

The Impact of Globalized Immigration on Mission and Missiology

CHRISTIAN DUMITRESCU, PhD, AIAS

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Abstract: The globalization process created a set of new challenges for mission and missiological thinking and teaching. Eastern and Western cultures influence each other. Immigration moves people from one side of the world to the other. Too often immigrants were taken advantage of for missionary purposes in their openness created by the transition to a new environment. Too often the Bible is offered to them in Western terms and logic, and mission is taught with Western philosophy and strategies. This paper will look at the challenges and opportunities created by immigration in both directions and look at how the process of contextualization needs to be adjusted to people who experience both rejection and gradual acceptance of new cultural values. What strategies may be both faithful to Scripture and to the culture and worldview of the guests in our culture? The paper will also assess the missiologists' current awareness of the new developments in immigration patterns and their responses.

Introduction

Globalization is defined today as “interconnectedness” (Tiplady 2003:2), as “complex connectivity” (Tomlinson 1999:2), or as an “intensification of worldwide social relations” (Giddens 1990:64). Tiplady describes globalization as a process in which “events and developments in one part of the world are affected by, have to take account of, and also influence, in turn, other parts of the world.” He also notes that globalization creates “an increasing sense of a single global whole” (Tiplady 2003:2). It goes beyond internationalization where communication mechanisms enhance cooperation between different entities. Globalization implies that all nations, institutions, networks, and individual players become one. As Tiplady concludes, “Globalisation is about global interconnectedness, not global Americanness” (or Westernisation) (Tiplady 2003:4).

However, globalization is not unidirectional, it runs many ways: both from the West to the Rest and from the Rest to the West, as well as from the North to South and return. Tiplady cautions that “ideas and products . . . when they get to their new destination, are not imbibed wholesale. They are adapted to fit the local situation” (Tiplady 2003:4). This adaptation changes globalization into “glocalization,” with its religious counter partner being the glocal church. Describing the glocal church, Dyrness and Garcia-Johnson portray it as “a sociocultural space that is diasporic, polyphonic, and polyvalent at its core” (Dyrness and Garcia-Johnson 2015:123).

Globalization and Christianity

Christianity was supposed to be global from its beginnings. When Jesus prayed for his disciples to be one, he wanted them to be part of the world. Obedience to the same Christ makes Christianity global. He often emphasized the importance of obedience to the Father for the sake of unity. When commissioning his disciples for mission, Jesus re-emphasized the global nature of the incipient movement in the light of the Adamic, Noahic, and Abrahamic blessing. Because of Israel's reluctance to go to the nations, people had to come to Israel in order to hear the good news of salvation, and too often they had to become Jews or proselytes to have access to the temple and sacrifices. Jesus restored the global nature of his people in light of his presentation of the divine beings as one. History shows that globalization happened cyclically, but today, as Shenk notes, "a new stage in this process toward an integrated world system has been reached. We have no choice but to recast knowledge and relationships in light of the processes of modern globalization" (Shenk 2006:9).

Today, no nation can survive isolated. But our sense of interdependence needs to evolve "into a compelling sense of solidarity across national boundaries. We have become interdependent with one another at the global level in all the important areas of life, in economics, politics, and culture, and the challenge is how to develop a sense of universal humanity in a way that does not either suppress legitimate differences or reify and absolutize such differences but sublates them into a recognition of common humanity" (Min 2008:189).

Mission cannot escape the "two-way street" context. From the beginning, Christians under persecution moved to other countries and cultures, and mission was done by im/migration. Today, refugees are forced to find shelter in Christian nations where locals may witness to them. In Scott Sunquist's words, "persecution is one of many causes of movements of people. From the beginning of time humans have been on the move, carrying their possessions as well as ideas and religious beliefs with them." In many parts of Africa, "migration, not intentional missionary activity, mostly explains this spread of Christianity" (Sunquist 2015:136). The current process of globalization brings back missional challenges and opportunities from past centuries at a larger scale. If history recorded most of these movements in the Western cultures, it does not mean they did not happen in other parts of the world, such as Asia or Africa. They were simply not so well documented or recorded.

Walls also observes that "Global Christianity is not a product of the twentieth century. . . . It is easily forgotten that the emperor of China was studying the Christian Scriptures at almost exactly the time that the king of Northumbria in Northern England was placing the adoption of the Christian way before his council, and that by the seventh century gospel preaching

had spread across the whole Eurasian land mass from the Atlantic almost to the Pacific. Much of Asia had a millennium and a half of Christian history before the first Western missionaries reached there, and some parts of Africa have a continuous Christian history far longer than Scotland's. In those early centuries the gospel interacted with cultures other than the Greek and Roman, and theological developments took place in other cultures than these" (Walls 2012:28).

Comparing Christianity of the first centuries with Christianity today, Walls finds powerful globalization parallels. He notes that the church through the centuries "lived amidst religious plurality, where Christians had to interact with those of other faiths. Its theology faced issues arising from Chinese, Indian, and Buddhist language, culture, and religion, and it had to reckon with Islam, not as a rival but as a ruler" (Walls 2012:29).

The post-World War II migration to Europe, after the demise of Western empires and colonialism, is linked by Sunquist to the concept of "reverse mission." "Migrating largely from Hindu and Muslim cultures, they were coming to live in the shadow of cathedrals and monasteries. . . . Nearly 20 million Muslims from North Africa, Iraq, Turkey, and the Balkans as well as from West Africa have settled in Western Europe, so that in France about 10 percent of the population is now Muslim and in Britain about 4.4 percent" (Sunquist 2015:138). Sunquist notes fairly accurately that "In the past, the flow of people and missionaries was from the West to the South and the East. The present missionary movement does not follow the mass movements going mostly to the West, but most of the African, Latin American, Pacific Island, and Asian missionaries are working within their regions. . . . These are the major new twists of migrations and missions at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The result is a much more culturally diverse Christianity and a much broader missionary engagement with cultures and societies than the world has ever known" (Sunquist 2015:138).

Globalization changed the economic status of many non-Western countries, for better or for worse. The newly created imbalance impacted the worldview of people, especially in terms of education, church life and organization, and mission. Consumerism and secularism are piggybacking on globalization and producing what Valerio calls global mobility. She lists two sides of global mobility: "Firstly, there is the mobility of the wealthy: those who can travel to the UK (for example) to study and just visit. Secondly, there is the mobility brought by displaced peoples: economic refugees and asylum seekers. This mobility brought by economic globalization, whether positive or negative, allows for many opportunities, and mission agencies are well placed to help local churches, through their knowledge of people's homelands" (Valerio 2003:20).

Payne sees the hand of God behind global mobility, stating that “The Lord of the harvest has been moving some of the world’s unreached and least reached peoples to countries where governmental opposition will not interfere with missionary labors and where obtaining a visa and the costs of travel are not issues. The church in the West must remember her missional nature and function intentionally, strategically, and apostolically” (Payne 2012:33).

According to Patrick Johnstone’s demographic study (2011), migration is the second major global challenge. He challenges churches not only to be aware of the trend, but also “prepare for this inevitable, unstoppable reality” (Johnstone 2011:4). He warns that an aging Western society, due to falling birth rates, especially in Europe, “will have created a population deficit, which will be made up, legally or illegally, from the poorer parts of the world until the global population begins to stabilize” (2011:4). With a prophetic voice, Johnstone states that his predictions and charts may remain true if migration patterns are not upset by demographic catastrophes, “most of which would affect Muslim-majority regions . . . greatly increase that number and add to the large and growing Muslim communities that are least willing to assimilate into their host countries and cultures” (2011:4). Looking at possible migration patterns, he identifies Northern and sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East as refugee reservoirs from those politically, economically, and demographically volatile areas. Notably, he predicts that “the global Muslim population is likely to grow as fast as the Caucasian population shrinks” until 2050 (2011:5). These demographic changes already happen today at an accelerated rate, due to conflicts and natural disasters, and missionaries and missiologists need to respond to the new realities and predictions.

For the past few years, as a result of war and conflict in the Middle East and Northern Africa, Europe witnessed an increased influx of immigrants from these areas. European governments and citizens reacted differently. While Germany and Austria encouraged immigrants to get to their countries, Hungary or Slovenia closed their borders. Although, generally, population in every country stepped in to help, immigrants seemed to reject the resources offered. Many Westerners became upset when media showed immigrants angrily throwing on railroad tracks the water bottles received as a gift. Quite a number of Middle Easterners, educated people, obviously felt humiliated to be treated as refugees. They demanded free transit, caring less about visa requirements or border control issues.

Not long after immigrants settled in Western European cities, European citizens discovered and watched in horror how media presented incredible scenes of sexual harassment in public square, and even rape, while police forces pretended not to see or be overwhelmed. In fact, reports filed by police officers were hidden while major media news channels refused to include such events

in their news casts. Europeans started to have chills asking themselves how could immigrants be so ungrateful and respond with such barbarity to the warm welcoming in the very countries that offered them not only shelter but food and help for integration in the new society.

Something was obviously wrong, and many blamed the immigrants' lack of education, morals, or ethical principles. They were often portrayed as animals, and nationalistic political parties seized the moment to ask that the immigrants be sent back home. However, only a few faint voices talked about cultural differences, and even fewer had the courage to ask for an evaluation of the differences between the values of the newcomers and those of the local population.

Even before the recent wave of immigrants from the Middle East and Northern Africa, Europe discovered that the loudly trumpeted policy of multiculturalism was not producing the expected cultural or ethnical heterogeneity. Nationalistic feelings were more and more displayed, especially in countries with a history of ethnic cleansing. The melting pot was also a fiasco, because the individual entities did not merge together. Everybody started to ask the question, Why? Politicians claimed that legislation was the problem. Sociologists blamed the differences in cultures, traditions, and practices. However, the problem seems to be much deeper, and this paper would try to look at the differences in values and assumptions, and assess the level where the conflict really takes place. Unfortunately, very few people take the time to listen and understand how immigrants feel, think, and see the world around them. The cultural values and worldviews of these two worlds are different and only by understanding them a solution to the crisis may be found. How are Western nations responding to immigration woes? And how are missiologists and missionaries responding to the immigration crisis in the context of globalization?

Different worlds

Europe boasted the creation of a space without borders. But under the pressure of the new wave of immigrants it closed its outer and intra borders again. In every European country nationalism is on the rise. The question is How it affects mission? How are churches going to respond? And what about our theology of mission and our strategies? Do we use the historical windows of opportunity? We seem to be debating if a C5 insider movement approach is justifiable or not, while borders are closed and windows of opportunity lost. Are we prepared, pro-active, so when an opportunity arrives we already have trained people and contextualized approaches ready?

The cultural dimension of globalization is creating abysmal tensions. Since culture is so pervasive, the conflict between different cultural values challenges missiologists and missionaries. In Hanciles' words, "No aspect of the debate is more problematic than the now commonplace assertion that globalization is a homogenizing force ushering in a single global culture or universal civilization" (Hanciles 2008:48)

People from different cultural backgrounds do not live in the same world. Their worldviews are different, and they practically live in different worlds. If, for Westerners, rules and laws have as source of authority the judicial system and a constitution, "In traditional cultures, people validate actions and practices by appealing to tradition" (Shenk 2006:9). There should be no surprise that, for immigrants, rules are there to be bent or broken if personal face or the honor of the group needs to be defended.

Most immigrants feel depressed and lonely, in spite of groups or individuals that visit them. They clearly miss the community and lack their (extended) family that usually provides support. Due to the strong individualistic values, the society in the West assumes that immigrants feel content having a shelter and decent living conditions. Loneliness is widespread among newcomers regardless if one is an immigrant or a migrant (student, temporary worker, etc.). Individualistic societies keep individuals busy so they cannot even associate with their peers. From a mentality of survival, they find themselves having to compete for status and achievements. For many immigrants the language barrier adds to the isolation.

Most immigrants often seem claustrophobic because of the cramped apartments where they have to live or the cubicles in which they have to work. Space in the West has different meanings than back at home. There is no sacred space, and Westerners keep scrubbing every corner as if leprosy is endemic in their houses or countries. There are lots of private properties, and in general the idea of privacy is completely different.

Time is perceived differently by the two categories: for Westerners time is money, and it seems they never have time to talk, to enjoy life, or to meditate. An immigrant wants to communicate, to share his or her stories, but their hosts barely have time to exchange the mundane information of the day under the pressure of impossible schedules. A Westerner finds validation in the accomplishments of the future while immigrants are validated by their connections with their past.

For immigrants, shame is to be avoided at any cost and honor guarded fiercely and increased as much as possible. No effort is spared to avoid shame, even if one has to lie straight to someone's face. Such an approach is not

accepted by Westerners who believe truth is the capital value and justice is the highest ideal. But what, is the immigrant asking, if you are right while all your friends are abandoning you and you are left isolated and alone? Relationships are more palpable and alive than abstract ideas of truth or righteousness. Conflict is in the air.

Equality is another important value for Westerners, but not in the non-Western world. Your family provides you with a quota of honor and status that you will have to maintain and increase. One will always be striving for a higher status. As a karmic believer, your concern is to insure your birth into a superior status. Even within the Indian society's caste system, one doesn't pretend or claim equality with Brahmins, but stays within the agreed social and cultural boundaries.

Equality between genders is a utopia in most of the world. Each immigrant arriving in the West has roles assigned depending on their gender. Even within the same gender, the place in the order of birth makes a huge difference. In polygamous families each wife has certain given duties made clear at the time of marriage or even implied by the ranking position. The first wife will always be the one in charge of the house, directing the other wives in their chores. It is the husband's duty to provide for living, women are not expected to look for a job. If a wife looks for a job, the husband feels ashamed and humiliated because the assumption is that he cannot provide.

Every female has to be attached to a male in order to have status in society, and wives should have children, especially sons. Wives without sons are often abandoned by their husbands, and widows without children are repudiated by the extended family and have a hard time surviving. Most of the times, especially when still young, these widows are seen as a potential temptation for other women's husbands, so the community expels them.

It is only "normal" and assumed for a Middle Easterner male, who recently arrived in the West, to sexually harass a lone woman on the street because to him such a woman is available or is a prostitute. No honorable woman, in his eyes, would walk alone in the public square without a male companion, or without dressing according to the honor and modesty code they were used to. Websites report daily violence against women or entire communities at the hands of immigrants in West European countries. There is a rise of hatred or demands that immigrants behave according to the ethical and societal agreed norms of the West. However, immigrants' worldviews and values do not change overnight, or even at all.

Face is the most important value in the majority world. Traditional cultures apparently embraced globalization, but in reality it was a polite way to receive the uninvited guest and save the face of both, at the same time fighting strongly to maintain identity and values intact. Often, Christianity has been accepted, but old traditions and beliefs continued more or less visible. Strong syncretistic cultures exist in many parts of the world that were Christianized during the past few centuries. Spirits became saints, incantations became hymns, sacrifices became offerings, while rituals have often been baptized. The Western emphasis on truth, understood as universal, clashed with the locals' understanding of face. Truth was to be avoided if face or honor needed to be saved.

The other side of truth is that it was never intended to be defined as a set of abstract principles or dogmas. Truth was always incarnated. Jesus described himself as the truth, at a time when the Pharisees and the scribes were debating principles of orthodoxy. Jesus never divorced orthodoxy from orthopraxy. As James stated in his letter, it is futile to prove the right faith without the right action. But Jesus always invited people to live by the right action in order to be consistent with their faith. He showed them how to save face and be truthful at the same time. Jesus himself denied he was going to be present at the Passover celebration in Jerusalem, only to show up there during the ceremonies. No one accused him of being a liar, everyone understood he needed to save his face and his ministry. For immigrants today, truth is incarnated in life, it is part of daily being and doing. Truth is not an attribute of religion; it is life itself. Truth is real.

It is not uncommon to see new Christian converts accepting the new religion but having problems living it. Ministers and missionaries are only too happy to baptize immigrants who accepted Jesus out of respect for their hosts and with the desire not to lose face. In the race for numbers, very few missionaries and evangelists ask questions to determine the real *metanoia* in the life of the new converts. In other words, Westerners take advantage of the values and assumptions of immigrants for their own very pragmatic purposes. Real discipleship takes time, and time is not to be wasted in the West. How many times did we hear horror stories about young converts from among immigrants who acted based on their unchanged assumptions and values? People for whom polygamy was normal, lying was necessary, and violence and bloodshed was required in order to wash away shame, showed up at our door and we assumed they shared our values and worldview.

The major current challenge I witness in the globalized village is a powerless Christianity. Other major world religions, especially outside of the Western world, are ways of life, not simply a doctrine or an intellectual assent. Too often Christianity is presented as a cover to other aspects of life. It is like a coat put on or taken off depending on the need. A Christian worldview is frequently

described in biblical terms, but in reality those are systematic doctrines defined and interpreted over the centuries in the West. Most Christian principles are devoid of cultural context. Dichotomy and the separation of life into isolated compartments contributed to the dualistic identity of Christianity. Terry LeBlanc writes that “Dualism is comfortably embedded in the foundations of Western Christian theology. As a consequence, it has become increasingly difficult for Western Christians to make sense of what we are discovering, by means of contemporary science, to be a far more interrelated cosmos than we had ever imagined” (LeBlanc 2012:175).

Many times, new converts have been taught to read the Scripture with Western eyes, without realizing that two major worldviews clashed and different values had to be accommodated. Some assumptions and values went undercover, but did not disappear. When crisis hit, the old worldview was there and surfaced by default.

Missiology in the Global Context

Theology and missiology were historically defined by the West, according to the Greek philosophical understanding. Even the process of contextualization is a Western creation, due to centuries of lack of theological flexibility. The recent focus on humans, as a counterbalance to theology as the study of God, reveals the innate ability of human nature to adapt to newly discovered realities. Missiology itself went through an arduous process of transformation from understanding mission as belonging to the church to *missio Dei*. From mission to overseas territories to mission in the back yard. From unreached countries to unreached people groups. From pure exegetical theology to enlisting the support of anthropology and other social sciences. Missiology stands today as a multidisciplinary activity that intends to exegete both the Word of God and the World of humans.

The Enlightenment’s project to provide universal principles and values evidently failed. Modernity’s push for globalization managed to create superficial universals, but underneath the visible, the vast realm of differences and division remained alive more than ever. Modernity tried to offer universals removed from the cultural context, but cross-cultural encounters proved the limits and illusory nature of modernity’s claims.

With the arrival of the internet and email communication, Westerners shared—or even imposed—their theologies, religious views, opinions, and hermeneutical approaches. Academic courses, literature, seminars, webinars flood today the internet “often at the expense of people from other countries developing their own material that would reflect their individual cultures more adequately” (Valerio 2003:19). Rich Christians from the West inevitably

impose their agenda and views to the rest of the world. Valerio notes that “this domination inevitably affects mission thinking and practice.” She proposes “reverse missions,’ whereby Christians from poorer countries live and teach in the wealthier nations. It is imperative that those from poorer countries be heard and that those from more wealthy churches/mission agencies find the humility to sit at the feet of these others and let themselves be taught by them. This would enable us to discover the positive side of globalization” (Valerio 2003:19).

My observation is that the Majority World Christians come to the West and teach the very conservative and fundamentalist theology and practice Western missionaries brought to the rest of the world decades or centuries ago. Reverse missions is not automatically the best solution, unless the same process of contextualization and understanding of Western values and worldview is taken into consideration by the Majority World missionaries. Unfortunately, immigrants and refugees tend to create their own ethnic churches and mostly stay separated from the host country Christians.

Frequently, Christian books dealing with immigrants advise discipleship. However, extremely few authors consider the different cultural backgrounds of the immigrants or how their value system conflicts with the Western discipleship and ethical expectations. As J. D. Payne explained, “Whether the new believers are literate or not, they need to know how to understand and apply the Scriptures, fast and pray, share their faith, and deal with spiritual warfare. They need to understand what it means to be a part of a local church, even if that local church is initially made up of just few other new believers” (Payne 2012:142). However, Majority World Christians may not worship like us, and may not read the Scripture with the same hermeneutical view. As Payne noted, we are in danger of teaching them our own Western preferences. “We end up teaching new believers an unbiblical—maybe even a syncretistic—understanding of the local church. In addition to providing poor biblical teaching, we also provide complicated structures and organizations that are difficult for new believers to reproduce among their people across the world” (Payne 2012:143). Although there may be nothing wrong with our understanding of the Bible or the way we do church, “we need to instruct others that our culturally preferred ways are not the only ways and simultaneously help those we are teaching to think through how they will apply biblical church-planting principles to their own contexts” (Payne 2012:144).

Theology in the Global Context

Globalization, inevitably, impacts theology. Andrew Walls (2012) rightly remarked that even “the theological agenda is ... culturally conditioned ... Each time the gospel crosses a cultural frontier, new issues will arise, first of the

“What should I do?” and then of the “How should I think?” category, many never faced by Christians before. Each time the gospel crosses a cultural frontier, a fresh set of intellectual materials is available for the task” (Walls 2012:26). Predictably, Walls notices that “the twenty-first century will face new theological issues that have little to do with Greek or Latin, and still less to do with the later developments of European and American thought. The issues will arise from the Christian interaction with the cultures and realities of life in Africa and Asia and Latin America” (Walls 2012:27). And these African, Asian, and Latin American realities are brought by immigrants to the Western world.

Walls counsels that “one of the best ways of preparing for the new age of global theology may be to develop the study of the history and literature of the former age of global Christianity. It is the joint inheritance of Western, African, and Asian Christians alike” (Walls 2012:29-30). He concludes on a positive note, looking at the opportunity globalization brings to the theological development. “The biblical and Christian interaction with the cultures of Africa and Asia has begun to open a whole range of new theological issues and the possibility of fuller and clearer thought on some old ones. . . . Much of Christian humanity lives in a larger, more populated universe than the Enlightenment one. As a result, Christians face countless situations to which Western theology has no answer. . . . The theological workshop is likely to be busier than ever before, its workers more varied in language, culture, and outlook” (Walls 2012:33).

Analyzing the early church’s contact with the Gentiles, Lamin Sanneh (2012) noted that “uniformity of belief and culture was not what the Gentile breakthrough was all about. . . . In its most creative phases, Christianity has been an intercultural reality, and its doctrinal system remained plausible at all because of the rich variety of cultures upon which the church drew” (Sanneh 2012:41). He remarks, on the other hand, that “Christianity translated naturally into the terms of all cultures.” What Sanneh points to is the fact that being translatable to different cultures, “Christianity was a stimulus on the vernacular. . . . Christian vitality tapped into vernacular springs. . . . Religion can bring about change by the influence it exerts rather than only by the instruments it controls” (Sanneh 2012:42-43). In the global context, theology needs to find its flexibility and relevance.

Hermeneutics in the Global Context

For Westerners, interpretation takes place naturally in the forensic context of their cultures. Laws, natural and scientific laws, are guiding theological inquiry. But the rest of the world looks at the same reality and the same revelation asking different questions. As Gene L. Green noted, “Asian Christians ask

questions about the faith in a pluralist culture, African theologians grapple with the relationship between Christianity and African traditional religions, and Palestinians and Native North American theologians have deep concerns about land. Reading from their place involves asking questions that find little or no expression in the received texts from the West” (Green 2012:50-51). As a result, the global hermeneutic employed by immigrants is informed by the particular social and cultural context of the reader.

Due to the inclusive nature of reality, Majority World theologians “long for an *engaged* faith, but not a faith devoid of substance beyond the issue of the moment. . . . While upholding the normative role of Scripture, Majority World interpreters hear its prophetic voice speaking into their world” (Green 2012:53). They find inappropriate the cultural detachment of the Western hermeneutic. For them, “The biblical understanding of Jesus as Mediator, as in Hebrews, resonates with African views on mediation and the place of ancestors as mediators. Jesus then becomes the Ancestor. This inculturation hermeneutic has found wide acceptance, so that in India, Jesus may be viewed as a Dalit, and in First Nations theology, God is primarily known as Creator, resonating with the traditional indigenous concept of God” (Green 2012:57-58). Green concludes that “Meaning is only known and is only useful if it has efficacy for one’s community and our world” (Green 2012:59).

Immigrants will find in Scripture plenty of support for their communal cultural values because the context of the biblical writers was similar. However, for people who treat laws as not so important as for Westerners there is hope: the gospel can be found through an honor and shame reading. Sin is not primarily breaking the law, but disobeying and dishonoring our heavenly father. The Majority World Christians understand much better why God required so much blood as a solution for sin, because they understand that the shame of sin can be washed away only with blood. The Rest of the World Christians understand what grace is, not so much intellectually, but in a practical way. They understand why Jesus is described as a mediator, since conflicts in their cultures are often solved with the help of third parties. Although different, non-Western hermeneutical approaches are as valid and legitimate as the Western one. In fact, they may have a better grasp of biblical concepts and principles because their cultural values come closer to the ones shared by the biblical writers.

Conclusions

Mission in the new globalization era needs to adapt to the cultural context. Relevance has to become the guiding principle. Missiology, as a multidisciplinary field, should balance the tendency of Western theologians to focus mainly on God by bringing the exegesis of people to the table. In the face of globalization,

contextualization should be guided by a thorough understanding of how the Bible describes the incarnated Christ. Church growth and discipleship should pay attention to people's worldviews, building up the set of values they bring to the table. Theology can no longer be informed strictly by Western assumptions and categorization systems, but will have to answer multicultural questions that may open up new perspectives that were obscured because of lost cultural values. Theological unity will be achieved not through a unique statement of beliefs, but through a lively dialogue where there is room for a diversity of views supported by the Scripture. Hermeneutical approaches will support different emphases and values depending on the context where they are used.

Using Mark Labberton's suggestion, our primary attitude should be humility when it comes to doing mission and theology in the global context. "The diversity, range, and subtlety of contexts, history, issues, and challenges is breathtaking. Global theology demands particularity. And that particularity is itself 'global,' not least given the wonder and mystery of human beings who bear the *imago Dei*" (Labberton 2012:225). Reflecting on Psalm 8, he concludes that "Human existence, including global theology, involves acts of paying attention to God and paying attention to the world in God's name. . . . Ministry beckons God's people to pay attention to the particular world of people, relationships, culture, economics, religion, sociology, power, art, land, and more. . . . Paying attention is a continuous, communal act that is meant to be part of how our diversity of gifts enable the body of Christ to attend to God and the world more faithfully" (Labberton 2012:228-229). Immigration is the continuous result of globalization. Let's pay attention to it.

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