Wheaton, I joined in the process of selecting and preparing a team to travel with 12 high school students and four other adults to the Dominican Republic for 13 days in the summer of 2006. In the months prior to our departure, each person who wanted to be part of any team (there were five that summer) went through an interview process.

Unlike job interviews or scholarship competitions, all of us going into the interview were aware that this was less about “selection” and more about forming teams. We knew we were going in to learn about what this process entailed as much as for the interviewers to gain information. For the prospective leaders in particular, it is often difficult to find the necessary number of leaders for these trips. If someone is seen to be utterly unsuitable for leading such a trip, he or she would be discouraged from applying and it is unlikely they would reach the interview stage. Yet the form of the interview varied little, in terms of practice, from what would be expected in a more competitive process. The practice of speaking involved in an interview comprises what linguistic anthropologists refer to as “officializing” discourse. This refers to genres of speech that encode and express “particular orders of knowledge and experience” (Bauman 2000:85) in which the speech and its form serves to reaffirm or re-signify social relations to reflect common cultural understandings and shared context (cf: Csordas 1997:161–163).² In other words,

1 These ethnographic data are taken from *Short Term Mission: An Ethnography of Christian Travel Narrative and Experience* (Howell 2012).

2 The term “genre” is typically applied to forms of written language (e.g., the mystery genre). In linguistic anthropology, however, it has become a more widely applicable term and helpful in understanding the different contexts in which speaking about the trips planned for the GO program took on more cultural significance for those involved. As developed by Mikhail Bakhtin (1985) and others (Bauman 2000; Hanks 1987), the notion of genre includes speech engaging the “emergent elements of here-and-now contextualization” (Bauman 2000: 85) worked out in “particular contacts between the meanings of words and actual concrete reality under certain typical circumstances” (Bakhtin as quoted in Hanks

the conditions of the interview and the performance of our speech made it an important moment in the creation of our experience of STM (what anthropologists call “subjectivity”), as well as profoundly shaping the narratives we would later employ to interpret the trip itself.

In one case I observed, typical of the dozen I participated in, the committee was talking to Rob Wilson, an adult leader applying to lead one of the STM trips. Charlie began, “OK, Rob, this is usually where I ask, why do you want to be a part of [the team]?” After a few more questions more specific to the individual, the chair returned to the interview schedule with the question: “Just give us a sense for where your skills lie or what sort of gifts you think that you could bring to the leadership team. Is it making lists and checking them twice? Or is it working with a student to build an atmosphere of mentoring and discipline and making sure their hearts are in the right place? [...] Or...?”

Rob answered about his skills in carpentry and construction, though he felt his real gifts lay “in the relational side of things,” working with the high school students. In all the interviews in which I participated, the questions followed a similar form: identify your gifts, tell us about your interests in using those gifts, what has been your experience of using those gifts.³ The most consistent element resurfacing in the interviews was the link between “gifts” and “tasks” in the short-term mission endeavor. The majority of the questions turned on the notion of the particular “gifts” an individual brought to the team, and how those gifts should be used in mission work. Sometimes this referred to personality, preferences, and skills that might contribute to the effective functioning of the group. But the language of gifts served to invoke the more specifically Christian language of “gifts” as God-given abilities prominent in evangelical Christian discourse.⁴ In this

1987: 680). In other words, it is not enough to attend to what is being said, but it is necessary to focus on the specific context in which speech is performed and interpreted.

3 I participated in six interviews with prospective GO team leaders, not including my own. The interviews for the students, though there were more of them, were more difficult to negotiate, as I needed to get parental permission prior to my participation. I was only able to participate in five of those. For that reason, I have not made conclusions or drawn as directly from those data. I would argue, however, that the effect of interviewing, as an embodied form and linguistic genre, served to shape the narratives of the high school students as strongly (if not more strongly) as the adults.

4 Though the notion of “spiritual gifts” is often associated with Pentecostal emphases on glossolalia, prophecy and the like, evangelicals have, for many years, used the notion in a less mystical sense. (McQuerry 1979)

way, the interview genre brought together the role of leaders and their activities such as “making lists” with the spiritual call of missionary work and ministry. As interviewees were led to frame their contribution to mission in terms of their gifts, they were led away from personal interest in a place or team, towards a view of themselves as needing to abandon any personal desires for the sake of serving the team.

This process of explicitly sublimating personal desires to the needs of the team is a process similar to what Rebecca Allahyari (2000:4) called “moral selving,” or “a concern for transforming an experience of an underlying moral self, in contrast to a situated identity.” Together with the interview team, the prospective leaders coming to the interview were casting their personal desires as necessarily less important than the needs of the group. Notably, this process of working out the nature of service and the moral self was unlike the volunteers to the social service agencies studied by Allahyari, in that the prospective STM team leaders at WCC were not foregrounding their desire for personal transformation, instead they were articulating a sense of calling, sacrifice, and self-abnegation, in line with the STM narrative.

When I explicitly asked people about their motivations for going on the STM trip, they often cited such goals as “learning about the Dominican Republic” or “spending time with my friends,” but from the beginning, our missionary narrative pushed those aspects of experience out of the frame. That is, learning from or about the people to whom we would travel, building stronger personal relationships, and connecting with those communities was not discouraged or denied as important or valuable; they were simply marginalized from the narrative of mission and the theological significance of our travel. Instead, following the call of God, employing our gifts, serving the long-term missionaries and sharing the gospel (all elements of “real missions”) were central to the interviews. This created a subjectivity of each participant towards the process that made other understandings of the trip difficult. Within the structure of the interview there was not an opportunity for the interviewee to reframe the discourse into areas not opened by the interviewers themselves. The officializing linguistic practice of the interview went in a particular direction, away from aspects of learning from or investing in particular communities, and towards a selfless notion of service. Anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu described this kind of embodied practice of language the “religious field,” in which social and religious practices were organized

(i.e., structured) by leaders and laity working together to create a sense of the real and the possible in their religious lives (Bourdieu 1991). In a statement typical of French poststructuralist prose, Bourdieu argues that

[t]he effect of *consecration* (or legitimation) exercised by *explanation*... causes the system of dispositions toward the natural world and the social world inculcated by conditions of existence to undergo a *change of nature*, in particular transmuting the *ethos* of a system of implicit schemes of action and appreciation into *ethics* as a systematized and rationalized ensemble of explicit norms (1991: 14).

In other words, the act of endorsing, through the interview process, a particular view of one's role and purpose for being on a team (providing relevant gifts for the task ahead) creates a particular posture towards the world (in this case, the STM trip). This posture is not particularly clear to those who adopt it, though it is supported by a seemingly common sense or natural understanding of things.⁵

This practice of developing an understanding of “mission” as equivalent to “service” exists in tension with other views of mission that would include the connection of a person to a particular place or people through language learning, deep relationships, and investment over time. (Incidentally, I think this is why the phrase to “love on” someone has become so popular. To say you are going to “love” someone seems to retain the semantic range implying a relationship and

5 My own interview was a bit different than those of prospective leaders from the congregation. In my case, the committee was asking about my role as an anthropologist and how that might affect the dynamics of the group. Even within that context, however, the group doing the interview was self-consciously aware of the ways in which they saw the interview shaping the subjectivity of the potential participants. The interview began with,

OK, Brian, this is typically where we ask somebody why they want to be a part of the mission trip. And it's where people would say the Holy Spirit has really given me a vision to expose students to world missions, or I really feel called to serve our missionaries. So I'll ask you, why do you want to be part of this [Global Outreach] trip?

Thus, even as I sat explaining the ethnographic method and my interest in the topic, I had the experience of conforming my language to the expectations – or the perceived expectations – of the committee. It was not that I disagreed with these aspects of the motivations, but the embodied process of being interviewed made it more difficult to speak in ways that were not pre-structured to fit into the forms I knew were already part of the format. For those beginning to create narratives for travel, it became a moment in which the “structuring structure” came into play quite strongly, pushing our personal narratives of travel toward a shared ethic of STM (cf. Bourdieu 1980:49).

mutuality. To “love on” someone becomes an act of service, akin to giving a cup of water to someone, where no reciprocity nor time investment is implied. Thus “love on” becomes another activity of mission in which the gifting is non-reciprocal in its intention.) For those who come to experience, and subsequently understand, mission as the abnegation of personal desire, not requiring a relationship with a specific locale, the theology of mission becomes one in which “mission” is defined by acts of service and humanitarian action rather the call to devote one’s life and time to language, cultural learning and the building of relational bonds in a specific community.

I have no doubt that there are a variety of theologies of mission extant in the single church where I did my research, let alone in the North American church generally. My point here is not to make an argument that short term missions or even this particular aspect of STM has transformed mission into a new or singular thing. However, I do argue that the practices of STM are having effects on the theologies of participants (and non-participants) through the practices that are forming them in addition to, and perhaps in opposition to, the teaching they may receive as members of these congregations.

PART II – UNRAVELING THE RELATIONSHIPS OF INSTITUTIONS, PRACTICES AND CULTURE

In his recent work *Desiring the Kingdom*, and even more so in his follow up work *Imagining the Kingdom*, philosopher James K.A. Smith (2009; 2013) drew heavily on anthropological theory (and Pierre Bourdieu in particular), to argue that Christian formation occurs most significantly through those embodied practices most charged with meaning. Through what he terms “cultural liturgies” (which can occur inside and outside the church), he argues that humans in every context are formed into people whose hearts are directed towards particular loves (in an Augustinian sense), that guide our life.

I would extend his argument a bit to note that this not only directs our actions, but also shapes, or even creates, our theologies. Though, like Smith, I do not discount the importance of cognitive work and traditional education in the shaping of categories and frameworks by which we apprehend our world and place in it, I agree with him that the ordering and practicing of these frameworks is governed primarily by the commitments (the “loves”) we have developed through

the embodied practices of life, in particular in those moments most freighted with social, personal, and religious importance. And surely preparations for an STM trip are those freighted moments in which we have a heightened sensitivity to what Geertz (1973:143) famously called the “really real,” the true stuff of life, which is, for the Christian, God’s work and will in the world.

Third wave mission, as a diffuse, decentered, and deterritorialized process of mission creates numerous moments of practice and interaction in which people are bringing together cultural, institutional, and theological resources in new and unpredictable ways. We should ask the question: why did our STM team organize their interview process in the way they did? The reason for the interview process – denoting a climate of seriousness and serving as an “accountability” structure – was evident from interviews with leadership, and could have been ascertained through surveys, but the consequences of the interview process of shaping the mission theology of the participants was only evident through participation, observation, and engagement with the process over time.

If Christian theology generally, and mission theology specifically, is being generated and embraced in these moments of church life, then these are critical places where the missiologist must study these third wave movement phenomena. In order to understand how these processes work to shape and (re)produce Christian life, researchers must be present in the institutionalized moments of cultural production, as well as the informal practices that emerge as cultural liturgies of STM. I am not, of course, discounting the importance of interviews and surveys, both of which were part of my own research, but as I hope this small ethnographic illustration made clear, some of the formative processes at work in third wave mission can only be understood through embodied, ethnographic methods.

At the same time, while the ethnographic method is necessary, it is not sufficient. What must accompany the gathering of these ethnographic data are the theoretical apparatus to make sense of them. While I have leaned heavily on practice theory as read through the work of Bourdieu in this essay, I would not begin to suggest that this is the pinnacle of contemporary theory or should necessarily provide the analytical scaffolding for all our missiological research. I agree, however, with Michael Rynkeiwich that there is a great need for missiologists to engage the contemporary theory extant in anthropology in order to engage the sorts of phenomena most interesting and important in the church today.

Theoretically, missiology has been, as Rynkeiwich said, “steeped in functionalism and focused on symbol and ritual” (2011:153). This has led some missiology to continue to frame culture largely in terms of bounded locality and public alterity. While this has yielded some extraordinary research for the church today, as Robert Schreiter and others have noted, culture is primarily about networks, not locations; culture is a process rather than a possession (see Howell and Williams Paris 2012: Chapter 2). Grappling with issues of power, globalization, and inequality is not only about applying the methods of participant observation and ethnography to diverse contexts, but also grappling theoretically with these contexts in new ways, continuing to problematize the units of analysis, and engaging multiple conversation partners in theology, philosophy, history, and throughout the diverse discipline of anthropology.

Third Wave Mission represents a creative fluorescence of the church. No question there exists in these diverse movements promise and peril for the church of Christ. In order for missiologists to understand the dynamics of change represented by these diffuse and dynamic phenomena, we need research and theory that can holistically interpret and understand the wider contexts and particular agency at work. Only by bringing missiological research into an invigorated conversation with contemporary anthropological theory and method can we truly begin to unpack the new wave of missionary energy at work in the church today.

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Training for the Third Wave of Mission:

A Catholic Perspective

MIKE GABLE & MIKE HAASL

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What we hope to do is to:

- Do a brief review of what “Mission in the 3rd Wave” means.
- Recognize its potential and challenges.
- Share how Catholic tradition informs a way forward for the 3rd Wave.
- Initiate dialogue about new formation process some Catholic practitioners new formation process some Catholic practitioners are putting forth to address some of the challenges for Mission in the 3rd Wave.

For centuries, mission was the work of a chosen few. With the emphasis on the laity in the Second Vatican Council, and the Decree on Mission Activity of the Church (*Ad Gentes*) in 1965 which stated that “the pilgrim church is missionary by its very nature,” mission was determined to be something that all Christians are called to by virtue of their baptism.¹

And now, since the 1980’s, short-term mission trips and parish or diocesan twinning relationships, whereby Christians in parishes and congregations directly engage with peoples and countries from another part of the world, have increasingly been a part of the U.S. Christian mission landscape. This has been true for Catholics as well as Protestants.

In his keynote address at the Maryknoll Centennial Theological Symposium in Chicago in October, 2011 Fr. Robert Schreiter established a continuity of this new form of short-term mission and partnerships with earlier forms of mission. He described how, over the course of history, the extent and shape of mission has always been greatly influenced by the infrastructural capacity of exchange (as he defines “globalization”) surrounding it and argued that mission, at least in the West, has been shaped by three distinct waves of globalization.²

The first wave, in the 1500’s was the Portuguese and Spanish exploration of distant lands, as the development of better ships and of instruments for determining a ship’s position were improved. Mission accompanied the explorers and traders. The second wave occurred in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries after the

1 *Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church (Ad Gentes)*, 1965.

2 *The Future of Mission Ad Gentes in a Global Context*, Robert Schreiter, Maryknoll Centennial Theological Symposium in Chicago in October, 2011. Schreiter defines globalization as “any qualitative leaps in the possibility of commercial trade or other forms of exchange that opens up a social group to the wider world.”

emergence of liberal democracies in the Age of Mobilization and arose with the invention of the steam engine which revolutionized sea and land travel, and the invention of the telegraph. The shape of this mission was national mission-sending societies each with its distinctively national flavor. Enhanced by the engagement of laity after the Second Vatican Council, mission of the second wave continues today.

Schreiter argued that the third wave of globalization in recent years, with the advent of the Internet, instant e-mail communication, cell phones reaching even the most remote villages, has resulted in an unimaginable compression of time and space. In this context, multitudes of Catholics from many dioceses, parishes, schools and universities in our country have taken up the challenge to engage in mission, now directly with parishes, dioceses, schools, universities, and other entities all over the globe.

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF MISSION IN THE THIRD WAVE

First, it is helpful to be aware of the two distinct forms of Mission in the Third Wave. In the *short-term mission model*, missionaries travel in small groups, to a place outside of their usual socio-cultural and geographical context, often to an economically challenged place, (a “crossing of borders” of some kind) for a *one-time, short duration trip*. The purposes of these short-term mission trips vary, but generally the main purpose is to 1) do some kind of “service” work, 2) expose people to different socio-economic conditions and/or cultures (and, for some, to expose how U.S. policies affect the local people), and/or 3) to build a kind of “connectedness” with people of other places/cultures/socio-economic groups.

The *partnership model* (also known as twinning or “sister parish/sister diocese”) involves one community maintaining an on-going long-term relationship (often for decades) with another community of a different socio-cultural context. The main purpose of these partnerships is similar to those noted for short-term mission. These partnerships often involve group visits to the partnering community for usually 1-2 weeks. With an ongoing connection, members of the U.S. community often make multiple visits to their partnering parishes (sometimes dozens) and can form deep and trusting friendships. These partnerships can also involve reciprocal visits, whereby people from the outside community travel to the U.S. community for visits.

By definition, the time spent in the community is very short in comparison to earlier forms of mission. For the short-term mission model, it may be difficult to really get to know the people well, although that issue is somewhat mitigated in the partnership model with multiple visits, ongoing e-mails and phone calls between visits.

Another major difference with the first two waves of mission in the Catholic approach to mission, is that whereas the earlier waves involved a more unified and structured engagement, the Third Wave relationships often arise “organically” at the grassroots, which is to say, they may occur as a result of a personal connection between one person from one country or culture to one person or entity of another country, who then invite others in their parish to engage with the distant community. There is often no connection to a larger institutional entity which might be attentive to larger, regional concerns (e.g., a parish, without connection to the diocese, etc.)

POTENTIAL FOR GOOD

The potential for good in this Third Wave of Mission is immense. Participation in God’s mission to bring about good and build the sense of solidarity is more accessible to the followers of Christ than at any time in the history of the Church. It is a new moment fraught with possibility!

For one thing, the Third Wave of Mission engages far larger numbers of missionaries than in the previous two waves. Whereas, about 6,000 Catholics per year were engaged directly in mission of the second wave in 2005 (and note that that has dropped to 3400 by 2009)³, Robert Priest reported that over 1.6 million U.S. adults and 2 million youth went on short term mission trips in 2005---probably at least a fourth of them Catholics. That is a factor of well over 100 times more Catholics participating in mission in the Third Wave of Mission. With regard to partnerships, a safe estimate is that 2,000 of the 19,000 U.S. Catholic parishes are engaged in parish partnerships, and the number continues to grow as other parishes become familiar with the idea and make their own connections. Moreover, in both types of this Third Wave of Mission, the experience of face-to-face engagement with people of other countries is often shared widely with other parish or school

3 *U.S. Catholic Mission Handbook: Mission Inventory 2008-2009*, U.S. Catholic Mission Association, 2010.

community members. The awareness and experience of mission has become very familiar to many Catholics. “Mission” is now something that many Catholics “in the pews” routinely do. This is very new for us Catholics.

In an increasingly secular, fragmented and struggling world, mission is a very relevant and meaningful engagement, and a hopeful expression of their faith.

The Third Wave of Mission has great potential for the building up of a more human, more connected, more equitable and a more just and peaceful world, that is, *seeking the reign of God*.

POTENTIAL FOR HARM, AND CHALLENGES

However, just as with the earlier waves, mission occurs within its cultural context. The earlier waves of mission largely occurred in the context of colonization whereby the expansion of the Church resulted in terrible harm to local peoples and cultures. This legacy requires that we ask of mission in the Third Wave, are similar dispositions still operative? We observe that well-intended people, born into a can-do and problem-solving cultural context themselves, many having grown up a uniform culture of white privilege, sometimes enter into another culture in situations of experiences of desperate poverty with a “hero” mindset, to “help those poor people,” “fixing” and “doing” often without seriously knowing or consulting with the local people. [Or they consult, but are unaware that the cultural context calls for the locals to affirm when they really don’t agree with the missionaries’ plans.] This points to an unwitting paternalistic attitude similar to those found in the first two waves. The language of “first world” vs. “third world” and “developing” vs. “developed” betray these unwitting attitudes. In his book *Toxic Charity*, Robert Lupton, documents the dependency created by so many of these well-intended short-mission trips.⁴

Ever since the third wave has emerged spontaneously and organically in Catholic parishes in the 1980’s, there has been virtually no institutional oversight. The U. S. Bishops have mentioned parish twinning in their 1997 document *Called*

4 Robert D. Lupton, *Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those they Help (and How to Reverse It)*, New York: HarperOne, 2011.

to *Global Solidarity*⁵ and call parishes to engage in ways that are not paternalistic and do not create dependency. But many of those engaged in parish twinning or short-term mission are not even aware of this document. They engage with little oversight from their pastors, but that point is moot, since the pastors themselves have had little formation in the task and challenges of global mission.

This situation is far from the kind of dignity and oneness of the Reign of God that mission calls us to.

RECOVERING CATHOLIC CONTEXT

A few years ago, a small group of Catholic missionaries who have been engaged in preparing and accompanying Catholics in the Third Wave of Mission came together to reflect on the potential and challenges of the emerging Third Wave of Mission that was exploding around us. We concluded that given the technology and possibility for travel, and the organic nature of the movement, it was not going away and we simply could not ignore it. Moreover we recognized the potential as described above. We decided what was called for was some formation in sound practices. We recognized that within our own tradition—a body of documents referred to as modern Catholic Social Teaching and post-Vatican II missiology---there were a wealth of principles that could be gleaned and made accessible to those leading and engaging in the Third Wave of Mission which could help to shape healthy mission relationships.

The fundamental principle of all Catholic Social Teaching is that of the *dignity of the human person* and its call for deep *respect*. This can be summed up in an often-used quote by Max Warren: “Our first task in approaching another people, another culture, another religion is to take off our shoes, for the place we are standing on is holy, else we may find we are treading on men’s dreams. More serious still, we may forget that God was here before our arrival.” Deriving from that deep respect is both the idea of *mutuality* and the importance for each person to have the opportunity to express their voice---hence the call to *participation* in community. In addition, with the papacy of Pope John Paul II, the expression *global solidarity* emerged as a strong part of Catholic Social Teaching, calling all people to support one another’s struggle for justice for the long term, regardless

5 *Called to Global Solidarity: International Challenges for U.S. Parishes*, U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops, 1997.

of nationality, race or ethnicity. The Latin American Bishops at their meeting in Medellin in 1968, with the help of Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez, responded to the gospel call to take the “*option for the poor*” and to do *social analysis* as a way to identify the sources of poverty and injustice. And like the Hebrew prophets Isaiah and Amos, they were not afraid to *prophetically challenge powerful structures* as sources of that oppression. At the invitation of Archbishop Oscar Romero, the U. S. Catholic and many other Christian Churches assumed a *model of accompaniment, solidarity and mutual evangelization* as Christian witness. This idea of mutual evangelization can be summed up in the quote by the Australian aboriginal woman Lily Walker: “If you come here to help me, then you are wasting your time. But if you come here because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us begin.”

These principles derived from Catholic Social Teaching provide a solid foundation for shaping the Third Wave of Mission, but they are not well known among many Catholics involved in Third Wave Mission, beyond a vague, general sense of trying to “do good.” Therefore, this group of Catholics decided to try to establish a Third Wave of Mission Institute which could develop and deliver the formation needed for this growing movement.

At the current time, eight 45-minute modules are being developed in the following areas:

1. Overview of the Missioning Process [preparation; insertion/reflection; re-entry integration]
2. Mission History and Theology [including scriptural roots; also noting colonial context]
3. Relationships at the Center of Mission [focus on openness, presence, transformation leading to ongoing commitment to social justice and solidarity]
4. Intercultural competencies [respect plus address questions of power; communication]
5. Mission Spirituality [humility, walking with]
6. Inter-religious and ecumenical Dialogue [methods of better listening and dialogue]
7. Partnership Principles [accompaniment; mutual planning/decision-making; sustainable human development, avoiding dependency]
8. Tools for Re-entry and Integration [keeping experience alive, remaining faithful for long term efforts of solidarity]

As we develop and implement our Third Wave modules, we would expect that participants would grow out of pre-Vatican II heroic models of mission where

visitors and missionaries came from the Global North to supposedly “fix” and “save” those in the Global South. We would now expect our participants to mature into more humble Christians who are more willing to learn from and be re-evangelized by our sisters and brothers of other cultures near and far. Why not seek the reign of God as mutual partners in faith?

We imagine our participants becoming aware of social analysis to understand the deeper causes of solutions of poverty and oppression. We presume they would respectfully dialogue with the people that they visit, and develop long-term friendships of solidarity with them. Ultimately we anticipate that our participants would connect with their local diocesan social justice offices and join advocacy organizations like Bread for the World so as to eliminate the causes of hunger and poverty for the long term. For example, there are many in my archdiocese of Cincinnati who have made immersion trips and are involved in parish twinning relationships who are now visiting their congresspersons on a wide range of issues like immigration and food-aid reform.

At the current time, our plan is to make these modules accessible on the Internet for leaders and participants. As they become known and more formation is sought, more could be provided.

CONCLUSION

The Third Wave of Mission has both immense potential, as well as serious concerns and challenges. With adequate formation we believe these challenges can be overcome, and the immense potential for good of the Third Wave of Mission can be unleashed. Our hope is that through the learning and utilization of this formation, Mission of the Third Wave will achieve its potential. We hope that it will engage U. S. Catholics with the global church in a way that will lead to a more just and compassionate world--a world where every individual's gifts and talents are valued, where each achieves his or her God-given potential and creates a caring global community where all cultures are respected and valued.

We invite the reaction and input of participants of this American Society of Missiology. Possibly the Holy Spirit will urge us to some form some type of on-going Third Wave network among ourselves for our mutual development as we seek God's reign together.

McAloo Partnernships

Reflections On Contemporary Indo - American Intercultural Missional Partnerships

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INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly globalized world, with a heightened sense of interconnectedness and interdependency, intercultural partnership has become the buzzword, particularly in the political and corporate realms. Barack Obama, the president of United States, during his visit to India in 2010, spoke at the combined session of the two houses of parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha) on the close partnership between the two largest democracies in the world. He called the Indo-American relationship “one of the defining partnerships of the 21st century” (Obama 2010).

Partnership has been a major theme of discussion in the church for a long period of time. However, there has been a fresh revisiting of the topic in the light of the emerging global and local realities, the rise of Southern Christianity, as well as the exponential increase in intercultural partnerships and short term missions. In the United States, from 1998 to 2005, the number of churches and mission agencies claiming that partnership is now a primary method for engaging in global missions has incredibly increased by 6900 percent (Lederleitner 2010:206). The number of short term “missionaries” grew from 120,000 in 1989 to 2,200,000 in 2006, and Americans spent an astounding \$1,600,000,000 on short term missions in 2006 alone (Corbett & Fikkert 2009:161).

In the Indian missions scenario, there are divergent views and perspectives regarding its relation with the western churches, mission agencies and charitable institutions. (I have used the term West and Western to refer to Euro-America in colonial times and primarily America in the contemporary era.) During my research for my PhD thesis regarding the persecution of the church in India, I asked many key Christian leaders how they viewed partnering with the West, and if such partnerships help or hurt them. I received a wide range of answers. While many expressed partnership with the West as a positive phenomenon if managed well, there are others who said it hurts, particularly if it leads to financial dependency and cultural domination, which will in turn hinder effective inculturation of the gospel in the Indian context.

There have been other research attempts into this issue. For example, Frampton Fox, in his research on foreign monetary support and dependency,

enumerates four categories of responses from Indian mission leaders – from least to most supportive of use of foreign funds – even though almost all of them were positive about receiving monetary assistance from abroad (Fox 2006: 140,141).

This article primarily draws information from my research data as well as my experiences in the Indian missions community, as a trainer of field missionaries and professor of missiological anthropology. I have used the term “McAloo Partnership” to denote the Indo-American intercultural missional partnership efforts, as “McAloo” is a type of burger introduced by McDonalds in India – a “contextualized” vegetarian version of McChicken (“aloo” means potato) that combines the American enterprise and Indian ethos.

In this article, I shall highlight some key issues regarding partnership between American and Indian churches and mission agencies, and also posit three positions or paradigms of partnership – ethnocentric exclusivity, subservient dependency, and intentional interdependency. Finally, I shall present the biblical ideal of church as the body of Christ as a model for effective interdependent intercultural partnership.

DO WE NEED THIS DEADLY DANCE?

More than 100 years ago, a South Indian Tamil Christian from the Tirunelveli region created much consternation in the historic World Missionary Conference, held at Edinburg in 1910. Azariah – probably the most influential Indian Christian leader in the first half of the 20th century – concluded his speech at the conference with these words, “Through all the ages to come the Indian Church will rise up in gratitude to attest the heroism and self-denying labors of the missionary body. You have given your goods to feed the poor. You have given your bodies to be burned. We ask for love. Give us friends” (Neill 1962:16).

This talk created such a stir, that an informal meeting was held to discuss the issue and the young Indian speaker. Azariah would later become the first Indian Anglican Bishop and his diocese of Dornakal grew from 50,000 to 250,000 in 30 years under his stewardship. As a result of this exponential church growth, he was involved in an ongoing controversy with Mahatma Gandhi over the issue of conversion, who also considered Azariah as his “Number One Enemy” (Harper 2000:7).

Though relatively unknown to the wider world when he made that speech, he boldly pointed to the Western missionary movement and its leaders that in spite of their great sacrificial service for the Lord, the local indigenous Christians often felt unloved and marginalized as they were not treated equally. They were perceived and paternalized as children and not as friends and partners in the gospel, their contribution reduced to a mere footnote in the annals of the accomplishment of Western missionaries, while the best among the local Christians were showcased as triumphalistic trophies of the Western missionary movement.

A century has gone by and much water has flowed in the Ganges. The context has dramatically changed and the center has shifted – from North to South – ushering in a new matrix for missions, but the issues raised by Azariah are still pertinent for the global church.

American missiologist Miriam Adeney narrates a story, which she had heard from an African Christian leader, that highlights partnership with American mission agencies. The story goes like this:

An elephant and mouse were good friends. One day, the elephant said, “Mouse, let’s have a party.” Animals came from far and near. They ate and drank, sang and danced. And nobody celebrated more exuberantly than the elephant. After the party was over, the elephant exclaimed, “Mouse, did you ever go to a better party? What a blast!” But the mouse did not answer. “Where are you?” the elephant called. Still there was no answer. Then he shrank back in horror. There at his feet lay the mouse; his body ground to the dirt, smashed by the exuberance of his friend, the elephant. The mission leader then said, “Sometimes that is what it is like to do mission with you Americans. It is like dancing with the elephants” (Corbett & Fikkert 2009:161,162).

Often, both Western and non-Western friends of mine object to this story. The Western ones feel that they are portrayed unfairly as if they are solely responsible for the whole problem. Some non-Western friends object to using this story as it portrays America as the dominant one (“elephant”) and the non-Western missions as a weakling (“mouse”), which may then reinforce the hegemony of the West in Christian missions. Both are legitimate concerns. However, I believe that in spite of all the talks regarding the shift in power from North to South, this analogy is valid as America still continues to define and dominate Christian missions in the key realms of ideas, institutions, and resources, particularly finance.

According to Todd Johnson, one of the key trends of contemporary global missions is that while Christianity has shifted from North to South demographically, it is still under the grip of Western influence. He quotes Moonjang Lee, “Though we talk about a post-Christian West and post-Western Christianity, the prevailing forms of Christianity in most parts of the non-Western world are still dominated by Western influences” (Johnson 2010:165).

While a century ago, Azariah asked for love and friendship from Western Christians, this African leader seems to suggest that friendship with elephants will lead to the demise of many mice. If so, is it necessary to partner with American Christians? Do we really need this deadly dance?

Based on this story, it is possible to take two extreme positions regarding partnership. The first position is this: Fearing getting trampled by the elephant, the mouse cuts off its friendship with the elephant, flees from it and lives in its own hole. Like this mouse, some would like to cut off all kinds of cooperation and collaboration with the West, which can lead to an unhealthy, ingrown Christianity. I call this position *ethnocentric exclusivity*. There is also another form of *ethnocentric exclusivity* where the self-sufficient elephant feels that it does not need the mouse and can dance on its own.

The second extreme position is this: The mouse lives in a slavish dependent relationship with the elephant, willing to dance to the elephant’s tune, even at the expense of its own identity and dignity. It turns into a parasite on the pachyderm, and survives by sucking its blood. I call this *subservient dependency*.

There is a third position, which I call *intentional interdependency*. In this story, all the blame is usually placed on the bigfoot, and the elephant is portrayed as the villain and the mouse as the victim, which I think is unfair. For this strange alliance to succeed, both the elephant and the mouse need to understand and accept themselves and each other, which involves loving, listening, and learning. Each must accept their own identity as well as incarnationally identify with the other and be willing to accommodate them so that together they can master the moves that will enable them to effectively dance without dominating or damaging the other.

Let us briefly take a closer look at these three positions – ethnocentric exclusivity, subservient dependency and intentional interdependency.

I. ETHNOCENTRIC EXCLUSIVITY

In the Indian mission context, while many may not go to the extreme of totally cutting off their relations with their western counterpart, still there is a considerable degree of apprehension about partnering with Western churches, mission agencies, and charitable institutions due to the following reasons.

Breeds Dependency

Too much reliance on the West, particularly for monetary purposes, can lead to slavish dependency, which can result in the loss of one's own identity and dignity. Fearing this tendency, there are many mission agencies that do not receive funds from abroad for their missional purposes, as a policy, even though they are open to partnership in other areas. For instance, the Friends Missionary Prayer Band, a South India-based Indian mission agency with nearly 2000 workers has an annual budget of 56 crores rupees (nearly 10 million US dollars – 1 dollar equals 60 rupees), and almost all their money is raised from Indians, both living in India and abroad. There are many such organizations in India, who as a matter of policy, receive money only from Indians.

Hinders Effective Inculturation

Dependency dehumanizes persons as it reduces a partner to a parasite. An anemic, parasitic church is forced (or sometimes it willingly obliges) to submit to the dictates and domination of the West and to adopt its agenda and strategy, which may not be relevant in the Indian context, thereby seriously endangering its indigeneity.

Reinforces the Stereotyping of the Indian Church

Partnership and close identification with the West tend to reinforce the stereotyping of Indian Christianity as a western religion and the Indian Church as a western subversive agent intent on destroying Indic religions, desecrating Indian culture(s) and destabilizing the nation.

Leads to Moral Corrosion

There are many incidents in India where money from the West has been misused or abused. Recently, some of the highest officials of the Church of South India were indicted and punished by Indian courts for swindling Tsunami relief funds from the West. Also, some Indian Christian leaders with western connections – some of them who study and return from the U.S or who go there often for fundraising – tend to create little Americas in their own contexts through their affluent lifestyle and owning prime properties. These islands of prosperity in a vast ocean of poverty create a barrier between the leader and other Indian Christians and also brings criticism from non-Christians.

Prior Bad Experiences

Some of the prior bad experiences of dancing with the elephants can lead to severing relations and partnerships with the Western agencies and churches.

I believe, all these concerns are legitimate and adequate caution and utmost care needs to be employed in our partnerships with the West.

The other form of ethnocentric exclusivity is probably far more dangerous and debilitating to true partnership. If the first one was caused by fear – fear of being run over by the dominant other and losing one’s identity and dignity – this is inspired by pride, where the haughty elephant tends to look down upon the mouse and decides to go solo. It is a form of Christianity that is self-centered and self-contained and sees no need to learn or receive from anyone outside its fold. Sometimes Western Christianity comes across as if it needs nothing to learn from others, particularly non-Western Christians, just like the T-shirt of a man I saw in Chennai airport, which loudly proclaimed, “I Believe in Myself – No Cautions, No Suggestions, No Instructions, No Advice.”

The unwillingness to receive and learn from the other is evident from the fact that many western churches are still shaped by social Darwinism and driven by the mono-directional, mono-cultural understanding of missions, which belonged to the colonial era. Even though there has been a lot of talk in seminary and mission circles regarding multi-directional missions, “from everywhere to everywhere.” I truly wonder how much of that has percolated into the American churches. How many American churches, that send a vast number of short term mission teams,

sometimes kids and youth, to “minister” in the non-western world are willing to listen and learn from non-western voices? Frecia Johnson raises this issue and calls for “Reciprocal Contextualization,” as she writes,

The purpose of such reciprocity is to create respect for and recognition in the home churches and training institutions of the value of the perspectives of the receiving peoples ... What have the missionaries and their home constituencies learned about God and His works from the receiving peoples? (Johnson 2005:481)

Unfortunately, for some there is nothing worthwhile to learn from some parts of the world. Franky Schaeffer in his foreword for the book *The Gandhi Nobody Knows* by Richard Greneir, arrogantly questions if there is anything or anyone from India from whom western Christians can learn. In responding to an article in *Christianity Today*, on the title “Learning from Gandhi: Does Western Christianity have anything to learn from the Hindu who learned so much from Christ,” Schaeffer states, “There are undoubtedly regions of the world from which we do indeed have something to learn, but India? Hinduism?” (Schaeffer 1983:vii,viii).

These two forms of ethnocentric exclusive positions, whether inspired by fear or pride, are undesirable, at least for three reasons: biblical, anthropological and practical.

(i) Biblical

The Bible portrays the Church as the body of Christ with both local and global dimensions. The Christian leaders, whom I interviewed, who had a positive attitude towards partnering with Western Christians repeatedly invoked the biblical idea of church as the body of Christ as their main reason for partnership. They said that no matter what, we cannot cut off ourselves from the other because we belong to the same body, with Christ as the Head. The parts of the body may vary in their shapes, sizes, and utility, but all are interconnected and interdependent. Ethnocentric exclusivity overlooks the fact that all followers of Christ, as the body of Christ, are intricately and irretrievably interwoven with one another.

(ii) Anthropological

An ethnocentric exclusive position is undesirable, just as is extreme cultural relativism in the field of anthropology. It hinders meaningful relationships with the ‘other’, which will also stunt the potential for growth. In any culture, we need both the *emic* (insider) and *etic* (outsider) viewpoints. While the *emic* view is essential, the *etic* view is also needed as cultures can develop blind spots and fresh eyes are needed to locate them. This is highlighted by a Chinese proverb, “If you want to know what water is, don’t ask the fish” (Zacharias 2000:ix). We need each other to become better, wholesome followers of Christ by listening and learning from one another. A note of caution – while the *etic* view is needed, adequate care should be taken so that it does not muffle or mute the *emic* views and voices.

(iii) Pragmatic

In an increasingly globalized world, where interconnectedness and interdependency is the order of the day in the economic, political, and technological realms, the ethnocentric exclusive position becomes untenable from a pragmatic point of view. Organizational anthropologist Geert Hofstede writes that in the light of many global challenges facing humankind, “intercultural cooperation has become a prime condition for the survival for humankind” (Hofstede *et al* 2010:426).

II. SUBSERVIENT DEPENDENCY

In the Indian mission context, subservient dependency is common, particularly in the realm of finance. I shall briefly highlight how dependency in the area of money and technology can mar true partnership.

Money Matters

Money matters do matter a lot. Jesus spoke more about it than any other issue and there are at least 2,350 verses in scripture that deal with money and resources (Lederlaitner 2010:101).

During my research, many of the Christian leaders were vocal and vehement in expressing their reservation for receiving money from the West. There are some, however, who said that it is better to receive monetary help only for

socio-economic projects for the poor and marginalized and not for evangelistic purposes. There are still others who said that there is nothing wrong to receive fund for mission efforts within the government prescribed legal parameters, as other religious groups and charitable organizations also receive western help.

Money is needed, but it is not everything. While I personally do not object to receiving funds, with proper accountability and monitoring structures and also within the legal parameters set by the government, I would like to highlight some of the unhealthy practices in today's mission scenario due to an overemphasis and improper handling of finances.

Purse Strings and Puppet Strings

If not handled carefully, receiving money can lead to subservient dependency of the Indian churches upon the American churches and mission agencies, which will also subjugate them to their domination. The hands that hold the purse strings also tend to control the puppet strings, thereby reducing persons and partners into mere puppets. In a partnership, when dollar is valued more than people and rupee is exalted at the expense of relationships, then such a partnership is neither biblical nor desirable from a kingdom perspective. Also, the deification of the dollar can lead to the pathetic prostration of Indian Christian missions at the feet of the West.

Dependency and Cultural Insensitivity

Financial dependency also makes some Christian leaders – both American and Indian – to indulge in practices that may be culturally insensitive and detrimental to Indian missions.

A good friend of mine who is also a mission trainer recently confided to me that a teaching material developed by an American pastor was sent to their organization to find out if they would teach it to Indian Christians, and that Americans would pay the bill for running the program. The first illustration in the material was related to an incident in the field of baseball. My friend expressed his apprehension to them saying that he himself, who has visited and studied in America, does not understand baseball and hence the other Indian pastors definitely would not understand it. So he enquired if he could modify the illustration to suit

the Indian audience. The answer was a big ‘no,’ and that he should neither change baseball or even the name of the person in the illustration. So his organization rejected the offer. When I pointed out that in India there will always be takers if the price is right, even if his organization has done the right thing by rejecting the offer, he said another famous institution gave in to their demands and are now running the program.

Unfortunately, in many cases, there is not much concern if the material is suitable to the audience or culturally relevant to the context. Too often, there seems to be a willingness to bend backwards to accommodate Western workers and teaching materials. The reason is not necessarily the content of the course material but the Western contact and the money factor. For the right price, it seems that there are some Indian Christians who may be willing to even translate the American phone directory into the vernacular, and teach it as a course and send reports (of course with photos!) to the West saying that it was a blessing to many.

In the Indian mission context, there seems to be an affinity for mission strategies that emanate from overseas. Uncritical acceptance and uncontextualized application of some of these mission strategies and mega movements – that seem to originate from the classrooms of California or boardrooms of Boston – may have serious ramifications for the future of Christian missions in India.

Some mission programs are often conceived and executed in a militaristic manner by “mapping” the local area, fixing “targets” and conducting “campaigns.” The militarization of Christian rhetoric is particularly offensive for people living in countries that have experienced colonial subjugation. Unfortunately, many Indian Christians do not look into these issues critically or they choose to keep quiet due to their over-dependency on the West for their resources.

Donors must also be missiologically educated, as there have been many instances in India, of donors (including Indian donors) insisting on contributing something or building a church in a particular pattern, which may not be compatible to that particular cultural context. Yet the donor’s dictates are diligently followed lest they offend them and lose out on their resources. A mission leader of one of India’s largest mission agencies told me that a South Indian sponsor was willing to donate money to build a bell tower in a church in Punjab. However, this leader, who is anthropologically well-informed, objected to it, saying that one should not needlessly introduce something (like a church bell) that does not exist in that

culture. But the promotional director of the agency insisted on building the bell tower and said, “If we don’t get the money and build it, another agency will do it and we will lose the donor and the money.”

Hi-Tech Dependency

Dependency is also created due to the importation and implementation of technology that may not be relevant in a particular culture. One of the key factors for the dependency of mission movements in the two-thirds world on Western powers is that they have unfortunately imbibed the Western values of viewing mission as a capital-intensive, technology-driven, entrepreneurial enterprise, where efficiency and time-bound results are glorified.

Rene Padilla cautions against the Americanized “culture Christianity” and its obsession with numbers and technology;

In order to gain the greatest number of followers, it is not enough for “culture Christianity” to turn the gospel into a product; it also has to distribute it among the greatest number of consumers of religion. For this the twentieth century has provided it with the perfect tool – technology. The strategy for the evangelization of the world thus becomes a question of mathematical calculation (1985:16,17).

American missiologist Charles Taber highlights how this inordinate obsession with technology has facilitated dependency in missions;

So efficiency requires the maximum use of advance technical devices – all aimed at saving time. And this begins to affect our attitude towards all reality. Is the task evangelism? We immediately think of money for travel, honoraria, media, printing bills, rental of facilities.... We quite literally lack the capability to imagine doing things other than this capital-intensive, technology-intensive way. And we bring these ideas along wherever we do the Lord’s work. Even where technology is inordinately expensive. Even where believers are all but destitute. And even where the most abundant resource is willing minds, willing hands. Soon, however, it becomes apparent that local Christians can’t pick up the tab. And because

they also lack the know-how to operate the system, we end up taking over (quoted in Adeney, 2003:86).

To minimize this dependency, Miriam Adeney gives us few insightful questions to ask ourselves when involved in “culturally-sensitive transformation” in cross-cultural situations:

- (i). Does the project fit with local worldviews, concepts, and values?
- (ii). Does the project fit with local social structure?
- (iii). Does the project fit with local economic resources? (2003:96-102)

Short Term Visits and Long Term Victims

The exponential rise of short term missions in contemporary missions has facilitated closer and deeper relations in many inter-cultural partnerships. However, short term visitation by teams can also lead to long term victimization of the hosts if it is not handled correctly. While most Indians are good hosts and very hospitable, many may not disclose their discomfort or correct the shortcomings of the short term teams due to cultural factors (like saving face, being a gracious host, etc.) as well as pragmatic concerns like fear of losing the monetary benefits.

Recently a group of Christians from an Asian country landed in an Indian city. They went to a temple and started to prayer-walk around it. A friend of mine gently reprimanded and reminded them that this could cause serious trouble for the local Christian community. This zealous group of young people, who could hardly converse in English or in the local language, would create serious conflicts and then leave for the safe confines of their home country. The backlash will be borne by Indian Christians. What we need today is common sense, prayerful people with insights, rather than praying at non-Christian religions sites.

Within India, I have heard repeated complaints from both indigenous and cross-cultural witnesses serving in North India regarding big groups of South Indian sponsors visiting their area of work, which creates not only logistical problems but also implants suspicion in the minds of the local community. When they share this problem with their leaders, they tend not to listen because of their financial dependency on these sponsors.

In Gujarat, a cross-cultural witness had developed very good rapport with the local people and had bought a place to build a church. However, a big group of people from South India, who were supposed to sponsor the church building, visited this site. The next day, when the worker went there, the very local people who were favorable to him previously, beat him up. He told me that this big group created a suspicion in the minds of the people and hence they turned hostile.

III. INTENTIONAL INTERDEPENDENCY

While one must be cautious to avoid the two extreme positions, ethnocentric exclusivity and subservient dependency, the third position, intentional interdependency, enables us to have partnerships that are biblically compatible, culturally relevant, and practically useful. The biblical ideal of the church as the body of Christ helps us to better understand this intentional interdependent partnership.

The Body of Christ

The Bible portrays many metaphors to help us understand different dimensions of the church, so that we can arrive at a holistic picture of what a church is. One of the metaphors, which I think is pertinent to the issue of partnership, is that of the church as the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:12-31).

As mentioned earlier, during my research, many of the key leaders in India said that there must be positive relations between the Indian and Western churches as we all belong to the body of Christ. As the research was focused primarily on Gujarat, I believe the mercantile ethos and the widespread diaspora of the Gujarati community all across the globe may also be a factor for the positive view of the Gujarati Christian leaders regarding partnering with Western churches.

What was interesting, however, was the theological justification they gave for such a partnership with their Western counterparts by repeatedly invoking the biblical metaphor of the church as the body of Christ. This theme of being part of the local and global body of Christ would be raised repeatedly in my interviews with my research participants.

The Church as Swadeshi (local) and Sarvadeshi (universal)

In the light of the ongoing discussion about the partnership between Indian and Western churches, it is imperative to emphasize that the Church is truly glocal, with both local (particular) and global (universal) dimensions. The church in India has both a unique expression in its local context (of course, even within India, there are multiple unique expressions based on the local contexts) and also has a universal presence as it belongs to a wider community of people as well.

C. V. Mathew writes, “Christian church is always both a universal (*sarvadeshi*) and local (*swadeshi*) entity. If one is nullified, the other becomes meaningless and the Church ceases to be the Church” (2002:58). Andrew Walls points to the “indigenous” and “pilgrim” dimensions of Christians, which highlight both the rootedness of the gospel in a particular culture and also the translatability and universality of the gospel in all cultures. He writes,

Just as the indigenizing principle, itself rooted in the Gospel, associates Christians with the *particulars* of their culture and group, the pilgrim principle, in tension with the indigenizing and equally of the Gospel, by associating them with things and people outside the culture and group, is in some respects a *universalizing* factor (2006:9).

These two dimensions have to be kept in tension and an overemphasis on any one may result in a distorted notion of a biblical view of the church. On the basis of the biblical metaphor of the church as the body of Christ, I believe we cannot cut ourselves off from the global dimension of the church and we must have a dynamic partnership based on equality, integrity, and interdependency. However, the danger is that if the local dimension is not adequately rooted in the native soil, and if the global dimension tends to dominate the local expressions, then the church will lose its authenticity and will be seen as foreign and alien in the local context.

The biblical paradigm of the body of Christ presents us important themes for an effective interdependent partnership (I Corinthians 12:12-31). I shall briefly highlight four of them.

(i) Equality

True partnership is possible only when we grasp the biblical truth that all the parts of the body, though they may differ in sizes, shapes, and functions, are inherently equal, with Christ alone as its head. This equality is evident in Creation (All created in the image of God – Genesis 1:27), Redemption (All have sinned – Romans 3:23), and in Consummation (Redeemed multitudes from all the nations and tribes stand before the throne and the Lamb is on the throne – Revelation 7:9). If this spiritual dimension of equality is not understood and appropriated, we will tend to look down on each other based on money, influence, status, and numbers.

Indian social scientists like Sudhir Kakar and Pavan Varma have pointed out that Indian society exhibits strong hierarchical tendencies and high power distance which may not affirm the equal value and worth of all individuals (Kakar & Kakar 2007:7-24, Varma 2004:21-26). At the same time, there is a propensity in Western and other materially affluent societies – influenced by cultural evolutionism and social Darwinism – to consider themselves perched at the apex of world order. They also tend to exhibit – in the words of an Indian Christian development practitioner – a “god complex” that denies the equal worth of other human beings (Corbett&Fikkert 2009:65).

The Church is Flat?

Thomas Friedman in his best-selling book *The World is Flat* claims that the globalized world is increasingly becoming flat due to various factors (2005), a fact that may not be entirely correct. However, the true church as the body of Christ must be “flat.” The church has only one Head – which is Jesus Christ. No one particular place or region or individual or institution can claim or act as if it is the head.

The notion of privileging a particular place or region as the center of Christianity – whether it is Western or Southern Christianity – creates a geographical center of the Christian world, which invariably tends to act as if it were the head. Lamin Sanneh argues that there are no geographical or cultural centers, but only plurality of peripheries with Christ at the center. He writes,

Christianity triumphs by the relinquishing of Jerusalem or any fixed universal center, be it geographical, linguistic or cultural, with

the result that we have a proliferation of centers, languages and cultures within the Church. Christian ecumenism is a pluralism of the periphery with only Christ at the centre. (Unpublished paper, quoted in Frykenberg 2003:3)

(ii) Integrity

A body can function well as a unit only when there is integrity and trust based on truthfulness. As William Barclay writes,

We can only live in safety because the senses and nerves pass true messages to the brain. If in fact the senses and the nerves took to passing false messages to the brain, if for instance, they told the brain that something was cool and touchable when in fact it was hot and burning, life would very soon come to an end. A body can only function accurately and healthily when each part of it passes true messages to the brain and to the other parts. If then we are all bound into one body, that body can only function when we speak the truth. All deception impairs the working of the body of Christ (2002:184).

A lot of partnership breakdown happens due to a trust deficit, and the failure – of both the donors and receivers – to create an environment of trust, transparency, and truthfulness. It is imperative to have a proper accountability process for fundraising, receiving, implementing, and reporting. However, if the donor has a skeptical scrutinizing spirit and acts more like an IRS agent than a fellow Christian, a trust deficit occurs. At the same time, if the receiver tends to hide information or hype their results, a trust deficit will also occur.

An American friend of mine, who has been involved in assisting Indian missions for many years told me, “If all the reports that emanate from India are put together, India would have been saved many times over.” Sadly it is true. While a few are involved in willful deception and distortion (adding, or multiplying) results to satisfy their donors, there is also a duplication of numbers. However, the American church also must reflect on and rectify its glorification of numbers, obsession with bigness, and drive for result-oriented efficiency, which results in mere report producing ministries. George Barna comments on the American church,

For several decades, the church has relied upon greater sums of money, better techniques, bigger numbers and facilities, and more impressive credentials as the means to influence society at large. These elements have failed us; in our efforts to serve God, we have crowded out God himself (quoted in Webber 2002:132).

Obsession with statistics also leads to the objectification of people as members of a community are reduced to mere numbers.

In the Indian context, some mission agencies ask their workers to set targets (number of “souls to be saved”) for each month and year. This has resulted in malpractices in the mission fields like inflated numbers, hurried baptisms of new believers, and a serious negligence of post-baptismal care and nurture. This has also led to an alarming attrition of new believers, particularly among the *adivasis* (indigenous communities) in India.

(iii) Responsibility

The concept of the church as the body of Christ as a model for interdependent partnership also enables us to grasp our responsibility to one another – both locally and globally – and to be sensitive to one another’s needs, peculiarities, and particularities. Each part has to look out for the other because all parts are intertwined and interdependent for effective functioning. No one part can willingly injure or impede the other. We are responsible for one another and we must be careful in every way not to endanger our fellow Christians through our actions, attitudes, and articulations.

Western Christians and mission leaders must act with wisdom when they make statements regarding India or the religions of India. In this global era of satellite television, a statement made in America can harm Christians in India or elsewhere. When Jerry Falwell made a disparaging remark against Muhammad on American television (CBS 60 Minutes), there were protests in Kashmir (*The Hindu*, 2002a) and Gujarat (*The Hindu*, 2002b) in the following days, seriously jeopardizing Christian-Muslim relations in India.

The critics of Christianity in India are “consistently scanning and monitoring the Christian world, both inside and outside India” (Lobo 2002:142). The Evangelical Fellowship of India (EFI) cautions us to be careful of “what we

say or write for any medium at all, including letters, reports, songs, prayers, and material on the Internet, for the boundaries between in-house and public domain are disappearing” (Howell (ed) 2002:190). The Evangelical Fellowship of India has also published guidelines for using non-offensive language in witnessing, which is helpful to both Indians and the global Church.

Vicious verbal attacks on the gods of Hindus, propaganda banners like “India for Christ in 10 years,” hype regarding church growth and the number of Christians, all must be avoided. Stan Guthrie cites Ralph Winter’s negative comments on Hinduism in the November-December 1994 issue of *Mission Frontiers* magazine, which created a huge outcry in India. Ralph Winter later apologized and has withdrawn this offending article from the *Mission Frontiers* website (Guthrie 1999:471).

A Indian Christian leader offers two important suggestions to international mission leaders regarding the role of rhetoric in Christian mission:

1. That we will not use language behind the back of a non-Christian about him and his culture and his location that we will not use face to face when we are witnessing to him and sharing the message and love of Christ.
2. That we will acknowledge that what is right in America is not necessarily right for India (or other pre-dominantly non-Christian nations) and that we will have a major review of international Christian publicity and reports put out by the major alliances, networks, and federations (Guthrie 1999: 476, 477).

(iv) Unity in Diversity

The body can function effectively, not only when every part does its work well individually, but also when they can work collectively and in unity. This unity is not uniformity, but a unity in diversity. While in many issues there may be a divergence of positions and a difference of opinions, unity is brought about by oneness in Christ and by sharing a common cause. So, in the body of Christ, diversity is not tolerated, but celebrated as each part of the body does not compete with the other, but complements and completes the other. Understanding cultural differences is critical for forging this unity in diversity.

PARTNERSHIP AND CULTURAL ISSUES

Many of the partnerships that begin with noble intentions collapse due to a lack of awareness regarding cultural differences and how to deal with them effectively. Lederleitner claims that cultural issues like status, face, and time, and also cultural differences regarding money, can play a critical role in debilitating vibrant partnerships (2010:33-66). She writes,

Partners from different cultures and contexts start working together with the hope of accomplishing great things for the kingdom of God. Yet despite their noble dreams and aspirations, working through cultural differences that surround money can become overwhelming at times. Over the years I have witnessed often that these cultural differences about how funds are utilized and accounted for cause cross-cultural partnerships to come unglued. (2010:21)

Due to cultural differences and historical situations even the term “partnership” may mean different things to different people. Duane Elmer narrates an incident in a conference held in Canada where he spoke on the theme of partnership. Some two-thirds of the participants were Canadian missionaries and one-third were First Nations people. Duane asked the whole group this question “What comes to your mind when you hear the word partnership?” The missionaries said sharing, mutuality, respect, cooperation, collaboration etc. After some silence, a member of the First Nations said, “When we hear the word partnership, what comes to our mind is that this is another way for the white man to control us” (Elmer 2010: 11).

Sherwood Lingenfelter narrates a personal story, regarding a workshop, which he and his wife conducted in Cameroon that brought together Western and African partners from fourteen African nations (2007:45-48). At the beginning of the two-week workshop, he separated the Western and African participants into two groups and posed three questions to them: (i) Define partnership, (ii) What are the character qualities you expect in your partners, and (iii) What do you expect to contribute to this partnership. The answers differed significantly.

The Western partners primarily defined partnership as “relationships to complete the task” whereas the Africans viewed it as “relations of commitment to

God and to one another for the work of ministry.” Regarding the character qualities expected from the other, the westerners emphasized “work values” like reliability and commitment to achieving the goals, whereas the Africans’ emphasized “social values” like willingness to love others and be generous. The Western partners viewed their contribution to the partnership in the realms of “training, money and facilitation of the project” whereas African partners viewed their contribution as “relationships that were complementary, meaning mutual sharing of differences in kind, but of equal value and priority.” They also valued “open sharing of all available resources in a process that emphasizes mutual, rather than superior/inferior relationships.”

Lingenfelter makes an interesting observation. While the two groups at the beginning of the workshop expressed their differences and difficulties in forging meaningful partnership, even after the workshop ended they continued to operate with assumptions regarding the supremacy of their own cultural values. Hence, “they were unable to negotiate effectively either their cultural differences or their spiritual commitments in order to engage together in kingdom work” (2007:47). This shows not only the deep rootedness of our cultural conditioning, but also the need to constantly scrutinize and evaluate our cultural values and ethos in the light of Scripture and kingdom values.

CONCLUSION

Reflecting on the rich diversity that exists within the kingdom of God that calls us to not only worship but also work together, Native American scholar Randy Woodley writes, “God’s new song cannot be sung solo. We must all sing it together, embracing and not restricting our diversity” (2001:35). By God’s grace, let the “mouse” and the “elephant” hold their hands together, and walk and work unitedly, not tolerating but celebrating their diversity, serving with a spirit of humility, equality, integrity, and interdependency.

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Contextualization in the Post- secular American Society

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ABSTRACT

As the USA becomes a nation of immigrants, post-secularism goes with the painful process of transformation into post-colonialism which is often hidden in relation to the political, social, and cultural effects of decolonization. Here crucial questions arise about how American Christianity contextualizes its post-secular society with religious pluralism and post-colonial trauma, and how it reconciles with Non-Westerners and becomes missional partners in post-secular American society and for world evangelization. For contextualizing America in a post-secular age, a biblical and contextual understanding of diaspora is required; it calls for America's awareness to be partners with the diasporic south for the renewal of the church and world mission. Their repentance to heal post-colonial trauma, moving toward reconciliation and partnership for the world mission, is required.

INTRODUCTION

As the 2013 Pew Research shows, in 2050 82% of the population increase in the USA will be due to immigrants and their descendants. For example, the USA is the world's number one destination for Christian migrants, who make up nearly three-quarters (74%) of all foreign-born people. It is also the top destination for Buddhist immigrants, and the world's second-leading destination for Hindu immigrants, after India, and for Jewish immigrants, after Israel. Seeing its demographic trends, mission scholars have begun to redefine the USA as a mission field.

At the same time, it should be noted that American society has moved toward post-secularism, which, for J. Habermas (2008), refers to the resurgence of religions and pluralism. In particular, post-secularism goes along with the painful process of transformation to post colonialism, which is often hidden in relation to the political, social, and cultural effects of decolonization, including the anti-colonial challenge to western dominance, and the effects of postcolonial globalization and the development of indigenous solutions to local needs.

Here crucial questions arise about how American Christianity contextualizes its post-secular society with religious pluralism and post-colonial trauma, and how it reconciles with Non-Westerners and becomes missional partners in post-secular American society and for world evangelization. In order to answer these questions, first, I will focus on the history of secularism theory and its debate to understand current American contexts; secondly, I will describe the religious landscape of post-secularism in the USA; thirdly, I will suggest ways to contextualize post-secular American society for the revival of the local church as well as world mission.

1. Secularism, the Secularization Thesis, and Desecularization

In 1851, the term “secularism” was first used by the British scholar George Jacob Holyoake; its meaning refers to promoting a social order separate from religion, that is, the principle of the separation of government institutions and persons from religious persons and institutions. In 1967, Peter Berger, a fearless proponent of the “secularization theory,” wrote *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of A Sociological Theory of Religion*. This theory held that as technology improved and modernity advanced in a culture, religion would begin to decline.

By the late 1980s, however, Berger publicly recognized that religion was not only still prevalent, but in many cases was more vibrantly practiced than in periods in the past, particularly in the United States; in 1999, Berger edited his view of the “deseccularization of the world” by claiming the world is not secularized anymore. As we have all experienced, however, secularism is still prevalent even in a time of deseccularization. From a biblical perspective, contemporary Christianity has become more and more secularized as it aims to adapt easily to the current world for its survival.

2. The Religious Landscape of Post-secularism in the USA

1) *Post-secular: a complementary learning process between religions and secularities*

For Habermas, the term “post-secular” can be applied to secularized societies in which “religion maintains a public influence and relevance, while the secularistic certainty that religion will disappear worldwide in the course of modernization is losing ground”(Michele Dillon 2012). Habermas’ conclusion is that “Both religious and secular mentalities must be open to a complementary learning process if we are to balance shared citizenship and cultural difference.”

2) *Immigrant pluralistic society for democratic citizenship*

The return of religions in the USA has included a pluralism of immigrants from multi-religious backgrounds around the world. Here is an example from the Pluralism Project at Harvard University: over the past five decades, immigration has dramatically changed the religious landscape of the United States. Today, the encounter of people of different religious traditions takes place in our own cities and neighborhoods. In 1991, the Pluralism Project at Harvard University (www.pluralism.org) began a pioneering study of America’s changing religious landscape. Through an expanding network of affiliates, they “document the contours of our multi-religious society, explore new forms of interfaith engagement, study the impact of religious diversity in civic life, and contextualize these findings within a global framework.”

This statement shows in what direction society has been changing. This project statement continues, “The religious landscape of America is changing as immigrants from all over the world take the oath of citizenship and claim the

United States as their home... the new post-1965 immigration has made clear for all Americans that the United States is a nation based not on race, ethnicity, or religion, but on common commitment to the democratic ideals of its constitution. “

3) The mourning of post-colonialism inherent in post-secularism

For Habermas, post-secular does not refer to just the resurgence of religions, but goes with the painful process of transformation into post-colonialism. What is the post-colonialism? In *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), the psychiatrist Frantz Fanon medically analyzed the nature of colonialism as the imposition of a subjugating identity which is harmful to the mental health of the native peoples who were subjugated into colonies, and that the ideological essence of colonialism is the systematic denial of “all attributes of humanity” of the colonized people, which is called dehumanization.

In the same way, with post-colonial studies based on trauma, J. M. Coetzee, Wilson Harris, Toni Morrison, and Sam Durrant wrote *Postcolonial Narrative and the Work of Mourning*. In his review of it, Kimberly W. Segall analyzed that this work is “part of a recent trend to *redefine* the postcolonial in relation to trauma studies, which emphasizes how atrocity cannot be represented.” These trauma studies of postcolonialism, emerging out of Holocaust studies, show what a severe suffering and mourning in their hearts and memories immigrants from non-Western nations, mainly, the Third World, who have their roots in colonized history, have to face.

3. How to Contextualize American Post-Secular Society

In its original sense, contextualization is the process of assigning *meaning* as a means of *interpreting* the environment within which a text is executed (Wheeler 2002:78). What are some of the principles we use to assign meanings as a way of interpreting the post-secular American society within which we hope to communicate the Gospel?

1) Biblically understanding God's calling of immigrant Christians in the USA

First of all, the major trend of the current post-secular society is oriented to immigrant diaspora, which should be contextualized to integrate with the rest of American Christianity. According to the 2010 U.S. census, 43 million residents

were foreign born, and of those, about 74 percent were Christian. “Jehu Hanciles, a scholar of Christianity and globalization, said African Christian churches in America are places where members find their calling when it comes to advocacy.” In the same way, we must confess that multiethnic immigrants groups and Christians come to America in response to God’s calling.

According to their position on diaspora missiology by the Lausanne Conference, immigration is part of God’s providence for His mission. The host nation should welcome diaspora strangers as its own families and coworkers. As Acts 2 shows, on the birthday of the church diaspora was called by God and served as the secret impetus of God’s world mission.

2) Forming hermeneutical multiethnic communities: joint congregations or local associations

In most cases, immigrants have formed their own congregations due to cultural differences, especially, language barriers. However, we must make more attempts to form one congregation out of multi-ethnic groups because the church in the Bible is one multi-ethnic body. 1 Cor 12:13 says, “we were all baptized by one spirit into one body – whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free...” This does not mean that all churches form one local congregation, but that local churches should make an effort to form multi-ethnic congregations to fulfill the calling to be one body.

As one example of easily becoming one body, American churches with a building often merge with immigrant churches without a building, or American churches and immigrant churches form a local partnership or association, sharing their faith, fellowship, and mission; challenging and empowering each other.

3) Reconciliation and healing practiced by repentance: healing post-colonial hurts and hatred

What is the core message Jesus proclaimed when he came to this world? “Repent, for the Kingdom of God is near”(Matt 4:17). Here we as Christians find the good news that repentance brings the Kingdom of God; so it is a gift from God. Western and non-Western people should repent of their past respectively, including the postcolonial tragedy which is inherent in post-secular American

society. As the story of Joseph and his eleven brothers in Genesis 45-50 shows, their repentance and forgiveness caused the building of the nation of Israel into 12 tribes, a model of the kingdom of God.

In the same way, all Christians should repent of their sins of exploiting their brothers and sisters as well as not forgiving them in the name of Jesus. This repentance will help heal post-colonial hurts and hatred; without this repentance, there will be no Kingdom of God in our hearts, or our societies. No repentance, no Kingdom.

4) A missional living through living the Beatitudes as the Great Constitution of the Kingdom of God

Jesus Christ suggested the Beatitudes as the Great Constitution of the Kingdom of God; they represent the way of life for Jesus' disciples as well as all citizens of the Kingdom of God. Living the Beatitudes paves the way for Christians becoming the salt of the world and the light of the world (Matt 5:13-14). Jesus says, "they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven"(Matt 5:16).

According to Lesslie Newbigin (1989:230), "The Church is sent into the world to continue that which he came to do, in the power of the same Spirit, reconciling people to God." Jesus said, "As the Father has sent Me, I am sending you" (John 20:21). Thus every Christian in this world is one of God's people sent for His mission. What then is the essential strategy for this post-secular society that rejects the absoluteness of Christianity and its public evangelism, and emphasizes democratic citizenship alone?

It is the life of heavenly citizenship, based on living the Beatitudes, that is a shining light for the world even without the use of words. This can be called missional living in a post-secular society. "In Him was life, and that life was the light of men," (John 1:4). Nobody hinders a shining light; neither does any law in the world.

Furthermore, Charles Taylor (2007) explored what does it mean to say that we live in a secular age? His conclusion is represented in two ideas: spiritual conversions or "*epiphanic*" experiences (767) and celebrating the "integrity of different ways of life" moving away from homogenization as a principle.

The Christian identification of diaspora as a pilgrim who moves toward heaven, “a better country” (Hebrew 11:16), is a good example of missional life in a secular society. The Christian consciousness as being aliens and strangers serves as an antidote to a world full of greed. In relation to this, Abraham the father of our faith confessed, “I am an alien and a stranger” (Gen.23:4). However, this did not mean he was indifferent to the world, as we can see from his neighbors’ testimony, “you are a mighty prince among us” (Gen. 23:16).

5) Diaspora mission of the local church for its renewal and world mission

The major principle of biblical mission is diaspora. Its evidence appears in various places in Acts, and of those, Acts 6 offers one of the best examples. From their names, the seven evangelists selected were people of diaspora from the Hellenistic world. Originally, the church selected them for ministering in the daily distribution of food (6:1). However, God used them for his plan of world evangelization. Philip, one of the seven, was used as an agent for Samaritan mission (ch. 8); Stephan, for gentile mission (ch.11). The Antioch church as a center of world mission in Acts 13 is a diaspora model of missions.

Why did immigrants gather in America in today’s post-secular society and this global era? In *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South*, Philip Jenkins (2008) argued, the faith of the Global South is first and foremost a Biblical faith. Many southern Christians identify with the world portrayed in the New Testament where belief in spirits and witchcraft are commonplace Christians are persecuted just as the early Christians were. According to Jenkins, the Bible speaks to these Christians with a vividness and authenticity unavailable to most believers in the industrialized North.

This provides one possible reason why West and South meet. The encounter of the West and the Global South is God’s providence for his redemptive plans. Thus Western Christians recognize Southern Christians as coworkers sent by God for his Kingdom and likewise, the Southern Christians obey God’s will that they be partners with the West for this time of harvest. All Christians, the West as well as the South, should think deeply about why multiethnic groups have come to America at this particular time. Is it accidental? Jesus said, “I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields”(John 4:35). America in a post-secular age should be looked at as “the fields” in which the crop for eternal life is to be harvested.

CONCLUSION

The USA has become a nation of immigrant diasporas united in a post-secular society with pluralistic religions. What is a core principle of contextualization in this post-secular American society? The answer is a biblical and contextual understanding of diaspora. America is called to partner with the Global South for the renewal of the church and world mission in this modern world. Their repentance will heal post-colonial trauma, bring a missional life to the Beatitudes, and shine a Christian apologetic response on post-secularism, moving toward a renewal of world mission.

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Migrant-Shaped Urban Mission:

**The missionary nature and initiatives of The Church of
Pentecost, USA**

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ABSTRACT

In contemporary literature on urban mission, cities are often characterized as spiritual deserts: the “unreached,” “unclaimed frontier” of Christian mission. However, it is precisely within these contexts where vibrant immigrant congregations are thriving. The places disproportionately affected by immigrant flows are not necessarily countries, but cities—85 percent of immigrants in America live in the 100 largest metropolitan areas. In a time when nearly 70% of immigrants to the United States self-identify as Christian, this paper challenges assumptions that cities are unreached and the wider tendency to neglect how Christian immigrants are transforming the American religious landscape. Using qualitative data from research on the Ghanaian-led Church of Pentecost, USA, this paper explores African Pentecostal migrant-shaped mission in the city, focusing on its church planting initiatives and transnational orientation through embodied practice as migrants and their descendants seek to bring the gospel of Christ to bear on the needs and realities of life in a new context.

INTRODUCTION

We live in what is widely called the “age of migration” (Castles and Miller 2009). International migration is a global phenomenon that continues to grow in scope, complexity, and impact. There are more people on the move today than ever before: the 2013 United Nations Population Division estimates that 232 million people are international migrants (2013), and the number has more than doubled in 25 years (Koser 2007, 5). The United States, a nation historically built on immigration, remains the most popular destination, attracting about 20 percent of all international migrants and reaching an all-time high of 46 million international migrants in 2013. Nearly 13 percent of U.S. residents are immigrants, and that figure rises to about one-quarter of the overall U.S. population when adding the U.S.-born second generation (Zong and Batlova 2015).

Although the great wave of immigration that has taken place over the past few decades has included a wide variety of people from various world religions—Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam, for example—the majority of those who immigrate to America (67%) are Christian (2015b). Even as the overall percentage of Americans who self-identify as Christian is in decline (dipping from 78.4% in 2007 to 70.6% in 2014), Christians in America are becoming more ethnically and racially diverse. According to the recent Pew Research Center’s Religious Landscape Study, 41% percent of Catholics, 24% of evangelical Protestants, and 14% of mainline Protestants are racial and ethnic minorities (Murphy 2015). And particularly in urban contexts, the church “next door” is increasingly led by or comprised of Christians from African, Asian, or Latin American descent. Christianity exists in diaspora communities in many cities in the United States, providing spaces where diverse Christian communities rub shoulders, practicing their faith in ways that contribute to the ever-increasing plurality of Christian expression. As Stephen Warner explains, post-1965 immigration to the US has not led to the “de-Christianization” of American society, but rather to the “de-Europeanization of American Christianity” (Warner 2000, 274).

Although trends over the last decade indicate that immigrants are dispersing not just to the traditional gateway cities, but also to more and smaller places, they continue to be attracted to the nation’s largest metropolitan areas and are still underrepresented in suburban communities (Wilson and Svajlenka 2014). Nearly 65% of the total immigrant population in the U.S. resides in the twenty most

populous metropolitan areas. To put this in perspective, there are more foreign-born New Yorkers than there are people living in Chicago, America's third largest city. In 2000, 60% of West African immigrants lived in a metropolitan area, with nearly 40% residing in the central city: the highest percentage among all African immigrants (Takyi and Boate 2006, 59). Although increasing numbers of immigrants are moving to the suburbs, immigrants continue to have a disproportionate impact on cities. Therefore, migrant mission is often urban mission (Herppich 2011).

In the past two decades, we have also witnessed the “ascendancy of African and African-led churches and para-church groups with a deep sense of mission and evangelism crossing geographical, cultural, racial, and linguistic boundaries” (Omenyo 2013, 41). American cities are spaces for new churches and new movements. Yet despite the significant numbers of Christian immigrants who reside in American cities, there is a nation-wide tendency to neglect how the religiosity of these new immigrants is transforming the American religious landscape. Migrants are often characterized as poor, powerless, and passive—as objects of mission with little to contribute toward Christian mission or evangelization within urban contexts. Währisch-Oblau indicates that immigrant Christians and congregations in Germany “represent a Christianity that, if noticed at all, is mostly perceived to be foreign, transient, and diasporal, in short: a minority phenomenon which might need some protection and support, but nothing that would have an impact on majority Christianity” (2009, 4). Similar sentiments can be found in the relationship between immigrant and native-born Christian populations in the United States.

This is somewhat unsurprising in light of the persistent characterization among certain evangelical missiological circles of cities as spiritual deserts: urban contexts that are “unreached,” representing the “unclaimed frontier” of twentieth-century mission. Starting in the 1970s, cities within evangelical missiological literature were often conceptualized as the target of mission penetration, driven by strategies for reaching the (unreached) peoples and the migrants who are now at our doorstep (Greenway and Monsma 2000, Casiño, Fujino, and Sisk 2012, Payne 2012). The (unforeseen?) result of linking strategic emphasis on unreached people groups, immigration, and cities is that Christian migrant presence and agency within these contexts is often overlooked. However, many immigrant congregations are thriving within these urban contexts where so many Christian immigrants live, work, and worship. In a study on African immigrant faith in New York City, Mark Gornik (2011) suggests that Christianity is flourishing in these areas that

are “overlooked” and “neglected” – in the margins where Christian immigrants are establishing congregations with evangelistic zeal.

Therefore, this paper contributes to understanding the agency of Christian migrants in urban ministry by exploring the mission of a Ghanaian-led global Pentecostal movement, The Church of Pentecost, USA, in various cities in the United States. This research is based on participant observation (from 2007-current) in four Church of Pentecost congregations, and interviews with church leaders and members. I explore the migrant-shaped mission of the church in two domains: church planting and the transnational community.

THE CHURCH OF PENTECOST, USA: MIGRANT-SHAPED MISSION IN AMERICAN CITIES

Religious and spiritual experiences are both formed and transformed by the migration experience. Migration itself is a “dynamic process that many African immigrants infuse with religious significance and that, in turn, shapes religious practice and community building” (Olupona and Gemignani 2007:8). Of course, there are many economic pull factors that promote international migration, but the move to America is imbued with a divine sense of purpose for many Africans: they envision hope for a better economic future, but also see themselves as agents of hope with a missionary message for the American context (Bongmba 2007:107). The very fact that African Christian immigrants bring their faith with them as they migrate to the US represents what Bongmba calls the “portability” of the Christian faith and a “global mission project of the Christian tradition” (2007:102). Gerloff further points to the missional role of African immigrant Christians in deconstructing a “colonial mission” model, leading to a potential “renewal of contemporary Christianity, the ‘rebirth’ of African theology, and the lived-out diasporic conviction that our universal humanity counts more than any nation state” (2009:16).

The Ghanaian-led Church of Pentecost (CoP), the largest Protestant denomination in Ghana, arose out of the efforts of Ghanaian Pastor Peter Newman Anim in 1922 and later Irish missionary James McKeown in the 1930s. From the beginning, “it was made to be related to the Ghanaian soil, without losing its rooting in Christ and the Bible” (Larbi 2001:243). It developed as a fully indigenous and

self-supported church, as McKeown's strategy was "just to evangelize," allowing the growth of the church to occur through largely Ghanaian-led initiatives (Onyinah 2004, 221). A commitment to evangelism has been one of the core values of the church since the beginning (Larbi 2004, 144).

The church's growth has not stopped with Ghana, and it "appears to be the African church with the highest number of congregations outside its national boundaries" (Omenyo 2013, 50). The CoP has branches in over 84 different countries, with a total membership of nearly 2 million. At the end of 2014, there were 152 congregations in the U.S. with a membership of nearly 18,000 (2015a). The international growth of the CoP was not originally an organized endeavor, but is inherently linked with migration and the transnational networks of its members. In response to the exodus of many Ghanaians who migrated from Ghana in search of better economic opportunities in the 1980s, the CoP established an official missionary network, under the office of the International Mission Director. The International Missions Office oversees the work of all church branches outside of Ghana. In line with this centralized structure, the term "missionary" is used to describe the work of all pastors who either work outside of Ghana or outside of their countries of origin. The centralized structure of the church, which is organized along clear hierarchical lines of authority, is especially appropriate to the Ghanaian culture and promotes a sense of security, accountability, and discipline (Onyinah 2004, 223). When paired with the strong emphasis on lay leadership and creative initiatives, the church's structure has greatly facilitated the worldwide spread and growth of the CoP.

The church's vision and mission is that "It exists to bring all people everywhere to the saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ through the proclamation of the gospel, the planting of churches and the equipping of believers for every God-glorifying service" (The Church of Pentecost 2011). The fulfillment of this vision and the interpretation of the church's mission is rooted in prophetic utterances, starting in the 1940s, which proclaimed that God would raise up a nation out of Africa to be a light to the world, bringing up an international church that would send missionaries to the entire world (2000, 149). Echoed in these prophecies is the belief that the CoP has something unique to contribute to the world, and is thus contributing to world evangelization through mission to the Ghanaian diaspora (Onyinah 2004, 235).

Along with the International Missions Office, there are several other institutional structures supporting the church's evangelistic emphasis. These include Evangelism Week, Internal Missions Week, and McKeown's Missions Week: times set aside each year to raise money, pray, and preach on mission. Monthly missionary offerings are given, and the witness ministry (of which every regular churchgoer is considered an automatic member) facilitates evangelism activities such as passing out tracts or working with local food kitchens or other community services. However, these institutionally supported activities do not fully describe the mission of the Church of Pentecost, particularly in urban contexts shaped by migration. Rather, the core theology of the priesthood of all believers that encourages each member to view mission as a part of everyday life provides a better window into the mission of the church. Therefore, this paper will explore two avenues of migrant-shaped mission within the Church of Pentecost that are rooted in the lived experiences of Ghanaian immigrants. First, mission is understood as achieved through the grace of God in the growth of local congregations through church planting. Second, the church acts as a transnational community, demonstrating how migrant-shaped mission cannot be understood without a transnational lens.

The local congregation as hermeneutic of the gospel: church-planting initiatives

Church growth through the planting of new congregations is perhaps the most common example of migrant-shaped mission in the Church of Pentecost. The 2015 USA National Council Report encourages the creation of new districts in the United States—most of which would include multiple congregations under a single pastor—to “accelerate the growth of the church” (2015a, 6). Using lay leaders for the establishment of new congregations is a normal and encouraged practice of the church. Most congregations in urban contexts in the United States were started by either 1) Ghanaian immigrants who initiated small prayer gatherings that ultimately grew into official congregations, or 2) the intentional “split” of existing congregations to plant new churches in nearby cities. Although the hierarchical structure and categorization of the church facilitates church expansion, both methods are established largely through the efforts of local members and lay leaders, rather than through strategic initiatives of the national or international church leadership.

The active service of a strong lay leadership is a core feature of the Church of Pentecost. The church cultivates a robust theology of the priesthood of all believers (1 Pet 2:4-10) and all members are expected to contribute their time, money, and talents for the growth of the church. This is demonstrated by a song often sung in the church, which calls members to “work for the Lord always” (Larbi 2004, 157). Therefore, the role of evangelism is a task for the entire church community. Although each CoP congregation includes a ministry department dedicated to witness and evangelism, the task of evangelism is not relegated to a sub-segment of the church: it is the responsibility of each member, youth and old alike. The zeal expressed by one congregation’s youth and college leader is common:

We realize that we [the young people] have to do it [evangelism] rather than the church doing [it]. The church will do it; they have crusades and all that. But we the young people need to start one-on-one evangelism.

This self-perception that the primary task of believers is evangelism brings unity to CoP diaspora church members spread around the globe (Aßhom and Becker 2011, 166). And it is this presence of African Christian immigrants in the West that leads Jehu J. Hanciles to refer to every Christian migrant as a potential missionary (Hanciles 2008). Attentiveness to the priority of the local congregation in mission also gives fresh insight into the church’s desire to develop multicultural worshipping communities. As Afe Adogame portrays, many African immigrant congregations in the United States have a global vision for mission and a faith that extends across boundaries, but generally “lack a cross-cultural appeal” (Adogame 2013, 80). It is true that the majority of Church of Pentecost members in the United States are either Ghanaian immigrants or their descendants; just 5.5% of church members are not (2015a). However, the church views their primarily Ghanaian congregations as “springboards:” the Ghanaian Christian community provides a solid foundation upon which efforts can be made to reach out to non-Ghanaians (Onyinah 2004, Bredwa-Mensah 2004).

The ability to develop thriving multicultural or non-Ghanaian congregations is also often viewed as the task of the next generation: second-generation Ghanaian Americans who can more easily navigate the bridges between Ghanaian and American cultures. However, two CoP Spanish-speaking congregations have been

recently planted and the U.S. is also seen as the “springboard” for the church’s congregations in the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Haiti, Costa Rica, Trinidad, and Belize. Although some strides are being made in crosscultural evangelism and church membership, it is also important to realize that reaching the Ghanaian diaspora and the very presence of the church in the West is seen as a contribution to world evangelization (Onyinah 2004, 235).

Another way this “springboard” method is enacted is through planting Pentecost International Worship Centers, congregations where services are conducted entirely in English or in a mixture of languages reflecting the makeup of the members. In the 1980s, the CoP started “English Assemblies” with a vision to create a “well-organised, cross-cultural church for people of non-Ghanaian cultural background who want a place to worship God” (Larbi 2001:202). The formation of the English Assemblies, later named Pentecost International Worship Centers (PIWC), grew out of an acknowledgment that the evangelistic efforts of the church could not be limited to only one segment of society. Rather, God desired for the CoP to reach out to the entire world, including people who were quite different from the founding church members. In the United States, PIWCs often serve a dual role: as a place of belonging for the second generation who primarily prefer to worship in English, and as a congregation that is intentionally multicultural. Most districts in the U.S. include at least one PIWC congregation.

The way the CoP prioritizes church planting demonstrates how they conceive of contributing to world evangelization through their international, often urban, presence. Scott Sunquist identifies the role of congregations in urban mission by pointing to how local churches represent “the first and the last hope for the city,” claiming that any mission strategy that overlooks this “weak” witness “is not looking with spiritual eyes” (Sunquist 2013, 366). By planting churches with congregations of praying, Pentecostal Christians in cities across the United States, the CoP enacts its local and global mission. This is reminiscent of Newbigin’s view of the congregation as “God’s embassy in a certain place” (Newbigin 1989, 229). As he states, “the only possible hermeneutic of the gospel is a congregation which believes it” (Newbigin 1989, 232). Newbigin’s congregational hermeneutic suggests a “public, visible missionality” (Cronshaw and Taylor 2014, 213). Immigrant congregations are often identified as public sites for integrating immigrants into American civil society and membership in religious institutions is one area of civic engagement that immigrants participate in with much greater regularity than the

American mainstream (Foley and Hoge 2007:9). But they are also sites of “public” expressions of faith. This is not a privatized faith, but an embodied gospel that is expressed through the everyday lives of church members and lay leaders within the cities where they work and live.

Transnational religious community: Mission across borders

In addition to recognizing the global church planting initiatives of CoP, it is also vital to have an appropriate lens to explore ways in which the mission of the Church of Pentecost transgresses national borders and locally established congregations. This does not indicate the end of the imprint of the nation-state and immigration policy to the mission of the church. Rather, it is a recognition that the CoP acts as a multipolar transnational community, linking members to a global community of believers who see their primary identities as both African and supranational: as “citizens of heaven” (Adogame 2013, 130-35, Daswani 2015). Transnational ties are formed both at the level of individual migrants and through the wider institutional initiatives of the church. Thus, transnationalism as used here refers to “some combination of plural civic-political membership, economic involvements, social networks, and cultural identities reaching across and linking people (here, immigrants) and institutions in two or more nation-states in diverse, multilayered patterns” (Morawska 2009, 31).

The role of *religious* identities and institutions in forging and sustaining transnational ties is a considerable emerging topic that is beginning to gain traction among scholars of transnational studies (Levitt and Jaworsky 2007, Levitt 2007, Ebaugh and Chafetz 2002, Kivisto 2014). In many immigrant congregations, the frequent travel of religious leaders and church members facilitates the flow of information and communication between destination countries and the homeland (Biney 2005, Guest 2003, Fortuny-Loret de Mola 2002, Krause 2008). Afe Adogame calls this a type of “spiritual remittance” system, in which the international travel of church leaders facilitates transnational connections and networks between churches located around the world (2009:9). Beyond solely *remitting* spiritual ideas and beliefs, there is also *reciprocity* (if not always symmetry) in these transnational flows. In this manner, the transnational networks of the Church of Pentecost facilitate unidirectional mission.

Therefore, a transnational perspective emphasizes the ways in which migrants' lives, networks, religions, and churches do not stop at national borders but go beyond them. This implies looking beyond the nation-state as the main unit of analysis and recognizing the way mission is conceived when a local congregation is also part of a larger transnational religious community: a transnational social field. Using Faist's definition, transnational social spaces "consist of combinations of sustained social and symbolic ties, their contents, positions in networks and organizations, and networks of organizations that can be found in multiple states" (Faist 2000, 199). These spaces emerge within the Church of Pentecost when it operates across borders by establishing church congregations in the countries of immigration that are linked to the mother church in Ghana along with the vast network of CoP congregations around the globe. The CoP acts as a transnational religious community based on shared identities, beliefs, and values, "constituting a mechanism that can function as a bridge between distant places" (Aßhom and Becker 2011, 147).

The Church of Pentecost facilitates transnational engagement in numerous domains, including flows of people, money, beliefs, and practices. The transnationalization of the church has largely occurred due to the migration of Ghanaians: the "global culture of the mobility of labour has helped some of these immigrants belong to The Church of Pentecost, they soon share their faith with others and organize their converts into prayer and Bible study groups" (Memorial lectures 126-27). Aßhom and Becker highlight two types of CoP transnational social mobility: the mobility of Ghanaian migrant members and the mobility of CoP leaders (2011, 160). Transnational mobility does play an important role in the creation and sustaining of transnational religious flows within the Church of Pentecost. However, analyzing mobility alone tends to underestimate the involvement of non-migrants and media in the transnational social field. A thorough description of the ways in which CoP acts as a transnational social field is beyond the scope of this article. However, I will share several snapshots of how the cross-border practices of migrant and non-migrant CoP members and the wider organizational structure of the CoP mould the church's mission:

Networks of people:

At the relational-behavioral level, social relationships persist within the CoP "at a distance," with "social practices creating systematic connections" between

both origin and destination countries, as well as with other poles within the CoP community (Boccagni 2012, 297). In addition to sustained media communication, communication across national boundaries regularly occurs as church leaders from Ghana and other parts of the world visit CoP congregations in the West, and vice versa, forming dense and highly active networks spanning vast spaces. In the past five years, the Los Angeles district has received visits from the National Head, the International Missions Director, the International Chairman and many other apostles and pastors originating outside of the United States. Diaspora church leaders and members also regularly visit Ghana, Germany, the United Kingdom and other regions with large Ghanaian diaspora communities. The interchange of official visits between the diaspora church and its headquarters in Ghana demonstrates reciprocity and this experience of translocality points to the ways CoP members experience social relationships across borders, motivated in part by their participation within the religious transnational community of the CoP. These are networks with a religious function: leaders and members carry religious ideas and media with them, facilitating multidirectional flows from countries of origin to diaspora communities and vice versa, as well as along other transnational pathways connecting sites such as the U.K., Italy, Germany, Nigeria, and China.

Avenues of Capital:

At the micro-level, CoP congregations in cities across the United States regularly initiate the sending of money and goods to congregations of their kin and friends located in Ghana and worldwide. For example, the Los Angeles district has started supporting church planting efforts in Uganda, due to a connection made through the Los Angeles district pastor's mother: the national head of the church in Uganda was her former pastor. When the Los Angeles pastor heard of the need in Uganda, he energized the congregations in Los Angeles to financially support the evangelism and church planting efforts of the Ugandan CoP.

The financial system of the church also sustains regular transnational monetary networks. Offerings are given at annual "internal mission's week" programs in the U.S. and are sent to support the work of the church in Latin America, efforts initiated from the United States. Additionally, special missionary offerings (reflecting the church's particular emphasis on mission) are taken once a month in all CoP assemblies. This funding is then allocated and distributed through the International Missions office in Accra and is used to support the

church's international missionary efforts. This is both a "spiritual" and monetary remittance: CoP's transnational social space facilitates the flow of money from the local level up to the international headquarters, increasing the church's capacity for international mission and evangelism.

Flows of beliefs and practices:

Theological ideas that impact church practices also flow across national borders, through forms of religious media (books, videos, websites, and social media) and systematic communication. Members are linked to a larger Pentecostal community: a transnational network that extends beyond the confines of Ghana, the United States, or any one national context. Church members continue to live "within and between multiple spatial-temporalities" (Daswani 2015, 195). This has led to both continuity and discontinuity in religious beliefs and practices in the past decade. As Peggy Levitt indicates, the "hybridized or creolized religious beliefs and practices that the migration experience gives rise to emerge where local and global religious influences converge. Global religious institutions shape the transnational migration experience at the same time that migrants chip away at and recreate global religions by making them local and then starting the process anew" (2003, 849).

For example, the core value of holiness in the CoP has traditionally been evidenced through practices such as gender separate seating in the church and the wearing of head coverings and skirts by women (Nyamaah and Nsiah 2013). However, these practices seemed out of place in many congregations located in new (Western) contexts, leading to questions around the relationship of culture and practice. Ultimately, the CoP headquarters issued a controversial communiqué in 2010 that annulled these longstanding traditions, stating that the decisions were made to "retain the Church's growing youth and adult membership as well as open the Church's doors to people of different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds to have unhindered access to the total gospel in its churches worldwide," recognizing the "present culturally divergent nature of the Church and its mandate to disciple people of all nations and cultures" (Onyinah 2010). Therefore, the existence of a transnational community due to international church growth has contributed to both continuity (to the church's core doctrines) and discontinuity in what the church deems culturally-specific beliefs and practices that may deter the church's international mission.

The transnational activities of immigrant congregations serve to “systematically insert them into a global religious landscape” (Gerloff 2009, 12). Participation in a global religion with international connections can also contribute to the creation of “universal identities” among migrants who belong to global religions (Levitt 2003, 848). Many CoP congregants espouse a universal Christian, Pentecostal identity, in addition to their other primary identities. When migrating, CoP members often take their church membership cards as a means of introduction and incorporate into a new context. These cards serve as identifiers: as members of the CoP, they are part of a transnational organization that transcends geographical boundaries. Therefore, although CoP members in the United States do sometimes recognize their role as *African* Christians (particularly their contribution to overcome what they see as rampant secularization and a loss of Christian spirituality in the United States), the primary distinction in evangelization and mission has less to do with demarcations of national identity and more about distinctions between the “saved” and the “unsaved” (Glick Schiller 2008, 22). Thus, members often emphasize Christian universalism over ethnic particularism.

Therefore, a transnational optic helps us perceive how the CoP facilitates unidirectional mission: as diaspora churches grow in various cities worldwide, they are also part of a larger transnational religious community. This illuminates how Western cities, in a global context, should be viewed in relationship not only with economically “important” cities but also with African cities (Gornik 2011). This brings African cities like Accra—the site of the Church of Pentecost international headquarters—into a central, rather than peripheral, place in our understanding of global mission. The CoP community acts as a bridge between distant places, a coming together of the local and global that contributes to the self-understanding of the church’s international mission and contribution to global evangelism. Mission is not static or place-bound, but rather occurs within a dynamic and shifting network of beliefs and practices that are both affected by—and influence—the migration process.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The rise of migrant-led churches in the West over the last three decades raises questions about the agency of Christian migrants in American cities. These examples from the Church of Pentecost reveal important aspects of migrant-shaped mission that demonstrate migrant agency that transcends borders. Mission

is inherently tied to the everyday lives of migrants who participate in transnational religious organizations. As Christian migrants move, they are not only taking their faith with them; they are also following transnational ties as they participate in mission (Martinez 2013, 206). This calls missiologists to recognize ways in which the social, cultural, and religious significance of African Christianity is not limited to the African continent. It also calls into question missiological studies and strategies rooted in methodological nationalism: fixated on regional categorization and bounded concepts of culture that fail to see how African Christianity might have a significant or lasting impact on cities in the West.

Secondly, immigrant congregations and lives do not fit within the traditional understanding of mission as something initiated “from here” and then performed “over there.” This is not a to/from, territorial understanding of mission. Rather, it is multidirectional and often happens distinct from the strategic initiatives of the trained professionals. A cross-border perspective on mission is a salient aspect of the Christian migrant experience and requires moving beyond Western models and understandings of mission in the “doing” of mission, the “theorizing” of mission, and the “theologizing” of mission. It requires a posture that “seeks to re-learn mission from the churches of the South, particularly African-led churches” (Omenyo 2013, 66).

Third, it demonstrates the agency of Christian migrants as participants with a global vision of outreach. The mission of African immigrant Christians should not be ignored, even in the face of limited—albeit growing—success in reaching “native” Western populations. Kwame Bediako determined that the “international” self-definition of many African-led churches should be respected because their vision and mission is clearly global (2000, 311). Although mission may not have been the primary reason for migration, it acquires a central place in the mind of many diaspora Christians of the Church of Pentecost who see themselves as Christians with a global mission: evangelists and missionaries called to share the gospel to the ends of the earth (Asamoah-Gyadu 2011, 98). This leads to the charting of new identities and self-understanding within a global framework, what Afe Adogame calls the “global self-assertion” of churches like the Church of Pentecost that represent actual global structures (2013, 151).

However, this emphasis on the globalization and internationalization of African-led churches should not lead to the dismissal of the agency of African

Christian migrants in the local, often urban, contexts in which they live and work. Just as African Christianity has grown (and continues to grow) due to the efforts of millions of local Christians who engage in evangelism on a regular basis, so is the witness of African Christians in the West changing the face of American Christianity. This is less the mission of a few, professional specialists. It is rather primarily what Mark Gornik calls mission “as a way of life” (2011), what Jehu J. Hanciles refers to as a “witness as witness,” (2008, 365) and what J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu calls “witness of presence” (2013, 10). Therefore, rather than measuring the success of African migrant mission through their ability (or lack thereof) to incorporate non-Africans into their diaspora congregations, we should rather understand that “mission primarily takes place where people are”—as they witness to the goodness of a global God at work, school, and in everyday life.

The narrative that emerges is of mission inherently intertwined with migration. As African-led churches with a deep commitment to mission and evangelism cross national and ethnic boundaries, they are contributing to transnational witness through active church planting and in their everyday lives. Therefore, rather than assuming American cities are “unreached” spiritual deserts we must strive to understand the missionary impact of Christian migrants within these contexts, seeking to better know how migrants and their descendants bring the gospel of Christ to bear on the needs and realities of life in new (urban) contexts.

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Mission, Migration, and Christ Church in Vienna

**Forms of Mission in a Multi-ethnic and International
Anglican Church in Vienna.**

FRANK G. C. SAUER

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INTRODUCTION

In this paper I would like to summarise my presentation at the annual conference of the American Society of Missiology in the context of the panel *Migration, Urbanization & Diaspora Communities*. It was a great honor for me to have the opportunity to present parts of my my Ph.D. research project to the audience of the annual conference of the American Society of Missiology. For me it was indeed a first to present my project in front of an international English-speaking audience and to experience a perspective different from a European context.

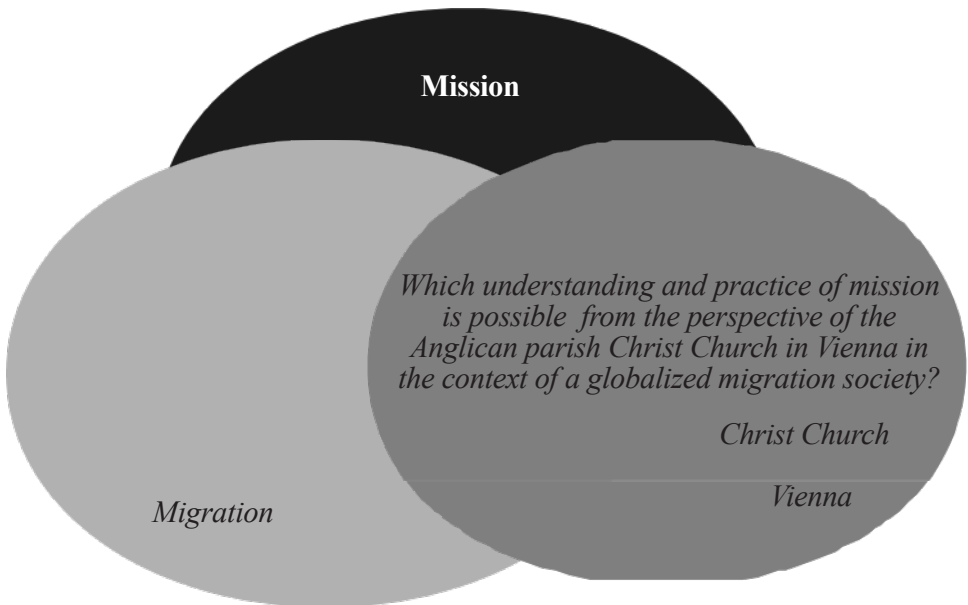
My presentation thematised one part of my ongoing doctoral project which focuses on a contemporary understanding of mission in the context of migration. In general the project is connected to a research area at the Department of Practical Theology of the Faculty of Catholic Theology at the University of Vienna which focuses on religion in the context of migration. The World Migration Report 2013 of the International Organisation for Migration recognizes the phenomenon of migration is indeed characteristic of the world of today (International Organization for Migration (IOM) 2013). Already the Roman Catholic instruction *Erga migrantes caritas Christi* declared in 2004 from a theological perspective: “We can [...] consider the present-day phenomenon of migration a significant ‘sign of the times’, a challenge to be discovered and utilised in our work to renew humanity and proclaim the gospel of peace.” (Catholic Church and Pontificium Consilium de Spirituali Migrantium atque Itinerantium Cura 2004, para. 14). While rooted in the Anglican tradition with ties to the old Catholic churches, I try to add another perspective to the theological discussion about migration within my research.

The focal point of my project are the members of the international Anglican congregation Christ Church in Vienna. In particular I would like to bring into focus the understandings of mission among Christ Church members and how they relate the activities of their congregation to mission.

To understand this segment of my project, it will be helpful to mention the main question of my research and the methodical background of my work. My project relates three topic areas with each other: mission, migration, and

Christ Church in Vienna (fig. 1). Therefore my general research question is: Which understanding and practice of mission is possible from the perspective of the Anglican parish Christ Church in Vienna in the context of a globalised migration society?

Fig. 1: Research Question



My research project aims to learn what a contemporary understanding of mission would look like for an Anglican congregation in Vienna that is highly affected by migration. The main issues of my work is therefore mission as the “lifeblood of the church” (Doe 2011, ix). As the Anglican bishop Michael Doe noted, migration is a very serious topic today and Christ Church is a community predominantly consisting of migrants. Current a views of the dramatic scenes of the Mediterranean Sea migration makes this an even more urgent topic from a European perspective.

Contrary to many other migrant communities, the members of the Anglican church in Vienna are quite privileged and wealthy. What does mission mean in this particular context? To answer this question my approach is practical-

theological. Practical theology I would describe as a reflection on religious practice in the context of contemporary lives and practices (Osmer 2008; Mette 2005).

The methodology for my research included:

- *First*, to describe the situation of Christ Church and its members,
- *Second*, to interpret the situation from the perspective of theology and other sciences such as sociology, and
- *Third*, to try to develop guiding principles for a contemporary mission in this particular context.

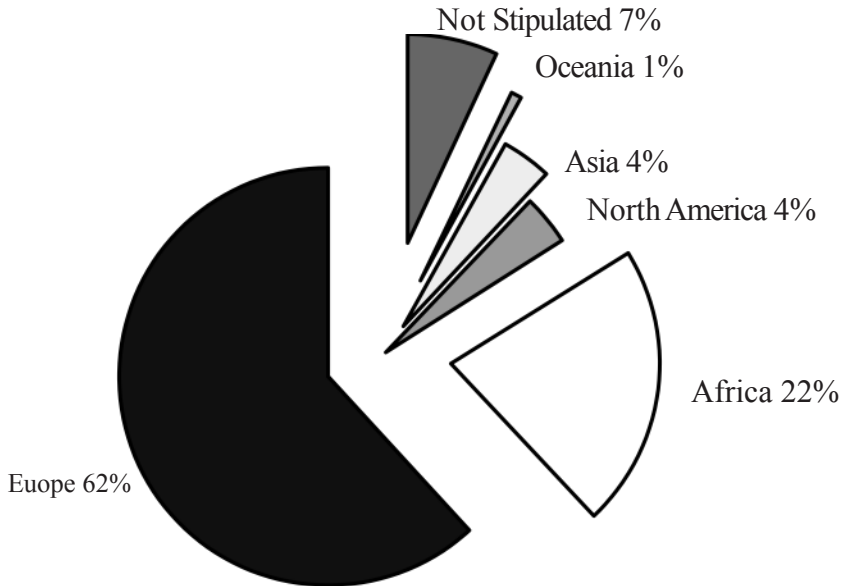
THE DESCRIPTION OF THE SITUATION OF CHRIST CHURCH AND ITS MEMBERS

Christ Church Vienna

Let me start the description of Christ Church and its members by giving some information about the congregation and its surrounding society.

The congregation is located in Vienna, the capital of Austria. Vienna has a population of about 1.8 million inhabitants. There are still strong connections with the countries that in the past were part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, 100-150 years ago. Many migrants living in Vienna today are from Eastern European countries like Poland, Hungary, Romania, and Croatia. There is also a big group of people of Turkish origin, but German immigrants are currently the largest group in Austria (Statistik Austria 2013, 35). Many English speakers live in Vienna because of international organizations such as the United Nations, etc. Consequently, the self-description mentioned on the website is: “Christ Church is made up by people from all over the world. Thanks to many international concerns in Vienna, we have representatives from almost every part of the worldwide Anglican Communion” (Christ Church 2015b). But Christ Church was originally erected as a place of worship for British residents.

The following pie chart shows the origin of current Christ Church members. This is taken from a survey that the church council implemented in 2013 (Stanners 2013).

Fig. 2: Origin of Christ Church Members

As you can see in figure 2 there is a large European group. It is important to say that approximately half of this European group are British passport holders (33%). The other half consists of Austrian passport holders (27%) with only a few other European nationalities represented. The next largest group are members from Africa, primarily from Nigeria and Ghana. Beyond that there are a few members from North America, Asia and Oceania. It is significant that not all of the members of Christ Church are originally Anglican. Many non-Anglicans joined the congregation because of the English services and the liturgical character of the worship. The impression of many members is that the character of the community is still very British. One member said, “It looks very historic [...] It was also very British. That was my feeling. I did recognize there are lot of Africans there, but I felt that the culture is still very British, [...]” (IP2 226-228)¹. But English is the first language of **only** half of the congregation. As a memorial plaque at the entrance of Christ Church says, the church building was “built by Voluntary Contribution and in Conformity with an order in Council of His Imperial Majesty Francis Joseph I permitting the erection of a place of

1 Citations from interviews will be quoted hereafter within the text by code and line number.

worship in which Divine service shall be Conducted according to the Rites of the Church of England was opened upon Sunday the 8th July, 1877..." (Brash, n.d., 1).

It is indeed remarkable that the character of the congregation is still recognized by many members and by people from outside as "British," although Christ Church is much more diverse today. That is a sign that colonialism still has an influence within the Anglican Communion today. The Anglican bishop Michael Doe, mentions with regard to globalization and a post-colonial church, "colonialism is not just about political and military domination but also about cultural hegemony, and how those in power assert this superiority and their right to represent the other" (Doe 2011, 75). This is true for Christ Church as well. One can notice this when there are discussions among members of Christ Church about the proper pronunciation of English words. It is also significant that Christ Church started to offer English language courses. For a congregation located within a predominantly German-speaking context that raises questions about the status of Christ Church within Viennese society. Some members are indeed under the impression that Christ Church is rather something like an "expatriates club" (IP7 395). Although I wouldn't go so far as to say that, I would indeed say that the colonial past of the Anglican Communion is still recognisable within the Anglican congregation in Vienna.

Today the congregation is organizationally part of the Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe, which is the biggest Diocese within the Church of England. Basically the diocese consists of Continental Europe. In Austria, Christ Church is the only Anglican congregation. One hundred and forty - five members are currently on the electoral roll. There are a four places of worship outside of Vienna: Slovenia, Croatia, Slovakia, and Klagenfurt in southern Austria are served by the clergy in Vienna. Hardly surprising, the language of all of the services is English.

Qualitative Interviews: Sampling

After this general information I would like to continue with some of the empirical evidence of my project. I conducted ten guideline based interviews within the congregation in Vienna. The average duration was approximately one hour. The design of my research is a case analysis (Flick 2007, 177-178) of Christ Church. Like many qualitative studies, my work is not arranged as a representative survey. My aim is to gain a greater degree of subjective understanding of mission and

the individual migration experiences within Christ Church. Therefore my general research question asks for possible understandings and practices of mission within Christ Church. The following table shows the origin of the interviewees.

Fig. 3: Interview Sampling

Origin	Lay (male)	Lay (female)	Clergy (male)	Clergy (female)	Total
UK	1	1	1		3
AT	1				1
Other EU		1			1
North America	1	1		1	3
Africa		1			1
Asia	1				1
Total	4	4	1	1	10

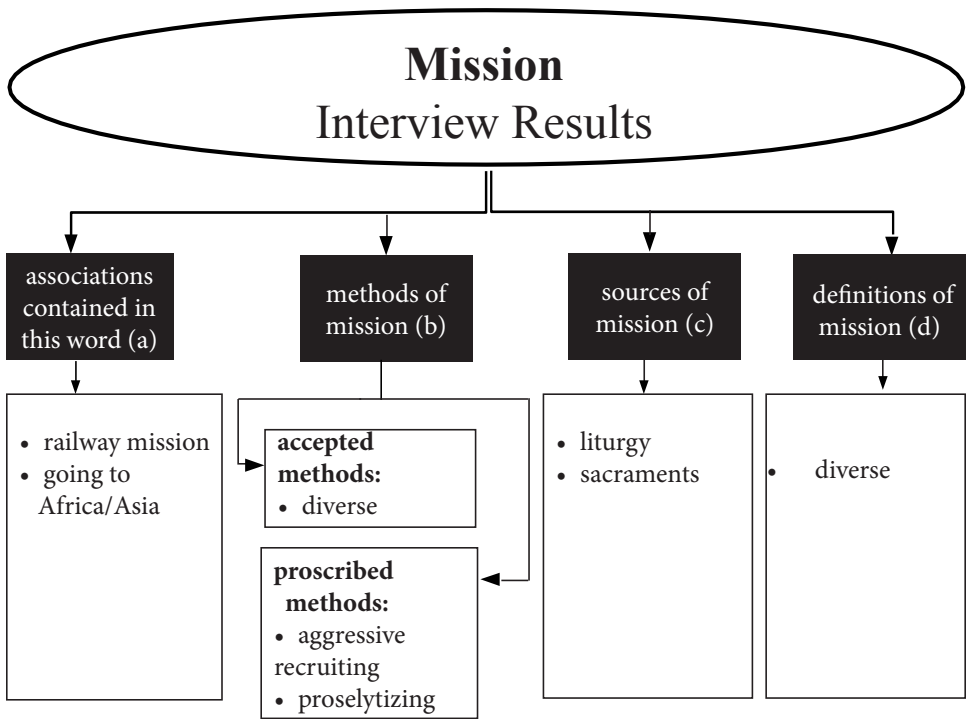
Three members from the UK, one from Austria, one from another part of the European Union, three members from North America, one member from Africa, and one from Asia have been interviewed. Half of the interviewees were male and half were female. Two of the ten interviewees were members of the clergy. On the one hand, the interviewees were selected because of their convenient accessibility and availability after the services. But on the other hand, I tried to get members from different places to get a broader overview of the congregation. In this paper I would like to focus on the interview results that address mission. Approximately 70% of the interviews are already analyzed. All of the interviews have been recorded, transcribed, and identifying information removed. Because of the difficult political situation in the homeland of one interviewee and the small size of the Anglican congregation in Vienna, one interview is not included in the analysis. It was not possible to remove enough identifying material in this case without possibly endangering the interviewee.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE AND RESULTS CONCERNING MISSION IN GENERAL

Concerning mission, my interviews included three questions:

- What comes to your mind when you hear the word “mission”?
- How would you picture your own experience as *mission*?
- How would you define “mission”?

Within the interviews, I have identified four main topics (fig. 4): associations contained in this word (a), methods of mission (b), sources of mission (c), and definitions of mission (d).

Fig. 4: Interview Results – Mission

- a. Interestingly two interviewees associated the term mission with railway mission. In German that is called *Bahnhofsmision*. As an ecumenical aid agency it has assisted people on low incomes for the past 110 years. The aim of this agency was originally to protect women from sexual exploitation who had moved for economic reasons from rural areas to the cities (Lutz, Nikles, and Sattler 2013, 20). Other associations were linked to the idea of going as a missionary to Asia or Africa. One interviewee noticed, “I don’t think mission is going out to Africa and trying to convert the poor black people and tell them that God loves them.” (IP1 567-568). Although this is a negative association from the interviews, it is certainly evident that this is an echo of the colonial past in the history of mission (Bosch 2011, 302 et seq.).
- b. Concerning accepted methods of mission there were diverse and mixed suggestions. Some said that visiting people in prison is a good method and others mentioned the coffee hour after the service. But almost all of the interviewees agreed that proselytizing and aggressive recruiting would not be acceptable. It seems that there isn’t a consistent positive understanding of mission approaches within the congregation. Only the rejection of unacceptable methods is quite clear. The concept of mission seems to be in

crisis, as the Anglican theologian Stephen Spencer has discerned (Spencer 2007, 3 et seqq). He argues that there is a dispute between three different viewpoints mission as social action, mission as church growth, and mission as public witness. He claims that the challenge for Christian communities today is to sort out what the nature of mission really is. Concerning Christ Church that is obvious.

- c. In some of the interviews you find the idea that the liturgy and the sacraments are the sources of mission. These are the places where the Good News is proclaimed and the reconciliation of God with his creation will be envisioned. In this regard, the Old Catholic theologian Angela Berlis wrote about the missionary potential of the liturgy (Berlis 2014). According to Berlis it could be seen as a place of witness and lived faith. She mentions the Dutch art historian Henk von Os, who in 1980 participated in a Eucharistic service of the Episcopal Church in Florence. He was impressed by the solemn liturgy and felt himself swept up into the ceremony with his whole body. The Protestant theologian Martin Wallraff states in his article “Mission and Media” (Wallraff 2012, 70 et seq.) that the liturgy occupied an important place concerning mission from the beginning of the Christian Church. Liturgy was a very prominent instrument of mission. Therefore the ideas concerning the cohesion of liturgy and mission within the interviews can be found in ancient Christian tradition.

An additional aspect is that the liturgy, especially the Eucharist, for a migrant community, is often very important. It is about the fellowship of migrants within a different cultural environment. Surveys in Europe and the USA have shown that religion is quite important within the process of migration (Brazal and Guzman 2015, 141).

- d. Once again, characteristic of the definitions of mission the interviewees tried to draft is that there is not one consistent understanding of mission. (It could however also be the case that there was not much reflection about mission in Christ Church previous to my interviews.) On the contrary, the definitions are pluralistic and sometimes inconsistent. Maybe that is not unusual for a congregation with members who migrated to Vienna from all over the world. According to the Anglican theologian Stephen Spencer, you can recognize mass immigration to western countries after the two world wars as an important source for the pluralist societies of modern Europe (Spencer 2007, 163). This may apply to the churches in Europe as well. Diversity and migration are major phenomena of today’s world. Migration in itself is not something new. There are experiences of migration one can identify from the beginning of human history. The Bible reflects a lot of migration stories as well (Nguyen and Prior 2014, xi). Abraham migrating to Canaan, the exodus experience, and Jesus and his parents fleeing to Egypt are only a few examples. But the growing diversity and the global dimension of migration is indeed something that is uniquely characteristic concerning the

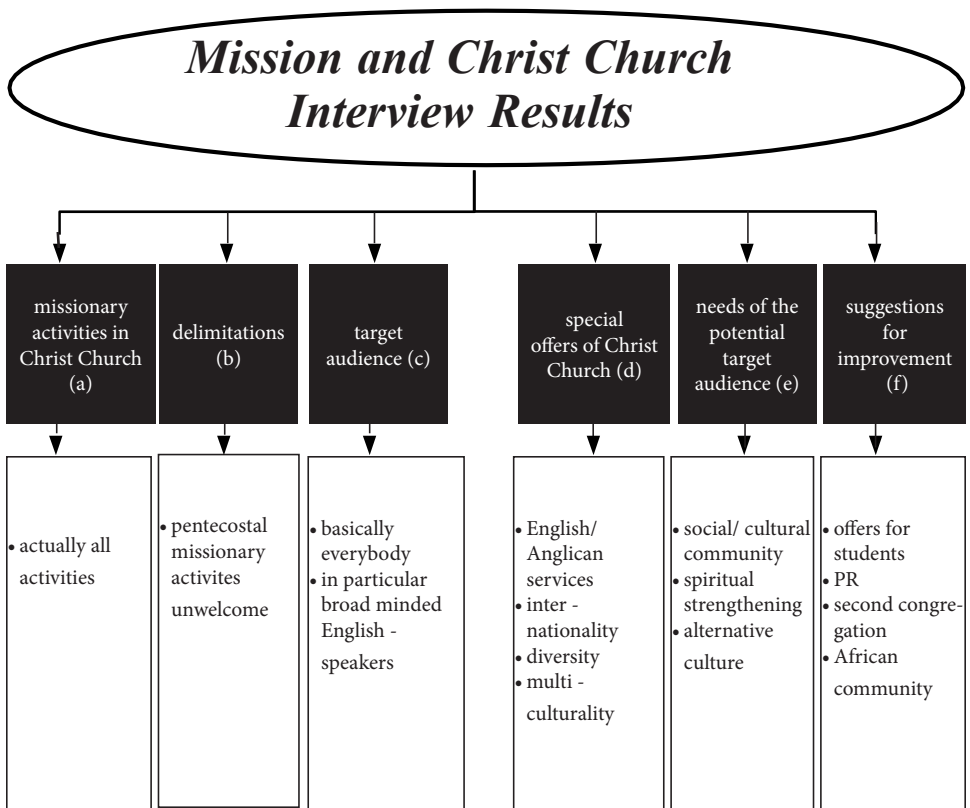
post-modern phenomena of migration. Furthermore, it is remarkable that the majority of modern migrants are Christians. This impacts aspects of mission. Migration has always been an important stimulus for mission during the history of Christianity (Reimer 2011, 53).

Interview Schedule and Results Concerning Mission and Christ Church

Relating to Mission and Christ Church my interview contained the following questions:

- What specific activities in Christ Church would you qualify as successful or inefficient missionary activities?
- For which group of people in Vienna is Christ Church ministering in your judgement?
- What are the needs of this group in your opinion?
- Could you please mention three special gifts and talents that Christ Church could offer the people in Vienna?

Again I identified the main topic areas as follows (fig. 5): missionary activities in Christ Church (a), delimitations (b), target audience (c), special offers of Christ Church (d), needs of the potential target audience (e), and suggestions for improvement (f).

Fig. 5: Interview Results – Mission and Christ Church

- a. Like the previous definitions of mission, the descriptions of the missionary activities among the members in Christ Church are diverse. Actually you can find all the activities of Christ Church mentioned as missionary activities. The Advent bazaar, the excursions, the concerts, etc. are only some examples. Diversity and inconsistent descriptions in relation to mission are once more found in the international Anglican congregation in Vienna. Moreover, I presume that the word “mission” was quite problematic for many of the interviewees. Someone said to me in German: “Ich [...] finde, das macht man einfach nicht [...]. Man geht nicht auf Menschen zu und versucht sie anzuwerben.” (IP3 518-519). In this view, mission is mainly connected to the unacceptable recruitment of people.
- b. Beyond that there are some other negative views. One interviewee said that pentecostal missionary activities would not be appropriate for Christ Church. That illustrates that Christ Church has a special flavor which is more connected to the Anglo-Catholic part of the Anglican Communion, or according to Stephen Spencer the “Catholic Ways of Discipleship” (Spencer 2010, 81). Within the Anglican Community one can recognise many

Christian movements over the course of church history. The Anglo-Catholic movement is in particular connected to the Oxford Movement with its renewal of the Western Catholic tradition within the Anglican church. The liturgy, the sacraments, the apostolic succession, etc. became very important during this renewal.

- c. Nevertheless, there is an understanding that Christ Church is for everybody. That reflects a general openness which is characteristic of the Anglican identity. The Anglican theologian, Paul Avis, explains this in the following way: “We are the church. You also are the church. But neither of us is the church in its fullness.” (Avis 2007, 166). On one side, Anglicans in Vienna welcome other Christians as brothers and sisters in Christ. They are invited to participate in Anglican services and to come for Holy Communion (Church of England 2000, 159). On the other hand, there is an awareness of the character of an English-speaking congregation. Therefore, the interviewees said that the target audience for Christ Church in particular are broad-minded English-speakers. It was mentioned in almost all the interviews that the English language has a central role. This was not always mentioned positively. As I already brought up, there are interviewees that experienced Christ Church more like an English expatriates club.
- d. Consequently, the interviewees pictured the Anglican services in English as a special service of Christ Church. Beyond that, the internationality, diversity, and multiculturalism of the Church was seen as a speciality of the congregation. Again one can recognize the slight tension between a universal understanding of the church and the particular character of a congregation like Christ Church.
- e. The needs of the potential target audience have been characterised by the interviewees as providing a social and cultural community, spiritual strengthening, and presenting an alternative culture in the context of Austrian or Viennese society. Providing social activities, a local community to look after each other, spiritual development, and the experience of a different alternative to Austrian society seem to be very remarkable aspects of Christ Church. This mirrors the migratory nature of the Anglican congregation in Vienna. For all of the migrant members of Christ Church there is the challenge to find a place within Austrian society. This can be understood as a process of acculturation, where members of a group of people try to find a place in the cultural environment of another group. Within this process, mechanisms of the adoption and rejection of some cultural dimensions can be recognised (Zick 2009, 534). Certainly the community of Christ Church is a necessary contact point for this acculturation process. The congregation offers obvious solidarity and encouragement for many of its migrant members. But this contribution is not totally successful in relation to the full inclusion of Christ Church and its members into Austrian society. There is indeed the impression within parts of the congregation that they should not be part of the surrounding society. One interviewee, for instance, mentioned: “ ... I don't see

this as being a part of the Austrian society.” (IP2 244).

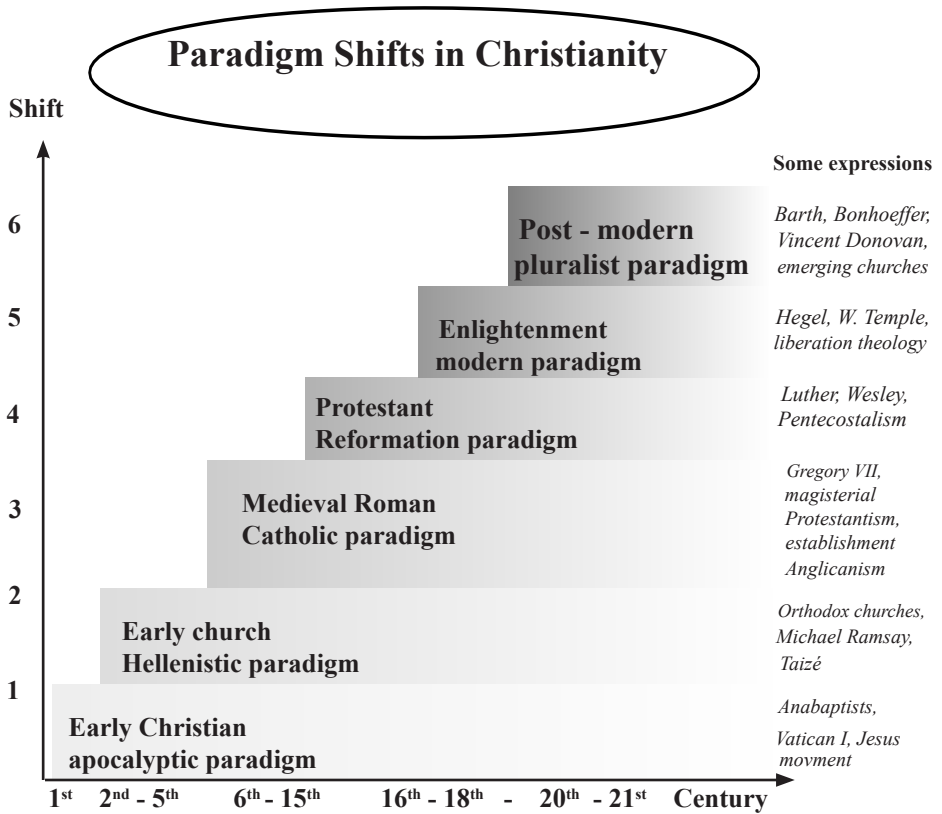
f. Finally the interview partners suggested improvements to mission at Christ Church. Some would like to see more services for students in the community. Other would like to see more involvement with the African community. Furthermore, public relations and a possible second congregation in Vienna have been suggested as well. To my mind this reflects issues discussed within the congregation. With regard to the students, there is probably the feeling that there should be more young people in the community. On the one hand, some interviewees would like to reach more people, but on the other hand some felt that the church is often quite crowded. This was the reason for one interviewed member to think about a second congregation. But for a majority of the interviewees, the topic of more involvement with the Africans within the congregation was a highlighted issue. There was the impression that there is an African subgroup in the community that is not as integrated into Christ Church as it should or could be. This shows that besides the acculturation process of Christ Church members into the Austrian context, there are indeed cultural disagreements within the congregation itself.

But, how can all these insights help to find an initial point for the construction of an appropriate concept of Christian mission? What would a contemporary understanding of mission for Christ Church look like?

THE INTERPRETATION

Paradigm Shifts in Christianity

The Anglican theologian, Stephen Spencer, introduces a model of paradigm shifts to help answer the question of the contemporary understanding and practice of mission (Spencer 2007, 42). This model is based of the works of the Reformed theologian, David Bosch (Bosch 2011), and the Roman Catholic theologian, Hans Küng (Küng 1996).

Fig. 6: Paradigm Shifts in Christianity

I tried to illustrate the ideas of Spencer, Bosch, and Küng in figure 6. The first point of this model is that there have been different paradigm shifts connected to the respective contexts in Church history. Six paradigms have been identified. These paradigms are the early Christian apocalyptic paradigm, the early church Hellenistic paradigm, the medieval Roman Catholic paradigm, the protestant reformation paradigm, the enlightenment modern paradigm, and the post-modern pluralist paradigm. The second point is that each paradigm is still present and finds its expression in the different parts of today's church (Spencer 2007, 37 et seq.). Pentecostalism, by way of example, relates to the protestant Reformation paradigm and liberation theology is related to the Enlightenment modern paradigm. In each paradigm one can recognise a certain approach to mission.

The argument is that after the disastrous experiences of the first and second world wars, and in the midst of the phenomena of mass migration, churches

are looking for a new understanding of mission. In the context of today's diversity and pluralism, the former understandings of mission are not sufficient. But in the mission practices of the churches and in the consciousness of Christians one can still detect the former understandings of mission.

The diverse definitions of mission which I identified in the interviews with members of Christ Church demonstrate how the congregation is wrestling for a new understanding of mission. On one side, there is an awareness of the insufficiency of the colonial context of mission, but on the other hand you can still find echoes of the imperial past from the British Empire. While Christ Church in the past was built as a congregation for British residents, it is today a highly international and multi-ethnic community. That is exactly what the post-modern growth in diversity is about. As a result you can see Christ Church is very much influenced by the post-modern pluralist paradigm.

Christ Church and Mission within Post-modernity

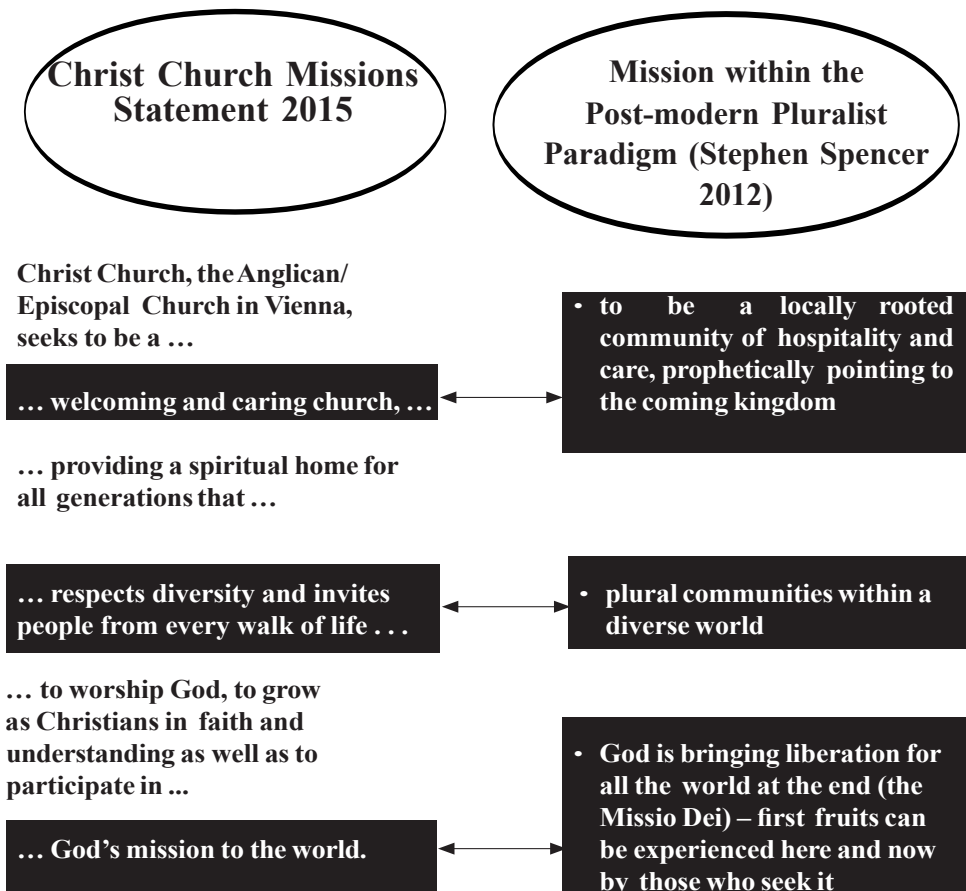
Another example of my assertion that Christ Church is affected by the post-modern paradigm is the recently formulated mission statement of the church council (Christ Church 2015a). To illustrate this, figure 7 compares the mission statement of Christ Church and the definition of the post-modern pluralist paradigm of Stephen Spencer (Spencer 2007, 161 et seqq.).

The context of that paradigm comes from the experience of the great disasters in the 21st century. These disasters are the two world wars, the Shoah, the atomic bomb, poverty, oppression, and the ecological crisis. The narrative of the enlightenment era that the world could be made systematically a better place by reason has failed in the light of the great catastrophes of the last century. The end of universal narratives and the phenomena of mass migration in the present has brought about a world of pluralism and diversity. In this context, mission needs a different approach. The local community becomes more important. It is a place where people can find hospitality and care. Within a diverse world the local communities are the places where the first signs of the coming kingdom of God can be recognized. But the liberation of the whole world will be brought by God at the end. God is the first actor. Mission is God's mission first (*Missio Dei*).

Christ Church describes itself as a welcoming and caring church. The diversity of people coming to the congregation is recognised as a positive. There

is an awareness that God is the first actor and that the people of Christ Church are participating in the mission of God. The term *God's mission* is explicitly mentioned. Moreover the concept of the *Missio Dei* is mentioned in one of the interviews. One interviewee said, "Basically I think it's God's mission" (IP1 411).

Fig. 7: Christ Church and the Post-modern Pluralist Paradigm



If you match the mission statement of Christ Church with the description of the post-modern pluralist paradigm by Stephan Spencer you can find many similarities: the aspect of plurality, the concept of *Missio Dei*, the aspect of

hospitality and care, and the local community. Therefore I would like to relate the situation and the context of Christ Church to the post-modern pluralist paradigm (fig. 6) as a first step in developing mission guidelines for the Anglican church in Vienna. The central concept will be the *Missio Dei* which is explicitly mentioned in the mission statement, and which is an important issue currently discussed in the Anglican Communion as a whole (The Lambeth Conference 2008, para. 21–22).

PROSPECTS – THE DEVELOPEMENT OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Missio Dei and Reconciliation

The *Missio Dei* concept was indeed a reaction to the theological thinking that resulted from the enlightenment. The term *Mission of God* means the self-revelation of the loving God within this world (Doe 2011, 39). This is regularly connected to the concept of Paul: “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ ...” (2 Cor. 5:19-20). The final document of the Lambeth Conference 2008 mentions this text as well (The Lambeth Conference 2008, para. 21). The central direction of the *Missio Dei* is seen as the reconciliation of the whole world to God. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, defined the *Mission of God* consequently in the following way: “Reconciliation is God’s mission to the world in Christ; therefore it is our mission.” (Groves 2014, ix). And likewise: “Reconciliation is at the heart of our calling to serve God in prayer and in witness.” (Groves 2014, ix).

The Episcopal theologian, Titus Presler, explains concerning Paul’s term of reconciliation in the second letter to the Corinthians: “The Greek verb Paul uses for this work is *katalasso*, which means to re-establish friendly interpersonal relations after these have been disrupted or broken, or to reconcile those who are at variance” (Presler 2010, 73–74). For Paul reconciliation goes beyond the end of a clash. It is the restoration of the broken relationship of God with his creation (Groves 2014, 9). Consequently, the renewal includes the relationship of God and human beings, of human being among themselves, and of human beings and the whole of creation. This doubtlessly involves all kinds of questions concerning justice and goes far beyond that. Maybe after a war justice has been achieved and offenders have been sentenced, but at the end, reconciliation still asks the

question about how we live together after we have done terrible things to each other. How can we live reconciled, knowing that God in Christ already made the first step to reconcile the whole cosmos (κόσμον – 2 Cor. 5:19) to himself? That is the mission we are part of.

Marks of Mission and Approach of Action

From an Anglican point of view, the *Book of Common Prayer of the Episcopal Church* makes it very clear that the mission of reconciliation is the central duty of **all** members of the Church. “The mission of the church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ” (Publishing 1979, 855) and, “The Church carries out its mission through the ministry of all its members” (Publishing 1979, 855). Furthermore reconciliation is the central term of mission expressed in a prayer within *Common Worship*, the contemporary prayer book of the Church of England: “Almighty God, who called your Church to witness that in Christ you were reconciling the world to yourself: help us so to proclaim the good news of your love, that all who hear it may be reconciled to you through him who died for us and rose again and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever” (Church of England 2000, 55).

Having identified reconciliation as the central aspect of God’s mission, the question is in which way should the members of the church participate in this mission? What are the key parameters of mission for Christians? What could mission mean in a practical way? What does that mean in particular for Christ Church?

In the Anglican Communion, Five Marks of Mission have been developed to characterize the practice of mission from of the concept of the *Missio Dei* as follows:

1. To proclaim the good news of the Kingdom
2. To teach, baptize, and nurture new believers
3. To respond to human need by loving service
4. To seek to transform unjust structures in society
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth (Markham et al. 2013, 684).

These marks picture again three aspects of restoration: reconciliation of human beings with God, with each other, and with creation. There are many activities of Christ Church that one can relate to these three aspects, or the Five Marks of Missions. The chaplain of Christ Church Vienna mentioned the marks of mission explicitly in a report about the activities of the congregation for the annual church meeting in 2014 (Sauer 2015, 10). Interestingly enough, the members of the congregation didn't relate their activities explicitly to mission or the theological aspects within their reports for the annual church meeting. That was the reason for the chaplain to urge the congregation in his report not to forget the Christian direction of all their activities. The danger is that Christians do all sorts of things in their communities, but forget the deeper reason for their actions (Sauer 2015, 20). Mission as reconciliation is not so much about activism, but more about a form of being. The Anglican theologians, Phil Groves and Anghard Parry Jones, advise correctly that "living reconciliation begins with an openness to share in the lives of our companions" (Groves 2014, 122). This is especially accurate concerning all questions of social justice, etc. This will be the starting point to develop guiding principles for the Anglican congregation of Christ Church in Vienna. A good argument can be made that there is more need for theological reflection within Christ Church concerning their activities, especially when it comes to aspects of colonialism and acculturation as set out in this paper.

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