



Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series

VOLUME 21



# Engaging the World

## Christian Communities in Contemporary Global Societies



**Edited By**

**Afe Adogame, Janice McLean  
and Anderson Jeremiah**



REGNUM EDINBURGH CENTENARY SERIES  
Volume 21

# Engaging the World

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## REGNUM EDINBURGH CENTENARY SERIES

The Centenary of the World Missionary Conference of 1910, held in Edinburgh, was a suggestive moment for many people seeking direction for Christian mission in the twenty-first century. Several different constituencies within world Christianity held significant events around 2010. From 2005, an international group worked collaboratively to develop an intercontinental and multi-denominational project, known as Edinburgh 2010, and based at New College, University of Edinburgh. This initiative brought together representatives of twenty different global Christian bodies, representing all major Christian denominations and confessions, and many different strands of mission and church life, to mark the Centenary.

Essential to the work of the Edinburgh 1910 Conference, and of abiding value, were the findings of the eight think-tanks or ‘commissions’. These inspired the idea of a new round of collaborative reflection on Christian mission – but now focused on nine themes identified as being key to mission in the twenty-first century. The study process was polycentric, open-ended, and as inclusive as possible of the different genders, regions of the world, and theological and confessional perspectives in today’s church. It was overseen by the Study Process Monitoring Group: Miss Maria Aranzazu Aguado (Spain, The Vatican), Dr Daryl Balia (South Africa, Edinburgh 2010), Mrs Rosemary Dowsett (UK, World Evangelical Alliance), Dr Knud Jørgensen (Norway, Areopagos), Rev. John Kafwanka (Zambia, Anglican Communion), Rev. Dr Jooseop Keum (Korea, World Council of Churches), Dr Wonsuk Ma (Korea, Oxford Center for Mission Studies), Rev. Dr Kenneth R. Ross (UK, Church of Scotland), Dr Petros Vassiliadis (Greece, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki), and coordinated by Dr Kirsteen Kim (UK, Edinburgh 2010).

These publications reflect the ethos of Edinburgh 2010 and will make a significant contribution to ongoing studies in mission. It should be clear that material published in this series will inevitably reflect a diverse range of views and positions. These will not necessarily represent those of the series’ editors or of the Edinburgh 2010 General Council, but in publishing them the leadership of Edinburgh 2010 hopes to encourage conversation between Christians and collaboration in mission. All the series’ volumes are commended for study and reflection in both church and academy.

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REGNUM EDINBURGH CENTENARY SERIES  
Volume 21

**Engaging the World**  
Christian Communities in  
Contemporary Global Societies

Edited by  
Afe Adogame, Janice McLean and Anderson Jeremiah

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# INTRODUCTION

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## INTRODUCTION

Afe Adogame, Janice A. McLean  
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Commission VII 'Christian Communities in Contemporary Contexts' formed one of the nine study groups that were organized in the lead up to the Missions conference held in Edinburgh in June 2010. The Study Group originally comprised 15-20 core members drawn from all continents and diverse Christian traditions. The study group focused on the following themes and key questions:

1. Poverty, suffering and marginalized communities: How do adjectives of Christian community such as discipling, healing, witnessing and contextual become lived realities in today's world?
2. Globalization and the reproduction of hierarchies: What is involved in being the church in the cities and mega-cities of today?
3. Christianity and socio political action: How can the local church be an agent of the kingdom of God and a source of healing and reconciliation?
4. Identity, gender and power: What is the true identity (the 'core DNA') of the church? How does it manifest itself in different denominations and cultures?
5. The interface of migration, diaspora and ethnicity: What are the tensions between homogenous and multi ethnic churches? How is church life in diaspora communities shaped?
6. HIV/AIDS, church and mission: Does Christian mission bear some responsibility for the spread of the virus? How can mission contribute to the struggle to stop the pandemic? What other forms of ill health call for particular attention from practitioners of Christian mission?

In investigating the above-mentioned themes we sought to incorporate the perspectives of academics, researchers, church leaders, religious non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations as well as policy makers. We were convinced that such a multidimensional perspective was necessary for critical thinking about how missions is articulated and practiced in contemporary contexts and also to seek new directions for engagement in Christian mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We held two successful consultations in Edinburgh prior to the June 2010 international conference. First, a one-day workshop was held on December 5, 2008 with 20 participants drawn mainly from the leadership of churches of immigrant/diaspora communities in Scotland. Papers/discussions at this

seminar focused on ‘Challenges in Urban Mission’, ‘Understanding the Impact of Power Dynamics’ and ‘Gender and Youth’. The second, much larger consultation was a two-day conference held on June 12-13, 2009. The over 35 participants were drawn from Africa, North America, Asia, Europe and Australia. The conference had its focus on the themes of Church and Reconciliation; Gender and Identity; Church and Poverty; Media representation and Pentecostalism; Conducting Mission in Edinburgh; Church and Society and Mission in Diaspora.

The chapters in this volume represent the lived experiences of Christians in diverse communities across the globe. It reinforces that Christian communities do not live in a vacuum but in complex, diverse social contexts. A Christian community in this context means a community which is primarily formed by its belief and adherence to Christian faith. A core focus of our study group was how Christian communities live within wider communities of different faiths and social realities. Thus, we were challenged to reflect on the relevance of Christian gospel and the church. Majority of the essays in this volume came out of the two consultations held in the autumn of 2008, and the summer of 2009. Reports from two regional consultations in 2009: the UK Urban Mission *Jesus in the City* (JITC) and the Eastern Africa Conference in Nairobi that both focused on our study groups’ themes are also included.

The authors of the above-mentioned essays engage with their specific topics from a variety of perspectives as academics, researchers, church leaders, religious NGOs, FBOs and policy makers. We believe that such diversity lends richness to the volume and highlights the critical thinking that needs to accompany the ongoing interrogation about how missions is not only articulated but also practiced in contemporary contexts.

## 1. Church And Society

Poverty is a complex, relative concept that conveys different meanings in different contexts. For instance, we can distinguish between generational and situational poverty based on patterns, just as there are cultural differences in poverty. An interrogation of poverty needs to be cross-cultural in orientation and outlook. Poverty as a multifaceted state of deprivation cannot be wholly divorced from its socio cultural context. It also creates marginalization and social exclusion, referring to relational dimensions, which brings with it inferior access to all the needs of the people resulting in low mobility, low security, inferior opportunities for participation in social life and collective decision-making. With an estimated 1.3 billion in the ranks of the poor worldwide, the target is to lift 650 million people out of ranks of ‘abject poverty’ – with an income of less than a dollar a day. It has been estimated that \$40 billion is needed annually to achieve the international goals related to poverty eradication. This is less

than what people in Europe spend on cigarettes and one tenth of the value of world trade in illegal drugs.

Current socio economic realities starkly indicate that hardly any secular government the world over has the wherewithal, resources or will to shoulder the entire responsibility for caring for its poor, the suffering, the oppressed and marginalized. Where the government is not doing much in this direction, and where in fact the oppression or injustice is coming from the government itself, then Christians must exercise their 'prophetic' voice and speak out against abuse and misuse of power. The world church has the great potential to offer unique solutions to poverty both in terms of alleviation and eradication. Ideally, the church should be in the vanguard of providing help to the poor, but it has in many respects become insensitive and complacent, thus neglecting her responsibility. Poverty is as much a psychological and spiritual issue as it is an economic problem, and it is in this realm that the church can be most effective. Although salvation is not the sole answer, the church is better equipped to meet the psychological and spiritual needs of poverty-stricken people.

While the primary task of the church is being with the poor and marginalized, the question of agency is pertinent. Christians often find themselves in positions of power or are given powerful positions, but how are they utilizing the power and to whose advantage? How do adjectives of Christian community such as discipling, healing, witnessing, contextual, become lived realities in today's world? How does the contemporary church faithfully engage with issues of success, wealth, empowerment, poverty, disempowerment and exploitation that mark the lives of many who live within rural/urban context? The organizational structures of the church have become obstacles in dealing with poverty, oppression, injustice and issues of marginalization. Absence of clearly defined objectives in the church produce somewhat ambiguous roles and functions that are unachievable. Ecclesiastical hierarchies have turned out to be autocratic in their functioning, thus resulting in the misuse of power and resources, self-centeredness and misappropriation of official machinery for personal benefits.

The church can provide some panacea through capital investment, generating funds to help those in need, thus appropriating their gifts and abilities to help those caught in the web of poverty. Christians should reach out to those in poverty by supporting ministries working in this area. Such an outreach provides churches with a mechanism to meet the physical needs of the poor as well as a context to meet their spiritual needs. Social action and evangelism often work hand in hand and thus this kind of social involvement can also provide opportunities for evangelism.

The world church must take urgent, concrete actions to alleviate poverty, suffering and marginalization in different local-global contexts. Such actions must include the following: the forging of a global alliance by the world church in partnership with the governments to make poverty

eradication a central goal of humanity; empowering the poor; ending discrimination against women/girls, supporting women, and tapping their tremendous potential; access of the poor to capital and other productive resources so as to gain productive self employment. Other actions are to provide enlightenment campaign on reducing proportion of hunger and malnutrition; encourage implementation of comprehensive programs to promote good health; encourage quality basic education, as well as secondary and higher education, vocational training and skill acquisition throughout life; social services should be developed with more social investments in partnership with governments and agencies; good governance and effective administration are prerequisites to effectively fight poverty; praying consistently to wipe out poverty.

Issues of poverty, suffering and marginalized communities, recurring themes throughout our consultations, were treated as interrelated, integrated and not as disparate entities. Although poverty and suffering are often to be associated with marginalized groups or communities, a crucially important task is also how to define poverty in the first instance. Poverty, suffering of the marginalized communities and social engagement of the church is the focus of the first section. In 'Poverty Alleviation: Issues and Challenges to the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria', Elijah Obinna contends that the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria (PCN), as part of the 'Reformed family', must remain faithful to the exercise of its prophetic role to the country which includes identifying with the poor. He challenges both the PCN and other Christian traditions which share aspects of the Calvinistic perspectives to engage in economic poverty alleviation in distinctive manners from the core of their Reformed heritage.

Danilo-Azuola Borlado offers an ecclesiological reflection in the context of powerlessness and vulnerability. This reflection is about the condition of vulnerability into which migrant workers found themselves in their host countries. In particular, Borlado focuses on the experiences of the Filipino migrant workers in Hong Kong, most of whom are female domestic helpers. He asks: What should be the form and face of the church of Jesus Christ in this context? In response to this question he offers an ecclesiological reflection that highlights features that should inform the church's interaction with the powerless and vulnerable. He posits a church of the vulnerable; a church with the vulnerable; and a church for the vulnerable.

Harold D. Hunter provides a worldwide perspective on the Pentecostal social engagement. Hunter reveals that while it would be misleading to suggest that all variations of those known collectively as Classical Pentecostals adopt the same approach to social injustice, the international WARC-Pentecostal Dialogue suggest that many Pentecostals start with the transformation of the individual. Pentecostals are known to construct alternative communities that address systematic issues and oppressive structures as they are encountered by those in their circle.

## 2. Christianity and Socio-political Action

The relationship between the world church and the socio economic and political fields will remain contentious in the face of local-global communities that are increasingly becoming insecure, ridden with crisis, war, corruption, racial discrimination, social strife, economic strangulation, health disasters, political persecution and authoritarian regimes. The local church is an integral part of the wider society and cannot therefore be detached from it. We need to understand how the local church can be both an agent of the 'kingdom of God' and a source of healing and reconciliation in the aftermath of crisis. We need to address issues of trauma and how the church can embark on social and political action to prevent or mitigate future problems. The church needs to encourage interfaith and intra-faith conversations in order to strengthen communal identity and facilitate reconciliation. The strengthening of commonalities would help to deemphasize religious boundaries.

Whilst many religious groups may have avoided addressing HIV/AIDS when it first became a development issue in the 1980s and early 1990s, more recently there has been a stronger engagement from FBOs in the prevention of HIV and care of people living with AIDS. The past reticence to work in this field largely stemmed from denial of HIV/AIDS being a problem, and from silence driven by the perception that transmission was through immoral acts and illegal behavior. There has been recognition more recently amongst both FBOs and donor agencies that FBOs are themselves well placed to inform, educate, motivate and support behavior change within communities and advocate at national, regional and international forums on behalf of those people affected by HIV/AIDS. Certainly education campaigns and supporting individuals to minimize their 'risk' behavior have had some success. However, greater success has been recorded when interventions happen at the local level as is tailored to the very particular circumstances of the target community and individuals. Within some countries, faith-based and mission organizations have assumed an important role in educating and supporting local communities in reducing HIV transmission.

The two essays in this section interrogate whether local churches serve as a source of healing and reconciliation; and to what extent Christian FBOs are engaging the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In 'Religion and Reconciliation Processes in the African Diaspora', Frieder Ludwig provides a brief overview of biblical scriptures to show how reconciliation is an important theological theme. He argues that since the late 1980s Christian mission has been increasingly connected with reconciliation and healing. In the context of globalization, postmodernity and fragmentation, a number of initiatives, both by civil society and by churches, have contributed to the reconstruction of societies after conflict through processes of truth and reconciliation. Christian communities are called upon to help bring peace with justice in situations of tension, violence and conflict. He states that

there are a number of other reasons for this shift, it was particularly in the African context and through theologians in Africa that reconciliation became a central theme of the theological and missiological debate. He focuses on reconciliation in the context of the Liberian TRC Diaspora Project and the manner in which it opened a new dimension to truth and reconciliation processes, thus in many ways redefining the way in which truth and reconciliation commissions should operate.

Matthew Clarke and Juliette Lumbers offer an interesting perspective in their essay 'Churches and Condoms: How Christian Faith-Based Organizations are Preventing HIV/AIDS in Developing Countries'. They illustrate their view with the example of the Christian FBO, *Yayasan Kesehatan Bethesda* (Bethesda Health Foundation – YKB), that works with church groups, rural communities, people living with HIV and street children in New Papua. It was set up by nine church denominations (Catholic, Indonesian Evangelist, Papuan Evangelist, Adventist, Reformation, Baptist, The Evangelist Camp, Uniting and Protestant) as a means to distribute medical supplies to Christian communities all over Papua. While medical supplies were once their sole purpose, the main focus is now health training. HIV became a priority because it was noted that 70% of people living with HIV in Papua were Christian church attendees and the churches did not know how to address the issues or help their people. YKB responded to this through setting up a sexual health program run through church leaders. The role that YKB have assumed in providing reliable and relevant information on the transmission of HIV is very important. The ability of this FBO to successfully engage with its community around issues of sexuality and sexual practice provides important lessons for other FBOs seeking to reduce HIV transmission through sustained behavior change.

### 3. Christianity and Culture

The essays in this section raise some fundamental questions, such as: What is the true identity, the 'core DNA' of the church? How does it manifest itself in different denominations and cultures? How can we understand power dynamics in the particular context of the slums in Bombay, Nairobi, Lagos, Rio de Janeiro etc.? The oppression of the Kakure Kirishitan in Japan and of Dalit Christians in India is a problem that comes not only from outside, but also from within the Christian communities.

Kirk Sandvig's 'Who Are Kakure Kirishitan? Issues of Communal Identity within Hidden Christians of Japan' shows how the function of identity has been of key importance, not only for its role in establishing who they were, but also in maintaining their communal integrity under centuries of 'hidden' existence from the early 17<sup>th</sup> century to today. Identity, it seems, has been the unifying factor keeping the Hidden Christian communities of Goto and Ikitsuki together, and its recent

deterioration, or transformation, has led to some of these groups deciding to disband after nearly 400 years of continued practice. The obvious questions, therefore, are how this identity has changed, and what elements have caused the changes to occur.

Anderson Jeremiah explores how in many cases access to resources is linked to power dynamics. He presents the caste system and the appalling situation of Dalit Christians in India, which is a serious problem that exists within the Christian communities. For many within the Dalit community their access to resources in the churches has been prevented due to the perpetuation of a hierarchy in the churches that mirrors what is present within the society. As a result, the Christian ministry has become privatized with the rich having more access to pastoral care because they contribute more economic resources to the church, ultimately producing a fragmented community. Sometimes, it is extremely difficult to cross frontiers and boundaries even within the context of the church. This singular example therefore throws a challenge on how we can understand the Christian message in light of growing unemployment and growing slums.

Daniel Ndukwe seeks to show the extent to which children suffer as the immediate victims of poverty, suffering and marginalized communities. He draws on research conducted across the different regions of Nigeria especially within the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria (PCN). The essay examines the immediate and long-term effects of crisis, the impact of diseases, natural disasters, social oppression and political instability on children. He demonstrates the challenges of economic poverty and its impact especially on children and sends a wake-up call on the PCN to engage in meaningful grass-roots actions towards addressing the problem of children welfare.

#### **4. Mission, Migration, Diaspora and Ethnicity**

Given the complexity of mission fields, there is need for multifaceted and multidisciplinary approaches to mission. This is necessary for effective identification of the needs of specific field areas and the resources required for each. For example, post-Christian fields in Europe and America require African, Asian and Latin American missionaries and therefore there is need to open spaces for missionaries to Europe, America. What is church life like in diaspora communities? What is the interface between migration, diaspora and ethnicity? How is cross-cultural expectation for mission articulated within contemporary church communities? Homogenous and multiethnic churches may always exist; history may cause a resistance for inclusion. To what extent is the picture of the global church today characterized by reverse mission dynamics? Do we have homogenous local churches but multiethnic societies? We are now witnessing the changing dynamic of community and shifting identities in home countries and



diaspora ethnically and religiously. Living and working in the diaspora entails the reconstruction of power within the family unit.

Understanding Christian mission in the present globalized world is the focus of this section. Sadiri Joy Tira provides an ethnographic description of the Filipino Diaspora Kingdom Workers. He highlights how the Filipino experience functions as mission orientation; centrifugal and centripetal missions; innovative mission strategies of 'Kingdom's Army and Navy'; labor feminization and impacting missions; justice and advocacy ministry; and frontier for missiological research.

Philip Wingeier-Rayo's 'The Transculturalization and the Transnationalization of the Government of 12: From Seoul to Bogota to Charlotte, North Carolina' sheds light on a growing trend in contemporary mission engagement: south-south and omni directional missionary movements. He investigates a relatively new mission model that began in South Korea and moved to Bogota, Colombia, and is now moving to the United States. This trend is moving against the traditional missionary flow, using new creative models; for evangelism and discipleship that are transnational and transcultural.

Matthew Clarke and John Donnelly in their essay, 'Learning from Missionaries: Lessons for Secular Development Practitioners' examine the *Decalogue of Development* and the *Summary of Resolutions Regarding Development* prepared by the Franciscan Friars in the Diocese of Aitape, Papua New Guinea. These documents explicitly describe strategies to 'improve' the physical lives (health, education, economic security) of the people of the Aitape area at the same time as President Truman was signaling the start of the secular development era. The Franciscans understood the importance of community empowerment when working with local communities to achieve these outcomes. Secular development practitioners however have only recently understood the importance of these principles. The essay contrasts the principles formulated by the Franciscans in the 1940s with the current 'best practice' ideals of secular development practitioners, noting the lessons that can be learned from missionaries.

## 5. Churches' Response

Erica Dunmow's report on 'the challenge of indigenous leadership in the UK urban mission context' addresses the question how we can make sure that the people born into the poorest neighborhoods are seen as leaders, not just for their locality but also for the wider church. In this regard it is important to examine the nature of the incarnation; past efforts and possible reasons for failure; signs of change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century – still to be worked at; and signs of change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century – learning from overseas, the non-Western world. The report further brings together different contexts and emerging initiatives by churches in the UK. Philomena Mwaura's report

on East African consultation highlights mission concerns for East Africa. They aptly suggested that various lessons may be learnt by reading through history. First, the importance of memory: an analysis of contemporary problems in Eastern Africa indicates that these are related to the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Christian missions. Chief among the challenges of African peoples are associated with alienation – from their land, their cultures, their world views – from themselves. Christian missions played a key role in this alienation.

### Conclusion

Power, identity and community are key issues in considering Christian communities in contemporary contexts. Also important is the nature and texture of mission. It is important to understand the context of Christian missions of contemporary time. Context becomes a priority in the task of working to improve peoples and communities. There are Christian ideals of unity and equality, but these become challenged in context. Religious, historical, ethnic and political, along with socio economic, factors all interact. There are very real problems of injustice, inequality, life and death, which Christians have to engage with and try to mitigate, if not solve, and this is really difficult when Christians are also tied up with the problem.

The center of gravity of Christianity is shifting southwards. In Europe, church membership is stagnating or declining, while rapidly increasing in Africa, Asia and Latin America. At the Edinburgh 1910 conference, mission was still very much seen as a Western enterprise. Today, mission is no longer unidirectional – not only from North to South or from West to East, but it is much more multi dimensional, from ‘everywhere to everywhere’. Concepts such as ‘mission in reverse’ or ‘mission and migration’ are therefore vitally important. Transnational migration often includes multiple destinations – from Asia to Latin America and then to the USA or from Africa to the USA and then to Europe. These immigrant congregations not only give a sense of identity or provide ‘a home away from home’, they are also constantly adapting themselves and their mission to new situations. They operate in very different contexts and provide unique insights into intercultural theology. Christianity is a migrating religion and important theologies are coming out of immigrant congregations. Immigrant Christian congregations are vulnerable, and vulnerability can be also experienced by Christians in minority situations.

A theology of empowerment of the poor and marginalized is expedient. Holistic mission now needs to be applied. Poverty alleviation, combating illnesses and epidemics such as HIV and AIDS are part of this process. These are multi dimensional and global phenomena that cannot be addressed by local congregations alone. The church is situated in a global context and global alliances must be forged. It should be borne in mind, in

this age of globalization, that mission societies were among the first global players. There is experience in international networking and in crossing boundaries.

### **Note on Cover Image**

The image shows a worship service of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), Jesus House Parish in London. This is one of the ‘Christian communities in contemporary contexts’ that Edinburgh 2010, Group 7 focused on as immigrant religious communities grappling with issues of power, poverty, marginalisation etc. Through ritual worship, sociopolitical action and strategies they are centrally ‘engaging the world’.

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**PART ONE**

**CHURCH AND SOCIETY**

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# POVERTY ALLEVIATION: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES TO THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NIGERIA

Elijah Obinna

## Introduction

The global increase of economic poverty as experienced in Nigeria has resulted in major researches by many social scientists. The researches are expected to translate into practice, the relationship between realities and theory. Martin Bulmer observes that research on people's daily lives 'are not just feedbacks to fellow academics, but are used to influence the life and chances of millions upon millions of people'.<sup>1</sup> Economic poverty is a visible problem in Nigeria, however it is easy for both government and religious institutions to stop thinking about it.<sup>2</sup> The victims of economic poverty are found in both urban and rural centers of the country and they include Christians, Muslims and adherents of the indigenous religions. However, the problem of poverty is rarely discussed in terms of showing how religious institutions could share in the processes of alleviating it. Strangely, despite the abundant material and human resources, poverty has persisted, thus raising contemporary challenge for understanding God's sovereignty and providential care and the church's calling in the midst of poverty. Admittedly, the problem of economic poverty in terms of meaning and scope appears complex, but that should not undermine actions.

Following the justice traditions of the biblical prophets and of Jesus in the gospel narratives, the church and individual Christians are called to hear 'the cries of the people who suffer and the woundedness of creation itself, over consumed and undervalued by the current global economy.'<sup>3</sup> The Bible relates to economic questions throughout; it speaks of justice as central to God's will. The prophets call the people not to sit comfortably under dehumanising structures, to repent and create institutions which protect the rights and dignity of the poor. Jesus in his life and ministry fulfilled the prophetic message of liberation in solidarity with the poor.

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<sup>1</sup> M. Bulmer, 'General Introduction', in M. Bulmer and Donald Warwick (eds), *Social Research in Developing Countries: Surveys and Census in the Third World* (New York: Routledge, 1998. Reprint, 2001). 3.

<sup>2</sup> Fernando Bastos de Avila, 'The Church and World Hunger', in Norbert Greinacher and Alois Muller (eds.), *The Poor and the Church* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1977), 6.

<sup>3</sup> The Accra Confession: Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth. World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), 2004. 1.

This chapter focuses on the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria (PCN). The contemporary PCN was established in April 10, 1846, through the missionary enthusiasm among the emancipated slaves in West Indies, thus accentuating the wealth that freed minds can accomplish.<sup>4</sup> The chapter therefore draws attention to the contemporary challenges facing the PCN and other Christian traditions which share aspects of the Reformed traditions on matters of economic justice. The chapter highlights the economic situation within Nigeria, and affirms that an understanding of the sovereignty and providential care of God should not undermine social actions, but stimulate them. In this chapter, I argue that a neglect of the PCN's social responsibility will affect its integrity and amount to a dereliction of its Reformed calling.

### The Politics of Economic Poverty

The question of how to define economic poverty has dominated academic debates on the subject. Scholars have often defined poverty according to their theological, cultural, social, ethical, political or ideological backgrounds as well as the practices and conventions of their society. This in part explains the difficulty in reaching one universally accepted definition of economic poverty. However, Ali Khusro notes that no part of the world is free from poverty, even as affluence is growing around the world. He highlights two different ways of measuring poverty – GDP *per capita* and Human Development Index. Any definition of poverty thus has to be understood at least in part and in relation to particular social, cultural and historical contexts.<sup>5</sup> Poverty therefore is not a simple phenomenon; it is rather a series of contested definitions and complex arguments which overlap and at times contradict each other.

Macpherson and Silburn define poverty as a 'basic lack of the means of survival; the poor are those who, even in normal circumstances, are unable to feed and clothe themselves properly and risk death as a consequence.'<sup>6</sup> The economically poor according to Samuel and Sugden are:

'The manual worker who struggles to survive on a day to day basis, the destitute, cowering as a beggar; the one reduced to meekness, the one brought

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<sup>4</sup> E.G.K. Hewat, *Vision and Achievement, 1796-1956: A History of the Foreign Missions of the Churches United in the Church of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, 1960), 1-7.

<sup>5</sup> A.M. Khusro, *Poverty of the Nations* (London: Macmillan, 1999).

<sup>6</sup> S. Macpherson and R. Silburn, 'The Meaning of Poverty' in J. Dixon and D. Macarov (eds) *Poverty: A Persistent Global Reality* (London: Routledge).

low...those weak and tired from carrying heavy burdens and the leper and very often the common people....<sup>7</sup>

Furthermore, William Jennings has argued that there is much more to economic poverty than money. Poverty he argues, involves a complicated matrix of issues, many of which are only indirectly economic issues such as patterns of education, the self-image of the poor, consumer protection, political representation, the police and legal system, the very structure and management of government programs.<sup>8</sup> Poverty therefore is a complex problem which involves political processes and policy development. It is a moral and political concept, but it implies and requires actions.

Pete Alcock insists that: 'Poverty is a problem, or it is nothing. What it cannot be is not a problem...poverty is also a basis for action and policy.'<sup>9</sup> Economic poverty is not only a state of affair; it is an unacceptable state of affair and discussions about it should intrinsically include the question, what should be done about it? It is possible to politicize or trivialize economic poverty especially when one's life has not been touched directly or indirectly by it. Furthermore, poverty can be relativized, with some people arguing that it is a 'state of mind' shaped by expectations – that people do not experience themselves as poor unless they compare themselves with others who have more. Economic poverty, as pointed out by Alcock is a reality and a problem with which many people in Nigeria live.

An analysis of the Nigerian situation highlights the complex and compelling nature of economic poverty. According to Ogunleye Sola Nigeria is held to be the World's 13<sup>th</sup> largest oil producer and the 6<sup>th</sup> largest in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).<sup>10</sup> This makes the poverty situation in Nigeria the more astonishing and raises the question about who they are that benefit, at the expense of others, from Nigeria's rich resources. According to the 2008 United Nations projection Nigeria has a population of 151.5million with a life expectancy of 46 years (men), and 47 years for women while the GNI *per capita* is US\$930.<sup>11</sup> Although such statistics have often been contested, they offer helpful insights into the economic situation of Nigeria.

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<sup>7</sup> V. Samuel and C. Sugden, *Evangelism and the Poor: A Third World Study Guide* (Oxford: Bocardo and Church Army Press Ltd, 1985), 2-3, quoting the Lausanne Committee document of the Consultation on World Evangelism (COWE).

<sup>8</sup> W.H. Jennings, *Poor People and Church Goers* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1972), 14-21.

<sup>9</sup> P. Alcock, *Understanding Poverty* (London: Macmillan, 1993), 4-5.

<sup>10</sup> O.O. Sola, 'Challenges of Poverty Alleviation in Nigeria', *The Social Sciences* 1. 3 (2006), 196.

<sup>11</sup> 'Country Profile: Nigeria', BBC, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country\\_profiles/1064557.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country_profiles/1064557.stm)



The 2005 survey of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) shows that about 70% of the Nigerian population live in economic poverty. According to a survey about 1.5 million Nigerians have died from, while at least about 4 million live with, HIV viruses. The most affected age range is 18-45; this comprises the main work force of the nation.<sup>12</sup> The statistic is startling, but shows the extent of the problem. The HIV/AIDS pandemic constitutes a major factor in the escalating level of poverty. Alan Whiteside describes HIV/AIDS as the ‘most devastating epidemic in recent history.’<sup>13</sup> There is thus a distinct relationship between poverty and communicable diseases; epidemic disease like any illness has potential to increase poverty. Illness therefore affects individual and household resources and income. Illness and death deprive households of labor; this may include paid or unpaid labors on the farm or caring for the family. Poverty, as argued, compounds the problem of disease: because of poverty, disease and suffering persons (including HIV/AIDS) do not receive the treatment needed. Many thus suffer and die who may have otherwise survived in situations of affluence.

The unabating rate of corruption among several political and public office holders in Nigeria compounds the issue. According to Transparency International’s submission, Nigeria is perceived as the most corrupt of 102 countries assessed.<sup>14</sup> Corruption refers to a misapplication of public goods to private ends. However, since the notion of what is public, what is held in trust for the people, varies across cultures, ‘corruption’ like ‘poverty’ is also a relative concept. However, within Nigeria, corrupt practices include: advance fee fraud (OBT – Obtaining by Trick), Money Laundering, bribery (PR – Public Relations), nepotism and political favoritism (IM – *Imma Madu*).<sup>15</sup> These practices violate the written codes of conduct for office bearers and have had severe negative consequences on the country. The impact includes decreased foreign direct investments in Nigeria as well as tainting the image of country’s national image.<sup>16</sup> Poverty appears to encourage all temptations for public officials; especially because of insatiability, they know that their opportunities may vanish. As such, they devise means of taking their share of the ‘National Cake.’ It is thus

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<sup>12</sup> USAID, From American People, Budget, [www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/cbj2005/afr/ng.html](http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/cbj2005/afr/ng.html) (accessed on November 24, 2006).

<sup>13</sup> A. Whiteside, ‘Poverty and Hiv /Aids in Africa.’ 313.

<sup>14</sup> O.D. Ajayi-Smith, ‘Corruption Rating: Transparency International and Nigeria’ African Citizens Development Foundation, <http://www.acdf-assefad.org/corruption.htm> (accessed on December 11, 2006).

<sup>15</sup> ‘About EFCC: Introduction’, Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC), [http://www.efccnigeria.org/index.php?option=com\\_contentandtask=categoryandsectionid=4andid=13andItemid=29](http://www.efccnigeria.org/index.php?option=com_contentandtask=categoryandsectionid=4andid=13andItemid=29) (accessed on September 12, 2009).

<sup>16</sup> H. Raji, ‘Nigeria Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) – A Brief Overview’, Lagos, <http://www.icac.org.hk/news/issue17eng/button2.htm> (Accessed on September 9, 2009).

common to hear questions like: ‘Is government your father – *Government na your papa?*’ Or ‘does Government money belong to your father?’ Implying that government fund belongs to no individual, thus breeding the idea that it is ‘the winner who take it all’.

In response to this problem, the Federal Government of Nigeria on September 29, 2000 inaugurated the Independent Corrupt Practices and other related Offences Commission (ICPC). Its main duties include: receiving complaints, investigating and prosecuting offenders.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, in 2002 the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) was established with the aim of curbing the menace of corruption; protect national and foreign investments in the country and contribute to the global war against financial crime.<sup>18</sup> Although these crime-regulating bodies are in place, corruption seems to be soaring higher each passing day. It seems therefore that although there are forces in place to deter corruption, it appears weak in exercising the functions or that the forces are politicized.

The description so far made about the poverty and economic situation within Nigeria poses a huge challenge to the prophetic ministry and calling of the PCN today. The PCN’s members, as part of Nigerian society, are involved in or affected by the resultant poverty which corruption imposes on the country. This poor economic situation calls for a re-conceptualization of the PCN’s foundational belief in God’s sovereignty and the church’s responsibilities.

### **Sovereignty of God in a World of Economic Poverty**

In recent years, a growing number of historical and theological studies on Calvin’s social and economic thought have been written.<sup>19</sup> Calvin does not marginalize poverty as something that is characteristic of the derelict in society; he recognizes poverty as a reality from which nobody is necessarily exempted. Pattison notes that Calvin indeed encountered the reality and experience of economic poverty in his days, being that many major cities in Europe had numerous beggars and poor.<sup>20</sup> Calvin, and with him the Reformed theological tradition he inspired, makes it clear that economic questions, the issues of wealth and poverty, equality and

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<sup>17</sup> H.Raji, ‘Nigeria Independent Corrupt Practices’.

<sup>18</sup> ‘Mission Statement’, (2008), Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) <http://www.efccnigeria.org/> (Accessed on September 22, 2009).

<sup>19</sup> W.F. Graham, *Constructive Revolutionary John Calvin and his Socio economic Impact* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press 1971); H. Heller, *The Conquest Of Poverty: The Calvinist Revolt in Sixteenth Century France* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1986); B.L. Pattison, *Poverty in the Theology of John Calvin* (Eugene: Pickwick Publication 2006).

<sup>20</sup> Pattison, *Poverty in the Theology of John Calvin* 11.

inequality cannot be left to the 'inherent logic' of economics.<sup>21</sup> These questions touch on the very basics of the Christian faith. Economic questions thus are important themes in the Bible and accordingly should take central place in the Christian faith.

The distinctiveness of the Calvinistic Reformed teaching which the PCN affirms is the particular understanding of the lordship and sovereignty of God over all of life.<sup>22</sup> The tradition however, is not monolithic in its answers to the question of economic poverty and injustice. Nor is Calvin necessarily the example *par excellence* of the tradition's common wisdom on the subject. Nonetheless, there are within the tradition shared convictions that create a certain 'family resemblance' in which Calvin in his own way participates. There is thus these convictions and belief that God's power is expressed in creating the world, governing and nourishing it.<sup>23</sup>

Although the term 'sovereignty' is rarely used by Calvin himself in reference to God, the related idea of the 'omnipotence' of God occupies his attention in several places.<sup>24</sup> It has been shown that no one idea was the principle from which all other doctrines of Reformed orthodoxy and Reformed thought were formulated.<sup>25</sup> However, the lordship of God in Christ is definitely prominent in Reformed thoughts, this sovereignty of God was not only emphasized in the salvation of the sinner, it was also, and even more so, emphasized over all of life. Economics is thus part of the church's life and one which the Reformed followers cannot in fact ignore. The Reformed and Calvinistic thought emphasises the honour placed on humankind, as created in the image of God. As a result, Christians are to perceive the ethical demand placed on them by this presence of the image of God in all human beings regardless of their sinfulness.

Though the image is clearest in the restored 'household of faith' it exists in all persons. Human beings are made for each other, to be useful and helpful to each other. The graces and gifts which each have received are for the service of others.<sup>26</sup> These graces and gifts are given by God in his

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<sup>21</sup> A. Boesak, J. Weusmann and C. Amjad-Ali (ed.) 'Your Poor, Your Needy, in Your Land...' Perspectives from Calvin on Economics and Social Ethics in Dreaming a Different World: Globalization and Justice for Humanity and the Earth, the Challenges of the Accra Confession for the Churches (South Africa: United Reformed Church in South Africa, 2010), 17.

<sup>22</sup> A. McGrath, *The Intellectual Origins of the European Reformation* (Oxford: University Press, 1987), 6.

<sup>23</sup> A. Case-Winters, *God's Power: Traditional Understandings and Contemporary Challenges* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990), 39.

<sup>24</sup> J.T. McNeil (ed), *John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (2 vols Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960), 121.

<sup>25</sup> M. Richard, 'The Myth of Decretal Theology' in *Calvin Theological Journal*, 30.1 (April 1995), 159-167.

<sup>26</sup> L. Boettner, *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination* (Grand Rapids: W.M B. Eerdmans Pub. Co. 1957), 36. See also T.H.L. Parker, *The Oracles of God, an*

sovereignty and are fundamental to the church's ministry of compassion in the community.<sup>27</sup> Calvin embraces an ethic of moderation which is expressed in simplicity. This according to him frees the conscience to use the things of this world without guilt as well as protecting the believer from 'wanton intemperance.'<sup>28</sup> Writing on this, John Calvin in his *Institutes* asserts:

Therefore, whatever person you meet who needs your aid, you have no reason to refuse to help him. Say, 'He is a stranger... He is contemptible and worthless'; but the Lord shows him to be one to whom he has designed to give the beauty of his image... The image of God, which recommends him to you, is worthy of your giving yourself and all your possessions...<sup>29</sup>

God is here affirmed as the source 'by whose will riches and poverty, contempt and honour, are dispensed.'<sup>30</sup> The poor and the despised of the world are in God's image and deserving of all we have to offer. Economic poverty thus in itself is neither a curse nor a sign of holiness; sanctifying or sinful; a state of virtue to be honored or revered as a means towards a life of spiritual perfection; or a scourge and result of divine judgement as the medieval ascetic tradition implied.<sup>31</sup> God's intention for the world, is that all persons be blessed with abundance of the goods of life. Economic poverty therefore is a result of the deformation of creation by the sinfulness of all human beings.<sup>32</sup>

Question 141 of the Westminster Larger Catechism speaks of the duty entailed in question 140, 'Thou shalt not steal'. They include such things as truth, faithfulness and justice in contracts and commerce among people, giving and lending freely according to our abilities and the necessities of others.<sup>33</sup> The eighth commandment as reflected in question 140 of the Larger Catechism is general enough in Exodus 20:15 to include both kidnapping and stealing what belongs to others. Clearly there is a sense of the integrity and security of personal property in the commandment. However property is not enough, property involves the person. Not to steal therefore, is not only to respect ownership and to live within the rights of

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*Introduction to the Preaching of John Calvin* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1947), 84.

<sup>27</sup> McNeil, *Institutes*, III/VIII, 6. Copyrighted Material

<sup>28</sup> Pattison, *Poverty in the Theology of John Calvin*, 350.

<sup>29</sup> McNeil *Institute* cf. Psalms 57:6-7.

<sup>30</sup> Ves Congar, 'Poverty as an Act of Faith' In Norbert Greinacher and Alois Muller (eds) *The Poor and the Church* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1977), 100. (The story of Francis of Assisi on his conversion to Christianity.)

<sup>31</sup> M. Hengel, *Property and Riches in the Early Church: Aspects of Social History for Early Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), 3-4. B.L. Pattison, *Poverty in the Theology of John Calvin* (Eugene: Pickwick Publication, 2006), 14.

<sup>32</sup> McNeil *Institutes*

<sup>33</sup> Westminster Larger Catechisms, Questions 98-196. <http://www.freepres.org/WCFLarge2.htm> (Accessed on July 13, 2010).

ownership, but it is to respect and love the person who owns something. The poor and the rich thus should work in their calling faithfully, without neglecting their duties towards an employer which is theft. While it is not wrong for the economically poor to wish and hope for improvement of his or her situation, burning with an ‘immoderate desire to grow rich is advised against.’<sup>34</sup>

Preaching his sermon on Deuteronomy 15:11-15, Calvin deals with the jubilee with an explanation of the text, ‘The poor will always be with you in the land’ (v.11). Calvin argues that it does not mean a fatalistic resignation to poverty. He asserts that resignation in the face of the existence of the poor is more than just carelessness, and manifests a form of unfairness and injustice. Calvin insists that the word is not given in order to make us complacent but rather to make us do what is necessary to fight poverty instead of merely pontificating about it.<sup>35</sup> Diligence, transparency and honesty are thus virtues which the PCN and its members must strive for as part of the Reformed family.

### God’s Providence and Economic Poverty

The basis of providence is the secret and mysterious plan of God; however, there is a cloud of mystery that surrounds Calvin’s account. Although the principle is clearly revealed in Scripture, the reasons behind providential acts are hidden from us. Thus faith is necessary to gain understanding of God’s providence. The doctrine of Providence, the belief that an ultimate being determines the course of events has always created some division in opinions among different people, especially advocates of free will. If any event has been foreordained, how can humans be free? On another level, if all is determined, why should humans try to do what is right?<sup>36</sup> Calvin relies upon providence to explain God’s role in history, and states that God ‘sustains, nourishes and cares for everything he has made even to the least sparrow.’<sup>37</sup> If, for even one moment, God were to withdraw, the world would ‘immediately perish and dissolve into nothing.’<sup>38</sup> It is evident that what Calvin is talking about is providential care and not ‘determinism’. It seems that the focus on the latter is a distortion within the tradition that has

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<sup>34</sup> W.A. Copinger, *A Treatise on Predestination, Election and Grace; Historical, Doctrinal and Practical* (London: James Nisbet and Co, 1889), iii.

<sup>35</sup> Boesak, Weusmann and Amjad-Ali, ‘Your Poor, Your Needy’, 18.

<sup>36</sup> R.J. VanderMolen, *Providence as Mystery, Providence as Revelation: Puritan and Anglican Modifications of John Calvin’s Doctrine of Providence* (Church History, vol. 47, no.1, 1978), 27.

<sup>37</sup> McNeil, *Institutes*, I/XVI, 1 and 5.

<sup>38</sup> Calvin, Commentary on Genesis 2:2. See also, J.D. Douglas, ‘Calvin’s Relation to Social and Economic Change,’ in Richard C. Gamble (ed.), *Articles on Calvin and Calvinism, a Fourteen-Volume Anthology of Scholarly Articles* (New York: Garland Pub. Inc. 1992), 129.

led some churches (even the Reformed) in different directions. The affirmation that God is a creator is incomplete without the discussion of providence. God is not just a ‘momentary creator’ who leaves the world to its own devices. If God were not a creator it would be difficult to believe that God cares for human affairs, but since God is the Creator, one should also be persuaded that God takes care of his works.<sup>39</sup> The creative power of God thus is not seen as having operated in the past, but no longer being operative.<sup>40</sup> James White further underscores this providence thus:

The decrees of God are the soul-comforting truth that God has wisely and perfectly decreed whatsoever comes to pass in this universe. Nothing is outside his control, nothing is without purpose. There are no renegade atoms in the universe, nothing that is beyond the positive decree of God.<sup>41</sup>

Divine providence to Calvin is a comforting notion – nothing can happen that does not come to us ‘from the hands of a loving Father.’ The considerations are more pastoral for him, so that the philosophical/metaphysical consequences are a lesser consideration. One of the chief benefits Calvin saw in his understanding of divine providence is that nothing is left to chance. Everything is ‘in the hands of the loving Father.’ Although Calvin would admit that it seems as if some things happen by chance, this is because God’s purpose in them is hidden from our view.<sup>42</sup> While the purpose of providence is to express God’s fatherly favor, it however summons the proper human response. Calvin asserts that providence does not imply lack of responsibility, because the whole purpose of providence is to get our attention to follow God. As he puts it, ‘Let them inquire and learn from Scripture what is pleasing to God, so that they may strive towards, this under the Spirit’s guidance...being ready to follow God wherever he calls.’ To blame providence for our failure therefore is to miss the point. Calvin rejects that our actions or prayers are rendered irrelevant because of providence. He regards this as a misuse of the doctrine because it contravenes its true intent.<sup>43</sup> The underlying concept of providence is therefore duty.

A misinterpretation of this Reformed position can and does easily serve as an escape route by many to shy away from engaging in the alleviation of the poverty of this world. The following questions are very striking and demand a response especially within the context of this discourse: if God ordains and is in control of the world, why strive for a change? And why help others? On these and more, Hector Mendez has argued that the

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<sup>39</sup> C. Partee, *The Theology of John Calvin* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 109.

<sup>40</sup> Case-Winters, *God’s Power*, 53.

<sup>41</sup> J. White, *The Potter’s Freedom* (Amityville: Calvin Press Publishing, 2000), 45.

<sup>42</sup> McNeil, *Institutes*, I/XVI, 9.

<sup>43</sup> J. Drury, ‘God’s Ever-Present Hand’, Calvin on Providence (*Institutes* I.16-18) <http://www.drurywriting.com/john/Calvin%20on%20Providence.htm> (Accessed on June 16, 2010).

Reformed theology's stress on God alone as omnipotent can only be seen in the Reformed trust in God's grace and aggressive work for a better world. The church, he argues, cannot be responsible for lulling its people to sleep; it cannot be responsible for closing people's eyes to the problems afflicting them.<sup>44</sup>

Providence as earlier highlighted is a call for service which has a universal mission to the world. Providence is about God's care for all the world and it should be mirrored in the Reformed care for others. Calvin's opposition to elaborate worship is also related to his concern for the poor. He instructs that the resources of the church be spent not on magnificent worship, but instead on the needs of the poor. This according to Calvin is an indication of the church's generous response in gratitude to God for its material blessings. The alms distributed through the ministry of the Geneva diaconate fed the hungry, housed the refugees and cared for the orphans and the sick. This testifies to the extent to which Calvin's teaching impacted the reform and social ministry of the church in Geneva.<sup>45</sup>

The PCN has a challenge to contextualize the 'Reformed faith' within the Nigerian situation if the church is to remain relevant. For an effective contextualization there must be a mutual challenge between the Gospel and the context. Among the Igbo of South-Eastern Nigeria, there is a common saying, '*Onye aguna – agu anaghi eti alleluia*', meaning the hungry cannot praise the Lord. The people are yearning for the God who answers prayers and is able to deliver them from their pains and agonies. Any theological affirmation by the PCN will remain hollow and empty unless it has the life blood of the compassion of Jesus, who became poor that others might be rich. John Mbiti has argued that *Ovimbundu*, which is one among the many names of God, means 'He who supplies the needs of His creatures.' This is one of the fundamental beliefs about God with examples coming from all over Africa.<sup>46</sup>

David Steinmetz shows that the "Calvinists founded Universities, pioneered the New England town meeting, insisted on the separation of Powers in the Federal government, played a prominent role in the movement for the abolition of slavery, and even promoted such characteristic institutions of frontier revivalism as 'the anxious bench' and the 'camp-meeting'...."<sup>47</sup> There is no excuse therefore for ignoring social needs and infrastructure. The unjust economy of Nigeria as manipulated by the powerful groups and structures in the society needs to be addressed by the PCN from the core of its Reformed faith.<sup>48</sup> Lester De Koster writes:

<sup>44</sup> H.H. Rowley, *The Biblical Doctrine of Election* (London: Lutherworth Press, 1948), 95.

<sup>45</sup> Pattison, *Poverty in the Theology of John Calvin*, 350.

<sup>46</sup> J.S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (London: Heineman, 1969), 41.

<sup>47</sup> D.C. Steinmetz, *Calvin in Context* (Oxford: University Press, 1995), 5.

<sup>48</sup> V. Samuel and C. Sugden, *Evangelism and the Poor: A Third World Study Guide* (Oxford: Bocardo and Chruch Army Press Ltd 1983), 28-29.

For Calvin, Gospel always implies Kingdom, here and now, with echoes hereafter... No, we are all called to a kingdom that is given existential possibility for everyone because Christ does reign in history through his word preached...<sup>49</sup>

The theology of the salvation of the soul (focusing on the state of the inner being on earth and in heaven) that is recurrent among many members and leaders of the PCN today appears to be a disconnection from the church's Reformed affirmation. The PCN's Community Development Services and other departments need to be more proactive in service delivery than presently. The PCN and its members are called today to use their God-given reason and governing ability both in the church and secular domain to organize society so that it will reflect God's order, showing love and justice.<sup>50</sup> The nineteenth-century Scottish mission to Nigeria, not only preached, but through their social actions established many hospitals, schools and leper colonies as ways of addressing and alleviating the economic poverty of their converts and host communities.<sup>51</sup>

The end of the Nigerian Civil War (1967-70) witnessed the takeover of many if not all the mission schools and hospitals (PCN's inclusive) by the Nigerian government. This scenario resulted in the church's less engagement in social actions, while much of its attention has been devoted to the 'soul' and the 'world to come' theology. While other Protestants and Pentecostal churches in the country have long recovered, especially given the Nigerian government's call since 1999 for a joint effort between the church and government in nation building, the PCN is yet to recover. And as such the PCN is conspicuously losing its prophetic presence in the Nigerian society. The PCN needs a theology that enables it to turn squarely into today's world while retaining 'not of this world' perspective to a degree. The expectation of a new earth must not weaken, but rather stimulate, the PCN's concern for cultivating this one. For here grows the body of a new human family, a body which even now is able to give some kind of foreshadowing of the new age.<sup>52</sup>

Calvin argues that honest and upright work in one's station for the common good of all is an individual's offering to God and a prerequisite for a godly society: 'For it is impossible for the body to remain healthy and sound, unless its members have different functions, and perform services

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<sup>49</sup> L. De Koster, *Light for the City; Calvin's Preaching, Source of Life and Liberty* (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans Pub. Co. 2004), xvii.

<sup>50</sup> Douglas, 'Calvin's Relation to Social and Economic', 127.

<sup>51</sup> G. Johnston, *Of God and Maxim Guns: Presbyterianism in Nigeria, 1846-1966* (Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1988); Ogbu Kalu (ed.), *A Century and Half of Presbyterian Witness in Nigeria, 1846-1991* (Ibadan: Ivory Press, 1996).

<sup>52</sup> W.H. Jennings, *Poor People and Church Goers* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1977), 94-95.



for each other.<sup>53</sup> Thus, for Calvin the reborn Christian self must interact with other members of the social organism, social relations being based on God's law of love. The presence of the PCN in Nigeria where the majority of the population lives in poverty caused mainly by unjust social order should provide it with the opportunity of understanding its responsibility to be a community bearing witness to God who himself became poor in Jesus Christ. The PCN and its members need to see how schools, industries, hospitals and skill-acquisition centers are connected to the alleviation of economic poverty. As part of the prophetic mission of the PCN, it should as an obligation denounce the high level of corruption and also the yawning gap between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' in the country. The idea of vocation or calling (serving God, serving the common good) means that our lives have a fundamental purpose. This means that each of us is a steward of God's gifts and calling. We cannot therefore focus on the life to come in a way which implies that this life does not matter.

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<sup>53</sup> A.A. Alves, 'The Christian Social Organism and Social Welfare: The Cases of Vives, Clavin and Loyola,' *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 20.1 (1989), 3-22.

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# AN ECCLESIOLOGICAL REFLECTION IN THE CONTEXT OF POWERLESSNESS AND VULNERABILITY

Danilo-Azuela Borlado and Wan Chai

## Introduction

Migration has become a dominant landscape of our global village. Due to joblessness, millions of migrant workers are forced to leave their families and home countries every year in search for work overseas. The Philippines alone has more than 8 million Overseas Contract Workers (OCWs) scattered in the different parts of the world such as the Middle East, Egypt, Greece, Italy, Singapore, Malaysia, the mainland China, Korea and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, to name just a few. While the availability of overseas work provides opportunities for income for the millions of jobless families in the sending countries, the trend gives rise to enormous emotional, social and moral problems, which are so obvious they need no mentioning here.

This reflection is about the condition of vulnerability into which these migrant workers found themselves in their host countries. In particular, I am focusing on the experiences of the Filipino migrant workers in Hong Kong, most of whom are female domestic helpers. Hong Kong has been the destination and host of more than 123,000 Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW), around 95% of whom are women working as domestic helpers in the homes of Expatriates and local Chinese families. Their duties range from childcare, pet care, house cleaning, marketing, cooking, running errands, etc. While there are a few skilled workers and members who have become permanent residents, more than 95% are domestic helpers. It is this group of migrant workers that are placed in situations of powerlessness and vulnerability.

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## 1. Experiences of Vulnerability

The situation of powerlessness and vulnerability arises from several factors. Here I would simply outline the most common ones without detailed discussions.

1. Perhaps the most common one is *verbal abuse*. This is more prevalent with Chinese employers. With just a little mistake, many of them are called with names such as 'idiot', 'stupid', 'good for nothing', 'crazy', 'worthless', 'liar', etc., day in and day out. So, they are constantly suffering from bruised egos and battered self-esteem.

2. There are also many cases of *physical abuse* by employers. For example, it was reported in the local newspapers several times about a case where employers ironed the hands of their helpers. Another story is throwing of hard objects at the Helpers. One particular case was handled by our church. In other cases, the children of the employers who do the abusing. A few of our members have been kicked or punched by the employer's children and such behavior warranted medical examination.

3. *Sexual abuses* are also committed against these vulnerable female Domestic helpers. Many of these cases had been successfully prosecuted resulting to the imprisonment of the guilty employers. A case in point is the one I handled at the high court as a Court Interpreter a couple of years ago.

4. Moreover, the Domestic helpers are among the lowest paid of the working sectors of Hong Kong. While there are employers, especially the expatriates, who pay their helpers above the minimum, most of them receive a basic monthly salary of HK\$3,580.00 (around US\$465.00). In 2010 a review of the Minimum Wage Law in Hong Kong was made. The live-in domestic workers were excluded despite the appeal of thousands of them for an increase. The Minimum Allowable Wage (MAW) was raised to HK\$3,920.00 per month.

5. Also, there is the problem of *long working hours*. While around 5% work as live-out helpers, most of them work as live-in workers. Those who are live-out are usually better off than those who are Live-In because they do not have to work as late as 11.00pm or 12.00 midnight. Those who are Live-In, though not all, usually work for 12-14 hours without overtime pay. And, as testified by many of them, they often work with little rest and, sometimes, with little food.

6. Furthermore, there is the constant fear of *premature termination of contract*. Domestic helpers do not have the security of tenure. Their contracts can be terminated anytime upon payment of one month salary in lieu of notice and other termination benefits, if any, by their employers. Of course, they can also terminate the contract if they are not satisfied either by paying the one month salary in lieu of notice or by giving a one month notice. But it is heart-breaking to see Domestic helpers being terminated after a few days or weeks of arrival for some silly reasons such as failing to say 'excuse me' to the dog when passing by or for having a strong feet odor. Most Domestic helpers are forced to suffer in silence for fear of losing their jobs, which often means (a) not finishing the payment of their loans for their exorbitant placement fees in their countries of origin, and (b) not being able to continually support the needs of their families back home.

7. Finally, there is the constant *battle against loneliness*, especially on the part of those who are mothers. Separation from their families is a heart-rending experience. The first three months is not only critical in terms of their adjustment with their work and employers' families; it is also critical in terms of overcoming the pain of separation. This is aggravated by the fact that they only get to go home once in two years, usually for 14 days,

after the end of each contract. It has to be noted though that some considerate employers allow their helpers to go home once a year shouldering all the expenses. This experience of separation compounds the situation of vulnerability the migrant workers are going through.

## **2. The Church in the Context of Vulnerability**

Now, against this backdrop, the ecclesiological question that arises is: What should be the form and face of the church of Jesus Christ in this context? While the church has some unchanging features regardless of its location and context such as being compassionate, just, loving, redeeming, etc., she has to evolve into a unique shape that corresponds to the dominant reality and uppermost experiences of the members.

Out of our personal and heart breaking encounter with powerlessness and vulnerability through the varied experiences of our members, we offer this ecclesiological reflection.

### *(a) A church of the vulnerable*

In the context of powerlessness and vulnerability, the church of Jesus Christ inevitably becomes the church of the vulnerable. It cannot remain or be identified with the strong and the powerful. Otherwise, it will have problem relating the gospel of Jesus Christ, who himself became poor, with its membership and the larger community of the vulnerable it is trying to serve. It doesn't mean, however, it should close its doors to the strong and the mighty. Certainly, the church of Jesus Christ is for everyone seeking to follow him. There must not be discrimination of people into its membership on the basis of socio economic, racial or educational status. However, in such a context, it has to be predominantly embodied as the church of the vulnerable. This inevitability is, or will be, brought about by two undergirding factors. One is demographical and the other is Christological.

1. The demographical factor arises from the composition of the membership of the church. The members practically come from among, and perhaps, the most vulnerable segment of Hong Kong society. As has been mentioned above, (a) they work for 12-14 hours a day with little rest and, sometimes, little food; (b) many of them are verbally and emotionally abused and thus suffered constant humiliation; (c) they are the lowest paid working sector. The rest of their sad plight has been made clear in the introduction, hence does not need repeating here. The point simply is that, given the demographical composition of the church in this context, it has to be, more than anything else, a church of the vulnerable. Only then, in such a context, can it be authentically called the church of Jesus Christ.

2. The other factor is Christological. It comes from the profound social message of the incarnation. The birth of Jesus Christ is surrounded by

powerful social implications that both affirms and identifies with vulnerability or the vulnerable.

- a. First of all, his birth is filled with vulnerability. The long and arduous travel Mary went through, the absence of a delivery room, the filthy surroundings of the stable and the massacre of innocent children that followed, etc. are all unequivocal testimonies to the vulnerability surrounding his birth.
- b. Moreover, vulnerability is also seen in his ministry. He himself said, '...the Son of man has nowhere to lay down his head' (Matt. 8:20). This statement speaks of discomfort and deprivation of some basic necessities in life. Thus, among others, it points to Jesus' personal experience of vulnerability during his earthly ministry, which culminated in his most cruel and barbaric death by crucifixion.
- c. Finally, the vulnerability of Christ is best articulated in an early Christian hymn, otherwise known as Kenosis Cristi, quoted by Paul in his letter to the Philippians: 'Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross' (Phil. 2:6-8)! This is vulnerability in its greatest depth and broadest sense.

These two solid foundational factors gave birth to the consciousness and shape of the church of Jesus Christ as a church of the vulnerable.

### *(b) A church with the vulnerable*

Secondly, given the demographic makeup and the Christological consciousness upon which our church, the New Beginnings Christian Fellowship (Hong Kong), is being built, it is inevitably becoming the church with the vulnerable. The church of Jesus Christ, in such a context, is both evolving as a church of the vulnerable and a church with the vulnerable.

1. *Some Biblical Support.* This particular contour of the church highlights not only the predominantly vulnerable composition of our church, but especially the poor and vulnerable face of Jesus the Christ.

- a. Paul succinctly stated in his second letter to the Corinthians the intentional decision of Christ to be poor. 'For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you, through his poverty, might become rich.' (2 Cor. 8:9). In here we see Paul articulating the deliberate act of Jesus Christ in becoming poor. Jesus identified with the poor by becoming poor for the purpose of enriching them spiritually.
- b. But, perhaps, the most poignant statement of divine visitation and companionship with humanity is found in the annunciation passage

in the Gospel of Matthew. 'The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel' – which means, 'God with us.' (Matt. 1:23) Here we find that the birth of Jesus is understood and proclaimed as God's act of visiting and accompanying his vulnerable and struggling people under the yoke of Roman domination.

- c. Of course, in the Old Testament, God's accompanying and providing presence is also clearly acknowledged. Perhaps the best passage is Exodus 13:21-22. In this famous passage, God's guiding presence is symbolized by the pillar of cloud during the day and by the pillar of fire by night. These are symbols of God's guiding, providing and accompanying presence for a most vulnerable people as they wander in the desert for 40 years on the way to the Promised Land. We even see it in God's dealing with the rejected and dislocated Hagar. She and the boy Ishmael were put in a most vulnerable situation when Sara sent them away from the household of Abraham (Gen. 16).

2. *The New Beginnings Experience.* God's accompanying presence with the vulnerable continues to the present. He remains the ever-present companion of the marginalized.

- a. In our church, God's accompanying and providing presence are celebrated during worship time, especially in the observance of the Lord's Supper and the preaching or teaching of the written Word. Every worship time is a celebration of God's sustaining, guiding, protecting, providing, and accompanying presence throughout the week of hard work and great physical and emotional strain.
- b. Also, God's accompanying presence is experienced in the Care Groups. Our church has eleven Study and Care Groups. They meet for one and half hours after every worship, except on first Sundays where the members are given a free day for personal transactions such as doing their remittances and meeting their friends or relatives. In the Care Groups, members are nurtured in the Word, but are also given the time to be cared for. It is done by allowing them to share their work difficulties, relational problems and other personal struggles, after which, they pray for one another as they excitedly look forward to the next meeting. They sometimes make sacrificial financial contributions for members of their groups in crisis.
- c. Counseling, both face-to-face and by telephone, becomes one concrete expression and experience of God's presence at the New Beginnings Christian Fellowship (Hong Kong). As the members are facing manifold problems, many of them are in dire need of counseling. It is not uncommon for us to receive anonymous calls seeking counseling every now and then, sometimes even at the middle of the night. The most common problem has to do with

humiliation due to the mistreatment by their employers. It is followed by the problem of debt from lending companies that entice migrant workers to borrow money. There is also the problem of infidelity, usually on the part of husbands who are left behind due to long separation. Juvenile delinquency and teenage pregnancy is also a recurring problem among children of migrant workers perhaps largely due to the absence of motherly care.

- d. Finally, the accompanying presence of God is especially highlighted during church anniversary celebrations. This is particularly due to the way the church was formed or born. It was started by around 30 people, mostly women with one or two men, in September 2006. All of them were domestic helpers. Yet it was able to gain a legal personality and satisfy the multiple requirements of the Hong Kong Immigration, including a certain amount of funds, to hire their own pastor. Today, after three years, the church is a self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating congregation of more than 200 members.

Hence, despite its many limitations, especially in terms of material resources, the New Beginnings Christian Fellowship (Hong Kong) has and is continually evolving into a church of and with the vulnerable people of God.

### *(c) A church for the vulnerable*

Finally, a church located in the context of vulnerability, composed of the vulnerable and ministering with the vulnerable can only be authentically called the church of Jesus Christ, if it consciously exists for the vulnerable. The salvation, nurture and liberation of God's vulnerable people must be central to its mission. The interest of the vulnerable must take center stage and translated into workable goals and programmatic structures before it can proudly call itself the church of Jesus Christ. Any church, in this context, must become vulnerable and exist for the vulnerable. Otherwise, it would lose its integrity and cease to be the real church of Jesus Christ. The existence of people living in the margins calls the wealthy and comfortable church of affluent societies such as Hong Kong to become vulnerable and exist for the vulnerable.

1. *Some Biblical Underpinnings.* Such characterization has its bases on the manifest mission of Christ and the praxis of the early Christian church. In the Gospels Jesus explicitly declares his mission agenda. And it is clearly biased for the poor and the vulnerable, without the exclusion of the materially privileged.

- a. Perhaps the most explicit one is the Lukan version. 'The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim



the year of the Lord's favor' (Lk. 4:18-19). Here we have a concise but straightforward statement of Christ's mission leaning towards the vulnerable of his time and culture.

- b. In the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats in Matthew 25, we read of Jesus declaring actions in behalf of the poor as a criterion of spirituality and a basis of judgment. Verses 45-46 are most relevant here: 'He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did not do for me.' 'Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.' Here service to the least (poor) is actually service to Christ and becomes the basis of judgment.
- c. This pro-poor emphasis is complimented, if not implemented, by the practice of the early church under the leadership of the apostles. For example, in Acts 2:44-45 we read: 'All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling all their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.' The same thing is described in Acts 4:34-35: 'There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need.' This practice echoes the sharp focus on caring for one another, especially the poor among them.
- d. Finally, the Johannine epistles also bear this focus. Perhaps the most explicit one is in 1 John 3:17: 'If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has not pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?' For John, helping those in need authenticates our 'sonship' and love for God. Essentially, John argues that God's community exists for one another in love, especially the needy among them.

2. *The New Beginnings Christian Fellowship Experience.* While there is still much room for improvement in this aspect, our church has been striving, with its limited resources and capacity, to be a church for the vulnerable.

- a. Benevolence Gift and Prayer. Every now and then a member's loved one dies or is hospitalized. Sometimes they can get to go home and join their families. But, at other times, they can't for financial reasons or because they are not allowed by their employers to go home. In such a time of distress, our church extends a certain amount of financial help to them as well as the ministry of prayer.
- b. Job Counseling and Referrals. Very often the members come to us with job-related problems or questions. Less complicated ones are often dealt with effectively by way of simple counseling. Complicated and serious cases are normally referred to organizations that provide services to Migrant Workers in the area of technical and legal assistance.

- c. **Temporary Shelter.** Premature termination of contracts is very common. It is oftentimes done by the employers, sometimes even in the middle of the night. The most critical period is during the first six months. When this happens, the domestic helpers need a place to stay until their fourteen day visa expires or until they find new employers. To meet this need, our church is renting a small place to serve as a temporary shelter. While there, we talk to them for encouragement, guidance and prayer.
- d. **Empowerment Seminars.** Once every quarter, we schedule seminars on different topics to help raise their level of awareness and self-confidence. Among others, we normally conduct 'Know Your Rights' and 'Money Management' seminars. For the newcomers, we usually conduct a general orientation session about the Chinese culture, the pressure of domestic work, and the different agencies they can go for help in times of need.
- e. **Participation in the Struggle for Better Wages and Working Conditions.** Every now and then, our church participates in efforts toward the protection and promotion of workers' rights, especially the domestic helpers'. To date we have already completed several signature campaigns for the alleviation of their sad plight. We have also participated in mass protests and rallies calling for the inclusion of the live-in domestic workers in the new Minimum Wage Law of Hong Kong. Moreover, our church collaborates with other service providers for ethnic minorities and is one of the founding bodies of the Coalition of Service Providers for Ethnic Minorities in Hong Kong. Finally, together with other concerned churches and organizations, our church has participated in dialogues with the Philippine Consulate General in connection with issues affecting the Filipino community, especially the domestic helpers.

Opportunities to work for and on behalf of the vulnerable members of the Filipino community in Hong Kong abound. Sometimes the needs and challenges appear to be overwhelming. The point simply is that, in the context of powerlessness and vulnerability, the church of Jesus Christ must exist for the vulnerable members of God's community.

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### **Conclusion**

As the jobless millions leave their families and countries in search for work overseas, migration is becoming a dominant reality of our present world. In their respective host countries, these migrant workers face insurmountable challenges and are subjected to vulnerable conditions. The migrant workers in Hong Kong are among them. In such a context, the church of Jesus Christ takes a distinctive shape and character. Composed mainly of women domestic helpers, the church, if it is to be an authentic Christian church, must inevitably and ultimately become the church of the vulnerable, with

the vulnerable and for the vulnerable. That is what following Jesus means; that is what it means to be a Christian church in the context of powerlessness and vulnerability. Any church that does not take on such a character is bound to mediocrity and irrelevance and is no different than a social club.

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## **PENTECOSTAL SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT: EXCERPTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD**

Harold D. Hunter

Was the founder of the original 'Earth Day' a Pentecostal? How does the first murder of an abortionist physician fit into a Pentecostal pacifist paradigm? Was there a Pentecostal woman in Egypt who Muslims say is in paradise? Who was that Pentecostal tortured in prison while fighting apartheid alongside the likes of Desmond Tutu? How has the Unión Evangélica Pentecostal Venezolana sought solidarity with the poor? What Christian group first broke Jim Crow segregation laws in Martin Luther King's Alabama? Who stopped the bombs at Vieques?

While it would be misleading to suggest that all variations of those known collectively as Classical Pentecostals adopt the same approach to social injustice, it was said in the international WARC-Pentecostal Dialogue that many Pentecostals start with transformation of the individual. However, Pentecostals are known to construct alternative communities that address systematic issues and oppressive structures as they are encountered by those in their circle.

Many of the Pentecostal liabilities related to social engagement seem to be well-known. One can even hear a sense of desperation in the title of Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen's 2001 study 'Are Pentecostals Oblivious to Social Justice?'<sup>1</sup> To list but a few of the challenges, one could start with a primer:

- Dualism – salvation of the 'soul' given priority
- Eschatology – immense and apocalyptic doomsdays scenarios leave no room for worry about social work
- Apolitical posture – portrayed as secular vs sacred
- Prosperity gospel – the wretchedly poor deserve their status

Unfortunately it is beyond the scope of this limited study to address all aspects of this question. However, there are considerations that may shed a different light on some of these criticisms. First, it must be noted that many accounts fail to place Pentecostals in their proper context. It seems many such Pentecostals come to life better when read in light of their social location, being objects of oppression, and the lack of political space for their empowerment. Another factor to note is that Pentecostals often did not

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<sup>1</sup> Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, 'Are Pentecostals Oblivious to Social Justice? Theological and Ecumenical Perspectives' *Missionalia* 29.3 (2001).

publicize their work in this regard thus leaving the argument from silence to flourish.<sup>2</sup>

Having logged over 15 years with Pentecostal archives,<sup>3</sup> it seems there has long been a ferment for social change not recognized inside or outside the movement. In terms of academic research, it stands out that few make their way to a location like Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, to comb through rare original documentation to find out what actually happened with the International Pentecostal Holiness Church. Thus despite the several handicaps, my view is that there is evidence to the contrary as models of social justice within these communities often dubbed the underside of society have emerged not recognized inside much less outside the Pentecostal movement.

One reality that clouds our way forward is that when Pentecostal political posturing in the global north is revealed in national media, the most widely reported cases reveal rampant political conservatism. On the national stage in the USA, Assemblies of God produced James Watt as Secretary of the Interior then John Ashcroft, 79<sup>th</sup> United States Attorney General. Neither was well received by scholars in their own tradition much less the media.<sup>4</sup> Again we see the disparity of how some Christian traditions are judged by their scholars while others are known only by their devotees.

While it would be misleading to suggest that all variations of those known collectively as Classical Pentecostals – even when narrowed to those connected to the Pentecostal World Fellowship – adopt the same approach to social injustice, it was said at the start of the WARC-Pentecostal Dialogue that many Pentecostals start with transformation of the individual. It is to the detriment of some observers that they undervalue the considerable impact of personal transformation or underplay the suppression of sexual abuse, spousal torture, drug addiction, coupled with the embrace of the likes of the Dalits and leper colonies in India. Pentecostals are known to construct alternative communities that may

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<sup>2</sup> A study that may offer promise for future discussion is the 2010 release by Eerdmans of *Pentecostalism and Political Theology* by Amos Yong. Darrin Rogers (3-17-09) said mainline Pentecostal publications treated political positions as ‘secular’ and therefore not reported. He had to go to newspapers and the like to find people who held political offices. See Darrin J. Rogers, *Northern Harvest: Pentecostalism in North Dakota* (Bismark, North Dakota: North Dakota District Council of the Assemblies of God, 2003).

<sup>3</sup> When I was Scholar in Residence at the Church of God Theological Seminary in the early 1990s, my office was in the Dixon Pentecostal Research Center. I have been director of the IPHC Archives and Research Center from 1995 through to the present.

<sup>4</sup> Even Ronald Reagan’s administration gave up on Watt over the following comment he made to a group of lobbyists regarding the makeup of his coal-leasing commission: ‘We have every kind of mix you can have. I have a black, I have a woman, two Jews and a cripple.’ – James Watt, September 21, 1983.

address systematic issues and oppressive structures as they are encountered by those in their circle. Or some might express it this way. Pentecostals seek not so much the 'transubstantiation' of the Eucharistic elements as the transformation of people. Pentecostals tend to not consecrate many places, but expect the sacred in the believer. Can devotees of the 'real presence' who testify of miraculous healings of their bodies, ignore those who cannot care for their own bodies?<sup>5</sup>

In what follows I will highlight some Pentecostals who by their lives testify to their engagement with the social institutions and systems for good of others.

### **Who was that Pentecostal Tortured in Prison while Fighting Apartheid in South Africa alongside the Likes of Desmond Tutu?**

It is tempting to devote this entire study to the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) in South Africa. Their story reveals much about Pentecostalism that is a rebuke to a core message of this tradition. Our subject is chronicled in detail by Frank Chikane, Japie Lapoorta, Nico Horn and Allan Anderson, but space permits only a digest here.

When the Nationalist Party gained power in South Africa in 1948, the AFM supported the government in its apartheid policy. In 1955, when Prime Minister J. Strydom enlarged the senate to obtain the required majority in both Houses of Parliament to remove the so-called coloured voters from the electoral roll, G.R. Wessels, vice-president of the AFM, was one of the new senators while remaining ordained by the AFM. Thus, the AFM became a direct partner of the government in its implementation of apartheid.<sup>6</sup> During the 1950s, Wessels published a magazine which

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Harold D. Hunter, 'Reflections by a Pentecostalist on Aspects of BEM' in *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 29:3/4 (Summer/Fall 1992), 338; Miroslav Volf, in 'Materiality of Salvation: An Investigation in the Soteriologies of Liberation and Pentecostal Theologies', *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 26 (Summer, 1989), 447-68. Paul S. Fiddes, 'Unity and Universality, Locality and Diversity according to Baptist and Congregationalist Thinking', paper read to Joint 2<sup>nd</sup> International Receptive Ecumenism Conference in Durham (UK) January 13, 2009, 2, recently had this to say about Baptist theology: 'When believers gather together to find the mind of Christ, where the word of God is preached and where the body of the communion bread is broken (1 Cor. 10:16-17), *there* is the body of Christ. Indeed, in their eucharistic theology, Baptists tend to locate the body of Christ in the members who break the bread rather than in the bread itself.'

<sup>6</sup> Nico Horn, 'South African Pentecostals and Apartheid: A Short Case Study of the Apostolic Faith Mission' in *Experiences of the Spirit: Essays on Intercultural Theology*, Jan A.B. Jongeneel (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1991), 129. Also Allan Anderson, 'Pentecostals and Apartheid in South Africa During Ninety Years', *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research* #9 (2001) at [www.pctii.org/cyberj/index.html](http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/index.html), who is quick to dismiss the stereotype of Pentecostals in South Africa as apolitical.

advocated apartheid in its crudest form.<sup>7</sup> In 1955, he was featured as a speaker at the Fourth Pentecostal World Conference in Stockholm.

Japie Lapoorta points out that the AFM white church received governmental recognition for their contribution in the upliftment of poor whites during the Anglo-Boer war. However, influenced by Afrikaner ideology their commitment was only to poor whites.<sup>8</sup>

The early tide of antidenominationalism was illustrated somewhat in their registration with the government as an unlimited company rather than a church. This registration was legally changed to church in 1961. Most important, however, is that it was the white AFM that was acknowledged by the government. The black, coloured and Indian sections of the AFM were controlled by a missions department for several decades.

In 1985 the white Executive Council under Dr F.P. Möller, Sr, called the three black sections together to discuss the future of the AFM. A 1986 Proposed Document of Intent by the Workers' Council of the AFM declared that the AFM:

'accepts the Biblical principles of unity; ...rejects the system of apartheid based on racial discrimination as a principle in the Kingdom of God and within the structure of the Church; ...accepts the principle that the Church should operate as a single structural unit...'<sup>9</sup>

The struggle to end racial structures and practices within the AFM and the push for unity came mainly from the black AFM churches rather than from the white division of the church. When the black churches hit a white brick wall they went ahead with the unity of the black churches in 1993 which they called 'Composite Division'. Unity with the white division came only in 1996.

David du Plessis is perhaps the best-known product of the AFM. He was part of a family who joined the AFM shortly after its commencement in 1908. He was converted at the age of eleven and was called to the ministry at the age of 15. He entered full-time ministry in 1928 and in 1932 was elected to the Executive Council and in 1936 became general secretary. Until 1947, when he left South Africa to start his international ministry, he was one of the most influential men in the AFM. Although he initially promoted racial segregation in the AFM, he later became a prominent proponent of racial reconciliation.

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<sup>7</sup> Nico Horn, 'Crossing Borders in Southern Africa: A Lesson From History', *Crossing Borders*, Conference on Pentecostal and Charismatic Research in Europe, July 3-6, 1991, Kappel, Switzerland, 14. This study was subsequently published in the *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research* #3 (1998) at <http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/index.html>.

<sup>8</sup> Japie J. Lapoorta, *Unity or Division: The Unity Struggle of the Black Churches Within the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa* (Kuils Rivers: J.J. Lapoorta, 1997).

<sup>9</sup> Horn, 'Crossing Borders in Southern Africa', 16; Lapoorta, *Unity or Division*, 75.

The first significant protest against apartheid from within the Pentecostal churches came from Frank Chikane in the early 1980s. At that stage he pastored an AFM congregation in Kagiso, a black township outside the conservative white town, Krugersdorp, 25 kilometers from Johannesburg. Chikane would follow Bishop Desmond Tutu as General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches. In 1997, he served in the elected position of assistant president of the united AFM with Dr Isak Burger elected to the position of president.

Chikane's global notoriety, however, centers on dramas like his prison torture being supervised by a white AFM deacon, an assassination attempt by putting acid in his clothes while touring the USA, and his contribution to the legendary *Kairos Document*. A good starter is Chikane's *No Life of My Own*.<sup>10</sup>

In Kagiso, Chikane was confronted with the suffering of the community. His holistic African worldview made him realize that he could not ignore the pain of those to whom he ministered. He started several self-help schemes for the handicapped and unemployed people. Frank Chikane, always a good preacher, became a popular speaker at church conferences,

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<sup>10</sup> Frank Chikane, *No Life of My Own* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1988); Frank Chikane, 'The Blessings of Azusa Street and the Doornfontein Revivals and Pentecost's Blind Spot', in *The Azusa Street Revival and Its Legacy*, ed. by Harold D. Hunter and Cecil M. Robeck, Jr (Cleveland: Pathway Press, 2006), 259-276; J. Nico Horn, 'Experiences of the Spirit in Apartheid South Africa: The Possibilities of the Rediscovery of the Black Roots of Pentecostalism in South African Theology,' *EPTA Bulletin* 8:5 (1989), 116-22; G.D. Oosthuizen, *Pentecostal Penetration into the Indian Community in South Africa* (Durban: Interprint Ltd, 1975). During a visit to the international headquarters of the Apostolic Faith Mission (3-21-89), I was given a quite different picture of Frank Chikane when talking to F.P. Möller than that found in Ronald Sider, 'Interview with Rev. Frank Chikane,' *Transformation* 5:2 (April/June 1988), 9-12. See F.P. Möller, *Church and Politics: A Pentecostal View of the Situation in South Africa* (Braamfontein: Gospel Publishers, 1988); Mathew S. Clark, 'Pentecost and Politics', paper read to the Society For Pentecostal Studies (November 11, 1988); Mathew S. Clark, *What is Distinctive About Pentecostal Theology?* (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1989), 85f. Mathew S. Clark categorized the Pentecostal attitude as apocalyptic when reporting examples of things like slavery to demonic forces as the Pentecostal version of oppression. Congratulating Pentecostals for their 'healthy cynicism' toward announced struggles for social justice, he declared that such things reduce to simply a 'transfer' of temporal power [p. 90]. Clark was considerably influenced by his experience of living in Rhodesia when it changed to Zimbabwe. So my interview with him (3-20-89) in South Africa. Early signs of hope emerged about this time. Soon after his election to the post of general moderator of the white segment of the Full Gospel Church of God, Lemmer du Plessis told me (3-27-89) of his desire to implement a non-apartheid church government. In the meantime, Wynand de Kock gave himself so completely to the cause of non-whites, that this same church classed him as 'coloured'. Arthur Naidoo added to my knowledge of the horror.



youth clubs and other gatherings. He began to realize that the suffering of his people was directly linked to the political system of apartheid. He began to resist the system by helping political activists. Chikane's resistance resulted in him losing his ministerial status with the AFM.

He was also detained for several months without trial on many occasions. In 1985 he was charged with high treason, but the charges against him and several other black leaders were withdrawn before the case went to court. He later became the general secretary of the Institute for Contextual Theology (ICT). The ICT was the major force in the drawing up of the well-known *Kairos Document*, a theological reflection on the state of emergency. However, this document was never seen as a Pentecostal document nor was it generally accepted by the broader Pentecostal community, both black and white.

The 1991 Kappel Declaration, as it was known, was printed in the *EPTA Bulletin* 10:1 and *Transformation* 9:1 which included an introduction by Murray Dempster. Having been on site and interviewed some of the principal parties in 1989, it was no doubt in my mind that this note needed to be sounded. Yet it did not compare in importance with projects like *The Kairos Document: Challenge to the Church* (Johannesburg: Skotaville Publishers, 1986) and the *Relevant Pentecostal Witness* (Durban, SA: The Relevant Pentecostals, 1988). Relevant Pentecostals, during their brief existence, put out the *Azusa* journal and also organized the Society for Pentecostal Theology in South Africa. About the same time, Nico Horn, who did not recoil in the face of threatening apartheid struggles, used a version of Spirit Christology to call Pentecostals back to a form of pacifism.<sup>11</sup>

### Was the Founder of the Original 'Earth Day' a Pentecostal?

Yes, this was John Saunders McConnell, Jr. His father, J.S. McConnell, was an Assemblies of God minister and his grandfather, T.W. McConnell attended the famed Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles. J.S. McConnell was in Hot Springs, Arkansas, for the 1914 birth of the Assemblies of God. The early ministry of J.S. McConnell was filled with 'signs and wonders' as they traversed the USA.<sup>12</sup>

It was John McConnell who launched the original Earth Day sanctioned by the United Nations. John would drink from the same wells as his Pentecostal family by seeing a divine mandate in moving forward on this critical front.

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<sup>11</sup> Nico Horn, 'Pentecostal Peace – A Challenge to Militarism', *Azusa* 1:2 (March 1992), 6.

<sup>12</sup> Robert M. Weir, *Peace, Justice, Care of Earth: The Vision of John McConnell, Founder of Earth Day* (Kalamazoo, MI: Press on Publishing, 2007), 2-11, 119-22. I am indebted to Darrin Rodgers for this reference.

Unfortunately, the stewardship of God's creation was not warmly embraced by Pentecostals in the global north. Among the signs of a shift, was the pointed presentation about AICs in Zimbabwe given at Brighton '91<sup>13</sup> by M.L. Daneel at my invitation.<sup>14</sup>

When it comes time for water baptism, one group of AIC candidates in Zimbabwe confesses not only personal sins, but things like 'I chopped down 30 trees, but did not plant any.' 'I ruined the topsoil.' Then there is the Lord's Supper. A monstrous fire is built and 1,000s go running around this huge fire yelling out their sins. Along with familiar confessions to adultery, jealousy, stealing – are wailings over ecological wizardry. Before actually taking the elements of communion, they must pass through a series of symbolic gates of heaven. Each gate has prophets who discern hidden sins not confessed when running around the bonfire.

A thorough review of *Confessing the One Faith*<sup>15</sup> could move Pentecostals toward a void in their pneumatology that was loudly trumpeted in documents preparing delegates for WCC General Assembly Canberra '91. Yves Congar admits that prodding from Moltmann accounted for a full chapter devoted to ecological concerns in the last volume of his important trilogy on pneumatology. Indeed, the integrity of creation should flow out of humankind's responsibility for creation while avoiding the sacralization of nature (*One Faith* #205).<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> I conceived and organized the first global conference known as Brighton '91. Monsignor Peter Hocken helped with the program and together we published the primary papers as *All Together in One Place*. Although I was not able to invite all of my chosen speakers and some declined an invitation, we managed to tackle a wide range of topics such as the following: other living faiths as seen from India; Latin liberation theology; social justice in Korea and Romania; gender equality; apartheid; stewardship of creation; physical challenges; martyrdom. I devised here my paradigm of 'four streams' by which is meant Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant and Pentecostal. Every subsequent conference in which I have had a hand has followed this pattern in addition to calling on many others who did not fit this simplistic classification. Professor Jürgen Moltmann was the keynote speaker and simultaneous translation was provided in four languages at Brighton '91.

<sup>14</sup> M.L. Daneel, 'African Independent Church Pneumatology and the Salvation of All Creation,' in Harold D. Hunter and Peter Hocken *All Together In One Place* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 96-126. Also see Hunter, 'Aspects of BEM', 339; Harold D. Hunter, 'Pentecostal Healing for God's Sick Creation?' in *The Spirit and the Church* 2:2 (November 2000), 145-67.

<sup>15</sup> *Confessing the One Faith's* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1991) treatment of ecological issues is to be found under 'Creation and the Triune God' (78-89, 198) and 'Living Our Hope' (274-78).

<sup>16</sup> Harold D. Hunter, 'The Reemergence of Spirit Christology', in *EPTA Bulletin* 10:1 (1992), 53.

### **How Does the First Execution of a Convicted Killer of Abortion Practitioners Fit into a Pentecostal Pacifist Paradigm?**

Paul Hill was executed in 2003 for the 1994 murder of two abortionist practitioners in Pensacola, Florida. Although Hill was not a member of the Assemblies of God, he attended an Assembly of God on the Sunday prior to this tragedy. Hill told a TV audience on the Phil Donahue show that killing an abortion doctor was as justifiable as murdering Hitler. Then one July morning, he took a pump-action shotgun and shot a physician and his escort dead outside a women's clinic. Tragically there were voices within the community that condoned these murders, but these were not official representatives of churches belonging to the Pentecostal World Fellowship. I predicted this scenario in the 1980s while on the faculty of the Church of God Theological Seminary.<sup>17</sup>

Other than a significant body like the International Pentecostal Holiness Church, many Pentecostal denominations in North America originally were pacifists prior to World War I. The Church of God in Christ remains committed to this ideal and on this grounds opposed the USA invasion of Iraq. By the same token, however, their church leadership warmed against public protests targeting the Bush administration.

Pentecostals and Charismatics for Peace and Justice (PCPJ) led by Paul Alexander have sought to revive a commitment 'from the womb to the tomb'. They publish *Pax Pneuma: The Journal* and one of Alexander's most recent releases is *Peace to War: Shifting Allegiances in the Assemblies of God*.<sup>18</sup> PCPJ sponsored a revealing trip to the West Bank and Jerusalem in July 2009 with an emphasis on Gaza.<sup>19</sup>

### **Was there a Pentecostal Woman in Egypt who Muslims Say is in Paradise?**

Raised a Roman Catholic, at age 18 Lillian Trasher would go to God's Bible School in Cincinnati, Ohio. The next major stop was the Altamont Bible School, now known as Holmes Bible College, in South Carolina where she was baptized in the Spirit. By 1912 she was ordained with the Church of God (Cleveland, TN), however by 1919 she was part of the Assemblies of God.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> I heard Murray Dempster relate this connection soon after the event at an annual meeting of the Society for Pentecostal Studies. See *Los Angeles Times* 1 September 2003 and 3 September 2003.

<sup>18</sup> Paul Alexander, *Peace to War: Shifting Allegiances in the Assemblies of God* (Telford, PA: Cascadia Publishing House, 2009), 18.

<sup>19</sup> PCPJ web at <http://www.pcpj.org/>

<sup>20</sup> David Roebuck, 'Restorationism and a Vision for World Harvest: A Brief History of the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee)', *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research* #5 (1999) at <http://www.pctii.org/cyberh/index.html>

A Moslem official in Egypt honored her with this astounding commendation: 'I believe that when she dies, in spite of the fact she is a woman and a Christian, God will take her directly to paradise.'<sup>21</sup>

Miss Trasher's explanation of why she went to Assiout, Egypt is the type of story not foreign to Pentecostal ears. When twenty-three years of age, she heard a missionary from India speak and decided she should be a missionary to Africa. She had only \$5 having set it aside for her wedding that was planned 10 days later. Rather than disobey God, she determined that since her fiance would not join her she must go alone. Friends gave her \$13 and she decided to attend a missionary conference in Pennsylvania. She handed her money to Miss Mattie Perry who put it in her desk which was withdrawn by Mattie's sister to pay a debt as she did not know who owned the money. Lillian did not know this until time to leave for the trip and thus decided to go as far as the money would take her.

Lillian paid for a train fare to Washington DC and made contact there with a friend of Mattie Perry. Now hear Miss Lillian in her own words:

In due time I reached Washington, found Miss Perry's friend, and handed her the note of introduction. 'Oh! I am so sorry,' she said, 'but I cannot take you in as I am entertaining a missionary family from Assiout, Egypt; but come in and have some lunch.' The missionary was Rev. Brelsford, to whom I was introduced as a missionary to Africa. 'To what part of Africa are you going?' asked Mr Brelsford. 'Why-I-Don't know.' 'Oh, I see! What board did you say you were going out under?' 'I'm not going out under any board.' 'Your family is sending you out, I suppose?' 'Oh no! My family are not in favor of my going at all.' 'Well, have you your fare?' 'I have one dollar.'

Perhaps I better not try to tell you all that Mr Brelsford said or thought, but I can still hear him telling me to go home to my mother. But I did not go home; I went to Africa, as God called me. 'Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it.'

One of the ladies gave up her room to me and I remained there a day or two. Before I left Mr Brelsford asked me to join his work in Assiout, Egypt. I replied 'Well, since I had no intention of stopping over in Washington, perhaps the Lord led me here just to meet you.' I soon felt that I was to accept his offer and go to Egypt.

I arrived in Assiout, October 26, 1910, and went at once to Mr Brelsford's Mission and began to study the language. At first I became very homesick, but now I have come to feel more at home in Egypt than I do in America. After I had been in Egypt a little over three months I was asked to visit a dying woman. She had a tiny babe about three months old, and it was being fed from a tiny bottle. The milk had become caked and green and stringy, yet the baby was trying to drink it. Soon the mother died and the baby was given to me. I took it home. The child had never had a bath, and its clothes were sewed on. You cannot imagine the odors that came from it. The little thing

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<sup>21</sup> S. Sherneth, 'Lillian Trasher,' *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Stanley M. Burgess (ed.) (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 1153.

would cry and cry, making it hard for the missionaries to rest at night. They begged me to take her back, but I could not do that. So I went out and rented a house for twelve dollars and half per month, then spent my little for a bit of furniture; and thus February 10<sup>th</sup>, 1911 marked the opening of the Assiout Orphanage.<sup>22</sup>

Thus started the first orphanage in Egypt.

### **How Has the Unión Evangélica Pentecostal Venezolana Sought Solidarity with the Poor?**

After an unsuccessful bid – with a letter of support from Lamar Vest, General Overseer of the Church of God (Cleveland, TN) – for the newly created position of WCC General Secretary of Church and Ecumenical Relation, I received a fax from this new office in Geneva about a meeting with Latin Pentecostals in May 1994. I passed this on to Bishop Gamaliel Lugo of CEPLA while at Guadalajara, Mexico for the 1993 annual meeting of the Society for Pentecostal Studies. Lugo participated in that WCC consultation and subsequent meetings that will be noted momentarily.

CEPLA, or Comision Evangélica Pentecostal Latinoamericana, had sponsored occasional conferences known as Latin American Pentecostal Encounters. Some conference papers were published and notable among them was *Pentecostalismo y Liberacion: Una experiencia latinoamericana* (San José, Costa Rica: DEI, 1992) edited by Carmelo Alvarez. The general coordinator has been Bishop Gamaliel Lugo of the Union Evangelical Pentecostal Venezuela.

Critics of Pentecostals have long charged that its emphasis on ecstatic personal experiences – tongues, prophecy – is an escape from oppression that promotes passive acceptance of injustice. Some have concluded that powers-that-be use Pentecostalism to hold the masses in subjection.

Juan Sepúlveda has convincingly argued that the social alienation of Latin America's Pentecostals is the logical expression of the marginalization of the poor themselves, since the social milieu in which the movement has grown is precisely the world of the poor. With more opportunities for democratization, he said, Pentecostals have begun to ask themselves what it means to participate in society. At the Brighton '91 conference, Sepúlveda endorsed liberation theology. Among the parallels between autochthonous Pentecostal churches and base ecclesial communities identified by Sepúlveda was that 'for both movements,

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<sup>22</sup> Tract by Lillian Trasher, *The Birth of Assiout Orphanage or Why I Came to Egypt in 1910*, 2-3, 7-8. See Jerome Beatty, 'Nile Mother', *The American Magazine* (June 1939), 55, 56, 180; Jerome Beatty, *Nile Mother: The Story of Lillian Trasher* (Springfield, MO: The General Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc., nd).

salvation is not a purely immaterial question; it is a concrete reality in the here and now of real life.<sup>23</sup>

Marta Palma and others have clarified that Latin Pentecostal churches with North American or European roots are still strongly influenced from outside and tend to hold conservative political positions whereas the same is generally not true of the indigenous churches. An example of such is the August 1987 declaration of La Unión Evangélica Pentecostal Venezolana that it is a church without compromise regarding political participation. Gamaliel Lugo expanded this as length during the June 1996 WCC Consultation with Pentecostals in Costa Rica. Lugo made other contributions to the WCC – Pentecostal consultation at Peru '94 and Bossey '97.<sup>24</sup> He attended the WCC General Assembly which convened February 14-23, 2006, in Porto Alegre, Brazil. Lugo was still president in 2008 and has also made strong statements in favor of the Hugo Chávez government and his social policies in favor of the poor.

Explication by *Confessing the One Faith* (#208, #214, and #215) on charisms corresponds well to findings familiar to the Society for Pentecostal Studies, the European Pentecostal-Charismatic Research Association, the Latin American Pentecostal Encounter, the Asian Charismatic Theological Association and the Society for Pentecostal Theology in South Africa. Significantly, Pentecostal academicians have been turning away from mere obsession with lines of demarcation tied to initial evidence<sup>25</sup> and moving to the stuff of Spirit baptism.

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<sup>23</sup> Juan Sepúlveda, 'Pentecostalism and Liberation Theology: Two Manifestations of the Work of the Holy Spirit for the Renewal of the Church', *All Together In One Place*, 51-64; Adoniram Gaxiola, 'Poverty as a Meeting and Parting Place: Similarities and Contrasts in the Experience of Latin American Pentecostalism and Ecclesial Base Communities', *Pneuma* 13 (Fall, 1991), 172-3; Miriam Reidy, 'Latin American Pentecostalism', *One World* (May 1988), 7.

<sup>24</sup> These consultations produced a series of booklets published by the World Council of Churches. They remain available at <http://www.pctii.org/wcc/index.html>

<sup>25</sup> Gary B. McGee, *Initial Evidence* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991) marked a watershed for North American Pentecostal denominations since the thrust of the volume is to challenge this litmus test. Similarly: Jean-Daniel Plüss, 'Azusa and Other Myths: The Long and Winding Road from Experience to Stated Belief and Back Again', *Drinking From Our Own Wells* and Jean-Jacques Suurmond, 'The Meaning and Purpose of Spirit-Baptism and the Charisms', *Experiences of the Spirit*, 35-62. For a sampling of prior explorations see: Gordon D. Fee, 'Baptism in the Holy Spirit: The Issue of Separability and Subsequence', *Toward a Pentecostal/Charismatic Theology*, J. Rodman Williams (ed.) (South Hamilton: Society For Pentecostal Studies, November 15-17, 1984); Anthony D. Palma, 'The Gifts and the Fruit of the Spirit', *Conference on the Holy Spirit Digest*, Gwen Jones (ed.) (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 1983) 1:193f. The 1979 Gallup poll reported in *Christianity Today* claimed that 33-50% of Pentecostals and charismatics actually spoke in tongues.

An incarnational model of Spirit baptism realized in addressing human rights among refugees in Costa Rica was given at Brighton '91 by Lic. Luis Segreda, professor at the widely respected Seminario Biblico Latinoamericano that I visited in late 1980s. Segreda told of engaging the government and ministering to refugees from Nicaragua while encountering opposition from his church which was the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel.<sup>26</sup>

On 12-14 May 1998, the Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano (CELAM) and the Comisión Evangélica Pentecostal Latinoamericana (CEPLA), with the assistance of Consejo Latinoamericano de Iglesias (CLAI) facilitated an encounter in Quito, Ecuador between selected Catholics and Pentecostals from throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. Jose Antonio Gonzalez, Archbishop of Quito gave the opening greeting, while Gamaliel Lugo, President of *La Union Evangelica Pentecostal de Venezuela* and CEPLA described it as an 'opportunity' provided by the Holy Spirit 'on the road of unity.' Both Marta Palma and Monsignor Juan Usma Gomez reported on, and gave their perspectives on, the International Roman Catholic – Pentecostal Dialogue.<sup>27</sup> CEPLA has existed for nearly 20 years and has helped to facilitate a number of ecumenical conversations and events during that time.<sup>28</sup> Unfortunately, most of the largest Pentecostal denominations in Latin America do not participate in this organization, pointing to a need for greater intra-Pentecostal cooperation within the region.

### **What Christian Group First Broke Jim Crow Segregation Laws in Martin Luther King's Alabama?**

The Church of God of Prophecy may have been the first church to defy Jim Crow laws in their worship services in Alabama. They served notice of

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<sup>26</sup> Elsa Tamez, professor at the Seminario Biblico Latinoamericano, delivered the plenary address for the Society for Biblical Literature on November 22, 1992. Dr Tamez received a standing ovation for a speech no less penetrating than that provided by Luis Segreda at Brighton '91. See Luis Segreda, 'Evangelization and the Holy Spirit in an Urban and Multicultural Society: The Experience of the Pro-Human Rights Ecumenical Committee', *All Together in One Place*, 134-48.

<sup>27</sup> Manuel Quintero, 'Lideres Catolicos y Pentecostales Participant en Encuentro Teologico-Pastoral,' released by Agencia Latinoamericana y Caribena de Comunicacion (ALC) 14 May 1998.

<sup>28</sup> An entire issue of *Medellin: Teologia y Pastoral para America Latina XXIV* – no 95 (Septiembre 1998) was given over to the subject of Pentecostalismo, in which articles by Catholic and Pentecostal scholars were published. It also featured a 'Mensaje a las Iglesias' on the 'Encuentro Católico-Pentecostal Latinoamericano y Caribeño: Quito-Ecuador, Mayo 12-14 de 1998', 523-27. Pentecostals came from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru and Venezuela. Unfortunately, none of the larger missionary churches were present.

opposition to the Klu Klux Klan in their first solo general assembly of 1924.

For decades, the Church of God of Prophecy was the most racially inclusive Pentecostal denomination in the USA. This is determined by race mixing on the local, district, state and national level and by its designated leaders. In fact, many years ago CGP appointed non European-American leaders over states and/or regions where the majority members were European-American.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> *Minutes of our Nineteenth Annual Assembly of the Church over which A.J. Tomlinson is General Overseer held at The Central Avenue Tabernacle, Cleveland, Tennessee, September 10-16, 1924*, 42; Harold D. Hunter, 'A Journey Toward Racial Reconciliation: Race Mixing in the Church of God of Prophecy', in Harold D. Hunter and Cecil M. Robeck (eds), *The Azusa Street Revival and Its Legacy*, (Cleveland, TN: Pathway Press, 2006), 277-296; David Harrell, *White Sects and Black Men in the Recent South* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1971), 94-96; Harold D. Hunter 1980 interview of David Harrell in Alabama.



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**PART TWO**

**CHRISTIANITY AND  
SOCIO-POLITICAL ACTION**

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# RELIGION AND RECONCILIATION PROCESSES IN THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

Frieder Ludwig

## 1. Introduction

Religion and reconciliation enjoy what Max Weber called an ‘elective affinity.’<sup>1</sup> There are many examples of reconciliation in the Bible. The Old Testament tells a number of stories of conflict and strife between brothers, family members, peoples; some of these end in reconciliation and others are unresolved. In the New Testament, John’s Gospel shows a particular concern for truth and peace; in the Gospel of Luke salvation is closely linked to the healing ministry of Jesus. The Book of Acts tells how Jews and Gentiles were reconciled in one new community.<sup>2</sup> But although the theme of ‘reconciliation’ is central to the Christian faith, the term appears rarely in the New Testament. Paul uses the Greek term, *katalassein* (which means first of all compensate, balance, settle, exchange or interchange), when he talks about reconciliation (from Latin *reconciliare* – ‘coming together again’, ‘being re-united’) only three times – in Romans 5:10, Romans 11:15-18 and 2 Cor 5:18-20.<sup>3</sup> The origin of Paul’s idea of reconciliation has its roots in the diplomatic sphere. ‘To be reconciled’ or to make ‘reconciliation’ has almost the same meaning as ‘to make peace or to ‘exchange hostility for friendship’. However, to Paul the relationship with

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel Philpott, *Religion, Reconciliation and Transitional Justice: The State of the Field*, 2007: ‘We can think of transitional justice as the sum of total activities that states and citizens undertake to redress past political injustices in order to restore political orders in present and in the future... One of the emergent distinctive features of religious involvement in religious justice is... the theme of reconciliation. Although it is not only the religious who talk about reconciliation (secular people do, too), and although the religious do not only talk about reconciliation (...), religion and reconciliation still enjoy what Max Weber called an ‘elective affinity’. Reconciliation finds a particularly strong justification in religious texts, traditions, and theologies and is espoused by religious actors disproportionately to secular actors. Religious people are arguably largely responsible for making reconciliation a fixture in today’s global political discourse.’

<sup>2</sup> Jacques Matthey, *Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation*. Geneva 2005, Preparatory Paper No. 10. <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/other-meetings/mission-and-evangelism/athens-2005-documents/preparatory-paper-n-10-mission-as-ministry-of-reconciliation.html>

<sup>3</sup> Margot Käßmann, *Reconciliation and Forgiveness*, Paper given at the Partner Churches Consultation, Hermannsburg, October 2008.



God is central: it is the substitutionary death of Christ on the cross which makes the reconciliation of human beings to God possible. In Paul's concept, reconciliation is God's deed in Christ through which human beings are renewed or recreated (2 Cor. 5:17). Yet this renewal implies a new relationship within the renewed community, and the letter to the Ephesians (probably not written by Paul) develops the Pauline idea that reconciliation to God entails the creation of a new humanity in which social and cultural barriers have been broken down.<sup>4</sup> Thus, reconciliation is an important theological theme.

However, as political scientist Daniel Philpott pointed out, reconciliation in the context of the state is a fairly late arrival in Christian theology. Among other reasons, Philpott refers to the privatization of forgiveness in the medieval Catholic Church and the Protestant Reformation. Whereas in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Holy Roman Emperor would beg for forgiveness from the pope in the snows of Canossa, and the King of England would do public penance for murdering the Archbishop of Canterbury, three centuries later penance and forgiveness had been relegated to the confessional, to prayer and to personal relationships. According to Philpott, it was only in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century that some theologians began to think differently. In his *Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation*, Albrecht Ritschl argued for Christ's reconciliation as an effective transformation of the world. Reacting to the First World War, Pope Benedict XV appealed to nations to practice forgiveness and reconciliation. At the same time, Karl Barth adopted the idea that Christ's justification of sinners begets the transformation and reconciliation of political orders (while rejecting Ritschl's optimistic liberal theology).<sup>5</sup> After the Second World War, Barth was one of the authors of the *Darmstädter Wort* which listed errors of the past and emphasized the need for reconciliation.<sup>6</sup>

But reconciliation was drowned out by other aspects in Christian ethics and was not a major theme in missionary conferences before the late 1980s. Since that time, however, mission has been increasingly connected with reconciliation and healing. In the context of globalization, postmodernity and fragmentation, a number of initiatives, both by civil society and by churches, have contributed to the reconstruction of societies after conflict

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<sup>4</sup> Cilliers Breytenbach, 'Reconciliation: Shifts in Christian Soteriology', in: *W.S. Vorster (ed.), Reconciliation and Construction. Creative Options for a rapidly changing South Africa*, Pretoria 1986, 1-25, esp.3, 19.

<sup>5</sup> Daniel Philpott, *Religion, Reconciliation and Transitional Justice: The State of the Field*, 2007.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Darmstädter Wort*. The *Darmstädter Wort* is published in Karl Gerhard Steck and Dieter Schellong (eds), *Umstrittene Versöhnung* (München) 1977, 37, 38; for a historical introduction see Berthold Klappert, 'Das Wort von der Versöhnung hören und tun', in Berthold Klappert, *Versöhnung und Befreiung*, Neukirchen-Vluyn (1994), 216-28.

through processes of truth and reconciliation. Christian witnesses are called upon to help bring peace with justice in situations of tension, violence and conflict. As the churches seek reconciliation and peace, the World Council of Churches has launched the *Decade to Overcome Violence* (2001-2010).<sup>7</sup> The theme of the world mission conference in Athens in 2005 was 'Come, Holy Spirit, heal and reconcile' and the sub-theme 'Called in Christ to be reconciling and healing communities.'

There are a number of other reasons for this shift, but it should be pointed out that it was particularly in the African context and through theologians in Africa that reconciliation became a central theme of the theological and missiological debate. The *Kairos Document* of 1985 stimulated a lot of discussion on the concept of reconciliation not only in South Africa, but also in other countries. It pointed out that 'no reconciliation is possible without justice' and that 'no forgiveness and no negotiations are possible without repentance.'<sup>8</sup> South Africa's 1993 Interim Constitution recognized the importance of reconciliation to South Africa. The postamble to that document stated that 'the pursuit of national unity, the well-being of all South African citizens and peace require reconciliation between the people of South Africa and the reconstruction of society.'<sup>9</sup>

The only other predecessor truth commission with the twin objectives of establishing truth and working toward reconciliation was the Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation. The Chilean Commission framed its task as 'truth for reconciliation'. While its focus was on investigating and determining the truth, it understood that this truth had a clear and specific purpose: 'To work towards the reconciliation of all Chileans.'<sup>10</sup> In South Africa, the relationship between truth and reconciliation was seen differently, and the South African experience shaped other Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRCs) in Africa which have emerged as a critical part of the responses of states to serious acts of human rights violations and impunity occasioned by a history of prolonged conflicts. In the subsequent years, TRCs were established in South Africa (1995), Sierra Leone (1999), Ghana (2000), Rwanda (2001), Morocco (2004) and Liberia (2005).

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<sup>7</sup> Jacques Matthey, *Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation*, 2005.

<sup>8</sup> The *Kairos Document* is published in <http://www.bethel.edu/~letnie/AfricanChristianity/SAKairos.html>, Charles Villa-Vicencio, *Between Christ and Caesar: Classic and Contemporary Texts on Church and State* (Cape Town 1986), 251-69. For an introduction cf. Wolfram Kistner, 'The Role of Theology in the Transformation of South Africa' in Wolfram Kistner, *Justice and Righteousness Like a Never-Ending Stream* (edited by Andrea Fröchtling, Desmond Lesejane, Eddie Makue, Tinyiko Maluleke) (Johannesburg 2008), 34-48.

<sup>9</sup> Audrey R. Chapman and Bernard Spong (eds), *Religion and Reconciliation in South Africa: Voices of Religious Leaders* (West Conshohocken), 2003, 1.

<sup>10</sup> Chapman and Spon, *Religion and Reconciliation*, 11.

However, while the final volume of the TRC in South Africa raised questions about the applicability and relevance of the religious dimension of reconciliation in South Africa's situation,<sup>11</sup> other TRCs in Africa referred to religion as an important factor. An example is Liberia where the Truth and Reconciliation process was inaugurated by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf on February 20, 2006 and started its operational work at the end of June 2006. The final report of the TRC in Liberia notes 'that religion and traditional culture, principle and values weigh heavily on the conscience of the Liberian people. As such a truly integrated reconciliation process must engage these institutions for sustainable and genuine results.'<sup>12</sup> Two of the ten commissioners were religious leaders – retired Bishop Arhur F. Kulah (a Methodist) representing the Christian community and Sheikh Kafumba Konneh representing the Muslim community.

The Liberian TRC was the first to include the diaspora. Statements from thousands of Liberians living in the USA are being collected. The Liberian commission was quite aware that this opened a new dimension to truth and reconciliation processes. The final report states that 'the TRC's Diaspora Project was innovative because it redefined the way in which truth and reconciliation commissions should operate – from local or nationally centered bodies to global truth seeking institutions – by conducting international hearings that included testimony and perspectives from its citizens abroad, thereby, raising the bar of ingenuity in transitional justice approaches.'<sup>13</sup> The Diaspora Project began in Minneapolis, Minnesota with the assistance of one of TRC's key partners, the Advocates for Human Rights. Minnesota was important because of the large number of Liberians living there. In the following, I will give a brief overview of the history of Liberians in Minnesota and then focus on the truth and reconciliation project in the diaspora.

## 2. Liberians in Minnesota

Liberian immigration had started in the 1970s. Important in this context was the LAMCO Company, a mining company which operated in Liberia and sent students to the Dunwoody College of Technology in Minneapolis.<sup>14</sup> This institution of higher education had been founded in 1914 in memory of the businessman William Hood Dunwoody to 'provide for all time a place where youth without distinction on account of race, colour or religious prejudice, may learn the useful trades and crafts, and

<sup>11</sup> Chapman and Spon, *Religion and Reconciliation*, 12.

<sup>12</sup> TRC Final Report, Vol. I, Findings and Determinations, 2008, 58.

<sup>13</sup> TRC, Final Report, 49.

<sup>14</sup> For a fuller story, see Frieder Ludwig, 'Just like Joseph in the Bible: the Liberian Christian Presence in Minnesota', in Frieder Ludwig and Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu (eds), *The African Christian Presence in the West* (Trenton 2010).

thereby fit themselves for the better performance of life's duties.<sup>15</sup> A majority of these Liberians in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area settled in the inner cities of Minneapolis and St Paul. However, a far larger number of Liberian immigrants arrived in Minnesota after 1996 when the civil war forced them to leave their home country.<sup>16</sup>

Several factors attracted them to the 'North Star State': Lutheran Social Services based in St. Paul offered one of the largest resettlement programs for Liberians in the Twin Cities. Between 1997 and 2002, LSS assisted 816 Liberian immigrants.<sup>17</sup> Another NGO in Minnesota closely interacting with Liberians is the Center for Victims of Torture which began a project in Guinea in late 1999 to assist people traumatized by violence in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Among its other advocates had been Minnesota senators Paul Wellstone, a Democrat, and Rod Grams, a republican.<sup>18</sup> Wellstone in particular was prominent among Liberians. He was an original co-sponsor of the Liberian Immigration and Fairness Act that granted legal permanent status to more than 15,000 Liberians residing in the US following the civil war. When Wellstone died in a plane crash in October 2002, he was posthumously awarded the Liberian Community Human Rights Award. The Union of Liberians in Minnesota issued a press release which stated: 'He was indeed a friend, an advocate and partner of the Liberian people for peace in a war-torn country. He helped many Liberians to reunite with their families in the United States.'<sup>19</sup>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.dunwoody.edu/content/default.cfm?pid=7> (Accessed May 26, 2008).

<sup>16</sup> The Advocates for Human Rights, *A House with Two Rooms*. Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia Diaspora Project, Saint Paul 2009 ([http://liberiatrc.mnadvocates.org/Final\\_Report.html](http://liberiatrc.mnadvocates.org/Final_Report.html)), XIV: 'From 1979 to 2003, more than 1.5 million Liberians were forced from their homes to escape from the violence and destruction of a protracted civil conflict. Hundreds of thousands became refugees and many eventually made their way to countries of resettlement including the United States and the United Kingdom (p.3.). 'Tens of thousands of Liberians live in the United States (reportedly more than 30,000 in Minnesota alone), in the United Kingdom and in refugee settlements in the West African sub-region.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Earl P. Scott, 'The New African Americans: Liberians of War in Minnesota', in: John W. Frazier and Eugene Tettey-Fio, *Race, Ethnicity and Place in a Changing America* (Binghamton: Global Academic Publishing, 2006), 142: 'In the mid-1990s the US government started the refugee program through Lutheran Social Services based in Minnesota. It became one of the largest resettlement programs for Liberians in the Twin Cities. Between 1997 and 2002, LSS assisted 816 Liberian immigrants.'

<sup>18</sup> Robert J. White, 'Minnesota and the World Abroad', in Stephen Richards Graubard, *Minnesota, Real and Imagined: Essays on the State and its Culture* (St Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press 2001), 249-71, here: 257.

<sup>19</sup> 'Liberians Mourn the Death of Senator Paul Wellstone: A Press Release Issued by the Union of Liberian Associations in the Americas (ULAA)', in *The Perspective*, (October 29, 2002), cf.: <http://www.theperspective.org/senatorwellstone.html> (Accessed 1 Jan. 2008).

Chain migration also contributed to the increase of the Liberian immigration: often, entire families ultimately reassemble in Minnesota. 'Minnesota was open; there were many programs to accommodate Liberians. The word spread all over the US that MN was open. Jobs are available here. Most Liberians work in the nursing area, family health services, some in factories, in the school system, in banking institutions.'

While the early Liberian community settled in the inner cities near existing African-American neighborhoods, these more recent arrivals moved to the suburbs. The map of Liberian residential distribution reflects a process of spatial inertia, with a wedge extending from the inner city core out to the northwest selected inner suburbs of New Hope and Brooklyn Center, on to Brooklyn park and Crystal to the outer suburbs.<sup>20</sup>

Some Liberian Christians joined congregations which had been established before the arrival of the new immigrants from West Africa. Yet there was also a strong tendency among Liberians to establish their own congregations. The same is true for their involvement in community organizations: some of the leading Liberian representatives, as for instance Wilfred Harris, participated in Afro-American associations such as 'Black Minnesotans', yet in general the community feels more represented by organizations which are more explicitly Liberian in character such as the Organization of Liberians in Minnesota. Jehu Hancile's observation that there are several areas of dissonances between the Afro-Americans and the new African immigrants which are partly caused by cultural differences<sup>21</sup> was confirmed in some of our interviews. One of our conversation partners remarked that 'we do not like the lifestyle of the Afro-Americans; their values and activities are completely opposites of what we do.'

The 'Organization of Liberian Nationals in Minnesota' was established in 1973 when the number of Liberian students and their spouses in Minnesota began to increase. After a conflict during the second election in 1974, the Liberian community experienced a split. The group which was dissatisfied with the election process broke away and formed the Liberian Student Association of Minnesota. Since there were few Liberians in Minnesota at the time, members of the two organizations often attended the same social activities and in 1978 the two organizations decided to be merged. The names of the dissolved organizations were dropped and the name Organization of Liberians in Minnesota (OLM) was adopted.<sup>22</sup>

In the late 70s, OLM became a chapter of the Union of Liberian Association in the Americas (ULAA). This umbrella organization had been established on July 4, 1974 at Philadelphia with the mission 'to advance the

<sup>20</sup> Earl P Scott, 'The New African Americans', 142, 145.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Hanciles, 'Separated at Birth', *The African Christian Presence in the West* (Trenton 2010).

<sup>22</sup> Anon., *A Brief History of the Organizations of Liberians in Minnesota*, undated. I am grateful to Marie Hayes who was a member of the OLM Board of directors, for sharing this document.

just causes of Liberians and Liberia at home and abroad'.<sup>23</sup> It provided a platform to articulate protest against the ruling elite in Liberia. Thus in 1978, the ULAA issued a 'General Statement' which criticized the 'political domination' of a 'tiny fraction of the population...over the vast majority of the people' and stated that the 'settler oligarchy occupies the key positions in the nation's only political party – The True Whig Party. Descendants of the ex-slaves are also prominent in the country's religious and fraternal organizations.'<sup>24</sup> When the Liberian President William Tolbert visited the USA in 1979, a demonstration was held outside the Liberian mission in New York City.

However, the dynamics of exile politics could be manipulated for personal gains: one of the organizers of the demonstration was Charles Hankay Taylor whose rise to power is traceable to his activities as an ULAA chairman in Massachusetts. In an attempt to appease the protest movement, Taylor was invited to Liberia where he stayed until the 1980 coup during which Tolbert was murdered.<sup>25</sup> The coup was led by Thomas Quiwonkpa, an in-law of Taylor who appointed him director of Liberia's General Services Agency, a government procurement body. Quiwonkpa became commanding general of the army and used his influence to get his friend Samuel Doe accepted as head of state. Coming from the ethnic group of the Krahn, Doe was the first Liberian head of state who was not a member of the Americo-Liberian elite. When Quiwonkpa lost the power struggle with Doe in 1983, Taylor fled to the USA, but was arrested in May 24, 1984, in Somerville, Massachusetts, to face charges of embezzling \$922,000 of government funds. But he managed to escape and became one of the main organizers of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia. Backed by neighboring countries such as Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire he entered Nimba County with around 100 men in 1989. Through the support of the local population who were disillusioned with their present government, a large section of the country came under the invaders' control. After the first Liberian Civil War (1989-96), Taylor was elected as President in 1997, yet his brutal, autocratic and dysfunctional government led to a new rebellion

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<sup>23</sup> <http://www.ulaaliberia.net/overview.htm> (accessed on September 17, 2008.)

<sup>24</sup> Union of Liberian Associations in the Americas, July 25, 1978 'General Statement', published in H. Boima Fahnbulleh, *Voices of Protest: Liberia on the Edge, 1974-1980* (Boca Raton: Universal Publishers, 2005), 97-98. The document continues: 'The economic and political domination of the settler-ruling clique has created vicious social conditions: poverty, unemployment, mal-nutrition, under-medication, illiteracy etc. These conditions have forced the Liberian people to question their living conditions and also the declaration that Liberia is free and independent.'

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Ikechi Mgbeoji, *Collective Insecurity: The Liberian Crisis, Unilateralism and Global Order* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2003), 149, Footnote 63; Adekeye Adebajo and Ismail O.D. Rashid, *West Africa's Security Challenges. Building peace in a Troubled Region* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2004), 181, 182.

(1999- 2003). More than 200,000 people are estimated to have been killed in the civil wars.<sup>26</sup>

It was during this period that many people fled from Liberia and the number of Liberians in the United States increased significantly. ULAA expressed strong criticism of President Charles Taylor and reminded him 'that the maintenance of peace and security was largely dependent on the protection of human rights as guaranteed by the Constitution, strengthening of democratic institutions in Post-War Liberia and provision of quality of life issues.'<sup>27</sup>

Right from the beginning of their affiliation, OLM had been a strong arm of the ULAA – it was the first chapter of the ULAA to have two presidents elected in succession – and its local character helped in the coordination of projects and initiatives.<sup>28</sup>

Since the Liberian population continued to increase, OLM took on new tasks while still maintaining its initial objectives. It now has the aims at organizing Liberians into a cohesive unit, providing information and assistance to meet their socio-economic and educational needs.<sup>29</sup>

### 3. International Dimensions of the Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Process

Given the strong presence and the good organizational structures of Liberians in Minnesota, it is no coincidence that the Diaspora Project of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission started in the North Star state. With input from a national Advisory Committee of Liberian community members, statement-taking was pilot-tested in Minnesota in the fall of 2006. In the USA, the project has been coordinated by the Advocates for Human Rights since June 2006.

The Diaspora Project resulted in the collection of approximately 1,500 statements from alleged perpetrators and victims of Liberia's various episodes of state chaos and conflict. The project eventually conducted activities in eleven US cities, Europe and Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone

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<sup>26</sup> For a more detailed account of the history of the civil war in Liberia see Stephen Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy: The Destruction of Liberia and the Religious Dimension of an African Civil War* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 2007.

<sup>27</sup> ULAA, Against War and Dictatorship (A Statement issued by the Union of Liberian Associations in the Americas, ULAA, on the current deteriorating military, political, social and economic conditions in the Republic of Liberia, signed by Mydea Reeves-Karpeh, National President, Union of Liberian Associations in the Americas, ULAA, Baltimore, August 7, 2000, <http://www.theperspective.org/ulaastatement.html> (Accessed September 27 2008).

<sup>28</sup> Wilfred Harris, Interview, Friday January 11, 2008: 'If you want to get things done, you turn to OLM.'

<sup>29</sup> Harris Meh, Interview, January 22, 2008.

where a significant number of Liberian refugees in West Africa reside. Community Advisory Committees comprising ‘credible Liberians’ were established in each city hosting a project. Numerous outreach events were organized. The TRC created a Diaspora Committee to closely track and monitor the project. Commissions made periodic visits to the USA and played a leadership role in several training modules of the TRC mandate, transitional justice, the history of Liberia and its various episodes of conflict, the Liberian Constitution, statement-taking and investigation in human rights law and multiculturalism. The Diaspora Project trained over 600 volunteers to collect statements from Liberians in the USA. This model of training was replicated with modifications for the West African Diaspora Project. Ten Liberians residing in the Buduburam Liberian refugee camp in Ghana were trained as statement takers to assist the TRC to collect statements from Liberians in Ghana. About ten Liberians resident in the federal Republic of Nigeria were also trained for the TRC project.<sup>30</sup>

The relationship between religion and reconciliation is ambiguous since there are victims as well as perpetrators in the religious communities. Global networks and the dynamics of exile politics are used for peace and reconciliation processes, but they could be also manipulated for personal gain and party politics. The rise to power of the warlord Charles Taylor is traceable to his activities as chairman of the Union of Liberian Association in the Americas (ULAA) in Massachusetts in the late 1970s; during his presidency (1997-2003) which led to the second Liberian Civil War he frequently invoked his ‘Christian faith’. When in 2002 a three-day ‘crusade’ called ‘Liberia for Jesus’ was held at the main stadium in Monrovia and attended by 75,000 Liberians, he proclaimed Jesus to be President of Liberia. He then laid prostrate on the stage and urged that others should also prostrate themselves before God.<sup>31</sup> The ‘crusade’ had been organized by two rather dubious US-American evangelicals, Pat Robertson and John Giminez, and a spokesperson for Robertson remarked during afterwards that Taylor stands ‘as a symbol of the nation’s corporate surrender to the sovereignty of Jesus.’<sup>32</sup> When the Bush administration turned against Taylor, Robertson complained that ‘we’re undermining a Christian, Baptist president to bring in Muslim rebels to take over the country.’<sup>33</sup> The support for Taylor from certain Liberian Baptist

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<sup>30</sup> Report, 45, 46, 49.

<sup>31</sup> R. Drew Smith, ‘American Evangelists and Church-State Dilemmas’, in R. Drew Smith (ed), *Freedom’s Distant Shores. American Protestants and Post-Colonial Alliances with Africa* (Waco: Taylor University Press, 2006), 151-53.

<sup>32</sup> Quoted in Smith, 152.

<sup>33</sup> ‘Pat Robertson Alone in Support of Liberian President’, in *Christianity Today*, July 2003: <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2003/julyweb-only/7-7-48.0.html> (Accessed on December 27, 2007). The article refers to a contribution by Alan Cooperman in the *Washington Post* who looks at Robertson’s most recent demonstrations of support for the dictator and his assertions that the country’s



congregations continued even until early 2008. On the eve of his trial in The Hague on 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, a church service at the First Baptist Church in Congo Town, outside the Liberian capital Monrovia in support of the former Liberian president was held.<sup>34</sup>

Many other religious organizations had opposed Taylor's regime, and some of their leaders had left West Africa because their life was threatened and they were oppressed. They provided support for the peace and reconciliation process at home – not only financial support, but also intellectual and ethical support. Religious leaders play a significant role in their communities. According to one informant, 'pastors are very influential in many ways. When we have a conflict, we will go to the clergy and take the complaint to the pastor. The pastor becomes a mediator... In Liberia, we do not have counsellors, we go to community leaders and pastors.' And another interviewee explained the influence of religious communities as follows: 'Religious communities are culture transcending; with everything what happens in Liberia you go to an interfaith commission or the council of churches or the Muslim organization. Issues are resolved by the religious umbrella organizations.' According to Stephen Ellis, the most prominent Christian and Muslim leaders in Liberia have an outstanding record of working for peace throughout the war, notably through the Inter-Faith Mediation Committee.<sup>35</sup> Established in 1990, the IMFC (later the Inter-Religious Council of Liberia or IRCL) was awarded the Desmond Tutu Peace Prize for its significant role in the peace process in Liberia by the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) in Addis Ababa in 1998.<sup>36</sup>

Christian-Muslim cooperation is an important theme in the film *Pray the Devil Back to Hell* which chronicles the story of Liberian women — ordinary mothers, grandmothers, aunts and daughters, both Christian and Muslim — who came together in the midst of a bloody civil war, to pray for peace and then staged a silent protest outside of the Presidential Palace. The film's title is a reference to President Taylor's penchant for 'preaching' in area churches, saying that his leadership came from 'Jehovah God

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'horrible bloodbath' is the result of the State Department's opposition to Taylor. 'What Robertson has not discussed in these broadcasts is his financial interest in Liberia,' Cooperman writes, noting a four-year-old, \$8 million agreement between Robertson and Taylor to mine gold in the country.

<sup>34</sup> 'Supporters hold church service for Liberia's Taylor', Reuters, January 6, 2008, <http://africa.reuters.com/wire/news/usnL0648948.html> (Accessed on October 3, 2008).

<sup>35</sup> Stephen Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, 302.

<sup>36</sup> Sumoward E. Harris, Brief Summary on the Inter-Religious Council of Liberia, paper given at the launching of the inter-faith action for peace in Africa Commission, Kigali, Rwanda, June 19-22, 2006, in: <http://www.africa-faithforpeace.org/doc/prog/BRIEF%20SUMMARY%20ON%20THE%20INTERJUNE%202016,%202006.doc> (last accessed September 28-08)

Almighty' – all while he's ordered terror and atrocities upon his own people. Leymah Gbowee, one of the leaders of the Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET) narrates: 'Taylor would pray the Devil out of hell. And we said of this man who is so 'religious,' we need to get to that thing he holds firmly to. So if the women started pressuring the pastors and the bishops, the pastors and bishops would pressure the leaders [of the warring factions, who were meeting in churches].'<sup>37</sup> The documentary was praised nationally and internationally; the eulogists included Liberia's President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan as well as South Africa's archbishop emeritus Desmond Tutu. Positive reviews were published by Reuters, the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *Los Angeles Times*. A fairly typical example of the praises is the statement by Julia Bainbridge in the *Cond Nast Traveler*: '...run, don't walk, to whatever movie theater is lucky enough to screen *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*, a documentary about the truly remarkable Liberian women (both Christian and Muslim) who came together to help end a bloody, decades-old civil war.' *Pray the Devil Back to Hell* was screened in many US-American cities, and the Liberian story was presented as 'a compelling testimony of how grassroots activism can alter the history of nations', 'a faith-filled example of how powerful peacemakers can be when they join together.'<sup>38</sup>

There are, however, also more critical reviews, such as the one by Manohla Dargis in the *New York Times*. 'At 72 minutes, the movie can only gesture at the horror and its historical antecedents, offering up a quick sketch of moments and portraits that demand greater detail. I wish, for instance, that the filmmakers had spent more time with Asatu Bah Kenneth, a vision of the modern African woman that defies easy categorization. A police officer whose ample bosom gives her the aspect of a well-fortified citadel, Ms Kenneth is a Muslim who wears pants to work and a head scarf to the mosque. She's a terrifically appealing interview subject, but, like the other teary and defiant testifiers, remains frustratingly obscure. The filmmakers seem to take it as a matter of faith that building a peace movement on a gender divide can work because men make war, and women make peace. It's a reassuring idea, perhaps, though the image of Ms Kenneth in her police uniform suggests that the world is more complicated.'<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Quoted in 'Pray the Devil Back to Hell.' Review by Brett McCracken posted 11/07/2008 <http://www.christianitytoday.com/movies/reviews/2008/praythediabacktohell.html?start=2> (Accessed on 2 February 2009).

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.chicagoseminarian.com/2009/01/movie-screening-pray-devil-back-to-hell.html> The online site for the Chicago Seminarian News and links to all things seminary.

<sup>39</sup> Manohla Dargis, 'Unsung Heroines of Liberia, Making Guns Yield to Words,' *New York Times*, November 7, 2008.

Thus, the impact of the documentary *Pray the Devil back to Hell* which was screened in many places in the USA and also in Europe may be somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand, it strengthens the truth and reconciliation process by providing an encouraging example of a peace movement which emerged in Liberia during the wars. At the same time the film was produced in the US and appeals to an US-American public; there may be some easy categorizations which have an impact on the perception of the Liberian war in the West as well as in Africa. This adds new dimension to international interactions in the Liberian TRC process – as well as new dimension to theological reflections on reconciliation.

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# **CHURCHES AND CONDOMS: HOW CHRISTIAN FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS ARE PREVENTING HIV/AIDS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

Matthew Clarke and Juliette Lumbers

Over 30 million people currently live with HIV, with more than 2 million more people becoming newly infected each year. Transmission of HIV occurs through the exchange of bodily fluids, primarily through sexual intercourse, sharing needles containing infected blood, incorrect dressing of infected wounds and from mother to child across the placenta or whilst breast-feeding. To reduce transmission therefore, it is necessary to change people's behavior so that fluids are not exchanged. Not only is this impossible in terms of mother to child intra uterus transmission, but it is very difficult in terms of other modes of transmission. Certainly education campaigns and supporting individuals to minimize their 'risk' behavior has had some success. However, greater success has been recorded when interventions happen at the local level as is tailored to the very particular circumstances of the target community and individuals. Within some countries, faith-based and mission organizations have assumed an important role in educating and supporting local communities in reducing HIV transmission. This chapter considers the approach of a Christian organization in West Papua in preventing the transmission of HIV and AIDS. Important lessons can be gained by considering how this Christian organization has successfully undertaken such work

## **1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>**

Over 30 million people currently live with HIV, with more than 2 million more people becoming newly infected each year. Transmission of HIV occurs through the exchange of bodily fluids, primarily through sexual intercourse, sharing needles containing infected blood, incorrect dressing of infected wounds and from mother to child across the placenta or whilst breast-feeding. To reduce transmission therefore, it is necessary to change people's behavior so that fluids are not exchanged. Not only is this impossible in terms of mother to child intra-uterus transmission, but it is very difficult in terms of other modes of transmission. Certainly education

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<sup>1</sup> The authors are thankful to Ms Simon Charnley for her research assistance from which part of this chapter is related.

campaigns and supporting individuals to minimize their 'risk' behavior has had some success. However, greater success has been recorded when interventions happen at the local level as is tailored to the very particular circumstances of the target community and individuals. Non government organizations have played an important role in initiating and implementing the local behavior change campaigns. Within some countries, faith-based organizations (FBOs) have also assumed an important role in educating and supporting local communities in reducing HIV transmission.

As with many concepts and terms within development, a precise definition of 'faith-based organizations' does not exist (see Cornwall 2007). Vidal (2001) identifies three typologies of faith-based organizations: 1) congregations affiliated with a physical structure of worship or geographical grouping of worshippers; 2) national networks of congregations, including national denominations and their social services affiliates, as well as other networks of related organizations, such as the YMCA and YWCA; and 3) unaligned or freestanding religious organizations that are incorporated separately from congregations and national networks. Very often in developing countries, these faith-based organizations have missionary work as their geneses. Therefore FBOs are organizations affiliated with a religious structure, doctrine or congregation. However, FBOs are not simply those agencies that have vaguely stated religious motivation (such as World Vision) or geneses (such as Oxfam). Rather, they must have an active relationship with a religious institution (such as Lutheran World Service or Caritas).

While religious groups are primarily concerned with providing spiritual leadership for their communities, for many the interest in physical well-being of their communities has also been a core aspect of their existence for many such groups. Certainly mission groups have a very long history of providing education, health and other welfare services. However, as missionary efforts have matured in many countries and transformed into locally-led churches, much of the concern with physical well-being is now often delivered through affiliated FBOs that operationalize this outreach. Despite this long history of service provision, FBOs have long been invisible in discussions of community development. This apparent invisibility though should not be mistaken as nonexistence. More correctly, their invisibility reflects a blindness of the development sector itself in failing to recognize FBOs within communities. This may be partly explained by FBOs being embedded within communities and being less external agents and more 'organic' to the community. It can also be explained by FBOs choosing to position themselves outside the development sector and remaining more closely aligned with the religious body to which they are affiliated.

It does appear though that the invisibility of FBOs in community development work is now diminishing. There has been recognition more recently both within the development sector and by FBOs themselves, that

there is importance and synergy to be gained by secular and sectarian agencies engaging with one another in a more purposeful manner. As participatory community focused models of development have become increasingly dominant in recent years (see Chambers 2005; Stiglitz 1999; Craig and Porter 1997; Sihlongonyane 2003), FBOs have become increasingly 'attractive' as agents or key stakeholders in the development process due to their strong links to local communities. Moreover, FBOs themselves have also begun to initiate contact with aid donors to seek increased involvement (and funding) in community development interventions. Over the past decade a number of international forums have been developed that have brought together FBOs and large international donors to explore how to leverage the experience and expertise that both groups can bring to improving the lives of the poor.

FBOs are now seeking 'a seat at the policy table, while they are also, in many instances, asking development institutions to work and support faith groups in scaling up their community and social justice operations' (Marshall and Van Saanen 2007, 4). Reticence that donors may have had in the past of being seen to be working with FBOs is now being replaced by a clearer understanding that FBOs are a legitimate part of civil society that offer entrée into local communities, networks across countries and regions and (often) expertise in community development processes and interventions. This recent 'acceptance' of FBOs mirrors the 'acceptance' of secular non-governmental organizations during the 1990s by the same donors. Enhancing aid effectiveness requires accessing and engaging with local communities and there is now the recognition that FBOs (like NGOs) can facilitate this access and engagement for donors.

This chapter considers the interventions adopted by a local Christian organization in Papua, Indonesia. The ability of this faith-based organization to successfully engage with its community around issues of sexuality and sexual practice provides important lessons for other FBOs seeking to reduce HIV transmission through sustained behavior change. Whilst a single model or approach for HIV and AIDS interventions by FBOs does not exist, this paper does conceptualize a 'wheel' of successful characteristics based upon the experience of this organization. This paper argues that FBOs are distinct from NGOs and require a FBO-model of HIV and AIDS engagement. Therefore the characteristics discussed should be considered by other FBOs operating within the HIV and AIDS sector.

This paper is set out as following: this section has introduced the paper. Section 2 considers the specific issue of HIV and AIDS in relation to FBOs. The case study is discussed in Section 3 before eight lessons from these case studies are considered in Section 4. The paper is concluded in Section 5.

## 2. FBOs, HIV and AIDS

Transmission of HIV occurs through the exchange of bodily fluids. This occurs generally through intimate physical contact between humans. Other than within pregnancy and breast-feeding, transmission of HIV in most instances is associated with ‘sinful’ activity – that is, sexual intercourse with multiple partners or commercial sex workers;<sup>2</sup> prohibited sexual practices such as anal intercourse (including ‘men who have sex with men’), or illegal drug injection. Reducing the likelihood of transmission requires behavior change – either the (unlikely) abstinence from these activities or a harm reduction approach such as instigating condom usage and the use of cleaner injecting equipment. The involvement of FBOs in preventing HIV transmission or care of those with AIDS is therefore perhaps counter intuitive to many.

To properly engage with HIV and AIDS prevention requires addressing human sexual activity and illicit drug use. Addressing these activities also requires acceptance of them and an ability to communicate effectively about these activities and how they relate to religious teachings and beliefs. It is reasonable to expect therefore for FBOs to have a natural preference to engage with more appropriate or ‘moral’ community development interventions, such as provision of health care, education services, agricultural extension, water and sanitation or economic enterprise and turn away from involvement with HIV and AIDS prevention programs. Indeed, during the early phase of the HIV and AIDS epidemic, religious leaders and FBOs were generally silent, often only breaking this silence to preach against homosexual practices that were considered the main mode of transmission. Due to the stigma that was attached to HIV and AIDS, many religious leaders and FBOs also denied that this was a relevant issue for their own communities, further adding to the stigmatization felt by those affected (including the families of those infected). Denial, silence and stigmatization by FBOs and religious leaders hinders interventions aimed at reducing HIV transmission and the care of those with HIV and AIDS thereby exacerbating the problem.

It might also be expected that if FBOs did choose to engage with HIV care and prevention, they would more likely focus on the preaching of abstinence as this is in line with the theological tenets of their faith. Surprisingly though, many Christian FBOs are now undertaking condom distribution and social marketing in ways that resemble secular organizations. The reasons for this shift include the greater prominence given to HIV and AIDS in national policies, the overwhelming numbers of those infected and affected by HIV and AIDS (particularly within sub-

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<sup>2</sup> This excludes the transmission from (generally) husband to wife as HIV cannot be introduced into a monogamous and faithful relationship. Transmission in this context requires one partner to have contracted the virus via the transmission modes discussed above.

Saharan countries and some parts of Asia), the increasing need for a multi-sectoral response, and pressure from donors, national governments and local communities themselves for FBOs to more adequately address HIV and AIDS, but also their associated problems of orphans, reduced household incomes, and on going stigmatization. Where once the response of Christian FBOs hindered positive responses to HIV and AIDS and abetted stigmatization, FBOs are now playing a central role in addressing this phenomenon in all its guises.

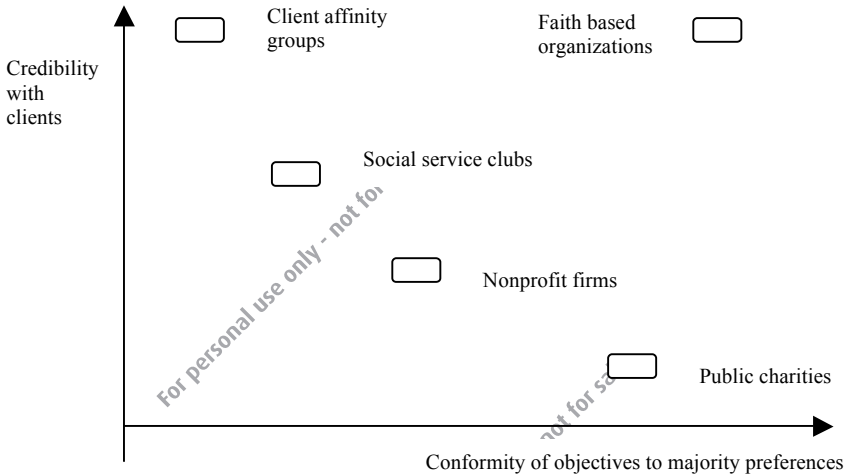
Clarke (2002) has found though that within care and prevention interventions, more targeted and risk-specific information is required by those who undertake risk behaviors associated with transmission of HIV than that required by the general population. It is not appropriate or efficient to provide explicit information that is relevant to commercial sex workers or injecting drug consumers to the wider population. Such dissemination could, at the very least, further stigmatize these 'at risk' groups. However, it is necessary that this specific information – often specific to small geographic areas or sub-population groups – be prepared and disseminated. As the World Bank (1999) has noted 'although it is highly desirable to focus public interventions on those who are most likely to contract and spread HIV, identifying and reaching these individuals can be difficult, especially when legal sanctions and social stigma cause these people to want to avoid being discovered' (146). It is at this level though that Christian FBOs can be very effective in reaching isolated or illicit communities by drawing on their local community networks and trust within communities.

However, it is simply insufficient to disseminate information and expect that this will result in sustained behavior change within these 'at risk' groups. It is also necessary to establish peer supports that enable changes to be contemplated, trialed and then sustained. Again, Christian FBOs have natural advantages of working at the local level to assist in building the capacity of peer trainers and peer support to facilitate this. The development of an 'enabling environment' is fundamental to sustaining behavior change (Parnell and Benton 1999). An enabling environment addresses issues around general employment, health care, access to education or personal security. Not only must individuals be able to understand the risks to their own health (and life), they must also be supported in changing their behavior that also includes modifying (including reducing or strengthening) external factors that are linked to these risk behaviors (World Bank 1999).

It is the unique characteristics of Christian FBOs that make them well placed within communities to advance enabling environments that will support sustained behavior change. Unlike secular non government organizations, Christian FBOs have a natural constituency at the local level but in addition they also have organizational networks both nationally and internationally. Utilizing the networks that exist at these different levels



supports their ability to undertake effective community development. Feeny and Clarke (2009) describe the different roles that non government organizations can play at the micro, messo, macro and supra-macro levels in both advocacy and programming. Faith-based organizations are also able to operate in these levels by piggy-backing on the pre existing structures their associated religious organizations have in place. This therefore aids their efficiency and provides advantages over secular NGOs.



*Figure 1: Differing Strengths of Five Types of Nonprofit NGOs*  
 Source: authors' own work (modified from World Bank 1999)

FBOs can be very powerful advocates in overcoming the moral pressures to further punish or prosecute these risk behaviors through their formal links to religious groups. As a result of these religious ties, FBOs are somewhat unique in terms of other NGOs in that they cross over between having high credibility with their target beneficiaries while also having the support of the wider population due to their religious grounding.<sup>3</sup> Broad-based public charities have large constituencies drawn from the general public and are therefore likely to have objectives in broad conformity with the general public interest. However, such broad-based public charities are likely to be less credible with the client group than an organization composed of members of that group. While non profit firms might have higher levels of credibility with their clients, they do so at the

<sup>3</sup> Presuming that the FBO is of the religious majority for that particular country or region.

expense of public support. This is similar to the further trade-off between credibility with clients and public support experienced by social service clubs and client affinity groups (World Bank 1999). Unlike these organizations that have to trade-off credibility with clients to wider population support, FBOs can simultaneously achieve high support with both (see Figure 1) as they are visible at both the local level working with target groups but also because they form part of the social mores upon which the wider society is based.

Yayasan Kesehatan Bethesda (Bethesda Health Foundation) is a small, local Christian organization based in Papua, Indonesia. Documenting the approach undertaken by this organization provides a clearer understanding of the role FBOs have in relation to reducing the transmission of HIV and AIDS. A wheel of successful characteristics of HIV and AIDS interventions is then conceptualized by drawing on the experience of this case study.

### **3. Yayasan Kesehatan Bethesda (Bethesda Health Foundation)**

Papua is a deeply religious area, with the majority of Papuans being Christian. Due to the number of Indonesians migrating to Papua (mainly Javanese and Sumatran) there are also increasing Muslims as well as Buddhists and Hindus – though they still remain in the minority. The strong religious affinity of Papuans has resulted in the churches (and other places of worship) being appropriate locations for providing information on the transmission of HIV and AIDS (and other sexually transmitted infections). Whilst the basis of this education is abstinence and faithfulness, many of the religious leaders have recognized the need to promote safer sex and have chosen to work closely with various NGOs and the KPA (the national AIDS commission).

One such Christian FBO is Yayasan Kesehatan Bethesda (Bethesda Health Foundation – YKB). YKB is a local Christian organization that works with church groups (particularly church leaders), rural communities, people living with HIV and street children in Papua, Indonesia. YKB first opened in 1984. It was set up by nine churches (different denominations – Catholic, Indonesian Evangelist, Papuan Evangelist, Adventist, Reformation, Baptist, The Evangelist Camp, Uniting and Protestant) as a means to distribute medical supplies to Christian communities all over Papua. However, the Catholic Church has been the most consistent and active in its involvement with YKB. YKB currently receives funding and support from numerous other organizations such as AusAID, USAID, KPA (the national AIDS commission) and MCC (Menonite Central Committee). As a result of the changes in funding, the focus and purpose of YKB has changed over time. While medical supplies were once their sole purpose, the main focus is now health training. YKB responds to the needs of the Christian community at the request of the churches. HIV became a priority

because it was noted that 70% of people living with HIV in Papua were Christian church attendees and the churches did not know how to address the issues or help their people. YKB responded to this through setting up a sexual health program run through church leaders.

While data is difficult to obtain, it is assumed that up to 2.5% of Papuans are living with HIV and AIDS. Within Papua, one of the main groups perceived as being responsible for the rapid spread of HIV is the 'mobile man with money' (3M) – with often a fourth 'm' being added: married. High-ranking government workers and officials are widely believed to have money and transport and pay more to have unprotected sex. These men often become infected by the sex worker, then go home to their wives and infect them. Infected women will then often transmit HIV to their babies across the placenta in the womb or through breast-feeding.

In Papua, there is heavy campaigning and numerous governmental and NGO bodies working to raise awareness of HIV and AIDS using different forms of media, including, stickers, posters, badges, billboards, t-shirts, banners and advertisements. However, despite this information campaign, a 2006 survey undertaken by the Indonesian Health Department in cooperation with the Bureau of Statistics and supported by the World Bank and Family Health International, showed that almost 50% of the population had no knowledge of HIV and of those that were aware of HIV and AIDS, the majority had poor or incorrect information about what it was and how it was transmitted and there was still heavy stigmatization and discrimination against those known to be living with HIV.

The role that YKB have assumed of providing reliable and relevant information on the transmission of HIV is very important. The Sexual Health Program is YKB's most successful HIV and AIDS program. It was initiated in October 1999 and focused on providing HIV and AIDS training for church leaders and also working with young people. It recognizes that religion is very strong in Papua and believes that the church is the best way to reach the people. The Sunday Schools were targeted because they meet regularly and the relationships between the leaders and pupils are usually good. YKB provide training for church leaders (Sunday School Teachers) and District Liaison Officers (who act as the intermediate between the church and YKB). DLOs are on-site within local clusters. The program is run in a number of hard-to-reach areas as well as in the cities. Currently, the program runs in twelve sub-districts, but in 2008, this expanded to 15. It involves 99 church congregations from eleven different denominations. There has also been interest from some Muslim groups to join the program. YKB is keen for this to occur and is currently pursuing this partnership.

Church leaders are taught about HIV and AIDS and are given a range of resources (from KPA in conjunction with other international NGOs) and ongoing training and evaluation sessions provided by YKB. YKB helps the church leaders design programs that cover 18 topics for sexual health promotion and pastoral care (topics covered include love, sex, marriage,

HIV and AIDS). Whilst there is no record of HIV being transmitted in Papua through the sharing of infected needles, YKB have recognized that injecting drug use is likely to become a risk behavior in the future. YKB distribute condoms, comics promoting ABC (abstain, being faithful and condom use) and encouragement for people to be tested and talk more openly, posters, pamphlets, DVDs and CDs to church groups. Most communities have enthusiastically accepted the majority of the materials, however there have been some other church members that have opposed it. It should be noted, however, that the church groups that participate in the program have chosen to do so voluntarily. This has meant that the priest/pastor/rector/vicar has supported the program and does not easily give in to public pressure. Most people who were initially against the program now have respect and understanding for it and support the program's aims and objectives. YKB believe that the acceptance is due to the material covered and the approach used. Addressing HIV and STDs through pastoral care, and by combining it with a group of other issues centered around relationships and love, has resulted in the church community accepting it to be necessary teaching.

The work of YKB has resulted in many positive changes within the local Papuan community. There are now HIV positive street children working in HIV prevention with other NGOs and church groups. The access to information and HIV and AIDS resources in remote areas has become more readily available to communities and more church groups and even Muslim groups are requesting to participate in the YKB sexual health program. The acceptance, changing attitudes and support that the program has brought about has made a significant difference to the community. So far, the program is proving to be highly successful by changing the attitudes towards people living with HIV and AIDS and individuals changing their own behavior and lifestyles.

#### **4. A FBO HIV and AIDS Approach?**

While there is no single approach or model for FBOs to adopt when working with communities to reduce the transmission of HIV or the care of those with AIDS, it is possible to develop a suite of characteristics that underpin successful HIV and AIDS interventions.

Successful HIV and AIDS interventions by FBOs require managing the tension between understanding both the ability and the limits of the FBO in achieving behavior change within a community. FBOs have both credibility within and access to local communities. This credibility and access is central to effectively disseminating information and increasing knowledge of HIV and AIDS (see Figure 1). FBOs have a natural position of authority within communities based on their links to religious belief systems. While secular agencies would spend considerable time building a reputation and level of trust within a community, by their nature, FBOs already have an

advantage in this regard. If FBOs disseminate integrated education materials that reflect existing knowledge and align with practiced risk behaviors, they are able to draw on their authority as experts in this field. Whilst FBOs have a natural authority, this does not necessarily translate to individuals changing their own practices at the simple behest of the FBO. Indeed, the authority of the FBO is attributable to their own relationships to a religious belief system, which universally teach against the activities that are risk behaviors for HIV transmission (illegal drug use and non monogamous sexual intercourse). It is evident though that these teachings have not prevented people from undertaking such risk behaviors. So if the authority of the religious body itself cannot hold sway over personal behavior, FBOs also cannot expect to simply dictate appropriate behavior. They must therefore acknowledge their own limitations when seeking to change risk behaviors whilst working with communities.

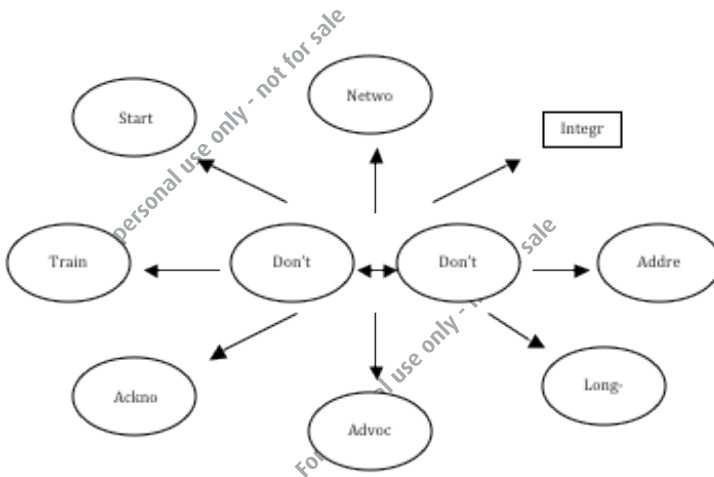


Figure 2: Wheel of Successful FBO HIV and AIDS Characteristics

Acknowledging the strengths and weakness of the YKB approach, eight characteristics can be identified for successful approaches to the provision of HIV and AIDS care and prevention programs. These characteristics are:

1. Acknowledging disconnection between religious teaching and human behaviors
2. Training religious leaders in HIV and AIDS transmission
3. Understanding that HIV and AIDS interventions require long-term commitment
4. Starting interventions where the community is
5. Integrating HIV and AIDS interventions into social and community development activities

6. Addressing all modes of transmission (even those that are not currently present)
7. Advocating for better national programs
8. Working with other FBOs and secular organizations

FBOs incorporating these eight characteristics into their own programs will be better placed to address HIV and AIDS in their local communities.

1. *Acknowledging possible disconnection between religious teachings and moral tenets and risk behavior practiced in the community* is essential as HIV is transmitted via the exchange of bodily fluids. This occurs generally through unprotected sexual intercourse, sharing needles containing infected blood, incorrect dressing of infected wounds and from mother to child across the placenta or whilst breast-feeding. While dressing infected wounds and transmitting the virus during pregnancy do not transgress religious teachings or moral tenets, sharing needles and sexual intercourse may very well do so. Injection of illegal drugs and sexual intercourse outside of marriage – including heterosexual intercourse with commercial sex workers or sexual intercourse between men – are risk behaviors associated with the transmission of HIV. FBOs must acknowledge these risk behaviors and incorporate them into their interventions. It is insufficient for FBOs to exclude such considerations because they are in conflict with the religious teachings. FBOs cannot ignore the reality of risk displayed by the communities they work with in preference to the behavior expected from and associated with their religious beliefs and teachings.

2. *Training religious leaders is necessary* as the primary basis of the FBO's authority is its link to a religious belief system. Whilst separate to, the natural partner for FBOs is the existing religious organization to which it is aligned. It is necessary that these two organizations work closely when addressing HIV and AIDS. Religious leaders provide very important moral and religious support for an FBO's interventions. Training religious leaders in both the myths and facts of HIV transmission is necessary to ensure that their sermons and actions do not contradict the FBO intervention. Having the imprimatur of the local religious leader adds great weight to the FBO.

3. *Understanding that interventions addressing HIV and AIDS are long-term in nature* is necessary as behavior change takes time to initiate and takes further time to become entrenched as a new sustained pattern of behavior. The length of time it takes for this transition differs between individuals, but is substantial. Moreover, given the risk behaviors associated with HIV transmission (i.e. drug use and sexual activities), new cohorts of potential risk-takers are constantly appearing as children become young adults. Therefore, addressing HIV and AIDS cannot be equated to, for example, installing water and sanitation infrastructure nor even improving gender awareness. There is a necessity therefore for long-term support of behavior change, but also on going dissemination of information with new cohorts of young people at risk of undertaking these behaviors.

Associated with the long-term nature of these interventions is a constant review of risk behaviors and practices to ensure that the information being disseminated is relevant to current awareness and risk behaviors. Fundamental to this is securing long-term funding (through either secular or sectarian donors).

4. *Starting where the community is* recognizes that each community is different, and therefore so too will their initial knowledge of HIV and AIDS. As behavior change is the primary means of reducing risk of transmission, information must be specifically tailored to the knowledge, belief and practices of that particular community. Indeed, there is likely to be distinct cohorts within each community requiring distinct integrated education materials that address their own circumstances. FBOs must investigate knowledge of HIV and AIDS transmission and practice of risk behaviors within their communities before implementing interventions. Starting where the community is, is also pertinent to selecting appropriate responses. In order to maintain community support, immediate and aggressive condom social marketing may not be appropriate as an initial intervention. FBOs must challenge their communities, but not threaten them. Over time, FBOs may be able to successfully socially market condoms with the support of the community (including religious leaders), but not if they overwhelm community goodwill in the first instance.

5. *Addressing all transmission modes even if these risks are not currently being practiced within the community* ensures that new transmission modes are not ignored. It is necessary to provide information on all modes of HIV transmission, even if the community does not currently practice certain risk behaviors. Therefore, while injecting drug consumption may not be a known activity, for example, it is still important for the FBO to include information about the importance of clean injecting equipment in their information dissemination activities.

6. *Integrating HIV and AIDS prevention interventions within a wider program of social and community development, which includes care of those living with HIV and AIDS* results in more successful outcomes. HIV and AIDS interventions should not be seated in isolation from other community development interventions. Indeed, certain risk behaviors arise due to general issues associated with poverty that can only be properly addressed through wider community development. Moreover, FBOs should use their strong connections and authority in local communities to actively reduce stigmatization around HIV and AIDS by 'mainstreaming' prevention interventions into their normal community development interventions. In addition to this, they should also actively seek to provide care (and social respectability) for people living with HIV or AIDS. These care interventions may include some welfare based activities including provision of food, shelter and health care, but can also include micro-finance opportunities (including skills training) and social events for companionship.

7. *Advocating for better national programs (and funding) addressing HIV and AIDS* across the wider religious institution results in improved HIV and AIDS responses, programs and funding from national governments. FBOs do carry significant political influence in some developing countries, and can draw on their constituents to pressure national governments to enhance responses to HIV and AIDS. When working in concert with sectarian agencies and other community-based organizations, this influence is multiplied. FBOs advocating on the national stage also has the associated benefit of further reducing stigmatization of HIV and AIDS as it is seen as a 'respectable' development issue worthy of consideration by dint of the FBOs' involvement.

8. *Working with other FBOs and secular organizations (including national or regional bodies)* will result in a critical mass to better address the difficulties of achieving behavior change. Changing behavior is difficult and requires not only knowledge and information, but also an enabling environment to support efforts to change. This enabling environment may include improved sustainable livelihoods, access to education and health services, increased personal security, enhanced gender awareness and so forth. It is not reasonable therefore to expect FBOs to engender such an enabling environment in isolation. They must therefore work closely with other FBOs, secular organizations and, importantly, with government agencies – especially public ministries of health and law and order. Working in isolation or limiting co operation with other sectarian agencies will limit their effectiveness.

How the tensions of the potential influence (and lack thereof) and incorporating eight (or part thereof) of the lessons described above are managed will have implications for how FBOs may currently work. There may be some concern that adopting the lessons above will minimize the distinction between FBO and NGO with the former losing their overarching religious identity and secularizing themselves to become the latter. This need not be the case. The religious aspect of FBOs makes them quite distinct from secular NGOs, in both their motivation for existence, but also their connection to their communities. Depending on the country or region, FBOs may be embedded in the cultural structure making it easy to seamlessly work at all levels within society and access all community members. In less religious states or where the FBO is associated with a religious minority, connections with the wider community will be weaker but possibly stronger with the specific religious cohort being engaged with. In either circumstance the existing levels of trust and relationships will be more permanent than a relationship with a secular organization that may be more transitory or motivated by a specific cause or need.



## 5. Conclusion

It is now increasingly recognized that FBOs are important agents in addressing a wide range of development issues. This sectarian identity provides them with unique connections to both local communities but also national and international networks. Whilst many religious groups may have avoided addressing HIV and AIDS when it first became a development issue in the 1980s and early 1990s, there has more recently been a stronger engagement from FBOs in the prevention of HIV and care of people living with AIDS. The past reticence to work in this field largely stemmed from denial of HIV and AIDS being a problem, and from silence driven by the perception that transmission was through immoral acts and illegal behaviors. However, in line with FBOs becoming increasingly active as community development agents in other spheres, their involvement in HIV and AIDS has increased also. There has been recognition more recently amongst both FBOs and donor agencies that that FBOs are themselves well placed to inform, educate, motivate and support behavior change within communities and advocate at national, regional and international forums on behalf of those people affected by HIV and AIDS. This chapter has conceptualized a wheel of successful characteristics of FBO interventions in HIV and AIDS. These characteristics are drawn from a Christian organization in Papua working to reduce HIV transmission and provide care to people living with HIV or AIDS. While it is unique it does provide insights and lessons for other FBOs seeking to combat HIV and AIDS. Rather than becoming more secular in their operations, FBOs' sectarian identity makes them a powerful and important resource in the on going campaign against HIV and AIDS.

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# PART THREE

# CHRISTIANITY AND CULTURE

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# WHO ARE KAKURE KIRISHITAN? ISSUES OF COMMUNAL IDENTITY WITHIN HIDDEN CHRISTIANS OF JAPAN

Kirk Sandvig

While the seemingly simple question of ‘Who are you?’ might have rather benign intentions in most social situations, the question carries with it inquiries of identity not commonly thought of in casual conversation. When asked this question, however, we force ourselves to reflect on not only on what we are called by name, but also our age, gender, nationality, culture, religious affiliation and occupation. It brings into question where we are from, with whom we associate, what we are doing and what we hope to become. Such is the nature of identity. It is precisely in the process of reflection, encompassing the past, present and future, which the notions of identity begin to formulate.

In the case of Hidden Christians in Japan, the function of identity has been of key importance, not only for its role in establishing who they were, but also in maintaining their communal integrity under centuries of ‘hidden’ existence from the early 17<sup>th</sup> century to today. Identity, it seems, has been the unifying factor keeping the Hidden Christian communities of Goto and Ikitsuki together, and its recent deterioration, or transformation, has led to some of these groups deciding to disband after nearly 400 years of continued practice. The obvious questions, therefore, are how has this identity changed, and what elements have caused this change to occur?

To begin answering these questions regarding Hidden Christian identities, one must inevitably to look into issues of community, syncretism, agency, power, modernity and conversion.

When looking into the definition of identity, we find its roots within the Latin *identitas*, from *idem*, meaning ‘the same’. This notion of ‘sameness’ brings in the social dimension associated with identity. According to A.L. Epstein, ‘Identity...is essentially a concept of synthesis. It represents the process by which the person seeks to integrate his various statuses and roles, as well as his diverse experiences, into a coherent image of self.’<sup>1</sup> Identity, in this case, can only exist within a relationship with other selves,

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<sup>1</sup> A.L. Epstein, cited in Anthony Cohen *Self Consciousness: An Alternative Anthropology of Identity* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 11.

whereby one finds affiliation with certain groups, and disaffiliation with others.

During what is known as the Christian Century in Japan, the arrival of Francis Xavier in Japan in 1549, banning of Christianity in 1630s, Japanese Christians went through a tumultuous period, which led to the formation of a 'Hidden Christian' identity. When Portuguese missionaries first arrived, Japan was amidst bitter times of feudal wars that spread throughout the nation. The early mission strategy was to target the upper classes in Kyushu, in hopes of using their power and status to influence those who were under their control. The apparent 'success' in this strategy came when, in 1563, Omura Sumitada (1533-87) became the first Christian ruling lord, or *daimyo*. He was followed one year later by *Daimyo*'s Takayama Ukon (1552-1615), by Omoto Sorin (1530-87) in 1578, and then by Arima Harunobu (1567-1612) in 1580. In the areas under which these ruling *daimyo* were in control, sequences of mass baptisms were put into effect, where entire regions were made Christian. *Daimyo* became attracted by the prospects of profitable trade of goods and arms that the Portuguese were willing to offer. In order to entice Portuguese trade within a certain region, the *daimyo* would allow Jesuit missionaries free reign within their land, and, in cases such as Omura and Ukon, would even ask to become baptized. Often times, *daimyo* would request that the Jesuit missionaries use their influence to get Portuguese ships to enter their ports, as was the case in Nagasaki where, in 1570, Jesuits were used by the Catholic Church to survey the area in search for a base of trade between Portugal and Japan. At the behest of Jesuit missionaries, these Christian *daimyo* would then order mass conversions of those living in their land, and would even push Buddhist monks to either convert to Christianity or be expelled from the land. Buddhist temples were then handed over to the missionaries, making it easy for the Japanese to respect Christianity as a legitimate spiritual entity.<sup>2</sup>

Those converted, however, found acceptance into the new religion rather difficult. Because during the early periods of Christian mission in Japan, Japanese Christians were expected to adapt to the ways and likings of the Portuguese Jesuits. Through this method of thinking, a widening gap between European missionaries and Japanese converts began to formulate. Japanese members of the Society of Jesuits were treated as though they were second class Jesuits.<sup>3</sup> While the Japanese were encouraged to become more European, little, if no, effort was made to provide opportunities for Japanese to learn Latin or Portuguese, while their European counterparts had little encouragement to learn the Japanese language. With such limited encouragement and lack of opportunity, Japanese Jesuits began having

<sup>2</sup> Miyazaki Kentaro 'Roman Catholic Mission in Pre-Modern Japan' in Mark Mullins (ed.) *Handbook of Christianity in Japan* (Boston: Brill Academic Publications, 2001), 7.

<sup>3</sup> George Elison *Deus Destroyed*, (Harvard University Press, 1973), 15.

feelings of resentment towards the Society after having been unable to improve their status within the church.

This attitude changed after Alexandro Valignano arrived in Japan in 1579 as Visitor of the Jesuit Indian Province for the General of the Society, who sought to encourage Jesuit missionaries to adapt elements of Japanese culture in the structure and practice of Christianity in Japan, while improving the theological education of the Japanese Christians. This reordering of structure within the Society of Jesuits also allowed room for the role of lay helpers to exist. This role were typically delineated by the extent of their theological education. Those of whom attended the colleges or seminaries were usually given the titles of *padre* or *irmaos*, while those whose theological education was not as developed were given the roles of *dojuku*, *kambo* and *komono*.<sup>4</sup> By having these roles based upon theological knowledge, it made it possible for people to improve their status within the hierarchical structure. These roles would later provide a structure through which Japanese Christianity could functionally exist after the Jesuit priests had left. By 1583, there were nearly 200 churches built throughout the country of Japan. Out of 190 churches, only 20 did not require the use of *kambo*, since *padre* were already residing in these locations. These lay leaders were primarily responsible for church upkeep, and the teaching of the Japanese catechism, which, for many, had to be committed to by memory.

Despite Christianity's growth throughout Japan, missionaries received an unexpected blow after Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536-1598) eventually picked up the reigns for the quest for national unity. While he first tolerated the presence of Christianity for the reasons of economic prosperity, he later came to view Christianity, or more specifically the Jesuit missionaries, as a potential stumbling block in his quest to bring all political, economic and religious forces under his control. After witnessing the extent to which Jesuits had gained control over the Nagasaki region, Hideyoshi sent out a proclamation in 1587 that called for all foreign missionaries to be expelled from Japan.<sup>5</sup> While this proclamation had called for the demolition of Christian churches and buildings, and the evacuation of missionaries and lay leaders, this edict did not, however, banish the Christian faith. Some of the Jesuit missionaries left for Macao. Many decided not to leave and retreated to the western half of Kyushu, stealthily continuing their ministry despite the order to leave. Many *daimyo*, however, turned a blind eye to this edict in order to continue a lucrative trade with the West.

Once it was believed that Japan could continue its trade with the West without the influence of the Jesuits by establishing trade ties with the Protestant Dutch, Japan's first Shogun, Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616), set

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<sup>4</sup> Andrew Ross, *A Vision Betrayed* (Orbis books, 1994), 49.

<sup>5</sup> Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan* (University of California Press, 1951), pp 100-1.



into motion a nationwide order in 1614 that would ultimately prohibit the Christian religion within Japan for the next 210 years. While it was Tokugawa Ieyasu who formalized the ban against Christianity, it was his son, Tokugawa Hidetada (1579-1632), and grandson, Tokugawa Iemitsu (1604-51), who would then enact, and eventually perfect, the persecution against Christianity. All forms of Christian books were now banned from being read and propagated. Christian books of doctrine were especially targeted for censorship, forcing many Japanese Christian leaders to once again make the impossible task of committing such material to memory. If any such material were found, the contents would either be destroyed or crossed out, signifying that such material was not to be read. Those in possession of such material would then be executed.

The three great martyrdoms in Kyoto (1619), Nagasaki (1622) and Edo (1623) demonstrated Hidetada's commitment to the extermination of Kirishitan presence within Japan. The martyrdom in Kyoto took the lives of 52 lay followers, which even included six children. Of the 55 *irmãos* and followers martyred in Nagasaki, 22 were burned at the stake and 31 were beheaded, while all 50 padres and lay leaders in Edo became martyrs by being burned alive.<sup>6</sup>

By the time Tokugawa Iemitsu became the ruling shogun of Japan, Christian persecution had been thoroughly organized. In the highly Christian populated region of Shimabara, harsh land taxes and unreasonable treatment eventually became too much for many to bear. The cause of such turmoil was due, largely, to Tokugawa Iemitsu appointing Shigemasa Matsukura (1574-1630) as *daimyo* in 1616. In hopes of extinguishing the Christian community in Shimabara, Matsukura had ordered the construction of a new castle to be built in Shimabara, in order to better deal with the Christian population. The construction of this castle took an exhausting seven years, and required heavy taxes that many were unable to pay. By the time Shigemasa's son, Katsui Matsukura (1530-83), had taken power the citizens of Shimabara had endured enough. In 1637, a rebellion ensued under the leadership of the young samurai, Shio Tokisada (1623-38), which would later be known as the Shimabara Rebellion.

After storming and occupying Hara Castle for four months, the rebellion was finally put down after the ruling government called in Dutch soldiers to cut off supplies and ultimately put an end to the rebellion. The government called this a 'Christian' insurrection, and used it as a means of crushing the Christian presence within the area. Though the rebellion was a reaction of unfair treatment of the citizens of Shimabara, it was easily perceived as a Christian liberation movement when the rebels carried a flag with the Portuguese motto *Loucado Seia o Santissimo Sacramento* ('Praised be the Blessed Sacrament'). In retribution for the rebellion, as well as a means of exterminating the Christians, the government ordered the execution of

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<sup>6</sup>Ikuko Higashibaba *Christianity in Early Modern Japan*, p 142.

approximately 37,000 people, including 17,000 men and 20,000 women and children, many of whom were Christian.

In a recent archaeological excavation of the Hara Castle, a number of artefacts were uncovered which reveal much about what was happening during and after the rebellion. In the midst of the thousands of skeletons uncovered from the sight, a number of lead crosses, such as the one seen here, were also found during the excavation. Apparently these lead crosses were made from the same bullets fired by the Dutch soldiers into Hara Castle. In the mouths of some of the exhumed skeletons, crosses such as these, along with other Christian medallions, were sometimes found around the piles of dismembered skulls. The picture here shows a Christian medallion inside what seems to be rows of teeth. It is believed that many of the Christians who knew they were about to be executed, would place crosses and medallions such as these inside their mouths in order to ensure that they would not be taken from them as they met their death.

Various forms of public torture, including being burnt at the stake, being weighted down while binding the arms and legs as they were thrown into the water, being boiled alive in scalding hot water and being thrown off a cliff, were used by the ruling government with the expectation that such drastic means would help them in deterring people from continuing their Christian practices. What these officials did not expect, however, is that, in the witnessing of such actions, these spectators were becoming even more compelled to the faith, seeing that these martyrs were so courageously willing to give their lives for their beliefs.

Martyrdom was now becoming a ritualistic action that was openly embraced, if not glorified, by Christian groups throughout Japan, as an ultimate symbol of Christian faith. The practice of martyrdom eventually came to have a three-part function in these Christian groups: first, it formulated a way to distinguish between true and false Christians; second, it provided a way to demonstrate the power of *Deus* by giving these martyrs a strength and conviction that could not seem humanly possible; and third, it demonstrated the truthfulness of Christian teachings.<sup>7</sup>

For many Christians after the 1614 ban, the only way to fulfil their roles as Christians was through martyrdom. There were some, however, who did not feel that this was the only answer and continued to hide their faith by means of declaring apostasy, while still continuing their faith. These Christians who managed to maintain their faith underground are known today as '*Kakure Kirishitan*', or Hidden Christians. A societal shift from kingdom to one centered more around villages and towns began to occur during the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Along with having to share resources and labor, these communities often shared religious beliefs as well. It was this strong sense of communal solidarity that allowed for a type of political autonomy within these small communities, making it possible for Kakure Kirishitan

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<sup>7</sup> Higashibaba. *Christianity in Early Modern Japan*. Brill, 2001, 148.

to exist, even in the midst of such tough religious persecution. If there was a break within the religious solidarity of a village, the consequences could be disastrous for the community, resulting in a series of *kuzure* (crumbings), where large groups of families are rounded up and arrested. In order to keep such *kuzure* from occurring, outsiders were not allowed within these groups. The Kirishitan faith, therefore, needed to be passed from generation to generation through the family in complete secrecy in order to keep the beliefs and traditions alive.

Due to the harsh persecution against Christians in Japan beginning in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century and lasting for another 250 years, many Japanese Christians continued their faith underground, practicing 'hidden' forms of Christianity. With the threat of discovery high and the consequences dire, Hidden Christian communities relied heavily on each other to keep their activities secret. The formation of Hidden Christian groups into isolated communities and societies marked a starting point through which Hidden Christians could continue practicing their religion despite the mandates of Christianity's prohibition. It was through the shared values and common ways of behaving that the structural dimensions of communal and societal identity could be manifested.<sup>8</sup> In the development of the communal identity of these Hidden Christians into a set of characteristics, the need to become distanced from others became necessary for survival. It was important, therefore, for boundaries within which Hidden Christianity could exist. However, as Richard Jenkins points out, boundaries are permeable, and 'identity is constructed in transactions which occur at and across the boundary.'<sup>9</sup> In this sense, religious syncretism became a necessary transaction needed to remain hidden. In order to cloak their existence, Hidden Christians needed to be Christian, but not look Christian; conversely, they needed to look Buddhist/Shinto, but not be Buddhist/Shinto. The syncretistic interchange of religious meaning and practices, created a dynamic of 'being and not being', thereby formulating part of the Hidden Christian identity.

By the 1870s, after nearly 250 years of isolation during Japan's period of Christian prohibition, Hidden Christians, particularly in the Nagasaki prefecture, began to reflect upon and reassess their identity after the ban against Christianity had been lifted. With the re-emergence of Protestant and Roman Catholic missionaries across the Japanese landscape, Hidden Christians were confronted with new issues of identity clarification. Hidden Christians had to then decide whether to reveal themselves and integrate with mainstream Christianity, or remain hidden within their isolated

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<sup>8</sup> Anthony Cohen, *Self Consciousness: An Alternative Anthropology of Identity* (Routledge, London and New York, 1994), 118.

<sup>9</sup> Richard Jenkins. *Social Identity* (Routledge, 1996), 24.

communities.<sup>10</sup> Although some Hidden Christian groups decided to assimilate themselves within the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches that had begun to spring up within Japan,<sup>11</sup> still others decided to remain in hiding, maintaining the separation between themselves and mainline Christianity, despite the newly attained religious freedom. Although the reasons are not exactly clear as to why these groups refused to come to the *alma mater* church, speculations have been made attempting to provide reasonable answers to this question. One possible reason has to do with a fear of having to give up their status within the community. While these groups remained hidden, families were able to hold specific roles that gave them status within their communities. If they were to enter the Catholic Church, the fear was that they would no longer be able to perform these roles, and therefore have no status.<sup>12</sup> Another possibility is related to filial piety. Many felt that it would be disrespectful to their ancestors, whom had managed to maintain their faith under centuries of persecution. Regardless of the reasons, the Kakure Kirishitan continued their hidden practices in spite of the religious freedom in which they were afforded, again passing down their beliefs and practices from generation to generation as it had been done for hundreds of years, continuing even until today.

In recent times, however, Hidden Christian groups among the Ikitsuki and Goto communities have, once again, reflected upon their notions of communal identity, and are considering whether or not to disband. This decision process brings into question aspects of agency amongst Hidden Christian communities, causing us to ask questions such as what factors have caused these groups to question whether to continue their religious practices or not and why, after perpetuating their hidden identity for over a century and a half, have these questions now resulted in some groups deciding to disband? As Steven Hitlin and Glen Elder, Jr point out, ‘agency is a necessary aspect of organisms’ struggling to adapt and (in the case of humans) make sense of their environments.’<sup>13</sup> It is, therefore, necessary to look into the ways in which community environments surrounding the Hidden Christians have changed, causing their communal identities to become altered.

Some of these causalities have come as a result of issues with power, and the reaction to the power struggles facing Hidden Christians. Many of

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<sup>10</sup> It is important to point out that it was the Hidden Christian groups/communities who made these decisions and not individual selves, for one could not make a decision without affecting the rest of the group/community.

<sup>11</sup> What is interesting is that although Protestant churches were prevalent within the Nagasaki area, it was not until Catholic churches were constructed that Hidden Christians began to reveal themselves.

<sup>12</sup> Information gathered from S. J. Diego Yuki interviewed in Nagasaki, Japan in July, 2005.

<sup>13</sup> Steven Hitlin and Glen H. Elder, Jr, ‘Time, Space, and the Curiosity Abstract Concept of Agency’, in *Sociological Theory* 25:2 (June 2007).

these power issues are not new to the Goto and Ikitsuki Hidden Christians. Governmental influences have long affected Hidden Christian identity, in its attempts to unify the nation in matters of politics, economy and religion. The great number of Roman Catholic churches along with Buddhist and Shinto temples surrounding the areas of Goto and Ikitsuki has created pressure to conform to the 'mainstream' religious practices. Hidden Christian reaction to this, by continuing their faith underground despite the threat of severe persecution and alienation, can be seen as a form of protest against the ruling powers, which undoubtedly shaped their identity. As Keven Hetherington points out, 'There is a multiplicity of expressive forms, the identity set, that this opposition can take; 'new social movements', religious movements, alternative lifestyles, and so on. To reiterate, the anti-instrumentalism and expressiveness of these groups operates within everyday life at the level of identity and lifestyle as much as they do in forms of collective protest.'<sup>14</sup> The increasing number of Hidden Christian groups recently deciding to disband, however, and find affinity within the mainstream religious practices surrounding the Goto and Ikitsuki areas, gives indication that this nonconformist mentality has shifted.

Another major influence affecting the Hidden Christians of Goto and Ikitsuki is the rise of modernity. Anthony Giddens points out that, 'In high modernity, the influence of distant happenings on proximate events, and on intimacies of the self, becomes more and more commonplace. The media, printed and electronic, obviously play a central role in this respect.' Giddens goes on to say, 'With the development of mass communication, particularly electronic communication, the interpenetration of self-development and social systems, up to and including global systems, becomes ever more pronounced.'<sup>15</sup> This interpenetration for Hidden Christians, whose identity has been sustained through isolation and secrecy, has radically challenged perceptions of 'otherness', thereby altering their notions of communal identity.

Younger generations within these Hidden Christian communities are particularly the ones who are influenced by the rise of modernity. With a greater accessibility to the world outside their communities through various media outlets such as television and the internet, younger generations are forced to approach a wider spectrum of societal norms and behaviors than those of earlier generations where such access was more limited. With the increased ease in modes of transportation, it is now common for many of the younger generations to leave their once insulated communities in order for school and jobs.

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<sup>14</sup> Keven Hetherington, *Expressions of Identity* (London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi, SAGE Publications), 1998, 119.

<sup>15</sup> Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Polity Press, 1991), 4.

With the shifting sense of identity occurring among these communities, and the fact that former Hidden Christian members are finding affinity with Roman Catholic, Buddhist and Shinto religious traditions, aspects of conversion are pivotal in the understanding of identity. Diane Austin-Broos explains that, ‘Conversion as passage is also quest, a quest to be at home in a world experienced as turbulent or constraining or, in some particular way, as wanting in value. The passage of conversion is a passage to some place rather than no place. It is not a quest for utopia but rather for habitus.’<sup>16</sup> The issue of conversion among Hidden Christians is a complicated matter. For instance, one of the former Hidden Christian leaders has stated that he calls himself a Buddhist, since he prays to Buddha every morning and night, but insists that he has not abandoned his Hidden Christian faith, and would, at times, pray to the Hidden Christian God. He describes that his Hidden Christian faith is about worshipping God, while Buddhism is about praying for and respecting the ancestors.<sup>17</sup> What is interesting is that, in this case, faith and religiosity has not drastically changed for the individual, but the choice to find association and affinity with one particular religion over another has been made on an individual level. Once the Hidden Christian groups decided to disband, the notion of identity transformed from that of a communal level, where existence depended upon the whole of the group, to more of an individual level, where the individual is understood to be in control. Conversion, in this light, has been in reshaping the communal dynamics from that which places an emphasis on communal decisions essential for communal existence to that of an individual existence.

As indicated in this paper, identity has provided a pivotal role in the maintenance of Hidden Christian communities. The changing dynamics of Hidden Christian communities have caused many Hidden Christian groups to bring into question feelings of nationalism, disbelonging and betrayal, which Hidden Christians, deciding to either to disband their groups or continue their practices. These groups are dealing with issues of filial piety associated with keeping the traditions and rituals of the Hidden Christians alive, and the way it affects their communal identity as whole. With the rise of modernity, and many of these groups deciding to disband, Hidden Christian groups have seen a dramatic shift among the communal dynamics of Hidden Christians, which has changed from an emphasis of the community to that of the individual. While the faith and beliefs of Hidden Christians remain relatively unchanged even after deciding to disband, individuals and communities are forced to reshape and re-establish their notions of identity. This lack of communal solidarity and support will invariably lead to future generations of Hidden Christians ceasing to exist,

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<sup>16</sup> Diane Austin-Broos, ‘The Anthropology of Conversion: An Introduction’, in Buckser and Glazier (eds.) *The Anthropology of Religious Conversion* (Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003).

<sup>17</sup> Information gathered from former Kakure member, interviewed July of 2005.

with the remnants of Hidden Christianity relegated to museums and history books.

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**FRAGMENTS AND THE WHOLE:  
AN INSIGHT INTO THE DELIBERATIONS OF  
MISSIONARY ORGANIZATIONS IN SOUTH INDIA  
AND THEIR IMPACT**

Anderson H.M. Jeremiah

**Introduction**

'Ideological glosses of humanity and academic glosses on ideology, leave out too much of what men and women themselves find most meaningful: their aspirations and discontents, much of their suffering, the texture of their lives and the flow of their experience. We need to explore such experience and not just the ideology of caste' Steven M. Parish<sup>1</sup>

It would not be an overstatement if I said that South India was one of the most important missionary destinations since early 15<sup>th</sup> century. Following the Catholic missionaries, most of the Protestant missionary organizations from Europe and America established their missionary fields in various parts of South India. As a result of such intensive missionary activity, the majority of the Christian population in India is accounted in the South Indian states. Presence of ecumenical spirit notwithstanding, the churches still have their own distinct identities preserved in their local traditions. Following a judicious observation, this paper tries to explore and understand the question: is there a possible association between the denominations and caste within the South Indian churches, since the denominational, diocesan and regional<sup>2</sup> identities functions also as an indicator for other socio cultural factors that prove to be a cause of division within the Christian community in South India. It will be explored at three levels, (a) historically tracing the mission attitude to caste, (b) glancing through some references from the South Indian churches and (c) elucidating the implications of such an associational view. Though the facts and studies that are used in this paper are not new, they provide new insights owing to the new context from which it is read. It is also important to note that these social practices within the Christian communities are inadequately documented, hence leaving us to speculate an interpretation.

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<sup>1</sup> Steven M. Parish, *Hierarchy and its Discontents* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), 7.

<sup>2</sup> These terms are used interchangeably referring to the same phenomena.



Considering that fact, this essay remains exploratory in nature, trying to understand the complexities of Christian communities in South India. It will also help us to place the status of Dalit Christians within this fold. Interestingly enough the situation of Dalit Christians has not changed much within the church, rather it has become an accepted reality.<sup>3</sup>

### **The 'Empire', 'Mission' and the 'Caste' in South India**

The advent of 'missionary' Christianity, which accompanied the colonial Empires<sup>4</sup> in India, resulted in an interesting interaction between the message of 'Christ' as brought by the western missionaries and the socio cultural setting of South India.<sup>5</sup> The southern part of the country being the hub of much Christian missionary activity proved to be a great laboratory. Despite the existence of a vibrant Orthodox Christian community in the tradition of St Thomas, since the 1<sup>st</sup> century, the missionary movement provided more excitement because of the number of new converts through mass movements into Christianity. The Catholic missionaries were the first ones to come to the shores of South India and to begin the missionary work. Instantaneously they were confronted by the caste reality and its deep rootedness in the Indian society. The 'missionary' mind was unable to comprehend this peculiar and strange phenomenon. After initial hesitation they began to have an agenda to convert all the 'pagans' to Christianity.

<sup>3</sup> To understand the gravity of the oppressive nature of the caste system, references are made to situation in the Roman Catholic Church, the CSI, the Lutheran churches, the Baptist and the Orthodox churches in South India. Due to lack of documentation on this subject, Pentecostal churches are not included in this paper.

<sup>4</sup> Due to the limited scope of this paper I shall confine observing only the British Empire and its missionary connections. Having said that, it is important to recognize the complexity that might have existed in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century with five colonial powers (the French, Dutch, Danish, British and Portugal) ruling various parts of South India accompanied by their own band of missionaries.

<sup>5</sup> Similar to the geographical diversity, the country is also divided on the lines of language, culture and most importantly caste, a distinct identity for the unique oppressive social stratification in the Indian subcontinent. There are various theories explaining the emergence and function of caste system in the Indian socio cultural system but the significant aspect emerging from these discussions is that a large section of people were left outside the caste system and designated as 'the outcast'. (John C. Webster, *The Dalit Christians - A History* (Delhi: ISPCK, 1992), 2-5. This social stratification and oppression of Dalits was (is) ordained, pursued and perpetuated by powerful religio-political and socio-cultural forces. Instead of being called 'untouchables' or 'harijans', they named themselves in an affirmative posture as 'Dalits', meaning 'broken', 'split-open' and 'oppressed', which symbolizes their wretchedness of life. James Massey, *Down Trodden* (Geneva: WCC, 1997), 3. To this oppressed and violated people came the 'gospel of Christianity' or 'the good news' brought by the missionaries in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. For detailed report on history and atrocities against Dalits see this Human Rights Watch report, <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/india/>.

They didn't want to get embroiled in the conflict, rather they adopted a safer method, not to have a confrontational attitude.<sup>6</sup> Summarizing the attitude of the Catholic missionaries at that time Duncan Forrester observes:

'Roman Catholic mission...from the beginning appear to have regarded the caste system as the given and religiously neutral structure of Indian society within which evangelization, understood as the conversion of individuals without detaching them from their social context, and also the conversion of the whole caste group, might proceed. Christianity, in other words was seen as neither threatening nor undermining the caste system, but rather working within it and accommodating western social standards to the norms of caste.'<sup>7</sup>

The resourceful missionaries also thought that if they succeeded in getting the 'high caste' converts then it would trickle down to the low caste, making their job easy. But, conversely, the high caste converts objected to sharing the worship place with low caste Christians.<sup>8</sup> Fearing that a negative attitude to caste system would affect their prospect of getting more converts to Christianity they decided to tread carefully. As a consequence caste system was initiated into the church. The Protestant colonial powers followed by their missionaries arrived two centuries latter, but by then the Catholic Church had made progress in terms of getting their church established.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century South India appeared animated with all these missionary organizations working vigorously to Christianize the 'heathens'. An insight in to the relationship between the missionaries and the local colonial rulers would shed more light on later consequences of events. Specifically observing the British colonial history in India, Anna Johnston comments:

The relationship between missionaries and the colonial state was one fraught with complications, ambiguity and extreme provisionality. In different mission fields of the British empire this relationship was variously mutually supportive, mutually antagonistic or ambivalent, in short it was highly contingent on local circumstances.<sup>9</sup>

She further observes, investigating the communication of the governor as early as 1807 in his directives to the board of directors of the East India Company.

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<sup>6</sup> Kenneth Ballhatchet, *Caste, Class and Catholicism in India 1789-1914* (Surrey: Curzon, 1998), 7.

<sup>7</sup> Duncan B. Forrester, *Caste and Christianity* (London: Curzon, 1980), 14.

<sup>8</sup> S. Manickam, 'Mission Approaches to Caste', in V. Devasayam (ed.), *Dalits and Women*, Chennai: Gurukul, 1992, 67. B.R. Ambedkar, a pioneer in Dalit thinking expresses a similar anguish over the failure of the missionaries to check this social evil. Ambedkar as quoted by Anthoniraj Thumma, *Dalit Liberation Theology* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2000), 87.

<sup>9</sup> Anna Johnston, *Missionary Writing and Empire 1800-1860*, (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 72.

'Lord Minto (the governor in Fort St George) also advised company directors on a crucial point which missionaries either ignored or did not consider worthy of concern – that interference in the caste system would have the effect of destroying India's whole scheme of civil polity as well as their fondest and most rooted religious tenets'.<sup>10</sup>

When the reform-minded missionaries had difficulty following such an authority and had their own way of evangelizing, they too received firm instructions from their own mission directors; let me quote one from LMS board of directors, 'Missionaries must be sure of manifesting in their own conduct, and promoting also in others, a sincere and affectionate respect to the government and to the subordinate authorities which it appoints'.<sup>11</sup> Anna Johnston comments on this LMS situation that 'the LMS was intent upon their representative obeying their strictures so much so that any violation of it on their part would be regarded as a ground of immediate dissolution of their connexion with the society.'<sup>12</sup>

In spite of such strict instructions the Protestant missionaries had a contrasting point of view from that of their Catholic predecessors and the colonial rulers. They considered that 'caste within the church was an unmitigated evil'<sup>13</sup> and did make genuine efforts to ward off this social evil. But they found it to be too complicated to manage, so they had to yield to the pressure. For instance this record on the experience of the missionaries in the educational front says that, 'The earliest mission schools were intended for both sexes and all castes and classes: but increased knowledge and experience convinced the missionaries that prejudices were far too strong for their good intentions.'<sup>14</sup> In this background when different cast groups converted in large numbers, they brought along with them the cultural baggage of caste practices also. Regardless of the missionaries' concerted efforts, this social evil couldn't be checked. Webster mentions in his important historical work, the impact of 'the missionary dilemma', their decision to take up a conciliatory approach towards caste and its significance in the history of the South Indian church.<sup>15</sup> Holding a similar view, Ayub Daniel concludes in an influential and detailed analysis of the Christian missionaries approaches/attitudes to caste system over the past centuries, that they were of three kinds, 'accommodation, rejection and compromise', all of them pursued with an intention of preserving their mission of Christianizing rather than emancipating the lives of outcastes, with few exceptions of enlightened Protestant missionaries.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Johnston, *Mission Writing and Empire*, 73.

<sup>11</sup> Johnston, *Mission Writing and Empire*, 76.

<sup>12</sup> Johnston, *Mission Writing and Empire*, 76.

<sup>13</sup> Forrester, *Caste and Christianity*, 42.

<sup>14</sup> Johnston, *Mission Writing and Empire*, 67.

<sup>15</sup> Webster, *The Dalit Christians*, 37-38.

<sup>16</sup> Ayub Daniel, 'Approaches of Mission and Church towards the Indian Caste System', in *Religion and Society* (June 1995), 6.

### An Associational View

Unlike the doctrinal and class struggle that manifested in the denominational division in Europe, the fertile mission fields of South India provided a different role for the denominational identity. Although some of the missionary societies were interdenominational on an organizational level, the majority of the missionary societies had a strong denominational identity, like, the Danish-Halle Mission (Lutheran) led by Bartholomew Ziegenbalg and Henry Plutschau, the Baptist Missionary Society, the Church Missionary Society, the Wesleyan Methodist, the Scottish and American Presbyterians and the Canadian Baptist Mission, to mention a few! As a reflection of denominational and doctrinal divisions back in Europe and as an outcome of the inner missionary struggle to dominate and control in India, missionaries belonging to various churches and mission bodies during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, had agreed to work and concentrate within particular territories and communities in order to avoid conflicts and confusion. Highlighting this development Sister Carol Graham records in her work:

‘...Since the great missionary conference held in Edinburgh in 1910 almost all the reformed churches and mission bodies have agreed to work within clearly defined geographical limits...this has at least to some extent lessened the confusion and decreased the Babel of many voices proclaiming the one Gospel, but it has also created situation among Indian Christians in which their church affiliation depends entirely upon the area in which they are born.’<sup>17</sup>

This process of exclusive mission fields gave impetus to each denominational missionary organization and churches assuming distinct geographical and spatial identities. But unfortunately it had a spin-off effect for in the South Indian context, these geographical boundaries came to signify certain caste groups from which the majority of Christian converts were drawn. Underlining this development Duncan Forrester records:

‘The L.M.S in Travancore and some of the C.M.S and S.P.G stations in Tinnevely became known as ‘Nadar churches’ and converts from other castes were not encouraged. In Travancore the vast majority of Christians were L.M.S Christians. Thus relations between denominations could have a caste dimension. It was also the case that congregations in a particular area might be composed virtually entirely of converts from one caste, forming a kind of caste-sect within the larger church organization...the Nadars in the south were able virtually to take over the church and use it in part as an expression of their caste identity.’<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Sr Carol Graham, *The Church of South India: A Further Stage in Development* (published on behalf of the Appeal Committee for Women’s Work in the Church of South India, 1956), 8.

<sup>18</sup> Forrester, *Caste and Christianity*, 84.

This could be traced as the emergence of a confused identity with the denominational heritage and caste at their roots. It is also crucial to note that this method of accommodating and working within the caste framework brought the missionaries rich dividends in terms of the number of people getting converted into Christianity. But they also had to be very shrewd in not losing the high caste converts. In some cases they even have to take special measures to keep them coming.<sup>19</sup> Those efforts had rather a negative impact on the emancipation of the Dalit converts. Though the missionaries provided various avenues of hope and progress for the Dalit communities, some of their efforts to safeguard the mission 'interests' hampered the development and transformation of Dalit Christians.<sup>20</sup> Focusing on one particular caste community meant that they didn't have to really bother about other cultural issues, which would distract them from their aim of 'Christianizing the heathen'. It can be attributed to the factor that the missionaries didn't want to give room for inner-caste and inter-caste conflict within the church, which further strengthened different communities assuming distinct identities.

### Prevalence of Associational Views

The Church of South India (CSI) offers a good example of the dynamics of caste reality. CSI is a union of churches from Anglican, Presbyterian, Wesleyan Methodist and Congregational missionary background. This missionary movement took to itself people from various caste communities, especially a large number from the outcasts.<sup>21</sup> Even though CSI was formed with an organic unity in principle, the groups involved in the union continued to preserve their own denominational missionary heritage in its life and ministry of the local congregations, besides safeguarding the caste identity. A CMS pamphlet published in the early days of CSI depicts a clear picture:

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<sup>19</sup> In his chapter titled Liberal missionary attitude to caste, Forrester discusses in detail the prevailing ideas about caste and various arguments for it and against it, among the missionaries which influenced the life of the church during the time. Forrester, *Caste and Christianity*, 136.

<sup>20</sup> In this extremely well researched article Dayanandan exposes the myth that the missionaries completely changed the life of the Dalits, rather followed discreet methods to accommodate the high caste into the church. He also accounts for the denial of opportunities in educational institutions for the pariah community. He observes that the Free Church of Scotland mission opened up avenues as well as denied opportunities for progress of the community. P. Dayanandan, 'Dalit Christians of Chengalpatu area and the church of Scotland', in George Oomen and John C. Webster (eds), *Local Dalit Christian History* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2002), 18-64.

<sup>21</sup> They included: Pariah, Pallar, Nadar, Vellala, Mala, Madiga and Izhava communities, just to mention a few. Though they were all Dalit communities, they had their own inner caste dynamics and hierarchy.

*no thought was given to unity on the mission field, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodist, Lutherans and a score of others busied themselves building separate churches. Now all thought turns to unity and sees its longing coming to realization in the church of South India, formed in 1947 by the union of Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodist and congregational churches. Amid much change and upheavals, fundamentals are permanent.*<sup>22</sup>

During the formative years, for practical administrative reasons dioceses were formed based on various denominational mission boundaries.<sup>23</sup> This organizational process has left an indelible mark on the life of CSI. It would be helpful to observe some of the South Indian church's fact file. In a pioneering work, published decades ago, Ninan Koshey exposes the wide gap between various Christian groups and enumerates the harsh realities experienced by the Dalit Christians within the churches in Kerala.<sup>24</sup> The subtle manner in which it is accepted as the norm among Christian communities is well documented. The 'highness' associated with the Syrian identity and their patronizing attitude, irrespective of the church affiliation, points to the deep rootedness of the issue. Further working on this concern, Gladstone (presently bishop of CSI South Kerala diocese) in an article titled *Christian Missionaries and Caste in Kerala*, traces the roots of caste conflict between Syrians and Dalit converts from the days of CMS and LMS missionaries, that has laid the foundation for caste segregation, which exists even today where they do not break bread together or share the Eucharist!<sup>25</sup>

Godwin Shiri, another noted Christian researcher, in his extensive work on the Karnataka region records widespread segregation among Christians superficially expressed through their mission allegiance, but essentially reflecting caste demarcation. If a person is from a Basal mission background in the Mangalore region (South Kanara), it is almost sure that he/she hails from 'Billava' caste, since most of the converts exclusively come from this Sudra caste with few Brahmin converts. Dalit conversion in this region was negligible. Highlighting their attitude he says, 'It is true that the Mangalore Christians for long, perhaps even now to some extent, carry

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<sup>22</sup> CMS Pamphlet, *Travancore: Then and Now*, 1953

<sup>23</sup> For e.g., Madras diocese includes most of the Scottish mission fields, though it falls into other states.

<sup>24</sup> Ninan Koshey, *Caste in the Kerala Churches* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1968).

<sup>25</sup> J.W. Gladstone, *Christian Missionaries and Caste in Kerala*, in M.E. Prabhakar (ed.), *Towards a Dalit Theology* (Delhi: ISPCK, 1988), 104-112. In a recent historical study George Oomen observes the complexity involving the caste identity in spite of all the mobility. The Pulayas (Dalit) are accepted in some areas of life if they imitate Syrians and rejected if they continued to live as they used to live. George Oomen, 'Pulaya Christians of Kerala: a community in dilemma', in George Oomen and John C Webster (eds.), 83-97.

a bias against Christians of interior Karnataka who happen to come mostly from Dalit origin.<sup>26</sup>

The southern most dioceses of Tamil Nadu which were under the Anglican missionary society's spiritual dispensation were dominated by converts from Nadar community, who preserve their Anglican tradition even today,<sup>27</sup> prompting them to look down upon other dioceses, which constitute members from Dalit communities like the northern dioceses, which were either Scottish or American mission fields. It is also observed that there is very little social interaction between these Christian Dalit and non-Dalit communities. Inter caste marriages are a rarity. Some of the Dalit pastors are not allowed or entertained into some of the congregations. Separate cemeteries are kept for Dalits and non Dalits. Bishop M. Azariah, a former bishop of CSI expresses his anguish at the prevalence of segregation and oppression on the basis of caste and remarks:

'The attitudes of caste division among Christians seem to be not at all different from those of the orthodox Hindus.'<sup>28</sup> 'Even after coming into the Christian church the different segments of the population continue to carry not only in their mind and consciences, but deep in their soul and spirit the different caste and outcaste identities. These identities or stampings leave different types of markings on their souls within different segments of the population.'<sup>29</sup>

Lutheran churches in South India bear further testimony to this evil system of caste. Lutheran missionaries predominantly worked among Dalit communities. Inevitably the Lutheran churches bear a Dalit identity. For example the members of the Andhra Evangelical Lutheran church are predominantly drawn from the 'Mala' community and it is invariably known as one. Similarly the Canadian Baptist and the Methodist churches continue to have their own caste identity as 'Madiga', though there are few converts from the other castes.<sup>30</sup> The historical rivalry between these caste groups results in a strained relationship between the churches concerned and further complicates its association with some of the churches that have a distinct high caste leadership<sup>31</sup>. When the Lutheran church is placed

<sup>26</sup> Godwin Shiri, 'Plight of Dalit Christians in Karnataka', in V. Devasayam *In search of roots: Christian Dalits in Karnataka and their struggle for the liberation, in Religion and Society*, (December 1993).

<sup>27</sup> Forrester, *Caste and Christian*, 84 -5.

<sup>28</sup> M. Azariah, *The Unchristian Side of the Indian Church* (Bangalore: Dalit Sahitya Academy, 1985), 10.

<sup>29</sup> M. Azariah, 'The church's healing ministry to the Dalits', in James Massy (ed.), *Indigenous People: Dalits* (New Delhi: ISPCK, 1994), 320.

<sup>30</sup> M.E. Prabhakar, 'Caste-Class and status in Andhra Churches and Implications for Mission Today: Some reflections', *Religion and Society* (September 1981), 9-35. See also Forrester, *Caste and Christian*, 79.

<sup>31</sup> Clarinda Still, a research scholar at the London School of Economics has encountered this phenomenon as part of her doctoral work among the Madiga's in Andhra Pradesh and she discusses this in her paper 'Caste, Identity and Gender

alongside the CSI, there is little scope for 'koinonia'. The 'Syrian Christian' churches look down upon them as churches with no tradition and as 'New Christians'. Other so-called high caste Christians do not engage in any ecclesial association with them, adding to that the Lutheran church has to suffer from the strong inner caste conflict experienced by others too. Webster also records that this 'associational view within Christian communities,' due to the large presence of various caste communities, plays a significant role in the church polity.<sup>32</sup>

As already mentioned, the situation of the Catholic Church is no different.<sup>33</sup> In two extremely well researched ethnographic studies among the Kerala Catholic churches (which account for the majority of Catholics in South India), Sunil George Kurian brings out divisions on the basis of colonial patronage as well as the plight of the Dalit Christians in the hands of a few powerful high caste Christians who continue to dominate and control the church.<sup>34</sup>

### Implications

With the preceding historical appraisal, we can draw the following conclusions on the basis of the consequences created by such an associational view of caste. These identities have far-reaching consequences in terms of the socio economic status of people concerned, creating a deceptive and rigid hierarchy and paving the way for justifying the leadership, domination, marginalization and subordination of Dalit Christians within the church. Here I would like to highlight three crucial areas of concern from the Dalit Christian perspective.

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among Madiga's in Coastal Andhra Pradesh,' presented in the SAAG Conference held at Edinburgh University, September 4-5, 2007.

<sup>32</sup> Webster, *The Dalit Christians*, 180.

<sup>33</sup> Webster, *The Dalit Christians*, 173. Webster observes that, 'in south caste played a lesser role in Protestant than in Catholic church, where separate seating for caste and Dalit Catholics still continues. There are also separate burial places in Catholic cemeteries as well. Dalits have been assigned inferior roles in Catholic mass, in Catholic funerals and in the celebration of Christian festivals.'

<sup>34</sup> Sunil George Kurian, 'Struggle for Survival - Experience of Christian Dalits (in Vijayapuram Diocese) in Kerala', in *Religion and Society*, 42.2 (June 1995), 14, and 'Kerala: the Christian Dalits Experience - a Case Study of the Palais Diocese', in *Religion and Society*, 45.4 (December 1998). Augustin Andrews also discusses this problem in his unpublished thesis, 'The problem of caste in the church: a challenge to the praxis of theology of liberation with special reference to the church in Tamil Nadu', (Unpublished M.Th thesis, Edinburgh University, 1993), 11-12.



(a) *Education and employment*

Within the South Indian context, the church owns and runs a significant number of educational and health institutions, becoming an important educator and employer. With the preceding discussion it's very obvious that, educational and employment opportunities are decided on the basis of caste, since most of the institutions are controlled by people from the non Dalit communities, Dalit Christians are denied and victimised. One of the strong critical observations comes from Dr. Chandran Devanesan, an important educator and church man,

There are Christian institutions today that look as if they are the private property of particular castes that have been converted in the past. Anybody who does not belong to that caste cannot hope to be appointed as a teacher in that institution. So the appointments are no longer in terms of who is most qualified or in terms of academic merit. You have to belong to the right caste to get in!<sup>35</sup>

What is observed is not only history but a living reality in the lives of South Indian Christians.<sup>36</sup>

(b) *Church leadership*

The administration of the church provides a glaring example of caste reality in practice. The domination of a particular caste within the power structure/church hierarchy could be perceived from the grassroot to the apex level. For a long time in CSI, the leaders were always elected from the high caste communities and the beneficiaries of such leadership were naturally people from the same communities. During the election for the national/state church bodies, one could recognize the various political alignments based on the regional/diocesan/denominational roots, which clearly reflects certain caste orientation. Reflecting on this situation Webster says:

Caste has certainly played its role in this struggle for power within the churches, at least in the south where caste provides the basis for informal political alliance from the congregational level on up. The basic division has been between Dalits and non Dalits. Except among Andhra Pradesh Protestants, where the rivalry between Madigas and Malas has been even more serious. The politics of caste affects not only election to position of

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<sup>35</sup> Chandran Devanesan, *The Educational Ministry of the Church: Priorities for the Mission of the Church* (Madras: CSI, 1982), 26-27.

<sup>36</sup> This internet journal brings out the recent developments in the CSI diocese of Madras, where four important educational institutions have been appropriated by upper cast individuals from the church. [http://www.dalitvoice.org/Templates/jan\\_a2006/articles.htm](http://www.dalitvoice.org/Templates/jan_a2006/articles.htm)

leadership and power, but also appointments and promotion in Christian institution.<sup>37</sup>

This painful history has left an inflexible hierarchy, controlled by non-Dalit and economically powerful Dalit communities in nexus with the oppressive forces dominating the majority Dalits. Bishop Devasahayam observes:

In Indian church, which is predominantly a Dalit church, non Dalits are holding offices disproportionately. Authentic Christianity demands that non-Dalit church leadership should shun its superiority complex and arrogance and become humble enough to encourage and accept the leadership of the Dalits. This principle of humility to receive from the underdogs should affect and dictate our social life through inter dining and inter marrying. This is a concrete way of fulfilling the great command: love your neighbour as your self.<sup>38</sup>

Obviously there is little effort from the church towards the emancipation of Dalits in this direction. Godwin Shiri critically records in his work the gross negligence of the Dalit situation within the church, which amounts to betrayal of their hopes and aspirations.<sup>39</sup>

### (c) Ecclesial communion

Though on a superficial level, the reason for disunity among Christians in South India is attributed to the doctrinal and missionary heritage, a judicious observation would reveal that it is actually the caste factor that keeps the different groups from realizing an ecclesial communion. What are the results of such a continuation? The churches in South India become the best examples of fragmentation, in-fighting and litigations, embodiment of social injustices, moral corruption and bankruptcy, and failure of leadership. Most of these issues are fuelled by very strong socio economic factors as well. Church being one of the largest land and property owners, the struggle to control and have authority invariably leads to bitter relationships among various groups internally and externally. Adding to this, as mentioned earlier, there is no inter-caste interaction at marital relationship level or Eucharistic communion. Because of these inner dynamics, the churches in South India are unable to bear a holistic witness to the gospel in their territory. It also affects the possibility of offering a united stand against the atrocities committed by the Hindu fundamentalists against the oppressed and the Church.

<sup>37</sup> Webster, *The Dalit Christians*, 177

<sup>38</sup> V. Devasahayam, 'Authentic Christianity', in V. Devasahayam (ed.), 257.

<sup>39</sup> Godwin Shiri, 'Plight of Dalit Christians in Karnataka', in V. Devasayam (ed.) *Authentic Christianity*, 95.

## Conclusion

The preceding discussion showcases that, though decades have gone by since the arrival of missionary Christianity, caste continues to dictate terms in the subsistence of the churches in South India. The re-reading of this history assumes significance because a great deal of attitudes and activities found within the church today owes its survival to it. In order to maintain the status quo and run the institutional church, this approach becomes important. In the process, the concern of thousands of Dalits who are still waiting for the promise of emancipation to be realized is sacrificed. It's not only a failure on the part of the church to actualize the message of the gospel in concrete terms in the lives of the Dalits but preserved to safeguard the power dynamics within the institutional framework. Unfortunately it is not a new phenomenon, since it is the same attitude of the missionaries that allowed this evil to exist under the guise of being a cultural practice.

These are nothing but rejection of Christian message in its entirety in the process of power struggle to control and dominate, interestingly, which reflects the core of caste system. In its broadest understanding, caste organization is the *modus operandi* to channelize power relations within a community through norms of subjugation and domination. Once this framework is accepted within an institution like the church, the very message of being vulnerable in love is replaced by powerful authority in control, corrupting the carnal truth of the message of Jesus Christ, hence becoming a victim of a corrupt social system. The body of Christ, the church, which was called to live out prophetic discipleship and extend the Kingdom of God, in contrast, has unfortunately become the handmaiden of parochial unjust power structures pursued and perpetuated by the power hungry church leadership. It might be termed as generalization, but nonetheless this situation explains why the churches in South India are unable to make a difference. A real unity is a far cry! In other words, it depicts the extreme form of uncritical inculturation resulting in compromise and conciliatory dilution of gospel message resulting in failure of being a meaningful church. The questions still remains, will the church ever be able to stand against this social evil? Will the Dalits ever be able to see the light of Jesus shining in their lives? Yes, it might become a possibility, on the day when the church and its leadership decide to follow the *kenotic* path of Jesus Christ! So it is a fact that *fragments* do make the *whole*, but they also reflect the brokenness of the *whole*. As long as the *fragments* remain fragments and evade integration into the *whole* in a seamless harmony, the *whole* will continue to be a mirage and elude our reality!

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# TOMORROW IN TRAUMA CHILDREN IN A BLEEDING WORLD

Daniel Ndukwe

## Introduction

It is usually the non combatants that suffer most in the time of war. Vulnerable people are more liable to be traumatized during crisis periods and the scars of marginalized societies appear to last longer on the powerless. The atrocities and brutalities associated with wars and crises are too horrific to be imagined. Most often, children and women are the real victims. In A February 2009 edition of *The Economist*, this picture of war was painted thus:

Babies' skulls dashed against rocks; attempts to twist off the heads of toddlers. Girls, their mothers and grandmothers (and sometimes male relatives too) raped at knife- or gunpoint, the weapons then used to inflict mutilation. Women hauled off to camps or just tied to trees and gang-raped. Thousands of children, some as young as nine, snatched or recruited by armed gangs (or regular forces) and made into drug-crazed killers, the girls among them often serially abused or taken by commanders as 'wives'.<sup>1</sup>

Such are the horrors reported from some recent conflict zones. In civil wars, women and children always fare worst. But with every new killing field, from Bosnia to Liberia, Sierra Leone, Congo, the Central African Republic or the Darfur region of Sudan, the level of cruelty seems to shock even the most seasoned observers.

Unfortunately, new inventions and experiments on human brutality are not regionalized or limited to particular races. Most secular humanists believed that with the progress of human society, civilization and technology, the world would sooner or later naturally move away from the horrors of primordial wars. But the viciousness of the first and second world wars and the reports of horror from recent hostilities in Cambodia, El Salvador, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Congo, the old Yugoslavia, to name a few, nudged them to the reality that humans are innately brutal and wars bring out this brutality.

The world is bleeding, in fact hemorrhaging, from different points, and all the advancements in science and technology, medicine and psychology, arts and literature have not succeeded in quenching the flow. The

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<sup>1</sup> 'Much Butchery, Some Retribution', *The Economist*, 19 February 2009.

cumulative effect of the problems facing the world weighs more on children and the future generation. This is because today's traumatized generation is bequeathing to them the legacies that are the product of such trauma. In this paper I attempt to shed light on some of these issues.

### **Global Impact of Hunger and Poverty on Children**

Consider these alarming statistics:

- In 2005, almost 1.4 billion people lived below the international poverty line, earning less than \$1.25 per day.<sup>2</sup>
- Among this group of poor people, many have problems obtaining adequate, nutritious food for themselves and their families. As a result, 947 million people in the developing world are undernourished. They consume less than the minimum amount of calories essential for sound health and growth.<sup>9</sup>
- Pregnant women, new mothers who breast-feed infants and children are among the most at risk of undernourishment.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2006, about 9.7 million children died before they reached their fifth birthday. Almost all of these deaths occurred in developing countries, 4/5 of them in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, the two regions that also suffer from the highest rates of hunger and malnutrition.<sup>4</sup>

The above statistics reveal that a large percentage of the world's population is poor and as a result may be without access to the basic necessities of life, i.e. sufficient food, clothing and shelter.

Of these three necessities, the most pressing is that of food. In fact, hunger can be said to be the most extreme form of poverty, whereby individuals or families cannot afford to meet their most basic need for food, and it manifests itself in many ways other than starvation and famine. Most poor people who battle hunger deal with chronic undernourishment and vitamin or mineral deficiencies, which result in stunted growth, weakness and heightened susceptibility to illness. Countries in which a large portion of the population battles hunger daily are usually poor and often lack the social safety nets the developed nations enjoy, such as soup kitchens, food stamps and job training programs. When a family that lives in a poor country cannot grow enough food or earn enough money to buy food, there is nowhere to turn for help.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *Global Purchasing Power Parities and Real Expenditures*. The World Bank. 2005 International Comparison Program. August 2008.

<sup>3</sup> 'Malnutrition'. World Health Organization.

<sup>4</sup> *State of the World's Children 2008 – Child Survival*. UNICEF. January 2008.

<sup>5</sup> *Are We On Track To End Hunger? Hunger Report 2004*. Bread for the World Institute. 2004.

Much of the hunger facing the world today could be traced to corrupt political leaders, poor policy planning, inequality in development, disregard for environmental issues, over-exploitation of natural resources and wars. A great percentage of these 963 million hungry people are children living in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and Latin America. This is also true for the 16,000 children who face death every day as a result of hunger and malnutrition. In these parts of the world many people still live on less than one dollar a day. For example, the average monthly minimum wage in Nigeria is less than \$50. Apart from hunger and malnutrition, extreme poverty also translates to diseases, lack of clean water, housing problems, violence, crime and non-access to good educational facilities.

Most of these poverty related deaths can be attributed, not to outright starvation, but to diseases that infect children whose bodies have been weakened by hunger. The four most common childhood illnesses are diarrhea, acute respiratory illness, malaria and measles. Each of these illnesses is both preventable and treatable. Yet, when coupled with poverty it creates a situation where parents are unable to access immunizations and medicines. As a result, chronic undernourishment in addition to insufficient treatment greatly increases a child's risk of death.<sup>6</sup>

Economically, the constant securing of food consumes valuable time and energy of poor people, allowing less time for work and earning income. Socially, the lack of food erodes relationships and feeds shame so that those most in need of support are often least able to call on it.<sup>7</sup>

### **Children and the Problem of HIV/Aids**

Researchers in Africa attribute the escalation of the HIV/AIDS in the continent to ignorance, lack of information, discrimination, stigmatization poverty and poor access to antiretroviral drugs. The spreading HIV/AIDS epidemic has quickly become a major obstacle in the fight against hunger and poverty in developing countries because the majority of those falling sick with AIDS are young adults who normally harvest crops. As a result, food production has dropped dramatically in countries with high HIV/AIDS prevalence rates. In half of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa, *per capita* economic growth is estimated to be falling by between 0.5 and 1.2% each year as a direct result of AIDS.

The picture of children of about 13 or 14 years old forced to head families and cater for their siblings is almost unimaginable. But this is a common situation in many southern African countries. This is actually an aberration because African social structure is built on a closely knitted

<sup>6</sup> State of Food Insecurity in the World 2002. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

<sup>7</sup> State of Food Insecurity in the World, 2008 FAO. 'Food Security Statistics'. [www.fao.org/es/ess/faostat/foodsecurity/index\\_en.htm](http://www.fao.org/es/ess/faostat/foodsecurity/index_en.htm) (Accessed on March 15, 2009).



family structure in which an adult is the head of the household. Child upbringing that usually has been the responsibility of the extended family is gradually disappearing due to the overwhelming and often uncontrollable spread of HIV/AIDS. Now poverty is being perpetuated from generation to generation since the new 'child' heads of household do not possess the economic wherewithal to cater for the family.

### **The Problem and Effect of War on Children**

Wars and their negative effects have had a serious blight in the face of developmental efforts in Africa since the 1960s. The effects of wars on children (who are largely innocent of the cause) include:

#### *Death*

In the event of wars, there is usually a high casualty rate among children who get caught up in warfare. They make up the bulk of collateral damage in any given war situation. According to *The Economist*, a total of 2 million children have been killed within the last decade. Some of them were specifically targeted. This is because many contemporary struggles are between different ethnic groups in the same country or in former states. When ethnic loyalties prevail, a perilous logic clicks in. The escalation from ethnic superiority to ethnic cleansing to genocide, as we have seen, can become an irresistible process. Killing adults is then not enough; future generations of the enemy – their children – must also be eliminated. The traumatic exposure to violence and brutal death has emotionally and psychologically affected generations of young people for the rest of their lives.

#### *Child Soldiers*

The prosecution of wars took another dangerous dimension in the last century especially in Africa. This is because of the introduction of child soldier phenomenon on the continent. The use of children during conflicts is really not a new development; that has been happening for centuries. What we are seeing today is the escalation of the situation and the use of children as the rule and not the exception. *The Economist* estimates that in recent years children under the age of 16 have been used as soldiers in no less than 27 countries. In 1988 alone, there were 200,000 of them.<sup>8</sup> The situation is even worse today. What are the advantages of child soldiers? *The Economist* states the reason thus:

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<sup>8</sup> United Nations Report, July 2004.

‘They are easier to intimidate and they do as they are told. They are also less likely than adults to run away and they do not demand salaries.’<sup>9</sup>

In long-drawn-out conflicts children also become a valued resource. Many current disputes have lasted a generation or more. Children who have grown up surrounded by violence see this as a normal way of life. Alone, orphaned, frightened, bored and frustrated, they will often finally choose to fight. In the Philippines, which has suffered for decades from a war of insurgency, many children become soldiers as soon as they enter their teens. When schools are closed and families fragmented, there are few influences that can compete with a warrior’s life.

Indeed, in these circumstances, a military unit can be something of a refuge – serving as a kind of surrogate family. In Uganda in 1986, the National Resistance Army had an estimated 3,000 children, many under 16, including 500 girls, most of whom had been orphaned and who looked on the Army as a replacement for their parents.

At a more basic level, joining an army may also be the only way to survive. Many children joined armed groups in Cambodia in the 1980s as the best way to secure food and protection. Similarly, in Liberia in 1990, children as young as seven were seen in combat because, according to the director of the Liberian Red Cross, ‘those with guns could survive.’ In Myanmar, parents volunteer their children for the rebel Karen army because the guerrillas provide clothes and two square meals a day; in 1990, an estimated 900 of the 5,000-strong Karen army were under the age of 15.

Finally, children may also have active reasons to want to fight. Like adults, they too may see themselves fighting for social justice – as was often the case in Central America or South Africa – or they may want to fight for the protection of their religious beliefs or cultural identity. In more personal terms, they may also be seeking revenge for the deaths of their parents, brothers or sisters.<sup>10</sup>

Writing on the topic ‘Child Soldiering: A World Crisis’, Cisco Archbold explains the rise of the child soldiering phenomenon. According to him, one reason why children are being abducted is that they are more easily manipulated. Children will fall for the promise of money while most adults will not and because they are by nature very trusting of adults, they believe what they are told. In this manner they are more controllable. Children are also abducted because of their size. Children are a lot smaller than an adult and therefore are capable of fitting in places that adults will never be able to fit into. Children can also infiltrate the opposing army ground in ways adults can’t. Children are also a lot more expendable, meaning they are easily replaced. So, if a child has a treatable disease they are not treated. Also if a child gets wounded in a battle, he is left for death. Basically, the

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<sup>9</sup> ‘Much Butchery, Some Retribution’, *The Economist*, 19 February 2009.

<sup>10</sup> ‘Children as Soldiers’, [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org) (Accessed on April 7, 2009).

logic of the commanders is, why care for them when we can just get new and healthier children?<sup>11</sup>

Once recruited, children undergo varying degrees of indoctrination, often verging on the brutal. Indigenous children in Peru, who have been forced to join guerrilla bands, have undergone long periods of forced political indoctrination. Some rebel groups in Cambodia and Mozambique turned children into fierce warriors by subjecting them to a brief period of terror and physical abuse – ‘socializing’ them into violence. Much of the same thing happened in Sierra Leone, where in 1995 the Revolutionary United Front raided villages to capture children into its ranks and forced them to witness or take part in the torture and execution of their own relatives. Thus outlawed and brutalized, and often fed crack cocaine or other drugs, the children were led to neighboring villages to repeat the exercise.<sup>12</sup>

What are the effects of child soldiering? On the African continent they are having a hard time. For one, they are losing many of their children to war. Some of the children that do manage to escape do not want to go back to school. Some of them are even too traumatized to go back to school. The abduction of children is affecting politics because it helps to support rebel armies and has even made the economy worse. Some of the children that are soldiers become commanders because the only thing they know is war and conflict between two different forces. The situation keeps getting worse and more and more children are dying because of this inhumane way of living.

### *Uprooted Children*

Children are uprooted as a result of wars, crises and natural disasters. The waves of violence that have swept across the world in recent years have uprooted enormous numbers of people – at least half of whom are children. Some are classified as ‘displaced’, having fled their homes to move elsewhere within their own country; others are ‘refugees’ who have crossed borders into neighboring countries. The total number of uprooted people is currently around 53 million – one out of every 115 people on earth has been forced into flight. Since three quarters of refugees have fled from one developing country to another, this places an enormous strain on countries that already have problems caring for their own populations.<sup>13</sup>

When forced into squalor and deprivation – the characteristic conditions of refugee camps – children are at particular risk. One of the most serious problems is malnutrition. In 1992, refugee populations in Somalia had

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<sup>11</sup> ‘Child Soldiering: A World Crisis’, Cisco Archbold, [www.justiceandinjustice.org](http://www.justiceandinjustice.org).

<sup>12</sup> ‘Children as Soldiers’, [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org) (accessed on April 7, 2009).

<sup>13</sup> ‘Uprooted Children’, [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org).

mortality rates very much higher than during a time of peace. There have been widespread outbreaks of micronutrient diseases such as scurvy, beriberi and pellagra. And in Angola, Liberia and the Sudan, the prevalence of wasting was more than 40 per cent. In the Goma refugee camp in eastern Zaire in 1994, a cholera epidemic killed 50,000 people in just one month. Refugee situations often raise the problem of 'unaccompanied minors'. In a study carried out in 1995 in Angola, UNICEF found out that about 20% of the children had been separated at some time from their parents and guardians. One of the most disturbing cases of lost children has emerged in the civil war in southern Sudan. Apart from the main government and opposition groups, there are also various militias that spread terror by pillaging villages and killing or seizing their inhabitants. Fearing capture or death, at least 20,000 Sudanese young people, mostly boys between the ages of 7 and 17, have fled their homes. Thousands of girls have also been killed or abducted by the raiders, but few have run away from their villages since it is more difficult for girls to envisage life outside their families. These 'lost boys' of the Sudan trekked enormous distances over a vast unforgiving wilderness, seeking refuge from the fighting. Hungry, frightened and weakened by sleeplessness and disease, they have crossed from the Sudan into Ethiopia and back. Many have died on the journey; most survivors are now in camps in the parched north-western plains of Kenya.<sup>14</sup>

According to [www.womensrefugeecommission.com](http://www.womensrefugeecommission.com), 'The conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan has displaced an estimated 1.8 million people who live in camps inside the Sudan and another 250,000 in refugee camps across the border in Chad. More than half of those displaced are under age 18, according to UNICEF, and between 70 and 80% of the camp population are women and children.'<sup>15</sup>

### **The Church's Response in a Bleeding World**

The African church has often been accused of growing in quantity and not much in quality. This means that in spite of the numerical expansion of the church, it has not been able to make much impact in the area of social actions. The church has not been able to stop nor end crises. In fact sometimes the church is alleged to have actively participated in fomenting crises like in the case of Rwanda and Nigeria where Christians allegedly abetted religious crises. Many of the political leaders who perpetrate corruption are active church members and professing Christians.

Indeed the church has failed in many areas. But that does not negate the fact that the African church is responding in her own ways to crisis situations. Much of the church's response has been prophetic in nature. The

<sup>14</sup> 'Uprooted Children', [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org).

<sup>15</sup> [www.womensrefugeecommission.com](http://www.womensrefugeecommission.com).

voice of the church still resounds in the face of world crises. It must not be forgotten that many of those who have stood firmly and resolutely against oppressive policies and systems are church leaders. The African church has not ceased preaching against evils and insisting on righteousness both in private lives and in the government. While some of these cries have been heeded, unfortunately, political leaders usually prefer to do things their own way. Specifically, the church stood against the evils of apartheid in South Africa, the church fought the regime of Idi Amin in Uganda and was left with scars to show for their opposition to repression. In Nigeria, the church spoke out loudly against the dictatorship of Gen. Sani Abacha. Other examples of the church fighting wrong systems in Africa abound. Indeed, the church in Africa has not kept silent. The unfortunate abdication of responsibilities in some nations is exception and not the rule.

On more concrete notes, the African church has gone beyond their primary duties of preaching to reach out to bleeding hearts and lives. For example, the Redeemed Christian Church of God and the Anglican Church in Nigeria are two of the churches that have departments dedicated solely for the rehabilitation of street children. The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria (PCN) has the Presbyterian Community Service and Development (PCSandD) which responds to crisis situations and social problems. This department has intervened in so many disasters with relief material and rehabilitation.

While the civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone lasted, many West African churches maintained relief offices in those countries at the risk of the lives of their personnel.

### **Presbyterian Church of Nigeria Response to Crises**

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria channels her relief efforts through the PCSandD. This agency has set liaison offices all over the country through her synods. When needs arise, the synods raise relief materials from local churches and send to the agency who then distribute to the crisis areas. The PCSandD has intervened in areas of religious crises, places devastated by natural disasters and in poor communities.

A very important department of the PCSandD is the PresbyAids which is responsible for assisting HIV/AIDS victims and affected people. Also a lot of effort is put into the prevention of the spread of the epidemic. To this end, PresbyAids has trained thousands of Peer Educators whose duties are mainly to enlighten peers on the disease and assist victims. All Presbyterian ministers (except those who recently graduated) have also been trained as counselors on HIV/AIDS matters. The agency has gone ahead to set up resource centers where information material can be obtained. In such centers, people suffering from the sickness are counseled by experts and antiretroviral drugs are dispensed.

Another agency for social action within the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria is the National Directorate of Missions (NDM). As the name suggests, the NDM's primary function is to open new frontiers for the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ. However, in the course of doing this, schools, farms, hospitals and health centers are set up to meet the social needs of rural communities especially women and children.

The PCN makes social responsibility a collective affair. When there is need for intervention, the church does not merely dip into her reserves for funds. Instead, the situation is announced in all congregations all over the country and people are asked to make contributions. Sometimes, the assistance that is rendered at the time of crisis might not be as important as the awareness that such situations exist. Awareness helps people to speak out against injustice and other social vices. The PCN might be the only church or one of the few churches that mark World AIDS Week in Nigeria. For most churches, December 1 is enough to speak about the ravaging scourge of HIV/AIDS. But for the PCN, an entire week is used to create awareness all over the church.

### **Saving Our Tomorrow Through the Children**

Without the children of today, there is no tomorrow. When today's children are exposed to different kinds of suffering, tomorrow is in trauma. It therefore follows that the future of the world can only be safeguarded by treating our children with respect and protecting them from dangers.

As the Coordinator of Children's Desk in the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, this writer has seen the problems of the Nigerian children first hand. In the course of his travels, the writer has seen children living in abject poverty in villages without electricity and clean water. In the northern parts of Nigeria, the problem of religious beggars persists. These children popularly called *almajiris* are pupils of local Koranic teachers who send them into the streets to beg for a living thereby exposing them to dangers and exploitation. These children are often used to foment religious crises.

Illiteracy is another major problem affecting children in Nigeria. Most *almajiris* and other poverty-stricken children never have the privilege of formal education. The immediate past governor of the Nigeria Central Bank, Prof. Charles Soludo, once said that illiteracy and poverty in Nigeria is mainly a northern phenomenon, but that is not so. These social ills are prevalent throughout the country. Illiteracy is even worse among girls since many parents still think it is a waste of time educating girls. They prefer to marry them off to the first suitor that comes along. Other issues that need to be addressed concerning (Nigerian) children include female genital mutilation, refugee status due to political and religious crises, lack of basic health care, the problem of street children (*almajiris* in the north and *areas boys* or *areas girls* in the south), child labor etc.

It is true that the church is already doing something to ameliorate the situation of the poor masses. In order to save our children, the following suggestions might also be considered:

1. It is true that the church is not a social welfare organization; however the welfare of her members especially children should be of some concern. Credit schemes, cooperative societies and skill acquisition centers are some of the concrete ways the church can empower her poor members in order to increase their incomes and raise their standards of living.
2. The church can establish counseling and rehabilitation centers for children who are traumatized by both war and poverty.
3. More involvement of the church in education and the reintroduction of moral and religious education in schools. Some people have noticed the coincidence of crimes and social vices increasing among young people in Nigeria immediately after the civil war in the early 1970s with the elimination of moral instructions in schools. It was during this period that the federal government took over the running of schools from religious bodies. Many state governments are now reversing this action having noticed the lowering of moral and educational standards.
4. Introduction of subjects that teach children social responsibility and human dignity in school curricula. Children are known to be very impressionable, and if they are taught to respect the right of others, they will understand that every human is made by God in his image irrespective of color or race. People should be taught from childhood that human life is sacred and wars and killings should not be options in solving problems.
5. The issue of child labor all over the world, particularly in less developed countries, should be of concern to the entire world. The church should liaise with the governments, international agencies and other viable institutions to set up targeted projects to rescue vulnerable children.
6. Bringing war criminals to book and viewing crimes like rape, mutilation and recruitment of child-soldiers with the seriousness required. Until very recently, war criminals have more or less gone scot-free no matter the crime committed under their watch. But with the arrest, trial and conviction of Slobodan Milosevic of former Yugoslavia (though he died while still on trial) and Saddam Hussein of Iraq, there is hope that future war criminals will not be let off easily. The church should be more proactive in speaking out against governments and leaders who do not respect the rights of their citizens and people of other countries. Rape and recruitment of child-soldiers should attract heavier sanctions.
7. The Children's Desk of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria has made a comprehensive proposal to reach out to children through the

church, homes, schools and social groups. This proposal involves the offer of the gospel of Jesus Christ, teachings on social responsibility, training of those outside formal schools in vocational skills and getting children to be more responsible and interested in current issues like concerns for the environment, social crises, crime and child abuse. Children should be made to know that the future belongs to them and they should be concerned about how it turns out.

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**PART FOUR**

**MISSION, MIGRATION,  
DIASPORA AND ETHNICITY**

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# FILIPINO DIASPORA KINGDOM WORKERS: A CASE STUDY OF DIASPORA MISSIOLOGY IN ACTION

Sadiri Joy Tira and Enoch Wan

## 1. Introduction

This paper is an ethnographic description of the Filipino<sup>1</sup> experience in diaspora in the form of ‘case study’ to portray them as ‘Christian Communities in Contemporary Contexts’.

Several keyterms are defined as follows:

- ‘Diaspora missiology’ – In this paper, diaspora is used to refer to ‘the phenomenon of “dispersion of any ethnic group from their homeland.”<sup>2</sup> ‘Diaspora missions’ refers to dispersed ethnic groups who are actively engaged or actively involved in fulfilling the Great Commission; regardless of vocation and denominational affiliations of individuals involved.<sup>3</sup> ‘Diaspora missiology’ is ‘a missiological study of the phenomena of diaspora groups being scattered geographically and the strategy of gathering for the Kingdom’ (Wan 2007).
- ‘The Filipino Experience’ – The involvement or participation of diaspora Filipinos in missions. Due to the limitation of length, the scope of ‘The Filipino Experience’ will be delimited to that of Filipino nationals, specifically ‘overseas Filipino workers’ (OFWs), deployed as seafarers on ocean vessels, and as land-based workers in the 10/40 Window.<sup>4</sup>
- ‘Case study’ – A detailed, intensive and in-depth study of a spatial-temporal-specific entity (e.g. a person or group, an institution or phenomenon).

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Filipino’ refers to the people of the Philippines while ‘Pilipino’ refers to the Philippine national language.

<sup>2</sup> Luis Pantoja Jr, Sadiri Joy Tira and Enoch Wan, *Scattered: The Filipino Global Presence* (Manila, Philippines: LifeChange Publishing Inc., 2004), xxviii.

<sup>3</sup> Sadiri Joy Tira, ‘Scattered with a Divine Purpose: A Theological and Missiological Perspective on the Filipino Diaspora.’ Asian Pacific Alliance (CandMA) Conference, Taipei, Taiwan. April 1998.

<sup>4</sup> Gailyn Van Rhee, *Communicating Christ in Animistic Contexts* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1996).

Our conviction is that this paper is not primarily about statistics, demographics, economics and the like; but about God's mission through the diaspora Filipinos. The purpose of this paper is to showcase the Filipino experience within the context of 'Christian Communities in Contemporary Contexts' as featured by papers of Commission VII gatherings.

This paper begins with an ethnographic description of Filipino experience, followed by a discussion on the Filipino experience as Christian communities in contemporary contexts.

## **2. The Phenomena of Diaspora: 'Global Trend' and Christian Missions**

### *2.1 The Phenomena of Diaspora as a Global Trend*

Unprecedented movements of diaspora in large scale and higher percentage/frequency have set a 'global trend' that marked the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. This global trend is caused by multiple factors such as:

- war, natural disasters (e.g. earthquakes, tsunamis, drought, hurricanes, etc.);
- dissolution of dated political entity (e.g. the former Yugoslavia and former USSR);
- demographic changes in aging nations (i.e. declining populations in developed countries forces them to accept more immigrants and workers from the developing countries that are undergoing population increase, urbanization, personal development, educational advance, diplomatic and military assignments and economic disparities between developing/developed countries;
- coupled with an increasingly mobile labor force;
- in recent years, there has also been an alarming rise in human trafficking/smuggling, operated by international syndicates.

Indeed, international migration is a complex issue that is increasingly changing societies, cultures and world demography. Undoubtedly, all nations have been affected by mass migration internally. International migration is rapidly changing the demographic distribution globally. (See Appendix I). In the publication *Trends in Total Migrant Stock: The 2005 Revision*, the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat reported that there were close to 192 million international migrants.<sup>5</sup> These migrants are affecting

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<sup>5</sup> 'Estimated number of international migrants at mid-year (both sexes) 1960-2005', *World Migrant Stock: The 2005 Revision Population Database*, Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, 21 September 2008 <http://esa.un.org/migration>

change wherever they go as they intermingle with locals and other migrants.

## 2.2 Diaspora: from 'Global Trend' to Opportunities for Missions

Today, mass migration is one of the dominant forces in the world that is being 'watched' not only by government policy makers and social scientists; but also by missiologists. A case in point is the annual gathering of the American Society of Missiology (ASM) in June 2002 was designated to deal with the topic 'Migration Challenge and Avenue for Christian Mission' with the proceedings published in the journal *Missiology*.<sup>6</sup>

Furthermore, at the Forum 2004 in Pattaya, Thailand, the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE)<sup>7</sup> included a track for the first time on 'The Diaspora Peoples' as one of the key issues in global missions. A 'Senior Associate for Diasporas'<sup>8</sup> was installed during the biannual LCWE Leadership International meeting in Budapest, Hungary from June 18-24, 2007. And in January 2008, the Lausanne Diasporas Leadership Team (LDLT)<sup>9</sup> was assembled, meeting for the first time in Portland, Oregon and hosted by IDS-US ('Institute of Diaspora Studies') at Western Seminary. International migration is one of the global issues to be discussed at the upcoming Lausanne Congress III in Cape Town, South Africa from October 16-25, 2010.

In preparation for the Lausanne Congress III, the LDLT convened the Lausanne Diasporas Strategy Consultation in Manila, the Philippines from May 4-9, 2009 gathering together fifty experts in the field of migration including members of the government and diplomatic communities, missiologists and aid workers. The objectives of the consultation were as follows:

- to inform about the challenges and opportunities of ministries among diaspora groups;
- to inspire a vision to explore new approaches to minister to these groups; and
- to ignite a passion to mobilize the Church to that end.

This weekend in Edinburgh, the Commission VII: Christian Communities in Contemporary Contexts recognizes diaspora as a reality of Christian mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Hence, missiologists have recognized the immense potential that Christians in diaspora have as already-deployed

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<sup>6</sup> See *Missiology an International Review: Mission and Migration* 31.1. (2003) edited by Terry C. Muck.

<sup>7</sup> For details of LCWE, see <http://www.lausanne.org>.

<sup>8</sup> For details of the appointment and role of 'Senior Associate for Diasporas' see <http://www.lausanne.org/lausanne-connecting-point/2008-september.html>.

<sup>9</sup> For details of LDLT, see <http://www.gatheredscattered.com/>.

‘Kingdom workers’, and have joined the growing body of academics tracking international migration.

The integration of migration research and missiological study has resulted in practical ‘diaspora missiology’ – a new strategy for missions. Diaspora mission is a providential and strategic way to minister to ‘the nations’ *by the diaspora* and *through the diaspora*. This paper features the ministry of Filipino diaspora ‘kingdom workers’ all over the world. Even though their scattering is primarily economically motivated and thus for survival, God is using their unique historical, cultural and religious backgrounds for the fulfilment of the Great Commission. The Filipino diaspora kingdom workers provide an excellent case study of ‘diaspora missions’ in action in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### 3. Filipino Diaspora and the Filipino Experience

In recent decades, it has become common knowledge among missiologists that there are mission initiatives from the diaspora Christian communities. The Filipino experience is such a case. It encompasses themes of poverty, suffering and marginalized communities, and the challenge that it presents to the church: globalization; the interface of migration, diaspora and ethnicity and reverse mission dynamics.

People from the Philippines are widely scattered. According to the Population Reference Bureau (PRB),<sup>10</sup> an ‘estimated 10 % of the country’s population, or nearly 8 million people, are overseas Filipino workers distributed in [over] 182 countries...that is in addition to the estimated 3 million migrants who work illegally abroad.’<sup>11</sup> Many of them are found in Creative Access Nations (CANs) and in the 10/40 Window of the world. According to the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches, approximately 7% of the Filipinos working overseas are evangelical Christians,<sup>12</sup> and are thus a potential significant force of kingdom workers. This background information is essential as to why Filipinos are being chosen in this case study of diaspora missiology in action.

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<sup>10</sup> PRB informs people from around the world and in the United States about issues related to population, health and the environment.

<sup>11</sup> Yvette Collymore, ‘Rapid Population Growth, Crowded Cities Present Challenges in the Philippines’, June 2003, Population Reference Bureau, 27 September 2007 <http://www.prb.org/Articles/2003/RapidPopulationGrowthCrowdedCitiesPresentChallengesinthePhilippines.aspx>

<sup>12</sup> Rev. Efraim Tintero, Bishop and General Secretary of the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches (PCEC) reported during the FIN Global Consultation in Singapore (July 20, 2002) that approximately 7% of the OFWs living outside their homeland are Evangelical Christians.

### 3.1 Brief History of the Philippines

The Philippines is located in the western Pacific, west of the Micronesian islands, north of Borneo and south east of China. It has a total land area of 298,170 square kilometers and is composed of 7,100 islands. The islands were first inhabited by 'aetas', a small negroid race, and were later followed by Malaysian and Indonesian migrants. As trade developed in the region, Chinese, Indian, and Arab travelers arrived bringing with them a 'mix' of culture and religion, including Islam.

Ferdinand Magellan landed in Cebu 'planting the cross' of Roman Catholicism with 'the help of the sword' of Spain in 1521. Though the islanders killed Magellan soon after his arrival, his death did not prevent the Spanish from colonizing the islands for over 300 years, and from introducing Catholicism – making the Philippines the first Christian nation of Asia.

Spanish colonization ended in the Philippine Revolution (1896-98) resulting in the islands' independence on June 12, 1898. However, in the same year the new Republic of the Philippines (the Philippines) fell under American authority as a result of the Spanish-American War and the Treaty of Paris that was signed to end Spanish-Cuban-American War (1898). A civilian government later replaced American military authorities until the creation of the ten-year Philippine Commonwealth' in 1935. Though Japanese invasion and occupation of the Philippines during the Second World War interrupted American rule in 1941, the Philippines were recaptured by the United States in 1945. Finally, the American government on July 4, 1946 granted official independence. Since then, the Philippines has suffered under successive dictatorial regimes resulting in a depleted currency and mass poverty of its population.

### 3.2 Diachronic and Synchronic Study of Filipino Diaspora

The phenomenon of Filipino diaspora globally has taken place in distinct stages and has accelerated noticeably in the last 150 years. There are records of people from the Philippines traveling during the Spanish era – mostly galleon workers and traders to other ports of the Spanish empire such as Mexico, and wealthy *mestizos* (children as a result of Spanish and native marriages) to Spain and the rest of Europe for education. However, large groups of Filipinos leaving the islands for work did not begin until the arrival of the Americans.

The colonial experience of the Philippines with the United States 'had a profound impact on Philippine migration.'<sup>13</sup> It was during the American colonial period that Filipinos were recruited to migrate to the United States as soldiers in their military, sailors in their navy, workers in their mines,

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<sup>13</sup> Amador A. Remigio Jr, 'A Demographic Survey of the Filipino Diaspora', in Pantoja, Tira and Wan, *Scattered*, 6.



plantations and factories; and for the children of wealthy Filipinos, as students in their universities (refer to Appendix II: ‘Timeline of Filipino Immigration to the United States’). Moreover, Americanization brought the Philippines an education system patterned after the American way, as well as the introduction of American English as a common language of business and instruction. These American legacies were essential in establishing the Filipinos as important participants in the international labor market, in which English is the current lingua franca and in which USA-based companies are scattered abroad.

In the 1970s, recognizing that their people were assets to the international labor force, the Philippine government formalized an organized system of overseas employment and ‘started aggressively promot[ing] Filipino skills abroad, particularly in the Middle East’ as ‘a response to the world oil crisis.’<sup>14</sup> Demand for Filipino workers increased with changes in the global economy. Pushed out by financial crisis and increasing political instability in the Philippines and pulled by promising jobs in other countries, Filipinos began to leave in massive numbers. By the 1980s what are now referred to as Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) were in demand beyond the Middle East and were deployed to most continents.

### 3.3 *Historico-Demographic Global Distribution of OFWs*

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA)<sup>15</sup> reports OFW deployments reaching a record breaking 1,077,623 in 2007 (see APPENDIX III: Table 1. ‘Deployment of OFWs by Type of Hiring, 2007-2006’). The top ten receiving countries for OFWs in 2007 were (in decreasing order of number of registered OFWs): Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Hong Kong, Qatar, Singapore, Taiwan, Kuwait, Italy, Brunei, and South Korea. (See APPENDIX III: Table 2. ‘Deployment of OFWs by Top Ten Destinations – New hires and Rehires, 2007-2006.’ See also APPENDIX III: Table 3. ‘Deployment of OFWs by Major World Group – New hires and Rehires, 2007-2006’)<sup>16</sup>. They serve their host countries as medical workers, construction workers, performing artists, engineers, teachers, household workers, hotel and restaurant staff, architects, factory workers and others.<sup>17</sup> Filipino seafarers are also in

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<sup>14</sup> Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz, ‘The Overseas Filipino Worker’, Pantoja, Tira, and Wan, *Scattered*, 39.

<sup>15</sup> POEA is the government agency, which is responsible for optimizing the benefits of the country’s overseas employment program.

<sup>16</sup> For exhaustive data on OFW destinations refer to ‘Table 21. Deployed Landbased Overseas Filipino Workers by Destination (New Hires and Rehires)’ of *POEA Overseas Employment Statistics 2007* <http://www.poea.gov.ph/html/statistics.html>.

<sup>17</sup> For detailed data consult ‘Table 29. Deployment of Newly Hired OFWs by Skills Category’, *POEA Overseas Employment Statistics 2007*, <http://www.poea.gov.ph/html/statistics.html>.

demand as officers and ship personnel (see APPENDIX III: Table 4. 'Deployment of Seafarers by Flag of Registry, 2007-2006'). In 2007 the top 10 flag registry of deployed seafarers were Panama, Bahamas, Liberia, Singapore, Marshall Island, United Kingdom, Malta, Cyprus, Netherlands, and Norway. According to the POEA Overseas Employment Statistics for 2007 OFW remittances reached in American currency (USD) \$14,449,928 in 2007 with a monthly average of USD\$1,204,161 (see APPENDIX III: Table 5. 'OFW Remittances by World Group, 2007-2006'). For the Philippines, the OFWs are the new 'national heroes.'<sup>18</sup>

Luis Pantoja Jr, Filipino theologian and Senior Pastor of one of Metro Manila's largest Evangelical churches – Greenhills Christian Fellowship – observes that 'on a worldwide scale, royal courts and average households get into disarray because they are dependent on Filipino housekeepers, nannies, and caregivers.'<sup>19</sup> This would ring true for the hospitals, offices, ships, airports and construction sites around the world that are also dependent on OFWs. Evidently, as the world experiences a 'brain gain' because of OFWs, the Philippines is suffering a 'brain drain' or 'brain haemorrhage'. Clearly there is massive loss of valuable human resources as an average of 2,952 workers leave the country for jobs overseas daily.

### 3.4 Religion-Demographic Distribution of OFWs

Despite all the negative aspects surrounding the diaspora of OFWs, their scattering presents an interesting perspective, specifically the Filipino presence in the 10/40 Window.

The Filipino Diaspora's global distribution by major religious blocks is estimated as follows<sup>20</sup>:

- Western world (4 million)
- Buddhist/Hindu world (1.3 million)
- Islamic world (1.7 million)
- Jewish world (30,000)

### 3.5 Characteristics of the Filipino

Anthropologists have noted that Filipino culture and language can be described as a fusion of basic Malay traits with foreign influences. Consequently, people in the Philippines are racially and culturally heterogeneous. The Filipinos in diaspora are 'natural witnesses of Jesus

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<sup>18</sup> President Corazon Aquino first labeled the OFWs the '*bagong bayani*' or new national heroes for their role in the Philippine economy.

<sup>19</sup> Luis Pantoja Jr, 'Formulating a Theology of the Filipino Diaspora', in Pantoja, Tira and Wan, *Scattered*, 76.

<sup>20</sup> Estimate of FIN.

Christ with great potential for impact wherever they are<sup>21</sup> due to the following factors: religiously being Catholic, linguistically being English-speaking, socially being friendly, pleasant and adaptable, etc. Due to their history of contrasting cultures and colonization, the Filipinos have been characterized by ‘The Three “A”s’ – adaptable, acceptable and accessible, as observed<sup>22</sup> by Efraim Tendero, a respected Christian Filipino leader. The Filipinos are known to be culturally adaptable, linguistically flexible, resilient, hospitable, quick to identify cross-culturally. They have a happy disposition, and are geographically accessible because the government of the Philippines has diplomatic relations with most nations.

### 3.6 The Economic Dimension of Filipino Diaspora

From the phenomenon of Filipino diaspora, two socio economic implications are to be considered (Lausanne Occasional Paper No. 55, 2005).

Today, including OFWs, there are more than 8 million Filipino nationals scattered in more than 197 countries.<sup>23</sup> As Filipino citizens they are required to send dollar remittances back to the Philippines. According to the Philippine government, OFWs have become the Philippines’ major foreign currency earners. As previously noted, in 2007 alone, the POEA reports that the OFWs remitted USD\$14,449,928. It is not surprising that the current Philippine president, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo also hails the OFWs as ‘the Philippines’ modern day heroes’.

### 3.7 The Social Dimension of Filipino Diaspora

Many of the recent OFW deployments are female. These women are in the younger age groups (under 35), whereas the male OFWs tend to be in the older age group (35 and above). Many of these female OFWs are employed as service workers, professional and technical workers, administrative and managerial workers and production workers.

A large number of the women are marrying foreigners<sup>24</sup> (see Appendix IV: ‘GMANews.TV Article – More Pinays marrying foreigners – religious group’); resulting in a surge of *mestizo* children (e.g. Filipino-Japanese, Filipino-Chinese, Filipino-Arab, Filipino-Canadians, Filipino-Italians, etc.). Hence, Filipino blood is now ‘sprinkled’ and ‘intermingled’ across the

<sup>21</sup> Lorajoy Tira Dimangundayao, ‘All to All People: Samples of Diaspora Filipinos Making Kingdom Impact’, Pantoja, Tira, and Wan *Scattered*, 295.

<sup>22</sup> Dimangundayao, *All to All People*, 295.

<sup>23</sup> ‘Stock Estimate of Overseas Filipinos ss of December 2007’, *Commission on Filipinos Overseas*, 21 September 2008 < <http://www.cfo.gov.ph/statistics.htm>>.

<sup>24</sup> For detailed statistics see ‘Number of Filipino Fiancé(e)s and Other Partners of Foreign Nationals by Major Country of Destination: 1989-2007’, *Commission on Filipinos Overseas* <http://www.cfo.gov.ph/statistics.htm>.

nations. These Filipinas have also become an agent of social change in their host nations because they have injected their culture, tradition and religion into their adoptive communities.

#### **4. The Filipino Experience as a Case Study of Christian Communities in Contemporary Contexts**

The goal of providing ethnographic description of the Filipino experience of diaspora Filipino thus far is to portray them as ‘Christian Communities in Contemporary Contexts’.

##### *4.1 The Filipino Experience – Mission Orientation*

Based on the statistic of nearly 8 million OFWs worldwide, 80% are Roman Catholics, 15% are Protestant and a conservative estimate of 7% of these figures are evangelical Christians. With 7% (or 560,000) of the 8 million OFWs being evangelical Christians they become a powerhouse for the cause of global missions.

Indeed, wherever there are clusters of Filipino communities, there are also thriving congregations. Today, you will find such congregations in the Canadian Prairies, the remote Arctic Circle (e.g. Yellowknife), the oil fields of the Arabian Peninsula, the urban jungles of Singapore, Hong Kong, Taipei and Tokyo, the islands of the Pacific and in the mega-cities of Europe and North America. There are even fellowship groups on cruise ships, super tankers and fishing vessels. Since Filipinos are adaptable, acceptable and accessible, they are now involved in cross-cultural ministries as well. In several cities of the world, including Singapore, Hong Kong, London and Toronto, clusters of Filipino congregations have formed ministerial fellowships for cooperative missions and evangelism initiatives. Innovative evangelistic strategies include concerts, festivals, literature and radio programs, *Jesus Film* distribution, and compassionate work.

In May 1995, the Filipino International Network (FIN) was launched in response to the need for a coordinated global effort to motivate, equip and mobilize Christian OFWs to help fulfill the Great Commission. To accomplish this objective, FIN coordinates regional and global strategic consultations for Filipino diaspora leaders: distributing evangelistic tools like the *Jesus Film*, facilitating evangelism and discipleship training seminars, Family Life Conferences to strengthen OFW marriages and to reach the mixed-marriage couples and their families. To undergird all this, FIN gathers Filipino Christian diaspora leaders for Prayer Advance during which they pray for the Christian witness of diaspora Filipinos both locally and globally.

Evidently, the effects of Spanish and American colonization in the Philippines are not entirely negative. Their positive legacy was that they brought Christianity to the Philippines, making it the only Christian nation

in Asia. Though the Filipino diaspora is mainly driven by economics and politics, God's providence and sovereignty has overturned the root cause of the Filipino diaspora for his glory. The Filipino diaspora has penetrated the Western world, the Buddhist world, the Islamic world and the Jewish world. Filipino seafarers also float in all the oceans and seas on planet earth.

#### 4.2 The Filipino Experience – Centrifugal and Centripetal Missions

While it is a fact that a high percentage of the 2,952 OFWs who leave the country each day are bound for CANs and significant numbers of them are faithful followers of Jesus Christ, it is also a fact that the empowering and mobilizing of OFWs for kingdom work requires a holistic ministry specifically addressing the realities of the OFWs (i.e. their personal needs and family needs in the 'homeland'). A couple of issues stand out.

Averell Aragon, Professor of Church History at the Alliance Graduate School, describes one of the most significant issues for the OFW:

'Living and working abroad entails personal as well as domestic problems. Many OFWs are often the victims of blatant exploitation and abuse by their recruiters here and employers abroad. Some of them return home physically and psychologically disfigured. To put an end to this problem, representatives of the Association of Southeast Nations (ASEAN) in its 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Summit held in Cebu City (Philippines) in 2007 signed the ASEAN Declaration for the Protection and Promotion of Rights of Migrant Workers.'<sup>25</sup>

Furthermore, families of OFWs left in the Philippines are suffering. Countless heartbreaking stories are printed in daily newspapers. Tales of broken marriages, dysfunctional and juvenile delinquent children because of family separations are on the rise. Evidently, moral instability is increasing and has become a societal problem and a challenge to the government and the church.

What actions are to be taken by the Philippine church in light of this situation? Due to the limitation of this paper, we will only highlight a few critical points related to 'the Filipino experience'.

- The Philippine Church must intentionally prepare their members for tent-making ministries. It is encouraging to note that the Philippine Missions Association set a goal of 200,000 workers to be deployed by the year 2010.<sup>26</sup> This is a significant number of kingdom workers to be mobilized. Today, various mission agencies and

<sup>25</sup> Averell Aragon (ed), *Phronesis: A Journal of Asian Theological Seminary and Alliance Graduate School*, (2007) (Manila, Philippines: Alliance Graduate School of Theology, 2007).

<sup>26</sup> Robert Ferdinand K. Lopez, 'The Philippine Missions Association (PMA) Tentmaking Agenda: Raising an Army of Outstanding Filipino Witnesses', Pantoja, Tira and Wan, *Scattered*, 197.

denominations are conducting tent-making seminars and training 'market-place missionaries'.

- The Philippine church must strategically partner with diaspora congregations to provide holistic ministry to OFWs and their families. It must be repeated that in 2007 alone, the POEA reports that the OFWs remitted USD\$14.4 billion. It is a fact that these funds are used to keep the Philippine economy afloat. Moreover, these funds not only support the Philippine economy but also supplement the financial activity of the Philippine church. Many Filipino Christians working abroad support not only their families but also their home churches. Moreover, in recent years many Filipino diaspora congregations have initiated centripetal missions activities and church planting initiatives in the homeland. The financial contributions of the Filipino diaspora congregation varies from scholarship funds for Bible school students, church planting movements, construction and reconstruction of church facilities, and funding of orphanages. These diaspora congregations are also sending their own short-term mission workers at their own expenses (e.g. medical and dental missions) to conduct holistic missions in disaster-hit areas and with internally displaced communities.

The deployment of Filipino tent-makers particularly to CANs and the Filipino diaspora churches supporting their homeland congregations can be seen as centrifugal and centripetal missions that need to be simultaneously encouraged, affirmed, nurtured and celebrated.

#### *4.3 The Filipino Experience – Innovative Missions Strategies of 'Kingdom's Army and Navy'*

We have already seen the global dispersion of OFWs both inland and at sea. Filipinos are religious people. Wherever there are Filipinos we find Roman Catholic or Protestant congregations. We find local churches in the high-rise buildings in Hong Kong and Singapore dominated mostly by Filipino domestic workers. There are fellowship groups among the former prostitutes in Japan. These are women who are now married to Japanese men and have led into the kingdom their spouses, *mestizo*-children and some of their Japanese in-laws. They are growing in numbers. Every Sunday afternoon, in the central park of Nicosia, Cyprus we find hundreds of Filipinos turning the park into a meeting point. There we find dozens of Bible study and prayer groups meeting in clusters for several hours until sunset. We also find local churches meeting in various places (e.g. government designated worship centers and 'underground' places) in the Middle East and North African countries.

We know of a group meeting every Friday in a rented bus. The bus is packed with 50 people going around the city for two hours. Inside the bus, these Filipino believers with their 'local friends' and other expatriate

workers worship the living Jesus Christ who is always present – they sing, they pray, they exhort each other, they receive their tithes and offerings, their leader-pastor preaches, etc. The only thing they don't do inside the bus is water baptism. In 2005, this group was only meeting in one bus. Today, they have three buses. In a hostile environment these 'bus-churches' has to be resourceful for security reasons but persecution cannot quench their passion for Jesus. Evidently, they are growing. One bus-church is added every year!

In recent years there has been an accelerated effort to mobilize Filipino Christian seafarers to reach their coworkers from other countries and many vacationers on-board the cruise ships. Martin Otto, a German missions practitioner based in Hamburg, Germany is intentionally recruiting, training and mobilizing Filipino seafarers not only to lead Bible studies and facilitate prayer meetings on-board the ship. He is recruiting many Filipino seafarers to plant 'churches on the oceans'.

A partnership between the FIN, Campus Crusade for Christ – Philippines, Alliance Graduate School, Operation Mobilization and Seamen's Christian Friend Society has recently been forged to accelerate training of Filipino seafarers to become church planters and pastors of congregations on-board the super tankers, containerships, bulk carriers and cruise ships. Negotiations are underway among partnering organizations to set up a training center in Manila for the future sea-based kingdom workers. The first training, led by Martin Otto, was conducted in April 2008 (see APPENDIX V: 'The FIN News Volume 10 Issue 1 Article: New FIN Partner – Seamen's Christian Friends Society (SCFS)') and a second training is being planned for late 2008.

#### *4.4 The Filipino Experience – Labor Feminization and Impacting Missions*

Biblical history and modern history records outstanding women missionaries. Filipino women have a vital role in fulfilling the Great Commission. We refer particularly to the thousands of household maids deployed in high places in the Buddhist, Jewish and Islamic world. These women have privileged access to the homes of people and families that Western conventional missionaries do not have the privilege. Affluent Arab, Jewish and Chinese families entrust their children to their Filipino maids. Many of these Filipino caregivers or 'nannies' and household workers are like the ancient Jochebed who raised Moses to become a national figure in Egypt.

It must be noted that in recent years, other countries have accelerated the hiring of house-hold workers from India, Thailand and Indonesia. These workers are hired for lower wages than the Filipinos. This current labor trend becomes a missiological issue because workers who are devotees of religions such as Islam and Buddhism are gradually replacing Filipino

Christian women. Philippine labor recruiters believe that Filipino women still have an edge because of their educational background, mastery of the English language, pleasing cultural values and personality traits. However, the labor dominance that they once enjoyed for decades will face competition and will impact missions.

#### *4.5 The Filipino Experience – Justice and Advocacy Ministry*

Aragon notes the suffering of Filipinos who work abroad and the pain of those families left behind in their homeland. Furthermore, he reports that the ASEAN declared to fight for the rights of migrant workers. The ASEAN governments need to be commended for their justice and advocacy works. However, the Christian community is specifically exhorted and required to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with God. (Mic. 6:8). Both the state and church must develop a strong and efficient mechanism to uphold the rights of the migrant workers. Churches in the diaspora must open their doors as a refuge to the victims of abuse and injustice.

Families of OFWs in the Philippines must be provided with pastoral care. How can kingdom workers become effective if their own respective loved ones are hurting? This is an urgent need the church in the homeland must address. Also, the trend of Philippine feminization in missions continues, but will be also be challenged by Islamic and Hindu advances through their female foreign workers who are also agents of their religion.

#### *4.6 The Filipino Experience – Frontier for Missiological Research*

The task of mission strategists and missiologists is not only to analyze and describe the phenomenon, but also to respond by conducting ongoing missiological research and formulating a contextual mission strategy. In 2007, the Institute of Diaspora Studies (IDS) was launched in Asia and USA hosted by the Alliance Graduate School in Manila, Philippines and Western Seminary in Portland, Oregon respectively. The ‘mission’ of IDS is to investigate the effective communication of the gospel among the people of diaspora and through their networks to regions beyond. It is a joint effort of researchers and practitioners seeking to understand and minister to the people of diaspora – people dispersed from their original homeland.<sup>27</sup> Filipino missiologists in particular must vigorously engage themselves in research and formulate a distinct Filipino diaspora missiology in order to accelerate awareness of the unique role of the Filipinos in global missions.

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<sup>27</sup> See <http://www.globalmissiology.org> and <http://www.fin-online.org> for more information.



In his article in *EMS Occasional Bulletin*, Spring 2007 Issue, Enoch Wan, an advocate for diaspora missiology, describes the distinctive features of ‘diaspora missiology’ in comparison to ‘traditional missiology’. In the charts below, Wan summarizes the tenets of diaspora missiology. These are helpful guides to Filipino missiologists and practitioners to formulate mission strategies.

#	ASPECTS	TRADITIONAL MISSIOLOGY ↔ DISPORA MISSIOLOGY	
1	FOCUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Polarized/dychotomized</li> <li>- ‘Great Commission’ ↔ ‘Great Commandment’</li> <li>- saving soul ↔ social Gospel</li> <li>- church planting ↔ Christian charity</li> <li>- paternalism ↔ indigenization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Holistic Christianity with strong integration of evangelism with Christian charity</li> <li>- contextualization</li> </ul>
2	CONCEPTUALIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- territorial: here ↔ there</li> <li>- ‘local’ ↔ ‘global’</li> <li>- lineal: ‘sending’ ↔ ‘receiving’</li> <li>- ‘assimilation’ ↔ ‘amalgamation’</li> <li>- ‘specialization’</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ‘deterritorialization’<sup>28</sup></li> <li>- ‘glocal’ (Tira)</li> <li>- ‘mutuality’ and ‘reciprocity’</li> <li>- ‘hybridity’</li> <li>- ‘interdisciplinary’</li> </ul>
3	PERSPECTIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- geographically divided: foreign mission ↔ local, urban ↔ rural</li> <li>- geo-political boundary: state/nation ↔ state/nation</li> <li>- disciplinary compartmentalization: e.g. theology of missions/strategy of missions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- nonspatial, ‘borderless’, no boundary to worry, transnational and global</li> <li>- new approach: integrated and interdisciplinary</li> </ul>
4	PARADIGM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- OT: missions = gentile-proselyte – coming</li> <li>- NT: missions = the Great Commission – going</li> <li>- Modern missions: E-1, E-2, E-3 or M-1, M-2, M-3, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New reality in the 21<sup>st</sup> century – viewing and following God’s way of providentially moving people spatially and spiritually</li> <li>- moving targets and move with the targets</li> </ul>

Fig. 1: ‘Traditional missiology’ vis-à-vis ‘diaspora missiology’: 4 elements

<sup>28</sup> Enoch Wan defines ‘deterritorialization’ as the ‘loss of social and cultural boundaries.’

#	ASPECTS	TRADITIONAL MISSIOLOGY ↔ DISPORA MISSIOLOGY	
1	MINISTRY PATTERN	OT: calling of gentile to Jehovah (coming) NT: sending out disciples by Jesus in the four Gospels and by the H.S. in Acts (going) Modern missions: - sending missionary and money - self sufficient of mission entity	- new way of doing Christian missions: ‘mission at our doorstep’ - ‘ministry without border’ - ‘networking and partnership’ for the kingdom - ‘borderless church’ (Lundy). ‘liquid church’ (Ward) - ‘church on the oceans’ (Otto)
2	MINISTRY STYLE	- cultural-linguistic barrier: E-1, E-2, etc. Thus various types: M-1, M-2, etc. - ‘people group’ identity - evangelistic scale: reached → ← unreached - ‘competitive spirit’ ‘self sufficient’	- no barrier to worry - mobile and fluid, - hyphenated identity and ethnicity - no unreached people - ‘partnership’, <sup>29</sup> ‘networking’ and synergy

Fig. 2: Comparing traditional and diaspora missiology in ministry

NO	YES
-No visa required	-Yes, door opened
-No closed door	-Yes, people accessible
-No international travel required	-Yes, missions at our doorstep
-No political/legal restrictions	-Yes, ample opportunities
-No dichotomized approach	-Yes, holistic ministries
-No sense of self-sufficiency and unhealthy competition	-Yes, powerful partnership

Fig. 3: The ‘yes’ and ‘no’ of ‘Mission at our Doorstep’

Filipino missions practitioners and researchers may consider consulting Tira’s 2008 Doctor of Missiology dissertation for Western Seminary, Portland Oregon, ‘Filipino Kingdom Workers: An Ethnographic Study in Diaspora Missiology’ in which he articulates Wan’s seminal essay. They may also consult the upcoming publication *Missions in Action in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Enoch Wan defines *partnership* as ‘entities that are separate and autonomous but complementary, sharing with equality and mutuality.’

<sup>30</sup> A prepublication copy of *Missions in Action in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* edited by Tira and Wan was produced specifically for the delegates of the 2008 General Assembly of the Christian and Missionary Alliance – Canada, July 2008; however it is still undergoing revision and is not yet available to the general public.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Study

In this study, the Filipino experience has been described ethnographically in details to illustrate diaspora in missions in action in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It is a case study of ‘Christian Communities in Contemporary Contexts’ –the theme of Commission VII. It is presented at the Commission VII conference to showcase one of the initiatives from the diaspora Christian community, just like the movement of Chinese Coordination Center of World Evangelism (CCOWE)<sup>31</sup> among the Chinese diaspora.<sup>32</sup>

The Filipino experience in diaspora missions also illustrates the providential grace of God in spite of the painful past of colonization of the Philippines by Western powers and sorrowful financial state of contemporary Filipino society. Hence, the sovereignty of God is evidently shown in the scattering of Filipinos globally for a purpose. It is diaspora missions in action – those being scattered have become gatherers for the kingdom in many nations.

The following are recommendations for further missions study and ministry strategy:

1. Accelerated equipping of tent-makers (land-based and sea-based OFWs) both for those who are already in the field and for those preparing to leave the country; theological and ministry training for those who are leading Filipino diaspora.
2. Strategic partnership of like-minded organizations and institutions is necessary for the delivering of evangelistic resources (e.g. *Jesus Film*) into the hands of Filipino kingdom workers, particularly those strategically positioned in CANs.
3. Connect abused and persecuted workers with advocacy and justice organizations in order to safeguard their rights and safety.
4. Provide pastoral care for the families of OFWs left behind in the homeland.
5. Further research on how to enhance the effectiveness of Filipino kingdom workers in cross-cultural ministry.
6. There are many anecdotal cross-cultural evangelism reports; especially among Filipinos. Hence, further study must be conducted on the effective evangelism of diaspora Filipino kingdom workers in order to showcase to other diaspora groups who need to go beyond their own ethnic ministries and accelerate their ‘outreach’ to their host nations in various continents that diaspora missiology is not only theological sound; but is practically effective for Kingdom ministry.

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<sup>31</sup> For more details see <http://www.cccowe.org/eng/content.php?id=9>.

<sup>32</sup> See Enoch Wan’s ‘Diaspora Missiology’, *Occasional Bulletin of EMS* (Spring 2007). For details on Chinese diaspora and Christian missions, see Enoch Wan, ‘Mission among the Chinese Diaspora: A Case Study of Migration and Missions’ *Mlssiology*, 31.1 (January 2003).

7. The scope of ‘the Filipino experience’ in this study has been limited to that of Filipino nationals, specifically ‘Overseas Filipino Workers’ (OFWs), deployed as seafarers on ocean vessels, and as land-based workers in the 10/40 Window. Future studies may explore other types of diaspora Filipinos such as immigrants, students, diplomats, etc.

In this study, the Filipino experience of the diaspora kingdom workers has provided an excellent case study of ‘diaspora missions’ in action in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

### Appendix I

Year	Estimated number of international migrants at mid-year (both sexes)
1960	75,463,352
1965	78,443,933
1970	81,335,779
1975	86,789,304
1980	99,275,898
1985	111,013,230
1990	154,945,333
1995	165,080,235
2000	176,735,772
2005	190,633,564

*Table 1. Estimated number of international migrants at mid-year (both sexes) 1960-2005 (world)*

Source: Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, *Trends in Total Migrant Stock: the 2005 Revision*, 21 September 2008 <<http://esa.un.org/migration>>.

Year	International migrants as a %age of the population
1960	2.5
1965	2.4
1970	2.2
1975	2.1
1980	Copyrighted Material 2.2
1985	2.3
1990	2.9
1995	2.9
2000	2.9
2005	3.0

*Table 2. International migrants as a percentage of the population 1960-2005 (world)*

Source: Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, *Trends in Total Migrant Stock: the 2005 Revision*, 21 September 2008 <<http://esa.un.org/migration>>.

Year	Refugees as a %age of international migrants
1960	2.9
1965	4.9
1970	4.8
1975	4.9
1980	9.1
1985	11.9
1990	11.9
1995	11.2
2000	8.9
2005	7.1

Table 3. Refugees as a %age of international migrants 1960-2005 (World)

Source: Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, *Trends in Total Migrant Stock: the 2005 Revision*, 21 September 2008 <<http://esa.un.org/migration>>.

Country of area	Migrants in millions	As %age of total
United States of America	38.4	20.2
Russian Federation	12.1	6.4
Germany	10.1	5.3
Ukraine	6.8	3.6
France	6.5	3.4
Saudi Arabia	6.4	3.3
Canada	6.1	3.2
India	5.7	3.0
United Kingdom	5.4	2.8
Spain	4.8	2.5
Australia	4.1	2.2
Pakistan	3.3	1.7
United Arab Emirates	3.2	1.6
Hong Kong, SAR China	3.0	1.4
Israel	2.7	1.3
Italy	2.5	1.3
Kazakhstan	2.5	1.2
Cote d'Ivoire	2.4	1.2
Jordan	2.2	1.2
Japan	2.0	1.1

Table 4. The twenty countries or areas with the highest number of international migrants 2005

Source: Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, *Trends in Total Migrant Stock: the 2005 Revision*, 21 September 2008 <<http://esa.un.org/migration>>.

## **Appendix II: Timeline of Filipino Immigration to the United States** (Adapted from Daisy C.S. Catalan, 1996)

1898 Commodore Dewey sailed to Manila as war broke out between the United States and Spain. Spain ceded the Philippines to the United States at the Treaty of Paris on December 10th.

### *1900-45: First Phase of Filipino Immigration to the United States*

1900: First Filipino immigrants came to the mainland United States. They were made up of students called '*pensionados*'. They were sons and daughters of rich influential Filipinos who were friends of United States officials. They were sent to study at the expense of the United States government. They were often '*mestizos*', a mixture of Spanish and Filipino blood. They were also volunteers for services in the US army, navy and merchant marines during World War I. Most of these Filipinos stayed in the United States after the war.

1906: First group of 15 Filipino men arrived in Hawaii to work in the sugar plantations. The Hawaiian Sugar Planters Association recruited them from rural areas in Northern and Central Philippines. They were called '*sacadas*'. Several years earlier the Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, Portuguese and others had already started working in the plantations.

1922: Filipino laborers in Hawaii were recruited to work for higher wages in the United States mainland as canners in Alaska, fruit and vegetable farmers in the states of Washington and California. Some laborers whose contracts had expired in Hawaii opted to go to the mainland rather than returning home. Likewise, Filipino students came to the mainland United States with plans to complete their education. Most of these students were in their teens or early twenties. Many had only a few dollars in their pockets having used most of the money from the mortgage of their parents' lands or sale of their animals to pay their fares. Although they were eager to continue their education they discovered that they could not earn enough money to support themselves and go to school at the same time. Many of these Filipinos had limited job opportunities that were oftentimes confined to the lowest paying menial occupations.

1930: Approximately 150,000 (Pedraza and Rumbaut, 1996: 296) became contract workers in the sugar and pineapple plantations in Hawaii. After their contracts expired, more than 50,000 (Teodoro, 1981: 4) either returned to the Philippines or went on to the mainland. At this time, in the wake of the Great Depression, 7,300 Filipinos (Teodoro, 1981: 4) were repatriated to the Philippines because of lack of work.

1934: US Congress passed the Tydings-McDuffie Independence Act which established the Commonwealth of the Philippines. It set a ten-year transition period for which the United States would withdraw all rights of possession over the Philippines.

1934-45: Post-depression and World War II years. A quota of 50 Filipinos a year could emigrate to the United States as permanent residents.

1946: Philippine independence from the United States.

### *1946-65: Second Phase of Filipino Immigration*

The majority of immigrants at this time were war brides or wives of Filipino service men. Immigration quota was raised to 100 Filipinos per year immediately after independence. President Truman signed the Immigration and Nationality Act which enabled many Asian residents in the United States to apply for citizenship. Filipinos who had served honorably for three years in the United States Armed Forces were eligible for naturalization as US citizens. The law likewise gave the Filipinos the opportunity to request or petition members of their family who were entitled to non-quota or high preference status to join them. The recruitment of plantation workers to Hawaii continued. Some established workers requested recruitment of younger male relatives. During the two decades from 1946 to 1965 over 34,000 Filipinos (Pedraza-Rumbaut, 1996: 295) came to the United States.

### *1965–Present: Third Phase of Filipino Immigration*

1965: Liberalization of immigration laws. This increased the Filipino immigration to the United States. The guiding philosophy behind the new policy was the admission of relatives, the reunification of families and the recruitment of needed skilled professional workers. The number of immigrants allowed to enter by quota in each country from the eastern hemisphere was 20,000. Those allowed to enter were classified under preference categories. Exempted from the quota were minor children, spouses and parents of adult US citizens. Also exempted from the quota was the admission of refugees. The influx of Filipino immigrant professionals such as doctors, nurses, medical technologist, teachers etc. began.

1980s: More than half of the Filipino American population in the United States were foreign born.

1990s: The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) reported 1 million (Pedraza-Rumbaut, 1996: 295) Filipino admissions to the United States.

*Source:* Amador A. Remigio Jr., 'A Demographic Survey of the Filipino Diaspora', Pantoja, Tira and Wan, *Scattered* (Manila, Philippines: LifeChange Publishing Inc., 2004), 27-29.

### Appendix III: POEA 2007 Overseas Employment Statistics

	Deployment January to December <sup>1/</sup>			% Share to Total	
	2007	2006	% Change	2007	2006
<b>LANDBASED</b>	<b>811,070</b>	<b>788,070</b>	<b>2.92%</b>	<b>75.26%</b>	<b>74.17%</b>
<b>NEW HIRES</b>	<b>313,260</b>	<b>317,680</b>	<b>-1.39%</b>	<b>29.07%</b>	<b>29.90%</b>
GPB Hire	8,625	11,346	-23.98%	0.80%	1.07%
Private Agency Hire	272,517	279,354	-2.45%	25.29%	26.29%
Name Hire	31,210	21,300	46.53%	2.90%	2.00%
Workers with Special Exit Clearance <sup>2/</sup>	79	231	-65.80%	0.01%	0.02%
Employment-based Immigration (EB3) <sup>3/</sup>	829	5,449	-84.79%	0.08%	0.51%
<b>REHIRES</b>	<b>497,810</b>	<b>470,390</b>	<b>5.83%</b>	<b>46.20%</b>	<b>44.27%</b>
<b>SEABASED</b>	<b>266,553</b>	<b>274,497</b>	<b>-2.89%</b>	<b>24.74%</b>	<b>25.83%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,077,623</b>	<b>1,062,567</b>	<b>1.42%</b>		
<i>Daily Deployment Average</i>	<i>2,952</i>	<i>2,911</i>	<i>1.42%</i>		

<sup>1/</sup> - Based on the report of POEA's Labor Assistance Center on the actual departures of OFWs at the international airports.

<sup>2/</sup> - Non-contract workers leaving on employment visa / work permit or equivalent document to work abroad but who remain in the employment

<sup>3/</sup> - of the local companies and trainees of PEZA-registered companies bound for Korea with trainee visas.

<sup>3/</sup> - Source: Commission on Filipinos Overseas.

Table 1. Deployment of OFWs by type of hiring 2007-06

Source: POEA, 'Table 1. Deployment of OFWs by Type of Hiring, 2007-2006', POEA Overseas Employment Statistics 2007, September 21, 2008  
<http://www.poea.gov.ph/html/statistics.html>.

Destinations	OFW Deployment			% Share to total	
	2007	2006	% Change	2007	2006
1. Saudi Arabia	238,419	223,459	6.7%	29.4%	28.4%
2. United Arab Emirates	120,657	99,212	21.6%	14.9%	12.6%
3. Hong Kong	59,169	96,929	-39.0%	7.3%	12.3%
4. Qatar	56,277	45,795	22.9%	6.9%	5.8%
5. Singapore	49,431	28,369	74.2%	6.1%	3.6%
6. Taiwan	37,136	39,025	-4.8%	4.6%	5.0%
7. Kuwait	37,080	47,917	-22.6%	4.6%	6.1%
8. Italy	17,855	25,413	-29.7%	2.2%	3.2%
9. Brunei	14,667	9,461	55.0%	1.8%	1.2%
10. Korea	14,265	13,984	2.0%	1.8%	1.8%
Other Destinations	180,379	172,490	4.6%	22.2%	21.9%
<b>Landbased Total</b>	<b>811,070</b>	<b>788,070</b>	<b>2.9%</b>		

Table 2. Deployment of OFWs by top ten destinations  
 – new hires 2007-06

Source: POEA, 'Table 3. Deployment of OFWs by Major World Group – New hires and Rehires, 2007-06', POEA Overseas Employment Statistics 2007, September 21, 2008  
<http://www.poea.gov.ph/html/statistics.html>.



World Group	OFW Deployment			% Share to total	
	2007	2006	% Change	2007	2006
ASIA	218,983	222,940	-1.8%	20.3%	21.0%
MIDDLE EAST	487,878	462,545	5.5%	45.3%	43.5%
EUROPE	45,613	59,313	-23.1%	4.2%	5.6%
AMERICAS	28,019	21,976	27.5%	2.6%	2.1%
TRUST TERRITORIES	6,674	6,481	3.0%	0.6%	0.6%
AFRICA	13,126	9,450	38.9%	1.2%	0.9%
OCEANIA	10,691	5,126	108.6%	1.0%	0.5%
OTHERS	7	8	-12.5%	0.0%	0.0%
<i>Workers with Special Exit Clearance</i>	79	231	-65.8%	0.0%	0.0%
LANDBASED TOTAL <sup>1/</sup>	811,070	788,070	2.9%	75.3%	74.2%
SEABASED TOTAL	266,553	274,497	2.9%	24.7%	25.8%
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>1,077,623</b>	<b>1,062,567</b>	<b>1.4%</b>		

<sup>1/</sup> - Includes workers who exited thru Employment-based Immigration scheme (829)

*Table 3. Deployment of OFWs by major world group  
– new hires 2007-06*

Source: POEA, 'Table 4. Deployment of OFWs by Top Ten Destinations – New hires and Rehires, 2007-2006', *POEA Overseas Employment Statistics 2007*, September 21, 2008 <http://www.poea.gov.ph/html/statistics.html>.

Flag of Registry	OFW Deployment			% Share to Total	
	2007	2006	Growth Rate	2007	2006
Panama	51,619	55,016	-6.2%	23%	24%
Bahamas	29,681	29,457	0.8%	13%	13%
Liberia	21,966	22,210	-1.1%	10%	10%
Singapore	10,308	9,362	10.1%	5%	4%
Marshall Island	9,772	9,993	-2.2%	4%	4%
United Kingdom	8,172	7,824	4.4%	4%	3%
Malta	7,513	7,803	-3.7%	3%	3%
Cyprus	7,052	7,255	-2.8%	3%	3%
Netherlands	7,017	6,653	5.5%	3%	3%
Norway	6,975	7,260	-3.9%	3%	3%
Other Flag of Registry	66,825	67,189	-0.5%	29%	29%
<b>Total</b>	<b>226,900</b>	<b>230,022</b>	<b>-1.4%</b>		

*Table 4. Deployment of seafarers by flag of registry, 2007-06*

Source: POEA, 'Table 12. Deployment of Seafarers by Flag of Registry, 2007-2006,' *POEA Overseas Employment Statistics 2007*, September 21, 2008 <http://www.poea.gov.ph/html/statistics.html>.

WORLD GROUP	OFW Remittance		January to December
	2007	2006	% Change
ASIA	1,543,180	1,496,120	3.1%
MIDDLE EAST	2,172,417	1,909,208	13.8%
EUROPE	2,351,691	2,061,067	14.1%
AMERICAS	8,244,349	7,198,212	14.5%
TRUST TERRITORIES	0	0	0.0%
AFRICA	16,027	10,272	56.0%
OCEANIA	121,418	85,610	41.8%
OTHERS <sup>1/</sup>	846	819	3.3%
TOTAL LANDBASED	12,213,565	10,812,018	13.0%
TOTAL SEABASED	2,236,363	1,949,290	14.7%
<b>TOTAL <sup>2/</sup></b>	<b>14,449,928</b>	<b>12,761,308</b>	<b>13.2%</b>
<i>Monthly Remittance Average</i>	1,204,161	1,063,442	13.2%

<sup>1/</sup> Total amount of remittances of overseas Filipino workers from countries not elsewhere classified

<sup>2/</sup> Breakdown may not add up to totals due to rounding off

Source: Data are based on reports of commercial banks, thrift banks, CEBUs and FOREX Corporations submitted to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

NOTE: Data are not truly reflective of the actual source of remittance by country of deployment of OFW due to the common practice of remittance centers in various cities abroad to source remittances through correspondent banks mostly located in the United States. Since banks attribute the remittance to the most immediate source, U.S., therefore appears to be the main source of OFW remittances.

Table 5. OFW remittances by world group, 2007-06  
in thousand US dollar

Source: POEA, 'Table 20. OFW Remittances by World Group, 2007-2006', *POEA Overseas Employment Statistics 2007*, September 21, 2008  
<http://www.poea.gov.ph/html/statistics.html>.

### Appendix IV: More Pinays Marrying Foreigners – Religious Group

Article posted October 16, 2007, 08:23 PM

A religious congregation providing counseling services to overseas workers has expressed concerns over the growing number of Filipino women marrying foreigners whom they knew only through the Internet.

Sr Bernadette de Guzman of the Religious of the Good Shepherd's Center for Overseas Workers said her group provides counseling and pre-departure orientation seminar (PDOS) to some 16,000 Filipino women leaving the country every year to marry foreign nationals. There are at least 12 million Filipinos scattered around 197 countries across the globe.

'Everyday we give counseling to an average of 45 women marrying foreigners, and we give emphasis on values formation as most of them only met their would-be spouses on the Internet,' she said.

'The minimum requirement for a marital relation is that the couples should have known each other in person even for a short time,' she added.

According to her, the US, Japan, Australia and Canada have the most number of Filipino intermarriages. 'We also observe that all of the countries that host overseas Filipino workers have Filipinos married to their nationals. We have recorded Filipino women marrying Africans, Afghans and even Yugoslavians,' she noted.

Sr Bernadette said that of those who pass through the RGS counseling, less than 10% reported they have troubles in their marriage abroad.

'We require our counselees to maintain communication with us at least within three months after their departure. Majority of those who called back said they are doing well,' she said.

In August, Senate President Manuel Villar Jr said there are some 300,000 to 500,000 Filipino women leaving the country as mail-order brides every year. The grim statistics prompted Villar to file a resolution before the senate committee on youth, women and family to ‘inquire into the plight of these women and the brazen violation of corresponding laws.’

Under Senate Resolution 101, Villar reacted to the disregard to the law of several Internet sites, which openly advertized Filipino women as mail-order brides.

The resolution named three websites: [www.2bwed.com](http://www.2bwed.com), [www.afilipina.com](http://www.afilipina.com) and [www.1mailorderbrides.com](http://www.1mailorderbrides.com) that publicly marketed Filipinas, a number of whom came from the provinces.

According to Villar, the practices are prohibited under Republic Act 6,955 enacted on June 13, 1990. The senator then vowed to investigate the illegal trade that has been ongoing for the last two decades. – Luis Gorgonio, *GMA News.TV*

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Source: Luis Gorgonio, ‘More Pinays marrying foreigners – religious group’, *GMA News.TV*, October 16, 2007 [GMAhttp://www.gmanews.tv/print/64697](http://www.gmanews.tv/print/64697).

## APPENDIX V:

### **New FIN Partner – Seamen’s Christian Friends Society (SCFS)**

Most church-planting initiatives are ‘land-locked’. Many missiologists and evangelism strategists miss the fact that there is more water than land on our planet. For as long as there is water, there will always be people who are living and working on-board the ships (i.e. commercial ships, leisure ships and warships). Martin Otto, a German missions practitioner with the Seamen’s Christian Friend Society (SCFS) has recognized the need to evangelize and disciple seafarers on-board these vessels.

The SCFS was founded in London in 1846 as a mission to seamen. Its goal was and is ‘to help seafarers spiritually by telling them about the love of Christ, but also helping them in practical ways.’ SCFS is represented in ports around the world. At each represented port, SCFS staff members meet with docked seafarers. SCFS’ hope is to ‘strengthen Christians in their belief and explain the gospel to unbelievers in order to bring them closer to the Lord.’ Their ministry includes worship services, Bible distribution, and Bible self-study distribution, inspirational music and film presentations, as well as distribution of other Christian literature. SCFS staff also strive to provide practical assistance, such as taking seamen to local shops, and providing seamen with a way to make phone calls. The Philippines has long provided ocean vessels with seafarers. According to Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), in the year 2000, there were 198,324 deployed sea-based OFWs; in 2006 the number rose to 274,497. If the estimated 7% of these OFWs are committed followers of Jesus Christ, there are conceivably over 19,000 witnesses for Jesus Christ

on-board ocean going vessels! In conversation with Otto, he asks: 'Can you imagine if there are also pastors on-board the ships?' In his book *Church on the Oceans: A Missionary Vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> century*, he documented churches on the ocean being led by Filipino seafarers.

### *Church at Sea Alliance (CASA)*

Realising that the diaspora Filipinos are not only stationed in different lands, but are also scattered across the seas, FIN sponsored a consultation on-board the Operation Mobilization ship, the MV Doulos, in Manila, Philippines from December 3-5, 2007. Representatives of FIN, Operation Mobilization, Campus Crusade for Christ, SCFS and Alliance Graduate School forged a new partnership, called Church at Sea Alliance (CASA) to train Filipino seafarers to become pastors on the ocean. CASA intends to train thousands of Christian seafarers to share their faith and establish churches at sea for seafarers on-board ships. Mr Otto himself will conduct the first training in April 2008 in Manila. CASA also intends to provide seafarers with evangelistic resources such as the *Jesus Film* in the different languages represented by the seafarers around the world. Filipinos today are advancing the kingdom on-board the ships.

Source: FIN. *The FIN News* Volume 10, Issue 1 (Edmonton, Alberta: FIN), 2008.

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# **THE TRANSCULTURALIZATION AND THE TRANSNATIONALIZATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF 12: FROM SEOUL TO BOGOTA TO CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA**

Philip Wingeier-Rayo

Traditionally missionary movements have spread from the north to the south, or from the west to the east, following the European colonial power structure. This was the model in 1910 at the time of the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh where the overwhelming majority of the delegates were from the mission-sending nations of Europe and North America. Today, however, there are new post-colonial and omnidirectional missionary movements. This article will research a relatively new mission model that began in South Korea and moved to Bogota, Colombia, and is now going north to the United States. It is moving against the traditional missionary flow using new creative models for evangelism and discipleship that are transnational and transcultural. This article has three main objectives: 1) to trace this particular style of small group methodology and theology from Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, Korea through Bogota, Colombia to Charlotte, North Carolina, 2) to understand the social and cultural adaptations of the small group methodology, and lastly 3) to analyze the theological implications of Cho and Castellanos' theology.

## **David Yonggi Cho**

Our story begins in southern Korea where Paul Yonggi Cho was born on February 14, 1936 under Japanese occupation. His father was working class and also was a very active lay Buddhist. When he was 18 years old he was diagnosed with tuberculosis and was given three or four months to live. He prayed daily to the Buddha for healing but nothing happened. One day he decided to pray to the Christian God: 'Oh God! If you really exist, come and help me. If you help me to recover my health I promise to live my life for you and for the well-being of others.'<sup>1</sup> Shortly after this prayer a young woman came to visit him and offered to speak to him about Jesus Christ. That young missionary returned every day saying the same things and Cho

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<sup>1</sup> David Yonggi Cho, *The Fourth Dimension*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Editorial Peniel, 2002), 11.



was tired of her and finally shouted: ‘That’s enough! Don’t say another word! I am tired of your stories. Let me die in peace!’<sup>2</sup> She left him a Bible and Cho began to read until he finally accepted Christ. Within six months he was completely healed of tuberculosis and began attending a Full Gospel Assembly of God Church.

In 1956 he began seminary at Full Gospel Bible College in Seoul. After graduating in 1958 he held a worship service in the home of his friend and future mother-in-law Choi Ja-Sil. Three years later the congregation bought a plot of land at Seodaemun-gu and built a 1,500 auditorium. He worked hard visiting people to fill up the new building and in 1965 suffered a collapse. At this time he realized that he could not do the pastoral work alone and divided the city of Seoul into 20 zones or ‘cells’ and trained a team of lay leaders to offer Bible studies in homes. Then in 1969 he felt called to buy land on Yeouido Island where the government was building its central offices. There Cho built a church auditorium that now has a capacity for 25,000 people.<sup>3</sup> Today the congregation has a membership of 763,000 and offers seven services on Sundays and three on Wednesdays.<sup>4</sup> In addition to the church itself, Cho has established two organizations: Church Growth International and the David Cho Evangelistic Mission to help spread his message beyond South Korea.

### From South Korea to Bogota

Given the geographical distance, the language and cultural differences, South America was the least likely place for his methodology to spread. Yet on the opposite side of the world a young pastor was struggling with the same issues as Cho did early in his ministry. Cesar Castellanos began his pastoral work in 1973 in Bogota, Colombia. By 1982 his congregation had grown a little, but he realized that although people came to church on Sunday, he was tired of having to beg parishioners to come to church. Castellanos recalls having to:

chase after the people begging them, ‘Don’t leave, you are needed and you are important to us.’...I said, ‘Lord is this what you called me for, to beg people to come back to You? I don’t want this! If this is what shepherding is then this is not what I want.’ He resolved not to return to the pastorate until God ‘confirmed the more specific purpose of my call.’<sup>5</sup>

While taking a break from the ministry, Castellanos went on a vacation at the beach and had a vision. In the dream Castellanos heard God speaking

<sup>2</sup> Cho, *The Fourth Dimension*, 12.

<sup>3</sup> Cho, *The Fourth Dimension*, 16.

<sup>4</sup> Website of the Yoido Full Gospel Church, <http://english.fgtv.com/yfgc.pdf> (Accessed on 30 September 2008).

<sup>5</sup> Cesar Castellanos, *Dream and You Will Win the World* (Hollywood, FL: G12 Editors, 2004), 24, 25.

to him about dreaming big: 'Dream of a very big church because dreams are the language of My spirit!'<sup>6</sup> Castellanos heard God promising him that: 'The church that you will shepherd will be as numerous as the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore. It will be so big that it will be countless.'<sup>7</sup> Castellanos founded a new church in 1983 under the name *Mision Carismatica Internacional*. Yet he still had not discovered the methodology that would put the legs under his new vision.

Hearing about the success of David Yonggi Cho in South Korea, Castellanos and his wife visited the Yoido Full Gospel Church in 1983 to learn firsthand about Cho's methodology and theology. He saw how the city of Seoul was divided up into cells, and how lay leaders lead Bible studies in homes across the city. Castellanos brought this idea back to Bogota and implemented it. However after seven years, he was still dissatisfied with growth. 'We tried it [Cho's system] but just didn't experience the growth we longed for,' Castellanos said. 'From 1983 to 1990, we only had 70 cells,' Castellanos reported.<sup>8</sup> For most churches 70 small groups would be a success, but Castellanos was not satisfied as only 30% of church members were involved in them.<sup>9</sup> He wanted more cell groups, a higher percentage of participation and a larger congregation.

While praying in 1991 Castellanos received what he had been waiting for: '[the] extraordinary revelation of the Principle of Twelve.'<sup>10</sup> Castellano reported that 'God removed the veil from my mind and I received the model that is now revolutionizing church growth. God validated the model by reminding me [of] the way Jesus had worked with His twelve disciples.'<sup>11</sup> Based on this vision Cesar Castellanos together with his wife, Claudia Rodríguez de Castellanos, adapts and refines Cho's methodology to the Colombian context. Castellano heard God saying to him: 'If you train twelve people and you manage to reproduce in them the character of Christ which is in you and if every one of them does the same with another twelve people and if these, in their turn, do the same with another twelve, transmitting the same vision to each other, you and your church will experience unprecedented growth.'<sup>12</sup> Castellanos calls his new hybrid methodology 'the Government of 12'. Basically the G12 builds on the methodology of David Yonggi Cho of cell group ministries, but limits attendance to twelve and instead of organizing the groups by geography they allow each cell group leader to seek out his or her twelve disciples of

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<sup>6</sup> Castellanos, *Dream and You Will Win*, 25.

<sup>7</sup> Castellanos, *Dream and You Will Win*, 25.

<sup>8</sup> Found in <http://www.charismamag.com/display.php?id=7978> Sept. 26, 2008

<sup>9</sup> Castellanos, *The Ladder of Success: A Practical Guide* (Bogota: Editorial Vilit and Co., 2001), 25.

<sup>10</sup> Castellanos, *The Ladder of Success*, 81. Also see website for Mision Carismatica Internacional.

<sup>11</sup> Castellanos, *The Ladder of Success*.

<sup>12</sup> Castellanos, *The Ladder of Success*, 25.

the same gender. By not dividing up cell groups geographically, the G12 model allows families to stay together – which is fundamental in the Latino context.

Castellanos also builds on Cho's fourth-dimension concept, and the importance of success. Castellanos advocates dreaming or envisioning one's goal in order for it to come true. He writes: 'First of all, it is necessary to point out that an attitude of success is something that must be inside you. It is not possible to attain any measure of growth and success in the life of the believer unless his attitude and lifestyle reflect that of a winner.'<sup>13</sup> Castellano uses the Old Testament figure of Joshua as the epitome of a successful man who was happy, healthy, prosperous, who had peace of mind and good friends.<sup>14</sup> Castellanos applies his method of dreaming of envisioning success to parish ministry, where pastors and leaders should envision multiplying cell groups and mega churches.

This ecclesiology comes from Castellanos' model in the MCI that starts with Cesar Castellanos and his wife Claudia who have a core group of twelve couples. Pastor Castellanos shepherds the men and Pastor Claudia the women. In turn each of these twelve men and women also shepherd twelve men and women. The G12 movement envisions each new Christian to be a leader and create his or her own cell group, so that theoretically the movement would multiply by twelve with the Castellanos being at the top of the pyramid. The cell groups are divided into categories of men, women, youth and children, and like the Yoido Full Gospel Church, are hosted in private homes. The organizational structure and methodology of the G12 will be discussed in greater detail below.

Castellanos, like Cho, formed an international organization to spread his movement to other countries. Individual churches not associated with the MCI can join the G12 organization for \$120 monthly membership fee. In exchange they will receive publications, a monthly communication and a discount on registration to the annual convention. Conventions are held in Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Miami, Atlanta, as well as the annual G12 convention in Colombia. Today the *Misión Carismática Internacional* (MCI) has 15,000 cell groups with a total of 120,000 members in the capital city of Bogota. Nationwide the MCI has 25,000 cell groups and a total of 170,000 members.<sup>15</sup> The MCI also has spread outside of Colombia through missionaries and immigration and has 120,000 members in Brazil, Chile, Bolivia, Ecuador and the United States. Pastors are also implementing the vision in Peru, Argentina, Mexico and Canada.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Castellanos, *Dream and You Will Win*, 87.

<sup>14</sup> Castellanos, *Dream and You Will Win*, 89-91.

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.mci12.com.co/index.php?option=com\\_contentandtask=view&id=62&Itemid=81](http://www.mci12.com.co/index.php?option=com_contentandtask=view&id=62&Itemid=81)

<sup>16</sup> Andrea Tunarosa, 'Spreading the Word - Fast: A New System Makes Church Membership Grow Exponentially', *Wall Street Journal*, 28 July, 2006.

### From Bogota to Charlotte, NC

In 1995 Luis and Marta Montoya emigrated as a lay people from Colombia to North Carolina, NC and began attending *Vida Nueva Iglesia de Dios* in Charlotte where Jose Chacon was the pastor of a congregation of about 175 people. Shortly afterwards Chacon experienced some conflict in the church and departed for Puerto Rico leaving another pastor in charge. The church split and Chacon returned to pastor the larger group of about 135 people and he asked Montoya to be the associate pastor in the fall of 1996. Chacon traveled a lot giving Montoya pastoral experience until finally Chacon convinced the congregation to financially support his missionary efforts and left to become a missionary in Africa in 2000. Montoya became the senior pastor, but the congregation maintained strong personal and financial ties to support Chacon's mission. Gradually people began to buckle on the imposed financial obligation and leave the church in 2001. Amidst this crisis in his first pastoral appointment Montoya saw church attendance decrease causing him to question his calling. In his own words Montoya said: 'I came face-to-face with God...and I asked God to reveal to me what to do. God told me to go to Colombia.'<sup>17</sup> So he went to Bogota with one leader from his church and they attended the introductory training of the G12 and brought back curriculum to read. Montoya studied the curriculum and compared it to the doctrine of the *Iglesia de Dios* (Cleveland, Tennessee). I felt that in my church we had a good doctrine, but we were not developing leaders. The G12 in Bogota assigned John Espinosa as an advisor to us, and he said that our first step was to come to an 'Encounter'. So I went back to Colombia with six women and one man from our congregation in March of 2002. Montoya describes the Encounter:

It was a great experience because all the participants were new believers. They separated us between men and women and sent us on buses [to the retreat center]. There were many drug addicts, thieves, homosexuals, as well as former military and paramilitary. In our church we had had retreats of 15 people, but this was a much much bigger. It was amazing to see the transformation of people.<sup>18</sup>

So Montoya returned back to Charlotte with his lay leaders and hosted their own 'Encounter' in May of 2002. Then Montoya went back to Colombia again for 'Re-Encounter' with nine or ten people from his church. But from then on they have hosted their own 'Post-Encounter' and began the School of Leaders.

Montoya asked the whole congregation to go through this process, but some long-standing members did not agree and left the church. According to Montoya, once they started this new G12 vision they have not lost

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<sup>17</sup> Interview with Pastor Luis Montoya, 15 October, 2008 in Charlotte, NC.

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Pastor Luis Montoya.

members. They only lost former members in the transition. Since adopting the vision they have grown to have an average weekly attendance of 500, and have built a new multipurpose facility and expanded their sanctuary to have a seating capacity for 600 making it the largest purely Hispanic congregation in Charlotte.

Montoya has adapted the G12 vision and not only offers these 'Encounters' for new believers in his congregation, but also for surrounding congregations. They have churches who have come with their pastor and key leaders in the congregation from Winston-Salem, Concord, Myrtle Beach and as far away as Virginia. Montoya's church provides financial support to his brother-in-law, Alvaro, who works with the G12 back in Bogota leading a cell group for drug addicts.

### **Methodology of *Vida Nueva Iglesia de Dios***

As each new Christian converts in the G12 process, he or she begins the 'Ladder of Success', which are a series of discipleship classes spiritual retreats to transfer believers into leaders. The Ladder of Success consists of four objectives: winning, consolidating, discipleship and sending. In order to achieve these objectives the Ladder of Success takes the new convert through the process of consolidation, Pre-Encounter, Encounter, Post-Encounter, School of Leaders, Re-Encounter with accompaniment through the process by consolidators and a cell group.

As one starts in the G12 process he or she is assigned a 'consolidator' to answer early questions about the Bible or faith and encourage beginners in the faith. A consolidator may call or visit new Christians and offer one-on-one Bible studies to strengthen a new believer during his or her first steps in the faith. The reason the consolidator position was created was to prevent new converts from dropping out. Many churches have hundreds if not thousands of visitors every year. Although a few might convert to Christ and start off on fire, just as many often become disenamoured and stop attending. The consolidator position in the G12 was created to precisely 'close the backdoor' of the movement. In traditional Protestant ecclesiology a consolidator might assume the responsibilities of discipleship often performed by the pastor, evangelism team or usher.

After one's first steps in the movement one would continue the 'Ladder of Success' by taking the 'Pre-Encounter' classes. These twelve classes can be taught by the pastor, but it is more likely taught by one of the pastor's 'twelve', or the inner circle of leaders immediately shepherded by the pastor. The men take classes separate from women. Over the course of twelve weeks the new believer prepares himself for a weekend spiritual retreat called an 'Encounter'. These classes play the educational role of discipleship, but in addition they create high expectations for the 'Encounter'. Participants are told very little about the actual content of the 'Encounter' creating a sense of mystery. A lot of weight and expectation is

placed on this weekend retreat as a 'make or break' moment in the life of a new Christian. New believers who have not yet attended an 'Encounter' are not authorized to hold any leadership positions in the church. This even goes for people who have served as pastor or lay leader in other denominations. When the long-awaited weekend of 'Encounter' arrives new Christians are asked to prepare for a serious encounter with Jesus Christ. Participants are told that this will not be like any other retreat they have been on and not to expect to have fun.

The 'Encounter' is a weekend retreat of 17 talks based on the Roman Catholic model of 'Crysalis'. Cesar Castellanos recommends that the 'Encounter' be held at a camp ground or retreat center away from the town where one lives. The 'Encounters' that I attended were held at a YMCA camp in the Smokey Mountains and attending the 'Encounter' was often referred to as going 'up to the mountain'. The pastor and his or her twelve inner leaders give the talks and pray for the participants. These leaders are called 'guides' for the weekend and no other visiting pastor or lay leader is allowed to give counseling. Participants are encouraged to seek out a guide for any additional prayer or counseling that arises during the 'Encounter.' The goal of the 'Encounter' is to confront each individual with his or her past and cleanse the participants of past sins. The talks have titles such as 'Hero of Heroes', 'Identifying the Media that Contaminate your Mind', 'Recognizing and Removing Bondage in your Life', 'Christ: Characteristics of a New Man', 'The Other and I', 'Health and Body', 'The Best Friend, The Holy Spirit', and 'Restoring Family Unity'. Their content is quite introspective asking the participants to recall painful childhood experiences that have marked one's life. Any past sins such as adultery, fornication, idolatry and lust are considered demons possessing the individual and must be rebuked. The G12 theology believes that sins committed in the past, even by an ancestor, cast a curse upon future generations. Even if one was a victim of a sin, for example rape or abuse, this still leaves demonic possession that requires liberation. Thus it is necessary to repent of these sins and break the curse from continuing in one's life and transmitting it to future generations. The prayers following the talks at the 'Encounter' could be described as exorcisms to cast out demons and seek spiritual liberation. The 'Encounter' is supposed to be an honest encounter with Christ and with one's past. The retreat becomes a watershed event in the life of a new Christian and has an almost sacramental place in the G12 movement. Before attending an 'Encounter' new comers are considered neophytes in the faith, yet once attending believers are considered 'Christians' and can begin to assume leadership roles.

After coming 'down from the mountain' the G12 movement attempts to continue the momentum of the 'Encounter' with 'Post-Encounter' classes. These nine classes are taught by the same leaders of the 'Encounter.' These are follow-up classes to not allow the convert to 'cool off' after his mountain-top experience. These classes have titles such as: 'Be a Person

Firm in Your Decisions’, ‘The Bible: the Book That Will Transform Your Life’, ‘Knowing the Will of God’, ‘Think Like a Winner’, and ‘God Created Man to be Prosperous’. I found that the ‘Post-Encounter’ classes offer a slight contradiction from the teachings of the ‘Encounter.’ The ‘Encounter’ taught that one must repent from past sins and cleanse oneself in order to be liberated. The assumption is that once the encounter is finished one will be free of these sins. However the Post-Encounter classes continue to emphasize these past sins as though they were still present.

The ‘Ladder of Success’ continues after the Post-Encounter with more classes to prepare for ‘Re-Encounter’. This is another retreat experience similar to the ‘Encounter’, but supposedly deeper. I found this second retreat experience to be more of the same of the first encounter. Again there were 17 talks given by the pastor and his inner circle of male leaders, as well as more exorcism of demons. Of course it is less of a mystery because all the participants have necessarily attending the first encounter. The ‘Re-Encounter’ does focus more on applying the G12 theology to one’s lifestyle. The title of some of the talks are: ‘Health and our Body’, ‘Marriage and Sexuality’, ‘Devotional Life’, and ‘A Christian Vocation’.

Although the G12 produces and publishes its own curriculum for the ‘Ladder of Success’ in Colombia, Pastor Luis Montoya in Charlotte is beginning to adapt the vision to his context. For example transporting over a hundred people two hours to the mountains and renting a YMCA camp has become cost-prohibitive for several potential participants. Given the reality of most Hispanic immigrants in the United States, it is very difficult to find disposable income to spend \$110 for registration in addition to the rising cost of transportation. Moreover, it is difficult for immigrants to get two days off work to attend an ‘Encounter.’ Therefore Pastor Montoya has started to shorten the ‘Encounter’ to only one day and consolidate two similar talks into one. Now he can have the ‘Encounter’ all-day on a Saturday for only \$40 and provide the meal in his local church. In addition the ‘Encounter’ only has eight talks and fewer leaders are required to facilitate the ‘Encounter.’

Following ‘Re-Encounter’ the participant is now prepared for a leadership role within the G12 – usually becoming a consolidator or cell group leader. The individuals will continue to prepare themselves once a week in the School of Leaders. The leadership classes are also taught by one of the pastor’s inner circle of twelve. This process of training continues for about two years in several different levels. The School of Leaders has three levels of three months each. Then the individuals will go through three months of teacher’s school where the curriculum focuses more on pedagogy. Finally the leadership school reaches its pinnacle with two levels of seminary entitled simply: Seminary I and II. When one reaches this level then it is expected that he or she has a cell group and is prepared to be a guide in the encounters and a teacher in the School of Leaders.

At *Iglesia de Dios Vida Nueva* in Charlotte the G12 vision has been implemented into the life of the congregation and they offer ‘Encounters’ and leadership classes to promote the vision for other churches. They offer two or three ‘Encounters’ and ‘Re-Encounters’ every year for men, women and youth. They also offer the leadership school once a week for members of their congregation and other nearby missions who would like to enter into the vision.

### Theological Analysis of David Cho

I will now transition from the nuts and bolts of the methodology to compare the theology of David Yonggi Cho with orthodox theology. Cho attended the Full Gospel Bible College related to the Assembly of God denomination and claims to be Christian. However his theology has some tendencies toward shamanism, spiritualism and the self-help philosophy of ‘the power of positive thinking’. In his book, *The Fourth Dimension*, Cho argues for a law of faith called ‘Incubation’. He states ‘the Bible says that faith is the substance of things hoped for, a substance which first has a stage of development – of incubation – before its usage can be full and effective’. Based on the 17<sup>th</sup> century physicist Isaac Newton who said that the material world is comprised of three dimensions, Cho argues that the spiritual realm is the fourth dimension. Founded in the creation story where God creates the world *ex nihilo* (out of nothing), Cho argues that the spiritual realm has the ability to incubate or envision a new reality for the material world.<sup>19</sup>

So men, by exploring their spiritual sphere of the fourth dimension through the development of concentrated visions and dreams in their imaginations, can brood over and incubate the third dimension, influencing and changing it.<sup>20</sup>

As the word incubation suggests, Cho likens envisioning to a ‘hen sitting on her eggs.’<sup>21</sup> In his book Cho offers the example of a single woman who had prayed to God for a husband without success. When Cho asked her what traits she preferred in a husband she responded: ‘Well, I don’t know...may he be whatever God wills.’<sup>22</sup> Cho scolded her for being so vague in her prayer and instructed her to pray for specific physical, social and emotional traits. A year later Cho visited that zone of the city and learned that the woman had married to the man of her dreams.

It is well documented that Cho grew up studying Buddhism and his father was a Buddhist lay leader in his community. One of the Buddhist beliefs is that enlightenment is an individual matter and one cannot receive

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<sup>19</sup> Cho, *The Fourth Dimension*, 39.

<sup>20</sup> Cho, *The Fourth Dimension*, 39-40.

<sup>21</sup> Cho, *The Fourth Dimension*, 43.

<sup>22</sup> Cho, *The Fourth Dimension*, 39.



much help from other persons, institutions or even the gods.<sup>23</sup> The individual must envision his goals through meditation and eliminate all outside distractions. Cho's 'fourth dimension' metaphysics places a great deal of emphasis on the human ability to visualize change in the physical world and influence it through prayer. His beliefs diminish the role and interaction between God's will, human responsibility and the natural sciences for understanding the physical universe.

Another influence on Cho's theology of incubation is modern psychology. In 1952 Norman Vincent Peele published *The Power of Positive Thinking*, which became a best seller and ushered in the pop psychology books known as 'self-help'. Peele's psychology was extremely popular during Cho's formative years. Peele argues that too many people become consumed by the minute problems of everyday existence and do not find peace of mind and happiness. He writes that one can cast these problems from the mind and channel positive energy toward success. According to Peele, one can even overcome physical ailments and achieve physical and emotional health.<sup>24</sup> Cho adds onto Peele's theory of the power of positive thinking, positive speaking and positive visualization of what you want.

Theologically speaking, Cho's belief challenges the orthodox position of the sovereignty of God. When God created the world there were no human beings present envisioning the creation. The Bible states in Genesis 1:1 'In the beginning God created heaven and earth.' God simply willed it. To assume that human beings can influence or imagine a future material change is to lift theological anthropology to the level of divine. Also God's will is defined in the Bible as 'good, pleasant and perfect', which may not be the same thing for all people.

Cho's answer to this challenge is that God's will is too broad and emphasizes the difference between the New Testament use of '*logos*' and '*rhema*'. While *logos* is the Word of God, Cho defines *rhema* as 'a specific word to a specific person in a specific situation.'<sup>25</sup> Like the woman praying for a husband, her general petition to God was not answered. However when she wrote a list of the specific traits that she desired God rewarded her with a husband. Cho believes that it is not enough to have a general knowledge of God through the *logos*, rather we must pray for specific petitions and incubate our design into the physical realm. Cho's doctrine of the spiritual realm have power over and influencing the physical realm becomes dangerous when it deals with prosperity.

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<sup>23</sup> Lewis M. Hopfe, *Religions of the World* (Upper Saddle River, NJ, Prentice Hall, 2001), 140.

<sup>24</sup> Norman Vincent Peele, *The Power of Positive Thinking* (Philadelphia, Running Press), 2002.

<sup>25</sup> Peele, *The Power of Positive Thinking*, 91.

### Theology of Cesar Castellanos

Cesar Castellanos has also implemented incubation theology and incorporated the *rhema* word into the theology of the G12. Meanwhile Cho says incubate, Castellanos says: ‘Dream and you will win the world.’ While a positive word can become reality in the physical realm, so then can a negative word. The tremendous influence placed on the ‘Encounters’ within the G12 structure is based on the undue emphasis on curses. All past sins, whether they be one’s own or those of one’s ancestors, are believed to have placed a curse on one’s life. Before attending an ‘Encounter’ a new believer is not allowed any leadership in the G12 structure. Even if they have been baptized or have been members (even pastors) of other denominations, if they have not attended a G12 ‘Encounter’ then they are still under the curses of past sins. Castellanos states that ‘it is absolutely vital to break the chains and the power of curses.’<sup>26</sup>

Setting aside the strong demonology in Castellanos’ theology, I would like to focus on the tremendous emphasis and hope placed on the weekend ‘Encounter’. Orthodox theology refers to justification as the moment where God’s grace forgives a new believer for one’s sins. This moment has simply been referred to as conversion. Jesus emphasizes the importance of ‘being born of the water and the Spirit’ in his conversation with Nicodemus (Jn 3:3). The timing of justification is different in the life of each believer and it impossible to program or structure. It seemed to me that the ‘Encounters’ attempt to do precisely this: to program the Holy Spirit to work at their convenience. Before an ‘Encounter’ a new believer is under a curse and possessed, and after the 17 talks and prayers then one can begin the ‘School of Leaders’ and participate in leadership roles. I agree that in the life of a Christian there should be a moment of justification of sins, however I have difficulty programming when and where justification should occur.

The reason that this encounter is so necessary in the G12 theology and order of salvation is the belief in ‘ancestral curses’ or ‘family curses’. Cancer, poverty, obesity, adultery, poor self-image could be the result of a generational curse.<sup>27</sup> According to Cesar Castellanos, these conditions can be the result of the sins of one’s ancestors, but this curse can be broken by the power of the blood of Jesus Christ during the ‘*Encuentro*’. Therefore if a person wants to attend a G12 church and assume leadership responsibilities it is necessary for he or she to attend an ‘Encounter’ first – even if one has been baptized and been a Christian for some time.

The structure of the G12 is in the shape of a pyramid, which can lead to the monopolization of power. The pastor has a group of twelve male followers who he disciples, and in turn each of them has twelve disciples,

<sup>26</sup> Castellanos, *The Ladder of Success*, 30.

<sup>27</sup> Marilyn Hickey, *Break the Generation Curse: Overcoming the Legacy of Sin in Your Family* (Denver, CO: Marilyn Hickey Ministries), 1988.

and so on, and so. Likewise, the pastor's wife has twelve female followers, and each of them has twelve disciples. This tiered ecclesiology creates a hierarchical structure that makes it difficult for individual followers to have access to the senior pastor or to ascend in decision-making ability or power. The whole church is organized into cell groups and there are no other committees. So the husband and wife pastoral team at the top wield a tremendous amount of power. They may consult with their team of twelve leaders who have a great deal of influence down to the bottom rungs of the pyramid. The other followers down the chain do not have access to the pastors and have little influence over the decision-making process. If there is a lack of opportunity in the structure then frustration and resentment can build up causing schisms. The lifestyles of those at the top of the structure can exacerbate these differences. A cell group leader with a following of twelve can have personal aspirations and feel that his leadership ability is underappreciated and can split from the G12 and create his own independent church.

### Gender Roles in the G12

The cell structure separates the small groups according to men, women, youth and children, limiting intergenerational and cross-gender interaction. According to Castellanos, co ed cell groups did not grow as fast as the homogeneous model.<sup>28</sup> The G12 model believes that men should disciple men, and women should disciple women. Separation allows for gender-specific curriculum in the cell groups. While this might be a good source of support for men and women, the content of the lessons has a tendency to encourage stereotypes and reinforce traditional gender roles. For example, men are encouraged in the G12 theology to be the spiritual guide and head of the household and women are encouraged to submit to their husbands. In a book entitled *Post-Encounter for Women*, Claudia Castellanos writes: 'The attraction God designed is specific – men towards women and women towards men, nothing else. God gave Adam a helper, the woman. She would become his support, and together they would represent a team.'<sup>29</sup> The G12 interprets the Bible in such a way as to reinforce the traditional gender roles in Latin America.

Although Latin American culture is being influenced by the West, traditionally men and women have very gender-specific roles. In her book *The Reformation of Machismo: Evangelical Conversion and Gender in Colombia*, Elizabeth Brusco describes the traditional roles assigned with each gender as women being homemakers and men being the

<sup>28</sup> Castellanos, *The Ladder of Success*, 30.

<sup>29</sup> Claudia Castellanos, *Post-Encounter for Women* (Bogota: G12 Editors, 2004), 51.

breadwinners.<sup>30</sup> However she acknowledges that men often spend their earnings on alcohol, gambling and other women. Feminists have historically criticized evangelicalism as reinforcing the traditional gender roles, yet Brusco's study indicates that conversion can be liberating when the husband adheres to his domestic responsibilities. In other words, conversion of the male partner to evangelicalism is tantamount to domestication. While Brusco's study was in Colombia, it was not specifically related to Castellanos' movement, yet it does apply to the G12's effect on gender relations, namely, that the conversion and subsequent domestication of men can actually be 'liberating' for the wives.

The flip side of the gender separation in the G12 is Claudia Castellano's emphasis on a pastoral team resulting in a higher profile for women. Mrs Castellano, in her own rite, is not a traditional stay-at-home mother. She forms a pastoral team with her husband as preacher and workshop leader and is a senator to Colombia's National Assembly. Yet she advocates the G12 method where women are ministered to separately from men, and a pastoral team of a man and woman are needed for counseling couples. Rather than the traditional role of a male pastor playing a leadership role, and the female spouse working behind the scenes, the G12 raises the profile of the wife to '*pastora*' and partner.

*Iglesia de Dios, Vida Nueva* in Charlotte has a pastoral team of Luis and Marta Montoya. Following the model of Cesar and Claudia Castellanos, Luis pastors the men and Marta the women. At times I have called and Marta answers the phone and she will promptly refer any questions to pastor Luis. During worship services both will speak, lead Bible studies and prayers. Luis preaches regularly on Sunday, but Marta is always there in a prominent leadership role. They both are working and available in the church office throughout the week. Together they supervise a group of twelve couples with Luis overseeing the husbands and Marta the wives.

The G12 vision creates a unique relationship between clergy and the laity. On one hand it embraces the Protestant slogan of 'the priesthood of all believers' and empowers lay leaders to preach, teach and counsel new believers in the cell groups. The ladder of success provides ongoing training where students learn Old Testament, New Testament, hermeneutics, homiletics, pedagogy, pastoral care and counseling techniques – although the hermeneutical emphasis is fundamentalist and does not admit any findings from social sciences that would in anyway contradict Biblical teaching as understood by Castellanos. The teaching in these fields, especially Bible, is text-proofing as bits and pieces of theories are appropriated to support the G12 vision. So, on the one hand the lay people are encouraged to prepare themselves to be a quasi-pastor as the leader of a cell group. Yet on the other hand the pyramid structure creates

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<sup>30</sup> Elizabeth Brusco, *The Reformation of Machismo: Evangelical Conversion and Gender in Colombia* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995).

an accountability structure where there is always someone looking over one's shoulder who can arbitrarily contradict, correct or reprimand a cell group leader. This hierarchical structure opens the door for abuses of power – especially for the person on top. On one occasion Pastor Luis Montoya announced that their G12 advisor, John Espinosa, was coming to Charlotte and would lead a three-day workshop on cell groups. At midnight the night before departing from Bogota Castellanos called him and said that he could not go. So Espinosa called Montoya and Charlotte and told him to cancel the workshop. After Castellanos learned that the leader had cancelled the event with no protest he called Espinosa back and said that now he could go as he was only testing his loyalty. When Espinosa arrived in Charlotte he told this story as an example of loyalty and submitting to authority.

On another occasion one key couple in Montoya's inner circle of twelve grew to have their own group of twelve couples, and all of them had their own group of twelve. So basically this one couple had direct supervisory influence over 144 men and 144 women. This allotted them a tremendous amount of power in a congregation of 500 members and they started questioning Montoya's decisions and challenging him. Last year Montoya decided to remove them from his inner circle of twelve and they left the church taking many of their followers with them. Obviously this was a painful departure for Montoya, and it underlines one of the weaknesses of the G12 vision, namely placing too much authority in the hands of the laity. Needless to say, loyalty, submitting to authority and respect are key themes in the G12 vision.

### **Transculturation of the G12**

As anyone who has crossed borders and cultures knows, what is successful in one context is not necessarily successful in another. Very few models or structures, whether they be religious or secular, have been transplanted successfully across cultures. The cell group model of David Yonggi Cho works in the Korean context because of a natural sense of loyalty and respect for one's elders within the Korean culture. The society holds together out of veneration for one's elders and this lends itself to a cell group structure without the fear of schisms and divisions. While Cesar Castellanos went to Seoul and studied Cho's model, it did not work in Colombia because of the different cultural context. Castellanos eliminated the geographical assignment to allow for close family connections in the Latino culture that want to gather together in homes regardless of geographical location. To prevent schism Castellanos capped the group size to twelve and then divided groups before they became large enough and powerful enough to consider starting a new church. The pyramid structure and 'Ladder of Success' also keep leaders closely supervised to avoid aberrations in doctrine.

In Charlotte, Luis Montoya has also needed to make adaptations to the model to allow for the immigrant lifestyle. For example the ‘Encounters’ were too expensive and too long for most immigrants who cannot afford to miss one or two days of work. Also, Montoya has consolidated the number of talks from 17 to 8, and adapted their content to fit the immigrant context. Moreover, the talks encouraging believers to only buy new cars and new furniture have been adapted to the reality of immigrants who earn minimum wage. The talks calling upon believers to own their own business have been modified to fit the reality where many Hispanic immigrants do not have a social security number to obtain a license to own their own business. Therefore, there are real material barriers that exist that cannot be overcome purely in one’s individual mind, or in the spiritual sphere.

### Conclusion

It is fascinating to trace the small group movement as a transnational and transcultural mission model from Seoul, Korea to Bogota, Colombia to Charlotte, NC. It defies the traditional missionary movements that moved from north to south and west to east. Yet Cho’s incubation theology and Castellanos’ ‘dream and you will win the world’ theology become problematic when understood in the hard reality of the poor and immigrant populations in the world. There are real concrete economic, racial and legal barriers for certain populations to obtain their dreams. As much as one may dream or envision a successful future, certainly obstacles are insurmountable until there are changes in the legal rights of immigrants. In the case of undocumented workers in *Iglesia de Dios Nueva Vida*, the threat of deportation is real and the dream of owning one’s home or starting a business cannot be achieved by dreaming or envisioning only in one’s head until real legislative change occurs in US immigration law. Montoya wisely adapted Castellanos’ dream theology to not offend or frustrate the aspirations of undocumented workers. There comes a moment where one cannot change reality only in one’s mind. One must see reality as it is and work in the real world for systemic change.

The spiritual realm is not so separate or distinct from the physical world – the two are more entwined and inter-related than Cho and Castellanos’ theology acknowledge. It is unfair to new believers to give them the illusion that these harsh realities can be overcome simply by envisioning a more successful future. To narrow down the ‘logos’ (collective) to ‘rhema’ (individual) is to create an individualized prosperity theology and lose the collective will of God. Globalization has made previous barriers more porous and created opportunities for missionary movements to move from anywhere to everywhere, but it has also exacerbated the split between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have nots.’ It is unjust to offer new believers the illusion that everyone can become prosperous when there are legal and economic barriers. It is exciting to reflect on transcultural and transnational

missionary movements challenging the traditional north-south colonial paradigm, however I would hope that their message would not confuse God's blessing with material prosperity.

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# LEARNING FROM MISSIONARIES: LESSONS FOR SECULAR DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONERS

Matthew Clarke and John Donnelly

President Truman's 1949 inauguration speech is often cited as the beginning of the international community's recognition of the need to improve the lives of the poor in developing countries. However, religious organizations have been undertaking successful 'development' within their missionary work for many hundreds of years. Reflection on the success of this missionary work provides lessons for secular development practitioners. This chapter will consider the *Decalogue of Development* and the *Summary of Resolutions Regarding Development* prepared by the Franciscan Friars in the Diocese of Aitape, Papua New Guinea. These documents explicitly describe strategies to 'improve' the physical lives (health, education, economic security) of the people of the Aitape area at the same time as President Truman was signaling the start of the secular development era. The Franciscans understood the importance of community empowerment when working with local communities to achieve these outcomes. Secular development practitioners however have only recently understood the importance of these principles. This paper will contrast the principles formulated by the Franciscans in the 1940s with the current 'best practice' ideals of secular development practitioners and note the lessons that can be learned from missionaries.

## 1. Introduction

Over one billion people live in extreme poverty with another two billion people surviving on around US\$2 per day. Life for those living in poverty is characterized by ill health, limited access to clean water and hygienic sanitation, poor quality housing, hunger, illiteracy and premature death. Material deprivation in developing countries has been the impetus for secular international efforts to eradicate poverty throughout the second half of the last century.

Effectiveness of development interventions aimed at improving the lives of the poor by these secular development practitioners have increased over this period as they have increased their own understanding of how to work successfully with local communities. However, such secular development practitioners are not the sole international agents interested in improving



the lives of the poor. Indeed, secular development practitioners have much to learn from missionaries. President Truman's 1949 inauguration speech is often cited as the beginning of the international community's recognition of the need to improve the lives of the poor in developing countries. However, religious organizations have been undertaking successful 'development' within their missionary work for many hundreds of years. Reflection on the success of this missionary work provides lessons for secular development practitioners. This chapter will consider the *Decalogue of Development* and the *Summary of Resolutions Regarding Development* prepared by the Franciscan Friars in the Diocese of Aitape, Papua New Guinea (PNG). These documents explicitly describe strategies to 'improve' the physical lives (health, education, economic security) of the people of the Aitape area at the same time as President Truman was signaling the start of the secular development era. The Franciscans understood the importance of community empowerment when working with local communities to achieve these outcomes. Secular development practitioners however have only recently understood the importance of this principle. This paper will contrast the principles formulated by the Franciscans in the 1940s with the current 'best practice' ideals of secular development practitioners and note the lessons that can be learned from missionaries.

This chapter is set out as following: Section 2 will discuss the concept of development and currently accepted principles of 'best practice' in achieving improvements in the lives of the poor. Section 3 will briefly describe the history of Franciscans in the Aitape diocese in PNG before their work is discussed with reference to 'best practice principles' of empowerment in Section 4. The paper is concluded in Section 5.

## 2. Development and Principles of Best Practice

Improving the lives of the poor at the local level is a complex undertaking.<sup>1</sup> Development itself is a contested term (McGillivray and Clarke, 2006), though general consensus exists that development is 'good change' that results in an improvement in the lives of the poor (Kingsbury et al., 2008). More contentious is the form that this improvement takes. Improvement can simply be increased income (see Dollar and Kraay, 2001) or concern with one's capabilities to use commodities well (see Sen, 1985). The Catholic Church's teaching on development highlights a faith-based view in which spiritual aspects of an individual's fulfillment are addressed alongside economic and social improvements (Alkire, 2006, *Populorum Progressio*, 1967; Reed 2001).

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<sup>1</sup> It is also a complex undertaking for those working at the macro level, with little agreement on how to best improve the lives of the poor through national and international policies and programs – see for instance Sachs 2005, Stiglitz 2007 and Easterly 2002 for divergent overviews of past failures and future approaches to development at the macro level.

Nongovernment organizations have been the primary agents of secular development activities at the local community level over the past six decades. Promoters of NGOs suggest that they are cost-effective in service delivery, have an ability to target poor and vulnerable sections of the population, are able to develop community-based institutions and are able to promote community participation to ensure the likelihood of sustained impact (Fowler, 1991). In addition, NGOs are considered to have intrinsic characteristics 'such as strong grassroots links; field based development expertise; the ability to innovate and adapt; [a] process oriented approach to development; participatory methodologies and tools; long term commitment and emphasis on sustainability; [and] cost-effectiveness' (World Bank, 1995, 15).

NGOs operate across the spectrum of development issues. NGO activities may include both community and advocacy work. Work with communities, or *grass-roots* programs, account for a significant proportion of NGO activities. This includes activities such as the provision of education services, care and support for those with HIV or malaria, feeding programs to improve child nutrition, agricultural extension programs or microfinance schemes. Depending on the nature of the activity, NGOs will include men and women, local leaders, youth representatives, religious leaders and local government officials in decision-making. Because they work closely with those receiving their services, NGOs are better able to target those most in need. NGOs have also recently begun to increase their advocacy work. Advocacy is particularly important in fragile states and where governments are corrupt and are failing to deliver essential services to their citizens. Advocacy programs aim to directly address those responsible for the weak policies that are contributing to poverty. NGOs may work independently or in collaboration with other NGOs. They will identify key policy issues affecting the country and put pressure on both the national government and the international community to address these issues. They may seek additional funds to support better education and training outcomes, or they may focus on increasing participation in the political process by calling on national governments to allow greater freedoms in various public spheres. Their advocacy work is vital to developing transparent and effective governments with strong democratic foundations.

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Success in improving the lives of the poor by NGOs has improved in recent years as these agencies have better understood community dynamics and the importance of supporting community empowerment. Korten (1990) has suggested that there are four typologies of NGO assistance: 1) relief and welfare; 2) community development; 3) sustainable systems

development; and 4) people's movements.<sup>2</sup> Korten posits these classifications as 'generations' along a continuum of best practice – moving from relief and welfare through to people's movements. Within Korten's stylized typologies, the continuum of (northern) NGO practice begins with the provision of relief and welfare services, progresses to the delivery of community development, moves from that to sustainable systems of development and then finally to become a people's movement. As a people's movement, NGOs achieve their greatest effectiveness as they empower local communities to make determinations of need, plan responses and then implement development interventions themselves.

Korten's continuum of typologies contains an implicit assumption, that is that community empowerment increases throughout this progression and this is inherently right and proper. Community empowerment within development interventions has now become widely accepted as the minimum requirement for successful and sustained development outcomes (see Chambers, 2005). The Franciscans Friars in the Aitape area of Papua New Guinea recognized community empowerment as the basis for successful 'development' work over sixty years ago. Moreover, and as will be discussed, the Franciscans also understood the importance of empowering women. While gender has only recently become a 'cross cutting' issue within secular development practice, again the Franciscans understood the centrality of gender to improving well-being many decades earlier.

'Empowerment' is an important development concept (Ife, 1995).<sup>3</sup> The structure of power and domination is overturned when community activities are strengthened and people themselves are allowed to run and take control of these development interventions. Their sense of self worth is restored when they are able to sustain these interventions through their own efforts (Kirk, 2000). They are more encouraged as they see themselves partaking and contributing as members owning their projects. However, empowering communities does not happen immediately and it takes a great deal of struggle, time and effort among people who are committed to genuine community development (Liffman, 1978). Further, cooperation in the community, as well as participation, inclusiveness and consensus are among the different facets of community development that also need to be taken into consideration.

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<sup>2</sup> A fifth classification of 'domestic change agents' is added by de Senillosa (1998), while Clarke (2009) challenges Korten's *participatory progression*, by proposing a new role for NGOs (in certain circumstances) of 'advocate-guardians'.

<sup>3</sup> Empowerment within welfare interventions is less likely to occur due to the nature of the interventions, though it is possible to empower communities during relief activities. Indeed, one of the weaknesses of the major relief effort that followed the 2004 Asian Tsunami was the failure of international NGOs to empower local communities in planning and implementing the relief activities (see Telford and Cosgrave 2006).

Active (as compared to passive acceptance) involvement in all stages of community development, including needs analysis, project identification and design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, makes it more likely that any impact of the particular intervention will be sustained (Uphoff et al., 1998; Dale, 2004). Sustaining the impact of a community development intervention is therefore more likely to be achieved if the beneficiaries, local community and other key stakeholders have actively participated in and 'own' the intervention. There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly, inclusion of those directly affected group in the planning stages will more likely ensure that the right development needs and their causes are identified. Secondly, the responses planned will better take into account local resources and strengths of the local communities that will ensure that there is less reliance on external inputs. Finally, community participation will also aid in the ongoing management of the project as the decision-making processes will have been developed in the initial stages to include the relevant local beneficiaries and key stakeholders, which will continue once the external funding has ceased.

International financial institutions, multilateral agencies, national governments and NGOs have, by and large, incorporated the term 'empowerment' into their development jargon in recent years (see Stiglitz, 1999; Craig and Porter, 1997; Sihlongonyane, 2003). If the rhetoric is transformed into practice, this means that community members are actively encouraged to identify their own needs, design the response, implement the project activities and also monitor it and evaluate its progress. The processes that are used differ between institutional type as well as between institutions themselves, but a common approach is the establishment of Project Community Management Committees (PCMC). Such a committee holds the decision-making power and is inclusive of the local beneficiaries, key stakeholders and local partners.

### **3. Franciscans in PNG**

Mission, as understood in the Catholic Church, is a continuation of Jesus' mission of service rooted in 'love', which itself was entrusted to his disciples whom he sent out (Lk 24:36-49; Jn 20:19-29; Acts 1:6-11). Missionary endeavor promotes human dignity, initiating dialogue and equality as a way of relating with other people (Ascheman, 2002).

Mission requires a preferential option for the poor and the quest for social and economic justice (Gonzalez, 1985; Gutierrez, 1973). The focus of Catholic missionary work is therefore no longer simple proselytizing. For Nemer (2001), missionaries have to live their commitment of serving the poor and the marginalized without preaching or being vocal in their faith. Being silent has far greater benefit and consequences as they work and serve the people of various backgrounds and faith beliefs. Without doing this, the love of Christ and the commitment to follow him may not be

seen by certain people. Miranda (2002) uses Cragg's words to challenge missionaries:

Our first task in approaching another people, another culture, another religion, is to take off our shoes for the place we are approaching is holy. Else we may find ourselves treading on another's dream. More serious still, we may forget...that God was there before our arrival (Bishop Kenneth Cragg in Miranda 2002, p38).

Missionary work and dialogue in developing countries therefore requires living amongst the poor. The lives of the poor are characterized by premature death, preventable illnesses, limited access to clean water and sanitation, economic insecurity and often illiteracy. Missionaries are therefore involved in community development work as they seek to live with those confronting these harsh realities for extended periods of their lives.

In 1942 the Japanese invaded New Guinea and many of the missionaries were either killed or imprisoned, while many catechists<sup>4</sup> continued the work of evangelization. In 1946, after the end of the War in the Pacific, 18 priests and 14 brothers came back to the Sepik area of the Central New Guinea Vicariate and they were joined by six Franciscans from Australia who took over the Divine Word Missionary's mission stations in the west of the Vicariate around Aitape and Vanimo (now the provincial capital of Sandaun province, Papua New Guinea). In 1949, nuns belonging to the order Missionary Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception (now known as Franciscan Missionaries of the Immaculate Conception, FMIC) arrived in the Vicariate and established themselves at Sissano to the west of Aitape and soon after at Fatima on the southern side of the Torricelli Mountains where the Franciscan Friars had already begun to expand. The numbers of friars were bolstered by the arrival in 1952 of a number of Italian Franciscan Friars recently expelled from China. Various congregations of brothers, sisters and priests joined the Franciscans and in May 1952 the Prefecture Apostolic of Aitape was created with the division of the Central New Guinea Vicariate into two Prefecture Apostolics. The Aitape prefecture was overseen by the Franciscan order of friars and Monsignor Ignatius Doggett, a Franciscan, was appointed to oversee this mission.

Under the care of the Australian Franciscans and assisted by their Italian brothers, the Catholic Church in the new Prefecture Apostolic of Aitape, expanded into the upper Sepik region south of the Torricelli Mountains establishing new mission stations and building roads and airstrips to facilitate the ongoing needs of the mission and the missionaries. The Prefecture Apostolic was designated as a Vicariate Apostolic in November

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<sup>4</sup> Catechists are trained lay preachers in the Catholic Church. Many are responsible for the spiritual and pastoral care of whole or part of parishes. They also officiate at formal services when priests are unavailable.

1956 and remained as such until November 15, 1966 when the Diocese of Aitape was established with Bishop Ignatius Doggett installed as the first Bishop of Aitape. The present day diocese has a total of 124 mission workers made up of priests, brothers, nuns and lay people. The diocese has three deaneries (groupings of parishes) with 24 parish centers serving a population of 69,400 Catholics in an area of 12,000 square kilometers stretching from Serra in the west to Suian in the east and from Ali Island in the north to Warasai in the south.<sup>5</sup>

These missionaries were more concerned about empowerment of local people than with the baptism of new converts to Catholicism (Duggan, 1983). According to Duggan, the Franciscans saw the 'development' of the people as an important aspect of their presence amongst the Sepik people. The Franciscans showed great concern for the people and went to great lengths to help them in adapting to the modern, monetized world. Around this time the Franciscans prepared a *Decalogue of Development* to guide their missionary work. The Franciscan decalogue gives a guide to the thinking behind this empowerment approach to Catholic mission in the days prior to and immediately after the formation of the Diocese of Aitape.

#### The Decalogue Of Development

Thou shalt not be ethnocentric  
 Thou shalt not be paternalistic  
 Thou shalt not talk down to people  
 Thou shalt not cross anyone in public  
 Thou shalt listen twice as much as thou speakest  
 Thou shalt find out what are the felt needs of the people  
 Thou shalt consult the people in all projects  
 Thou shalt serve the people in their strivings  
 Thou shalt develop sensitivity to all cultural factors  
 Thou shalt communicate God's love at all times

Source: Duggan 1983

The decalogue of development is significant in that it stresses a serving of the people in the fulfillment of their needs rather than an imposition of an outside doctrine, although by this time Christianity had been present for a number of generations. It is significant that the reference to God is only at the very last and then it is not doctrinal reference but one of relationship.

The missionary work put the local communities at the center of all actions. But just as importantly, it also minimized the importance of the missionaries themselves as actors and agents. This is in contrast to the pivotal role assumed by secular development practitioners who dominate Korten's first three typologies of NGO activities. For example, community members are recipients only within relief and welfare activities and merely passive participants within the community development typology. Secular

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<sup>5</sup> All data and dates from [http://www.global.net.pg/diocese\\_of\\_aitape/aitape/history.html](http://www.global.net.pg/diocese_of_aitape/aitape/history.html)

development practitioners retain the central role in leading and ‘owning’ the development intervention in both typologies. Whilst communities play a more central role in the sustained systems typology, secular development practitioners also remain central agents as the mobilizers of the community. The Franciscan approach is most comparable to the people’s movement typology in which the external agent plays an educator role and the community is empowered to determine the development interventions. A further insight into the prevalent attitude of the importance of community empowerment by these missionaries in its early years is in *Franciscan Mission Aitape: Summary of Resolutions Regarding Development*.

### *Summary of Resolutions Regarding Development*

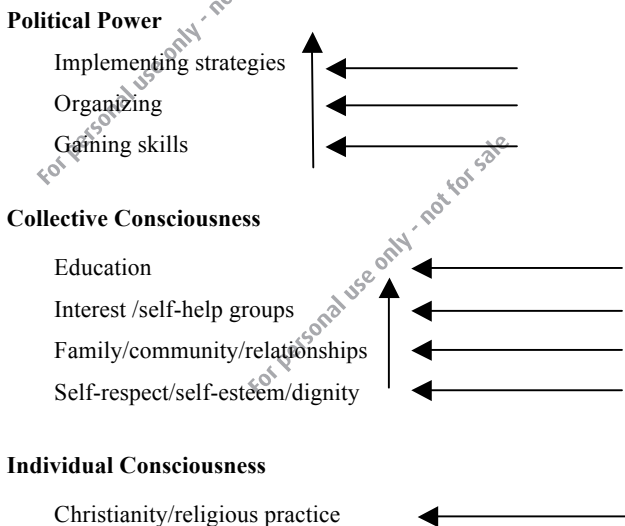
- That we examine our own attitudes and values, discuss them with others, inviting suggestions and criticisms.
- That we each do a time-activity study to see at what time we are really available to the people.
- That we must give true importance to the Sunday homily, by thorough preparation of material related to the life and strivings of the people.
- That visitation be given true emphasis – that it be real personal contact at a time convenient to the people. Having a genuine interest in the customs, relationships, land systems, gardening of the people, we may become attuned to think and feel with them and be aware of changing attitudes.
- In our communication through development, we must work with and through those with status, influence, authority or experience so that we depend on them. That we seek their ideas and through them the people’s. That we give people a chance to grow by praising and encouraging, by submitting our ideas to them, and allowing the initiative to come from them.
- That there be a Mission Band of experts who can be called to move to areas where their expertise is needed.
- That an anthropologist be available in the Diocese and that seminary study include anthropology to bring a deeper understanding of both the home and mission apostolate.
- That a library of useful texts be set up.
- That we re-evaluate our present projects to see their relevance to the needs of the people and whether they are over managed.
- That a Diocesan Development Committee be set up to evaluate, guide and guarantee projects. It should examine whether projects are relevant, it should allow them to develop at the people’s pace and guarantee projects so that once started, they can be completed and maintained.

Source: Duggan 1983

This summary of a development approach by the Franciscan priests of the diocese shows a commitment to the empowerment of people; so that the educator or facilitator (the missionary) endeavoring to understand the people so that his facilitation does not become an imposition upon the people but a demand-driven approach owned by the people. This approach was implemented 40 to 50 years before it was conceived ‘best practice’ by secular development practitioners working for NGOs.

#### 4. Empowerment of Women in the Missions

The decalogue of development and the resolutions regarding development clearly state the need for the people to be involved and have ownership over actions. Missionaries ensured that the people’s voices were heard, that the people were not imposed upon and that all efforts were made to ensure that time was available to enable an understanding of the people by the missionaries and an understanding of the missionaries by the people.



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Figure 1 – Building Empowerment Along a Continuum

Source: Donnelly, 2008 (adapted from Schuler, 1986)

Consideration of how missionaries in Aitape empowered women provides a useful example of their commitment to this ideal. In Donnelly’s (2008) adaptation of Schuler’s model (Figure 1), most development inputs aimed at effecting levels of empowerment are aimed at the level above collective consciousness; at the progression from collective consciousness to political power. This appears to assume that there is already an adequate



level of individual consciousness. Observations and research in relation to the women of the Diocese of Aitape and the physical environment of isolation in which most of these women live, leads to the conclusion that individual consciousness leading to a collective consciousness is the most important level on the empowerment continuum for these women. It is at these levels that awareness of alternatives and aspirations is possible. To acquire the ability to make choices, as Kabeer (1999) describes empowerment, one must be aware that there are choices to be made; that the status quo is not the only way things could be (Scheyvens, 1995). If for example women are able to make choices, the choices they subsequently make are themselves likely to vary from one person to another depending on culture, education level, life experience and many other influences. Individuals are always a part of a larger community, which will impact upon them, and they are subject to the agency of others (Biersack, 1991). The agency of others in enabling women to make choices is also seen as a way of bringing about empowerment for women in developing countries. The effectiveness of such agency however is difficult to determine and agency is '... indeterminate and hence unpredictable in a way that is antithetical to requirements of measurement' (Kabeer, 1999, 462). Therefore determining whether a person is empowered or not as a result of some action or situation is almost impossible to measure, and the success or otherwise of 'agency' will only be known to the individual on whose behalf the agency was enacted. Giving access to resources such as land or credit, or creating provision for political participation or equal educational opportunity are not themselves empowering, but they can allow for a greater degree of consciousness to be achieved that can result in choices to be made which were not previously available. This is empowering. The greater the degree of consciousness, or as one progresses from the level of individual consciousness to collective consciousness, the greater the ability to make choices and the greater the awareness of the availability of choice and the more able one is to exercise the ability to make the choice.

The states of, or levels of, empowerment as outlined by Rowlands (1998), Kabeer (1999) and Friedman (1992) could also be described as 'where a person is at' at any given moment or their position on the empowerment continuum. Between these moments is the progression from one level or degree of empowerment to another. Batliwala (1993) says that empowerment is both a 'process' and also a 'result of that process', indicating that there are different levels of empowerment and that one can be 'empowered' to varying degrees, but regardless of the degree, one is still empowered. The level of empowerment attained by a person could then change over time as one became more or less empowered. This would indicate that empowerment is very much a relative thing, relative to a previous level of empowerment and relative to the level of empowerment of others. In Donnelly's adaptation of Schuler's model, the individual consciousness level could have an infinite range within it, as too could the

collective consciousness level. These are not discrete categories and are relative to what was before and what comes after. Even political empowerment is not discrete as it too will be relative to the environment in which it exists.

The inputs into the empowerment process between the levels of individual consciousness and collective consciousness shown in Figure 2 are the type of inputs required by the decalogue of development which describe the approach taken by the Franciscans during the late 1940s.

While gender was not explicitly mentioned in either the *Decalogue* or the *Summary of Resolutions*, the emphasis made in point 5 of the *Summary* acknowledges the existence of a system of authority and governance that should be recognized, respected and utilized. There is no reference made here to the sex of those with status and influence, so we can only assume that those referred to might vary depending on whom 'the people' concerned with the activity were. If the activity involved women then we must assume that women of status and influence would be 'depended' upon.

The Franciscan Friars on their arrival in the Aitape area were quickly aware, from their western perspective, of the low status of women in PNG. 'Women have a secondary role in Papua New Guinean society. It is a definite role but certainly a lower and physically harder one' (National Franciscan Friar, Paias Teke in Bourke, 1994, 7). On arrival in Aitape the friars immediately wrote to Franciscan sisters in Australia asking for their help in working in particular with women and children. The nuns who first arrived in the Aitape area in 1949 were also Franciscan and they too, like the Franciscan Friars, had a more humanitarian rather than an evangelical approach to their mission. In the newsletter of the Missionary Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception (now known as Franciscan Missionaries of the Immaculate Conception), '*The Seed Grows*', there are numerous stories and references to activities, especially with and by women, which are concerned with improving the quality of life, be it from a health and nutrition or a social, relationship perspective.

Along with a deep concern for the well-being and development of all the people of the diocese, the friars, who under the Bishops of the Diocese (of whom there have been four and all four themselves Franciscans), have identified raising the status of women as one of their expressed objectives. This was achieved through:

- 'developing personal maturity as adult male Religious; comfortable in our position as men in PNG society. To grow as men who appreciate the women who enter our lives as one of God's greatest gifts to us.
- 'giving respect and reverence to all women we meet in everyday life. We must not exploit or abuse the innate trust they give us. We must not belittle them in actions or words and encourage them to use their talents and leadership qualities wherever it is possible.

- ‘being conscious that both men and women watch us to see how we treat our own Religious Sisters – to use the example of Saint Francis and the early friars in their relationship with St Clare and her Sisters as our role model.
- ‘encouraging the *Family Life* apostolates<sup>6</sup> and those who direct them as well as all those directly engaged in the care of women and children. To encourage all forms of women’s groups. To promote in men a strong devotion to Mary, the Mother of God. A devotion to Mary should overflow to all women.
- ‘tackling the increasing incidence of rape and violence to women in a forthright manner by our preaching and teaching. To instruct young men in what it means to be a Christian man and that the violation of any woman in our community is not only a catastrophe for her but an indictment of all the men of her community – including the male Religious.
- ‘making use of the information available to us about women’s issues in PNG.’ (Bourke 1994, 7).

Fr Bourke’s list of ways in which the Franciscans are endeavoring to raise the status of women may appear to be religiously oriented and lacking in practical, concrete efforts to effect change such as convictions for rape might do. But as he also says, ‘there are no atheists in PNG’ (Bourke, 1994, 6) as the people have such a deep spiritual dimension to their world. These efforts by people (the friars) seen as significant players in a large part of the spiritual world in ensuring that the behavior of all Religious adheres to the above six directives, is likely to have a positive impact upon the behavior of others. In spite of this, changing attitudes is a difficult task and Fr Bourke, in reference to the training of young Papua New Guinean priests, says, ‘...male attitudes to women do not change much in the novitiate’ (Bourke, 1994, 6).

The Diocese of Aitape still supports a developmental and empowering approach to its mission amongst the people of the diocese and is still committed to the issue of raising the status of women. The diocese has a range of activities grouped collectively under the heading of Diocesan Development Services. These services are provided and supported by the diocese under the rationale:

‘The Diocese of Aitape has the policy of holistic development of peoples as its standard of service... The main thrust is toward the spiritual health of the people but we realise that a healthy body and mind amid a peaceful and just society are essential to achieve a strong religious environment. So it is that we emphasise health, education, agricultural, social and developmental services through the departments of the Diocese’ (Bishop Austen Crapp,

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<sup>6</sup> *Family Life* is a program facilitated by the Diocese of Aitape for the purpose of enhancing gender relationships between men and women. Initially run by nuns, the *Family Life* program is now implemented by married couples.

Diocese of Aitape web page 2005). With this policy behind it the diocese has full-time officers in the pastoral care areas of women's issues and affairs, youth, Family Life Program and counseling services. The diocese also has enterprises that provide employment and training to a range of people. These areas are media (Aitape Star newspaper), saw mill and brickworks, farm, maintenance and electrical department and its health and care centers and nurse training facility.

## 6. Conclusion

For over sixty years, the international community has sought to improve the lives of the poor. Great improvements have been made in the living standards of the poor with many hundreds of millions of people being lifted from poverty during this time. At the local level, the primary agents of change have been NGOs. While they have played a vital role in improving health, increasing education levels, enhancing access to clean water and hygienic sanitation, etc. they have only in recent years confirmed 'best practice' in these endeavors as resting on the principle of community empowerment. However, over sixty years ago, Franciscan missionaries in the Diocese of Aitape in PNG recognized that successful 'mission' work was only possible through community empowerment. For sixty years, missionaries were practicing community empowerment whilst secular development practitioners were limiting the role of communities in development interventions and therefore limiting their impact. This paper has highlighted the foresight of missionaries in PNG. Secular development practitioners have much to learn from missionaries in their shared goal of improving the lives of the poor.

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**PART FIVE**

**CONFERENCE REPORTS**

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# URBAN MISSION DEVELOPMENT PROJECT, UK: REPORT TO E2010 COMMISSION VII FROM UK URBAN MISSION JULY 2009

Erica Dunmow

## Introduction and Process

The UK Urban Mission Congress Trust holds a triennial event for local urban mission practitioners (lay and ordained) called *Jesus in the City* (JITC) next due in 2010. The JITC Executive agreed with Edinburgh 2010 that it should link in to the Study Process via Commission VII as its theme for *JITC Belfast 2010*. The JITC Executive set up a process of listening to evidence on the themes and questions for Commission VII which began in June 2008. Apart from the speakers at these events, the comments were made anonymously. This is because speakers were sometimes challenging their traditions, orthodoxies and they do not want that reported. Some organizations turned down the opportunity to be part of the formal listening process for similar reasons. The learning from these events has informed some of the author's statements. The events where there was agreement to be 'heard' are listed in Table 1 below. The majority of the events were non aligned or non denominational and most were hosted by Christian social action/urban mission agencies for people working in local urban contexts. Thus, although some reference will be made to publications, the material in this report is almost entirely drawn from the events whose organizers had agreed that they would be part of the listening and evidence-gathering process.

Four members of the UK Urban Mission Congress Trust attended the events whose organizers had agreed to take part in this listening process. Two gave a time slot for structured discussion, but in most cases the rapporteurs simply listened to what was said at the event and noted responses under the Commission VII study 'Themes and Questions'. Additionally, an Urban Refreshment Day in Wales, planned jointly with (CYTUN) Churches Together in Wales, Gweini (a project of the Evangelical Alliance Wales); and the Catholic Justice and Peace Networks for Cardiff Archdiocese and Wrexham Diocese, was organized specifically

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<sup>1</sup> Where there are directly attributable comments or evidence from a particular event, these are endnoted with their full title for the first reference and by a shorthand title thereafter, unless clearly identified in the text.

to look at the themes, through the lens of illustrative case studies of mission in the urban context in Wales.

Those reporting were – Erica Dunmow, Urban Mission Development Advisor (the author of this paper), Bishop Roger Sainsbury, President FYT and Chair JITC 2010 Executive; Andy Wier, JITC 2010 Executive member, Community Regeneration Consultant; Katy Armstrong, Urban Mission Networks Support Officer; Michael Eastman, Secretary, Evangelical Coalition for Urban Mission. Their initials appear against the meetings they attended.

<p><b>Structured discussion at:</b>  Urban Mission Forum, Youth at risk in the City, London, October 2008 [ME, ED]  Methodist City Center Network, spring meeting, Darlington, February 2009 [ED]  Adfywio'n Trefi-Urban Refreshment – a day of conversation and prayer about mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Newport, Wales, June 2009, [RS, ED]</p>
<p><b>Formal listening:</b>  Evangelical Fellowship of the Anglican Communion, Pre-Lambeth Urban Workshop, June 2008 [RS]  National Estate Churches Network, day conference, London, October 2008 [ME, ED]  National Estate Churches Network, day conference, Manchester, October 2008 [KA]  David Stevens, Leader Corrymeela Community, Churches Community Work Alliance Meeting, Belfast, November 2008 [ED]  Ann Morisy, Community Theologian, Methodist City Center Network Conference, November 2008 [ED]  Urban Theology Collective, St Deiniol's Library, December 2008 [AW]  London Urban Theology Project, Westbourne Park, London, December 2008 [ME, ED]  Scripture Union Scotland, Beauty for Ashes Conference, Dundee, February 2009 [ED]  Catholic Association for Racial Justice Urban Network, February 2009 [ED]  Christian Response to Unemployment Day Conference, Frontier Youth Trust and Trinity College, Bristol, February 2009 [RS]  Yorkshire and the Humber Urban Mission Network, Spring Meeting, Sheffield, March 2009 [KA]</p>
<p><b>Informal listening:</b>  The author attended several other gatherings that did not agree to be a place of formal consultation or which had not been approached to be so. These are unattributed to protect the confidentiality of the gatherings.</p>

*Table 1*

In order to relate the Commission VII Themes and Questions to UK urban mission practitioners, Erica Dunmow (on behalf of the JITC Executive) undertook some work on interpreting them and linking them to examples of the practical issues faced in the UK urban mission context. Table 2, below, is the framework that was used. At each of the events

reported on, the listeners used a standard report form to gather responses. One special day event – Adfywio'n Trefi – Urban Refreshment, held in Newport, Wales in June 09 was organized specifically on the Commission VII themes. In order to cover the themes in one day, they were grouped into four 'Streams'. These are also indicated on Table 2. In some respects, grouping the Themes into Streams appears to lose some of the richness of response, but in reality, many of the issues faced by the urban mission practitioner are very interrelated and therefore aggregating them is more true to life.

Most of the process was one of listening rather than directed discussion. This meant that the most difficult and contentious topics were largely avoided. Question 4 was deliberately not addressed in Wales at the Urban Refreshment event. In the Welsh context, meetings across the traditions/denominations are held less frequently than elsewhere in Britain, and the seeking of common ground was felt to be more important for the process than discussing an issue that could highlight denominational and ecclesiological differences. Likewise, the full text of Question 7, which touches upon issues of sexuality that are very divisive in the current UK Christian context, was only covered in the Methodist City Center Network meeting where the discussions were structured. Urban Refreshment and the Scripture Union Scotland event covered the third more general question about ill health.

This lack of engagement with the most contentious issues demonstrates how hard it is for churches to tackle their difficulties and remain in fellowship with each other. The Welsh event usefully addressed problem in their answers to Question 3.

This paper will follow the Commission VII Themes and Questions and then draw an overall conclusion.

### **1. Poverty, Suffering and Marginalized Communities:**

How do adjectives of Christian community such as discipling, healing, witnessing, contextual become lived realities in today's world?

Ann Morisy<sup>2</sup> and David Stevens<sup>3</sup> both spoke about the contribution that individual Christians can make to the well-being of their communities by their attitudes to life. Morisy talked about the importance of countering anxiety by the use of humor and looking at the world with 'softened eyes', as one would a baby. Stevens, addressing the particularities of Northern Ireland, spoke of the need to respond to cynicism and a growing sense of disillusionment in the peace process within the more working class

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<sup>2</sup> Ann Morisy, Community Theologian, Methodist City Center Network Conference, Swanwick (MCCN Swanick) November 2008.

<sup>3</sup> David Stevens, Leader Corrymeela Community, Churches Community Alliance Meeting, Belfast November 2008.

communities with the ‘counter voice of hope’. Both of these positive attitudes can be seen as fruits of the Spirit. It is vital that discipling enables people to see beyond the scare mongering voices of the media and elsewhere to give a grounded sense of the possibilities of the future. We have to live in the kingdom that is imperfectly here but with trust that it can move closer towards the perfect hereafter. As the National Estate Churches Network Manchester conference put it we have to: ‘empower people to look outside the box’ and ‘raise their eyes beyond their surroundings.’<sup>4</sup> Speakers at their London event talked of the local church as ‘a place of continuity and welcome in communities where there is a very high turnover of population.’<sup>5</sup> This is a vital thing where in some areas there is a population change of over 20% change per year. The Evangelical Fellowship of the Anglican Communion made reference to the parable of the Good Samaritan as a key discipling model saying that ‘it will involve us...crossing boundaries of faith, culture and race.’<sup>6</sup> This cross-cultural mission works in many directions.

It is interesting that the specific issue of rising unemployment was absent from the formal Commission VII Themes and Questions. Stevens<sup>7</sup> spoke of how the Protestant working class was the most marginalized group in Belfast because they had a higher rate of unemployment from the traditional ship building and other heavy industries. The Frontier Youth Trust has a clear view that where communities are marginalized there is ‘rapidly rising unemployment, impacting particularly on the young.’<sup>8</sup> The church also compounds marginalization in its leadership selection and training processes. Vocations seem more easily recognized from white and/or middle class people and congregations, which means that many of our urban church leaders are effectively engaged in cross-cultural mission. The mainstream churches are gradually becoming aware of the need to grow leaders from within the indigenous working class population especially where churches serve those communities. Urban Expression, The Message Trust’s Eden Projects (both urban church planting initiatives) and the Pioneer Ministries developments within the Church of England and Methodist Church are beginning to address this. The older Afro-Caribbean origin denominations of the Black Majority Churches (BMCs) in the UK are also beginning to take very seriously the issues of cross-cultural mission where they aim to serve the general population (sometimes white

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<sup>4</sup> National Estate Churches Network (NECN), day conference, Manchester, October 2008.

<sup>5</sup> National Estate Churches Network (NECN), day conference, London, October 08

<sup>6</sup> Evangelical Fellowship of the Anglican Communion, Pre-Lambeth Urban Workshop (EFAC-Urban Workshop), June 2008.

<sup>7</sup> David Stevens, CCWA Belfast.

<sup>8</sup> Christian Response to Unemployment Day Conferences (CRU-FYT and Trinity College), Frontier Youth Trust and Trinity College, Bristol, February 2009.

majority) in the areas where their (gathered) congregations meet for worship.

Two papers at the Urban Theology Collective addressed the need for the churches to model good ways of relating to avoid marginalising groups.<sup>9</sup> John Higgins said that ‘the church needs to rediscover what it once knew about protecting children’ and Lesley Ann Bailey spoke of the importance of churches as a place of support and welcome for children with disabilities and their families.

Some gatherings talked about the very human processes involved in being good disciples. The Yorkshire and Humber Urban Mission Network made reference to the difficulty of getting older, white Britons to talk openly about God, and then to integrate that talk with everyday life.<sup>10</sup> The churches in this context need to encourage meeting to ‘eat, talk and pray’ and to help people move from simply ‘engaging with church activities to engaging with God.’<sup>11</sup> The Methodist City Center Network event in Darlington spoke of ‘walking the streets, sharing pie and peas in Peterlee and curry and halal pizza in Bradford.’<sup>12</sup> One of the characteristics of urban congregations is they are often much smaller in numbers than suburban congregations. Speakers at the Urban Theology Collective reiterated what many in such settings know, that it is the faithfulness in worship and witness of such organizations that enable them to undertake the quietly effective transformative work of good news, working ‘with, not just for’ local communities.<sup>13</sup>

The people attending the Urban Refreshment Welsh event spoke about the key place that prayer has, and how a growing number of inter church and inter denominational projects are grounded in praying together: ‘it was acknowledged that years of prayer has predated the work done together’ by churches tackling homelessness in Wrexham.<sup>14</sup> They talked also of the healing that comes about ‘when people were affirmed and then given a purpose.’<sup>15</sup> This event saw Isaiah 61:1-2a (quoted by Jesus in the Nazareth

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<sup>9</sup> John Higgins ‘Child Protection’ and Lesley Ann Bailey ‘Transformed Lives – Transformed Families’, unpublished papers both presented at Urban Theology Collective (UT Collective), St Deiniol’s Library, December 2008.

<sup>10</sup> The Methodist Church produced a very helpful booklet ‘Time to Talk of God’ in 2008 that has opened up this sort of conversation much more, and the Church Action on Poverty ‘Just Church’ course and the Tearfund/Livability Community Mission ‘Just People’ course are two valuable resources.

<sup>11</sup> Yorkshire and the Humber Urban Mission Network (YandH UM Network), Sheffield, March 2009.

<sup>12</sup> Methodist City Center Network Spring meeting, Darlington (MCCN Darlington), February 2009.

<sup>13</sup> UT Collective.

<sup>14</sup> Adfywio’n Trefi-Urban Refreshment – a day of conversation and prayer about mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (AT-Urban Refreshment), Newport, Wales, June 2009.

<sup>15</sup> Stream 1 Theme 1, AT- Urban Refreshment, Wales.

synagogue<sup>16</sup>) as a key paradigm on which to base the outworking of Christian community. The Methodist City Center Network spoke about ‘the need to put first the needs of those who are suffering most’ and that we need to look at ‘the assets within the people and the community – [e.g.] resistance, health and hope, informal groups of support.’<sup>17</sup> Another helpful theological notion is that of incarnation. ‘Incarnation is messy, and we make a mess, but we carry on despite this and must give each other permission to make mistakes too,’<sup>18</sup> and together seek forgiveness.

The notion that mission needs to be an integrated process including practical action, proclamation and community/civic engagement best done with other churches, is gaining much greater ground in the UK through initiatives such as *HOPE 08* and the earlier *United We Stand* process of the Evangelical Alliance UK. This includes congregations that might previously have concentrated on personal piety and individual conversion realising that ‘Jesus was proactive and reactive: we need to stop being just reactive. [So] we need to be more prophetic, speaking out to get agendas/rules changed... we need to find out whose voice is heard and talk to them.’<sup>19</sup> It can be an uphill struggle to disciple lay people from one form of Christianity to another. It can also be tough to broach the God question with people in the UK context. The Yorkshire and Humber Urban Mission Network spoke of the challenges in working with people who do come into church premises: how we should try to ‘move [them] from engaging with church activities to engaging with God and receiving the Good News.’<sup>20</sup>

## 2. Globalization and the Reproduction of Hierarchies:

What is involved in being the church in the cities and mega-cities of today?

City center ministry has been summed up by the Methodist City Center Network, which specializes in this area of mission, as demonstrating ‘the love of God as seen in Christ, for all who live, work and spend time in the city center.’<sup>21</sup> One of the most interesting questions that was raised under this Theme was ‘What does ‘community’ mean in the city center?’<sup>22</sup> Ann Morisy talked of the flows in and out of city centers and how the church in that setting can be a place of encounter with the separate flows and a place of bringing those flows into connection with each other.<sup>23</sup> This can be especially challenging in providing various sorts of worship that feed the spirituality of those different groups and still enables them to feel part of

<sup>16</sup> Luke 4:16-21.

<sup>17</sup> MCCN Darlington.

<sup>18</sup> Stream 1 Theme 1, AT-Urban Refreshment, Wales.

<sup>19</sup> NECN-Manchester.

<sup>20</sup> YandH Network.

<sup>21</sup> MCCN Darlington.

<sup>22</sup> YandH Network.

<sup>23</sup> Ann Morisy, MCCN Swanick.

the wider body of Christ.<sup>24</sup> The Urban Theology Collective however, felt that the pattern of movement is not uniform across the communities of a city and that ‘there is a risk of overstating...the declining significance of ‘the local.’<sup>25</sup> While this may be true of new developments around city centers, attachment to the local within many urban neighbourhoods remains strong.<sup>26</sup>

One of the most challenging flows is obviously that of the migration of people; more hidden but just as powerful is the flow of money. Several respondents were clear that engaging with this is the business of mission. A youth worker felt that churches should be ‘campaigning for governments to change economic priorities and to agree living wage targets.’<sup>27</sup> However churches do not have common answers. David Stevens talked of the tensions between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland both because they were differentially impacted by economic pressures, but also because they wanted different economic models as solutions.<sup>28</sup>

City center ministry often involves having a place at the civic table – including local cross-sectoral regeneration partnerships (called Local Strategic or Community Planning Partnerships in the UK). But in such contexts it is possible to let the ‘churches’ mission sink beneath the waves of regulation.<sup>29</sup> Also, just as in matters of theology the churches do not speak with one voice, so their engagement with civic and secular structures is not uniform. Civic and secular authorities want a ‘one-stop’ place of conversation, but we are doing a disservice to the complexity of our understandings of mission if we let one strand in the church hold the ring. The trick is to find a way of being connected in our differences. The Evangelical Alliance Wales set up a network called Gweini in the early 2000s to provide an interface with the local authorities. This began as an initiative to serve the whole Christian community. It gradually became clear that whilst on simple issues, such as the need for a shelter for homeless people, it was fairly easy to work together, on the more complex policy matters less so. Some parts of the Church of England see social care changes as an opportunity to contract with central government as a welfare agency;<sup>30</sup> other traditions want to retain their prophetic independence. The

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<sup>24</sup> MCCN Darlington.

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<sup>25</sup> In this context, this means that which is done locally, not the informal English word for a public house!

<sup>26</sup> UT Collective. Teachers serving schools on the Manor Estate, Sheffield, a social housing area with four generations of unemployment three miles from the center, often find that school trips can be the first time their pupils have been to the city center (author’s knowledge).

<sup>27</sup> CRU – FYT and Trinity College.

<sup>28</sup> David Stevens, CCWA Belfast.

<sup>29</sup> NECN-London.

<sup>30</sup> See Francis Davis, Elizabeth Paulhus and Andrew Bradstock, *Moral but No Compass: Government, Church and the Future of Welfare: A Report by the Von*



2007 report *Faithful Cities*<sup>31</sup> looked at what was happening in the urban in the UK and saw the lack of commitment from the established churches to resource and prioritize urban mission as a problem. The Evangelical Fellowship of the Anglican Communion held an urban mission workshop as one of its Lambeth 2008 pre-Conference events. The workshop produced a set of priorities for the church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>32</sup> One of the strong comments from that event was that the churches ‘must seek the welfare of our cities and this will involve holistic, incarnational mission.’<sup>33</sup>

Although the Urban Theology Collective warns of being seduced into the current rhetoric about the UK being post-religious or post Christian as ‘spirituality is one of the greatest issues of our day,’<sup>34</sup> the movement of people around our cities mean that some historic churches no longer have a large congregation. Such churches are looking to creative ways of enabling the buildings to be held in trust for the local community. The challenge raised, at the London Urban Theology Project, by a lay Christian working as an architect with an interest in this area, was when to decide to do this. She considered when churches should create a resource such as social housing on the site, and when to pass on the resource, perhaps to a newer denomination.<sup>35</sup> The response from those newer churches is that more constructive conversation with the property authorities of the historic denominations on this would be helpful,<sup>36</sup> to avoid the new denominations being simply left with the problem buildings of the historic churches. This again reflects one of the difficulties of doing mission in a joined up way.

One paper at the London Urban Theology Project (presented in a re-edited form at Commission VII’s conference, in December 2008),<sup>37</sup> speaks of how our churches are in danger of replicating the hierarchies of society in the way that they select and train leaders. Jesus’ action was counter to this: relatively uneducated men were given the instruction to ‘Follow me’, a

*Hugel Institute Commissioned by the Rt. Rev’d Stephen Lowe, Bishop for Urban Life and Faith* (Chelmsford: Matthew James Publishing, 2008).

<sup>31</sup> The Archbishops’ Council, *Faithful Cities: A Call for Celebration, Vision and Justice* (London: MPH and Church House Publishing, 2006).

<sup>32</sup> ‘Anglican Ten Commandments for Urban Mission’ developed at Evangelical Fellowship of the Anglican Communion, Pre-Lambeth Urban Workshop (EFAC-Urban Workshop), Trinity College, Bristol, June 2008.

<sup>33</sup> EFAC-Urban Workshop.

<sup>34</sup> UT Collective.

<sup>35</sup> London Urban Theology Project (LUTP), Westbourne Park, London, December 2008.

<sup>36</sup> Conversation between the author and pastors in the West Yorkshire African Caribbean Churches Council, 2007.

<sup>37</sup> Erica Dunmow, ‘London Overview from the Provinces’, personal, unpublished paper presented to London Urban Theology Project December 2008; Erica Dunmow, ‘The Challenge of Indigenous Leadership in the UK Urban Mission Context’, personal unpublished paper presented to Edinburgh 2010 Commission VII Study Themes Conference, December 2008.

phrase usually used by rabbis to call people to a process of intensive ‘*yeshiva*’ training. But even in the Gospels the tension around leadership is there from start to finish. Simon Peter, a relatively poor fisherman, the first-called, fishing in the shallows by hand, is challenged for leadership by James and John, richer men whose father has hired crew for their boat.<sup>38</sup> Right up to the Last Supper Jesus has to tell them that hierarchy is not what his style of ministry is about.<sup>39</sup> Maybe the fact that it is Peter who is finally given the shepherd’s role (not a Pharisee’s or judge’s one) is because Jesus knows his gut instinct will be to look out for poor people, yet Peter himself cannot quite believe it.<sup>40</sup>

The ideas about civic engagement in this Theme were powerfully summed up by the Christian Response to Unemployment event, which stated that the churches’ civic engagement must be on ‘caring for the unemployed, assisting in job creation projects, campaigning for governments to change economic priorities and to agree living wage targets.’<sup>41</sup>

### 3. Christianity and Socio-political Action:

How can the local-church be an agent of the kingdom of God and a source of healing and reconciliation?

Attendees at the Welsh event<sup>42</sup> were invited to select Biblical or other spiritual resources as part of their responses to the Commission VII Themes. Those looking at Theme 3 used the passage in John’s Gospel where Jesus encounters the Samaritan woman at the well<sup>43</sup> as a paradigm. It is one of the longest encounters between Jesus and someone who is not one of the Twelve. The passage was felt helpful in the following ways. Firstly, the Samaritan woman is not initially the recipient of Jesus help – Jesus asks her for help. Secondly, she is an outcast person who is asked to provide support for the person from the dominant culture that often oppresses her people. Three, Jesus knows who she is in terms of her unorthodox relationships but does not refuse to engage with her because of that. Four, Jesus witnesses to spiritual truths in a way that connects them to practical action. Five, the woman becomes one of the first evangelists – passing on to others what she has experienced and believes about Jesus. The passage spoke to the group of honest and integrated engagement and about reversing the usual pattern of Christians being seen as always the providers.

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<sup>38</sup> See Mark 1:16-20.

<sup>39</sup> See Luke 22:24-30.

<sup>40</sup> See John 21:15-21.

<sup>41</sup> CRU-FYT and Trinity College.

<sup>42</sup> AT - Urban Refreshment, Wales.

<sup>43</sup> John 4:7-42.

Social cohesion is a current buzz word within the UK government circles at the moment and faith communities<sup>44</sup> are seen as one of the providers of the 'bridging social capital'<sup>45</sup> that is expected to help create neighborhoods in which individuals from diverse backgrounds feel comfortable with each other. Some of the leaders of the new Black churches, such as Revd Nims Obunge, a founder of Haringey Peace Alliance are seen as important players within London in delivering this policy. Engagement across communities does not mean hiding our faith: 'we are a value-based Christian organization and we are not going to hide this in working with Government.'<sup>46</sup> In the past, churches most involved in civic engagement and social action often let this become separated from faith-sharing and discipleship – a process of 'mission creep' – that they are now beginning to mend. Attenders at the Methodist City Center Network felt that keeping Christian distinctiveness entails 'developing a vision from within Kingdom values,<sup>47</sup> arising within the local context, enabled by the church's response,<sup>48</sup> *Faithworks* and the Churches Regional Commission for Yorkshire and the Humber also commissioned a qualitative study about what makes Christian presence effective.<sup>49</sup> Their preliminary findings showed that the place of prayer was found to be more important to many of the 'presences' than their Christian ethos – i.e. living a faith and integrating our talking to God about social action, has more impact than statements about how we will work.<sup>50</sup> The Effective Christian Presence and Enterprise Report also found that some people did come to faith through their engagement with the 'presences', and that the biggest impact was had on

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<sup>44</sup> This is the term that the UK statutory bodies use to encompass followers of all the major world religions, calling each religion – its authorities and followers – a 'faith community'.

<sup>45</sup> A term coined by Rob Furbey and Marilyn Macey in their work for the Commission for Urban Life and Faith: Robert Furbey and Marilyn Macey, *Religion and Urban Regeneration: A Place for Faith?* (Bristol: The Policy Press, 2005). It refers to the fact that communities have helpful human resources (social capital) when they make links (bridges) to other communities or between sections of their community.

<sup>46</sup> NECN-Manchester.

<sup>47</sup> The word 'k/Kingdom' in phrases such as 'kingdom values' or 'kingdom building' or 'kingdom processes' is used by a growing number of Christians in the UK context as shorthand for an approach to mission in which different traditions and denominations work together for wider community benefit, rather than in the self-interest of their own church/congregation. It does not mean that they are not seeking to encourage people to be followers of Jesus but that they acknowledge that seekers might find other churches more congenial to them.

<sup>48</sup> MCCN- Darlington.

<sup>49</sup> *Effective Christian Presence and Enterprise* (London and Leeds: Faithworks and CRC, 2008).

<sup>50</sup> Personal communication with Ian Drummond, the researcher for the Effective Christian Presence and Enterprise Report.

the faith understanding of staff and Management Committee members, especially those who were initially of no faith.

Education has long been an area of contribution by the churches in the UK – indeed what is now the state system, grew out of the 19<sup>th</sup> century church-based Sunday Schools that provided basic literacy and numeracy and technical skills, as well as religious instruction. There is current controversy as to whether faith schools (the official government terminology is ‘schools of a religious character’) are contributing to social cohesion or not.<sup>51</sup> This was the topic of one of the papers at the London Urban Theology Project meeting in December 2008, and of a major discussion at the Urban Network of the Catholic Association for Racial Justice meeting in February 2009. The former, looking at the specifics of the inner London context from an Anglican perspective, concluded that Church of England primary schools were better at reflecting the range of diversity in the population of their catchment area than C of E secondary ones were. Most tended to use the syllabus for RE set by their local Schools Advisory Committee for Religious Education (SACRE – an interfaith body that advises each local authority on these matters), and aimed to serve the local community with good education rather than primarily aim to train new Christians.<sup>52</sup> The (mainly Catholic) CARJ Urban Network discussed the 2008 Runnymede Trust report into faith schools and community cohesion.<sup>53</sup> Here there was agreement that the Catholic Schools were aiming to provide specifically Catholic teaching to their pupils but a recognition that this did not have to be incompatible with social cohesion. This is partly because concepts such as respect for the dignity of the person, the common good, and social justice are a key part of Catholic Social Teaching post Vatican II.<sup>54</sup> Two recent internal Catholic reports also showed that 80-85% of their pupils thought that their school encouraged respect for different races and religions.<sup>55</sup> The matter is made more complex by the range of issues that affect cohesion – race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, disability etc. On some issues the school might advocate a more clearly inclusive stance than others – e.g. Catholic schools often have a better than average representation of African-Caribbean and

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<sup>51</sup> In England, the Church of England, Roman Catholic and Methodist denominations all provide schools that are part of the state system (i.e. do not charge fees like the private schools) and receive state funding, but have greater control over their selection procedures than the state schools.

<sup>52</sup> Henry Everitt ‘Faith Schools: Blessing or Curse?’, paper presented at LUTP.

<sup>53</sup> Rob Berkeley with Savita Vij *Right to Divide? Faith Schools and Community Cohesion* (London: Runnymede Trust, 2008).

<sup>54</sup> Catholic Association for Racial Justice Urban Network (CARJ-Urban Network), February 2009.

<sup>55</sup> ‘Ethnicity, Identity and Achievement in Catholic Education’ (2003) and ‘Formation for Citizenship in Catholic Schools’ (2006) both written by the Catholic Education Service, cited at CARJ-Urban Network.

working class pupils than other schools in their area, but some have no non-Catholic pupils.<sup>56</sup> The Church of England has voluntarily opted to retain 25% of their school places for non-Anglicans;<sup>57</sup> a very few Catholic schools based in areas with high Moslem populations are specifically allocating places for non-Christians, but there was considerable disquiet at the CARJ Urban Network meeting about the idea that any compulsory quota system be imposed.<sup>58</sup>

If churches themselves are divided, how can we aim for reconciliation in the wider community when we have not healed ourselves?

The Urban Refreshment Welsh event tackled this struggle with internal tensions. The group looking at Theme 1 (Stream 1) presented two cases where living the reality of healing in the community was – by the process of a breadth of denominations working together – modeling healing and reconciliation in action. Gweini, a project of Evangelical Alliance Wales, working with a Church in Wales priest, has supported the development of an interfaith Street Carers network in Cardiff. In Wrexham, local government action is ‘pushing churches into carrying out God’s will...through it the churches are finding their mission. The civic authorities see that this initiative is good and have responded generously to it. Churches offer something extra – the dimension of love: God’s love for us and our love for others.’<sup>59</sup> They also talked of the need for perseverance and continued hope when action failed.

The group at the Welsh event looking at Theme 3 (Stream 4) also examined this issue of the need for internal reconciliation in the body of Christ. Matters of women in leadership and the place of gay and lesbian people are deeply divisive for some traditions and between traditions in the UK. The group felt however that mission could not simply be put on hold until these issues were resolved, as service to the community is an imperative. Churches had to find a way of acknowledging their brokenness and disagreements, and then seeking the common, ‘kingdom’ ground to enable them to serve together despite the differences.<sup>60</sup>

One of the key issues that is impacting upon the UK urban scene is the regrowth of the level of unemployment, which causes disjunctures between people in communities that then need to be healed. A paper written by Roger Sainsbury<sup>61</sup> – recently retired as Chair of the Center for Youth Ministry (which coordinates training for Christian youth workers) and one of the JITC Executive members acting as listener collecting evidence for this paper – examines the likely impact of growing unemployment on young people. Dave Wiles, CEO of the Frontier Youth Trust is quoted in

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<sup>56</sup> CARJ-Urban Network.

<sup>57</sup> Everitt.

<sup>58</sup> CARJ-Urban Network.

<sup>59</sup> Theme 1, AT-Urban Refreshment.

<sup>60</sup> Stream 4, AT-Urban Refreshment.

<sup>61</sup> Roger Sainsbury, ‘Back on the Road to Wigan Pier’, private paper, 2009.

Roger Sainsbury's paper as saying to his regional staff that 'I think we need to be very concerned about the sense of failure and low self-esteem that is impacting young people who are unemployed now in 2009.' One of Frontier Youth Trust's local staff in Devon reports: '[The young people's] career aspirations [mechanic, laborer, farm worker] whilst not being high are for them simply not achievable. This has led to antisocial behavior that spirals quickly...violent behavior towards peers, and a complete loss of hope and self esteem...[T]hese are boys who would usually settle down in the adult world quite quickly, and who are socially able and keen to work. Unemployment strips away any belief, purpose and hope at a time in these young people's lives they need it most.'<sup>62</sup> The 1980s produced ample evidence of the corrosive and divisive effects of unemployment. This was strongly confirmed by two black unemployed young Christians from East London in their response to Roger Sainsbury's paper on unemployment.<sup>63</sup> Niall Cooper of Church Action On Poverty, quoted in Sainsbury, says that government policy in recent years has 'been built on the assumption that there is work available, and the question is how to enable various 'disengaged' groups...to get [it]. This strategy is now out of date...'<sup>64</sup>

The Church of England sees that an early response is needed 'not only because their immediate career hopes are dashed but because...it can critically damage their sense of belonging within a social contract which encourages civic engagement and community relations.'<sup>65</sup> The 2009 February Synod called for wealthier parts of the church to respond, and challenged the church to do better at integrating the practical responses to the spiritual, theological and worshipping life of the local church, so that social action should be seen as part of discipleship. One of the Christian projects set up since the 1980s to educate local congregations for that engaged spirituality is Livability's Community Mission Team (formerly the Shaftesbury Society). Reports such as *Angels and Advocates* by the Churches Regional Commission for Yorkshire and the Humber; the Catalyst Trust's *Urban Mission Toolkit* and the work of Unlock in producing discipling materials that are real about the demands of urban poverty, are all valuable resources that should mean that the church is far better equipped to take socio economic action in the local community than it was 30 years ago.<sup>66</sup>

The Urban Mission Forum in the autumn of 2008 took as its theme 'Youth at risk in the City'. It was held at a point when the extent of the

<sup>62</sup> Chris Turner, quoted in Sainsbury, 'Back on the Road to Wigan Pier', Chapter 1.

<sup>63</sup> Roger Sainsbury, personal communication with the author, 2009.

<sup>64</sup> Niall Cooper, CEO Church Action on Poverty, quoted in Sainsbury, Chapter 4.

<sup>65</sup> Implications of Financial Crisis and Recession, General Synod Paper GS 1719 February 2009 (Church of England)

<sup>66</sup> Churches Regional Commission for Yorkshire and the Humber *Angels and Advocates* (Leeds: CRC, 2003); visit [www.catalysttrust.org](http://www.catalysttrust.org) for their Urban Mission Toolkit and [www.unlock-urban.org.uk](http://www.unlock-urban.org.uk) for their resource materials.

recession was less obvious. How much greater will the risk be once the recession bites deep? The discussions highlighted the need for the church to counter negative stereotypes, especially those of young people. One person called the church ‘an agent of counter-cultural mission to the community’.<sup>67</sup> Several spoke of how the churches needed to ‘focus on the factors feeding violent gang behavior rather than the factors feeding gang membership.’ Some felt that the church needed to critique society as a whole as there was a danger of ‘dysfunctional children being taught by dysfunctional adults.’<sup>68</sup> The keynote speaker was Dr Joe Aldred, Minority Ethnic Affairs Officer of Churches Together in England, reporting on CTE research into the churches’ response to youth violence. Aldred said how important it is not to assume that gang members are ‘morally deficient’: such responses, he maintained, plus calls for punitive measures to respond to drug dealers, lack ‘both compassion and understanding’ and that the ‘church must move away from [such responses] if it is to be ‘salt and light’ and constructive peacemakers [sic] in our communities.’<sup>69</sup> He challenged the church to redeem the idea of ‘gang’ – one respondent said, ‘after all Jesus belonged to a gang.’<sup>70</sup> The group also called for a theology of childhood – do we see young people as God does and treat them accordingly?

This forum, along with a growing number of Christian commentators and other people at the events where we listened, talked about the churches needing to take pre-emptive action with secular and other decision-makers as well as engaging in service provision. One person said: ‘A lot of what we do [now] is to pull people out of the river where they’re drowning – this doesn’t quite resonate, but it is important. When is it time to go upstream and stop them falling in, in the first place?’<sup>71</sup> The Evangelical Fellowship of the Anglican Communion talked of the local church as ‘an agent of the kingdom of God by encouraging the ministry of prophetic evangelism in the tradition of the Old Testament prophets and Jesus.’<sup>72</sup> Speaking out against unjust structures is also good news for poor people.

Robert Beckford and Rev. Calver Anderson spoke at the Birmingham Urban Theology Forum in March 2009 about the African-Caribbean perspective on this issue. Calver Anderson gave positive examples of work with disaffected young people from within the Black churches. However, one questioner asked why there are fewer socio-political actions coming from within the African-Caribbean community now than in the 20<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Urban Mission Forum (UM Forum), *Youth at Risk in the City*, London, October 2008.

<sup>68</sup> UM Forum.

<sup>69</sup> Dr Joe Aldred, Dr Sophie Hebden and Dr Keith Hebden *Who is My Neighbour? A Church Response to Social Disorder Linked to Gangs, Drugs, Guns and Knives* (London: Churches Together in England, 2008), 43.

<sup>70</sup> UM Forum.

<sup>71</sup> UM Forum.

<sup>72</sup> EFAC-Urban Workshop.

century. Beckford responded that he felt that the community has lost much of its hope. There is surely a major indictment here of the mainstream denominations who have often sidelined and ignored the ethnic minority and Black Majority Church<sup>73</sup> offering to Christian mission in Britain. This is finally shifting. In September 2007 a group of African pastors in Glasgow brought together the mainstream denominations to model a powerful, holistic piece of mission action where whole hearted proclamation of the gospel was fully integrated with political action.<sup>74</sup> (See Section 5 below for more on the minority ethnic communities' impact on mission.)

But socio political action by churches is fraught even when the desired outcome is clear and consensual. People at the Yorkshire and Humber event spoke of the need for 'training on project development, organizational development, business skills and planning'<sup>75</sup> if church-based social action is to be effective and credible with secular authorities. The solutions to problems are not always agreed either. David Stevens talked of the economic factors that have fueled the sectarian Troubles in Northern Ireland.<sup>76</sup> The Protestant communities, previously reliant on heavy shipbuilding industry are being hollowed out and feel deeply under threat. The Catholic communities have in general done better, and it is harder to motivate congregations in middle class areas to take the actions to make the peace process real on the streets. The priests also have less authority within the more affluent communities. But there is also a growing number of disaffected poor, young Catholics and Protestants, who also have only nominal links to the worshipping community and influence of the church, who are in danger of glamorizing and emulating the sectarian activists of the past. As is so often the case, it is not the actively observing Christians who are engaging in the violence.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Black Majority Church (BMC) is a term used in the UK context to denote a denomination where the UK leaders are generally from the Black communities, even if internationally that is not the case. They are often Pentecostal.

<sup>74</sup> In September 2007 an informal grouping of African pastors held a Saturday afternoon event in George Square, Glasgow, marking the 200<sup>th</sup> centenary of the abolition of slave trading. Performances by a very wide variety of Christian musicians (Black rappers, a Korean classical choir and a white hillbilly group – all singing Christian material) were interspersed with short addresses by the leaders of all the major denominations talking of how the church had campaigned against slavery because freedom for captives was part of Jesus' message of salvation. They also urged people to sign a petition being taken around the Square to ask the Scottish Executive to change regulations affecting current trafficked people.

<sup>75</sup> YandH UM Network.

<sup>76</sup> David Stevens, CCWA Belfast.

<sup>77</sup> CCWA Belfast.



#### 4. Identity, Gender and Power:

What is the true identity (the ‘core DNA’) of the church? How does it manifest itself in different denominations and cultures?

This issue was addressed by only one of the gatherings that were formally listened to, but it is a topic of current interest in the church planting and fresh expressions<sup>78</sup> field. The key factor that is often used to identify whether a group of Christians are operating as a church is whether and how a group expresses its commemoration of the Lord’s Supper. Urban congregations are often small and some meet in houses rather than formal church buildings. They can sit light to some of the liturgical regulations of their churches in order to express their fellowship together, and have for over 20 years developed creative liturgy and the alternative forms of being church. These are now being experimented with in other settings through the ‘church without walls’<sup>79</sup> and fresh expressions movements. Many congregations in urban settings feel they have been pragmatically doing just this for many years, but Ian Duffield in his paper to the Urban Theology Collective<sup>80</sup> said that doing things differently was not the only way that the church can grow, and ‘undoing the parish system, abandoning existing structures or reinventing the wheel’ were not necessary for more effective evangelization. The Collective concluded that ‘‘If you do simple things well, the church will grow’ – e.g. building up existing congregations, being outward looking, using natural social networks.’ An urban youth worker in the Elim Pentecostal church agreed that for his young people their Wednesday meeting was church and his leadership would accept that. He felt that sharing cake and juice together at the close of a meeting was a valid ‘communion’.<sup>81</sup> Higher church ecclesiology finds that harder to deal with. The Sheffield Center, the Church Army’s research unit, is wrestling with this issue. New groups pastored by their non-ordained evangelists often want this person to celebrate communion with them.<sup>82</sup> In this context,

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<sup>78</sup> *Fresh Expressions* with a capital ‘F’ and ‘E’ is a project run jointly by the Church of England and Methodist Church to develop more culturally relevant forms of church; when used with a lower case ‘f’ and ‘e’, this means such an alternative congregation not necessarily formally accredited as such by the *Fresh Expressions* project.

<sup>79</sup> ‘Church without walls’ is a term more commonly used in Scotland to refer to new forms of ecclesiology.

<sup>80</sup> Ian Duffield, ‘Parish Churches and their Future: Church Vocation in the Church of England’, unpublished paper presented at Urban Theology Collective, St Deiniol’s Library, December 2008.

<sup>81</sup> Private communication with the author after Scripture Union Scotland event.

<sup>82</sup> Rev’d Dr George Lings, personal communication with the author on his recent, unpublished PhD Thesis – George W. Lings, ‘The Church’s Calling and the Capacity to Reproduce’, PhD thesis, Cliff College, England, 2009.

and that of lay-led youth groups, the ancient Christian custom of agape is very helpful, as it is in ecumenical services.<sup>83</sup>

The difference in worship style, between the incoming African-Caribbean Christians and the indigenous white British worshippers, was one of the factors leading to the setting up of the new Black Majority Church denominations in the 1960s and 70s. Similar factors affect the more recent immigrant Christians to the UK from Ghana, Zimbabwe etc., who often prefer to worship in their own language and style, whilst still wishing to retain their Anglican, Catholic or Methodist etc., identities. See Section 5 below.

One of the points many people made is that the other key element of the DNA of being church is community mission engagement – what the Anglican Evangelical Fellowship event called ‘a fierce commitment to staying in our urban areas.’<sup>84</sup> We should have a ‘mission-shaped church not a church-shaped mission’.<sup>85</sup> This is a slightly vexed issue at the moment in the UK where proposed changes in the law mean that churches are having to prove that their community engagement is part of their religious function and therefore consistent with their religious charitable aims and objects. As one person at the National Estates Churches event in London put it: ‘It’s really important to retain Christian distinctiveness and not become a social/community work ‘clone’. This means being prepared to be open about the place of prayer etc. in the life of a project and its staff.’<sup>86</sup> Those churches that have previously shied away from social action ‘must repent of our sins of proclaiming a truncated privatised gospel in our cities, based on selective texts and not taking the whole of Biblical revelation seriously.’<sup>87</sup> The Methodist City Center Network event summed this up by saying that the church is always ‘Christ-centered inclusive, adaptable

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<sup>83</sup> Agape, or love feast, is where bread and wine or similar simple food and drink is not formally consecrated before sharing, but where there is intentional remembrance of the Last Supper and Christ’s presence. The St Hilda’s Community in the East End of London was a relatively public radical worshipping community that grew out of the Church of England in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century that developed the protocol of using a simplified form of reference to the Last Supper when lay people were leading worship, and having full communion only when an ordained person could lead. Agape was still felt to be spiritually valid by those present, but was not liturgically unorthodox in Anglican terms. See Tim Stratford (Ed.) *Worship: Window of the Urban Church* (London: SPCK 2006), Chapter 8, for more discussion of this issue.

<sup>84</sup> EFAC-Urban Workshop.

<sup>85</sup> YandH UM Network. The reference is to: Archbishops Council, *Mission Shaped Church: Church Planting and Fresh Expressions of Church* (London: Church House Publishing, 2004).

<sup>86</sup> NECN-London.

<sup>87</sup> EFAC-Urban Workshop.

[motivated by] love for the good of the world' but that 'it is different in every context' and that 'it was always intended to be so.'<sup>88</sup>

### **5. The Interface of Migration, Diaspora and Ethnicity:**

Ethnicity – the tension between homogenous and multi ethnic churches

The denominations in the UK respond to this differently depending upon their ecclesiology. The Catholic and Methodist Churches tend to work on a chaplaincy model. The former appoint priests from overseas who can provide mother-tongue masses for the incomers. The British Methodist Church has agreements with its counterpart churches overseas. So, for instance, Ghanaian ministers in the UK act as chaplains to Ghanaian fellowships which meet monthly for mother-tongue services whilst the Ghanaians worship in mainstream Methodist Churches for the rest of the time.<sup>89</sup> The Episcopal Church in Scotland has a Kenyan-born priest acting as a link-person to the African pastors in that city. The hope is that the changing attitudes on race in white British culture will mean that the newer ethnic minority diaspora people will be more warmly welcomed into the historic church congregations than the earlier Afro-Caribbean incomers were, and that the chaplaincies will be a staging post to integration rather than the beginning of separate denominations. But that process may take a long while. Welsh-language churches still existed in London until very recently. It is also not clear that white British people are as accepting of minority ethnic incomers as denominational leaders nationally assume.<sup>90</sup> Anecdotal evidence from Black Christians suggests that white people still show considerable unease with Black people, even if not intentional racism, especially outside the more ethnically diverse metropolitan areas.<sup>91</sup>

Some of the new diaspora Black Majority Churches (BMCs) are playing a different role in the Christian community from that of the older African-Caribbean denominations. In London they are a very big presence and the Redeemed Christian Church of Christ, a Nigerian-based denomination, is the fastest growing church in the UK, currently planting many churches. The economic migrant membership of some of the African diaspora

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<sup>88</sup> MCCN Darlington.

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<sup>89</sup> This issue was widely explored at a conference convened by the British Methodist Church – 'Ethnicity, Cohesion and the Church', Swanwick, February 2007.

<sup>90</sup> The Catholic Association for Racial Justice is the only denominationally specific agency looking at this issue. Other denominations have generally subsumed their race relations' specialists into more general equalities teams, on the basis that racism has largely been effectively tackled.

<sup>91</sup> Bishop Delroy Hall, Church of God of Prophecy at 'Stepping Up' the Annual Reporting meeting of the Urban Mission Development Project, June 2009, which looked at the issue of 'The Contribution of Black Christians to the Christian Community in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century'.

churches are often wealthier than were the immigrants from the Caribbean, and more likely to be middle class professionals. However, others are mainly asylum-seeking migrants, who if they are undocumented are part of the economic underclass in the UK. The extent to which BMCs can engage with the historic churches depends greatly on whether they can afford pastors, and whether they have the confidence to engage. Some of the new Black churches have gained a credibility with government in a way that it has taken the African-Caribbean churches years to achieve, and are reaping harvest in ground that the Caribbean Christians have had to plough alone for a long time.<sup>92</sup>

The older Black Majority Churches are beginning to shift their mission to be more generally community focused not just for pastoral support for African-Caribbean people<sup>93</sup>. The Church of God of Prophecy is actively training its pastors to engage in this form of cross-cultural mission.<sup>94</sup> The New Testament Church of God has instigated a major training program for the whole church called the *Big Move* that is encouraging this more outward-facing ministry. This is a slow process, but there is strong evidence that people in need from within the white population are beginning to see the BMCs as a place of hospitality and support, especially if they are engaging in situations where the historic white majority churches are not.

The fact that there was no mention of matters relating to either Themes 5 or 6, at the National Estate Churches Network events,<sup>95</sup> was somewhat strange considering that there are diaspora congregations meeting in many historic church premises. Perhaps it is because this largely Black presence is seen as parallel to indigenous mission and activity locally, even where the congregation may have Black members from earlier migrations. This is part of the 'passive' racism of the historic churches still to be tackled. The Evangelical Fellowship of the Anglican Communion event said that 'the church must learn to listen and give a voice to those mainstream society wants to ignore'<sup>96</sup> and this can be modeled by consciously inviting them to mainstream church activity. There are some very good examples where congregations do come together for major festivals and link with community projects, but this is not so in the majority of cases. The lack of paid or full-time pastors and the gathered nature of these diaspora congregations does make this process harder, so it is not always about a lack of wish for positive engagement on the part of the host community.

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<sup>92</sup> Dr Joe Aldred, CTE, personal communication with the author, 2008.

<sup>93</sup> This process is outlined in Mark Sturge, *Look What the Lord Has Done! An exploration of Black Christian Faith in Britain* (London: Scripture Union, 2005).

<sup>94</sup> Personal communication with Bishop Wilton Powell, National Overseer, Church of God of Prophecy, December 2008.

<sup>95</sup> NECN-London and NECN-Manchester.

<sup>96</sup> EFAC-Urban Workshop.

False assumptions can be made by white churches about differences in ecclesiology and attitudes.<sup>97</sup>

*Street Pastors* is a ministry spreading across the UK, where older Christians walk the streets of city centers at night to be a responsible presence and offer practical support to young people, coming out of clubs and pubs, often the worse for alcohol and drug consumption. A Black church pastor<sup>98</sup> set it up, and BMCs are often in the lead in developing it. This model, and similar ones, has been widely adopted by integrated teams across the denominations and is a good example of joint action by homogeneous and multi ethnic congregations – again coming out of a common, and obvious, mission imperative.

There is therefore a very complex interrelationship of poverty, class and race affecting how and whether Black Christians engage with the Christian community as a whole, and whether congregations are remaining relatively homogenous, or becoming more truly the body of Christ in terms of racial diversity. This means that generalizations are almost meaningless. But it is incumbent upon the historic churches to examine their practice. Churches ‘who find themselves with possibilities of partnerships... should proactively and creatively move from passive accommodation of each other to active collaboration.’<sup>99</sup> Slowly this is being addressed.<sup>100</sup> Some of the older Pentecostal traditions, such as the Assemblies of God, have done more work on this than other historic denominations, because their headquarters are in the US and they often have more ethnically diverse leadership and congregations. In the run up to the 2009 local and European elections in the UK, all the denominations spoke out against the racism and the rise of the British National Party. The need for the churches to provide ‘opposition to extremism’<sup>101</sup> was endorsed at the Yorkshire and Humber event. A mixed group of white and Black Christians at the Urban Refreshment event in Wales, addressing this Theme, talked of the need for white people to overcome their ‘suspicion of the stranger’ and that the host churches need to ‘accommodate difference and give welcome’.<sup>102</sup> They suggested that the idea that we **all** have multiple identities was a helpful way forward.

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<sup>97</sup> In 2007 an African diaspora BMC church volunteered their choir to sing at the mass celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the priesting of one of the first women ordained as an Anglo-Catholic priest in the Church of England. The host church in Dagenham, Essex had no choir of its own. (Author’s knowledge).

<sup>98</sup> Rev’d Les Isaacs.

<sup>99</sup> MCCN Darlington.

<sup>100</sup> The ‘Ethnicity, Cohesion and the Church’ Conference, 2007 showed gaps still to be bridged within British Methodism.

<sup>101</sup> YandH UM Network.

<sup>102</sup> AT-Urban Refreshment.

## 6. Church Life in Diaspora Communities

An asylum-seeking Catholic spoke powerfully at the Welsh Urban Refreshment event about how his faith has supported him spiritually in coping with the traumas not only in his own country, but also the dehumanizing aspect of being an asylumseeker in the UK. A book he read as a teenager, about a Catholic priest coping with solitary confinement under a Communist regime, had helped him greatly – illustrating the sharply isolating effect that asylum status can have on a person. Churches, often absorbed in the practical side of immigration procedures, might also consider the pastoral aspects of supporting traumatized people. One Catholic religious in Wales has developed a ministry providing spiritual direction and retreats for asylum seekers. A social worker, dealing mostly with migration issues, spoke at the same Welsh event about how her faith was a factor in encouraging her to engage in this demanding area of work. Like homelessness, work with asylum seekers is one mission area where the churches are almost united in their wish to respond and able to work very effectively together to address the issues. The church must not rest on its laurels in this, but the welcome given is in contrast to the often less supportive secular NGO sector.<sup>103</sup>

The large majority of the events giving evidence for this process had individual Christians of minority ethnicities present: and at four of them presentations were made by people of minority ethnicity.<sup>104</sup> One, CARJ-Urban Network, was hosted by a Black-led agency. One BMC church was approached to take part, but did not have a suitable event for the rapporteurs to attend within the timescale. One of the places of informal listening was run by another BMC. This relative lack of formal Black denominational engagement, and the absence of many new diaspora church voices is regrettable, and sadly shows how integration with all strands of the church has a long way to go, and is not easy to achieve.

## 7. HIV/AIDS, Church and Mission:

Does Christian mission bear some responsibility for the spread of the virus? How can mission contribute to the struggle to stop the pandemic?

What other forms of ill health call for particular attention from practitioners of Christian mission?

HIV/AIDS in the UK context is largely seen as being associated with sexual behavior that the church has problems with – same-sex relationships and prostitution or drug use. Few churches have ministries with sex workers – the Assemblies of God, some of the independent charismatic

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<sup>103</sup> Chloe Clements, Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office, talking of evidence from research undertaken by her organization. Private conversation with the author, August 2009.

<sup>104</sup> UM Forum, AT-Urban Refreshment, LUTP, CARJ-Urban Network.

churches and Catholic missions tend to be the exceptions. Nothing was said about these matters at the events, except those where the Commission VII Themes were purposefully examined. One of the places of informal listening did have a workshop on healing ministry, and there is growing interest in two models in the UK at present – ‘Healing on the Streets’ first developed here in Co. Antrim, N. Ireland, and ‘Healing Rooms’. It is urban churches, where the need for healing in all its forms is often much more apparent, that tend to be in the lead on this.

Respondents who looked at this Theme at the Methodist City Center Network said that ‘we need to as churches heal the way we think [about]/view bodies, ill-health and sex in order to address issues of healing.’<sup>105</sup> The Scripture Union Scotland’s Beauty for Ashes youth event in February 2009<sup>106</sup> included a workshop on the difficult issue of self-harm<sup>107</sup> by young people. This tended to concur with the MCCN conclusion, and the facilitators said the churches can be very bad at admitting that any of their members behave in this way. Having the attitude that Christians are supposed to deal with their difficulties through faith and prayer alone can make dealing with mental illness and aberrant behaviors very difficult. The facilitators emphasized how important unconditional love is in helping young people address such behavior. They cited Mark’s parable of Jesus’ encounter with Legion and the overarching emphasis in his ministry of love for one another as being key to healing in such circumstances.<sup>108</sup> The church must not emphasize the harsh attitudes of the Old Testament teachings if true inner healing is to be found.<sup>109</sup>

The Urban Refreshment day in Wales also addressed situations where healing was needed. The group heard of ill-health faced by asylum seekers and teenagers, who ‘end up homeless, unable to cope with normal life’s demands – having life-controlling problems, a symptom of mental ill health’. A pioneering support group project caring for carers of people with mental illness was spoken about. It is led by a retired Catholic health professional. The support group ‘employ...silent group meditation, prayer and sharing personal stories in regular meetings, with no other objective than to listen considerately and prayerfully to each other.’ The group ‘agreed that Christian motivation of compassion for those suffering in these various ways is driven by one’s own appreciation for all the good things of life received, by recalling that everyone no matter what they have done or

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<sup>105</sup> MCCN Darlington.

<sup>106</sup> SUS Scripture Union Scotland, ‘Beauty for Ashes’ Conference (SUS Dundee), Dundee, February 2009.

<sup>107</sup> This is the term used for the process whereby a person deliberately physical harms themselves on a repeated basis, by cutting themselves, punching themselves, swallowing harmful objects/substances etc. with the intent to cause pain rather than to kill themselves.

<sup>108</sup> SUS Dundee.

<sup>109</sup> SUS Dundee.

endured is precious in God's eyes, and is focused by imagining the afflicted person is Christ's own face.' The story of Jade Goody (a UK reality TV celebrity from a mixed race, working class background who died of cancer in spring 2009 with a great deal of media interest) was given as an example of this. She is reported to have underlined Isaiah 53 in her Bible 'identifying with Christ the Suffering Servant during her dying days'. As the Stream 1 Group Report says, the giving of comfort in such circumstances and 'Christ's offer of salvation is helpfully deepened by understanding that the Hebrew root of the word 'comfort' means to 'make space for someone' Using a Welsh word '*croeso*' (hospitality in its broadest sense) the group felt that honouring people as guests, and full members of humanity and not de-personalising them were key factors in combating ill health. The guest should be sacred in our tradition through the example of Jesus who says, 'I was a stranger and you welcomed me – inasmuch as you did this to the least of my little ones, you did it to me.'<sup>110</sup>

### Conclusion

Many powerful examples of contextual urban mission were heard about through this listening process. The drawing of generalized conclusions is in many ways unhelpful however, because of the very contextual nature of mission in urban contexts.<sup>111</sup> Some were of small, innovative projects started by a few Christians in a local church whose example could be followed in many other towns and cities. Some were about the progress of well-established mission organizations. Over and again the rapporteurs heard about the joys of urban mission, but also how isolated and misunderstood its complexities were by the mainstream denominations, often dominated by leaders from churches in wealthier areas. What comes through all the events attended as part of this process, is that if Christ's mission is to be fulfilled by the churches as well as possible, Christians need to be generous and cooperative with each other. Churches must realize that our mission has been inadequate in the past and so we must work prayerfully, aware of our disparate failings, in the Holy Spirit's strength, to discover together what it is that God wants of us. As one person at the Welsh event said, 'several young people in our town would probably be dead by now if we hadn't learnt to work together to serve them.'<sup>112</sup> Churches that are centered upon Jesus who made the statement about welcoming strangers, and that live Jesus' statement by reaching out in

<sup>110</sup> Matthew 25:37-40, as used in AT-Urban Refreshment, Stream 3.

<sup>111</sup> A point made strongly by the UT Collective, and corroborated by John Ellis, an Anglican vicar who has served the East Marsh Estate in Grimsby, NE Lincolnshire, for over 25 years. He has written simple, powerful discipleship materials for the estate, which he says, would have to be re written for the neighboring estate, and any other, in order to speak into the local circumstances. (Yand H UM Network).

<sup>112</sup> AT-Urban Refreshment, Stream 4.



relation to others, followers of Jesus or not, will be best placed to fulfil Christ's mission in whatever context they are based, in this 21<sup>st</sup> century, as always. Our key question and challenge is: 'How can we work together better for God's purposes?'

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# EAST AFRICAN CONSULTATION

Philomena Mwaura

## Introduction Dr. John Padwick

Dr John Padwick welcomed participants to the conference and thereafter requested Dr Philomena Mwaura the chairperson of Edinburgh 2010 Eastern Africa coordinating committee to explain the purpose of the conference.

Dr Mwaura explained that the conference was part of a global process forming a prelude to an ecumenical gathering scheduled for 2010 in Edinburgh to celebrate a century of Christian missions globally. Edinburgh 2010 marks a hundred years since the World Missionary Conference that was held from 14-23<sup>rd</sup> June 1910 in Edinburgh. This was an ecumenical gathering comprising Protestant and Evangelical churches and mission societies deliberating on the subject of mission in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the work of the churches in the mission fields. As part of the celebrations, a study process was initiated around nine topical themes deemed crucial to mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The themes include:

1. Foundation of Mission
2. Christian mission and other faiths
3. Mission and postmodernities
4. Mission and power
5. Forms of missionary engagement
6. Theological education and formation
7. Christian communities in contemporary contexts
8. Mission and unity – ecclesiology and mission
9. Mission spirituality and authentic discipleship

After much deliberation, the East African coordinating team selected theme seven, 'Christian Communities in Contemporary Contexts'. The theme focuses on varieties of Christian communities as they draw on different traditions and engage with specific contexts (ethnic communities, urban/rural, youth, men, women, people with disabilities, class, race and the tensions they generate as they interact and the challenges they pose for mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Eastern Africa).

As different regions all over the world interrogate the different themes, the Eastern African region, seeks answers to the following specific questions:

1. What is the true identity of the church?
2. What is involved in being the church in Eastern Africa today?

3. What is the responsibility of the church in health, healing and reconciliation?
4. What responsibility does Christian mission bear with regard to ethnicity?
5. What contribution can mission make to both secular and ecclesiastical leadership?
6. What new forms of Christian communities need to be harnessed?
7. How can mission contribute to stopping the HIV/AIDS pandemic?

It was emphasized that the goal of the conference was to generate ideas on the theme that would be published and form the Eastern Africa's contribution to the 2010 process. It was also deemed necessary that the missiological themes be woven with praxis in East Africa today.

Dr Mwaura further explained that the conference was planned to be inclusive in terms of Christian traditions, region, gender, age, disability, youth, academicians and mission practitioners. It was thus ecumenical representing most Christian traditions in Eastern Africa (Catholics, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Pentecostals, Evangelicals, African Instituted Churches, Baptists, Methodists etc.), regional (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Eritrea, Rwanda) and had a balance between mission practitioners and academicians. The youth, women, people with disabilities, older clergy and the young were also represented. It was noted that the church in Eastern Africa bears a youthful face and this is the growing edge of the church and its future.

Following is a summary of the papers that were presented at the conference.

### **Keynote Address by Prof. J.N.K. Mugambi**

Prof. Mugambi, an ecumenist and Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Nairobi delivered the keynote address. In his preliminary remarks, he observed that Edinburgh 2010 is a great occasion to celebrate a century of Christian mission. He also acknowledged the presence of the Rev. John Gatu who was among the first generation of ecumenists in East Africa and had nurtured many on missiology.

The following is a summary of Mugambi's presentation.

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#### *From Mission Agencies to Christian Communities*

Between 1750 and 1800, a large group of mission societies were formed in Europe. Among them was the Church Missionary Society formed in 1799. It pioneered missionary work in East Africa. Today, we are no longer talking about Christian mission agencies but about Christian communities.

Mission involves application of the Bible in an analytical way. A question that is of concern here is: how deep are our perceptions and acceptance of the Christian faith?

A map of Africa shows the division of the continent between the various colonial powers, as actualized by the Berlin conference with the provision that although spheres of influence were going to be imperial Christian missions were free to move around.

Africa remains predominantly Islamic yet we keep referring to Africa as predominantly Christian. It may be the most Christian continent in the world but a quick scan of the situation indicates that North Africa and West Africa are predominantly Muslim. Mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century needs to be thoughtful when making certain statements. It should take cognizance of the huge population of Muslims in the continent. Mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century should also consider contemporary concerns over racial identity especially in South Africa and ethnic identity in many parts of Africa.

### *The Nature of Mission: Biblical Perspectives*

On the doctrine of election and the nature of mission Mugambi indicated that there are two notions of mission – one is the notion of going out to share (outward bound) and the other is one in which you invite others to come and see the glory of God (inward bound). The Old Testament has an inward bound sense of mission – all nations will come to Zion to see the glory of God. But there are forced perceptions – Jeremiah tells the Israelites not to lament when they go into exile, and Jonah is sent to Nineveh against his wish and outsiders are expected to witness. When Jesus comes he introduces an outward bound sense of mission. The last century of mission has assumed an inward bound approach to mission. It is along the outward bound model of Christ that mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century needs to emulate.

Turning to the concept of Jubilee, Mugambi indicated that often Jubilee is not popular because it is not just about jubilation and celebration; it is also about correction of any injustices. It is God's instrument of correction of imbalances and self centeredness. Comparing the New Testament with the Old Testament, Mugambi observed that while Old Testament relations are based on contract, New Testament relations are based on covenant. Unfortunately, the concept of contract seems to be gaining currency in East Africa today as manifested in such social challenges like breakdown of marriages.

The difference between covenant and contract – according to Sacks Jonathan in *Politics of Hope* are:

<u>Covenant</u>	<u>Contract</u>
Trust	Suspicion
Commitment	Obligation
Duties	Rights
Responsibilities	Freedoms
Self-interest	Other's interests
The community	Individual
Grace	Law

Jesus the author of outward mission is born in a manger away from home, with infancy in exile, trained in wilderness not in the city, first sermon in Nazareth not in Jerusalem, most of his sermons given in rural areas, leads from below not above, focusses on children and women, not professionals (Zacchaeus, a tax collector represents the elite). His disciples were artisans not professionals. From Christ's example, it would seem like homelessness is normative for mission.

### *Pauline Insights for Sustainable Christian Mission:*

Sustainable mission requires:

*Conversion:* This involves moving from power and influence to powerlessness and vulnerability.

*Conviction:* This is the readiness to defend the gospel position within and without in humility.

It is important to acknowledge and appreciate other people's positions so that you begin from what they know and build on it in mission. Mission that seeks to clear the cultures and faith of the other people's culture in the name of evangelism is inverted. Paul begins by acknowledging what people have and not condemning it. 11 Corinthians 9: 16-23 is the Pauline standard on which all missionary enterprise must be evaluated. Paul did not raise any funds for his mission but instead used the resources that were available among the people. He refused to be patron or patriarch of the communities he established. He did not settle. The 20<sup>th</sup> century Christian missionaries to Africa settled and caused great havoc to mission. The temptation to settle down as we do mission is rife in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and we should be wary of it whether we are talking of Christian missionaries from Africa to Europe or vice versa. Can mission in the 20<sup>th</sup> century meet Pauline's standard? Can we be all things to all people so that we might by the grace of God save some? Think of the Pauline standard for missionary conduct. The 20<sup>th</sup> century mission did not meet this standard; will mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

### *Pauline Norms for Sustainable Mission*

According to Paul, mission should be characterized by collaboration not competition. It should be horizontal not hierarchical, inductive not deductive, local not imperial, particularistic not universalistic, villages not global, liberation not dominion, equity not charity, empathy not sympathy.

Mission is not about appropriation of Christianity by kingdoms and empires – Roman empire, Spanish empire, Portuguese empire, British empire, Russian empire, Ethiopian empire etc. Where there is distortion of Pauline standard of mission, missionaries become imperialistic, or they become civil servants. Refer to Michael Taylor, *Not Angels but Agencies*, on the need to build Christian communities rather than agencies.

*Christian Mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Challenge:*

Christian mission in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was viewed as a relationship between the Christian world and the non-Christian world. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the situation is different. We have five mission fields:

1. Pre-Christian field (Africa?),
2. Nominally Christian field (North America),
3. Post-Christian field (Europe),
4. Non-Christian field (Asia), and
5. Anti-Christian field (materialistic).

It is important to remember that there is nothing triumphant about Christian success globally. Christians are a tiny minority even in certain parts of Africa, meaning mission fields are huge. In Asia, many remain non-Christian and in Europe Christianity has declined.

*Resources for Mission:*

For successful mission there is need for:

1. Surplus capital – not necessarily money or material but energy/motivation as in conviction and community. There is need for missionaries to rely on themselves and not on governments or corporate banks.
2. Freedom of movement – do African missionaries have freedom of movement? How easy is it for an African to get a visa to travel to America or Europe?
3. Biblical hermeneutics – Biblical literalism propelled 20<sup>th</sup> century movements. Today there is emphasis on liberalism which is appropriate but this should not replace literalism as certain tenets of the Bible cannot be done away with. Will Biblical reconstructivism bring new missionary impetus?

*Conclusion*

Edinburgh 1910 was planned by visionary leaders. Do we have visionary leaders in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Will Edinburgh 2010 offer constructive criticism? Will it envisage a world free of imperialism or will it endorse globalization? What will be the demographic profile of 2010? Will it manifest the cultural complexity of the world today? 1910 was strictly for missionaries, will 2010 be so strict? Will it be a conference for churches? What will be the meaning of Christ's prayer 'that all may be one'?

Edinburgh 2010 should challenge us to move from imperialistic to communitarian models of relationships.

**Rev. John Gatu's response to Prof. Mugambi**

In his address, Rev. Gatu made the following remarks:

While 1910 was a conference of outbound mission, the 21<sup>st</sup> century missionary work must come to terms with the need for Christian communities and for inter/intra relationships. In 1968, the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) celebrated its 65<sup>th</sup> year and from that point onwards, the church had to rethink the issue of independence in resource generation. How was the management of the church in future going to be carried out? When the PCEA sought independence from foreign missions and introduced the theme of self-reliance (*jitegemea*), their international partners did not take it well. Resource inadequacy was beginning to be a big challenge and it remains a big challenge to date. Solidarity to move the church to self reliance has not been very forthcoming and yet it is clear that management of local churches by foreign missions stifles the church. Edinburgh 2010 must be a time not so much of jubilation as of correction. Of greater importance, African Christians have to reassess the mission field afresh. We are familiar with the context in which mission is being carried out more than the foreigners and this calls us to greater commitment to mission.

### **‘Christian Identity amidst Conflicting Interests’ by Prof. Laurenti Magesa**

By way of introduction, Magesa indicated that his intention was to interrogate the role of the church in Eastern Africa today in terms of its identity and social space. Identity is about differentiation so: how different is the church from civil society? What is the church’s space amidst conflicting identities?

The church has been shaped by the social environment thus the different traits within a single church. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we had colonial churches shaped by missionary endeavor which was engaged in destroying African social, cultural, economic and political structures. The three Cs (Christianization, commerce and civilization) drove mission in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These elements have remained in our churches and mark the identity of these churches. So we have continued denigration of African cultural values especially in the mainline churches. The official stand of the churches may be progressive but praxis is different. The status quo has been maintained.

African Independent Churches (AIC) in spite of their weaknesses are ahead in the struggle to deal with the problem of cultural alienation in the churches. The AIC churches see to read the Bible together with the African text (African experiences) in seeking guidance to their praxis.

#### *Churches Identity versus the Political Sphere*

No church can wholly escape a political dimension to its behavior. In Eastern Africa, the church needs to prove its identity in the political sphere.

Failure to do this will lead to compromising its mission. For example, during Moi's time, the Africa Inland Church (AIC), Legio Maria Church of Africa and World Intercession Ministry held different opinions from those of the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK) in condemning poor political leadership. In fact the AIC withdrew from the NCCK. During the last elections in Kenya, the Roman Catholic Church was divided in the middle in an unhealthy polarization thereby failing to guide the faithful in one voice. Its moral integrity was severely eroded due to the division along ethnic lines. What then was the identity of the RCC? How was it evangelizing the community when it could not differentiate itself from the civil society? What about Rwanda during the 1994 genocide? Did the church demonstrate an intolerable stance to evil? Will the church continue living the same way after the genocide? In Tanzania during the Ujamaa experiment/process (1967 – 87), did the church raise any concerns? Did it define its identity in the context of this social policy? In Uganda during Idi Amin's reign, did the church condemn the atrocities of Amin even when great church men like Archbishop Luwum were executed?

And where is the voice of the church in the context of widespread corruption in Eastern Africa and Africa as a whole? Does the church keep silent because it benefits from corruption for example through *harambee*? Has the church considered suspending corrupt members from their community if only to prove its identity?

Christians are called to something new and the fragmentation we experience in the church though inherited from colonial missions should be addressed. The church should unite and provide a untied voice and action. Ecumenism is a Christian imperative. We should identify ourselves as Christians first before we identify with our own traditions (Methodist, Presbyterian, RC etc.) and much more before we identify with our ethnic identities. We as church are called to fight for justice and reconciliation and we can only attain this through ecumenism. Four things are required to fulfill mission as entrusted by Christ:

1. We have to guard jealously our autonomy (independence) from state to avoid being manipulated and compromised – we must not give the pulpit to the politicians.
2. We must make informed choices by studying the situation to understand the African context and guided by the Biblical text make a unified decision.
3. We must be a prophetic community
4. We must engage in proactive advocacy

In so doing, we will:

1. Protect the right of the church to speak and act for justice under the Word of God.
2. Facing evil, the church must shout until people hear and understand. There is no room for diplomacy.



3. To denounce evil effectively in a mature way the church must be aware of what is going on and so it must educate itself consistently and constantly.
4. The church must put its institutional weight behind its position.

Advocacy must be part of the church's agenda from a distinctive gospel perspective. The church must be the conscience of the nation as it was challenged by Jomo Kenyatta in the 1970s. Failure to do this, the church will become irrelevant and invalid as Nyerere cautioned. We must act not because it is safe, not because it is popular, but because conscience says it is right.

### **The Church in Africa and the Dilemma between African Christian Identity and Christian Ethnic Identity by Eunice Kamaara**

Kamaara explored the mission of the church in the midst of conflict in Africa arguing that the church has a mission to lead the way to democracy and nationhood. The article assumes that memory is important, for we need to understand where we are coming from in order to understand where we are and where we are going.

The article employs a historical analysis of the role of the church in Kenya to illustrate the role it has played in the democratization process and its consequences.

In traditional African societies, a holistic perspective to life was in place. There was no compartmentalization. Societies were theocentric in that everything revolved around God as the creator and sustainer of the world and anthropocentric in that human beings have a central role to play in continued creation and sustenance of the earth. Individual human rights were protected but only in the context of community rights.

Colonialism and missionary Christianity upset this balance and the consequences were, land alienation, political alienation, cultural and religious alienation and worst of all colonization of the mind. Denominational rivalry exacerbated these forms of alienation.

The post independent regimes under Kenyatta and Moi were characterized by blatant abuse of human rights and, just like during the colonial era when mission Christianity was silent in the face of colonial abuses, the church was acquiescent. The church played it safe with occasional comments against the government but little action. It is only between 1990 and 2002 that the church came out pro active with the result that Moi and the Kenya African National Union (which had been the ruling party since independence) were weeded out through the ballot. The churches and other faiths came together and jointly contributed to the success of democracy in 2002.

Since 2002 and during President Mwai Kibaki's era, the church has behaved like the civil society and become party to the unhealthy polarization which had started with the 2005 Referendum on the draft

constitution and culminated in the post-election violence in December 2007. Rather than rise above their ethnic identities, church leaders took sides and thereby did not provide leadership.

The conclusion derived from the article is that the church in East Africa needs to reexamine its mission and be a catalyst in building Christian communities that celebrate, appreciate and respect diversity and difference.

### **Sharing by Kiama Mugambi on the Nairobi Chapel**

The Nairobi Chapel is a family of churches with seven congregations. It started in the 1950s and it came from the Brethren tradition. In the late 1980s congregation sought partnership with the Baptist Church and it became the Nairobi Chapel. Over the years the church has grown to 2,500 people, 8 services a week, and 5 services on Sunday.

It is driven by a corporate vision underscored by three goals:

1. Desire to equip for service – leadership development
2. Commitment to outreach
3. Discipleship – church planting

In 1990, the Nairobi Chapel reformulated its agenda to adopt a vision with specific goals to propel the church to be in line with the national goals of development captured in the document, Vision 2030:

1. Global church planting targeting 300 first-generation churches by the year 2030
2. Aggressive evangelism – a portion of the mountain a million people to Jesus
3. Personal growth and transformation (100,000 disciples) for mission
4. Missions impact – train and raise leaders for international ministry

The organization of the Nairobi Chapel is based on Brethren format where elders and lay leaders lead the church. The model of ecclesiology is between congregational and charismatic church. Currently the Nairobi Chapel has 30-40 churches.

The church reaches out to the urban elite who may not be attracted by traditional churches and traditional models of worship. They have a unique approach to theology, an integrated approach that has 3 characteristics:

1. Practical and pragmatic
2. Broad based (Gospel has all essential elements)
3. Cognitive – appeals to the mind

The Nairobi Chapel has a contemporary worship style that has grown out of 3 things: contemporary music, community engagement and use of English as the medium of communication. It emphasizes personal confession but also community engagement.

In terms of approach to ministry, four things guide them:

1. Vision driven approach to ministry (having a common goal)
2. Commitment of every member in ministry (priesthood of all believers)

3. Leadership development – each leader leaves behind a legacy of leadership
4. Concept of partnerships with similar churches within the Nairobi churches family or outside like Nairobi Baptist churches and others in informal settlements. For every church they plant in high income areas, one church in low income areas. They also partner with other churches globally. This church has contributed to the evolvment of innovative ways of doing mission and being church in the urban context and targeting professional youth who are sometimes left out in mainstream churches. It has managed to tap their potential and to make them not only theologically but also socially engaged.

### **Rev. Elijah Waititu: Youth for Christ Ministry in Mathare North, Nairobi**

Waititu ministers to youth who are vulnerable to recruitment into militia groups especially in the informal settlement areas of Nairobi. He set up the ministry after the post-election violence after witnessing how the youth suffered under police and militia brutality. He decided to share Christ with them and help in rescuing them from violence and death. It is a risky ministry but he is ready to face all odds due to the conviction and passion he has for the youth.

Rev Waititu: Greetings in the name of the Lord. I thank you for this privilege to stand here. It is a great honor. Each one of us knows what has brought us together. I want to say that what I have devoted myself in is risky because I have been engaging myself with the militia group. When I started this ministry last year after the PEV, I decided to give myself to go and share Christ with the youth. Unfortunately both me and the militia have fear because people. So far, he has reached about 300 youth.

Waititu seeks to empower the youth. He has started some income-generating projects through which he equips them to be self-reliant. He also organizes football tournaments for entertainment. According to Waititu the mainline and independent churches have contributed to the youth's vulnerability to being recruited by militia groups since they have introduced them to traditional cultural teachings during church organized alternative initiation rites without adequate instruction. Since no proper follow-up is made, militia groups like the Mungiki take advantage of this lacunae to recruit the vulnerable youth who are also victims of, illiteracy, unemployment and poverty.

The emergence of militia groups in Kenya and their attraction to the youth is an indictment on the failure of the church to reach them. These groups feel ignored by the churches.

### **The Youth Responding to Poverty by Carmeline Otieno**

Carmeline Otieno explored how the youth in the God's Last Appeal Church, an African Instituted Church has continued to be marginalized due to poverty. She observes that not all youth migrate to urban areas in search of opportunities but some remain. AICs like God's Last Appeal Church has alienated the youth due to its promotion of negative spirituality, domination of leadership by the elderly and failure to respond to changes. The church is also inward looking and besides having been started by a woman, it does not allow women into its leadership. The youth are challenging church structures, breaking barriers and seeking spaces for dialogue.

### **Religion and Civil Society: Challenges and Prospects for Eastern Africa by Aquiline Tarimo**

Tarimo argues for the need to see the mission of the church in terms of collaboration between churches and civil society organizations for the common good, for mission cannot be carried out in isolation. He acknowledges that efforts to promote social justice and human rights in Eastern Africa through local churches have not succeeded due to the lack of centers for formation, political activism, institutional collaboration and effective methodology.

When social issues arise that require institutional statements arise, the church is silent. This is due to several reasons:

1. Misunderstanding of the role of religion in public life
2. Misunderstanding between religions
3. Division within the churches
4. Religion does not offer guidance in specific social issues e.g. education, constitution making, etc.

Agents of civil society are often skeptical about religion and consider religious people to be irrational.

Can religion be made meaningful in this century? How can religion be linked to civil society?

Religion is a powerful tool in social transformation due to its influence on a people's worldview.

How can religion play a role in concrete life? Two examples suffice:

1. Localizing the church through the small Christian communities to bring transformation to secular life. Little has however been achieved because of a hierarchical church structure. This makes people lose their creativity. Administratively, the local priest controls the functions of the Christian communities.
2. Pastoral letters: They offer teachings which touch on issues affecting public life, however, the laity does not critically respond to issues raised in pastoral letters. There are no grass-roots structures to interpret the teachings. These teachings should be practical and

geared towards social action. People are not generally formed to put ideas into action.

These examples provide a paradigm for linking religion and civil society.

An effective methodology should help build institutions to concretize the teachings. African churches need to rethink spirituality because it lacks practicality. It emphasizes the other world thus encouraging a dichotomy between the secular and the sacred. Methodology of collaboration between religion and civil society needs to be revised. Pertinent questions arise about the role of religion in the public space. If religion is not practical and intensifies disorder, it subsequently becomes irrelevant.

### **The Credibility of the Church Doing Mission in East Africa by Dr. Peter Nyongesa**

Nyongesa revisits the theme of the credibility of the church in Eastern Africa which has been put to the test in the last few years. To engage in holistic and mission with integrity, the church needs to rise above partisan politics and align herself to the world. Regaining its credibility means, going back to the basics of the teachings of the Gospel.

### **Neighborhood Christian Communities as the New Paradigm for Mission by Rev. Professor Christopher Byaruhanga**

Byaruhanga addresses the issue of fragmentation of the church in Eastern Africa and wonders what kind of Christian communities have evolved in over a hundred years of evangelization. Is there something wrong in the way of being church in the region? He argues that the church has a responsibility to contribute to the transformation of the region by adopting new models of being church. He proposes a paradigm of neighborhood Christian communities that are characterized by African community consciousness and Christian religious experience. The creation of neighborhood Christian communities is a concrete realization of the communitarian model of the church that transcends ethnic, racial, gender, class and other divisions.

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### **Christian Community as a New Strategy for Youth Mission by Dr. Maturu Erema**

Erema addresses the challenges Christian communities in Uganda face in their mission to the youth. She argues that problems that the youth face like drugs, sex, pornography, alcohol etc. are symptoms of a larger disease for key relationships are in disarray. She proposes that 'community-based youth mission' is the remedy for effective Christian mission to the youth. If this holds, we need to model this strategy to the current African religio-

cultural context. The church has been using a strategy to reach the youth that isolates them from the world of adults. She describes the youth as ‘relationally retarded’, ‘cognitively fragmented’, and ‘morally handicapped’. She advocates for a dialogical interface and interaction of mission work from other continents. She concludes that a community-based youth mission will help to avoid the danger of doing mission in abstraction, leading young people to grow into mature Christian adulthood.

**Mission in a Multi-Faith Context in Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century:  
An Exploration of Christian and Bahai Theory and Praxis  
in Mission by Dr Paul Mwangi**

Mwangi explores the meaning of mission in a multi-faith context and discusses the challenges the Bahai faith, which is growing tremendously and targeting Christians for conversion, is posing to mission theory and praxis. He argues that lack of a proper perception and practice of Christian mission has shaped the Christian landscape in Africa. Christian mission in theory and praxis does not seek to engage with other faiths and when they ever do it is not well thought through. This leaves gaps that aid evangelization by other faiths like Bahai.

**Understanding and Shifting ‘Mission’ Paradigms: Eschatology,  
Time and Contemporary Realities by Prof. Nehemiah Nyaundi**

Nyaundi surveys the development of the idea of ‘mission’ as was understood by the Seventh Day Adventists (SDA), zealous evangelizers at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century whose concept of mission is drawn from eschatological views. While the doctrine of eschatology was the driving force behind mission then, the passage of time and contemporary realities have forced the SDAs to reevaluate its understanding of mission. He sees eschatology as an important component of mission for evangelization of the world in terms of proclamation is still as relevant as it was in 1910.

**Contextual Bible Studies as Missiological Tool for Community  
Transformation by Rev. Dr Gatumu**

In his presentation, Gatumu observed that Edinburgh 1910 laid emphasis on biblical teachings. He proposes the need to do contextual Bible study as a tool in mission and for social transformation bearing in mind the complex social, economic, political, religious and cultural context in East Africa. At the time of Edinburgh 1910, he further states, Africa was depicted as ignorant and riddled with ‘animism’. Higher criticism of the Bible exacted no impact on the people. The report of Commission 2 urged converts to read the Bible for themselves in preparation of converts for heaven.

The Bible was taught literally and without interpretation. Edinburgh 1910 neglected the richness of African culture. Today, he suggests, a new methodology for reading the Bible is required. Contextual Bible study is such a methodology that is community oriented. In this approach, ordinary readers and biblical scholars engage in dialogue and read the Bible for transformation. It empowers grass-roots people to change their circumstances, individually and collectively through a liberational approach to reading the scriptures. The trained scholar provides the resource for the reading of the Bible. It stipulates the expected outcome of the Bible study. This is the action plan. Contextual Bible study entails empowering grass-roots people.

### **Mission Without Frontiers: The Virtual Church by Prof. Mary Getui**

Getui contributed her thought on how presented here thoughts on how the media has revolutionized evangelization by expanding the frontiers of evangelism and diversifying the methods. Laptops, mobile phones, internet, computers and other media technology have revolutionized the way we communicate. In 1910, these tools were not of critical concern. In this century we need to rethink mission in the light of the new innovations.

In New Testament time, Paul communicated through the written word and expected the letters to reach his target audience. The SDA has virtual programs that target the whole world. It has specific times set on secular radio stations for Christian mission. There are very many evangelists in other churches who have websites and broadcast their services and messages through electronic and print media.

Getui queried, what are the challenges and opportunities available for us as we remember 1910 and look forward to 2010? What could be dubbed as Christian media? Is it church or missionary? Who is the consumer? Which needs is the media responding to? Is the media compromising fellowship? What aspect of mission is service? Counseling?

As we look at the virtual aspect of mission, where is the element of service and human touch? How does inculturation and indigenization happen in the virtual mission? Is mission sustainable through virtual mission? How is Africa fairing in this – with regard to access and contribution? Borders may be open but other factors inhibit access.

1910 was about working together and since we have the virtual space without borders and frontiers, could we say that the media is playing an ecumenical role of a uniting agency?

Could we consider virtual mission as a replica of the Berlin conference where the agenda is set far away and implemented without due consideration to the consumer? What about individualism and privacy that are applied in the African context?

As we approach 2010, and as our minds are guided by these times, we need to reconsider a new understanding of ways of being mission. Perhaps the media is meeting the need that many are sent out – all nations are reached; but how does it challenge us in East Africa given our social, economic and political realities? Theological education should reflect these changes. There is need for church leadership to train experts on the media.

### **Mission in the Changing City: Implications of Urbanization for the Future of the Church in Africa by Dr. Colin Smith**

In his article, Colin Smith drew out the implications of rapid urbanization on the mission of the church in the African city that calls for redefinition of what it means to be community in the city. He noted that Africa is the least but fastest urbanizing continent, with East Africa having the highest growth. Rural poverty is growing and resulting in massive migration to the city. Pentecostal movements will be fading into the past. In this context, Pentecostal churches are growing but are likely fade into the past. But how is the church responding to these changes since rural poverty produces massive social, political and economic changes? Mbiti observes the interrelatedness between community and African identity; however, urbanization is changing this. What is the relationship between the African and urban identity? The perspective of the slum dweller is of interest to the church. Globalization has broken down the identity – religious and cultural. African society is still unable to be cohesive since the colonial impact and divisions are widened by globalization – parts of the city connecting to fiber optic cable quite fast while others are not and gaps are widening. Cities are also characterized by competition for the marketplace, and it is a place where ideas grow.

In terms of spirituality, we must learn to drink from our own wells. We need to understand the culture of the city. Can we keep returning to the rural areas to drink? What is the church of the future as exemplified by the slum? Since cities grow out of slums and slums eventually disappear, what becomes of the mission of the church if her mission is constructed mediating services to the slums?

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### **The Complexity of Migrant African Societies and its Missiological Implications by Dr. Henry Mutua**

In his article on migrant African societies, Mutua argues that modernity creates a new rhythm of life and urbanization impacts remarkably on societies. He queries, to what extent has the contemporary Eastern African city been affected by the new rhythm of life? He makes the following observations:

- The city is very complex – manifested in interplay of tradition and modernity.



- The extended family links depend on rootedness of individual families in the rural areas. The extended family lasts more among some communities
- Ethnic identity and loyalty to the urban community are always competing identities.

What does this complexity mean for the church? The church has to respond to the complexity of the society. There is need for reflection and analysis to understand society, be proactive, engage in theological reflection and learn from history. This complexity is an opportunity for the church to do mission as it presents growth and a needy society. There is no substitute for the church. We need to equip leaders in an aggressive manner.

### **Business as Mission by Dennis Tongoi**

Dennis Tongoi shared that the Church Mission Society Africa, initiated a Prayer Breakfast movement to influence business people into laying their businesses on ethical foundations. In his book, *Mixing God with Money: Strategies for Living in an Uncertain Economy*, Tongoi discusses how to do business in a Christian way.

He indicated that his first exposure to business in 2000 gave him an alternative business model. The 2008 global economic recession provides an opportunity for Christians to rethink the way they do business. Can Africa provide a new platform for economic impetus a new economic order?

The question is, can Africa be developed without destroying her social resources? Material wealth does not translate to happiness. Can Africa learn from the world or can the world learn from Africa?

### *Challenges of Business in Mission*

The current economic crisis is a real challenge as the poor are suffering most but it provides a window for the church to provide an alternative economic order.

Capitalism is on the demise. The challenge is to reduce the gap between the poor and the rich. Christian writings on economic development are few. Christianity is silent in the here and now. The pulpit has left economics to NGOs and the development department yet there is business in mission and mission in business. To teach religion without economics is classroom religion that has no impact outside the four walls of church and class.

### *Challenges of Business in Eastern Africa*

- Takes a very long time to register a business company
- Corruption

- Unstable political environment
- Rule of law absent increasing risks of business
- Lack of markets
- Political and trade borders
- Public policy – need for policy reforms – alternative capitalism

The opportunity is here now that we have the crisis.

In 1910 there were no missionary entrepreneurs but many missionary doctors, teachers etc. We need such professionals in mission if we are to be effective in mission the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Nevertheless, missionaries like David Livingstone did introduce commerce but there was no exchange of business skills. Missionaries also collaborated with the settlers in East Africa to build the colonial economy but Africans were only laborers in the creation of this wealth. How can Christians be involved in wealth creation without compromising the gospel values?

### **Rooting Mission in Popular Christian Discourse: Roho and Pentecostal Communities at the Grassroots by Rev. Nickta Lubaale**

Nickta Lubaale, General Secretary of the OAIC, discussed how Roho and grassroots Pentecostal local churches do mission noting the dynamic mission strategies that emerge from their context. Characteristics of mission feature the following:

- Space for everyone to testify
- Power of personal testimonies
- Creation of songs to deal with certain specific themes
- Searching of scriptures in relation to what people are going through
- Listening to the voice of the people
- Recognition of the Holy Spirit
- Informal learning processes

There many songs that deal with existential challenges like HIV/AIDS and they contain much theology. Through testimonies, a lot comes through that inspires builds. There is expression of solidarity with the suffering and women have space to experience and express their spirituality and edify the church. They create communities that heal, protect and build. The small Christian communities become some form of government that serves and influences.

#### *Weaknesses*

Some weaknesses of these churches and their mission self-understanding include:

1. Charismatic leadership is a characteristic of the churches and it can be disempowering for there can be too much focus on leader
2. Lack of training

3. Theology may be negative – inverted and could lead to stigma especially in interpretation of HIV/AIDS
4. They may become spaces of withdrawal instead of engaging with policy issues
5. Challenge from outside – other faiths think they are chaotic and try to organize them.

How do we support and affirm AICs rather than criticize and dismiss them? There is need to reconfigure our ecumenical movement so that we do not alienate others thinking that we are at the center and others are on the margins.

### **Mission Initiatives in Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network (EDAN) and WCC-DIFAM Study Group on Mission and Healing by Sam Kabue**

Samuel Kabue, the Director of EDAN, shared about the advocacy work he is doing on disability issues locally and internationally. He also talked about the work of the WCC-DIFAM study group in which he is involved.

#### *WCC-DIFAM Study Group*

WCC-DIFAM Study Group is organized jointly by WCC and DIFAM (German Institute for Medical Mission). It is linked to the to WCC's program on 'Unity, Mission, Evangelism and Spirituality', Justice, Diakonia and Responsibility for Creation'. It perceives itself as the successor of the WCC's Christian Medical commission. The group consists of 10-15 interdenominational persons from different countries, cultures and different professions – medical doctors, social scientists, professors of theology etc. He noted that mission has neglected medical concerns and DIFAM has as its mission the empowerment of individuals, churches and communities, through critical reflection and sharing of resources and experiences, to take responsibility towards greater partnership in the Christian healing mission. He also shared that as a contribution towards Edinburgh 2010, DIFAM is working on a publication 'Christian Communities in Contemporary Contexts from the Perspective of Healing and Reconciliation'.

#### *Ecumenical Disabled Advocacy Network (EDAN)*

EDAN is a WCC initiative started in 1988 at the 8<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of WCC in Harare to address the concerns of people with disabilities. The mission of the church it has been recognized includes mission to people with disabilities. EDAN seeks to encourage WCC member churches to be just and inclusive communities. It is based at the AACCC but working with

all the eight regions of the WCC churches in Latin America, North America, Caribbean, Middle East, Europe, Africa, Pacific and Asia.

### *Areas of Focus*

1. Introducing disability discourse in churches – a church for all by all.
2. Introducing disabilities discourse in theological institutions – challenge of study materials but EDAN is producing them.
3. Human rights work – UN in formulation for the rights of persons with disabilities.
4. Social concern.
5. Networking with all WCC departments, UN and other NGOS – programs on capacity building and maintaining fellowship.

### **Mission among the Nomadic Pastoralists: Experience by Fr. Joseph Ekomwa**

Talking about mission among pastoral communities like the Maasai, Turkana, Oromo and Karamajong, Ekomwa explained that doing mission among pastoralists is very challenging because they move from place to place in search of water and pasture. He argued that the church has to go to the people to do mission and not expect people to always come to it. Programs have to be designed and redesigned. For example the Africa Inland Church and Catholic missionaries went to the Turkana in the 1940s and established a mission to the nomads with little success. While the government has introduced moving schools, the church has barely adjusted to meet the needs of the pastoralists.

### *What is the Experience of Mission among Nomads?*

People are only available in the evening and the elders have allowed only women and girls and later young men to join the church. The older men have found the church divisive on account of denominational competition for converts. The elders have found it necessary to resist conversion in order to preserve the unity of the community: 'You people present different versions of the same message why is that? What is wrong with your God?' The church in Eastern Africa is in danger of fragmentation and this poses a challenge to ecumenism. There is also need for intercultural communication skills to facilitate evangelization. How do we handle mission among the nomads? Do we emphasize on community or individual concerns?

### **Women, Pentecostal Christianity and the Reshaping of Missiological and Theological Space in Kenya by Damaris Seleina**

Seleina discussed how various categories of women have increasingly feminized and engendered the face of Christianity in Kenya and how this gender charisma has spilt over to the public space to contest both secular and public places. They have transcended borders to make an impact regionally and internationally. Pentecostal discourses navigate around gender issues and ecclesial participation of women.

#### *Pentecostal Landscape in Kenya*

Pentecostalism has grown exponentially cutting across all classes – urban to rural but especially urban areas. Many of the Pentecostals are indigenous, charismatic, communities. Women are dominant especially in Neo-Pentecostal churches where they have carved out space for themselves.

Focusing on three women Pentecostal church leaders; Bishop Margaret Wanjiru (Jesus is Alive Ministries), Teresia Wairimu (Faith Evangelistic Ministries) and Elizabeth Wahome (Single Ladies International Ministries), Seleina examines the various ministries women are involved in and the benefits women reap by being in the churches and how they have altered perceptions of gender and transformed mission.

### **Studies of Selected Women Evangelists by Phyllis Ndro**

Ndro began by describing how women were firstly marginalized in the sending of missions to Africa because they were not married. Women missionaries had to be wives of missionaries. Women were generally used for fund raising and for prayer ministry. Eventually, they became accepted in their own right. The East African Revival which started in the 1930s in Rwanda and spread all over East Africa supported the women evangelists. Ndro gave examples of Christian women who ministered to women and encouraged some to become evangelists. These women stood against traditions like female circumcision. The roles of these women in Christian ministry need to be told.

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### **Advocacy and Agency in Mission: Africa Women in Mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century by Rev. Dr Sicily Muriithi**

In her presentation, Muriithi discussed the work of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians in exposing issues that marginalize women. The Circle articulates ways of being church and doing theology that promotes gender justice, inclusion and dialogue.

### **Ethical Training of Missionaries for Cross-Cultural Missions by Fr. Patrick Ryan**

Patrick Ryan explored the Roman Catholic understanding of mission as articulated in three church documents that represent evolution of the Roman Catholic understanding of mission namely:

1. *Ad Gentes* – Missioevangelization (1965)

Foreign mission was Western centered, reaching out to the pagan, uncivilized, primitive. This thinking was still rife in 1965. Mission is done everywhere – the general work of the church which varies depending on time and place.

2. *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975) – Conscientize Church on place of evangelization – from within outward, no complacency.

3. *Redemptoris Missio* (1990) – Different field of mission

Church in South is doctrinally very weak – revolves around a charismatic leader.

Training has to incorporate all the important categories:

- Specialization lacking – age of general missionary is over
- Need for consensus on what mission is all about

Status quo of RCC has two different paradigms:

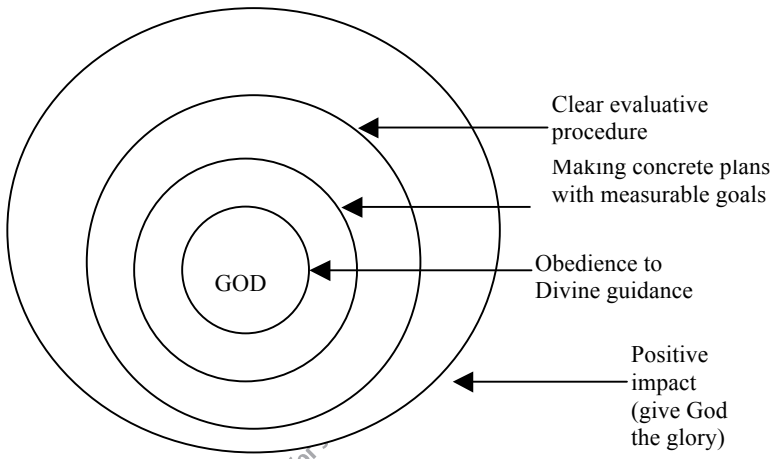
1. Focus primarily on building physical church – buildings. There is also the presupposition that mission has to be focused on some project. There should be more emphasis on sharing faith experiences.
2. Focus primarily on promotion of Christian values and living these values.

The idea of sending missionaries from the north to the south is now changing. Mission in reverse is already happening. Formation of priests by religious congregations in the north is now shifting to Africa. For example, there is no single white student studying in Uganda, Kenya or DRC.

### **Purpose Driven Mission by Dr Mumo Kisau**

Mumo in his presentation explored the importance of the church's mission being purposively centered on God and not being project driven. Such a mission has the following characteristics:

God-centered mission = obey God's guidance, Concrete plans with measurable goals, Clear evaluating procedures, Feedback (positive and negative), Glory to God is the ultimate goal.



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## LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

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**John Donnelly** completed his PhD at RMIT University, Australia on how the Catholic Church in PNG assisted women's empowerment. He has worked in numerous Pacific countries as a project manager and is currently an independent consultant.

**Erica Dunmow** has worked in urban mission contexts in the UK for nearly 30 years, serving variously as Chair of a Youth and Community Center; a local preacher within the Methodist tradition; as UK Development Worker for the Urban Mission Development Project; staff member for the UK Urban Mission Congress (Jesus in the City) whom she represented at Edinburgh 2012; and then consultant to the Christian Coalition for Urban Mission. She has published work on contextualized worship in urban areas. Her academic research area is the theologies that inform people engaged in community transformational mission, and matters of leadership in urban contexts.

**Harold D. Hunter** is currently Director of the IPHC Archives and Research Center. Denominational executive positions, seminary teaching and ecumenical dialogues have taken him to more than 60 countries. Hunter co-edited with Peter Hocken *All Together in One Place* (Sheffield, 1993), co-edited with Cecil M. Robeck Jr, *The Suffering Body* (Paternoster, 2006) in addition to *The Azusa Street Revival and Its Legacy* (Pathway, 2006) and released *Spirit Baptism: A Pentecostal Alternative* (Wipf and Stock, 2009). His articles have appeared in international journals, dictionaries and encyclopedia. Dr Hunter engages the World Council of Churches, Eastern Orthodox Churches, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) and the NCCUSA Faith and Order Commission.



**Anderson H.M. Jeremiah** is Lecturer in World Christianity at Lancaster University. His research interests include the anthropological enquiry into the complex lives and identity formation of Dalit Christians in India. He also continues to explore the role of Christianity in forging new identities and theologies in the context of marginality. He was also a member of the core team for Edinburgh 2010 Commission VII Study Group

**Frieder Ludwig** is Director of Missionsseminar Hermannsburg, Germany and lecturer ('Privatdozent') at the University of Göttingen. His research interests include the history of Christianity in Africa, the ecumenical movement, intercultural theology as well as Christian-Muslim relations and African Traditional Religions. He received his PhDs from Heidelberg and the University Lecturing Qualification (Habilitation) from Munich. Ludwig also taught at Bayreuth University and Munich University in Germany, at Jos University in Nigeria and at Luther Seminary in St Paul/Minnesota, USA.

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**Janice A. McLean** was a member of the core team for Edinburgh 2010 Commission VII Study Group. She holds a PhD from the Center for the Study of World Christianity, University of Edinburgh. She is currently on the Faculty of City Seminary of New York in New York, USA where she is coordinator of the Global New York Church Project and the Seminary Library. Her research focus is on West Indian Christianity and immigrant youth.

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**Daniel Ndukwe** is National Children's Desk Coordinator of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria (PCN), Enugu.

**Elijah Obinna** obtained his PhD from the University of Edinburgh. He served as a visiting Assistant Professor at the University of Missouri-Columbia. His research examined the complex religious identities and practices of Nigerian-African Christians balancing mission-influenced Christianity with indigenous religious traditions and identities. His recent publications include, 'Past in the Present: Indigenous Leadership and Contemporary Party Politics in Igboland, Nigeria' in *History, Time,*

*Meaning, and Memory: Ideas for the Sociology of Religion.* Barbara Denison, ed., Leiden and Boston: Brill. 2011

**Kirk Sandvig** served as Youth Coordinator for Edinburgh 2010. He is a PhD candidate at the University of Edinburgh Center for the Study of World Christianity. His current research examines the influences of movement and modernity within Hidden Christian communities in Japan.

**Sadiri Joy Tira** serves as the Lausanne Movement's Senior Associate for Diasporas, and the Global Diaspora Network (GDN) Chairperson. He is also Vice President for Diaspora Missions for Advancing Indigenous Missions (AIM). In 2011, Joy joined the Alliance Graduate School (AGS) in Manila as director of the Institute of Diaspora Missiology, and also the Jaffray Center for Global Initiatives at Ambrose University College and Seminary (AUCS) in Canada as Diaspora Missiology Specialist. Joy received his theological and ministry training from Western Seminary (D.Miss.) and Reformed Theological Seminary (D.Min.).

**Philip Wingeier-Rayo** is Associate Professor of Religion at Pfeiffer University in North Carolina. He also serves as adjunct instructor of Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary and Wesley Theological Seminary in the areas of theology, church history, missions and United Methodist History, Doctrine and Polity. He has published numerous articles and two books: *Cuba Methodism: The Untold Story of Survival and Revival*, 2nd edition, Atlanta, GA: Dolphins and Orchids, 2006 and *Where are the Poor? An Ethnographic Study of a Base Christian Community and a Pentecostal Church in Mexico*, Pickwick Publications, 2011.

## REGNUM EDINBURGH CENTENARY SERIES

David A. Kerr, Kenneth R. Ross (Eds)

### **Mission Then and Now**

2009 / 978-1-870345-73-6 / 343pp (paperback)

2009 / 978-1-870345-76-7 / 343pp (hardback)

No one can hope to fully understand the modern Christian missionary movement without engaging substantially with the World Missionary Conference, held at Edinburgh in 1910. This book is the first to systematically examine the eight Commissions which reported to Edinburgh 1910 and gave the conference much of its substance and enduring value. It will deepen and extend the reflection being stimulated by the upcoming centenary and will kindle the missionary imagination for 2010 and beyond.

Daryl M. Balia, Kirsteen Kim (Eds)

### **Witnessing to Christ Today**

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This volume, the second in the Edinburgh 2010 series, includes reports of the nine main study groups working on different themes for the celebration of the centenary of the World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910. Their collaborative work brings together perspectives that are as inclusive as possible of contemporary world Christianity and helps readers to grasp what it means in different contexts to be 'witnessing to Christ today'.

Claudia Währisch-Oblau, Fidon Mwombeki (Eds)

### **Mission Continues**

*Global Impulses for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

2010 / 978-1-870345-82-8 / 271pp (hardback)

In May 2009, 35 theologians from Asia, Africa and Europe met in Wuppertal, Germany, for a consultation on mission theology organized by the United Evangelical Mission: Communion of 35 Churches in Three Continents. The aim was to participate in the 100th anniversary of the Edinburgh conference through a study process and reflect on the challenges for mission in the 21st century. This book brings together these papers written by experienced practitioners from around the world.

Brian Woolnough and Wonsuk Ma (Eds)

### **Holistic Mission**

*God's Plan for God's People*

2010 / 978-1-870345-85-9 / 268pp (hardback)

Holistic mission, or integral mission, implies God is concerned with the whole person, the whole community, body, mind and spirit. This book discusses the meaning of the holistic gospel, how it has developed, and implications for the church. It takes a global, eclectic approach, with 19 writers, all of whom have much experience in, and commitment to, holistic mission. It addresses critically and honestly one of the most exciting, and challenging, issues facing the church today. To be part of God's plan for God's people, the church must take holistic mission to the world.

Kirsteen Kim and Andrew Anderson (Eds)

### **Mission Today and Tomorrow**

2010 / 978-1-870345-91-0 / 450pp (hardback)

There are moments in our lives when we come to realise that we are participating in the triune God's mission. If we believe the church to be as sign and symbol of the reign of God in the world, then we are called to witness to Christ today by sharing in God's mission of

love through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. We can all participate in God's transforming and reconciling mission of love to the whole creation.

Tormod Engelsviken, Erling Lundeby and Dagfinn Solheim (Eds)

***The Church Going Glocal***

*Mission and Globalisation*

2011 / 978-1-870345-93-4 / 262pp (hardback)

The New Testament church is... universal and local at the same time. The universal, one and holy apostolic church appears in local manifestations. Missiologically speaking... the church can take courage as she faces the increasing impact of globalisation on local communities today. Being universal and concrete, the church is geared for the simultaneous challenges of the glocal and local.

Marina Ngurusangzeli Behera (Ed)

***Interfaith Relations after One Hundred Years***

*Christian Mission among Other Faiths*

2011 / 978-1-870345-96-5 / 338pp (hardback)

The essays of this book reflect not only the acceptance and celebration of pluralism within India but also by extension an acceptance as well as a need for unity among Indian Christians of different denominations. The essays were presented and studied at a preparatory consultation on Study Theme II: Christian Mission Among Other Faiths at the United Theological College, India July 2009.

Lalsangkima Pachuau and Knud Jørgensen (Eds)

***Witnessing to Christ in a Pluralistic Age***

*Christian Mission among Other Faiths*

2011 / 978-1-870345-95-8 / 277pp (hardback)

In a world where plurality of faiths is increasingly becoming a norm of life, insights on the theology of religious plurality are needed to strengthen our understanding of our own faith and the faith of others. Even though religious diversity is not new, we are seeing an upsurge in interest on the theologies of religion among all Christian confessional traditions. It can be claimed that no other issue in Christian mission is more important and more difficult than the theologies of religions.

Beth Snodderly and A Scott Moreau (Eds)

***Evangelical Frontier Mission***

*Perspectives on the Global Progress of the Gospel*

2011 / 978-1-870345-98-9 / 312pp (hardback)

This important volume demonstrates that 100 years after the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, Evangelism has become truly global. Twenty-first-century Evangelism continues to focus on frontier mission, but significantly, and in the spirit of Edinburgh 1910, it also has re-engaged social action.

Rolv Olsen (Ed)

***Mission and Postmodernities***

2011 / 978-1-870345-97-2 / 279pp (hardback)

This volume takes on meaning because its authors honestly struggle with and debate how we should relate to postmodernities. Should our response be accommodation, relativizing or counter-culture? How do we strike a balance between listening and understanding, and at the same time exploring how postmodernities influence the interpretation and application of the Bible as the normative story of God's mission in the world?

Cathy Ross (Ed)

***Life-Widening Mission***

2012 / 978-1-908355-00-3 / 163pp (hardback)

It is clear from the essays collected here that the experience of the 2010 World Mission Conference in Edinburgh was both affirming and frustrating for those taking part - affirming because of its recognition of how the centre of gravity has moved in global Christianity; frustrating because of the relative slowness of so many global Christian bodies to catch up with this and to embody it in the way they do business and in the way they represent themselves. These reflections will - or should - provide plenty of food for thought in the various councils of the Communion in the coming years.

Beate Fagerli, Knud Jørgensen, Rolv Olsen, Kari Storstein Haug and  
Knut Tveitereid (Eds)

***A Learning Missional Church***

*Reflections from Young Missiologists*

2012 / 978-1-908355-01-0 / 218pp (hardback)

Cross-cultural mission has always been a primary learning experience for the church. It pulls us out of a mono-cultural understanding and helps us discover a legitimate theological pluralism which opens up for new perspectives in the Gospel. Translating the Gospel into new languages and cultures is a human and divine means of making us learn new 'incarnations' of the Good News.

Emma Wild-Wood & Peniel Rajkumar (Eds)

***Foundations for Mission***

2012 / 978-1-908355-12-6 / 309pp (hardback)

This volume provides an important resource for those wishing to gain an overview of significant issues in contemporary missiology whilst understanding how they are applied in particular contexts.

Wonsuk Ma & Kenneth R Ross (Eds)

***Mission Spirituality and Authentic Discipleship***

2013 / 978-1-908355-24-9 / 248pp (hardback)

This book argues for the primacy of spirituality in the practice of mission. Since God is the primary agent of mission and God works through the power of the Holy Spirit, it is through openness to the Spirit that mission finds its true character and has its authentic impact.

Stephen B Bevans (Ed)

***A Century of Catholic Mission***

2013 / 978-1-908355-14-0 / 337pp (hardback)

A Century of Catholic Mission surveys the complex and rich history and theology of Roman Catholic Mission in the one hundred years since the 1910 Edinburgh World Mission Conference. Essays written by an international team of Catholic mission scholars focus on Catholic Mission in every region of the world, summarize church teaching on mission before and after the watershed event of the Second Vatican Council, and reflect on a wide variety of theological issues.

Robert Schreiter & Knud Jørgensen (Eds)

***Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation***

2013 / 978-1-908355-26-3 / 382pp (hardback)

There is hope – even if it is “Hope in a Fragile World”, as the concluding chapter of Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation puts it. At the very heart of the gospel of Jesus Christ is a message of hope and reconciliation. Nothing could be more relevant and more necessary in a broken world than this Christian message of hope and reconciliation. ... I would like to congratulate the editors of Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation, for they listened carefully and planned with farsightedness. ... This rich book offers a valuable elucidation of the importance and the understanding of mission as ministry of reconciliation.

**REGNUM STUDIES IN GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY**

David Emmanuel Singh (Ed)

**Jesus and the Cross**

*Reflections of Christians from Islamic Contexts*

2008 / 978-1-870345-65-1 / 226pp

The Cross reminds us that the sins of the world are not borne through the exercise of power but through Jesus Christ's submission to the will of the Father. The papers in this volume are organised in three parts: scriptural, contextual and theological. The central question being addressed is: how do Christians living in contexts, where Islam is a majority or minority religion, experience, express or think of the Cross?

Sung-wook Hong

**Naming God in Korea**

*The Case of Protestant Christianity*

2008 / 978-1-870345-66-8 / 170pp (hardback)

Since Christianity was introduced to Korea more than a century ago, one of the most controversial issues has been the Korean term for the Christian ‘God’. This issue is not merely about naming the Christian God in Korean language, but it relates to the question of theological contextualization - the relationship between the gospel and culture - and the question of Korean Christian identity. This book demonstrates the nature of the gospel in relation to cultures, i.e., the universality of the gospel expressed in all human cultures.

Hubert van Beek (Ed)

**Revisioning Christian Unity**

*The Global Christian Forum*

2009 / 978-1-870345-74-3 / 288pp (hardback)

This book contains the records of the Global Christian Forum gathering held in Limuru near Nairobi, Kenya, on 6 – 9 November 2007 as well as the papers presented at that historic event. Also included are a summary of the Global Christian Forum process from its inception until the 2007 gathering and the reports of the evaluation of the process that was carried out in 2008.

Young-hoon Lee

**The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea**

*Its Historical and Theological Development*

2009 / 978-1-870345-67-5 / 174pp (hardback)

This book traces the historical and theological development of the Holy Spirit Movement in Korea through six successive periods (from 1900 to the present time). These periods are characterized by repentance and revival (1900-20), persecution and suffering under Japanese

occupation (1920-40), confusion and division (1940-60), explosive revival in which the Pentecostal movement played a major role in the rapid growth of Korean churches (1960-80), the movement reaching out to all denominations (1980-2000), and the new context demanding the Holy Spirit movement to open new horizons in its mission engagement (2000-).

Paul Hang-Sik Cho  
**Eschatology and Ecology**

*Experiences of the Korean Church*

2010 / 978-1-870345-75-0 / 260pp (hardback)

This book raises the question of why Korean people, and Korean Protestant Christians in particular, pay so little attention to ecological issues. The author argues that there is an important connection (or elective affinity) between this lack of attention and the other-worldly eschatology that is so dominant within Korean Protestant Christianity.

Dietrich Werner, David Esterline, Namsoon Kang, Joshva Raja (Eds)

**The Handbook of Theological Education in World Christianity**

*Theological Perspectives, Ecumenical Trends, Regional Surveys*

2010 / 978-1-870345-80-0 / 759pp

This major reference work is the first ever comprehensive study of Theological Education in Christianity of its kind. With contributions from over 90 international scholars and church leaders, it aims to be easily accessible across denominational, cultural, educational, and geographic boundaries. The Handbook will aid international dialogue and networking among theological educators, institutions, and agencies.

David Emmanuel Singh & Bernard C Farr (Eds)

**Christianity and Education**

*Shaping of Christian Context in Thinking*

2010 / 978-1-870345-81-1 / 374pp

*Christianity and Education* is a collection of papers published in *Transformation: An International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies* over a period of 15 years. The articles represent a spectrum of Christian thinking addressing issues of institutional development for theological education, theological studies in the context of global mission, contextually aware/informed education, and academies which deliver such education, methodologies and personal reflections.

J. Andrew Kirk

**Civilisations in Conflict?**

*Islam, the West and Christian Faith*

2011 / 978-1-870345-87-3 / 205pp

Samuel Huntington's thesis, which argues that there appear to be aspects of Islam that could be on a collision course with the politics and values of Western societies, has provoked much controversy. The purpose of this study is to offer a particular response to Huntington's thesis by making a comparison between the origins of Islam and Christianity.

David Emmanuel Singh (Ed)

**Jesus and the Incarnation**

*Reflections of Christians from Islamic Contexts*

2011 / 978-1-870345-90-3 / 245pp

In the dialogues of Christians with Muslims nothing is more fundamental than the Cross, the Incarnation and the Resurrection of Jesus. Building on the *Jesus and the Cross*, this book contains voices of Christians living in various 'Islamic contexts' and reflecting on the Incarnation of Jesus. The aim and hope of these reflections is that the papers weaved around

the notion of 'the Word' will not only promote dialogue among Christians on the roles of the Person and the Book but, also, create a positive environment for their conversations with Muslim neighbours.

Ivan M Satyavrata  
**God Has Not left Himself Without Witness**  
2011 / 978-1-870345-79-8 / 264pp

Since its earliest inception the Christian Church has had to address the question of what common ground exists between Christian faiths and other religions. This issue is not merely of academic interest but one with critical existential and socio-political consequences. This study presents a case for the revitalization of the fulfillment tradition based on a recovery and assessment of the fulfillment approaches of Indian Christian converts in the pre-independence period.

Bal Krishna Sharma  
**From this World to the Next**  
*Christian Identity and Funerary Rites in Nepal*  
2013 / 978-1-908355-08-9 / 238pp

This book explores and analyses funerary rite struggles in a nation where Christianity is a comparatively recent phenomenon, and many families have multi-faith, who go through traumatic experiences at the death of their family members. The author has used an applied theological approach to explore and analyse the findings in order to address the issue of funerary rites with which the Nepalese church is struggling.

J Kwabena Asamoah-Gyada  
**Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity**  
*Interpretations from an African Context*  
2013 / 978-1-908355-07-2 / 194pp

Pentecostalism is the fastest growing stream of Christianity in the world. The real evidence for the significance of Pentecostalism lies in the actual churches they have built and the numbers they attract. This work interprets key theological and missiological themes in African Pentecostalism by using material from the live experiences of the movement itself.

Isabel Apawo Phiri & Dietrich Werner (Eds)  
**Handbook of Theological Education in Africa**  
2013 / 978-1-908355-19-5 / 1110pp (hardback)

The *Handbook of Theological Education in Africa* is a wake-up call for African churches to give proper prominence to theological education institutions and their programmes which serve them. It is unique, comprehensive and ambitious in its aim and scope.

Hope Antone, Wati Longchar, Hyunju Bae, Huang Po Ho, Dietrich Werner (Eds)  
**Asian Handbook for Theological Education and Ecumenism**  
2013 / 978-1-908355-30-0 / 675pp (hardback)

This impressive and comprehensive book focuses on key resources for teaching Christian unity and common witness in Asian contexts. It is a collection of articles that reflects the ongoing 'double wrestle' with the texts of biblical tradition as well as with contemporary contexts. It signals an investment towards the future of the ecumenical movement in Asia.



David Emmanuel Singh and Bernard C Farr (Eds)

**The Bible and Christian Ethics**

2013 / 978-1-908355-20-1 / 217pp

This book contains papers from the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies' quarterly journal, Transformation, on the topic of Christian Ethics. Here, Mission Studies is understood in its widest sense to also encompass Christian Ethics. At the very hearts of it lies the Family as the basic unit of society. All the papers together seek to contribute to understanding how Christian thought is shaped in contexts each of which poses its own challenge to Christian living in family and in broader society.

Martin Allaby

**Inequality, Corruption and the Church**

*Challenges & Opportunities in the Global Church*

2013 / 978-1-908355-16-4 / 228pp

Why are economic inequalities greatest in the southern countries where most people are Christians? This book teases out the influences that have created this situation, and concludes that Christians could help reduce economic inequalities by opposing corruption. Interviews in the Philippines, Kenya, Zambia and Peru reveal opportunities and challenges for Christians as they face up to corruption.

Paul Alexander and Al Tizon (Eds)

**Following Jesus**

*Journeys in Radical Discipleship – Essays in Honor of Ronald J Sider*

2013 / 978-1-908355-27-0 / 228pp

Ronald J. Sider and the organization that he founded, *Evangelicals for Social Action*, are most respected for their pioneering work in the area of evangelical social concern. However, Sider's great contribution to social justice is but a part of a larger vision – namely, biblical discipleship. His works, which span more than four decades, have guided the faithful to be authentic gospel-bearers in ecclesial, cultural and political arenas. This book honors Ron Sider, by bringing together a group of scholar-activists, old and young, to reflect upon the gospel and its radical implications for the 21st century.

**REGNUM STUDIES IN MISSION**

Kwame Bediako

**Theology and Identity**

*The Impact of Culture upon Christian Thought in the Second Century and in Modern Africa*

1992 / 978-1870345-10-1 / 507pp

The author examines the question of Christian identity in the context of the Graeco-Roman culture of the early Roman Empire. He then addresses the modern African predicament of quests for identity and integration.

Christopher Sugden

**Seeking the Asian Face of Jesus**

*The Practice and Theology of Christian Social Witness*

*in Indonesia and India 1974–1996*

1997 / 1-870345-26-6 / 496pp

This study focuses on contemporary holistic mission with the poor in India and Indonesia combined with the call to transformation of all life in Christ with micro-credit enterprise

schemes. 'The literature on contextual theology now has a new standard to rise to' – Lamin Sanneh (Yale University, USA).

Hwa Yung

**Mangoes or Bananas?**

*The Quest for an Authentic Asian Christian Theology*

1997 / 1-870345-25-5 / 274pp

Asian Christian thought remains largely captive to Greek dualism and Enlightenment rationalism because of the overwhelming dominance of Western culture. Authentic contextual Christian theologies will emerge within Asian Christianity with a dual recovery of confidence in culture and the gospel.

Keith E. Eitel

**Paradigm Wars**

*The Southern Baptist International Mission Board Faces the Third Millennium*

1999 / 1-870345-12-6 / 140pp

The International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention is the largest denominational mission agency in North America. This volume chronicles the historic and contemporary forces that led to the IMB's recent extensive reorganization, providing the most comprehensive case study to date of a historic mission agency restructuring to continue its mission purpose into the twenty-first century more effectively.

Samuel Jayakumar

**Dalit Consciousness and Christian Conversion**

*Historical Resources for a Contemporary Debate*

1999 / 81-7214-497-0 / 434pp

(Published jointly with ISPCK)

The main focus of this historical study is social change and transformation among the Dalit Christian communities in India. Historiography tests the evidence in the light of the conclusions of the modern Dalit liberation theologians.

Vinay Samuel and Christopher Sugden (Eds)

**Mission as Transformation**

*A Theology of the Whole Gospel*

1999 / 978-18703455-13-2 / 522pp

This book brings together in one volume twenty five years of biblical reflection on mission practice with the poor from around the world. This volume helps anyone understand how evangelicals, struggling to unite evangelism and social action, found their way in the last twenty five years to the biblical view of mission in which God calls all human beings to love God and their neighbour; never creating a separation between the two.

Christopher Sugden

**Gospel, Culture and Transformation**

2000 / 1-870345-32-3 / 152pp

*A Reprint, with a New Introduction,*

*of Part Two of Seeking the Asian Face of Jesus*

*Gospel, Culture and Transformation* explores the practice of mission especially in relation to transforming cultures and communities. - 'Transformation is to enable God's vision of society to be actualised in all relationships: social, economic and spiritual, so that God's will

may be reflected in human society and his love experienced by all communities, especially the poor.’

Bernhard Ott

**Beyond Fragmentation: Integrating Mission and Theological Education**

*A Critical Assessment of some Recent Developments*

*in Evangelical Theological Education*

2001 / 1-870345-14-9 / 382pp

*Beyond Fragmentation* is an enquiry into the development of Mission Studies in evangelical theological education in Germany and German-speaking Switzerland between 1960 and 1995. The author undertakes a detailed examination of the paradigm shifts which have taken place in recent years in both the theology of mission and the understanding of theological education.

Gideon Githiga

**The Church as the Bulwark against Authoritarianism**

*Development of Church and State Relations in Kenya, with Particular Reference to the Years after Political Independence 1963-1992*

2002 / 1-870345-38-x / 218pp

‘All who care for love, peace and unity in Kenyan society will want to read this careful history by Bishop Githiga of how Kenyan Christians, drawing on the Bible, have sought to share the love of God, bring his peace and build up the unity of the nation, often in the face of great difficulties and opposition.’ Canon Dr Chris Sugden, Oxford Centre for Mission Studies.

Myung Sung-Hoon, Hong Young-Gi (Eds)

**Charis and Charisma**

*David Yonggi Cho and the Growth of Yoido Full Gospel Church*

2003 / 978-1870345-45-3 / 218pp

This book discusses the factors responsible for the growth of the world’s largest church. It expounds the role of the Holy Spirit, the leadership, prayer, preaching, cell groups and creativity in promoting church growth. It focuses on God’s grace (charis) and inspiring leadership (charisma) as the two essential factors and the book’s purpose is to present a model for church growth worldwide.

Samuel Jayakumar

**Mission Reader**

*Historical Models for Wholistic Mission in the Indian Context*

2003 / 1-870345-42-8 / 250pp

(Published jointly with ISPCK)

This book is written from an evangelical point of view revalidating and reaffirming the Christian commitment to wholistic mission. The roots of the ‘wholistic mission’ combining ‘evangelism and social concerns’ are to be located in the history and tradition of Christian evangelism in the past; and the civilizing purpose of evangelism is compatible with modernity as an instrument in nation building.

Bob Robinson

**Christians Meeting Hindus**

*An Analysis and Theological Critique of the Hindu-Christian Encounter in India*

2004 / 987-1870345-39-2 / 392pp

This book focuses on the Hindu-Christian encounter, especially the intentional meeting called dialogue, mainly during the last four decades of the twentieth century, and specifically in India itself.

Gene Early

**Leadership Expectations**

*How Executive Expectations are Created and Used in a Non-Profit Setting*

2005 / 1-870345-30-9 / 276pp

The author creates an Expectation Enactment Analysis to study the role of the Chancellor of the University of the Nations-Kona, Hawaii. This study is grounded in the field of managerial work, jobs, and behaviour and draws on symbolic interactionism, role theory, role identity theory and enactment theory. The result is a conceptual framework for developing an understanding of managerial roles.

Tharcisse Gatwa

**The Churches and Ethnic Ideology in the Rwandan Crises 1900-1994**

2005 / 978-1870345-24-8 / 300pp

(Reprinted 2011)

Since the early years of the twentieth century Christianity has become a new factor in Rwandan society. This book investigates the role Christian churches played in the formulation and development of the racial ideology that culminated in the 1994 genocide.

Julie Ma

**Mission Possible**

*Biblical Strategies for Reaching the Lost*

2005 / 978-1870345-37-8 / 142pp

This is a missiology book for the church which liberates missiology from the specialists for the benefit of every believer. It also serves as a textbook that is simple and friendly, and yet solid in biblical interpretation. This book links the biblical teaching to the actual and contemporary missiological settings with examples, making the Bible come alive to the reader.

I. Mark Beaumont

**Christology in Dialogue with Muslims**

*A Critical Analysis of Christian Presentations of Christ for Muslims  
from the Ninth and Twentieth Centuries*

2005 / 978-1870345-46-0 / 227pp

This book analyses Christian presentations of Christ for Muslims in the most creative periods of Christian-Muslim dialogue, the first half of the ninth century and the second half of the twentieth century. In these two periods, Christians made serious attempts to present their faith in Christ in terms that take into account Muslim perceptions of him, with a view to bridging the gap between Muslim and Christian convictions.

Thomas Czövek,  
**Three Seasons of Charismatic Leadership**  
*A Literary-Critical and Theological Interpretation of the Narrative of  
Saul, David and Solomon*  
2006 / 978-1870345-48-4 / 272pp

This book investigates the charismatic leadership of Saul, David and Solomon. It suggests that charismatic leaders emerge in crisis situations in order to resolve the crisis by the charisma granted by God. Czövek argues that Saul proved himself as a charismatic leader as long as he acted resolutely and independently from his mentor Samuel. In the author's eyes, Saul's failure to establish himself as a charismatic leader is caused by his inability to step out from Samuel's shadow.

Richard Burgess  
**Nigeria's Christian Revolution**  
*The Civil War Revival and Its Pentecostal Progeny (1967-2006)*  
2008 / 978-1-870345-63-7 / 347pp

This book describes the revival that occurred among the Igbo people of Eastern Nigeria and the new Pentecostal churches it generated, and documents the changes that have occurred as the movement has responded to global flows and local demands. As such, it explores the nature of revivalist and Pentecostal experience, but does so against the backdrop of local socio-political and economic developments, such as decolonisation and civil war, as well as broader processes, such as modernisation and globalisation.

David Emmanuel Singh & Bernard C Farr (Eds)  
**Christianity and Cultures**  
*Shaping Christian Thinking in Context*  
2008 / 978-1-870345-69-9 / 271pp

This volume marks an important milestone, the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies (OCMS). The papers here have been exclusively sourced from Transformation, a quarterly journal of OCMS, and seek to provide a tripartite view of Christianity's engagement with cultures by focusing on the question: how is Christian thinking being formed or reformed through its interaction with the varied contexts it encounters? The subject matters include different strands of theological-missiological thinking, socio-political engagements and forms of family relationships in interaction with the host cultures.

Tormod Engelsen, Ernst Harbakk, Rolv Olsen, Thor Strandenæs (Eds)  
**Mission to the World**  
*Communicating the Gospel in the 21st Century:  
Essays in Honour of Knud Jørgensen*  
2008 / 978-1-870345-64-4 / 472pp (hardback)

Knud Jørgensen is Director of Areopagos and Associate Professor of Missiology at MF Norwegian School of Theology. This book reflects on the main areas of Jørgensen's commitment to mission. At the same time it focuses on the main frontier of mission, the world, the content of mission, the Gospel, the fact that the Gospel has to be communicated, and the context of contemporary mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Al Tizon

**Transformation after Lausanne**

*Radical Evangelical Mission in Global-Local Perspective*

2008 / 978-1-870345-68-2 / 281pp

After Lausanne '74, a worldwide network of radical evangelical mission theologians and practitioners use the notion of "Mission as Transformation" to integrate evangelism and social concern together, thus lifting theological voices from the Two Thirds World to places of prominence. This book documents the definitive gatherings, theological tensions, and social forces within and without evangelicalism that led up to Mission as Transformation. And it does so through a global-local grid that points the way toward greater holistic mission in the 21st century.

Bambang Budijanto

**Values and Participation**

*Development in Rural Indonesia*

2009 / 978-1-870345-70-4 / 237pp

Socio-religious values and socio-economic development are inter-dependant, inter-related and are constantly changing in the context of macro political structures, economic policy, religious organizations and globalization, and micro influences such as local affinities, identity, politics, leadership and beliefs. The book argues that the comprehensive approach in understanding the socio-religious values of each of the three local Lopait communities in Central Java is essential to accurately describing their respective identity.

Alan R. Johnson

**Leadership in a Slum**

*A Bangkok Case Study*

2009 / 978-1-870345-71-2 / 238pp

This book looks at leadership in the social context of a slum in Bangkok from a different perspective than traditional studies which measure well educated Thais on leadership scales derived in the West. Using both systematic data collection and participant observation, it develops a culturally preferred model as well as a set of models based in Thai concepts that reflect on-the-ground realities. It concludes by looking at the implications of the anthropological approach for those who are involved in leadership training in Thai settings and beyond.

Titre Ande

**Leadership and Authority**

*Bula Matari and Life - Community Ecclesiology in Congo*

2010 / 978-1-870345-72-9 / 189pp

Christian theology in Africa can make significant development if a critical understanding of the socio-political context in contemporary Africa is taken seriously, particularly as Africa's post-colonial Christian leadership based its understanding and use of authority on the Bula Matari model. This has caused many problems and Titre proposes a Life-Community ecclesiology for liberating authority, here leadership is a function, not a status, and 'apostolic succession' belongs to all people of God.

Frank Kwesi Adams

**Odwira and the Gospel**

*A Study of the Asante Odwira Festival and its Significance for Christianity in Ghana*

2010 / 978-1-870345-59-0 / 232pp

The study of the Odwira festival is the key to the understanding of Asante religious and political life in Ghana. The book explores the nature of the Odwira festival longitudinally -

in pre-colonial, colonial and post-independence Ghana - and examines the Odwira ideology and its implications for understanding the Asante self-identity. Also discussed is how some elements of faith portrayed in the Odwira festival can provide a framework for Christianity to engage with Asante culture at a greater depth.

Bruce Carlton

**Strategy Coordinator**

*Changing the Course of Southern Baptist Missions*

2010 / 978-1-870345-78-1 / 273pp

This is an outstanding, one-of-a-kind work addressing the influence of the non-residential missionary/strategy coordinator's role in Southern Baptist missions. This scholarly text examines the twentieth century global missiological currents that influenced the leadership of the International Mission Board, resulting in a new paradigm to assist in taking the gospel to the nations.

Julie Ma & Wonsuk Ma

**Mission in the Spirit:**

*Towards a Pentecostal/Charismatic Missiology*

2010 / 978-1-870345-84-2 / 312pp

The book explores the unique contribution of Pentecostal/Charismatic mission from the beginning of the twentieth century. The first part considers the theological basis of Pentecostal/Charismatic mission thinking and practice. Special attention is paid to the Old Testament, which has been regularly overlooked by the modern Pentecostal/Charismatic movements. The second part discusses major mission topics with contributions and challenges unique to Pentecostal/Charismatic mission. The book concludes with a reflection on the future of this powerful missionary movement. As the authors served as Korean missionaries in Asia, often their missionary experiences in Asia are reflected in their discussions.

Allan Anderson, Edmond Tang (Eds)

**Asian and Pentecostal**

*The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia*

2011 / 978-1-870345-94-1 / 500pp

(Revised Edition)

This book provides a thematic discussion and pioneering case studies on the history and development of Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in the countries of South Asia, South East Asia and East Asia.

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S. Hun Kim & Wonsuk Ma (Eds)

**Korean Diaspora and Christian Mission**

2011 / 978-1-870345-89-7 / 301pp (hardback)

As a 'divine conspiracy' for Missio Dei, the global phenomenon of people on the move has shown itself to be invaluable. In 2004 two significant documents concerning Diaspora were introduced, one by the Filipino International Network and the other by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization. These have created awareness of the importance of people on the move for Christian mission. Since then, Korean Diaspora has conducted similar research among Korean missions, resulting in this book

Jin Huat Tan

**Planting an Indigenous Church**

*The Case of the Borneo Evangelical Mission*

2011 / 978-1-870345-99-6 / 343pp

Dr Jin Huat Tan has written a pioneering study of the origins and development of Malaysia's most significant indigenous church. This is an amazing story of revival, renewal and transformation of the entire region chronicling the powerful effect of it evident to date! What can we learn from this extensive and careful study of the Borneo Revival, so the global Christianity will become ever more dynamic?

Bill Prevette

**Child, Church and Compassion**

*Towards Child Theology in Romania*

2012 / 978-1-908355-03-4 / 382pp

Bill Prevette comments that "children are like 'canaries in a mine shaft'; they provide a focal point for discovery and encounter of perilous aspects of our world that are often ignored." True, but miners also carried a lamp to see into the subterranean darkness. This book is such a lamp. It lights up the subterranean world of children and youth in danger of exploitation, and as it does so travels deep into their lives and also into the activities of those who seek to help them.

Samuel Cyuma

**Picking up the Pieces**

*The Church and Conflict Resolution in South Africa and Rwanda*

2012 / 978-1-908355-02-7 / 373pp

In the last ten years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the world was twice confronted with unbelievable news from Africa. First, there was the end of Apartheid in South Africa, without bloodshed, due to responsible political and Church leaders. The second was the mass killings in Rwanda, which soon escalated into real genocide. Political and Church leaders had been unable to prevent this crime against humanity. In this book, the question is raised: can we compare the situation in South Africa with that in Rwanda? Can Rwandan leaders draw lessons from the peace process in South Africa?

Peter Rowan

**Proclaiming the Peacemaker**

*The Malaysian Church as an Agent of Reconciliation in a Multicultural Society*

2012 / 978-1-908355-05-8 / 268pp

With a history of racial violence and in recent years, low-level ethnic tensions, the themes of peaceful coexistence and social harmony are recurring ones in the discourse of Malaysian society. In such a context, this book looks at the role of the church as a reconciling agent, arguing that a reconciling presence within a divided society necessitates an ethos of peacemaking.

Edward Ontita

**Resources and Opportunity**

*The Architecture of Livelihoods in Rural Kenya*

2012 / 978-1-908355-04-1 / 328pp

Poor people in most rural areas of developing countries often improvise resources in unique ways to enable them make a living. Resources and Opportunity takes the view that resources are dynamic and fluid, arguing that villagers co-produce them through redefinition and renaming in everyday practice and use them in diverse ways. The book focuses on ordinary



social activities to bring out people's creativity in locating, redesigning and embracing livelihood opportunities in processes.

Kathryn Kraft

**Searching for Heaven in the Real World**

*A Sociological Discussion of Conversion in the Arab World*

2012 / 978-1-908355-15-7 / 142pp

Kathryn Kraft explores the breadth of psychological and social issues faced by Arab Muslims after making a decision to adopt a faith in Christ or Christianity, investigating some of the most surprising and significant challenges new believers face.

Wessley Lukose

**Contextual Missiology of the Spirit**

*Pentecostalism in Rajasthan, India*

2013 / 978-1-908355-09-6 / 256pp

This book explores the identity, context and features of Pentecostalism in Rajasthan, India as well as the internal and external issues facing Pentecostals. It aims to suggest 'a contextual missiology of the Spirit,' as a new model of contextual missiology from a Pentecostal perspective. It is presented as a glocal, ecumenical, transformational, and public missiology.

Paul M Miller

**Evangelical Mission in Co-operation with Catholics**

*A Study of Evangelical Tensions*

2013 / 978-1-908355-17-1 / 291pp

This book brings the first thorough examination of the discussions going on within Evangelicalism about the viability of a good conscience dialogue with Roman Catholics. Those who are interested in evangelical world missions and Roman Catholic views of world missions will find this informative.

**REGNUM RESOURCES FOR MISSION**

Knud Jørgensen

**Equipping for Service**

*Christian Leadership in Church and Society*

2012 / 978-1-908355-06-5 / 150pp

This book is written out of decades of experience of leading churches and missions in Ethiopia, Geneva, Norway and Hong Kong. Combining the teaching of Scripture with the insights of contemporary management philosophy, Jørgensen writes in a way which is practical and applicable to anyone in Christian service. "The intention has been to challenge towards a leadership relevant for work in church and mission, and in public and civil society, with special attention to leadership in Church and organisation."

Mary Miller

**What does Love have to do with Leadership?**

2013 / 978-1-908355-10-2 / 100pp

Leadership is a performing art, not a science. It is the art of influencing others, not just to accomplish something together, but to want to accomplish great things together. Mary Miller captures the art of servant leadership in her powerful book. She understands that servant leaders challenge existing processes without manipulating or overpowering people.

Mary Miller (Ed)  
**Faces of Holistic Mission**  
*Stories of the OCMS Family*  
2013 / 978-1-908355-32-4 / 104pp

There is a popular worship song that begins with the refrain, 'look what the Lord has done, look what the Lord has done'. This book does exactly that; it seeks to show what the Lord has done. Fifteen authors from five different continents identify what the Lord has indeed been doing, and continues to do, in their lives. These are their stories.

David Cranston and Ruth Padilla DeBorst (Eds)  
**Mission as Transformation**  
*Learning from Catalysts*  
2013 / 978-1-908355-34-8 / 77pp

This book is the product of the first Stott-Bediako Forum, held in 2012 with the title *Portraits of Catalysts*. Its aim was to learn from the stories of Christian leaders whose lives and work have served as catalysts for transformation as each, in his or her particular way, facilitated the intersection between the Good News of Jesus Christ and the context in which they lived, in particular amongst people who are suffering.

Brian Woolnough (Ed)  
**Good News from Africa**  
Community Transformation Through the Church  
2013 / 978-1-908355-33-1 / 123pp

This book discusses how sustainable, holistic, community development can be, and is being, achieved through the work of the local church. Leading African development practitioners describe different aspects of development through their own experience.

Makonen Getu (Ed)  
**Transforming Microfinance**  
A Christian Approach  
2013 / 978-1-908355-31-7 / 264pp

"This book highlights the important role that Christian-based organisations bring to the delivery of financial services for the poor. It is timely, significant and important and deserves a wide circulation".

Lord Carey of Clifton, former Archbishop of Canterbury

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## GENERAL REGNUM TITLES

Vinay Samuel, Chris Sugden (Eds)  
**The Church in Response to Human Need**  
1987 / 1870345045 / xii+268pp

Philip Sampson, Vinay Samuel, Chris Sugden (Eds)  
**Faith and Modernity**  
*Essays in modernity and post-modernity*  
1994 / 1870345177 / 352pp

Klaus Fiedler  
**The Story of Faith Missions**  
1994 / 0745926878 / 428pp

Douglas Peterson  
**Not by Might nor by Power**  
*A Pentecostal Theology of Social Concern in Latin America*  
1996 / 1870345207 / xvi+260pp

David Gitari  
**In Season and Out of Season**  
*Sermons to a Nation*  
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David. W. Virtue  
**A Vision of Hope**  
*The Story of Samuel Habib*  
1996 / 1870345169 / xiv+137pp

Everett A Wilson  
**Strategy of the Spirit**  
*J.Philip Hogan and the Growth of the Assemblies of God Worldwide, 1960 - 1990*  
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**The Globalization of Pentecostalism**  
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2003 / 8172147285 / xxiv+485pp

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## Engaging the World: Christian Communities in Contemporary Global Societies

This volume deals with the lived experiences and expressions of Christians in diverse communities across the globe. Christian communities do not live in a vacuum but in complex, diverse social-cultural contexts; within wider communities of different faith and social realities. Power, identity and community are key issues in considering Christian communities in contemporary contexts. Also important is the nature and texture of mission; while a reflection on 'context' is a priority in working to improve peoples and communities. The interrelated themes: poverty, suffering and marginalized communities; globalization and the reproduction of hierarchies; Christianity and socio-political action; identity, gender and power; the interface of migration, diaspora and ethnicity; and HIV/AIDS, church and mission, were explored by academics, researchers, church leaders, religious non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations, as well as policy makers. Such a multidimensional perspective was necessary for critical thinking about how missions is articulated and practiced in contemporary contexts and also towards charting new directions for engagement in Christian Mission in the 21st century.

*Engaging the World illuminates the transformative assemblage of fragmented worlds by vulnerable Christian communities in manifold mission contexts. In a multi-faceted approach the volume highlights the social reality of contemporary Christianity from a perspective of diaspora, migration, and minority experiences. With its focus on immigrant Christianities the book explores ethical problems manifest in world society. By covering issues of poverty alleviation, ethnicity or epidemics such as HIV and AIDS, the authors bridge concepts of holistic mission with the social engagement of secular actors in society. Likewise, the local agency of congregations and churches is webbed into transnational networks to stage the reconstructive dynamics of marginalized Christian communities. In short, the contributions present contextual immigrant theologies of empowerment in a globalising world. In this way the volume revisits the connection between local agencies and the omni-directional dynamics of global Christianity whose complexity may be termed 'rhizomatic' in character.*

Prof. Dr. Andreas Heuser, Extra-European Christianity, Basel University

**Afe Adogame** is Senior Lecturer in World Christianity and Religious Studies at the School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh. He served as Convener of Commission 7: "Christian Communities in contemporary contexts" during the Centenary of the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, 2010. His latest books are: *The African Christian Diaspora: New Currents and Emerging Trends in World Christianity* (2013); and (eds) *Religion on the Move? New Dynamics of Religious Expansion in a Globalizing World* (2013).

**Janice A. McLean** is a member of the faculty at City Seminary of New York. She is co-editor of *Understanding World Christianity: The Vision and Work of Andrew F. Walls* (Orbis 2012) and author of several articles on immigrant churches, and urban youth and religion.

**Anderson Jeremiah** is an ordained Anglican Priest. He is a Lecturer in the Department of Politics, Philosophy and Religion of Lancaster University and the author of *Community and Worldview among Paraiyars of South India: Lived' Religion* (2012).



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**Edinburgh 2010**  
WITNESSING TO CHRIST TODAY

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