

Moving Beyond Internationalizing the Mission Force

Missions have come full circle. Nations that were once the recipients of missionaries are now sending out their own. Internationalization and globalization of mission organizations is needed, but they are not the same thing. It is our failure to understand this and treating them as synonymous that spells trouble. Hence the need to think and act in new and more effective ways.

by J. David Lundy

Missions in the Two-Third World is alive and well. The Church in the Two-Third World is sending missionaries out to the extent that by the year 2000 their number may surpass that of the traditional sending nations¹ To take an example from each of the three major continents evangelized since the dawning of the modern missionary movement, Brazil, Nigeria, and India now send out cross-culturally over 10,000 missionaries each.² The church in the Two-Thirds World is increasingly a major player in the arena of world missions.³

Given this phenomenon, which has seen the growth in the number of Two-Thirds World missionaries from 13,000 in 1960 to an anticipated 164,000 in 2000,⁴ change in how to do missions is inevitable. This change is and will occur primarily in two areas: the forming of partnerships with indigenous missions and the globalization of international mission agencies. Much has been written about the issue of the support of national missionaries and so I will forgo an analysis of that controversial subject.⁵ The implications of how the influx of Two-Thirds World missionaries to what have historically been Western-rooted and run mission organizations have, however, been largely overlooked—even by the organizations facing this change in their internal composition.

It is the thesis advanced here that international mission agencies have not adequately grappled with the implications

of welcoming Two-Thirds World missionaries into their midst, and unless corrected, this will have negative ramifications for penetrating the final frontiers. It is my contention that *internationalization* and *globalization* of mission organizations are not the same thing, and that it is the treating of these terms as being synonymous that spells trouble. By internationalization we mean that an organization works in various countries around the world and has its missionary force similarly made up of workers from many different countries. *Globalization*, on the other hand, means all that *internationalization* does, plus incorporates structural and attitudinal components into an understanding of it.

In other words, a truly global ministry (or even a secular company for that matter) must have a universal as opposed to a parochial mind-set in the way it goes about conducting business. Ethnocentrism will increasingly be identified and dealt with in a globalized organization. The organizational culture of the mission must be such that whether one is a Korean or an American, the missionary will feel at home in the mission agency anywhere that that it works in the world. For this to happen, international organizations that have their origins in the Western World will need to retool resourcing patterns, structures, and values so that true partnership and synergy can emerge between the diverse sides of the worldwide Church in

the task of completing the Great Commission. Moreover, it is argued here that ethnocentrism is essentially a spiritual problem, and so unless addressed on that level, will not essentially be rooted out as this paradigm shift from West/North to East/South in missions transpires.

The internationalizing of interdenominational missions is occurring at a healthy pace. Operation Mobilization (OM), for example, has 48% of its 2,700 missionaries hailing from the Two-Thirds World.⁶ As early as a decade ago, YWAM had 35% of its workers from the Two-Thirds World.⁷ By and large the older interdenominational mission agencies have been slower to internationalize their membership but are making headway.⁸ For instance, WEC, of its 1,602 members in 1992, had 12.5% coming from the Two-Thirds World.⁹ The fact of the matter is that while nationals are creating their own indigenous mission agencies, many nationals are finding the thought of working with a far-flung, established ministry attractive. It is the assumption taken here that neither initiative should be discouraged. Particularly in getting the job done in the 10/40 Window, there is the need for a variety of approaches and partnerships. Inter-mission partnerships and intra-mission partnerships will be required. The question then becomes how these historically Anglo-American international, interde-

nominational agencies are to best welcome Two-Thirds World missionaries into their midst. It is an issue summarized nicely in the observation made to me at an international OM gathering by a Canadian Omer: "OM is still very Anglo-Saxon in orientation... with very few Westerners becoming like Indians, although they [the Indians serving in OM] are becoming like us." Or, as an Argentinean leader confided to me: "In some ways, OM across cultures does share a common method to prepare missionaries in a complete way [gives the appearance of being globalized], but it is more of an American or European type of training."

Moving beyond internationalizing to globalizing of mission agencies will require substantial progress in several ways: allowing for local diversity while maintaining a universal purpose; opening up international executive roles to non-Westerners and allowing for more variety in leadership styles; being less task-oriented and more people-oriented in the organizational culture; being less informal in certain intra-mission settings; compensating for English having to be the lingua franca of the mission; and developing less rigid ways of conflict resolution; above all, reflecting on and repenting of attitudinal predispositions that make ethnocentrism a spiritual problem.

LOCAL DIVERSITY, AND INT'L HOMOGENEITY

A study of multinational corporations in the business world reveals that many of them have the same feature. They have a strong organizational culture while allowing for local diversity. An example is Sony, the electronics and entertainment giant originating in Japan. Sony's success is partly due to its founder, Akio Morita, who insisted that its products appeal to local tastes. Sony's growth strategy for the nineties revolved around Morita's concept of "global localization," by which he meant decentralizing authority, adapting product lines, working conditions, and

marketing plays to the local situation, all the while focusing on a coherent international strategy.¹⁰ What I am driving at here has little to do with contextualizing the Gospel *vis-a-vis* the receptor culture. That is a given. Rather I am really talking about contextualizing in-house. Great skill in cross-cultural communication of the Gospel is needed but what about intercultural skills with your own missionary colleagues?! Well known it is that part of the reason for the high attrition rate of missionaries after one term or less is an inability to get along with fellow missionaries.

For example, if a mission is working in Uzbekistan in church planting with a scattered team made up of twelve adults, four of whom are from Korea, one from the Netherlands, two from India, one from Great Britain, two from Germany, and two from the USA, how do you go about working together? The situation's modus operandi gets more complicated when you have an essentially Western-based organization working in a country like India where many nationals are part of the field along with a few foreigners. Who calls the shots? How is the internal culture of the organization at the field level configured?

A collegial-participative structuring of the organization, not an authoritarian-paternalistic one, will encourage Two-Thirds World missionaries to feel more at home in the mission, which in turn will lead to greater effectiveness in ministry. For instance, flatter structures free Two-Thirds World missionaries to relate more easily to home churches, which may be more of a felt need with some non-Western missionaries than many realize.¹¹ The need for a close tie-in with home churches is true of many Westerners too, but may be more prevalent in the Two-Thirds World because of the corporate nature of society there. Instead of being micro-managed by an international policy manual that decides on length of home assignment, conditions for emergency leave, etc., some flexibility would be given to individual sending countries to

develop their own such policies in a highly globalized mission.

Consultants of multinational companies (MTC's) stress that true globalization does not undermine the integrity of localization or regionalization. In this regard Alvin Toffler says:

Globalization... is not the same thing as homogeneity. Instead of a single global village, as forecast by Marshall McLuhan... we are likely to see a multiplicity of quite different global villages all wired into the media system but all straining to enhance their cultural, ethnic, national, or political individuality.¹²

Similarly, in his book *Global Paradox*—which by its very name hints that two seemingly opposed realities will be held in healthy tension—John Naisbitt pinpoints how, in numerous ways, companies and even nations are finding that universal interconnectivity and local loyalties do not have to work at cross purposes. He claims that the world is both getting more globalized and more tribalized. Visa International is a case in point of having a strong central vision yet fragmentation of power. It is a "nationless" corporation which has its international headquarters in the USA but is owned by 21,000 institutions in 187 countries. Its governing and regional boards are set up to prevent any one country from having 51% of the vote.¹³ A subtly different MTC is one like IBM, which has a vast global reach but which has a dominant home culture to which most pivotal decision makers belong.¹⁴

While a "nationless", sprawling, international mission will need not to be dominated by any one ethnic culture, it will nevertheless require a strong, universal *organizational culture* in order to survive. What do we mean by *organizational culture*? It is simply "the norms and values that shape behavior in any organized setting."¹⁵ Organizational culture is formed in any organization—Christian or otherwise—through such things as story telling, symbols, traditions, accepted

styles of leadership, relational networks, the effect of behavior as opposed to words, the language people use, the mission or purpose statement, the formalized principles and practices, and by defining who the heroes are in the organization.¹⁶ To provide an example, OM gives great weight to the story of its beginnings in Mexico in 1957 when three American teenagers went to Mexico on their summer vacation to share about Christ. The story tells us that OMers are people who are willing to take risks, emphasize faith living, work in teams, live simply, are creative in evangelistic methods, believe in concentrating on sharing the Gospel with the unreached, work through nationals, and take on the hard places for God. Elaborating on the importance of establishing such universal organizational values, Edgar Schein says that this internal culture is “a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.”¹⁷

All the relevant literature concurs that *vision* and *values* are integral to any meaningful understanding of how an organization does things, of how to be politically correct intra-mission.¹⁸ Vision is the long term ‘what’, the putting of the flesh on the bones of the mission statement of the organization, serving as a kind of organizational rudder, whereas values give the day in and day out ‘how’ or basis for acting, like a navigational chart, as Stephen Covey would describe it.

Such organizational culture takes some time to form. Newcomers are informally and formally socialized to a “this is the way we do things around here.” That is fair enough. But as Two-Thirds World nationals find their new missionary home in the ranks of international agencies they are finding that they have to learn two cul-

tures, not one! They have to learn the language and culture of the unreached people group they are evangelizing, plus they have to learn a mission culture which is essentially Western World in nature.¹⁹ As the influx of nationals increases, it is not enough to ask the minority missionary culture to do all the intra-mission adjust-

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ing. There must be a new attempt to fashion a universal culture within the mission that is the result of “thoughtful, mutual listening... from every tradition and culture because the worldwide church is indispensable for mission.”²⁰ Only in such intentionalized interaction, designed to be part of a process over a considerable period of time, can ethnocentricity give way to universally shared values and vision of a truly globalized mission. In this kind of a globalized entity there will be no need to ride herd on local initiatives; enough commitment to the pan-organizational ethos and purpose will exist to keep the mission from becoming too centrifugal. Organizational culture will be shared and local expressions will be diversified and contextualized. Emotional dividends are built up with Two-Thirds World leaders in the organization as they are consulted, are part of the organization-wide decision-making process, and allowed to be the movers and the shakers at all level.

To globalize, international missions will need to have their centralized functions focus on providing services rather than making policy decisions. Decisions in general need to be made as close to the grass roots as possible and those affecting everyone in the organization need to be made so as to include a representative voice for the disparate sides of the organization. Services offered centrally could include missiological research, technology, pastoral care, fund-raising, and teaching, thus, not posing a threat to local autonomy. A collegial-participative structuring of the organization, while fostering a strong organizational culture, will encourage a Two-Thirds world shaping of the agenda of missions as we enter a new millennium.

**INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP
ROLES AND STYLES**

Many international missions are becoming structured so as to facilitate the type of Two-Thirds World participation described in the last paragraph. However, this representative restructuring internationally is often as much a function of governmental pressuring as it is of idealism.²¹ Two-Thirds World leaders do function at the international level with their comrades from the Western World. However, in what organization-wide roles are they serving? Are they becoming the International Directors? Or the International Treasurers or Comptrollers? Are they providing global service in missiology, training of new missionaries, and pastoral care of missionaries outside their own culture? Spiritual gifting does not come in certain skin colors or certain accents (1 Cor 12:11). Leaders of missions are the bearers and promoters of the global corporate cultures they represent. Whether international missions are conscious of their predilection to favoring executive missionary roles being filled by Westerners, mission organizations must face up to the issue of how the absence of more than token Two-Thirds World presence at the top predisposes the future of

their organizations to having a Caucasian face. As Samuel Escobar eloquently stated in his 1991 address to the EFMA:

The internationalization of mission will require a disposition to accepting partnerships in which leaders come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences. The partners in these new schemes will be contributing to mission in different ways. One of the most important principles of interaction will be that those who contribute financially the most may not happen to be the ones that will provide the leadership in terms of spiritual maturity, theology, methods, and strategies... I believe that true fellowship, friendship, and trust are the kind of spiritual infrastructure that makes international partnerships possible.

One might argue that race should not be a factor in choosing such leaders (Ephesians 2:14-18). Merit or anointing or calling (refer to it as you will!) should be the basis of selection. Again, such a stance does not reckon adequately with the role culture has in determining behavior. Yes, modification of behavior occurs when socialization to the organization takes place, as it does through completing the application process, pre-field training, exposure to international conferences and meetings, on-field training, and initial functioning on internationalized teams. However, who is having to make the major adjustment to the mission, the American joining to work in Bangladesh, or the Korean? As cross-cultural psychologist Glenn Fisher observes, "it takes considerable effort to override our habitual ways of perceiving and reasoning, to break out of established mind sets... [because] our conscious selves are not so much in charge as we think."²² And so the mission dominated by Westerners will have a Westernized worldview.

Studies in cross-cultural psychology support the thesis that there are fewer universal commonalities in human thought processes than most people think. This theory is supported, for instance, by Segal's findings on carpentering.²³ Through his experiment, Segal found that

Westerners judge the diagonal on their left side of a Sander parallelogram as being longer than it really is. He explains this bias as being the result of a tendency to perceive a parallelogram drawn on a flat surface as a rectangular surface extended in space. This causes the viewer to judge the distance covered by the left diagonal as being greater than the distance covered by the right diagonal. This perception is seen as being a function of Western societies being highly carpentered. That is to say, those societies are full of rectangular shapes. Buildings have sharp corners rather than curved. For those living in cultures where carpentered structures fill the visual landscape, the inference habit of interpreting acute and obtuse angles as right angles extended in space is not as great. Through this Carpentered-World Hypothesis, a generalization is made that environment and culture shape our perceptual habits.

Interestingly enough, globalization seems to fly in the face of what has just been said. The argument of globalization is that whether as a result of a communications revolution or the Hollywoodization of the world's cultures, we are becoming more and more alike across cultures. However, as Childs demonstrates, for example, this homogenization is occurring at the macro level and not micro level within international companies.²⁴ International executives mingle with those of other cultures relatively well because they have to do more of that in their travels and committee meetings. His research indicates, however, that behavior of employees in the work setting is largely culturally and not corporately determined. Hence, to apply these findings to our study at hand, Singaporean missionaries may defer to their field leader more than do their Dutch counterparts, who expect decisions to be made through consultation. Other cross-cultural management researchers have isolated significant diversity between managers of different cultures with respect to preferred styles of work behavior, goals, and standards at the

local as opposed to international level.²⁵

Hofstede has made a landmark study intercultural studies in which he distinguishes variables of behavior among companies of many nationalities.²⁶ In his 60 country survey of 160,000 managers and employees, he observed four areas of difference in work-related values and attitudes which could be traced to culture: individualism/collectivism; power distance; uncertainty avoidance; masculinity/femininity. Concerning the variable of power distance, countries vary, he found, in the degree to which people in a hierarchical setup perceive greater or lesser ability to control each other's behavior. People in high distance countries, such as in Mexico or the Philippines, perceive more inequality between superiors and subordinates than do people in low power distance countries like Austria or Denmark. In high power distance societies, much deference is given to the overall leader, who functions as a father figure, even as a kind of godfather.²⁷ Therefore, we could envisage a situation where considerable local authority is given to the national field leader of an indigenized arm of an international organization where, on the other hand, non-hierarchical structures and a more stereotypical form of servanthood leadership existed at the international level. Globalization recognizes that such paradoxes are not inconsistencies.²⁸

TASK ORIENTED VERSUS PEOPLE ORIENTED

One of the major differences between Western and Two-Thirds World cultures is concerning view of time. Studies reveal that Americans tend to be at the extreme end of a continuum in being *chronos* shaped, whereby time is viewed sequentially, with Koreans being at the other end in being *kairos* shaped, whereby time is event-oriented.²⁹ Reward in the latter frame of reference is association with the people in the event, or just that the event took place. Reward for the former is measured in terms of punctuality, achieve-

ment of goals in the event, etc. Monochronic cultures, such as found in North America, tend to do one thing at a time.³⁰ Latin and Arab cultures, on the other hand, are polychronic. Such findings have important ramifications for cross-cultural church planting, for instance, but also for how we work together on a multi-national team. Intercultural sensitivity should not just mean Indians working for an international organization learning how to be more monochronic. How about Germans learning to be a little more flexible about time usage?

Similarly, task-oriented Swiss must learn not to find the achievement of work-related goals their sole means of satisfaction in ministry, and see time-consuming development of a close relationship with their Argentinean co-worker as being a productive use of time. Rather than passing off all differences in perspective to the distinctions between Type A and Type B personalities, we need to understand that they are a function of culture as well. Task-oriented Americans can easily run rough-shod over the feelings of missionary co-workers "for the sake of the job," to give another example.

If there is one thing missiologists and missions practitioners are in agreement on with regard to globalization, it is that relationship building interculturally is essential. Thus Escobar says: "Fellowship is interrelated with mission, relationship precedes function, friendship precedes efficiency." Relatedly, Dodd contends: "By the nature of the process, intercultural communication is rooted in the social relationships that accompany our actions... [so that] our relationship with the person with whom we are communicating affects how the message is being interpreted."³¹ To make Latins feel at ease in a Western-based international agency, then, one would expect that a high emphasis would be placed on friendship forging. Trust is nurtured in Two-Thirds World cultures by spending time with each other, unlike in the West, where it is based on

competency.³² Therefore, for example, when an organization brings co-workers together for international ministry conferences or global strategizing meetings, it makes sense to be less business-like than the Westerners might prefer them to be,

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building into the programs good doses of leisurely time for one-to-one or small group kinds of relating. This approach might cut across the grain of Western efficiency values, but witness how one veteran Chinese missionary saw international mission meetings she attended:

In the West, often issues are presented with a rather pushy sales pitch appealing more to the emotions. Sometimes there is a confrontational attitude exhibited, making light of opposing viewpoints in order to substantiate one's own position. A culture that values relationships, not points of view, will find this approach abrasive.

Rasmussen observes,

Culturally, the many calls to "Hurry up!" only motivates a minority of societies. If the burgeoning missions force of Africans, Asians, and Latin

*Americans is really needed to help fulfill the *Missio Dei*, then we need to quit trying to motivate them as if they were "hurry up" cultures. Most of these brethren have a world view that says there is plenty of time to do whatever is really important.³³*

FORMALITY VERSUS INFORMALITY

Perhaps not as obvious in intercultural team settings as the differences between cultures in how time is viewed, but just as real, is concerning degree of formality expected in various contexts. Some cultures prize informality in most situations. Others are highly formal, whether in terms of relationships, or adherence to the law. The British may be viewed by North Americans as being extremely reticent to reveal overtly their feelings, but are downright forthright compared to the disingenuous Chinese!³⁴ To the Westerner, the Japanese are hard to fathom because in face-to-face relations formalities and protocol are maintained, no matter how one is feeling, making it difficult to measure the dynamics of the meeting accurately. What is going on is a clash between a *high context* and a *low context* society.³⁵

According to Hall, people raised in a high context culture expect that participants in a given situation will be highly skilled in perceiving what is going on internally, even though externally, through such things as conversation, nothing conclusive is discernible. To expect that crucial piece of the puzzle to fall into place explicitly or openly is to insult the other party and is considered as being a personal violation. Causing someone in the group to lose face is thus perceived as being the unpardonable sin. You do not even do that to your worst enemy in some high context societies.

In an international mission it is imperative that this intercultural undercurrent is learned. Patrick Sookhdeo in this regard calls for Westerners to distinguish between the *private face* and the *public face* in dealings with those from the Two-Thirds World. He observes that "in some

cultures good interpersonal relationships take precedence over competency and efficiency [and] to get along with a person with the minimum of friction is more important than the rate at which a job is done." Related to this is the matter of how personal identity is determined in societies. In the West, we tend to associate self worth with things like merit. But in other cultures, it may be determined by formal ascriptions, like birth and social rank, as in the Hindu caste system.³⁶

People in these latter cultures are expected to play their prescribed role in the group. As it relates to leadership, these *status focus* cultures require followers to avoid finding fault or expressing disagreement in the group milieu, unlike in *achievement focus* cultures, reared in a strong democratic tradition. Failure to notice these high and low context differences, then, will mean, as usual, that Two-Thirds World missionaries will have to make the adjustments—to a more free-wheeling, confrontational, and individualistic style of functioning.

ENGLISH AS THE LINGUA FRANCA

We should not underestimate the role of language in intercultural contexts. A large evangelism team—such as is found on board the ocean-going YWAM or OM ships—needs the common language of English in order to have any hope of avoiding total chaos! However, this immediately puts at a disadvantage those who do not have English as their mother tongue. There are only 12 countries in the world that have English as their first language and it so happens that most of these are in the Western World!

This problem is compounded when one realizes that the culture many non-English speakers come from is non-confrontational. English grammar encourages directness, as seen in the heavy use of active voices for verbs. If the active voice reduces ambiguity because it designates, specifies, and seeks accuracy, imagine the struggle for someone who thinks

communication of that sort is rude, untrustworthy, and embarrassing.³⁷ What Two-Thirds Worlders are good at, indirect speech, has been taken away from them. Conversely, as Elmer states, "Westerners are not as skilled at reading between the lines and interpreting people who express themselves indirectly."³⁸

Furthermore, as Pettigrew reminds us about the importance of communication in leading: "... a leader's effectiveness is likely to be influenced by the language overlap with his followers and by the extent to which a leader can create words that explain and thereby give order to collective experiences."³⁹

Little wonder then that Asian missionary trainers are complaining that when Asian missionaries join international mission agencies they have to learn two cultures and two languages, and that their success is gauged on the basis of how well they adjust to the mission agency, unlike the Westerner, who is judged on how well he or she adjusts to the local culture.⁴⁰

Even the kind of English used in the mission results in covert discrimination. Modified English speech is particularly prevalent in former British colonies, such as Singapore, India, and Nigeria. Examples of the metamorphosis of the British standard of English can be somewhat amusing, depending on your country of origin. Plural noun forms are common in India, such as "the street is full of litters." Hybrid words are frequently used in Singapore, like "shophouse" for store or shop, and "towkay" for proprietor. In Nigeria it is perfectly acceptable to drop propositions and nouns.⁴¹ So when you come to an international standard for intra-mission communication, which English standard is chosen? The fact of the matter is that language norms in the English-speaking world have to do with national identity and pride. A win-win situation in an international agency is unlikely in the language wars, but let's at least acknowledge the issue. That in itself will help globalize the organization. Glo-

balization has a lot to do simply with sensitization, with education.

Realistically, multicultural organizations can function effectively only if they possess a common language.⁴² Usually, this will be English; but because of the value and culture-laden nature of language, it might be wise for truly international organizations to adapt something of the following strategy. (1) Do not require non-English speakers to learn English as an entry point to the mission if the host country they will work in speaks another language. For example, an evangelism team working in Morocco composed of Koreans, Germans, and French missionaries could use French as the team medium, since no-one on the team has English as their mother tongue and French will need to be learned anyway, as one of the two main spoken languages of Morocco. (2) Opportunity to communicate publicly in other than English at international gatherings of the mission membership should be allowed. Of course, this sort of situation implies that a translation team is on standby to provide simultaneous translation into main languages of participants. (3) A phenomenon of modern missions is the large number of specialists who work in home or international offices who never learn another language. Their work is strictly in-house. However, this trend breeds parochialism. Perhaps missionaries who are long-term workers, no matter what their job, should be required to learn a second language—in the same way that St. John's Seminary in California requires students learn another language before they are ordained, in the interests of globalization.⁴³

HANDLING CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Another profound area of differentiation between the Western and Two-Thirds World is how to handle interpersonal conflict. Prominent in arguing for a change in the way intercultural conflict is resolved is Duane Elmer. He contends that, for

instance, negotiators respected by both sides of a dispute can mediate.⁴⁴ The engagement of a middle man enables Two-Thirds World parties trapped in a conflict to avoid face-to-face confrontation, thereby minimizing the potential loss of face or dishonor so often attached to the outcomes of conflict resolution.

While Orientals may be able to handle interpersonal conflict between equal status leaders decisively, because of a hierarchical view of authority, they may be paralyzed in resolving disputes when different levels of leadership are involved in a way that Occidentals are not. Commenting on the Asian perspective on leadership status, Maureen Ma says,

As Asian society is often conceived as having different levels of authority or rank, an attitude of respect and loyalty towards the leader or person in charge is expected and given. . . . As the person of a leader is closely identified with his position, challenging a leader's ways of doing things may be taken as an attack on the personal integrity of the leader. When heated issues are being discussed, a great deal of skill and tact would come into play to avoid causing offense to the person concerned. An Asian wouldn't like to see his leader being criticized in public. This is in marked contrast to the western view of leadership which allows for the leader's proposals or projects to be criticized or challenged without it being seen as a personal attack on the leader himself.⁴⁵

While there is some deference to power and status among Westerners, individualism and democratic values enable them to be more comfortable in seeking to resolve disputes regardless of who is involved. Given different outlooks, a mediator levels the playing field for all participants in an intercultural conflict.

Compromise is frowned on in many Western cultures. Forthrightness is considered to be an admirable quality in a leader. Accuracy and precision are associated with truthfulness. Confession of faults is deemed to be a sign of strength of character. In contrast, non-Western cultures have often diametrically opposed standards.

Matthew 18:15-17 is almost always offered as the proof-text for defending a more confrontational method of conflict resolution. A cursory survey of Scripture, however, reveals that more than one way of handling relationship problems is set forth. "Love covers a multitude of sins."... "As much as lies within you, be at peace with all men."... "Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ."...

TO THE DEGREE THAT WE FAIL TO FIND MIDDLE GROUND BETWEEN DIVERSE CULTURES AS WE WORK SIDE BY SIDE FOR THE SAKE OF THE GOSPEL, WE FAIL TO GLOBALIZE.

"Bear with one another and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another."... "A soft answer turns away wrath."... To quote just a few alternatives!

Jesus is an excellent model of the gentler approach. He did not always confront sin by throwing out money-changers from temples, as we see in John 8:1-11. He did not blow out a smoldering wick or bruise a fragile reed as he dealt with vulnerable people (Mt 12:20). Accusations of Pharisees were often met with silence or deflected by a question, in spite of his sometimes withering criticism of these religious leaders. To teach the disciples that they should not vie for prominence in service for Him, Jesus beckoned for a child to receive blessing from Him (Mt 9:33-37). In some situations, failing to answer a charge or question directly was not considered as avoidance but demonstrated the patience of waiting for a better time to resolve the problem. Elsewhere in Scripture, this cautious method is advocated too (e.g. Pr. 15:1; Jas. 1:19).

In his book *Cross-Cultural Conflict*, Elmer shows how the story of the Hebrew

midwives protecting the life of baby Moses demonstrates that managing a conflict through indirect methods is not necessarily deceptive or ungodly.⁴⁶ The midwives were silent in not replying to the Pharaoh's command, and deflected blame when confronted with their allowing of Jewish males to live. Concluding the narrative of the text, we read: "God was kind to the midwives." Would He have been so kind, we must wonder, if He were disapproving of their alleged disobedience. Another occasion for this using of an indirect method for handling conflict was Esther's sense of timing in revealing the plight of her people to the Persian king.

There may be nuances of these stories that escape us—especially if we are Caucasians. Meanwhile, Two-Thirds Worlders read these biblical stories and smile. They know what it means to be silent, to use inaction, or a third party mediator to engage in conflict resolution. Westerners need to stop assuming that such a strategy is unethical; it can be quite compassionate. All cultures are imperfect in their ability to objectively screen out cultural biases as they read and apply Scripture. One discovers this interpretive fallibility especially in an international missions' context.

ETHNOCENTRISM: A SPIRITUAL PROBLEM

In one sense, this last aspect of globalization of missions warrants our attention first of all. Considering the history of missions, with all its failures to indigenize, to contextualize and to sometimes distance itself from the imperialism and colonialism of the countries from which the missionaries came, it should not surprise us to find ethnocentrism continuing to rear its ugly head. Ethnocentrism in missions continues to exist, and is, to some extent, a spiritual problem. I was struck again in reading through a recent issue of *Christian History* (Issue 62) which is devoted to "the spiritual journey of the African in America" by how easy it is to be blinded to the sin of racism. The

remarkable, sustaining faith of African Americans in the face of the dehumanizing conditions they lived and worked in serving their white masters only underscored how blind and how wrong the whites were about their slaves' humanity and dignity. Racism may not be so blatant now, but those of us in missions must understand that triumphalism is not the stance to take as the age of the national missionary comes upon us. We must move from calling for *partnership* to calling for *equal partnership* as we complete the task of world evangelization together.

What are some of the biblical issues involved in any tendency to treat those unlike us as somehow inferior to us? Why is the globalization of missions being engendered here so imperative? First of all such globalization and the concomitant eliminating of ethnocentrism is predicated on the fundamental principle of the equality and unity of the human race. Major distinctions are made in the created order between humankind and other animal life (Gen. 1:26), but not between human and human (Gen. 11:1). As John Stott states in *Issues Facing Christians Today*. "The one people were to populate the one earth [and]...there was no hint at the beginning of the partitioning of the earth or of rivalry between nations."⁴⁷ Only Man-kind's Fall ushers in divisions between human beings and inspires racial discrimination. The dawning of the Church age clarifies God's long term intentions, for in the Church, there are to be "neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female" (Gal 3:28; cf. Jn 17:20-23).

Great pains are taken in Acts to make sure that it is evident to the emerging Church that racial division has no place in its evolution. Almost two full chapters are devoted to demonstrating that God is impartial with respect to race (10:1-11:18), emphasizing that the Church is not culture-bound (that is, in the sense of the Gentile believers needing to adopt Jewish culture forms to express their faith). Similarly Galatians argues that although the gospel must take root in cul-

tures, there is a supra-cultural dimension to it. Thus Paul chides Peter for siding with those Judaizers who would have Gentile believers be circumcised and eat only kosher meat (chapter 2; cf. Acts 15:1-30). There is no better culture than another! The gospel both critiques and affirms every culture. Unity does not require uniformity. The tension between diversity and equality must be maintained in mission activity in order to do justice to who God is and how He wants His People to live. As we take the gospel to unreached people groups, we must intentionalize what it means interracially to be united and equal, that we are part of one catholic global Church.

Myung Hyuk Kim captures this kind of equal partnership well in missions when he persuades, "Partnership does not mean that each party should be equal in terms of ability or possession [but] means that each party has its own unique status and tasks."⁴⁸ In other words, while we cannot ignore that there are differences between human beings, peoples and their cultures, these differences are not to be the basis for treating people unfairly, that is, discriminatorily. Just as God is impartial in His dealings with all people and peoples (Rom. 2:11; Eph 6:9; Col. 3:25; 1 Pe. 1:17; Ac. 10:34—all verses where the word *proso-poladphía* is used to describe that God isn't guilty of favoritism), so His People are to reflect His character in impartial relating with each other horizontally (Jas 2:1-13; cf. 1 Co 12:12-27).

The richness and complexity of the oneness of the Body of Christ would become all the clearer were we to study such biblical terms as *diakonos* (with its idea of servanthood that esteems the other as better than oneself), *koinonia* (translated as *partnership* in Php. 1:5 and 1 Cor. 8:4 and normally understood to mean *fellowship*), and *oikoumene* (highlighting the idea of the brotherhood of all humankind as is found in the concept of globalization- Acts 17:26). In more than one way, then, we are confronted in Scripture with the necessity of not allowing ethnocentrism to interfere with the spread of the

gospel. Today Westerners serving Christ cross-culturally may not be guilty of trying to convert 'native' to Anglo-American culture. After all, the tools of anthropology and the other social sciences have dealt with the ignorance of our previous generation of missionaries! Let us not be guilty, though, of insisting that national missionaries be converted to our way of doing missions. That will just be one more way we demonstrate we have been blinded by the spirit of pride which is at the root of ethnocentrism!

The above-mentioned litany of problems in working together as a multicultural body is by no means exhaustive. These problems do however represent some of the major stumbling blocks to the disparate sides of the worldwide Church being able to work harmoniously so that the synergy of the partnership created is greater than the forces that pull them apart. We would agree with Jon Bonk in his assessment that the key to globalization is the overcoming of Western triumphalism and provincialism.⁴⁹ Moving beyond internationalization—a simple, quantifiable reality—to include attitudes, mind-sets, and organizational culture, the unseen internals of a mission, is the key to globalization of missions. It represents a major paradigm shift in missions.

END NOTES

1. Larry Keyes and Larry Pate, "Two-Thirds World Missions: The Next One Hundred Years," *Missiology: An International Review* 21(2): 187-206.
2. Larry Pate, *From Every People* (Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1989).
3. By Two-Thirds World we mean the approximately two-thirds of the world's population (actually over 86% now according to Patrick Johnstone, *Operation World*, 5th edition, 1993, p. 21) and land mass found in the continents of Latin America, Asia, Africa, as well as Oceania. Two-Thirds sounds less pejorative than some of the other terms commonly used, while enabling a useful distinction to be made in relation to the peoples of Europe and North America, who have substantially different cultures and histories than these other blocs of the world's population which, although dissimilar to each other in significant ways, nevertheless have substantive

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- affinities with each other, especially in having suffered through long periods of colonization.
4. Keyes and Pate. Patrick Johnstone, using a different definition of "missionary" than Pate, determines that 31% of the world's missionaries are from the Two-Thirds World in *The Church Is Bigger Than You Think* (Ross-shire, UK: Christian Focus Publications, 1998), p. 139.
 5. A thorough analysis of this issue and a comprehensive bibliography are provided in David Lundy, *We Are The World: Globalization and the Changing Face of Missions* (Carlisle, UK: Pater-noster Publishing, 1999).
 6. OM statistics are taken from its *Personnel 1996* records.
 7. William Taylor, ed., *Internationalising Missionary Training* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1991), p. 161.
 8. Arab World Ministries, for example, has decided in the new millennium to focus on integrating missionaries from the larger Christian community globally into the organization.
 9. Statistics are from a letter to me of April 12, 1995 from the WEC International Secretary, Dietrich Kohl.
 10. Richard J. Barnett and John Cavanagh, *Global Dreams: Imperial Corporations and the New World Order* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1994), pp. 63-67.
 11. Joshua Ogawa, "The Benefits and Problems of Internationalizing Missions." In William Taylor, ed., *Kingdom Partnerships for Synergy in Missions* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1994), p.174.
 12. Alvin Toffler, *Power Shift: Knowledge, Wealth, and Violence at the Edge of the Twenty-First Century* (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1990), p. 341.
 13. *Ibid.*, p. 460. For further discussion about this issue in management literature see K. Ohmae, *The Borderless World* (New York: Harper Business, 1990); K. Ohmae, *Triad Power: The Coming Shape of Global Competition* (New York: The Free Press, 1985); P. Kvin, "The Magic of Multinational Management," *Harvard Business Review* (November-December, 1972), p. 97; P. R. Harris and R. T. Moran. *Managing Cultural Differences* (Houston: Gulf Publishing, 1987).
 14. Harris and Moran, p. 246.
 15. Warren Bennis and Burt Nannis, *Leaders: The Strategies For Taking Charge* (New York: Harper Collins, 1986), p. 111.
 16. For helpful explanations of the role of culture in an organization's life see Stephen Covey, *Principle-Centred Leadership* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 1992); Terrance Deal and Allan Kennedy, *Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life* (Reading, PA: Addison-Wesley, 1982); Burt Nanus, *Visionary Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992); Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *The Change Masters* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1984); Edgar Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992); Peter Senge, *The Fifth Dimension: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York: Doubleday, 1990); and A. L. Wilkins, *Developing Corporate Culture: How To Successfully Change An Organization Without Destroying It* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989).
 17. Schein, p. 12.
 18. Wilkins, p. 33; Senge, pp. 181, 207-209; Deal and Kennedy, p. 21; Schein, pp. 17-20.
 19. Titus Loong, "Training Missionaries In Asia: Asian Cross-Cultural Training Institute" in Taylor, 1991, p. 44.
 20. V. Ramachandra, "The Honor of Listening: Indispensable for Mission," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 30(4): 405.
 21. For example, Revenue Canada (the Canadian government's tax arm overseeing regulation of registered charities) requires that a Canadian charity sending money off-shore maintains its independence in relating to an international or separate entity proportionate to its financial contribution to that joint effort.
 22. Glenn Fisher, *Mindsets* (Yarmouth, ME: Sage Publishing, 1988), p. 25.
 23. Marshall Segal, *Cross-Cultural Psychology: Human Behavior In Global Perspective* (Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1979), pp. 72-93.
 24. Cited in Nancy Adler, "Typology of Management Studies Involving Culture," *Journal of International Business Studies* (Fall, 1983): 43.
 25. B. M. Bass, P. C. Burger, R. Doctor, and G. V. Barrett, *Assessment: An International Comparison of Managers* (New York: The Free Press, 1979), pp. 176-186; Laurent and Hofstede in Nancy Adler, *International Dimensions of Organizational Behaviour* (Boston: PWS-Kent, 1991), pp. 42-58; Schein, pp.259-262; Ohmae, 1985, p. 182.
 26. G. Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: International Differences In Work-Related Values* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publishers, 1984).
 27. Cited in Adler, 1991, pp. 27-54.
 28. In his original article, deleted here, Lundy explored in greater depth the various leadership styles found in every culture which can be characterized as behavioral, conceptual, directive or analytical. For this information contact the IJFM editor or contact Dr. Lundy direct.
 29. Sherwood Lingenfelter and Marvin Mayers, *Ministering Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1991), pp. 37-51; E. T. Hall, *The Hidden Dimension* (Garden City, NJ: Doubleday, 1966), p. 124.
 30. E. T. Hall, *Beyond Culture* (Garden City, NJ: Anchor, 1976), pp. 16-20.
 31. C. H. Dodd, *Dynamics of Intercultural Communication* (Dubuque, IA: W. C. Brown, 1987), pp. 27, 33.
 32. Duane Elmer, *Cross Cultural Conflict: Building Relationships for Effective Ministry* (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), p. 179.
 33. Robert Rasmussen, "Global Push Or Grandiose Schemes?" *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 32(3) (July, 1996): 276-277.
 34. Lingenfelter and Mayer, pp. 106-107.
 35. Hall, 1976, pp. 57, 142.
 36. Lingenfelter and Mayer, pp. 95-104.
 37. Elmer, pp. 47-52.
 37. *Ibid.*, p. 179.
 39. Andrew Pettigrew, "On Studying Organizational Cultures," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 22(4) (December, 1979): 578.
 40. Loong in Taylor, 1991, p. 44.
 41. Anthony Flint, "Your English, My English, Or Our English?" *The Toronto Star* (January 23, 1994), p. 8.
 42. Ohmae, 1990, p. 94.
 43. Ronald White, "Globalization Is Closing In On Us," *Theological Education* 27(2) (Spring, 1991): 51-67.
 44. Elmer, pp. 65-79.
 45. Maureen Ma, "What Do Asians Expect From Their Leaders?" paper presented to OM Euroleaders' Meetings of November, 1993.
 46. Elmer, p. 130.
 47. Bombay: Gospel Literature Service, 1989, p. 128
 48. "Principles of Two-Thirds World Mission Partnerships," in *Partners in the Gospel*, eds. James Kraakevik and Dotsey Welliver (Wheaton, IL: Billy Graham Center, 1991), p. 138
 49. Jon Bonk, "Globalization and Mission Education," *Theological Education* 30 (1) (Autumn, 1993): 75.

Photo here
of
David
Lundy

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