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This issue explores a wide array of topics, just as leaven penetrates every part of dough into which it is placed.

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Editorial

Missiology as Leaven

J. Nelson Jennings

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He told them another parable. 'The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened' (Matthew 13:33).

The articles in this issue exemplify how missiology instinctively operates like leaven. The authors probe a kaleidoscope of topics, thus collectively exploring a striking array of kingdom arenas. Jesus's parable of how leaven spreads throughout flour, illustrating how God's kingdom spreads its presence and effects into all aspects of creation, points to how every area of life and the world is open to missiological inquiry.

A quick rundown of the articles' titles shows the leaven of missiology widely at work:

"Inquire, Introspect, Involve: The Inquiry 2020 and Christian Missions in India"
"A Relational Aid to Multicultural Fields: Cultural Metacognition"
"Globalization and the Language of Worship: Is the Spread of English a Boon or a Bane?"
"When 'Go' Becomes 'Stay', One Is Left to Ask, 'Where Do We 'Go' from Here?' Viewing the 'Go' of the Great Commission as a Command to Contextualize the Gospel to the Nations!"
"God's Plan for the Fullness of Time: Overhauling Ralph Winter's 'Ten Epochs' and 'Three Eras' Models (Part I)"
"'The Trinity *Is* Not Our Social Program' and the Social Arian Temptation: Recovering from Mortifying Spin – Contextualization Gone Awry 4 (Christology) (Part II)"
"An Investigation of the Social Identity of Muslim Background Believers (MBBs) in Bangladesh in Light of the Set Theory, Critical Contextualization, and Self-Theologizing Teachings of Paul Hiebert (Part II)"
"Book Review: *I Will Give Them an Everlasting Name: Pastoral Care for Christ's Converts from Islam*"

These articles fan out into the social sciences, interpersonal relationships, various ethnic and geographic settings, linguistics, biblical exegesis, theology, history, interreligious conversion, visual models, pastoral care, worship, psychology, social ethics, and a number of other fields. The several multi-part articles attest as well to the considerable depth that missiological studies must often go in their various areas of exploration.

God's mission is to redeem all parts of his complex world: "Behold, I am making all things new" (Revelation 21:5). Some analysts have understandably reacted, "If everything is mission, nothing is mission." Others have pointed out that the *missio Dei* and missions are not the same, the latter pointing specifically to Christians' participation in God's kingdom mission. These concerns notwithstanding, the study of God's mission and of Christian missions - missiology - necessarily spreads into all arenas of God's worldwide, world-penetrating kingdom presence and activity. Missiology looks widely while centering on the evangel, as Chris Wright has pointed out

(Wright 2014). This issue's articles likewise center on the gospel of Jesus while working their way hither, yonder, and in all sorts of directions, exemplifying the leaven of missiology.

Enjoy, critique, interact, and probe widely.

References

Wright, Chris (2014). "Integral Mission and the Great Commission: 'The Five Marks of Mission'." Available online at https://www.loimission.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Chris-Wright-IntegralMissionandtheGreatCommission.pdf (accessed January 21, 2021).

"The Trinity *Is* Not Our Social Program" and the Social Arian Temptation: Recovering from Mortifying Spin – Contextualization Gone Awry 4 (Christology) (Part II)[1]

Mark R. Kreitzer

Published in *Global Missiology*, www.globalmissiology.org, January 2021

Abstract [same as Part I – ed.]

The Trinity *is* our social program, if our understanding of the Triune God is checked by biblical theology and biblical ethics developed within an international hermeneutical community. My thesis is this: "Everlasting Relationships of Following-and-Leading" (ERFL) within the immanent Trinity are founded squarely upon Scripture as read without Neoplatonic, Social Arian lenses. I establish this thesis through a survey of the interactions between the Father and Son in the economic interactions before creation in the covenant of redemption, then in the Son's work in creation and in redemptive history until and during the incarnation, next after the resurrection and enthronement, and last after the Judgment. I then trace the pattern of Filial-following and Patri-leadership in the dyadic titles ascribed to the Father and Son. Finally, I discuss implications for social theology of a Complementarian Trinity perspective.

Key Words: [same as Part I – ed.] Trinity, Social Arianism, egalitarian Trinity, complementarian Trinity, culture transformation, social revolutionary doctrines

Introduction and Thesis [same as Part I – ed.]

The Trinity *is* our social program, if the terms "Trinity" and "social program" are checked by Scripture and then sharpened within a truly international hermeneutical community to guard against encroaching syncretism (Prv 27:17) (Volf 1998, 403-423; contra Husbands, 2009). Fundamental to my thesis is that a person or people-group inevitably *become(s) like who or what they worship*, as we shall see repeatedly (Pss 115:1-8, 135:15-18; 2 Cor 3:18). Every view of the Trinity, even for those who reject the idea that the Trinity has social relevance, will lead to culture transformation. *No neutrality exists and no escape from social relevance exists*. If the earth's ethno-cultures are going to be transformed according to whole Bible teaching, these statements are essential because the Trinity is essential (Mt 28:17-20). If any culture is founded upon the wisdom and truth of a true Trinity (Tri-Unity), it will thrive. If not, it will collapse from the accumulated centuries of idolatry as seen by precept and example throughout Scripture.

This and subsequent articles focus especially on *Christology* gone awry. My thesis is as follows: Everlasting Relationships of Following-and-Leading (ERFL) truly exist within the immanent Trinity. The Tri-Une Godhead has always consisted of three Persons who share equal value, dignity, majesty, and glory. Yet, at the same time, all three have always interacted with equal glory-yet-diverse roles within the Father's single Being. Consequently, true equality and real diversity of authority roles are absolutely compatible, because that is what Scripture everywhere reveals our three-one divinity to be like. In the Scriptural revelation of the economy, *the Trinity is always and everywhere led by the Father* with the Son following. This is true in the pre-creational covenant of redemption all the way to after Messiah Jesus presents the universe back to his Father, who becomes "all in all."

I maintain that it is legitimate, therefore, to carefully infer backwards from these revealed economic relationships to the everlasting divine metaphysical time (DMT) of the ontological Trinitarian relationships before the covenant of redemption. Several other indications (e.g., God-Word, Glory-Radiance relationship) also demonstrate that this has always been the internal immanent way the Godhead *is*, was, and will always be. Hence, the following of the Son and leading of the Father in the economy is not temporary.

Further, whenever an ethno-culture's worldview becomes grounded upon a view of the relationship of unity and diversity that prioritizes the equality of unity above any diversity, it will self-destruct. This worldview concept will become a Pac-Man that devours all social freedom and created diversity in an egalitarian collective. The envisioned result is a communal-collective in which everyone is supposed to be absolutely and interchangeably equal, with no social hierarchies and no social boundaries. An updated slogan of the French Revolution could well be "Equality, Liberty, and a unitary family of Humanity." Such a viewpoint encapsulates the contemporary boast that equality is absolutely morally better than maintaining created social diversities. In contrast, our Lord provides a strong indication that true social unity and real, created, social diversity can exist in harmony when he prays, "Let them be one as we are one" (Jn 17:11, 23). His ideal social model is actually modeled on the Tri-Unity of his relationship with his Father (and by implication also with the Spirit). His new creation community in vital union with him is truly diverse – bi-gender, multi-ethnic, and multi-class – yet is also truly a unified community because only the Son's new-creation diverse and unified community *reflects* the immanent-ontological Trinity. Hence, an accurate understanding of the Trinity *is* our social program.

Unfortunately, the Trinity within the classic Tradition has too often been relegated to being a mere thought puzzle with little practical relevance to social systems. This type of relegation is especially true of Latin scholastic Trinitarianism, but also definitely occurs in earlier Greek and Latin Christianity as well (Hennessy 2007). However, as several scholars demonstrate in the last half century, such as the VanTillians, Frame, Poythress, and Rushdoony in the USA, and especially Colin Gunton in the UK, only a correct Trinitarian view builds a stable social order in all spheres of life. Therefore, what I term *Social Arianism* prioritizes the intuited moral value within the ontological Trinity of a simple-egalitarian unity above any real diversity of the Godhead. Within this simplist Tradition that includes a timeless, strongly immutable, and impassive deity are hidden deadly Neoplatonic presuppositions, as occurs within Augustine (Mullins 2013, 181). Robert Jenson summarizes: "Throughout his writings," Augustine possessed an "unquestioning commitment to the axiom of his antecedent [neo]Platonic theology, that God is metaphysically 'simple,' that no sort of self-differentiation can really be true of him" (Jenson 1997, 111). The Cappadocians before and Aquinas after him held to the same presuppositional syncretism.

[Part II begins here – ed.]

The Divine Title and Role of the Son as Related to the Father

To establish the thesis further that equality of essence and being is totally compatible with following-and-leading role relationships, I will consider the following dyadic role relationships: Word-God, Father-Son, Glory-Radiance, God-Image, Radiance-Glory and Representation-Nature.

Word-God (Jn 1:1-3)

In the cultural background of John's Prologue and throughout John's Gospel, the Word-God relationship is similar to that between a King and an official emissary (ἀπόστολος, apostle) sent by that authority on mission (ἀποστέλλω, apostellō) to the King's rebel subjects. "The God" (ὁ Θεὸς), the King, sent forth his personal Word to proclaim his royal message (Jn 3:34; 12:49; 14:10, 24) and perform a stipulated mission-task (Jn 4:34; 5:17, 20, 36; 9:4; 10:25, 32, 37, 38; 14:11, 12) for which the King greatly rewards him on return to his throne (Jn 6:37-39; 17:2; cf. Phil 2:6-11). What we will see is that this economic relationship is the same as within the immanent relationship. John's Prologue shares the true unity with the Father, yet also unique distinction that has always existed: "The God" is not "the Word."

First, "the Word was God" means that the *Logos asarkos* (pre-incarnate Word) shares full deity with "the God" because he shares the Father's full divine Being with the Spirit (Jn 1:1; see, Tit 2:13; 1 Pet 1:1; et al). The Word and God mutually indwell one another in mutual honor as the gospel elsewhere unequivocally teaches (Jn 10:37-38, 14:10-11, 17:21, 23). Yet both maintain distinct *roles* throughout: The Father always takes the initiative as the Speaker in the creation and incarnation, and the Word, the person we now know as Jesus, is the Message/Messenger. As introduced in the Prologue, Jesus always follows, is always led by the Father's leadership because that is what a Word from someone else must do by definition.

The living Word dwelling with "the God" [ὁ θεός] (the Father), according to John, is much more than merely existing at the creation as any true Arian would confess. Instead, John uses the aorist ēn [ἦν] (was) four times to imply something like "everlastingly alive": "In the beginning" – referring to Genesis 1:1 – was [ἦν] the Word." "The Word was [ἦν] with God and the Word was [ἦν] God" (Jn 1:1) and "he was [ἦν] in the beginning with "the God" (Jn 1:2). Therefore, since God is everlasting, it is logical to deduce from this data that the Word was [ἦν] always-living before "the beginning" with the everlasting God, sharing equally his Father's always-existing and never-ending divinity. As the "only-begotten [Son] Himself God," Christ is always present (ὁ ὢν: present active participle) "in the bosom of the Father" (ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ Πατρὸς) as the one who explains the Father (Jn 1:18). In other words, the Father is always the speaker and the Word has always been, is, and will always be the message of Father's speech.

Son-Father (Jn 1:14, 18, 5:18; Col 1:14; Heb 1:3)

Clearly, then, the omniscient and everlasting Son (Mt 11:27) is the image of the invisible Father (God), the firstborn over all creation (Col 1:15 NIV). Here Paul substantiates John's insights in the Prologue. The Son is "first-born" heir (πρωτότοκος), a metaphorical term conceptually analogous to John's simile "like an only-begotten and unique son with a father" (ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ Πατρός) (Jn 1:14; Col 1:14). In addition, John, Paul, and the writer of Hebrews all claim that this unique heir makes the invisible Father known because Jesus both exegetes God and is the visible image of that invisible speaking Monarch, who creates and upholds all things by his divine Fiat, the Logos of John and the υἱός/Huios (Son) of Colossians and Hebrews (Jn 1:3; Col 1:15-17; Heb 1:3). God has now spoken in/by his Son, Jesus (Heb 1:1-2).

Furthermore, in the second section of John's prologue (Jn 1:14-18), he reiterates this same everlasting relationship. The Word sent by God dwelt in a tent-tabernacle of flesh, revealing the glory, grace, and truth of the Father, analogous to the Shekinah-Glory of YHWH dwelling in the Tabernacle and Temple of Israel (Jn 1:14, 17). This in-tabernacle-ed Word was the Son, himself

God, who made known (ἐξηγέομαι, "exegeted" or explained) to humanity the invisible God/Father, who sent him. As Christ explains more completely later, "He who has seen me, has seen the [invisible] Father" (Jn 14:9b, see 5-11). Jesus states: I do not speak my words or do my works but my Father does his works and speaks his words through me (Jn 10:25,35, 37). The Jews correctly saw that Jesus claimed equality with God (Jn 5:18), yet Jesus then went out of his way to show that he was always following his Father's lead doing what he first saw the Father do. For example, he also is giving life – Jn 5:21, 25-26; judging because the Father gave him that authority to execute judgment – Jn 5:27, 30; given works to do by the Father (Jn 5:36).

In other words, he was saying that being ranked as a follower of his Father did not in any manner constitute demeaning inequality *in the economy*: Why then would it constitute inequality in the *ontology* of the Three-One being of the Father? This is the question I am addressing throughout this article. Social Arians say that role diversity with equality is impossible. How do they know? They first presuppose 1) inequality is never compatible with real authority-role diversity, and 2) God is a simple-Oneness. Both axioms are not revealed in Scripture but derived from an extra-biblical process of apophatic negation, which is read back into Scripture – eisegesis not exegesis (Kreitzer 2016, 2019a, b).

I summarize. From John's prologue we see that true equality of divinity and real diversity of authority-roles are compatible in eternity-past. The Word always "was" full-divinity and equal with God because he ever-is the I AM even "in the beginning" of the creation (Jn 8:58). Each of the four uses of "ἦν" is equivalent, then, to the I AM of the Name (YHWH), so there is no hint that the Word was anything else but the Word throughout everlasting DMT. This passage must mean that the everlasting relationship between the *Logos asarkos* and "the God" in the immanent Trinity made it totally befitting that this everlasting Word of God become the Word incarnate (*Logos ensarkos*). Those roles cannot be reversed in any other potentially imagined world but are *ontologically established*. Again, their true equality by which they totally and mutually share the God, the Father's single divine Being and real everlasting role diversity are compatible, contrary to the Social Arian error. Both Word and God, Son and Father are absolutely necessary within the divine ontology. Along with the Spirit, both are mutually defining of the other and cannot exist apart from the other in the manner that is revealed in Scripture.

The ramifications of this biblical Son-Father relationship are extremely important to consider, because Social Arians and Egalitarian Trinitarians imply that this relationship is merely one of love and inheritance but never of following and leading. Wayne Grudem disagrees as he interacts with Kevin Giles and Millard Erickson (Erickson 2008; Giles 2002, 2008, see 2017). Grudem surveyed the meaning of the Son-Father dyadic relationship in the context of "the biblical world," and concluded: "There were no commendable examples of a son not being [rank-ordered under] … his father or not deferring to the leadership role that still belonged to the father, even when the son had grown to adulthood" (Grudem 2012, 231). He continues that because this was "everywhere true" and because the conclusion is not contradicted elsewhere in the Bible, "surely [it] should be applied to the relationship between the Father and Son in the Trinity" (Grudem 2012, 231-232, see 227). Certainly if a person or culture reads Scripture with Western culture's underlying Neoplatonic worldview presuppositions, that person or culture can make decisions that result in "contextualization gone awry," as has occurred here with the Social Arians as a subset group within Egalitarian Trinitarianism.

No basis exists, then, for claiming as Kevin Giles does that "we found no evidence that [Son and Father] were separated or divided by function or differentiated by asymmetrical power and authority. Rather, they are depicted as working complementarily in perfect harmony and unity, exhibiting the same power and authority" (Giles 2006, 128). Readers familiar with Giles' other writings may detect how this claim portrays exactly his preferred egalitarian male-female roles for church offices. *A culture, including an ecclesial culture, must become like the divinity it bows down to*. Giles is perfectly expressing the Social Arian αἵρεσις (divisive sect), as he speaks in favor of the simplist Tradition's classic syncretism.

Radiance-Glory and Representation-Nature (Heb 1:1-3)

The author of Hebrews substantiates these conclusions. The Son, the incarnate "spokenness" of the Father, is (ὢν, present participle) both the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature. He upholds the universe by the word of his power that he always speaks from the Father (Heb 1:3 ESV). In other words, the everlasting Son has always been and always will be (the implications of the present active participle) the outshining radiance (ἀπαύγασμα) of the glory (δόξα) of the single Father, God. Perhaps the closest analogy is that of the sun. We do not see the actual ball of the sun. In effect it is invisible to our eyes. What we see is the out-shining radiance of that glorious orb. In like manner is the relationship of the Father and Son. The Father and Son are one-and-distinct, just as the sun's orb and the radiance are truly distinct but inseparably one. Yet the orb is first as is God the Father. The orb shines outward as does the Father's glory. He is first in order, and the radiance is second, radiating out from God, but not unequal to God, following not initiating. The Son, who is also the Word, is – present participle – then the perfect radiant representative of the leading Father's Light-Orb, so to speak (1 Jn 1:1-5; 1 Tim 6:16). Here again is a direct indication of the ontological relationship of the Father and Son in DMT.

This reading of the beginning of Hebrews is further supported by the author's next metaphor. The Father's true underlying essence (ὑπόστασις, hupostasis) is exactly represented by the Son, who is the true/accurate stamp of the Father's essence (χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως). The word-picture used does not give comprehensive information, but it does give some exact data about the ontological relationship, contrary to the apophatic Tradition. The mental-image invoked is that of a letter-seal or that of a mint stamping out coins. The χαρακτήρ, charaktēr was the impress of the original die that was put upon a newly minted coin or a letter seal. Ideally, the impression exactly represented the original die behind the image impressed. The Father is the ὑπόστασις or essence, "2. … b. the substantial quality, nature, of any person or thing: τοῦ Θεοῦ (R. V. substance), Hebrews 1:3" (Thayer's Greek Lexicon 2011) but the incarnate one, who "has spoken" from the Father is the exact-impression.

Two Disputed Pauline Passages: 1 Corinthians 3:21-23, 11:1-15

Last, I would be remiss not to mention the two disputed Pauline passages that rank-order humans, Christ, and God. In the first (1 Cor 3:21-23), Paul reminds the Corinthians not to enslave themselves under human leaders. He uses a powerful image to show their new identity. They are not servants but owners in union with Christ, the King and Lord of the house. Paul writes: We don't preach "ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake" (2 Cor 4:5). We are "only servants, through whom you came to believe" (1 Cor 3:6). So don't boast in them (1 Cor 3:21) because "everything belongs to you … and you belong to

Christ" – the Image of the God (εἰκὼν τοῦ Θεοῦ) (2 Cor 4:6) – "and Christ belongs to God" (1 Cor 3:21-23). Notice the authority order, the apostles and teachers, then the members of the community, then the Image of God, and highest, God himself. Each is under authority except God, the Father, who is sovereign over all.

Paul reminds the Corinthians that everyone must serve Christ, who in turn serves his Master, the God of the universe himself. For a Social Arian this type of ordering is absolutely repugnant, so it is relegated to the economy alone. However, the direct context does not merely mention that Jesus is the Anointed King (Christ) but that he is the veritable Image of God, the Father. As his Image, he shines out the very "glory of the God" as his Radiance, as we have seen. Believers, therefore, are able to see "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor 4:6). There seems to be more than a hint of the everlasting and abiding relationship of God to his Image-Son here. Hence, it was fitting that the everlasting Image, Radiance, Son, Word of God to become incarnate as the perfect man, the Image and Likeness of God, the second Federal-Son of God, and his true prophetic Word as the long-foreseen Prophet to come.

When we compare the second similar, role-ordering passage (1 Cor 11:1-15) to the first one, however, even stronger doubt can be cast upon the idea that following-leading roles are merely economic. Observe the following in its context: "But there is one thing I want you to know: The head of every man [male husband] is the Anointed King, the head of a wife [γυνή, not here a generic female] is her own husband [ὁ ἀνήρ, the definite article implies her husband and not any random male], and the head of Christ is God" (1 Cor 11:3, my trans.).

The context makes clear that Paul is not speaking about male-female relations but husband-wife relations. The husband must honor his head, the Anointed King (Christ), and a wife must honor her head, that is her own husband because even King Jesus has a head, "the God" [ὁ Θεός] himself. So far this passage could still be interpreted purely economically. Notice, however, that this husband-wife relationship seems to represent the ontological relationship between "the God" and "the [enthroned and glorified] Christ." This King is God, the Image, in now glorified flesh (see Tit 2:14). Now contrary to Kevin Giles, the term "Christ" does not always mean the *Logos ensarkos* but can also mean the *Lord asarkos* as 2 Corinthians 8:9 states: "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he [Lord Messiah] was rich, yet for your sake he became poor." The God-Christ relationship is the prototype of the designed husband-wife relationship.

The Trinity *Is* Paul's Social Program.

If the explanation above is accurate, and all the evidence gleaned so far substantiates that it is, 1 Corinthians 11 demonstrates that Paul's understanding of the Trinity was indeed his social program. Paul teaches that the husband (Adam), who came by direct creation, is "the image and glory of God," but the wife (Eve), possessed a true but still-derived image through her husband (1 Cor 11:7). Adam was a type of the true Image of God who would become incarnate (Rom 5:14). Since this passage in Romans is referring to the opening creation chapters (as is 1 Timothy 2:8-12), the prototype of any husband is Adam, and Eve is the prototypical example of a wife with one Pauline caveat. Since we now as husbands and wives are not the first Adam and Eve we must *also*, "in the Lord," be interdependent under God because every man comes through a woman's womb (1 Cor 11:11-12).

Nevertheless, Paul claims that Adam is the representative husband and God's representative leadership-image as the first created "son of God" (e.g., Lk 3:38). Yet Adam was not the Despotēs [δεσπότης] with unrestricted authority and absolute domination over his wife: only God is and he alone is good (Mt 19:17). No person is "the Judge," "the Law-giver," or "the King." And certainly, no man is able to save (Is 33:22). Husbands (elders and magistrates) have strictly limited authority under God who delegates all authority to his Son. The first husband was only a servant, a minister of God, only an administrator (vice-gerent) and not a vice-regent. That royal role, Samuel implies, must be reserved for the Theanthropos (1 Sam 8-12), though he allowed eventually under YHWH's direction the Davidic dynasty to reflect something of that role (Pss 2, 89, 110; Is 9:6-7).

Yet, even after the Fall, Adam and his sons still faintly reflect the only-God's glory, and hence share something of his delegated administrative authority. Hence, notwithstanding the Fall, Adam and his male sons retain God's "first-born" authority over the family (1 Tim 2:13). God created all families to have male *servant* leadership. A biological male-husband is to be the head and the biological female-wife is to be the helper. Within the grace of the Kingdom, these roles with differential authority as originally designed and renewed in Christ are not oppressive and demeaning but upbuilding and soul-satisfying (read Eph 5:20-33). Consequently, until the resurrection, at least, any wife, representing Eve as *derived* image of God, ought to have the sign of being under a husband's authority upon her head (1 Cor 11:10). This design-norm is not oppressive, particularly if understood in the culture of the day and within the biblical worldview. This conclusion flows inexorably from the Christ-God model of following and leading, which is to be reflected in the wife-husband relationship in marriage (see also Eph 5:20-33) and in the communities of the King (1 Tim 2:8ff).

In addition, what does Paul mean by "hair" in this text? In the context of 1 Corinthians 11, the woman's "hair" is her beautified, female-proving hair, which shows she is under her husband's leadership (1 Cor 11:15). Men have κόμη, komē (hair) but ought not to have, for them, shameful koma-hair. Such κομᾷ-hair is cosmetically beautified, female-style hair, and it demonstrates to the surrounding culture that this woman is a chaste wife, biologically female, and under her husband's authority. A female in Corinthian culture with a shaved head is either shameful and immoral (αἰσχρὸν γυναικὶ), a street prostitute, or perhaps a slave-girl of a temple brothel (1 Cor 11:6). No Christ-following wife wants to emulate that. On the other hand, a male could choose to have that kind of hair, but created-nature teaches that biological males who choose to have that kind of hair heap dishonor and shame (ἀτιμία, atimia) upon themselves. Paul asserts that violating this creational design-norm is a perversion of the created male-female binary (1 Cor 11:13-14, see Rom 1:23). Wives (and females in general) should demonstrate that they are female and vice versa. The details, however, of how this can be worked out should be left to believers in each culture (perhaps implied by 1 Cor 11:16).

I summarize. Christ, the now glorified King, is under the leading authority of his Father. As we have seen, this is a prototype for a husband-wife relationship. He must be a *servant* by showing it in external appearance and life-style. A wife, in turn, follows loving and just leadership and should show that she understands following as a servant in her female manner and external appearance. Yet almost paradoxically, both are to be servants, though each maintains a different servant role as Paul implies in his introduction to Spirit-filled and Spirit-led husband-wife roles: "Submit to one another." In other words, each is to be ordered under another as mutual servants (Ὑποτασσόμενοι). … "out of awe-filled respect for Christ" (Eph 5:20, my

trans.). Furthermore, for a wife, κομᾷ, koma was her glory and demonstrated that she is a married woman (γυνή, gunē) under the servant leadership of her husband. But such hair is a shameful disgrace to a male. He, too, needs visibly to demonstrate to all in his culture that he is the servant husband leader of his wife and family. Paul was reacting, I believe, to the gender dysphoria, the LGBTQ, and the rebel-feminist movement of that day.

Doxological Pattern and Following-Leading Relationships

In all of the doxological passages, the Father is the first, the Son the second, and the Spirit the third in order of service. This order is normative and thus appears in the Great Commission. Both Son and Father are equal but also truly distinct in role. The Scripture always reveals the Son following and the Father leading. Accordingly, all divine action and especially also all praise, blessing, honor, and authority-power is truly Trinitarian, flowing from the Father to the Son and to the Spirit and then back from the Spirit to the Father through the Son in an everlasting pendulum-movement. Therefore, Paul can write: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every blessing of the Spirit in the heavenly places" (Eph 1:3, my trans.; see 1 Pet 1:3). Later in the same letter, he writes that the Father sends the Spirit to join believers to the Son so that they would be filled with "fullness of God," and return blessing back to the Father: "To him be glory … in Christ, … for ever and ever. Amen! (Eph 3:14-21). Paul concludes his letter to the Romans with the same movement of praise and blessing: "Now to Him … to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen" (Rom 16:25-27).

This doxological pattern is always and everywhere the same throughout Scripture, and it unequivocally demonstrates that this is the way the ontological Trinity *is* throughout all DMT, the "was," the "is now," and the "yet to come." Christ shares *the Father's* glory (Rev 5:13) and is the Mediator of the revelation of that glory. "From him [the Father] and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen" (Rom 11:34-36). Paul also echoes this cry as his charge to Timothy:

> In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, … I charge … until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will bring about *in his own time*— God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen (1 Tim 6:13-16; italics added, see also Acts 1:7).

This pattern is the foundation for stating that the Son and Spirit share the one glorious Being of the Father, "the only true God" (Jn 17:3). Hence they are legitimately termed God and Lord, (2 Pet 1:1; Tit 3:3; 2 Cor 3:18). They are not eternally begotten or spirated in an atemporal act – a "no-time action" is self-contradictory and non-sensical. They are both always-reflecting throughout DMT the glory of the Father as Son and Radiance, and as executor of the Three as the Beloved, Set-Apart Spirit (Mullins 2016a; see 2013). No necessity exists to explain how this doxological pattern works based on syncretizing the biblical data with the Neoplatonic simplicity doctrine or the Social Arian presupposition. What is needed in our day is renewed international evangelical interpretative communities to begin rethinking the simplist Tradition and its concomitants such as the SAP.

Conclusion

I maintain that all cultural systems are founded upon worldview presuppositions. Hence, and especially relevant to this article, those systems incorporating ancient and modern forms of the Social Arian presupposition (SAP) all possess a basic guiding axiom. That anti-biblical presupposition skews their idiosyncratic reading and resulting systemizing of Scriptural doctrines, and it does not provide a true guide to truth. However, all people-groups must be discipled by continuously reforming their own "earthly, soulish, demonic" worldview presuppositions through careful Spirit-taught reading of Scripture, guided by true presuppositions, and engaged in a truly international hermeneutical community. Only such discipleship will protect against partisan "bitter jealousy" and "selfish ambition" for one's own sectarian view, as the context implies in James' third chapter (Jas 3:14-15). *Semper reformanda* is as relevant today as it was in the European Reformation. "To the teaching and to the testimony! If they will not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn [in them]" (Is 8:20).

Furthermore, Scripture provides the only truthful description of the Father-Son relationship as it is found in the Trinitarian economy, with clear indications that this economic relationship stretches back into the everlasting past. We possess no other legitimate data from which we can deduce backwards, so as to discover *some revealed aspects* of the real personal diversity of role and function in the Father's shared Tri-Une Being. Making such discoveries will not always be easy. For example, Ryan T. Mullins, a brilliant U.S.-American philosophical theologian at St. Andrews University in Scotland, magnificently dissects and refutes core aspects of what I have called the Social Arian heresy and its Neoplatonic presuppositional errors. Yet, surprisingly enough even he implicitly accepts its core viral presupposition. Mullins receives without analysis or question the potentiality that the three equal Persons could be re-ordered and re-imagined in other possible creations (see Mullins 2016b, 2013).

Tested and Found Deficient

Therefore, the Social Arian dogma has been tested and found both defective and syncretistic because it does not agree with the perspicuous, sole authority of Scripture. Equality and diversity are not contradictory. The apophatically derived doctrine of the simplest Tradition is actually useless for the long-term personal and social transformation that is implicit in the Great Commission's mandate to disciple all the ethno-peoples of earth. The biblically defined Trinity *is,* then, our social program. Scripture itself mandates that we build upon a foundation of revealed truth alone (e.g., Pss 12:6, 119:160; Is 8:19-20; Jn 10:35, 17:17; 2 Tim 3:16-17) and that *every culture inevitably becomes like the divinity(ies) it worships*.

Consequently, even the presuppositions with which to read Scripture correctly must be derived from Scripture alone as taught by the Spirit. Only then can each culture discover and honor the one true God, his nature, and the nature of his creation that reveals his glory (Ps 19:1-3; Rom 1:18-21). Consequently, Jesus commands us to reject any doctrine that is built on "the commandments of men" (Mt 15:9; see 15:1-9; Isaiah 29:17). Paul states that any philosophical presupposition not built upon the true revelation of who and what our Lord Christ himself is is in fact empty and deceptive (Col 2:2, 3, 6, 8). All such philosophy "depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ" (Col 2:8 NIV). Syncretizing apophatic-Neoplatonic methods and results with Scriptural insight leads in the long-run to demon-taught apostasy, as has occurred throughout church history (1 Tim 4:1-4; 1 Jn 4:1-7).

The Bottom Line

Here is the bottom line: If we are to maintain the genuinely Spirit-taught insights found in the Niceno-Constantinopolitan symbolic order, yet also must delete the Neoplatonic substrate in order to be consistently biblical, *so be it*. The Social Arian and Egalitarian Trinitarian doctrines are founded upon that Neoplatonic substrate and thus must be wholly pulled out by the roots no matter how loud the simplest Tradition resists it. Only new international hermeneutical communities can help us reformulate the classic symbols. After all, synods, councils, popes, bishops, general assemblies, pastors – indeed all true believers – have often failed. So, it does not matter how many church fathers may agree with the simplist, neoplatonized Tradition; that is not be the issue and must not be the major discussion point.

In other words, the Greco-Latin Tradition with its Egalitarian Trinity and Social Arian presuppositions is just as syncretistic as any other Majority World dogmatic tradition. Consequently, to impose that Tradition upon the multitudes of people-groups of the earth is imperialistic, a return to the Constantinian temptation, and must be boldly rejected. The Greco-Latin Tradition of Trinitarian relationships, no matter how ancient and "sacred," must never be reverenced as unchangeable and virtually on-par with Scripture. Dutch Theologian Gisbert van den Brink provides an excellent summary of the issues at stake. I highly recommend this article and especially its useful, concise refutations of those who want to escape onto a Platonic theological pillar that allows no relevant interaction for culture transformation:

> The doctrine of the Trinity is not intended as an obscure piece of theological mathematics, embarrassing most people because of its sheer incomprehensibility and only offering some fun to philosophical nerds who want to break its one-three code. Rather, as a doctrine of the church it is intended to guide and inform Christian ways of viewing, experiencing and acting in relation to God, ourselves and the world. In that sense, it is a practical doctrine, entirely relevant to the Christian life, rather than a speculative one (Van den Brink 2014, 336).

Therefore supporters of the dictum, "The Trinity Is *Not* Our Social Program," are often those who have made the Trinity irrelevant for all of life. Often, they also almost always have fallen into the trap of the Social Arian temptation and desperately need grace to turn to the truth by rejecting "mortifying spin" and to escape from the trap of the wicked one (2 Tim 2:24-26). *Scripture unequivocally teaches Complementarian Trinitarianism* (CT), which rejects Social Arianism. CT is not a heresy as leading Egalitarian Trinitarian theologian Kevin Giles and others claim: "What you are teaching in the light of the creeds and confessions," the Tradition, "is heresy" (Giles 2017, 1).

Yet, on the other hand, Scripture *also* rejects true – not imagined – colonial oppression, gender subjugation, and ethnocentric cultural abuse. In fact it rejects, to coin a term, any human -archy (e.g., matriarchy, patriarchy, oligarchy, monarchy). There is only one -archy to which we must bow the knee, namely the theo-archy of our Triune God. Our Father sets firm, loving and just boundaries in the Decalogue, which summarizes the morality of his tôranic wisdom flowing out of his character. He then gives grace "in Christ," his Son, to live with liberating freedom by their mutual Spirit within those boundaries in every sphere of life (Gal 5:1-18). For the social and cultural order, I call this biblical doctrine "Libertarian Complementarianism" in contrast both to the hierarchical, faux-complementarianism of ecclesial bullies, family despots, and

dictatorial civil governors and in contrast to the social revolutionary frenzy of Egalitarians holding consistently to the Social Arian heresy. *No social neutrality exists; every culture becomes like the god it serves.*

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Globalization and the Language of Worship: Is the Spread of English a Boon or a Bane?

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Abstract

Modern missions has long emphasized the importance of the heart language of a people for the Church. In this age of globalization, English is often put forward as a Lingua Franca for much of the world. Likewise, in recent years, there has been a growing use by Evangelicals of English as a tool for outreach and ministry. While most of us in missions have benefited at some point by the widespread use of English, what impact does English usage have in peoples' spiritual lives? Little has actually been done to explore how people are influenced spiritually by the use of English in the Church and in worship. This article is the result of study done in three contexts to begin to explore what impact if any the widespread use of English in the Church and missions has had in the life and thought of individual Christians. Is there a negative impact or crisis in the globalization of English in the Church?

Key Words: English in missions, heart language, spiritual life, worship

Introduction

Globalization shapes our daily lives. One of its tendencies is homogeneity, pushing everyone to be like everyone else. This is evident with growing use of English as the world's common language. As an example, a website from North Carolina State University (NCSU) lists 54 countries in which English is the official language and/or the language of higher education (NCSU n.d.). The widespread use of English is particularly true when we speak of media and entertainment.

In evangelical churches around the world, English is often at the center of ministry. As a means for doing missions, the organization TEAM in 2016 offered over 150 opportunities to teach English and share the gospel around the world (Hurlbert 2016). The well-known Australian church Hillsong offers various ministries to its global following. Their college boasts of over 10,000 students from more than 65 countries; English proficiency is expected (Hillsong Church n.d.). Hillsong channel offers a variety of media all in English and states that, "As of June 2018, people from 183 countries have watched the Hillsong Channel" (Hillsong Church n.d.).

This increasingly global influence of English in many churches raises questions regarding the impact on those who use English as a learned language rather than a heart language for their spiritual life with God. This article seeks to start developing an answer to the question, "How are non-native English speakers influenced spiritually by the use of English?"

Importance of Language for Spiritual Life

In this reality of the increasing use of English, we need to consider the influence of language on its speakers. How words are used and the meanings given to them depend on the cultural context. Each language is used with nuances that, until they are well learned, keep others from understanding the inner conceptual world of a people (Tucker 2013, 168).

To understand a language fully, it is essential to learn that language from within (Smith 1992, 31). When a person is learning a language, the processing of the language is limited by the lack of cultural understanding. Further, studies suggest that, since frames for language develop over time, there is a tendency to connect words to one's native frame unless the second cultural frames are well known (Luna, Ringberg, and Peracchio 2008, 291). Jim Harries points out that such linguistic extraction not only devalues the local language, but also that a native-English-speaking outsider's understanding of local meaning can be hindered even when interacting in English with a local person, since thought processes often reflect the local language even when expressed in English (Harries 2017). These challenges raise the question that, if one learns Christianity in an acquired language, and vocabulary and concepts are not readily available in the native language, what issues arise in gaining a true understanding of the gospel message? For example, native English speakers tend to fail to recognize the corporate nature of the Church as English does not have a distinct plural of "you," leading to interpreting such passages as Colossians 1:27 ("Christ in you, the hope of glory") from an individualistic perspective.

Why Does Heart Language Matter?

One central theme of contextualization in missions is that new converts should become Christians through and worship in their heart language. Heart language is defined as **"**the language in which people feel most comfortable relating to others and thinking deeply" Scott 2013, 38). According to Eleonora Scott—a Wycliffe translator—the reason for using the heart language is that people are thus

> freer to share with God everything on their hearts. They grow deeper in their faith, feel God's presence with them and sense the kind of relationship that he desires. It prepares people for the intimacy that friendship with Jesus demands and creates a thirst for knowing more of God, which prepares their hearts for greater discipleship (Scott 2013, 41).

Many contend that only as the gospel connects with the inner self within one's own cultural context does the gospel stop being foreign and is able to change the heart. Without spiritual understanding through the heart language, the argument continues, individuals do not fully own their faith and keep faith separate from other aspects of their lives, thus not fully identifying as Christians or growing as Christians (Maria 2015, 33-34). Linguist Ken Nehrbass, who studied individuals' comprehension of the Bible in acquired languages, while holding that monolingual speakers do need the Bible in their language, raises questions about the validity of assuming that the Bible is best understood in the heart language once a person has acquired a second language (Nehrbass 2014, 89). His study shows that at least comprehension of the biblical message was as equal in an acquired language as in the vernacular or heart language (Nehrbaas 2014, 100). Another study conducted in South Africa points out that the use of English as a daily means of communication is an important consideration in a multilingual setting. The attitude and level of use of English is an important consideration as well (Adams and Beukes 2019). While the influence of the heart language is indeed strong and shapes inner beliefs and values (Deutscher 2010, para. 25), other evidence would seem to point out that moving out of the heart language does not constrain or keep the Christian from growing spiritually.

Worldview and Change

Undoubtedly communicating in a learned language does not quickly achieve the same depth of understanding as in one's heart language. Achieving successful communication and meaning requires interacting at the worldview level where people hold understanding "about the world, life, God, and their relationship to it all" (Smith 1992, 34). Because worldview is accessed through language, Christians are concerned with gaining correct understanding of the biblical message through a comprehensible language.

Worship

Worship is an important part of the process of spiritual growth and transformation. Thus, it matters how we worship. "Who we are 'at heart' and how we worship are deeply connected" (Hotz and Mathews 2006, 7). Our worship style is an important part of our faith and if it is not "connected to our inner lives, it can become empty and formalistic" (Hotz and Mathews 2006, 63).

Worship, however, is not a simple matter. Just as words cannot be simply translated, we have to keep in mind that worship holds cultural meaning as well (Hiebert 1985, 149-150). A simple example is by asking how a culture shows reverence, an important aspect of worship. Reverence can be shown by taking off our hats or shoes, or by bowing or standing. The form of reverence used by English speakers is normally often without awareness and thus may not connect in the same way with speakers of another language/culture.

This cultural location of language raises the question of the music used in worship. How does music connect with the worshipper? Just as the spoken message needs to be understood, so should music speak to the heart (Tucker 2013, 286). A recent *Christianity Today* article that discusses the use of English in German churches points out the complexity of worship music in our global world. One comment reflects that worshipping in English allows for a more "uninhibited" worship expression that is more globally connected (Chitwood 2020, para. 5). In this case, the local culture is seen as an impediment to the desired style of worship.

Worship is not complete without the Word, God's spoken message to us. God's Word comes to us both through preaching and direct reading of the Bible. The Word, received in either form, takes the biblical story and connects it to the meaning we find in our own lives (Hotz and Mathews 2006, 119-120). Ultimately preaching by presenting Christ to us "purifies us by the reworking and reweaving the limited, fragmented story of our lives into the grand normative narrative of Scripture" (Hotz and Mathews 2006, 136). Thus the Word also connects to our inner life, again showing the importance of a comprehensible language.

Where to from Here?

It is the intent of the preceding discussion to show the significance of language in the Christian life and spirituality. A few points from cross-cultural communication help us cement the role of language in this process. First, each language is both limited and capable of being used to communicate God's revelation. Second, God is the communicator and is able to get his message across using language. Third, as Christianity takes on a cultural form it is God who is "speaking from outside of, and into, each culture" (Tucker 2013, 167). Ultimately Christian life and growth depend on God's action through the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Research Findings

To gain insight into the impact of language on spirituality, I carried out research in three phases. In the first, I conducted a web-based survey to which 38 people responded. The respondents were asked to be self-limiting to these requirements: "that you be at least 18 years of age and that a second language has been a part of your Christian spiritual life for at least one year." I was seeking not just those who have learned a second language, but those for whom that language has been an active part of their Christian experience. The second phase of this research was to interview three focus groups of adults at an Hispanic church that holds services in Spanish in a city in western New York. The first focus group was composed of those who indicated that Spanish is their first language. The second group considered themselves bilingual, and the third group consisted of individuals whose first language is English but can function in Spanish. The third phase sent an eight-question web-based survey to a pastor of an English-speaking church near Washington D.C. to distribute to individual adults in the church who self-identify as native Spanish speakers. There were six responses to this survey. The two surveys and focus group prompts used can be found in the Appendices.

The overall input came from individuals who identified as having seven different first languages. All adult age groups were included—though most respondents were younger adults. There was a range of time that they have been Christians, with the majority becoming Christian under age 18. The respondents were fairly balanced in how long an acquired language had been part of their Christian lives. Some in the first survey were native English speakers who have learned another language. Most became Christian through their first language, have grown spiritually mostly in their first language, and are moderately to strongly bilingual and multicultural, with 22 having English as their first language with Spanish and Korean Spanish speakers as the next predominant groups. I have not endeavored to approach these findings with statistical analysis but to look for trends and observations that can inform the work of missions and the Church in our increasingly globalized world.

Feelings about God

In each of the surveys, respondents were given this prompt: "I feel the same way about God when worshipping in either of my languages." The first phase's survey results (see Table 1) seem to indicate that language does not influence how one perceives God and that the longer one is bilingual, the less difference there is. The most significant variation is among those who consider themselves as having the lowest levels of bilingual ability or are least multicultural.

Table 1

Q10 I feel the same way about God when worshipping in either of my languages.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Difference	Agree	Strongly Agree
All (38)	3%	26%	18%	16%	37%
Most time in 2nd lang (19)	0%	5%	5%	26%	63%
Grown most in 2nd (9)	0%	11%	33%	11%	44%
Low bilingual	0%	50%	0%	17%	33%
Low multicultural	0%	36%	9%	36%	18%

One respondent's comment seems to summarize these results: "An (sic) an intellectual level I connect better with my first language, but on an emotional level, I connect will (sic) with both.

When it comes to prayer meetings, even though I prefer to pray in my first language, I feel deeply connected with my brothers and sisters in my acquired language."

The discussion with the focus groups in the Hispanic Church in western New York yielded similar result as the question listed in Table 1, with two individuals indicating that this is mostly true and four totally true. The predominantly Spanish focus groups indicated that there is no real difference. One person responded that "God is God, I feel the same about him" referring to using Spanish or English. The other two groups agreed with another comment that "It doesn't matter what language the Spirit moves in…if you understand the language." One exception was for an individual who saw the Hispanic church as more legalistic, so that individual prefers to worship God in English.

The Value of Worship

All respondents in the first survey indicated that worship has value in both first and acquired languages (see Table 2). At the same time, there was a slight preference for the language most influential in their life. English speakers throughout the responses showed preference for English, while other language speakers were less tied to their first language. Also, as Table 2 indicates, those who were converted in, or have had more spiritual input in, their acquired language lean towards that language, which in this study was mostly English.

Table 2

Q 20 I receive the most benefit spiritually from liturgy or public worship in my

	First	(No Label)	No Difference	(No Label)	Acquired
All (38)	8%	22%	55%	8%	6%
English (22)	14%	36%	45%	5%	0%
All other (15)	0%	0%	69%	15%	15%
vert in 1st lang (28)	11%	30%	56%	4%	0%
Convert in 2nd lang (10)	0%	0%	56%	22%	22%
Grown most in 1st (23)	13%	35%	48%	4%	0%
Grown in both (6) 3+3	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Grown most in 2nd (9)	0%	0%	50%	25%	25%

Most respondents in the focus groups indicated that public worship is equally valid in either language. This was especially true for songs. However, sermons were beneficial depending on one's language ability. Interestingly, the more bilingual the respondents were, the more they viewed live translation as a barrier to understanding due to getting tied up in thinking about how they would translate the sermon. The respondents to the second survey sent to the D.C. Church likewise indicated that they are able to worship in English as well as Spanish.

A comment from the first survey helps to understand what might be happening in this regards. "Some of the questions were hard to answer because it is not so much the language that matters in the word preached but the quality of preaching and not so much the language that matters in the worship and the singing of songs as the heart of worship and the whole atmosphere."

Respondents in the second survey sent to the D.C. Church indicated that they are able to grow as well in English as in their native Spanish. Yet they also indicated that their deepest beliefs and their relationship with God are more closely tied to Spanish (see Table 3).

Table 3				
4. When I worship God personally/alone I prefer Spanish.				
No	A little	Average	Mostly	Totally
1	0	1	2	3
6. My deepest beliefs about God are more connected to Spanish than English.				
No	A little	Average	Mostly	Totally
0	1	2	2	1

Likewise, in the first survey the responses show that a first language is not necessarily the only way for spiritual life to take place (See Table 4). The evidence indicates that it is not just the language of Christianity that matters but also the content. The highest variations were between the English speakers and those with a low bilingual self-rank.

Table 4					
Q 12 There are parts of my spiritual life that are best met in my first language.					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Difference	Agree	Strongly Agree
All	0%	3%	18%	32%	47%
English	0%	0%	9%	32%	59%
Low bilingual	0%	0%	0%	33%	67%

The Value of the Heart Language

The first survey also looked at what aspects of spiritual life are preferred in one's first language, looking to see if it matters what is in one's first or heart language. Again, a respondent provided a helpful summary:

> I love connecting with the Lord in both languages, but when I am tired or just…needy, verses and songs especially jump out at me in my first language and feel much stronger. I understand them in my acquired language, but they don't arrest my attention the same way as in my first. However, I often find new insights in my acquired language that can only been seen in a different manner of expressing the world and the Lord. Super cool.

While this representative comment supports the above conclusion that we can benefit from more than one language spiritually, it also focuses on the reality that some deeper-level matters work out best in one's first language. The general question regarding deepest beliefs reflects both ideas as well (See Table 5). The most interesting variations are the age at which the person became a Christian, and those who converted in a second language.

The only real variation is when a person has spent more time in, or has primarily grown spiritually in, an acquired language. Other questions relating to spiritual factors—Bible study, preaching, devotional reading, and doctrine—that are connected to more intellectual aspects and are more individually experienced indicate preferences for one's first language. The only consistent variation was when the respondent converted in a second language.

Table 5					
Q 16 My deepest level beliefs are most connected to my first language					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Difference	Agree	Strongly Agree
All	5%	18%	19%	34%	26%
Most time 2nd lang	10%	16%	21%	32%	21%
Convert in 2nd	20%	40%	20%	10%	10%
Grown most in 2nd	22%	33%	11%	11%	22%
Convert under 18	0%	19%	16%	34%	29%
Convert over 18	29%	14%	14%	29%	14%

One respondent stated that at "an intellectual level I connect better with my first language, but on an emotional level, I connect will (sic) with both. When it comes to prayer meetings, even though I prefer to pray in my first language, I feel deeply connected with my brothers and sisters in my acquired language."

Another comment adds insight to the dynamic of the varied aspects of our spiritual lives. "God knows everything and He works in ourlives (sic) different than we do. He has given me abundant grace through different languages but the moment when I faced my God strongly was while I was praying in (first language) so I think they would may feel me more special anytime I pray in (first language) after that God still works in my heart with different language."

For the respondents of the survey sent to the D.C. Church, the only prompt that showed a preference for Spanish was "When I worship God personally/alone I prefer Spanish," with five of the six indicating mostly or totally. The focus groups seemed to give the most varied results, leaning towards the level of language ability.

One final comment demonstrates our ability to function across languages and grow spiritually, while reinforcing the importance of our first language.

> Even though I am fully bilingual, have a degree in my acquired language, have been ministering in my acquired language for 24 years and am very capable in it, I am still more comfortable reading and learning in my first language although I might even say I am more comfortable teaching in my acquired language because it is the primary context in which I teach. But personal stuff, reading, hearing sermons…reading for pleasure or relaxation//English for sure.

The importance of the heart language is further supported by question 14 from the first survey (see Table 6). The responses indicate that this only changes when a person spends more time or has converted in a second language. Length of time in a language does make a difference. The evidence would indicate that the more one is involved in a second language and culture, the less that person's faith is dependent on the heart language.

Table 6					
Q 14 I have grown the most spiritually in my first language.					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Difference	Agree	Strongly Agree
Grown most in 1st	0%	0%	9%	39%	52%

Grown in both	0%	17%	67%	0%	17%
Grown most in 2nd	22%	44%	22%	11%	0%
Lowest multi	0%	0%	9%	36%	55%
Highest multi	7%	19%	26%	22%	26%
Low bilingual	8%	0%	8%	33%	50%
High Bilingual	4%	19%	27%	23%	27%

Conclusion

This study has endeavored to look into the relationship of language with spiritual life. In particular, the article seeks to start to answer the question: How are non-native English speakers influenced spiritually by the use of English?

A few tentative conclusions can be drawn:

1. God is bigger than language and is not limited by language. He is God and can be known through any language.
2. As the acquired language proficiency of the believer increases, there is less importance placed on the language used and more on the content of the communication.
3. The last area of spiritual life to adjust to an acquired language is personal time with God, either through reading or prayer.

What do these conclusions say to our concern for globalization and the spread of English in the Church and in ministry? What we have believed all along is true, one's heart language matters. However, with proper guidance and discipleship, the use of English does not preclude a genuine relationship with God for non-native English speakers. Nevertheless, we still need to keep working to provide materials and worship opportunities in heart languages as some will not come to Jesus outside of their heart language.

Undoubtedly further research is needed. More people and more demographic groups need to be studied. Examples include those who are more recent converts and those who convert at a higher age and through a second language. Also, finding respondents who have basically left behind their first language as Christians would be interesting to study.

As a result of this study all involved in missions can be motivated in two ways. First, we should keep encouraging the Church to function in the heart language of the people. Second, and most importantly, God will speak to the hearts of all who listen to Him, no matter which language they choose to use in their spiritual growth. He is God of all languages.

Appendix 1

Web-based survey

Your participation in survey is voluntary. The only requirements are that you be at least 18 years of age and have been involved in a second language for at least one year as a part of your Christian life development. Completing the survey indicates your voluntary consent to participate in this research. Click next to continue, close the survey if you do not desire to continue.

The background for this study comes from the study of missions. In the field of missions study it is a widely held assumption that the gospel message is most effective in one's heart language. A heart language is the language in which one is most comfortable, and/or the language of one's home. Little research has actually been done to understand how Christians perceive the impact of language on their spiritual life and development.

For the purposes of this research the term "First language" will be used to refer to the heart language or the language with which you have primarily communicated in your home. "Acquired language" will be used to refer to the language which you have added and which has been a part of your Christian life growth. In this survey the word bilingual will be used in reference to your ability to function in both languages; and multicultural will be used in reference to your ability to function in both your own culture as well as a culture of your acquired language.

There are two main sets of questions. The first section focuses on aspects of each respondent's identity.

Identity Questions will seek basic information about you as a responder in order to make comparisons between participants. This is general information and is not intended to be able to identify you. Also responses will be anonymous and no attempt will be made to identify any responder.

The second set of questions asks about your perceptions regarding language and your spiritual life; focusing mainly on aspects of worship. This section is subdivided into two parts. The first deals with general and the second more specific spiritual life questions.

Section 1 - Identity: The answer options vary between questions, please consider the options carefully.

Your age 18-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, 56 and older

How long have you been a Christian? 1-2, 3-5, 6- 10, 11-20, 21 or more years

The age at which you became a Christian under 12, 12- 17, 18-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, 56 and older

For how long has an acquired language been a part of your Christian life 1-2, 3-5, 6-10, 11-20, 21 + years

The language through which you became a Christian first, acquired, equally both

The culture in which you have grown the most as a Christian first, acquired, equally both

Personal level of being bilingual (1-5) minimally bilingual, equally functional in both cultures

Personal level of being multicultural (1-5) minimally multicultural, equally functional in both cultures

The language you consider to be your first language English Other language (option to write language)

Section 2 - Spiritual life questions:

Please read the instructions for each part, as each part has a different type of response type

Part 1 - General Spiritual life questions

These questions focus on broad concepts regarding your spiritual life. Indicate your response that ranges from you strongly disagree with the statement to you strongly agree with the statement. The middle would indicate that there is no real difference.

I feel the same way about God when worshiping in either of my languages

I have benefitted spiritually by having worshipped in two or more languages

There are parts of my spiritual life that are best met in my first language

I benefit most in my Christian life when worship is in my first language

I am most comfortable worshiping in my first culture

I have grown the most spiritually in my first language

If I had to choose, I would live my faith in my first culture

My deepest level beliefs are most connected to my first language

Part 2 - Specific worship related questions

These questions focus on specific areas of worship and your Christian life. Indicate your response on a range from whether the statement is most true for your first language or most true for your acquired language. The middle would indicate that there is no difference between languages.

I benefit the most spiritually when studying the Bible in my

I benefit the most spiritually when singing in my

I receive the most benefit spiritually from hearing preaching in my

I receive the most benefit spiritually from liturgy or public worship in my

I receive the most benefit spiritually from personal or private prayer in my

I receive the most benefit spiritually from public prayer in my

I receive the most benefit spiritually from devotional readings in my

I receive the most benefit spiritually when Christian doctrine is expressed in my

If you would like to add a comment, do so in this space.

Appendix 2

Prompts used for the Focus Groups

Discussion prompts for the focus groups:

Our goal in this discussion is to understand how using an acquired language influences worship and spiritual life.

1. Talk about this church and the role of both English and Spanish.
2. Talk about worship and spiritual life among this congregation.
3. Earlier I did a survey, and some from this church may have participated. It seemed to indicate that
   a. benefit from public worship in both languages
      -worship, singing no clear preference
   b. most people grow more spiritually in primary language
      - bible, preaching, devotions best in primary language
      -what about prayer (not in survey)
   c. Feel the same about God in either language
      -deepest faith is tied to first language

How can a church meet the spiritual needs of people with two or more languages?

Appendix 3

Survey sent to D.C. Church

1. I am comfortable worshipping in English in Church
   No A little Average Mostly Totally

2. I would prefer to worship God in Spanish in Church
   No A little Average Mostly Totally

3. I am able to grow spiritually worshipping in English in Church
   No A little Average Mostly Totally

4. When I worship God personally/alone I prefer Spanish
   No A little Average Mostly Totally

5. I feel the same way about God when Worshipping in English or Spanish
   No A little Average Mostly Totally

Comment option: Please explain any ways in which you don't feel the same about God.

6. My deepest beliefs about God are more connected to Spanish than English
   No A little Average Mostly Totally

7. I believe that my relationship with God is best using
   Spanish Mostly Spanish Both are the same Mostly English English

   What else would you like to tell me about worshipping in English Compared to Spanish?

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When 'Go' Becomes 'Stay', One Is Left to Ask, 'Where Do We 'Go' from Here?' Viewing the 'Go' of the Great Commission as a Command to Contextualize the Gospel to the Nations!

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Abstract

Worldwide, 272 million people live outside of their home country and another 800 million have been forced to migrate within their own county. This massive displacement of people provides a great opportunity in the Church's own backyard, where many believers should be—and can be—involved in fulfilling Christ's Great Commission. The 'going' in the Great Commission does not geographically move the disciples very far in the first months/years of the early Church; however, with the first outpouring of the Spirit, the Church was stretched contextually into places it never expected to go. This research will examine the aorist participle, 'go', in the Great Commission and postulate a contextual understanding of the command to 'go'. This contextual understanding provides an opportunity to be part of the Great Commission in a world whose borders are closed, due to the world-wide Coved-19 pandemic.

Key Words: aorist participle, diaspora, go, Great Commission, immigrants, Matthew 28:19

Introduction

Worldwide, 272 million people "live outside of their home country—representing about 3% of the world's population." As many as 750 million people worldwide would choose migration, if it were possible, and another 800 million have been forced to migrate within their own county (Nguyen 2020, 32). Many of these immigrants have come from among unreached people groups looking for a place to belong that is safe to live, love, and flourish with their families (Pew Research Report 2012). They may be Kachin or Rohingya refugees fleeing religious persecution in Myanmar, they may be Somali refugees fleeing civil war in Africa, and/or they may be Syrian refugees fleeing starvation because the encroaching Al-Qaeda have stolen their crops once again. Millions of such refugees flee first to camps across their own borders and then wait for placement/acceptance, sometimes for more than a decade, in a receptive third country.

This tragic, forced, modern migration of large population groups, once placed, move down the street from churches and live in houses across the back fence from established Christians that give them—both the reached and the unreached—a golden, hitherto unavailable, opportunity to be part of the Great Commission of Christ, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them…" (Matt. 28:18-20). "For Christians who participate in God's redemptive purposes, the migration of people, whether forced or voluntary, should be viewed, not as accidental, but as part of God's sovereign plan" (Im and Yong 2014, 148). In November of 2006, then UN General Secretary, Kofi Annan, proclaimed, "International migration is one of the greatest issues of the century… We have entered a new era of mobility" (Pocock & Wan 2015, 3). This command to make disciples of all nations no longer requires a geographic understanding of 'go' and has provided a great opportunity in the Church's own backyard, and many believers should be involved with the contextual fulfillment of Christ's command. Such a contextual opportunity to be part of the Great Commission is even more important in a world whose borders

are closed, due to the world-wide Coved-19 pandemic, and the ability to ‘go’ to some places are no longer possible.

Tim Keller defined contextualization as, “giving people the Bible's answers, which they may not at all want to hear, to questions about life that people in their particular time and place are asking, in language and forms they can comprehend, and through appeals and arguments with force they can feel, even if they reject them” (Keller 2012, 98). Such contextualization always requires a ‘going’, whether it be mental, physical, emotional, or intellectual, and requires a contextual ‘going’ from a place of comfort and safety. There is an unprecedented opportunity to reach masses of people forcefully displaced into our own neighborhoods. This research will demonstrate that it is possible to maintain an imperative understanding of the Greek aorist participle, ‘to go’, while maintaining a broader contextual understanding of the command ‘to go’ through an examination of the exegetical differences of the text and a broader contextual biblical approach to understanding ‘going’.

Summary of Exegetical Agreement

The defining of mission from the command to ‘go’ in Matthew 28:19, and the implications of its use (or the implications of not using this aorist participle with the main imperative verb ‘make disciples’), have been a significant missiological concern for very long time (Kvalbein 1988, 49). Textual consideration is given to πορευθέντες οὖν μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, βαπτίζοντες… διδάσκοντες… (Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them… teaching them…) (Matt. 28:19a, 20a). Many Greek scholars agree that the imperative weight of the main verb μαθητεύσατε (make disciples) affects the participle πορευθέντες (to go) and gives it imperative weight as well. At the same time, a nuanced view (argued below) of the imperative influenced participle πορευθέντες translated as a command, “Go!” should include, at the very least, a command to contextualize (as a form of going) for the sake of the imperative μαθητεύσατε (making disciples).

There seems to be only a rare argument among scholars that the aorist imperative μαθητεύσατε (make disciples) is not the main verb in Matthew 28:19-20. Aorist imperatives, in general, convey a sense of urgency and immediacy of action (Wilder 2012, 5) and give the reader of the Matthew text a sense of the importance that the writer attaches to this pericope. Craig Keener concludes that the commission to make disciples “is no afterthought to Matthew's Gospel; rather, it summarizes much of the heart of his message” and that readers should conclude that the writer was utilizing this commission in weaving together the many themes that appear throughout Matthew (Keener 2009, 3). Cleon Rogers, to preserve the act of ‘going’ as the point of the text, argued that the construction of the verse (location of πορευθέντες ‘going’ at the beginning of the sentence) must be translated as an imperative as well, and therefore it is an integral part of making disciples (Rogers 1973, 267). However, while some have followed his example, others still postulate that the only imperative is to μαθητεύσατε ‘make disciples’.

The imperative μαθητεύσατε ‘make disciples’ is supported by three participles: πορευθέντες 'going', βαπτίζοντες ‘baptizing’, and διδάσκοντες 'teaching'. “The main verb describes the aim of the work of the disciples [make disciples]. The last two participles describe the means to reach this aim:” baptizing and teaching (Kvalbein 1988, 48). The first of the three participles is the aorist participle πορευθέντες (‘going’ or ‘to go’), and the other two, βαπτίζοντε (baptizing) and διδάσκοντες (teaching), are present participles (Rogers 1973, 258). The first, the aorist participle πορευθέντες (to go), is used to modify the main verb μαθητεύσατε ‘make disciples’. In

coordination with the action of the imperative, μαθητεύσατε 'make disciples', πορευθέντες (to go) takes on imperatival force as well, and together they are most often translated, "Go and make disciples." "Further, the action of the participle is something of a prerequisite before the action of the main verb can occur, [as if] to say, no making of disciples will take place unless you go: 'Go and make disciples!'" (Wilder 2012, 5; Heibert 1992, 348).

Summary of Exegetical Disagreement

While in more recent times many Greek scholars often agree with the above conclusions, historically there have been two major exegetical differences that have greatly divided the missiological conclusions of some, depending upon the emphasis one would follow. "One is an emphasis on the imperative character which has led to a strong *'go'* in the missionary command (explained above). The other is a reaction in which the 'go' receives a secondary status, even to the point of omission in translation" (Rogers 1973, 259). Some scholars have concluded that since πορευθέντες (to go) is simply a participle and not a finite verb, then, "the participle πορευθέντες with which the verse begins should be translated 'as you go'," 'having gone' (Culver 1967, 118), or perhaps not even translated at all (Freeman 1997, 17).

Interestingly, both arguments seem influenced by a strict geographic understanding of the participle πορευθέντες (to go). In the first, the imperative is used to understand the geographic going of missionaries across the world and the Church living out the apostolic sending mission of God. The imperative is used to raise money, convict congregations, call women and men to missionary work, and raise awareness for the needs of the masses overseas. In the second position, as will be demonstrated below, the strict geographic understand does not mesh well with how the biblical text records the living out of this geographic command in the Book of Acts. The disciples did not demonstrate an initial compulsion to "go" on missionary journeys in response to the command of Jesus, and therefore this second position concludes that the geographic "go" is not an imperative and should be translated/understood, "As you are going…"

The evidence, however, shows that the imperative verb μαθητεύσατε 'make disciples' allows for Gundry's conclusion that going is paramount among the themes of making of disciples among all the nations (1982, 593). However, the placement of the aorist participle πορευθέντες at the beginning of the sentence, its linkage to the imperative μαθητεύσατε, and the weight of other biblical texts must give the participle imperatival force and would indicate that the writer of Matthew has included it to make some important point that must be summed up to include the essentiality of 'going' (Rogers 1973, 258-267). Thus, the translators seem to have correctly translated πορευθέντες οὖν μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations." On one hand this position does not seem to lend to the argument of this paper, that πορευθέντες is not an exclusive command to physically go, but on the other hand, with a strong πορευθέντες (imperatively influenced by the weight of placement and a strong imperative verb), one must deal with the participle 'to go' and decide what it means to the reader (both then and now). While keeping all this textual information in mind, consideration will next be given to the larger context of the biblical text.

Considering a Biblical Range of Possibilities for the Aorist Verb "To Go"

As has always been the case, God's mission required radical change, a radical new start, a radical departure, a radical 'going'. Those involved in God's mission are commanded to "Go!" "Go and bless…" (Gen. 12:1-3). "Go and show yourself…" (Isa. 49:9). "Go and preach…" (Matt. 10:7).

"Go and make disciples…" (Matt. 28:19). God's mission has always required leaving and going. However, "Leaving and going need not necessarily mean actual travel from one geographical place to another." Rather, those on God's mission are going out from their known world, and the 'going' is a form of leaving that which is "spiritual, mental, and attitudinal—even when it is not physical… it involves the abandonment of the worldview through which the world tells its own story, and adopting [the worldview of] the biblical story of God's mission" (Wright 2010, 78).

Christopher Wright clearly postulates that the 'Great Commission' of Matthew 28:19, "Go and make disciples," is based upon the mission of God "Go and be a blessing" that runs throughout the Old Testament as "Commissioned to spread the blessings of Abraham" or "Called to be a blessing" (Wright 2010, 73-74). Matthew's 'Great Commission' further emphasizes that this Abrahamic blessing is to be extended to all nations through teaching and consequently baptizing them into God's blessings. The followers of Yahweh in the Old Testament were often willing to 'go' to the promise land or 'go' to Jerusalem to worship, yet we find them rarely willing to be a blessing, either at home or abroad. Today, while those responding to Matthew's command are often willing to 'go', many remain unwilling to be a blessing to the 'nations' who have moved in next door. "Something is missiologically malignant when we are willing to send people across the ocean, risking life and limb and spending enormous amounts of money, but we are not willing to walk next door and minister to the strangers living there" (Payne 2012, 33).

Broadly one can conclude that "Jesus [was] directing [the first church] to go to all the nations and to makes disciples, and it is entirely appropriate to describe this passage as a mission passage. They are commanded to go" (Blomberg 1992, 431). The problem remains to be argued, what exactly does 'go' mean, and how does it modify the process of making disciples? Is 'go' solely a geographic command to change locations on a map, or does 'go' include something more missiologically? If one concludes that 'go' is specific to geography, how far is far enough for the move to be a geographic shift that qualifies one as having fulfilled the Great Commission? Does it require a move to a different country… a different state… a different city… or does across the hall to a different apartment qualify and alleviate the command to go? If these locations all qualify, does this not lend to the watering down of the imperative influence of the main verb (make disciples) to the point that the aorist participle (to go) is relegated *de facto* to the Culver/Freeman position that the translation of the participle is unnecessary and should simply be "Make disciples" not "Go and make disciples"?

The same aorist participle is found in Matthew 10:7, πορευόμενοι δὲ κηρύσσετε, and is translated, "As you go, preach…" In this text translators determined that the imperative verb, κηρύσσετε (to preach), does not lend imperative weight to the aorist participle πορευόμενοι (to go) and is translated passively by most translators, "As you go…" Interestingly, the same translators that translated πορευθέντες οὖν μαθητεύσατε with imperative weight as "Go and make disciples" chose not to do so in Matthew 10:7. This decision seems to have been based upon context and the overall importance of the text in reference. Matthew 10:7 contains directions given to twelve new disciples in training that would be going locally 'to preach', while the presumption of 28:19 is that, with the birth of the new Church, the then trained would reach to the world 'making disciples of all nations'. While the "mission in Mt. 10 and 28 are addressed to the same group, what has changed between these chapters is not Jesus' audience, but the time and the objects of mission. There is a connection between eschatology and mission-targets…" (White 2014, 361).

In the same context as Matthew 28:19 is Luke 24:49b, "…tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high." From the text's account, the Lukan rendition is presumably, timewise, shortly (earlier that same day) before the Matthew 28:19a passage and seems to be contradictory if taken literally along geographic lines. Matthew 28:19a's "go" and Luke 24:49b's "stay" geographically seem at odds. While the Luke 24 command to "stay" seems temporary, "until you are endued with power," the Matthew 28 text does not say "after you stay and wait for power, then go!" Rather the imperative weight given, for the above-described reasons, cause translators to translate Jesus's command with the eschatological immediacy, "Go and make disciples." If one is to conclude that 'go' is a geographic command alone, one would also have to conclude that the disciples (the first church) were mostly a dismal failure in geographical moving until persecution forced them to disperse through Europe and Asia. Even then, except for Paul's and his companions' missionary journeys, the first church seemed to be solely seeking sanctuary and a place of safety. Summarily, absent the Apostle Paul, the first church of the Book of Acts is a church that mostly 'stayed' and did little geographic 'going'!

A further statement by Jesus, in the same timeframe of his ascension and shortly after the two statements discussed above (Matthew 10:7b, 28:19a), is Acts 1:8b, "you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." In this text, 'staying' in Jerusalem and 'going' to Judea, Samaria, and the rest of the earth seemingly can be contemporaneous ventures. Yet only in isolated instances does one find anyone going to Samaria and beyond until the Apostle Paul's missionary journeys. Then the church seemed willing to let the 'new convert' carry the torch where Paul and his team begin to exercise their Apostolic prerogatives contextually. The church's stance is one of ambivalence, 'go' or 'stay', just don't rock the boat contextually. The first church seemed eager to see Paul and Barnabas 'go'; the problems arose when customs associated with eating and circumcision were violated. Go, just don't contextualize the traditions, customs, and/or culture of the mother church!

The Disciples Live Out the Command to "Go"

Initially, the disciples were 'staying' in the upper room in Jerusalem. In fact, they were not even 'going' across the street or next door; they took 'staying' literally and did not leave the upper room. The first act of 'disciple making' was the result of the Holy Ghost being noised abroad and the crowd becoming disciples was an act of seekers 'coming', not the first church 'going'! Acts 2:5-12 explains the 'going' of disciples with the contextualizing of the Gospel (in regard to speaking in their native tongues) to at least 14 nations that would become part of the first making of disciples. Clearly if the insistence of 'going' solely mandated a geographic relocation, the disciples missed the boat and surely, if they had disobeyed the final summary command of Christ, the results would not have been so spectacular. Luke's report in the Book of Acts clearly "emphasizes that the Jerusalem Christians, including the apostles, did not mobilize significantly to bring the gospel to the nations; until God himself scattered them through persecution" (Wan 2014, 90).

Unfortunately, despite such biblical evidence, some scholars still argue for a solely geographic understanding of the aorist participle πορευθέντες. White asserts that the Great Commission insisted that "Jewish believers in Jesus [were] commanded to travel to all the nations" (White 2014, 353), and Upkong claims, "The fullness of mission is realized at the transcultural geographic level… mission is fully realized when carried out at a transcultural geographical level" (Upkong 1985, 169). However, just as clear as the imperative influence of

the main verb μαθητεύσατε (make disciples) over the aorist participle πορευθέντες (to go) that resulted in the translation of a strong command, "Go ye therefore and make disciples," it seems equally clear, from the consideration of other biblical commands and the biblical response to such commands by the first church, there must be something beyond the solely geographic understanding of the command 'to go'.

Peter O'Brien concludes that the implication of the above observations of how the disciples responded to the words of Christ was that "the 'going' is not to be emphasized" but only to teach and baptize when the opportunity arose to do so. Moreover, he seems to argue that the Great Commission may not even apply to Christian work in the twentieth century. O'Brien concludes that if it does apply, of which he is not convinced, it should only be "understood to refer to bringing men and women to… become disciples" (O'Brien 1976, 73). If an understanding of πορευθέντες (to go) is strictly geographical, the only conclusions that can be construed from the disciples' response is that the aorist participle is not to be emphasized or the disciples were disobedient by not really 'going' until the conversion of the Apostle Paul. Even in the case of Paul's response, the disciples, who were commanded 'to go', did not really go, rather they let the convert Paul go in their stead. Clearly, there must be an additional understanding of what Christ meant with the command to "Go and make disciples!"

Understanding 'Go' Contextually

The discussions above that the command 'to go' lead to understanding the 'going' as a command to contextualize the Gospel so that it can be heard by "each in their own language" and in their own cultural understanding. Acts 2 reports more than just a translation of languages when the Spirit was poured out. Keener, in his effort to explain the difference in the translations of Matthew 10:7b and Matthew 28:19a, seems to make this point. In Matthew 10:7b, the 'go' was isolated "to Israel's lost sheep, and not to Gentile or Samaritan cities," whereas in Matthew 28:19, "the object of 'going' has changed. Jesus' followers are to make disciples of the nations, so 'going' demands crossing cultural barriers to reach the Gentiles" (Keener 2009, 4). Donald Hagner observed that Matthew's Jewish audience was caught in a cultural "no-man's land" between their own heritage and traditions and the heritage and traditions of the people to whom God had command them to "Go and make disciples" (Flemming 2005, 244). Jesus added the cross-cultural thrust in the commissioning of His followers to 'make disciples' and the command to 'go'. While certainly including the possibility of a geographic 'going', Jesus's Commission include a contextual 'going' that would move Matthew's readers from the comforts of Judaic culture, customs, language, and traditions. This contextual 'going' would force them to make concessions in circumcision, eating habits, women in ministry, economic power, slavery, places of worship/preaching, language usage, positions of power, holidays, and countless other matters. The essence of the gospel would not change; however, it would appear to a Jewish observer much different when disciples were being made during the teaching of the Gentile woman, Lydia, on the banks of a river in the Asian town of Thyatira. It was this contextual kind of 'going' that would be difficult at times for the disciples to accept.

Conclusions

What the Church does will be determined by its theology, and its theology will be greatly influenced by how theologians interpret Matthew 28:19. The first conclusion from this research, regarding the aorist participle πορευθέντες (to go), is to interpret with strong influence from the imperative verb μαθητεύσατε 'make disciples'. The translation, "Go and make disciples," lends

to the urgency of the times and the passing opportunities. Even though the disciples did not (at least initially) understand πορευθέντες (to go) geographically (Im and Yong 2014, 75), there is an urgency that permeates their disciple-making behavior throughout the Book of Acts that reflects the contextualized imperative "Go!"

Second, if πορευθέντες (to go) is understood with the imperative verb's influence, then what πορευθέντες (to go) means is important and must be understood appropriately. It seems clear that the disciples from the very first chapter of the Book of Acts understand πορευθέντες (to go) as a contextual command. In Acts 1:8, Luke records the Lord's words, "you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." In Acts 2 the outpouring of the Spirit is contextualized so that 14 nations understand and respond in their own 'tongues'; in Acts 6 the Apostles appoint Greek pastoral caregivers to contextualize care for the widows; in Acts 9 the message is contextualized for/by the Samaritans and the Ethiopian eunuch; in Acts 10 the message is contextualized by Cornelius to include his Gentile household; and, the remainder of the Book of Acts contains Paul's missionary journeys to continue contextualizing the Gospel to the Gentiles in Asia Minor (the first geographic application of πορευθέντες). All of this happens without the disciples ever 'going' anywhere in a strict geographic understanding of the word. The Early Church "quickly moved from a near-cultural context to a slightly different cultural context to a radically different cultural context. Yet, no missionary crossed an ocean. No missionary traveled overseas" (Terry 2015, 399). A contextual understanding of πορευθέντες (to go) seems the only possible understanding that incorporates the nuances of the original text, the behavior of the Apostles, the variants of opportunity that have been presented to the Church throughout history, and the changing demographics in the world today.

Third, a final conclusion specific to diaspora missiology is "not geographically divided or confined to home/foreign, regional/global, or urban/rural. Rather, it is borderless. It is transnational and global" (Tira 2013, 155). Conceptually, diaspora missions/missiology de-territorializes geographic boundaries and is simultaneously local and global: "in contrast to the lineal concept of traditional missions, it is multi-directional" (Tira 2013, 155). With modern technology, by reaching out to an immigrant next door who can then reach around the world within seconds to family, friends, and acquaintances through cell phones and the internet, one's witness to a 'neighbor' can instantly impact those in the land from which the neighbor came. Such unprecedented possibilities and opportunities must not be ignored by today's worldwide Church. "Congregations in the receiving countries can easily practice missions 'at our doorstep' without crossing borders geographically, linguistically, and culturally" (Tira 2013, 162-163).

Summary

While this research has argued for an imperative understanding of the aorist participle 'to go' in "Go ye therefore and make disciples…", it has also demonstrated that the biblical text did not originally convey, nor has it ever conveyed, a geographic understanding of that aorist participle, 'to go'. To reconcile these two points, a contextual understanding of the aorist participle 'to go' has been argued, namely that 'going' includes the urgent biblical command to make disciples, first among Jews, then among Samaritans, and then among the Gentiles, all the while staying in Jerusalem. The significant point here is not that the Church has no geographic mandate to 'go'—because that would be included in, but not limited to, a contextual understanding—but rather that the command to "Go and make disciples" is contextually based. A contextually based

understanding of 'going' by the Church mandates sharing the gospel with the migrating masses living within our borders and assembling at our borders in a way they can understand and be converted. This requires an adjustment by the Church of outdated, irrelevant, and culturally based methods, even though it will mean participating in uncomfortable, unfamiliar, and unrecognizable expressions of the Gospel.

When Jesus said, "Go, make disciples of all nations," in the simplest of terms, He called upon all who would become the Church, Jew and Gentile, to be part of the ongoing contextualizing mission of God, "Go and be a blessing!" Christ's followers "must not concentrate all their thought on 'coming' to church. They must also 'go' to bring the precious tidings to others" (Hiebert 1992, 348). To 'go' is the task of each believer, whether across the street to their neighbor or across the ocean to people they have never seen (Hendriksen 1973, 999). The Matthew 28:19 Great Commission, "Go and make disciples of all nations," is intended for the Church today, just as it was intended for the first disciples (Culver 1967, 20). The Church consciously and intentionally "must continue to send missionaries throughout the world [and] must also recognize the Great Commission's opportunity" that is present around our own homes (Payne 2012, 32-33). The arrival of millions of immigrants in churches' immediate areas should "open our eyes to opportunities for evangelism and ministry right here in our own backyard" (Soerens and Yang 2009, 175), wherever in the world that might be. The 'immigration problem' has presented the Church with an "unprecedented opportunity to share God's love and the gospel message with folks from those countries—not abroad, on their own doorstep" (Soerens and Yang 2009, 162). All Christians "who participate in God's redemptive purpose, the migration of people, whether forced or voluntary, should be viewed not as accidental, but part of God's sovereign plan" (Im and Yong 2014, 148). "We must plead with our broken neighbors like weeping prophets, not denounce them like angry moralists. We must gently throw our arms around all those trapped in sin. Love them into the kingdom, and travel with them no matter what the cost in their journey toward wholeness in Christ" (Sider 1996, 177). This ministry of love is the continued 'going' of Christ in a world on the move!

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Inquire, Introspect, Involve:
The Inquiry 2020 and Christian Missions in India

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Abstract

This brief article attempts to capture the current realities of Christian missions in India, with reference to the historical past, contemporary context, and future mission challenges. The research that was done through India Inquiry 2020 is also analysed for understanding the health and struggles of the Indian Church.

Key Words: catalyst, India, Inquiry, mission, movement

Introduction

As this article is being written, the world is gripped by the Corona Virus Pandemic that has affected India greatly, with very high numbers of infections and deaths, loss of livelihood, high unemployment, dislocation of people, and a ruined economy. The International Monetary Fund has downgraded India's growth. India has also slipped to seventh position in the global economy. A recent *Indian Express* report states, "Bangladesh is set to beat India in per capita gross domestic product (GDP) in the calendar year 2020, says data from the IMF World Economic Outlook" (Singh 2020).

Christianity a failed project?

Dilip Mandal has written an article that portrays Christianity as a failed project in India (Mandal 2020). The article states that right-wing propaganda that 'Hinduism is in danger, because of Christian missionaries' need not be heeded or believed. In fact, the percentage of Christians in India has dwindled, even though the Christian faith has been in this land for 2000 years. The author provides five important reasons for his claim.

First, Christian faith in India has never developed an appropriate 'liberation theology'. Hence, doing social work, helping people, and spending money has all been to induce them to convert – which is not 'moral'. According to the author Social working, helping people and spending money has failed miserably.

Second, "Christianity in India never played any role like the Black Church played in the Civil Rights Movement or as in the case of Latin American Church where priests who became part of the anti-colonial struggle there. In its early days, Christianity was perceived as the religion of the colonialists and the oppressors."

Third, "Christianity failed to transcend the barrier of caste. Becoming Christian does not absolve an Indian from the shackles of caste." Sadly, there is discrimination based on caste within the church. In that sense, the church has failed to be a model of biblical values of equality and fraternity.

Fourth, initial converts were Brahmins and other upper castes. The author writes that they dominate the church and lower castes do not feel comfortable since their caste leadership is not sanctioned by the Christian faith, as that of Brahmins in Hindu faith.

Fifth, Christian education institutions did not empower the poor, but instead educated the elite, who become oppressors. Christian schools "largely became the hub of social and

economic elites of the country. In most of these schools, located mainly in urban areas, poor kids can't enter."

The yardstick of the approach by the author is about numerical growth and lack of social impact on a large-scale on the nation of India. Yes, Christianity made certain national impacts in the past before India's independence in 1947. However, the author did not discuss those aspects.

Church Growing and Thriving

In the year 1998 the first "Inquiry" was conducted in India. Various Christian leaders – pastors, mission leaders, Bible college professors, and others – were requested to complete a questionnaire to help formulate vision, strategies, projects, and projection targets for respective ministries. The exercise was repeated in 2003 and again in 2020. The church leaders' documents of from Inquiry 1998, 2003, and 2020 provide brilliant statements, reports, and vision of faith. The main focus has been church planting in all three inquiries.

There have been several catalyst movements that enabled the church to get the vision of planting churches. Many young people were inspired by such movements that had specific, time-bound targets. Here are ten movements that made an impact on individuals, missions, and organizations and also gave birth to new church planting movements:

1. *Saturation Church Planting*: According to this approach, the idea of having a church for everyone thousand population would complete the Great Commission task. So, in every district, there were attempts to mobilize the 'Harvest Force' to the 'Harvest Field'. When there were not enough 'Harvest Force' laborers, missions from outside were requested to come and help.

2. *DAWN*: Discipling A Whole Nation also conducted vision seminars to think beyond disciple-making and church planting to engaging the whole nation.

3. *AD 2000 Movement*: This movement inspired mission agencies to work out a plan so that the Great Commission would be completed by AD 2000. Many Christians were inspired in the 1990s to strive towards this goal.

4. *10/40 Window***:** The vision of reaching out to people groups that are within the window of 10 degrees and 40 degrees north of the equator provided a compelling image, and many of those people groups happens to be in India. That image gave passion to many people.

5. *4/14 Window*: This vision showed that in the western world most people came to Lord Jesus Christ when they were between 4 and 14 years old. Hence reaching that age group became strategic. However, as noted below this demographic trend has not been true in India, yet there was great interest in this focus.

6. *People group thinking/movement*: This movement tried to help people to get a vision to reach various people groups. The approach should not be just geographical progress but penetration progress, reaching all people groups.

7. *Transform World*: This is another global movement that made an impact in India also. Many leaders caught a new vision and worked innovatively to reach out to people.

8. *Movement Day*: Urban missions celebrated Movement Day in various cities. Those events helped to see what God was doing in cities and gave new vision for city transformation.

9. *Networks*: Working together as a network became a buzz word. Earlier it was more about partnerships. However, missions were more comfortable with networks. Several networks were formed: city networks, state networks, regional networks, and national networks.

10. *Prayer movements*: Undergirding all these efforts were prayer networks, including national, regional, denominational, and state- or city-wide prayer networks. Some were highly influential, for example the National Prayer Network.

Inquiry Research Details

Regarding the number of survey respondents, for an overall population of 1.38 billion people, assuming two percent are Christians the Christian presence is 2.75 crore (27.5 million). The latest Inquiry had only 1016 respondents, which is inadequate for such a large population of Christians. The survey was done between August 2019 and March 2020. The following organizations participated and partnered in this survey: EFICC (Evangelical Fellowship of India Council of Churches), EFI (Evangelical Fellowship of India), IMA (India Missions Association), Seva Bharat, and the Caleb Institute. The regional response to the survey was as follows: 8% South India, 24% West India, 17% North India, 17% Central India, 13% Northeast India, and 21 % East India.

With specific regard to gender, the Inquiry exemplified how Indian Christianity is dominated by male leadership, with low representation for woman: there were 80% male respondents while just 20% female respondents.

The ages at which individuals have come to faith in Jesus Christ is very vital research information that could help Indian churches to develop effective strategies. Globally the 4/14 Window movement has received wide attention. However, as noted earlier the research data from India does not follow the trends in the West. A majority, i.e. 68%, have come to the Lord between the ages of 15-29, while 23% have come to faith between 0-14 years of age. Only 7% came to know Christ when they were 30-50 years old, with 1% when they were over 50.

Furthermore, the survey results show that 88% of those who had accepted Christ between the age of 0-14 were from a Christian background, where both parents were Christians. Another 7% had Christian mothers while 4% had Christian fathers. In other words, almost all respondents (99%) who came to faith by the age of 14 were influenced in their homes to accept Christ, which questions the relevance to India of the 4/14 Window approach. As noted above, the Inquiry's results shows that first generation Christians were more (68%) from the age group of 15-29 years.

As for external threats or challenges, in the 1990s India joined the global economy with several changes in economic policies of the government. Indian economic policy right after Independence was of Fabian socialism, tended towards protectionism, import substitution industrialization and state intervention. The economic liberalisation occurred in 1991 with the goal making India more market and service oriented and expanding the role of private and foreign investment (S 2018). India's was dubbed as a 'liberal' economy. There was also the Information Technology (IT) revolution that catapulted India as an IT soft power, driven by English education in the southern states. These two factors helped spur Indian economic growth that also saw large scale urbanization, migration from rural areas to urban areas. Getting richer was the goal of many young people. As a result, materialism began to dominate people's thought process. Rightly, the 2003 Inquiry identified 'materialism' as a

major external threat. It distracted the churches and especially young people to be focused on material benefits.

In the year 2020, the major external threat mentioned is persecution and political oppression. The intelligentsia of India have moved from ‘central’ political views to ‘right-wing’ political views. This rightward shift has become evident in academics, media, bureaucracy, government policies, and political discourses.

As for internal obstacles or threats, in 2003 the survey results (20%) identified unhealthy churches that do not reproduce as the foremost threat. According to the 2020 survey, the foremost problem (10%) is lack of vision and understanding. Unhealthy churches also lack vision and perspective about missions, hence they are unhealthy.

With respect to future focus, In the 2003 survey 27% wanted to focus on reaching unreached social groups. In 2020, 13% of the older leaders wish to set goals and pursue the target, while 14% of the younger leaders want to be engaged in personal evangelism.

In the 2003 survey, 15% had a vision of a church for every people. In the 2020 survey, 11% of older respondents would like to have the goal of the ‘Whole Church taking the Whole Gospel to the Whole World’. Younger leaders, about 11%, want to see ‘Power, Presence and Peace of God for all’.

In 2003, about 22% of leaders wanted to have a place and opportunity to do missiological reflection. In 2020, leaders desire inspiration and prayer networks (11% general and 12% youth).

As for catalysts for faith, in the 2003 survey 55% felt that an invitation to receive Christ at a special place was the catalyst for their faith. In 2020,9% state that reading the Bible is the main catalyst for their faith while 7% who are below 25 years get inspiration from their parents.

Contemporary Challenges

There are many changes happening around the world at an accelerated speed. Technology has greatly enhanced human communication. At the same time, the world is vulnerable to pandemics like corona. India also faces several challenges that force the church to rethink its mission and to conceive relevant strategies.

Divisive ideology presents one challenge. Soutik Biswas writes: “Also India's shift to the right is not unique to India - it's happening with the new right in the Republican Party in the US, and the central ground of French and German politics has shifted rightwards. India's rightward shift is clearly part of a wider trend where the nature of nationalism is being redefined and cultural identity is being given renewed emphasis” (Biswas 2019). India has been polarised with ‘majority’ politics. This has led to a ‘trust deficit’ in the society. Minorities, Dalits, and Tribals are marginalized, and the majority resorts to victim blaming. Instead of love and compassion, hatred and bigotry dominate the mindscape of India.

Another challenge is downgraded business. India's GDP plunged by a record 23.9% in the April-June quarter of 2020.

> Analysts say millions of workers lost their jobs and businesses suffered due to the lockdown, but the government has refuted any large-scale unemployment. Even before the pandemic struck, the Indian economy was amid a slowdown as a crisis in the shadow bank sector hurt new loans and took a toll on consumption, which accounts for some 60 per cent of the country's GDP (PTI 2020).

This 2020 economic downturn has been a historical contraction, and it may become even worse in the coming days. Devyani Madaik writes: "This is considered to be the worst contraction in the history of the Indian economy. The majority of this is attributed to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic" (Madaik 2020).

Recovery from this situation is going to take a long time. In this context, there will be immense suffering as people will not be able to meet their basic needs.

Demoralized youth constitute yet another challenge. 'Demographic Dividend' (Thakur 2019) was a great advantage for India. With a huge young working population, India had potential to become a formidable economic power. This aspiration triggered youngsters who have seen their dreams shattered. Young adults with an engineering degree or MBA are trying to get manual labour jobs initiated by government of India for the poor in rural areas. Niha Masih and Joanna Slater write in the *Washington Post*: "During the nationwide lockdown, more than 120 million jobs were lost, most of them in the country's vast informal sector. Many of those workers have returned to work out of sheer necessity, often scraping by on far lower wages (Masih and Slater 2020). Economist Jayati Ghosh states that the 'Demographic Dividend' will turn to 'Demographic Disaster' if there are not enough jobs for young people (Sampath 2020). A youth bulge in population without a robust economy will create violence.

As for women in India, they face many obstacles. Violence against women is increasing day by day. Harassment, oppression, dowry deaths, discrimination, rapes, and molestation are daily news. "The Government of India acknowledges women's safety as a matter of concern and measures such as use of information technology for women's safety, introducing self-defence as a part of the school curriculum, making police stations women-friendly, setting up of all-women police stations, etc. have been initiated" (Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation 2016, 35). Laws alone cannot protect women. Only a transformation in the thought processes and paradigms of people and of government policies can bring transformation.

Deadly pollution and dying environment also present massive challenges. India faces the challenge of air, water, soil, and noise pollution. Many districts are perennially 'flood-prone'. Some rural areas experience drought year after year. Waste management is not properly done, simply left to individual efforts of 'rag-pickers' and others. Water scarcity is increasing as ground water-level has gone down. "India is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world, with hydrological (water-related) disasters being among the most frequent and having high morality and damage costs" (Bagai 2020). The government of India is having to spend about 20,00,00,00,000 rupees to clean the river Ganges, which Hindus consider as holy (PTI 2019).

Children in India are often denied opportunities for fruitful living. A nation is esteemed by the way the children are treated. Gender bias leave thousands of unborn girls disappear even before birth or soon after birth by criminal negligence. "India is the only large country where more girls die than boys, with the inverse sex ratio at birth being 900 girls born for every 1000 boys. Globally 7 per cent more boys die under the age of 5 compared to girls but in India, 11 per cent more girls die under the age of 5" (UNICEF n.d.). Furthermore, "In 2013, India was the top among 5 countries with the highest rate of child abuse" (Save the Children 2016). Children are also abused physically, verbally and sexually. Crime against children has increased in the recent years.

> Children from rural areas, slums and urban poor families, scheduled castes, tribal communities and other disadvantaged populations suffer from multiple deprivations

> related to poverty, malnutrition, access to quality health services, child marriage, poor school attendance, low learning outcomes, lack of sanitation facilities, hygiene, and access to improved water (UNICEF n.d.).

Another challenge is disappearing discourses and increasing violence. Ramachandra Guha states that India has remained as a democracy and united only as a miracle. He also states: "There was also an intolerance of criticism not only among the political class but also among various communities and linguistic groups" (IANS 2017). Mallika Bhagat writes:

> Why do we as a nation promote the culture of intolerance? Books have been banned; writers roughed up for progressive criticism. A myriad of social factors, coupled with political complexities have made the political scenario unaccepting of voices of dissent. Freedom of speech has limits which make it hard, nay, impossible to voice opinions without hurting sentiments (Bhagat 2017).

Intellectuals are branded as 'Urban Naxals' and also with an 'anti-national' tag. "Agnihotri defines an 'Urban Naxal' as an intellectual, influencer or activist who is an invisible enemy of India. He has expounded on this idea in his book titled *Urban Naxals: The Making of Buddha in a Traffic Jam,* released on 27 May, 2018" (Agarwal 20218). Rachel John writes that reading certain books worries many people about being branded as anti-national (John 2020).

Dingy governance is yet another challenge. Moral responsibility of government is not taken seriously. Bureaucratic corruption, judicial incompetence, lack of political will, and non-state actors doing unlawful activities are all banes on India. Ramachandra Guha writes:

> India is in danger of becoming an 'elections-only democracy'. Every election is free and fair. Yet other instruments of democratic accountability remain imperfect. Parliament meets rarely -- when it does, it resembles a wrestling pit more than the stately chamber of discussion it was meant to be. The criminal justice system is in a state of near-collapse. The state is weak and incompetent when providing basic services such as education and healthcare; but savage and brutal in its suppression of discontent (Guha 2018).

Poor infrastructure presents another challenge. Homelessness is a great problem. Sriram Mahadevan writes:

> The lack of available housing options, combined with limited income and minimal access to home finance for low income borrowers, means that millions of Indian households currently live in cramped, poorly constructed houses/slum areas/shanties. They lack access to a clean and healthy environment, with even basic amenities such as sanitation, clean water, sewage, waste management and electricity often absent (Mahadevan 2015).

Moreover, public transport is not adequate. There are traffic jams in all cities.

Regarding the challenge of "Digital India,"(Digital India is a flagship programme of the Government of India with a vision to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy.) there are three factors to be taken into account regarding the Digital revolution. First is uninterrupted electricity service; second is an effective Internet network; and third is affordable devices. Rahul Sapkal, Ashok Chikte, and Upamanyu Sengupta write:

> A nationwide survey of villages by the Ministry of Rural Development in 2017-18, showed that 16 percent of India's households received one to eight hours of electricity

> daily, 33 percent got 9-12 hours and only 47 percent received more than 12 hours of power supply daily. Erratic power supply only exacerbates the existing digital divide, which is evident across class, gender, region and place of residence (Sapkal, Chikte, and Sengupta 2020).

An editorial in *The Economic Times* warned about digital inequity: "This overwhelming shift, driven by necessity, from physical to electronic mode, has highlighted the digital divide in the country. There is a need to invest in digital capability — hardware, software, spectrum — to ensure that fight against Covid-19 does not exacerbate yet another form of inequity" (ET Editorial 2020). Kundan Pandey writes:

> Education is just one area that has highlighted the digital divide between India's rural and urban areas during the lockdown. The trend is evident everywhere — telemedicine, banking, e-commerce, e-governance, all of which became accessible only via internet during the lockdown. The divide exists despite the rise in the number of wireless subscribers in India over the past few years (Pandey 2020).

Digital defeat? Digital India is sharply divided. Many teenagers have committed suicide, because they could not afford smart phones and are missing online classes.

Challenges Create Opportunities

In mission we cannot simply observe challenges and rest. Indeed, we are called to act. To act, we need to look with new eyes or a new perspective. Challenges are then seen as God-given opportunities for mission. Providing food for five thousand plus was a challenge, but it was also an opportunity for a boy to be generous and God to miraculously multiply resources (Matthew 14:13-21). A person was born blind so that the 'glory of God' could be revealed (John 9:3). Friends of the person paralyzed looked at obstruction through horizontal entrances as a challenge and created a way from the roof for their friend to reach Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 5:17-26).

There are, in reality, several strategic ideas for ministry in India. Strategic ministry of chaplains in hospitals, army, and industries in the history of mission could not be overestimated. Today, the IT sector needs chaplains as does the hospitality industry. Seminaries should train personnel to be 'online chaplains'**.**

Today India needs a great army of counsellors. Schools, colleges, and other educational institutions are strategic mission areas, searching for counsellors. "The Madras High Court has directed Tamil Nadu government to consider creating trained full-time counsellors in schools as a long-time measure" (PTI 2016). In West Bengal also, the Calcutta High Court ordered appointment of counsellors in all one hundred thousand schools, because of increasing child sexual abuse (Bora 2018). This need is an open door for the churches to mobilize their young people to get into educational institutions.

Content creators are also strategic. The world of media has changed, mainly because of the digital revolution. Social media has opened immense opportunities for innovative communication. With a good smart phone and access to a stable network, any individual could create viable content for a global audience. In this context, young Christians should be encouraged to engage media. "For many, WhatsApp, is the first (and preferred) channel of communication and transmission of information of all kinds. As many as one out of three voters in India is reportedly using the platform" (Sam and Thakurta 2019, 32).

There is also a need for godly men and women to champion various causes, be they children's rights, Women of Worth, education for all, equality for all, or various other

matters. Christian advocates and awareness creators can serve in such areas of social life as drug addiction, digital addiction, and pornography. Dignified discourse, courteous behaviour, public hygiene, traffic sense, and safe environments for woman are just some of the other causes that should be promoted by disciples of the Lord to enhance inherent goodness in the society.

There is also a need for creative methods in evangelism, disciple making, leadership development, and mentoring emerging leaders. Fun, food and fellowship is a successful strategy developed by some youth groups. Similar creative methods are urgently needed.

In the past, wars and lack of medical development created many destitute orphans. Children's home were run by Christians to provide care and support. Today, other kinds of marginalized needing Christians' attention include unwed mothers, single mothers, abandoned elderly, alcoholic fathers, and abandoned children.

The Church in India must raise change-agents to transform society. William Carey fought against Sati, Amy Carmichael fought against the *Devadasi* system (Temple slave prostitution), and Pandit Rama Bai fought against child marriage. New social reformers and community transforming agents are needed.

Challenge and Conclusion

Since its beginning two millennia ago, the Church in India has survived regular attempted attacks of compromise (syncretism), persecution, exile, and even annihilation. Even so, the Church has actually grown stronger and with great dynamism. With a clear and sharp vision, strategies to match myriad challenges, a steward mindset, a servant attitude, and passion for the relevance of the gospel in all walks of life, the Indian Church will greatly serve the great nation of India to make it even greater through incorporating biblical values into the national fabric and ethos.

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A Relational Aid to Multicultural Fields: Cultural Metacognition

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Abstract

One reason to learn the cultural backgrounds of individuals on a multicultural field is the fact that the physical, neuronal pathways in the brain underlie cultural differences among the peoples of the world. Cultural metacognition includes unconscious,[1] in-the-moment monitoring and control of cognition, as well as conscious reflective reasoning and planning. It can enable appropriate application of cultural information and can be developed through reflection on intercultural encounters. Metacognitive experiences can become the starting point of a learning cycle centered on fieldmates. The article classifies cultural metacognition as a relational activity because it can help fieldmates see each other for who they are.

Key Words: cultural metacognition, culture, metacognition, mindful, multicultural teams

Introduction

Serving on a multicultural field is first and last a relational essay. Good relationships, like a well-written essay, have multiple drafts behind them. Jesus blended a strong emphasis on relationships with a consistent focus on what He was sent to do, so we know it is possible to combine the two. Yet in practice it can be challenging to follow His example.

Metacognition is a mental skill, useful in both the relational and task sides of ministry. A simple definition of metacognition is thinking about thinking. Examples of cognition are solving mundane addition and multiplication problems and the writing of this article. If you have ever said, "We can think about this in more than one way," you have used metacognition. If, when you finished taking a test in school, you had a sense of how well or poorly you did on it, then you experienced metacognition. If in the act of thinking or doing you realized you made a mistake, it was metacognition that gave you that sense of mistakenness.

It was only five years ago that I first learned that there was a thing called metacognition. I investigated it as a prelude to creating an intercultural seminar for those who serve on multicultural fields (MCF). As I read about metacognition, I realized I had been practicing it for a long time. Learning the labels for its components enabled me to identify when I had been experiencing and using metacognition before I became a missionary, while I served as a missionary in Uganda, Ukraine, and Russia, and while I have been serving in missions organizations in the U.S.

The title of this article includes multicultural "fields," not "teams." The metaphor field is preferable because the metaphor team is an U.S.-American metaphor, when by definition a MCF *is not* and *cannot* be an American group. Moreover, using the metaphor team privileges an American conception of the metaphor above how fieldmates from the Global South may conceive of it. Not using the metaphor team is a step towards U.S.-Americans giving up power over the way Global South intercultural servants talk and think about their fields of service. This article defines a MCF as one where at least three cultures are represented among members.

This article seeks to apply the literature on metacognition – which is focused on learning primarily though not exclusively, in formal educational settings – to learning about the cultural and social influences on MCF members. Instead of discussing how metacognition may guide the learning of a subject such as science or history, this article addresses MCF members as subjects directing their learning of fieldmates. MCF members are not objects of study but siblings in Christ, partners in intercultural ministry. As a MCF is a special kind of Christian community, the members are to manifest the presence of the Spirit through God-honoring relationships that are a witness to the world (cf. John 13:35; Col. 3:12-17).

Becoming familiar with the cultural backgrounds of fieldmates can be fostered by the practice of cultural metacognition (CM), which enables reflection "on cultural assumptions in order to prepare for, adapt to, and learn from intercultural interactions" (Chua, Morris, and Mor 2012, 2). Those who are high in CM tend to learn new cultural norms faster (Morris, Savani, and Fincher 2019, 58) Learning about fellow MCF members is a way to honor and respect their cultural backgrounds, a way to show the value of each individual as she is.

Given the number of times the word "cultural" has already appeared and will appear in this article – instead of simply presuming that readers agree that learning about the cultural backgrounds of fieldmates matters – the following subsection reports briefly on what cognitive neuroscientists have been learning about the influence of culture or the social environment on the brain. In short, culture sculpts the brain (Goh and Park 2009; Park and Huang 2010).

Culture Sculpts the Brain

The socio-cultural environment of babies and children shapes the wiring or microstructure of their brains. As Peter Hanenberg (2018) writes, "Different cultural practices lead to different structures in the brain – including size and connectivity of certain cerebral regions" (13). Barrett (2018) notes, "The human brain is a cultural artifact. We do not load culture into a virgin brain like software loading into a computer; rather, culture helps to wire the brain. Brains then become carriers of culture, helping to create and perpetuate it" (144). Although the macrostructure of the brain is indeed the same for all humans, the microstructure is different, a product of individuals' backgrounds. Given the inherent diversity of a MCF, the brain circuits of each member will be different at the micro level, making it harder to establish and maintain healthy interpersonal relationships. Cultural differences among fieldmates are not merely surface-level behavioral superficialities but have corresponding neural substrates.

About 45 years ago scientists began to learn that the adult brain can extend and strengthen existing brain circuits, as well as grow new brain cells, specifically neurons, in response to a variety of influences external to an individual (Fuchs and Flügge 2014). The ability of the brain to grow new cells and create new brain circuits is called neuroplasticity. Thanks to our God-endowed neuroplasticity, no one is locked into the cultural default settings of a home culture. Individuals can consciously and deliberately modify cultural tendencies learned in a home culture. No one of any cultural background can legitimately claim, "This is how God made me and I cannot change." Part of learning about intercultural fieldmates is identifying the multiple cultural influences on each individual. Cultural metacognition can play a key role in facilitating that learning process for the purpose of improving relationships among fellow MCF members.

Cultural Knowledge

While factors such as personality are major forces influencing behavior, also significant are situational context and cultural influences. Indeed, "the power of situational context to affect behavior comes mostly from culture, because cultures give social contexts important meanings, and it is these meanings that drive behavior" (Matsumoto and Juang 2013, 28).

An incomplete list of cultural aspects that may be potentially important for understanding the communication habits of individual fieldmates follows. In actuality, "we largely decode the message [received] based primarily on nonverbal cues such as facial expressions, paralinguistic tone of voice, and bodily postures and gestures" (Ting-Toomey and Dorjee 2019, 261). It follows that a new MCF member should first and last pay close attention to the nonverbal communicative behaviors of fieldmates, for it is here that relational misunderstandings born of misinterpretation may begin. In contrast, U.S.-Americans usually focus first on verbal communication habits. These habits include preferences for high context or low context communication, a direct or indirect interaction style, a person-oriented or status-oriented style, high or low power distance, and an individual's concept of and orientation to time (Thatcher 2012, 65; Ting-Toomey and Dorjee 2019, 180-194).

Even so, possessing cultural information is not the same as having cultural knowledge. Knowledge involves the application of information (Brackett 2013; Vora 2015). A simple Internet search may supply a wealth of cultural information and not one little bit of cultural knowledge. Why? Because the social setting in a how-to video (who the specific individuals in the video are, where they are located spatially and in time, their ages, their home cultures, personal histories, etc.) is unlikely to be the same as the social settings on your MCF. Information becomes knowledge when you know how to use it appropriately in specific social contexts.

A related construct is cultural intelligence. "Specific content knowledge of cultures is the foundation of cultural intelligence because it forms the basis for comprehending and decoding the behavior of others and ourselves" (Thomas et al. 2008, 128). The behavior of individuals of other cultural backgrounds may be different from one's own in part because their assumptions of what constitutes appropriate behavior may be different. Monocultural individuals lacking cultural intelligence have a particularly strong tendency to decode or interpret the behavior of individuals of other cultures based on the learned preferences from their own cultural backgrounds. Still more problematic is those individuals' tendency to regard their interpretations to be 100% accurate. The automaticity of an interpretation may be reckoned as "proof" that one's interpretation is *right*.

Misinterpretation of what a fieldmate's communication habits mean *to him* can be the seed from which interpersonal conflict on a MCF may sprout. Assuming it is known that resolving misunderstandings and conflict involve exploring possible underlying causes, CM can suggest possibilities of what those underlying causes may be. Some form of dialog with a fieldmate would then be necessary to confirm what may be its actual cause(s). Then it may be possible to imagine a resolution to it. Similarly, when a social context changes – perhaps individuals of other cultural backgrounds join the conversation – CM can offer a reminder that one may need to alter one's manner of speaking to accommodate the cultural assumptions of those who just arrived. CM can also offer suggestions for possible matches between what is already known about the individuals and one's store of cultural information. Cultural metacognition is *the* skill

that enables appropriate application of information *to establish and maintain healthy relationships* on a MCF (Thomas et al. 2008, 131, 135).

Mindless Living

Individuals regardless of cultural background cognitively process social cues automatically (Fernandez-Duque, Baird, and Posner 2000, 289; Ginot 2017, 5; Glaser and Kihlstrom 2005, 189). As an individual moves from one social setting to another in a home culture, she automatically knows the words to say, in a certain tone of voice, with the right kind and amount of emotion, accompanied by appropriate body postures and facial expressions. This individual also has implicit expectations of how others ought to respond. The most comfortable, easiest, and least tiring action is to relate mindlessly. That is, we live much of each day on autopilot.

On a MCF the automatic, mindless action or response that was appropriate back home may be transformed into a social gaffe that may be mildly to very offensive to fieldmates of other cultural backgrounds (Thomas et al. 2008, 125). The solution is to turn off autopilot and live your life mindfully until appropriate ways of relating and communicating on a MCF become automatic (Thomas et al. 2008, 132). Cultural metacognition can help identify actions that build and support better relationships among fieldmates.

Hasty Value Judgments and the Bible

As recorded in John 7:14-24, Jesus was teaching in the temple courts during the Feast of Tabernacles. Opinions about Him were divided, some saying He was a good man and others saying He deceived people (v. 13). Jesus concluded His defense first by asking a question (v. 23) and then by making a statement, "Stop judging by appearances, and make a right judgment" (NIV, v. 24). The New Living Translation puts His statement positively: "Look beneath the surface so you can judge correctly." What a fieldmate says or does may strike you the wrong way. It may require some investigation to find out if you understood accurately what she intended to communicate.

The Book of Deuteronomy lays down standards for the investigation of crimes. When an accusation was made against an individual, a judge was supposed "to inquire, probe and investigate it thoroughly" (Deut. 13:14). Also, a lone witness was "not enough to convict a man accused of any crime or offense he may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses" (Deut. 19:15). Acting on the basis of your own value judgment of a fieldmate as valid, based only on a superficial understanding of her, would be hasty.

John 9 records the story of a man born blind whom Jesus healed. The Pharisees investigated the incident, talking to the formerly blind man twice (vv. 13-34). Yet they did not care what the facts of the matter were, that the man who could see really had been healed by Jesus. The Pharisees lacked spiritual perception, and that lack was willful (vv. 40-41).

The Pharisees were not willing to follow wherever the evidence might lead because to do so would overturn certain of their basic beliefs. They were so deeply invested in what they knew *must* be true they refused to accept what was real. Similarly, trusting your gut reaction to what a fieldmate said or did even in the face of evidence that your gut got it wrong would not be praiseworthy. Jesus wants us "to look carefully and to see things for what they really are or what they truly signify" (e.g. Mark 8:17-18) (Collicutt 2015, 34).

The Wisdom Literature calls us to seek wisdom for everyday living that is a result of observation and reflection (Prov. 24:30; Eccl. 4:1; 8:9). A pair of proverbs invite one to reflect on when to answer a fool and when to remain silent (Prov. 26:4-5). Regarding God's wisdom, the author of a commentary on the Book of James writes that "because of the identification of wisdom with God's Spirit, the claims to be wise, to have God's wisdom, and to be filled with the Spirit were virtually identical" (Davids 1982, 152). Reflecting on wisdom as characterized in James 3:13-18 and connecting that reflection to mindless living may reveal relational habits that need to be modified.

Living and serving mindlessly on a MCF will likely lead to hasty, premature, and inaccurate value judgments of fieldmates. A caring and wise fieldmate will check information for accuracy, take time to observe, and reflect in order to see past superficialities. Metacognitive skill can aid spiritual perception of fieldmates.

Mindfulness

A difficulty of discussing mindfulness is that there is no agreement on what it means, with some emphasizing its source in Buddhism and a few expanding its meaning to implicitly include metacognition. In this article, a minimalist stance is taken, describing it as "paying attention on purpose," choosing to be consciously aware in the present moment (Van der Horst and Albertyn 2018, 5).

Paying attention to what? To one's inner world of thoughts, emotions, and bodily sensations, including taking note of *metacognitive experiences* (see the ensuing section) as they occur. A mindful MCF member also pays attention to the immediate social and physical setting in which she finds herself, observing the nonverbal and verbal communication behaviors of the individuals in her immediate vicinity (Thomas et al. 2008, 131). Such attention is mindfulness and cultural metacognition for the sake of God-honoring relationships on a MCF.

To be mindful is a conscious choice and a conscious activity. Sustaining mindfulness over longer stretches of time can be physically and emotionally draining.

Cultural Metacognition

Staying aware moment-by-moment makes it more likely that an intercultural missionary will notice unexpected or unusual things said and done by fellow MCF members. Such novel situations are times when you cannot or should not engage in routine actions and are instances when cultural metacognition (CM) can help you improvise in the moment. In short, the practice of CM can help you cope better in just about every encounter and situation when you first join a MCF (Fernandez-Duque, Baird, and Posner 2000, 289). Coping well of course makes you feel better. Coping well aided by CM is also socially beneficial for a whole MCF.

If you pay attention to the emotions you are experiencing in novel situations you may note a feeling of surprise and/or confusion. It is likely one or both of them are metacognitive experiences (ME) (Veenman 2001, 213). Here is one illustration of how ME occur:

> Imagine that you come from a culture that values direct, straightforward communication….. Now imagine that the individual with whom you are communicating comes from a culture that values indirect communication and the avoidance of public embarrassment…. Now, consider that neither of you is sufficiently knowledgeable to

> adapt your communication style to suit the other's culture. The most likely result of this scenario is that you will ask a direct question and get what you perceive as an unsatisfactory result. At this point you are likely to experience an emotional reaction – discomfort, perplexity, offense, or surprise (Nardon and Steers 2008, 51).

What this illustration calls an emotional reaction is in fact a ME. A ME is a message from the nonconscious mind formulated as an emotion that something needs to be investigated. There is information about your conversation partner which when understood, reflected on, and used appropriately may facilitate better understanding and communication that can contribute to better relationships (Efklides 2006, 5).

When I first read the article by Efklides in March 2015, I realized I had been having and paying attention to MEs for decades. Having a label for what I had been experiencing brought into focus what was happening in my mind. It also boosted my confidence in my metacognitive judgments or decisions that grew out of MEs. A ME does not tell me what I am missing in an encounter, only that missing something I am. The two feelings I usually get as a ME are either surprise or unease.

In August 2014 (one year earlier), I returned to Uganda for the first time in 21 years, having lived and served there for eight years. During those years I lead the founding of a Bible College for training pastors. As we drove to the college an African in the car talked on the phone with the college's African director. He asked about our estimated arrival time and what our dinner plans were for the evening. We also learned there would be a program attended by many at the college the next day, after which we would all have a late lunch together.

I knew from years of personal experience that hospitality was highly valued among Bakonjo, the people I served and served with. So then, there was no question they would provide dinner for us. Yet the African director, with whom I served side by side for years, asked about our dinner plans? His question did not make sense, and I felt vaguely uneasy. I was having a ME. Then in astonishment I exclaimed "Samweli (not his real name) is asking us *not* to have dinner at the Bible College tonight!" Immediately the Africans in the car had whole body reactions just as I had mine a moment before. When we called Samweli back to offer to eat dinner in a restaurant instead of at the Bible College, he offered the culturally unusual explanation of wanting to spare the women cooks of having to fix dinner for us while still have to make lunch the following day for a very large group. (It is also worth noting that this incident illustrates that choosing well relationally is also good for ministry.)

CM includes in-the-moment monitoring of cognition and error checking of it (Morris, Savani, and Fincher 2019, 48). While at the time I did not yet have the CM label, my cultural metacognitive monitoring detected what might be a cognitive error, or at least an anomalous question. I then became consciously aware of how I felt, which was a ME. Next bloomed in my conscious mind the thought that Samweli was asking us not to eat at the college that evening. What happened in between my ME and my realization of what Samweli was really asking?

CM also includes nonconscious control of cognition (Efklides 2006, 11; Veenman 2013, 201). As I was having a ME, my cultural metacognitive ability *on its own initiative* directed my nonconscious thinking, searching my cultural knowledge for an explanation of Samweli's incongruous question. The same ability offered a likely explanation for his strange question, of which I then became consciously aware (Kudesia 2019, 412). This nonconscious control of

cognition can offer behavioral solutions to new or unusual events as they unfold (Efklides 2006, 11; Klafehn, Li, and Chiu 2013, 967). A new MCF member should expect to experience many new and disorienting intercultural encounters that leave one mystified about how to behave or respond. CM can help identify how to behave appropriately so that one's behavior fosters better relationships with MCF members instead of hindering them.

Note that my cultural metacognitive ability could not have identified Samweli's bizarre question as an instance of indirect speech if I had not possessed that piece of cultural knowledge. Cultural information is as foundational to the operation of CM as it is to cultural intelligence. Goryunova (2020) relates outstanding case studies of CM in action.

In addition to in-the-moment nonconscious monitoring and control of nonconscious thinking, CM also includes conscious reflective reasoning and planning (Morris, Savani, and Fincher 2019, 48, 63).

A ME can become a starting point for an experiential learning cycle (ELC). An ELC has four parts: Concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. As a learning *cycle*, active experimentation proceeds back to concrete experience (Kolb 2020; Nardon and Steers 2008, 50-52; Ng, Van Dyne, and Ang 2009m 512-513; Van der Horst and Albertyn 2018). Using the ELC is a helpful approach to learning contextually-relevant cultural information as needed about fieldmates on a MCF. CM can initiate and guide an ELC centered on fieldmates for relationship-building purposes on a MCF.

Developing Cultural Metacognition

The following description fits one of my former ministry colleagues: "there are … adults, who are overconfident in their response although they are totally ignorant of a topic. This overestimation of their knowledge or of their abilities suggests a lack of metacognitive awareness of their deficits in knowledge" (Efklides 2006, 11). My former colleague may have been either naturally low in metacognition (Fleming 2014, 34; Veenman 2001, 210; Wokke, Cleermans, and Ridderinkhof 2017, 787) or had not tuned or calibrated her MEs (Efklides 2006, 11). Perhaps as a young person she implicitly concluded that her metacognitive sense was unreliable and stopped listening to it.

How to help an individual who has little or no sense of how little cultural information she knows? *Somehow, that person's unconscious mind needs to be informed of what it does not know* (Serra and Metcalfe 2009, 20). Such a process occurs indirectly by the individual making a list of the categories of cultural information known poorly or not at all. As noted earlier, a person's metacognitive sense is always monitoring or "listening in" on his conscious thinking.

Conscious reflection on past intercultural interactions, all the while looking for lessons to apply to future encounters on a MCF, is the beginning point for developing CM (Chua, Morris, and Mor 2012, 25). This constructive process applies both to individuals whose metacognition works well in others spheres of life and to those whose metacognition is underdeveloped. Gibbs's six-part Reflective Cycle offers plenty of detailed guidance for reflection (The University of Edinburgh 2019).

The individual who is either naturally low in metacognition and/or never learned to tune her metacognitive sense is the most difficult to help. Merely becoming more aware of what is felt during an intercultural encounter is a first step. An excellent article on metacognitive experiences

points out that they are "highly variable. As a consequence, the information they convey … may go unnoticed or, even, be misinterpreted. This implies that one has to 'learn' the meaning of a ME and understand the conditions that give rise to them" (Efklides 2006, 11). The process of learning what a ME means or indicates is called tuning. A mistaken interpretation of a ME can be a learning moment when the reason why it was mistaken is identified.

Concluding Comments

Seeking to relate to other MCF members according to one's own familiar social forms of interaction is likely to produce misunderstandings and hurt feelings, if not damaged relationships. CM provides mental skills that can be employed to help fieldmates see each other as they really are for the purpose of relating according to Biblical love and wisdom.

Previously I referred to a former ministry colleague who seemed unaware of the limits of her knowledge. During my years of service with her, what I remember most strongly in meeting after meeting was a sense of the holes in *my* knowledge. As a proposal was explained and discussed, what came through to me was what I did not know. These realizations were metacognition at work in me in the moment, monitoring my thinking, identifying the limits of what I knew, and occasionally suggesting strategies to find out what we all needed to know. Although my comments were well-intentioned, I eventually realized they were not welcome. I was overly focused on the task at hand and too little focused on people.

Service on a MCF is an incredibly complex undertaking, particularly in terms of interpersonal relationships in tandem with ministry tasks. The importance of paying attention first to nonverbal communication habits was noted earlier. What I learned about nonverbals and could use in practice while living and serving in other cultures I learned intuitively through mimicry. That was fine as far as it went, but my learning in that area did not go nearly far enough. I needed to have consciously reflected on what I did not know, then consciously decided how to acquire the needed information in order to teach my unconscious mind about nonverbals, so that my metacognitive sense could have helped me in this area.

A common source of interpersonal problems on a MCF is the misinterpretation of each other's nonverbal communication. As an intercultural missionary, your metacognitive sense cannot help you unless you learn to pay attention when it speaks or until you teach it what it needs to know. The practice of CM can enhance interpersonal relationships and Kingdom ministry on a MCF.

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[1] Some readers may be puzzled by the reference to "unconscious" instead of "subconscious" monitoring and control of cognition. As a term, the meaning of "subconscious" is often unclear. Freud condemned the use of the term. Psychology uniformly refers to the "unconscious." The sentence in the article refers to cultural metacognition as part of the unconscious mind, which works in tandem with the conscious mind.

An Investigation of the Social Identity of Muslim Background Believers (MBBs) in Bangladesh in Light of the Set Theory, Critical Contextualization, and Self-Theologizing Teachings of Paul Hiebert (Part II)[1]

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Abstract

This two-part article investigates the social identity of Muslim Background Believers (MBBs) in Bangladesh. In Part I (Yun 2020), the author narrates the historical context of MBBs in Bangladesh up to the present day with a particular emphasis on four MBB social identity groups in Bangladesh taken from Tim Green's writings: Christian, *Isai*, *Isai* Muslim, and Muslim. Through using the qualitative case study method, the author selected three MBBs whose cases provide significant representation across each social identity. He deals with questions in three areas: new social identity formation, social integration, and four-self dynamics in Bangladeshi *Jamaat* (house church or a small gathering of MBBs). Each subject interacts with Paul Hiebert's three well-known theories: Set theory, Critical contextualization, and Self-theologizing. Part II continues this interaction with Hiebert. Through using simple figures and tables, the author tries to explain and incorporate various viewpoints of contextualization in a real context. The findings and implications of this research call for understanding and cooperation between each social identity group and between foreigners and Bangladeshis to foster a healthier future for the MBB community in Bangladesh.

Key Words: contextualization, insider movements, MBBs (Muslim Born Believers), Paul Hiebert's theories, social identity

Research Setting and Three Case Interviews: Interacting with Paul Hiebert (cont.)

Social Integration with the majority and viewpoints of several key concepts like Isa (Bible) and the Qur'an (Muhammad) with Paul Hiebert's Critical Contextualization (RQ 2)

These three people mentioned below (Table 3) have different degrees of participation with the

	Hasan	Ahmed	Rana
Characteristic	Clear Christian identity of children, least relationship with Muslims	Participation in Muslim activities with reinterpretation and opportunity	Difference between intention and obligation. Searching for contentment

Table 3. Three Cases of Social Integration of MBBs (full version in Appendix C)

majority of Muslims and different views of key concepts. Hasan has a clear Christian identity and can legally hold a Christmas service inviting MBB friends and police. He has a view of Jesus as

[1] Part I was published in July 2020 and can be found at http://ojs.globalmissiology.org/index.php/english/article/view/2373.

the spiritual Son of God and Muhammad as a guide toward the *Kitab* (Holy Books) and a warner. Ahmed has no problems with participating in Muslim activities such as *Namaz* for prayer (without saying the second part of *Shahada*) and *Qurbani* for remembering Abraham's sacrifice and as an opportunity to share the gospel. He believes in Jesus as his savior, and he also believes in Muhammad as a prophet. When he teaches his children, he focuses more on the Bible and the savior *Isa* (Jesus) than the Qur'an. Rana has faced trouble from his Muslim wife and Muslim mother but decided to raise his child as a Christian schoolboy. Marriage is one of the most difficult situations single MBBs are facing because of the complication of finding a believing spouse while being subordinate to their parents (Green 2012; Grant 2015; Meyer 2015). As for calling himself a "Muslim," Rana may agree if the need arises, but at heart he feels guilty in doing so.

Paul Hiebert's "Critical Contextualization" helps decide whether a belief or practice is contextualization or syncretism. He suggests four steps and three checkpoints for critical contextualization. Rather than rejecting or accepting old customs, he alternatively suggests a four-step linear process (Hiebert 1984, 290-292; Cathcart 2009, 210):

1. Exegesis of culture: Gathering information about the old customs;
2. Exegesis of Scripture: Studying biblical teaching about the old;
3. Evaluation of the two: Critically interacting between the two;
4. Application of the new: Creating contextualized practice.

In this process, Hiebert argues first that the believing community has to have the power to discern the interaction between their contextual reality and normative truth beyond missionaries' and pastors' judgment (290). Second, Hiebert adds three checkpoints to create a balance between local initiative and universal church that avoids excessive contextualization: the Bible, the Holy Spirit, and a "discerning community" (293). Scott Moreau defines syncretism as "the replacement or dilution of the essential truths of the gospel through the incorporation of non-Christian elements" (Moreau 2000, 924). He highly values the role of the indigenous community in determining whether or not certain beliefs or practices are syncretistic. Moreau states, "The local community must be empowered to biblically evaluate their practices and teachings. Missionaries must learn to trust that indigenous peoples are able to discern God's leading and trust God to develop and maintain biblically founded and culturally relevant Faith and Praxis in each local context" (Moreau 2000, 924).

In his article "Contextualization without Syncretism," after asserting that "biblical Christianity is a worldview not a culture," Rick Brown asserts that "syncretism (as commonly understood) is a parameter of worldview, whereas contextualization is a parameter of enculturation" (Brown 2006, 132-133). He argues that all C1 to C6 categories have some syncretistic elements. Specifically regarding the much discussed C5 category, Brown not only thinks that C5 does not fall into syncretism, but he also considers that it is an effective and "well-contextualized" missional movement (Brown 2006, 133). Also, Rebecca Lewis, as a supporter of the movement, reviews similar movements in history and notes four possible pitfalls:

1. Inadequate discipleship or insufficient access to Scripture can lead to syncretism.
2. Attachment to community customs and identity can lead to syncretism and/or conflict with community leaders.
3. Believers can be pressured to act against their conscience.
4. Christian leaders can undermine a movement, even unintentionally (Lewis 2010).

Her points need to be addressed by insiders, mission practitioners, and Christian leaders worldwide in order to avoid falling into syncretism.

In the situation of Bangladeshi MBBs, who should decide whether certain practices are syncretistic or biblical? How can foreign and local practitioners do an exegesis of the cultural/religious activities and Scripture? Who has the authority to evaluate whether the practices are permissible or not? How can Christians develop new contextualized practices that are rooted both in Bangladeshi soil and in a proper understanding of Scripture? Paul Hiebert's observations above suggest that indigenous people are better positioned than cultural outsiders to produce critically contextualized faith and practice.

Over the past two decades there have been many conflicts over contextualization differences among MBBs. In Bangladesh, while phenomenologically, as described earlier, there are the four social identity groups Christian, *Isai, Isai* Muslim, and Muslim, in actuality only two paradigms exist: the "right (moderate) side" and the "left (radical/in) side." So, for example, Isai Fellowship in Bangladesh (IFB), one of "the right-side" networks in Bangladesh, does not allow the "left side" paradigm because they think the insider movement in Bangladesh confuses both Muslims and Christians, rather than engaging Muslims in biblically sound evangelism (Palash 2014).

Leonard N. Bartlotti, who was a long-term worker in a sensitive context, has responded to the growing concern about the two different paradigms with his "lens" idea (Bartlotti 2013, 150). Using Bartlotti's nine lenses, this article introduces five paradigms and adds four accompanying categories for clarity (Table 4; detailed in Appendix E). The resulting conglomerate table can explain much about why diverse MBBs take different approaches to their social identity.

In Figure 5, Ahmed (position A) has a more context-based theological view and reinterpreted faith in *Isa* by his own judgment of Muslim activities. Hasan (B), however, tries to keep within his Christian/*Isai* boundary for securing freedom for Christians' religious activities. Rana (C) migrates between the two, depending on his context. Charles Kraft's view of disconnection between form and meaning can lead to insider missiology, while Hiebert's view of the closeness between the two is generally agreed upon in moderate evangelical circles (Moreau 2012, 152-153).

In terms of the relationship between religion and culture, while C's position separates religion from culture, A's position situates them close together. Although the concept of self-theologizing has been advocated by Paul Hiebert, he emphasizes a more balanced view between local initiative and the "check of the international community of churches" (Hiebert 1988, 394) than Kraft's emphasis on subjectivity and openness (Kraft 1996; Moreau 2012, 82-89; 154-155). It is helpful to understand the reality of the two sides of social identity of Bangladeshi MBBs with a visual diagram (Figure 5) in connection with Bartlotti's approach to the two different paradigms (Table 4).

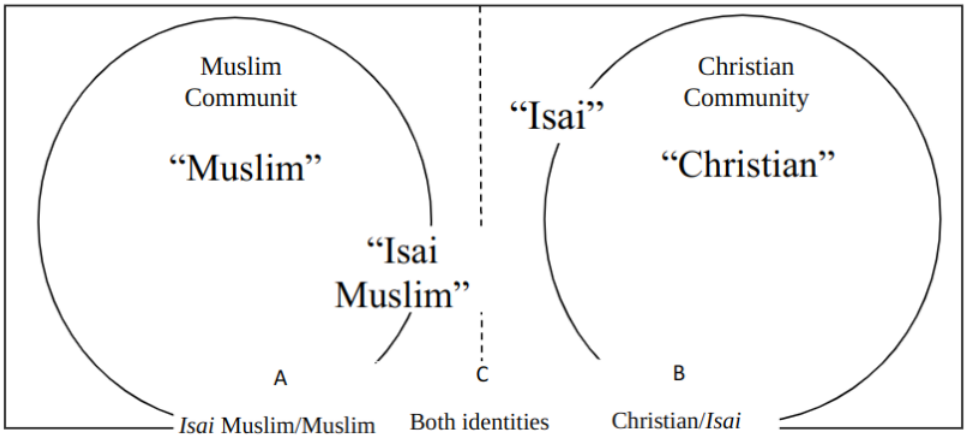

Figure 5. Visual Presentation of Two Sides of MBBs' Social Identity in Bangladesh

Radical (high) Contextualization Left side (Muslim/*Isai* Muslim)	Two Theological Lenses by the author (Yun)	Moderate (low) Contextualization Right side (Christian/*Isai*)
Bartlotti's Five Lenses		
Simple church, Jesus emphasis	Ecclesiology	Sacraments, Pauline Emphasis
Local (contextual) theologies	Doing Theology	Western theological tradition
Continuity, Fulfillment	Other Religions	Discontinuity, Exclusivism
"islams" (lower case, plural)	Islam	"Islam," Historically essentialized
Centered Set/Moving toward Christ	Conversion-Initiation	Bounded Set/Clear identity markers
This Article's Four Additional Categories		
Charles Kraft. "Meaning Disconnected from Form and Message"	Teacher	Paul Hiebert. "Meaning Corresponding to Form and Message" (Moreau 2012, 88)
Religion and culture are closely related	Religion and Culture	Religion and culture are different
Self-Theologizing	Emphasis	Balance Self-theologizing and Metatheology
Ahmed	Case figure	Hasan, Rana (mainly)

Table 4. Summarized two paradigms of contextualization through various lenses

Social Identity with collective level-Four Self Issue (Self-propagating, Self-supporting, Self-governing, and Self-theologizing) with Paul Hiebert's The Fourth Self (RQ 3)

The necessity of four-self principles is generally agreed upon by all three

	Hasan	Ahmed	Rana
Characteristic	*Jamaat* in his house. Trying to be self-dependent in all four areas and tries to reach out to the majority with the *Isai* Muslim approach.	Started several *Jamaats* in different areas. Trying to be self-dependent, welcomes cooperation for training. Teaching how to use the Qur'an to leaders	His village *Jamaat* always needs him, lack of four-self areas. His city *Jamaat* depends more on the foreign initiative in terms of self-supporting and governing.

Table 5. Three Cases of Social Identity with Collective Level-Four Self

respondents (Table 5). Hasan's *Jamaat* tries to be self-dependent in the four areas of reaching out to neighbors, finances, organizing leadership programs, and making disciples of MBBs in various social identity positions. Ahmed's *Jamaat* is also governed by independent principles concerning sharing *Isa* through the Qur'an and then the *Kitab*, managing his living and working expenses on his own, and teaching his disciples to teach others. The two *Jamaats* mentioned above also have shortages, in the eyes of foreigners, of funding and of teaching. Even so, both show good examples of making progress in applying the four-self dynamics. Rana's two *Jamaats* are good examples of typical MBBs' *Jamaats*. For his rural *Jamaat*, it is hard to find a proper leader for it, therefore the members are passive and reluctant to gather, financially contribute, and teach. There is little opportunity or energy towards applying the four-self idea to their *Jamaat*. For his urban *Jamaat*, there are active disciples of *Isa* in terms of regular gathering, offering, sharing, and teaching by foreign and Bangladeshi believers. However, once the NGO work finishes and/or Bangladeshis lose their jobs, this *Jamaat* will most likely change, at least to some extent.

From the beginning of his article "The Fourth Self," Hiebert examines historically how Anderson and Venn' three-self principle has been applied. Concerning self-propagation, indigenous young churches pioneered by foreign missionaries have not been likely to reach their neighbors through local believers' efforts and money. Instead, local churches naturally have considered evangelism and mission work to be the missionaries' responsibility (Hiebert 1988, 194). Anderson and Venn's argument that local churches have to be involved with evangelistic work and missions was generally accepted, although in actuality local churches have not been able to follow the way missionaries worked, particularly their expensive evangelistic projects and social work that required much money. "Some of these they [the local churches] closed, and some they continued to operate on levels more in line with their financial abilities" (Hiebert 1988, 195). Self-governance raised more debate. Local churches began to require missionaries to turn over leadership roles, but it has not been easy for missionaries, who have seen local leaders as immature, to transfer their ecclesiastical authority to local believers (Hiebert 1988, 194-195).

Through the history of Bangladeshi churches, such examples of non-self-propagating and non-self-funding churches have been common. In more than 200 years of history of Bangladeshi Protestant churches, there have been many dependency stories for several reasons: a huge gap between foreigners' economic level and that of local believers, hierarchical structures from a denomination's (or foreign mission's) headquarters imposed on local churches, and patron-client relationships (Jennings 2007, 57). For MBBs, it is also difficult for them to throw off strong historical habits of a dependent culture of Bangladeshi Christians. Even if some MBBs desire to

build up a self-sustaining *Jamaat*, it is hard to actualize it because this effort has rarely been practiced and missionaries who can support it are still around them (Lee 2015; Oh 2015; Palash 2014). Nevertheless, there are MBBs who are willing to reach out to their families and neighbors as a result of their life-changing conversion experience from Islam. Even so, self-supporting and self-governing churches have been difficult to develop.

Looking at the issue from several foreigners' statements, it seems that some (even many) Bangladeshi churches have become groups that attract substantial outside financial support, and some pastors seek to become important leaders by attracting large outside investments (Oh 2015). Moreover, a heritage in some Bangladeshi circles of higher classes dominating lower classes makes it difficult for missionaries to transfer leadership to local believers for the fear of an uncertain future (Meyer 2015). However, looking at the issue from the Bangladeshis' perspective, it seems that indiscreet and hasty missionary support made Bangladeshi MBBs greedy for money (Jennings 2007, 58-60). Both the foreigners and Bangladeshis need to take responsibility for their respective actions and reactions in the area of dependency. In this present time, how can the foreigners and Bangladeshis collaborate to develop a three-Self model? Furthermore, how can they move to the next step—the fourth self (self-theologizing)—the principle which gives new MBB churches authority to interpret and apply their theology?

First of all, it is important to note that these four-self criteria do not exist independently from each other but rather that these four are interconnected and working together. Even though there have been debates regarding separate variables of each of the four criteria of four-self dynamics, Robert Priest's research has demonstrated that they are "a single unitary construct" showing positive correlation with each other (Priest 2013, 311-316). Therefore, the mature three-self Bangladeshi MBB community can also strive for the element of self-theologizing, whereby local church leaders and theologians should "feel free to explore their theological perceptions from their own contexts" (Trull 2013, 5). Hiebert agrees, despite such possible dangers as theological errors, so that local believers can mature deeply in their context through trial and error (Hiebert 1985, 195). The benefit of working for self-theologizing in the Bangladeshi MBB community is "not only indicating the right to do one's own theology or theological reflections but also allowing for equal partnership in globalizing theology" (Trull 2013, 5). The more MBB communities participate in this process, the better the outcome will be in this self-theologizing activity. Hiebert's suggestion of building up "transcultural theology," which discerns cultural bias and examines the universality of the Bible, can also be a useful guideline for avoiding syncretism and nurturing the fourth self (Hiebert 1985, 216-224).

Moreover, examining the three representative figures introduced earlier (Hasan, Ahmed, and Rana) using Hiebert's insights for producing new believers and building up local theologians (Hiebert 1985, 215), the way forward to develop the fourth self of self-theologizing becomes clear. First, upon analyzing what made it possible for Muslims to respond to the gospel and carefully observing and understanding Muslims and MBBs, Jesus's followers can utilize similar opportunities to communicate with various kinds of Muslims in order to convey the gospel in contextually appropriate ways and nurture them in light of Scripture. Second, how do expatriate missionaries as well as local followers of Jesus prepare and develop the future of the Bangladeshi MBB community? It must be through building up local leaders and indigenous theologians (Hiebert 1985, 215). Also, they can learn from other theological applications from similar Muslim majority contexts like Iran and Pakistan, or different but corresponding majority world contexts

such as Africa and Korea. The responsibility of this task of developing globalized and contextually relevant theology is not only for Bangladeshis but also for all believers in Christ around the world.

Conclusion and Implications

The main purpose of this article has been to interact with Paul Hiebert's writings to gain insights into the social identity of Bangladeshi MBBs. The three followers of *Isa* who were selected for the case study represent the current MBB society. Also, the case study has examined the Bangladeshi MBB community using Hiebert's three well-known categories of Set Theory, Critical Contextualization, and Self-theologizing. For Bangladeshi MBBs' context of diverse groups of social identity, it is more appropriate to focus on right directionality toward *Isa*, our Lord and Savior, whom we his followers aim for than anything else. For social integration and application of the four-self dynamics in different social identity groups and *Jamaats,* it is more important first to understand rather than hastily rendering judgment, in particular understanding why each group thinks and acts in a particular way. Even though we who are Jesus's followers read the same Bible, due to different contexts we view the Word and world differently. Hiebert provides helpful frameworks to discern and develop Christian community, both providing enough space to think freely and suggesting guidelines to avoid syncretism. Some movements that start from good motives can produce a bad reputation because of naïve methods and processes. The history and current situation of Bangladeshi MBBs is an example of such a development, especially in terms of the problems of financial dependency and lack of autonomy. It is possible to correct the situation if believers, both foreign and local, cooperate for the long term development of a healthy MBB community.

In light of several observations from this research, there are several applications for both local believers and foreign workers in Bangladesh. For local believers, despite their very real current physical needs, they must overcome the mentality of personal survival first and instead take care of each other by living sustainably and encouraging others. Rather than depending on or expecting foreign support, using their own talents and resources in various ways can lead to gradually sustaining themselves. They also must remember that they have the full potential to think critically and apply their findings appropriately in light of Hiebert's three criteria, "the Bible, the Holy Spirit, and a discerning community" (Hiebert 1984, 293). Also important to remember is that, without respect and love, even excellent theological formulations can be only "a clanging cymbal" (1 Cor. 13:1). Based on these various elements, local believers will need to communicate day by day with the surrounding Muslim majority, with co-believers of different groups, and with the Master himself in order to strengthen themselves to become a four-self community.

For foreign mission workers, we must first humbly note what we have done wrong, such as trying to control ministries (or movements) by using economic superiority and implanting Western (or foreign) theological perspectives, and make appropriate changes. Also, a sincere concern for MBB community over the long term is essential. A short-term fix is not a proper answer for a long-term problem. Individual solutions are also not enough, but a cooperative and open network of listening to other foreign organizations and to Bangladeshis would be one kind of solution for moving one step forward in healthy contextualization and developing four-self MBB communities in Bangladesh. Foreign mission workers need to emulate Barnabas, who introduced Saul to other believers and worked together with him, as encouragers and empowerers of indigenous "Pauls" to reach their potential (Cheong 2012, 311; Totire 2015, 224). "Stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel" (Phil 1:27).

Appendix C – Three Cases of Social Integration of MBBs

	Hasan	Ahmed	Rana
Social integration of family (marriage/ child education...etc)	Children studied the Christian religion and identified as Christians. The elder son married an MBB whom her parents do not agree with. His daughter in law needed to go to court to change her religion before marriage.	Judged by society several times because of his faith in *Isa*. Hopes to marry his children to an *Isa* following girl. Has taught children the Bible and sometimes Qur'an before, but now more Bible.	Married Muslim woman. Tries to build up his son as a Christian schoolboy. Rana's mother (still Muslim) asks a question about her son's burial saying "how do you want to be buried? As a Muslim or a Christian?"
Participation in Muslim Rituals	Does not participate in Muslim religious and social activities because he believes rituals are Islamic. His neighbors do not invite him to their social activities like marriages and funerals because they are jealous of him and hate him as a convert from Islam.	Joins Muslim prayer (*namaz*) in Mosque several times a week, but for the last part of a prayer, finishes only saying that God is one (not mentioning the next part about Muhammad). During the sacrifice festival (*Qurbani*), remembers *Ibrahim*'s faith (Abraham) using this as an opportunity to preach *Isa* as the lamb of God to Muslims.	Visit Muslims' house on *Eid* festival, but not want to participate in any religious activities like *namaz* or *Qurbani* because thinks these are Islamic. Because his organization and city *Jamaat* does not want to celebrate Christmas, he sometimes feels the desire to celebrate Christian festivals.
Social association & Legal Identity	Sometimes if he was invited, did not go to avoid possible fights with hot-tempered Muslim guests. But, legally he is fine to hold an open Christmas festival and to invite the police to give them	When he fell into the social trial (judgment) several times by the Islamic foundation and others, the effect of verbal punishment has been dismissed automatically because his economic condition was good, and had a good reputation for serving the poor in the	Advantage – got a job in a Christian organization because of being baptized and experience working with Christians. Disadvantage - Feels guilty when he needs to introduce himself as a Muslim, even though agrees with the literal

	the opportunity to hear the good news and enjoy good food. Advantage – legal protection from the government, Disadvantage – hatred due to converting from Islam.	village. Advantage – social integration and opportunity to share *Isa*. Disadvantage – some people hate him because he follows *Isa* retaining Islamic activities.	meaning of the term which is "who submits to God (Allah)."
The belief in Jesus and the Bible	*Isa* (Jesus) is a spiritual son of God in contrast to local Bangladeshi Muslims' belief of *Isa* as a prophet and the one who is coming to the world again as a disciple of Muhammad.	*Isa* (Jesus) is the savior, but he focuses on similarity, but does not want to criticize the differences between the Qur'an and the *Kitab* (Holy books).	*Isa* (Jesus) is the savior and most of the time he meditates on the Bible himself and with his foreign leader.
The belief of Qur'an and Muhammad	Muhammad came to this world for introducing good news and being a warner for judgment.	Muhammad is a prophet like other prophets in the Bible. Qur'an is like other holy books like *Torah*, *Zabur*, and *Injil*.	Muhammad is a warner and a prophet. Not want to look down on Qur'an in comparison to the Bible (*Kitab)*
Point	The clear Christian identity of children, least relationship with Muslims.	Participation in Muslim activities with reinterpretation and opportunity.	Difference between intention and obligation. Searching for contentment.

Appendix D – Three Cases of Social Identity with Collective Level-Four Self

	Hasan	Ahmed	Rana
Self-propagating	He is willing to share the good news with his majority of neighbors, sometimes using the Qur'an as a tool because it is an easily acceptable bridge to introduce the good news.	He willingly preaches about *Isa* as the savior through the Qur'an and the Bible. He formed many *Jamaats* and does a circuit every week, and his disciples and believers of the *Jamaat* have a similar identity to him.	He has two *Jamaats* with which he is involved: one is a village *Jamaat*, and the other is a city *Jamaat*. He isn't able to care for village *Jamaat*, so they are passive, but several

			members share the gospel in urban *Jamaat*
Self-supporting	He is running a local *Jamaat* in his house by his means without outside support, but getting some funds for ministries from a foreign donor. He has a plan to be self-supporting in the long term by buying or selling land given by donation and by doing different kinds of business. With resources (tithe of income) from these businesses, he wants to do diverse ministries.	Each *Jamaat* consists of 2-3 families (5-8 people). He teaches them about tithes and offerings, and sometimes *Jamaat* members buy blankets and distribute them to the needy. However, because of their financial insufficiency, it is not enough for holding training. In this sense, he welcomes to get some benefits in cooperation with foreign workers.	Village *Jamaat* always wants his leadership and teaching to run it, but he does not have much time to visit his village. City *Jamaat* looks self-supporting, but he feels not because the major portion of offering comes from foreign workers' tithe.
Self-governing	Members of *Jamaat* gather together once a week as well as holding several seminars per year such as family or leadership seminars and invite good speakers from around the country. Candidates for leadership are people who come to *Jamaat* every week and willing to serve and share the gospel.	He seeks to find knowledgeable followers of him and someone who can teach others and guide others in the right way. Most leaders of *Jamaats* have been selected by members of *Jamaats*. They can choose the appropriate leader through discussion.	His urban *Jamaat* – Feeling much foreign initiative but foreign leader tries to empower local leaders. Rural *Jamaat* – too far away to train leaders. He has a connection to a Christian church in his hometown but worries about cultural differences.
Self-theologizing	He is hoping to build up several on-going (or coming) disciples from Muslim society (like *Isai* Muslims) to be a light in the process of coming toward *Isai*/Christian and draw his family and neighbors to the gospel gradually.	He starts from teaching the Qur'an to connect to teaching the Bible and once one becomes a leader of the *Jamaat*, he trains them both for evangelism and discipleship.	For applying four-self, he believes that the first step is to see the change in their life before preaching the good news because he has seen that many Christians or MBBs, who are involved in evangelistic works,

			have a materialistic mindset (religious business)
Point	*Jamaat* in his house. Trying to be self-dependent in all four areas and with strategies to reach out to the majority allowing believers to have an *Isai* Muslim identity coming toward being *Isai*/Christian.	Started several *Jamaats* in different areas. Trying to be self-dependent, cooperation welcomed for training. Teaching how to use the Qur'an for leaders	His village *Jamaat* always needs him, lack of four areas. His city *Jamaat* depends more on a foreign initiative in terms of self-supporting and governing.

Appendix E – Two paradigms of contextualization through various lenses

Radical (high) Contextualization (Muslim, several *Isai* Muslim groups) with Inside Missiology	Theological Lens	Moderate (low) Contextualization of MBBs (Christian, *Isai*, some *Isai* Muslim group)
Bartlotti's Five Lenses		
Word, Spirit, Two or three gathered, Simple church, Synoptic Jesus emphasis	Ecclesio-Logy	Word, Sacraments, Discipline, Order, Leadership, Pauline Emphasis
Local (contextual) theologies, Theologies from majority world church "Indigenizing Principle"	Doing Theology	Universal truths, Western theological tradition, "Pilgrim Principle"
Continuity, Fulfillment, Preparation of the way for the gospel	Other Religions	Discontinuity, Exclusivism, Radical disjunction
"islams" (lower case, plural), Culturally embedded, "muslims," "Which Isalm?," "Whose Islam?"	Islam	"Islam," Historically essentialized, "Muslims" Islamic tradition
Process, Belonging, behaving, believing, Kingdom of God, Centered Set, Moving towards Christ	Conversion-Initiation	The event, Believing, behaving, belonging, People of God, Bounded Set, Clear in/out markers of identity
Author's division		

Charles Kraft. "Meaning Disconnected from Form and Message"	Teacher	Paul Hiebert."Meaning Corresponding to Form and Message"
Religion and Culture are closely related	Religion and Culture	Religion and culture are different
Self-Theologizing	Emphasis	The balance between Self-theologizing and Metatheology
Ahmed	Case figure	Hasan, Rana (relatively)

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God's Plan for the Fullness of Time: Overhauling Ralph Winter's "Ten Epochs" and "Three Eras" Models (Part I)

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Abstract

Over the past half-century, Dr. Ralph Winter (1924-2009) shaped the framework, goals, and strategies of evangelical missions more than any other single missiologist. Winter's monumental presentation at the 1974 Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization, entitled "The Highest Priority: Cross-Cultural Evangelism," steered the focus of evangelical missions away from converting individuals and their countries to reaching people groups. Winter argued persuasively that distances missionaries needed to traverse were cultural more than geographical. The concept of two ongoing structures he termed sodalities and modalities, along with his identification of modern missions' "closure" trait, are only two of many other seminal insights that reinforced Winter's expansive influence.

Related were Winter's two historical models that have influenced evangelical missiology. His "Three Eras of the Modern Missions Movement" has especially shaped Evangelicals' historical sensibilities; Winter's broader "Ten Epochs of Redemptive History" links with and supports the "Three Eras" model. Both of these models substantiate Evangelicals' expectation that today is both the final missions era and the age of Jesus's return. As such, Winter's "Three Eras" has provided evangelical missiologists and missions mobilizers a useful historical framework for inspiring fellow Christians to become involved in today's missions movement.

These "Eras" and "Epochs" models have undoubtedly galvanized evangelical missions with easily understandable historical metanarratives necessary to sustain any movement. They convey a passion and spirit to be cultivated and treasured. Even so, the models seemingly de-emphasize important biblical-theological themes. Moreover, due to contextual changes the models appear to have inadequate capacity for current historical sensibilities as well as the kind of theocentric and worldwide-collaborative character required for future mission movements.

Divided into three parts, this study conducts an overhaul of the two models to see what repairs and enhancements might be needed. Part I introduces the models, including their general context and basic components. Important influences on the models' formations are noted in Part II, leading into an analysis of the models' contextual moorings, traits, and limitations for wider use. Part III then considers viable courses of action, including commending features of more adequate historical models for Evangelicals to consider for moving forward. Recognition of the inherent limitations of all human constructs for explaining God's "plan for the fullness of time" (Ephesians 1:10) concludes the study.

Key Words: context, iterations, limitations, mobilization

Introduction

Any consideration of the past, present, and future of evangelical missions must include - extensively or minimally, explicitly or implicitly - the influence of Dr. Ralph D. Winter. The crystallized idea of Unreached People Groups (UPG), which has played the single most central role for evangelical missions over the last half century, came directly from Winter's presentation,

entitled “The Highest Priority: Cross-Cultural Evangelism” (Winter 1974a), to the inaugural 1974 Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization. Even when missiologists today discuss needed revisions to UPG thinking or even question the continuing validity of the UPG construct for today’s globalized world of megacities (Datema 2016:45), the monumental importance of the UPG concept testifies to Dr. Winters’ central and enduring influence for evangelical missions research, strategizing, and practice. As his biographer Harold Fickett put it, Winter was “a genius for God” who “dared to shake up world missions” (Fickett 2012).

Another framework formulated by Winter is arguably as widely influential as that of UPGs, namely the “Three Eras of the Modern Missions Movement” model. The model has been updated and modified by both Winter himself and others, but its validity has not been questioned to the degree that UPG thinking has. An adjoining historical scheme of Winter’s may not be cited as much but, like the “Three Eras” model, remains unchallenged: “The Ten Epochs of Redemptive History.” Simple and memorable diagrams of each model are etched in many Evangelicals’ minds, further solidifying and broadening the models’ steadfast and ongoing influence.

Dr. Ralph D. Winter was gifted at communicating through clear diagrams the main emphases of any number of complex ideas. However, Winter’s gift of clear communication should not cloud the challenge of analyzing the intricacies of Winter’s wide-ranging and ever-growing thought that undergird his simple and memorable diagrams. That analytical challenge becomes all the more daunting when a necessarily brief examination such as this one seeks to do justice to the two influential models under consideration here.

Analyzing the “Ten Epochs” and “Three Eras” models, including how they developed, is complicated by the difficulty of sifting through their voluminous and varied source materials. Winter’s own published versions first came out in 1979 and 1981, but almost from the very beginning his essays appear in different publications and even under different titles - particularly the “Three Eras” essay. Furthermore, Winter’s ever-developing understanding of a constellation of themes, their interrelationships, and their effect on Christian missions meant that his writings and publications - including about the “Ten Epochs” and “Three Eras” models - were always being refined, revised, and updated. In Winter’s own words late in life, “both charts and thoughts keep recurring as I attempt each time to give a clearer explanation” (Winter 2008b:viii). Various collections of Winter’s writings are helpful (Snodderly 2018), but identifying and locating pertinent materials are not straightforward processes.

As referenced below, the various editions of the *Perspectives* course reader and several issues of the *Mission Frontiers* (MF) and *International Journal of Frontier Missions* (IJFM) journals have been the main (but not the only) outlets for Winter’s own compositions. Identifying and locating all relevant versions of Winter’s works about or related to the models are not simple tasks. Furthermore, others’ writings and presentations use various versions of the models’ essays and graphics - with differing degrees and styles of referencing whichever version is being employed. Simply identifying how and where the models have been presented, then subsequently used, takes one on an adventurous and uncharted journey.

Such complications notwithstanding, this study dares to give an appreciative and thorough inspection of both models, both to understand them better and to determine how improvements might be made, i.e., to give the models an “overhaul.” The study first introduces the models, including their general context and basic components. Important influences on the models’ formations are noted next, leading into an analysis of the models’ contextual moorings, traits, and

limitations for wider use. In light of its findings, the study then considers viable courses of action, including commending features of more adequate historical models for Evangelicals to consider for moving forward. Recognition of the inherent limitations of all human constructs for explaining God's "plan for the fullness of time" (Ephesians 1:10) concludes the study.

Before proceeding, it should be noted that this study was not prompted by Ralph Winter's new concerns later in life, which did affect his presentation of the two historical models. Rather, the study's impetus was what and how the models communicate in today's different context of world missions compared to four decades ago, when the models were first published. Of course, what and how the models communicate, as well as why it is helpful to overhaul the two models to see what repairs and enhancements might be needed, should emerge through what follows.

Additionally, this study believes that close examination of the effects on the models by Winter's late-in-life change in focus reveals more continuity among the models' several iterations than discontinuity. As seen further below, Winter sought to add to his models more than to alter their fundamental structures. Much more than Winter's change in focus, it is today's different context that calls for a careful and constructive overhaul of the "Ten Epochs" and "Three Eras" models.

The Models and Their Iterations

Taken together, Winter's two models are interdependent - but not completely. They are almost always presented independently, each as a stand-alone scheme. They differ in their historical spans: 4,000 years and 200 years. Also, the degrees of details explained vary, particularly with regard to the models' respective diagrams. Where the models link content-wise is how the "Three Eras" essentially comprise "the latter half" of the final 400-year "Epoch." Winter expressly makes that connection in his lone essay in which both models appear together, albeit in succession rather than integrated by theme or topic per se (Winter 1989). As for other analysts, John Piper most explicitly links the two models where he concludes his article entitled "Overview of the History of Missions" - which is expressly based on Winter's "Ten Epochs" model - with "See the three eras of modern missions" (Piper 1981). Winter himself makes a similar reference within a later version of his "Kingdom Strikes Back" essay (Winter 1999a:212).

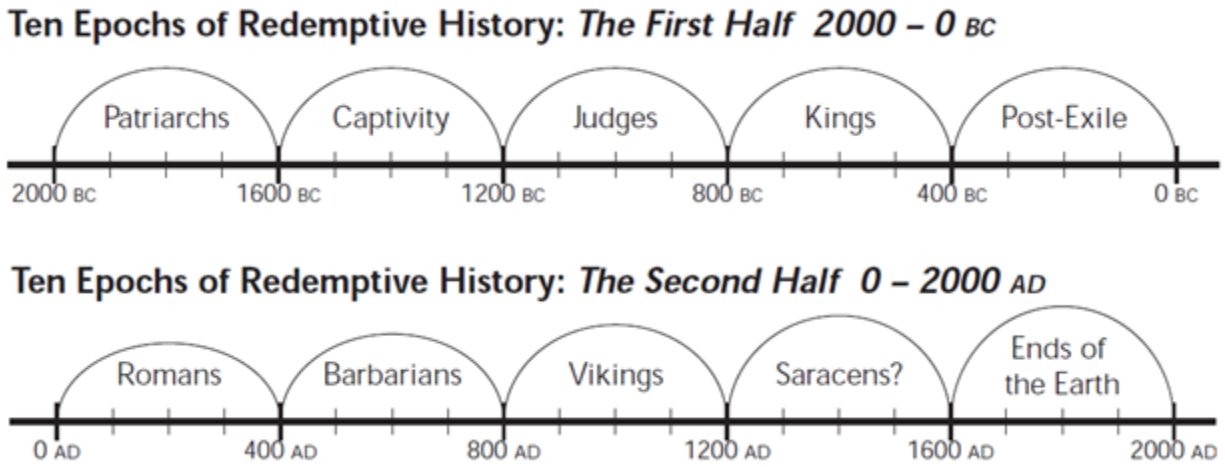
At a conceptual level, interconnections are evident in Winter's Fuller School of World Mission course outline on "The Historical Development of the Christian Movement" (Winter 1974b:6). In particular, from their earliest publications the models are tied together by Winter's conviction that, throughout redemptive history (including modern missions history), Old Covenant Israel and subsequently "nations which have been singularly blessed by God [have had an] obligation to be a blessing to other nations." Winter thus exhorts his fellow U.S.-Americans, "As individuals and as a nation we are responsible 'to be a blessing to all the families of the earth'," pointing to God's promise and charge to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3. Winter adds Jesus's sobering warning, "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required" (Winter 1981e:139; Winter 1981d:168). This conviction about national responsibility will be explored further below. So will another vitally important link between the two models, namely their intended goals of mobilization for frontier missions.

"Ten Epochs" Model

Winter's lesser known framework, "Ten Epochs of Redemptive History," shapes the overall historical backdrop against which he formulated and presented many of his missiological ideas. The model is most systematically laid out in Winter's article, "The Kingdom Strikes Back: Ten Epochs of Redemptive History," first published in 1981 (Winter 1981e). The important place in Winter's mind of the "Ten Epochs" model is demonstrated by the "Kingdom Strikes Back" article being placed first in the historical section of all four editions, ranging across almost three decades from 1981 to 2009, of the *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader* (Winter and Hawthorne 1981, 1992, 1999, 2009). The article also is positioned first in the earliest editions of the *Foundations of the World Christian Movement: A Larger Perspective* reader, designed for the course of the same name offered by the Institute of International Studies at Pasadena's U.S. Center for World Mission (USCWM) (Winter and Snodderly 2008, 2009). A version for children was also published under the same title in 2008 (Winter 2008a).

With its title inspired by the previous year's blockbuster movie "The Empire Strikes Back" (Star Wars Episode V), the essay sets forth redemption as a divine counter-attack against Satan's attempted coup to unseat God's rightful rule over his world. Winter's model labels ten equal-length, historical periods or "epochs" linked by "the grace of God intervening" and "contesting an enemy … so that the nations will praise God's name" (Winter 2009a:8). Winter notes more than once that each of the epochs lasts "roughly" 400 years (Winter 2009a:8-9), but the graphics and the overall essay convey a start-to-finish history evenly divided into well-defined periods.

More specifically, Winter's model casts the overall sweep of redemptive history as consisting of 4,000 years: 2,000 years before Christ and 2,000 years after:



(Winter 2009b:211-212; Bible and Knowledge 2015). God's redemptive work begins - that is, the Kingdom initially "strikes back" at Satan's doomed occupation of God's rightful domain - through Abraham. This initial redemptive initiative takes place around 2000 B.C. The five subsequent Old Testament periods are focused on:

1. Patriarchs - Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph
2. Captivity in Egypt
3. Judges
4. Kings
5. Post-Exile - The Babylonian Exile and Dispersion

Throughout these five B.C. 400-year epochs, even though "the promised *blessing* and the expected *mission* (to extend God's rule to all the nations of the world) all but disappear from sight," there continues "the active concern of God to forward His mission" (emphases original; Winter 2009a:9).

Jesus Christ marks the central dividing point of redemptive history. Winter strikingly asserts that "Jesus did not come to *give* the Great Commission but to *take it away*" from "the chosen missionary nation," Israel. In turn, God then "makes sure that the other nations are both blessed and *similarly called* 'to be a blessing to all families of the earth'" (emphases original; Winter 2009a:9).

The five subsequent periods that comprise "The Second Half of the Story" (Winter 2009a:9) are marked by various foci of Christian mission:

6. Romans
7. Barbarians
8. Vikings
9. "Saracens?" (later "Muslims?")
10. Ends of the Earth

Winter introduces his extensive descriptions of these periods by noting, "Those nations that are blessed do not seem terribly eager to share" the blessing of Christ's kingdom with other peoples (Winter 2009a:9-10). Even so, throughout both the first half of the story and the five A.D. 400-year epochs, "God has not changed His plan in the last 4,000 years…. 'This Gospel of the Kingdom must be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all peoples, and then shall the end come' (Matt 24:14)." Other nations were blessed beyond the "agony of Rome" and the "agony of the Barbarians," and that same expectation holds for what lies beyond the likely upcoming "very dark period for the Western world," including even the uncertain "survival of our own country" (Winter 2009a:23).

Even if not as explicitly influential as his "Three Eras" model, Winter's "Ten Epochs" scheme serves to correct some Protestants' mistaken notion that the entirety of Christian missions history consists only of the last two hundred years. Moreover, looking at 4,000 years of redemptive history has supported many evangelical leaders' corrective emphasis that Christian missions did not begin with "The Great Commission" of Matthew 28:18-20. Represented by Kaiser's *Mission in the Old Testament* (Kaiser 2012), along with Winter these leaders have pointed Evangelicals to Genesis 12 and God's promise (and command) to Abraham that "all nations will be blessed through you" (Genesis 12:3). Christian missions thus becomes more than simply obeying Jesus's final, and supposedly isolated, command: God's long-ranging Kingdom redemption of all peoples throughout the earth, the divine invasion of Satan's usurped and illegitimate reign, becomes the larger framework for missions.

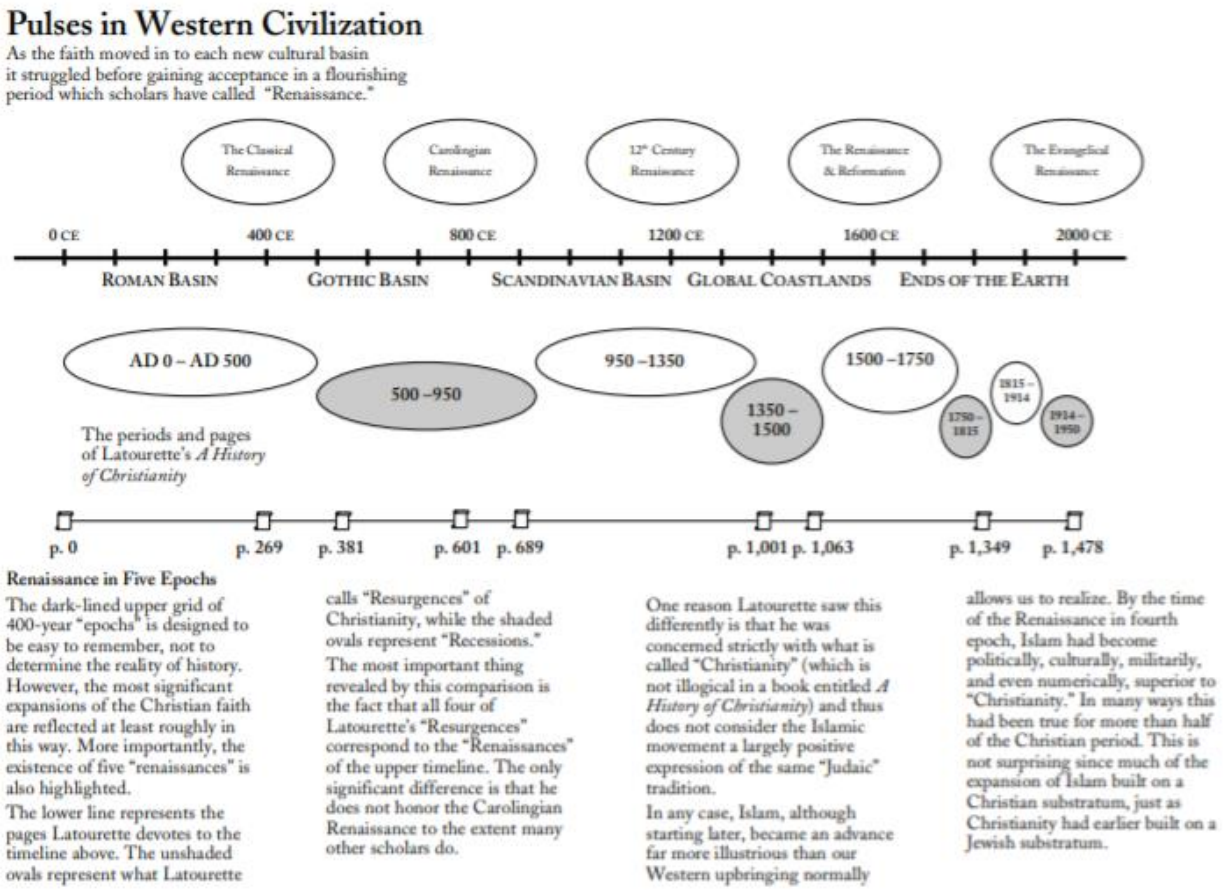
For the purposes of this study's analysis, it is constructive to note some of the revisions to the "Ten Epochs" model (or at least to the model's presentation) that have been made over its almost 40-year lifespan. Among what might be considered smaller revisions, in the first 1981 version and second 1992 version the only graphic is of the "Second Half," whereas later versions include both halves plus expanded explanations of the "First Half" (Winter 1981e:138, 140; Winter 1992a:B—4-5, B—7; Winter 1999a:196-198; Winter 2009b:210-212). There is an inexplicable omission of the question mark after "Saracens" in the graphic of the revised (second) edition only (Winter

1992a:B—7); and, there is a curious dropping of the arcs in the 2009 *Foundations* course version's graphics (Winter 2009a:8-9). Another subtle change is the 2009 fourth edition's use of "Muslims" instead of the previous versions' "Saracens" (Winter 1981e:140, 141, 150; Winter 1992a:B—7, B—16; Winter 1999a:198, 199, 208; Winter 2009b:212, 213, 221). Epoch headings in later versions, in the text if not in the graphics, have the added beginning "Period #" (Winter 1981e:141; Winter 1992a:B—7; Winter 1999a:200; Winter 2009b:213), perhaps reflecting early questions Winter had received (and to which Winter had made adjustments elsewhere) regarding "Whether [time periods should be] considered 'epochs', 'cycles', or 'eras'" (Mission Frontiers 1979; Winter 1989).

A set of three revisions in the same later versions seemingly reflect a change in the model's commitment to the finality or completion of the 4,000-year redemptive history around A.D. 2000. First, later versions drop the initial "The" in the 1981 and 1992 editions' article subtitle, "The Ten Epochs of Redemptive History." Second, whereas the earlier versions state that Jesus came in the middle "of the 4000-year period we are now ending," the reworded versions shift the emphasis backward: "... of the 4000-year period beginning in 2000 B.C." Third, after the earlier iterations' concluding words of Matthew 24:14 (The gospel must be preached throughout the world to all peoples, "and then shall the end come"), the later versions add two sentences: "God can raise up others if we falter. Indeed, the rest of this book [the *Perspectives* reader] indicates that is already happening" (Winter 1981e:137, 138, 155; Winter 1999a:195, 196, 213).

Each essay's iteration progressively includes more content, explanations, details, and changes. Even the second, revised 1992 version - otherwise identical to the first 1981 essay - adds a brief paragraph to highlight "the *four different* 'mission mechanisms' at work [throughout the first half of redemptive history] whereby other peoples could be blessed," namely going and coming both voluntarily and involuntarily (Winter 1992a:B—5; emphasis original). One substantial revision is later versions' inclusion (early in the essay) of Winter's later-year emphasis on wider "Kingdom" themes, including battling germs and disease. For example, later versions have added references to "disease germs," "'The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil' (1 Jn 3:6)," and how Satan "distorts even DNA sequences, perhaps authors suffering and all destruction of God's good creation," and devises "virulent germs" (Winter 2009a:7-8; Winter 2009b:209-210 [includes correction to 1 Jn 3:8]). A subtle, corresponding change is made in the wording of Matthew 24:14: earlier versions read, "This gospel must be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all people groups, and then shall the end come"; in later versions there are two changes: "This *Gospel of the Kingdom* must be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all *peoples*, and then shall the end come" (Winter 1981e:155; Winter 1999a:213; emphases mine).

A particularly significant addition in later versions (starting in 1999) is a greatly expanded "Period II: Winning the Barbarians, A.D. 400-800," including sections on monastic orders and Charlemagne (Winter 2009a:13-16). Yet another major addition, as part of the expanded "Period V: To the Ends of the Earth, A.D. 1600-2000" section (and introduced earlier in the essay), is a full-page chart entitled "Pulses in Western Civilization," directly correlating Latourette's "Resurgences" in his *A History of Christianity* with "Renaissance in Five Epochs," i.e., over the course of two millennia of Western history and, through modern missions, "Global Coastlands" and "Ends of the Earth" (Winter 2009a:11, 21):



The significance of these various adjustments will be pursued later.

"Three Eras" Model

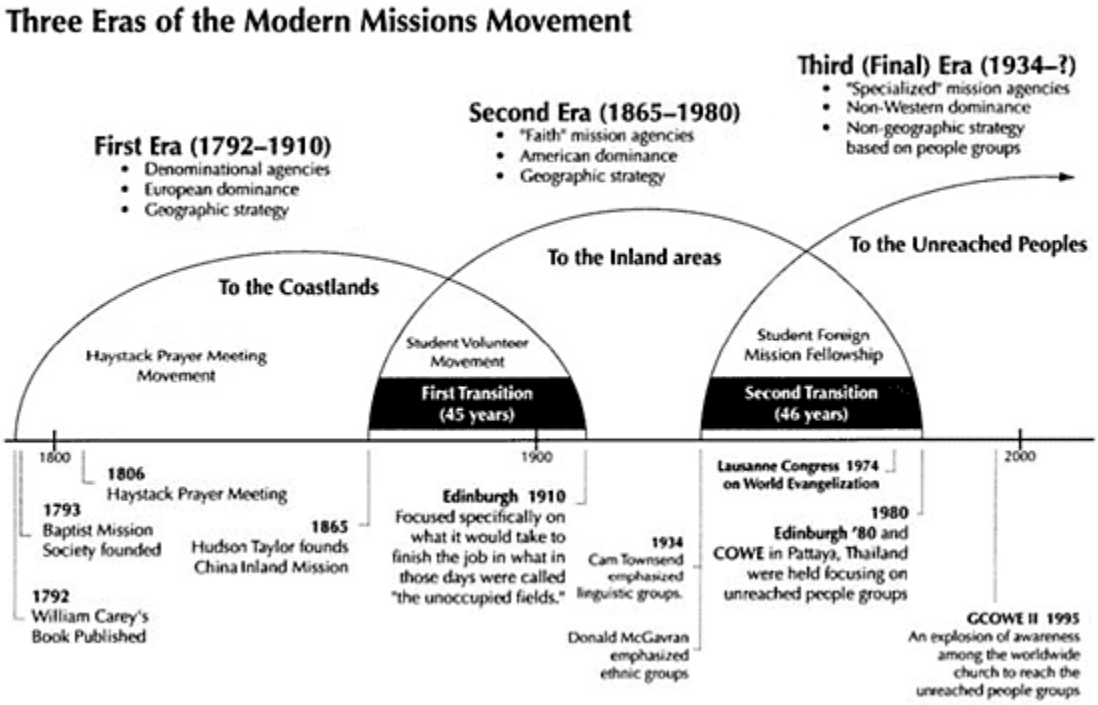
Winter's "Three Eras of the Modern Missions Movement" model has captivated many Evangelicals, including other renowned missiologists and students of the "Perspectives" course. The model has been a refreshing revelation to many who have discovered it, as many blogs and teachings have testified. The widely read John Piper, for example, published an "essay of gratitude" for Daniel Fuller of Fuller Seminary entitled "A Vision of God for the Final Era of Frontier Missions." Piper composed the essay in 1985, four years after his aforementioned missions history article and only eight years prior to the first edition of his widely influential *Let the Nations Be Glad!* (Piper 1993). Just as Piper's earlier article follows Winter's larger historical outline, this 1985 essay expressly utilizes "the insights of Ralph Winter, who has identified three major eras in Protestant missions history" (Piper 1985).

The many other authors, teachers, students, and other Christians who have referenced Winter's models of redemptive and missions history, all approvingly, have done so in a variety of ways. Some have considered the models only "very rough approximations" and "a memory device" (Culbertson n.d.). Others have incorporated them into their own outlines (John 2014). The Frontiers Mission Movement has understood its own historically particular location and role coming out of the "Three Eras" scheme (Johnson 2001). Several analysts have sought to build on the "Three Eras" progression to suggest a "Fourth Era" for contemporary missions (Chismon 2020;

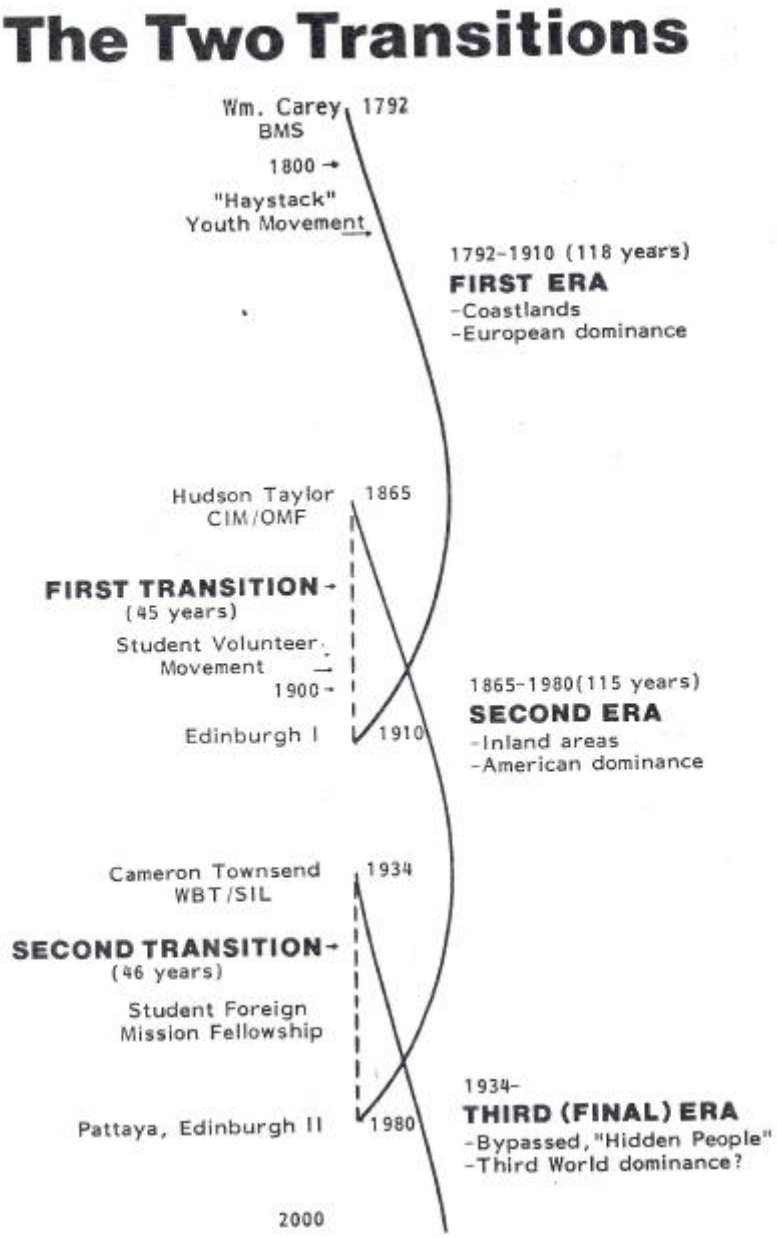
Davis 2017; Shadrach 2018). Countless others have been gripped by the models' urgency for service in missions' "final" era (Smith 2014).

The vast majority of those who have referenced the models have reckoned them as authoritative and accurate historical depictions. It is worth noting as well that *The Gospel Coalition* website, while recently publishing articles questioning certain aspects of the Unreached People Group construct (Akin 2019; Carlson and Clark 2019), has never conveyed an essay critical of either of Winter's historical models.

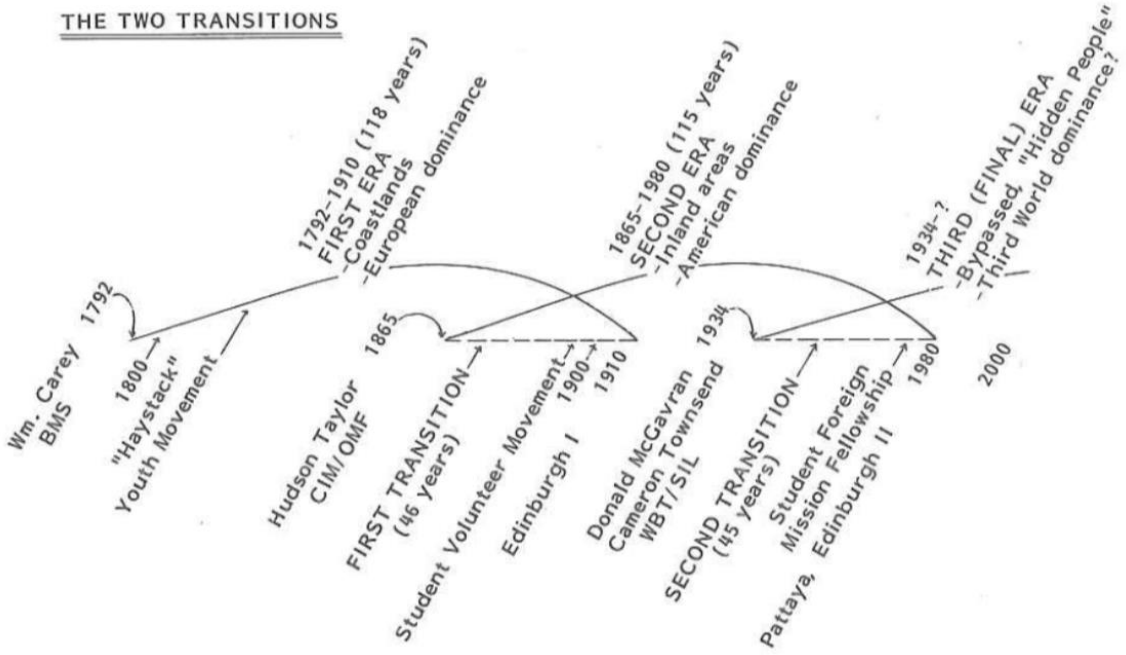
The following diagram from 1999 is the most mature visual presentation of Winter's original "Three Eras" scheme:



(Winter 1999b:259; Gospel Revival Ministries 2017). As was the case with the "Ten Epochs" model, Winter's "Three Eras" scheme appeared in the first edition of the *Perspectives* reader (Winter 1981d). Interestingly, however, the familiar graphic above - which is from the third edition of the *Perspectives* reader - was not the first graphic that Winter used. The basic idea of "Kodachrome slides on the same screen" (Winter 1981c) was there from early on, but the first diagram, which appeared in slightly variant forms in two different 1981 publications (with one again in 1992), was styled differently. More substantially, along with stating the focus of the "Third (Final) Era" as "Bypassed, 'Hidden People'," the 1981 and 1992 graphics were labeled with a different heading than the later and more familiar "Three Eras" title, namely "The Two Transitions":



(Winter 1981b);



(Winter 1981d:173; Winter 1992b:B—39). Both graphic headings were incorporated in the title of both the 1992 and 1999 (but not final) revised versions of Winter's essay: "Four Men, Three Eras, Two Transitions: Modern Missions" (Winter 1992:B—33; Winter 1999a:253). The importance of the titles and headings will emerge further below.

As suggested earlier, there were hints of the emerging model in Winter's 1974 Fuller School of World Mission "Historical Development of the Christian Movement" course syllabus (Winter 1974b:6). The "Three Eras" scheme first appeared publically (not yet with an accompanying graphic) in 1979. That brief article, entitled "The Hidden Peoples: the last frontiers," was published halfway through the first year of the new journal *Mission Frontiers* (Winter 1979). The USCWM and William Carey University had just been established a few years earlier (Frontier Ventures 2020), plans for the long-awaited Edinburgh 1980 conference were taking concrete shape (Winter 1980), and Winter thus issued his clarion call about "THE THIRD ERA--Today!" The article stirringly concludes,

> These forgotten people will be receptive to the Gospel if the means and strategies are developed to reach them. The new U.S. Center for World Mission in Pasadena is small in comparison to the immensity of the task, but it is the largest single property in the world today dedicated exclusively to reaching the hidden people. What has been launched in Pasadena must alert us, as did that first satellite [launched in 1961, cited at the article's beginning], that we have entered a new age, and nothing short of a total effort will conquer this last frontier (Winter 1979:5; emphasis original).

Ralph Winter was passionately marshalling all conceivable "means and strategies" to equip evangelical Christians to complete the task and the final era of Christian missions.

The basic thrust of the model comes from the three, overlapping arcs that identify modern missions' three eras and their transitions, culminating in the new (as of the late 1970s and early 1980s) final era of reaching unreached peoples. Starting with William Carey and his 1792 *Enquiry*, missions first went to the coastlands of Africa and Asia. Before this coastal trend concluded,

Hudson Taylor spearheaded missions initiatives into Africa's and Asia's "inland" regions. In the 1930s, the third (final) era starts to coalesce with Cam Townsend's identification of the importance of reaching different linguistic groups in Latin America simultaneously with Donald McGavran identifying groups of people coming to faith in India. The notion of people groups emerges, along with the exegetical insight that these groups are actually the "nations" or *ethne* of Scripture, preeminently Matthew 24:14 and 28:19, "all nations" or *panta ta ethne*. Whereas the first and second eras involved "geographic strategies," the third era's focus on unreached peoples is "non-geographic." This "three era" model has helped contemporary Evangelicals locate themselves at the culminating point of missions (and redemptive) history.

In the model's earliest versions, Winter repeatedly stressed the challenge of transitioning between eras - most pointedly from the second era into the new and final third missions era: "The bombshell confrontation for our time is not quite the same as Carey's (the 'heathens' can and must be reached) or Taylor's (we've forgotten the inland peoples) but rather, *what about the 4 out of 5 non-Christians who are still beyond invisible cultural frontiers?*" (Winter 1979:5; emphasis original). Winter sensed that a "potent new mood was developing all through mission circles with regard to the final frontiers-the final cultural and social barriers to the penetration of the gospel" (Winter 1981c). At the same time, Winter perceived "the contrast between this new concern for frontiers, and the still strong concern for nationalization and withdrawal, that is, the predictable tension between two overlapping eras" (Winter 1981b:1; emphasis original). The three eras and their overlapping transitions constitute the model's message.

After the initial almost-two years of presenting his overlapping-eras framework for modern missions (Winter 1979; Winter 1981a), Winter added "an alliterative sequences of stages" of mission activity to the model - both verbally and graphically:

> Stage 1. A Pioneer stage - first contact with a people group.
> Stage 2. A Paternal stage - expatriates train national leadership.
> Stage 3. A Partnership stage - national leaders work as equals with expatriates.
> Stage 4. A Participation stage - expatriates are no longer equal partners, but only participate by invitation" (Winter 1981d:170-171; Winter 1981b:2; Winter 1981c).

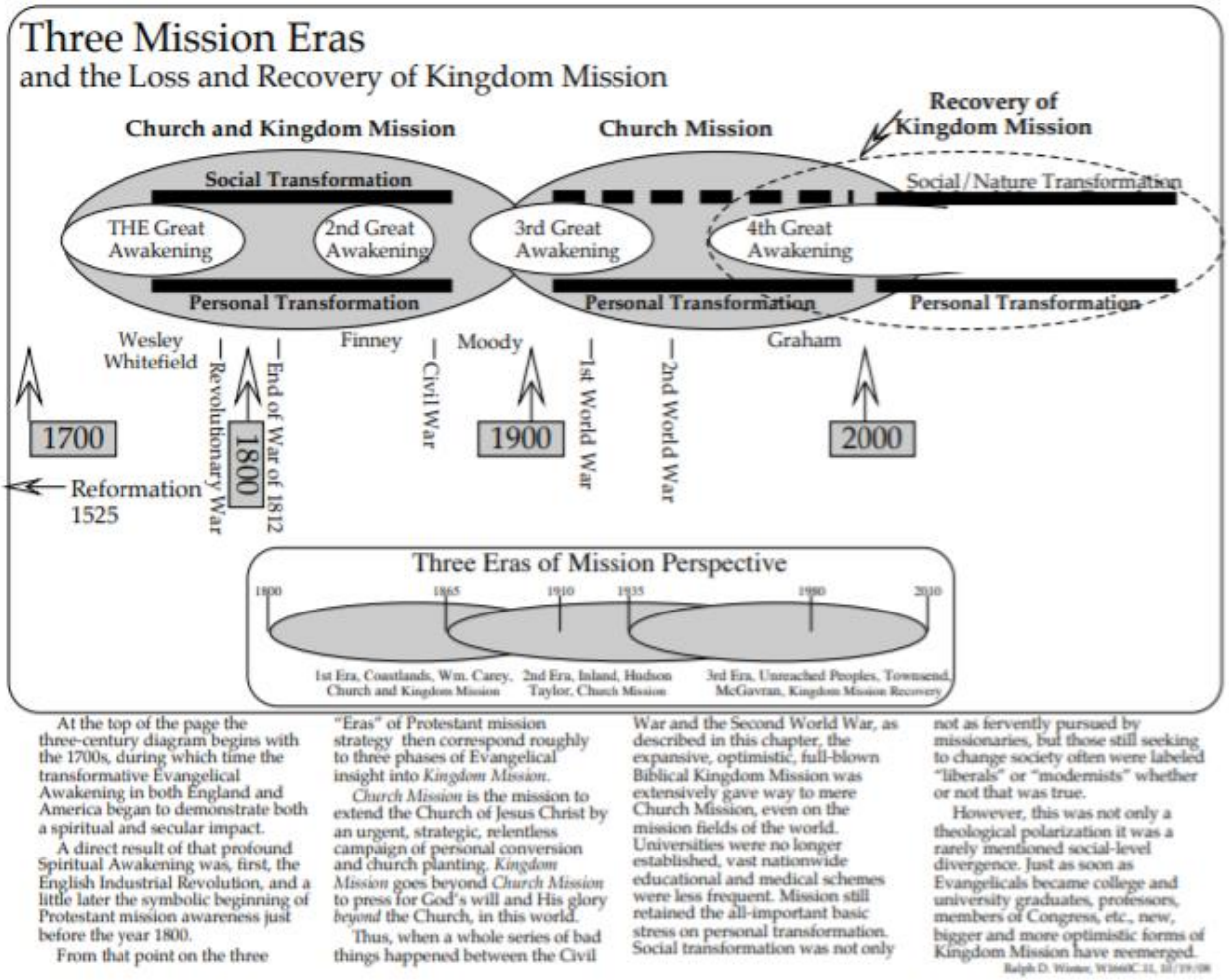
At first glance, this addition may seem arbitrary and out of place. Moreover, the situational nature of Winter's essays, along with his continual revision of what he had published earlier, can make the exact reasons for adding these four stages difficult to determine. However, Winter was confronting evangelical Christians, especially mission executives, with the question, "Is it not possible for one field to be in one stage while another field is in another stage?" Historically speaking, "Today the Protestant tradition is in a slow, massive, agonizing transition between a Second Era and a Third (and final) Era, and ... like two Kodachrome slides on the same screen, the partnership and participation stages of the Second Era confusingly overlap and tend to obscure the logic of the pioneer and paternal stages of the emerging Third Era" (Winter 1981c). Different fields require different activities, Winter explained. Partnering with newer and maturing churches is important to be sure, but pioneering missions efforts are desperately needed in today's third and final era to reach the heretofore unrecognized, vast number of hidden, unreached peoples.

Other important revisions that Winter made to his model in 1981 were, first, adding "another young man … Cameron Townsend" (following Carey and Taylor) as "the early prophet of the Third Era" (Winter 1981a; Winter 1981b:7; Winter 1981c) and, second, adding Donald McGavran

alongside Townsend as having begun the third era (Winter 1981d:174-175). Winter differentiates Townsend and McGavran as having identified "linguistic barriers" and "social barriers," respectively, that must be overcome by frontier missions efforts for unreached people groups (Winter 1981b:174; Winter 1997).

In the 1992 version, Winter's essay adds strong criticism of interpreting Old Testament missions as centripetal versus centrifugal New Testament missions: "The fact is, both patterns operated in both periods," Winter retorts (Winter 1992b:B—34). Winter also changes earlier versions' use of "Hidden Peoples" to "Unreached Peoples" (Winter 1992b:B—42-43), reflecting intense discussions in which he had been involved in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Datema 2016:51-54). Winter also appreciatively mentions the AD2000 Movement's added phrase, "the gospel for every person…" (Winter 1992b:B—43). Winter's late 1990s iterations include bits of updated information, a more visually pleasing "Mission-Church Relations: Four Stages of Development" graphic, and the more detailed, mature "Three Eras" graphic displayed earlier (Winter 1997; Winter 1999b:256, 259).

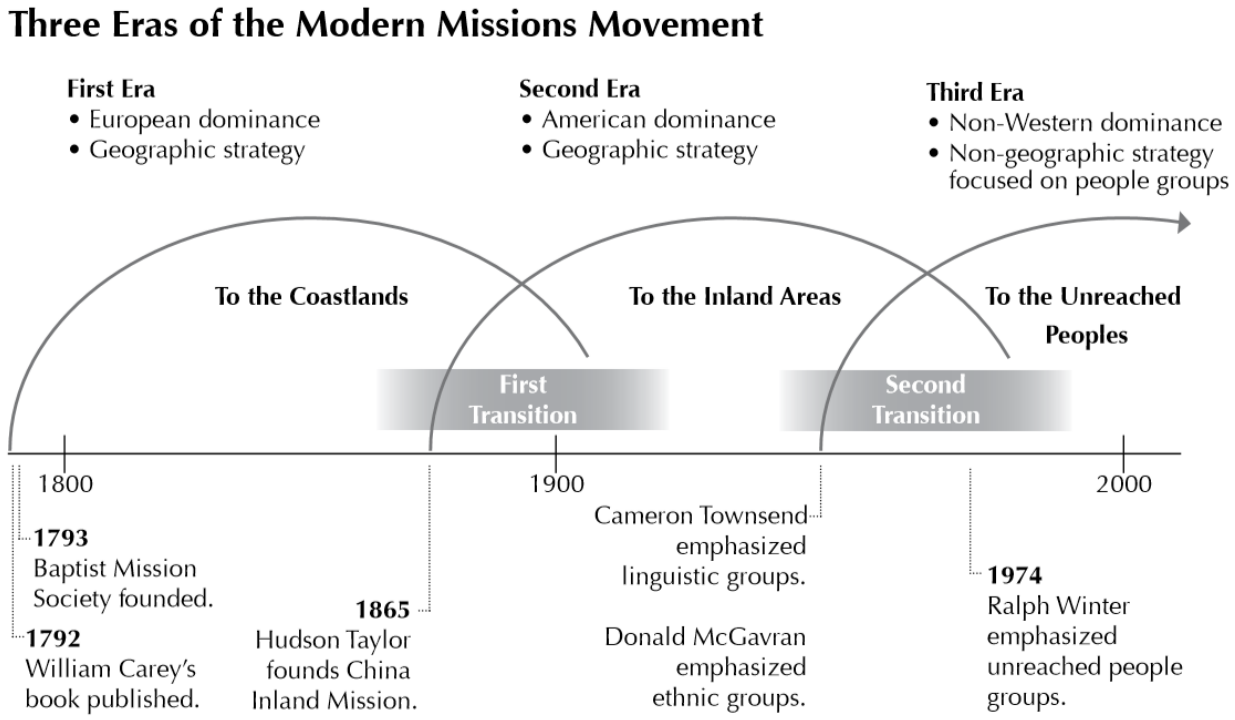
It was during Winter's later years that his "intriguing thoughts on science and theology and their importance for our understanding of disease," a pursuit concerning which some may "wince" or be "uncomfortable" (Fickett 2012:151; Huckaby 2013), significantly affected his presentation of the "Three Eras" scheme. One "huge intellectual task" Winter attempted was to combine "the Christian dynamics" and "the secular events" of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Winter 2009c:263). The result appears in the latest, fourth edition of the *Perspectives* reader and puts "Kingdom Mission Recovery" alongside the third era's task of crossing the frontiers of unreached people groups:



(Winter 2009c:265). In this revised scheme, a three-century interplay between Church Mission and Kingdom Mission is set atop the original two-century, coastal-inland-unreached three-era progression. Pivotal events of wider U.S.-American (and European) history are given more visibility than before. Prominent U.S-American evangelists take center stage.

Earlier versions of Winter's "Three Eras" essay conclude with a section entitled "Can We Do It?" - ending with a stirring call to finish the task of world evangelization: "We have potentially a worldwide network of churches that can be aroused to their central mission. Best of all, nothing can obscure the fact that this could and should be the *final* era…. God has not asked us to reach every nation, tribe and tongue without intending it to be done. No generation has less excuse than ours if we do not do as He asks" (Winter 1981d:176; Winter 1992b:B—43; Winter 1999b:261; emphasis original). This later iteration now ends with two subsections entitled "How Far Have We Come?" and "How Far to Go?" - ending with a more comprehensive and less urgent tone: "The Third Mission Era, in so far as it recognizes both Unreached Peoples and a recovering Kingdom Mission, reveals significant demands, unfailing inspiration and incredible promise" (Winter 2009c:277-278). One appreciative interpreter seeks to retain the feel of both versions, asserting that with Winter's updated model Christians can "aggressively and effectively collaborate to advance his Kingdom and His Church *and* to complete the missionary task in our day" (Butler 2008; emphasis mine).

An alternative later version of the "Three Eras" model - tweaked by Winter's mentees in his honor - retains the single emphasis of Winter's original version. The three-arc graphic is almost identical to the 1999 mature version. The sole addition is Ralph Winter himself as one of the "Pioneers Leading the Way in the Final Era":



(Honeycutt 2009:377, 378). This simplified iteration notes that "Winter popularized the concept of unreached people groups" at Lausanne 1974; then, "the Winter-promoted Edinburgh 1980 conference made the phrase 'a church for every people' common among mission movements all over the world" (Honeycutt 2009:379-380). The original "Three Eras" call to finish the task of reaching the unreached remains the primary focus.

Winter's other later, integrated version burst the "three-eras" wineskin into what he renamed, "Seven Men, Four Eras" (Winter 2008b:308-316). The "Fourth Era" Winter calls the "Kingdom Era," in which Christians are to focus on "how reconciled man working with God can together destroy the Kingdom of Darkness, putting away both human evil and natural evil (disease)." The three added men are "three key Evangelicals," all professors and authors: Carl F. Henry, Timothy Smith, and David O. Moberg. Because of three books these three men composed, they "can reasonably be considered the pioneers of the growing Kingdom Era for American Evangelicals in the 20th and 21st centuries" (Winter 2008b:314-315). The essay concludes with the familiar challenge of "Can We Do It?" - ending with the Kingdom Era theme interwoven with the same, previous versions' clarion call to action in missions' final era(s): "The Unreached Peoples Era and the Kingdom Era could well be the *final* eras…. God has not asked us to assist in the expansion of the Kingdom of God into every nation, tribe and tongue without intending it to be done. No generation has less excuse than ours if we do not do as He asks" (Winter 2008b:315-316; emphasis original).

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Book Review

Duane Miller, *I Will Give Them an Everlasting Name: Pastoral Care for Christ's Converts from Islam*

Reviewed by Philip Hill

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Duane Miller is a pastor and a scholar. He is an Evangelical American Episcopalian minister with a BA and MA earned in America and a Ph.D from Edinburgh University examining conversion to Christianity from Islam. He is a fluent Arabic speaker who has taught in an Evangelical Arab theological seminary in Nazareth and currently serves on the staff of the Episcopal Cathedral in Madrid, Spain while also being an associate professor at the Protestant Faculty of Theology in the city.

Miller acknowledges that there are well-known problems for a convert from Islam, such as an inaccurate knowledge of Christian teachings or hostility from his or her Muslim family. Even so, Miller believes the greatest problem has to do with a sense of identity, which he describes as having three essential aspects: core (who am I to myself?), social (who am I to my group or groups?) and collective (what is my group's identity in relation to the wider world?).

To provide answers to these questions, Miller reflects in brief chapters on a range of issues that he believes should be explained both to converts and to those offering them pastoral support. *The Christian heritage of the pre-Islamic Arab communities* is valuable because it enables converts to answer for themselves and others the criticism that becoming a Christian means betraying their historic identity and culture. Explaining *how an individual should study and apply the Christian Scriptures (Observe, Interpret, Apply)* enables the convert to read them with an eye for their context and spiritual message rather than with the very different approach to the Qur'an they were taught as Muslims. *Converts should be given a basic summary of the Christian faith that replaces the basic Islamic confession* that there is one God and Muhammed is his prophet. Miller suggests using for this the Apostles and the Nicene Creeds. *Converts should also and immediately be taught how to pray,* both extemporaneously and using traditional forms (the latter point and critical view of much extemporary prayer somewhat reflecting his Anglican identity).

Another issue raised by Miller is the need to *make converts aware of various denominations* or traditions beside that of the person through whom they have come to Christ, since if they live where there are few churches, or must move to a new area, they may need to join a church from another tradition. Also, an awareness of different churches will teach them that there are primary and secondary truths. *Baptism should be treated seriously* as a turning point expressing a Christian commitment and as a public confession, preferably with family members present so that they have some understanding of their relative's genuine conversion. *Open profession of faith* should be taught as essential in the long term, because Islam aims to preserve the religious unity of an Islamic culture. An 'apostate' threatens that and undermines the claim that Islam is superior to all other beliefs. Execution is still sometimes employed – even in the form of murder by a relative or acquaintance – but if converts to Christianity can be silenced through fear it achieves the same goal of presenting Islam as incontrivertable in Islamic society.

Miller's Anglican commitment is also revealed in his next recommendation, which is to *use the liturgical calendar*. I must admit that I found this chapter the least convincing as a major strategy for converts. Miller follows this theme with what seems to me a far more relevant matter: *the need for the Christian church to communicate with the convert's family*. This, he reasons, may seem to make the convert vulnerable but in reality will not because the family is less likely to act against the convert if it knows that there is a community of people watching over the convert. It will also show respect for the importance of family in Islamic culture and empower the convert to share his or her faith rather than hide it. The next section emphasises the need to *teach converts how different from the Islamic portrayal of God is the Christian and biblical picture*. Converts tend to bring their Islamic assumptions to Christianity of a god who is impersonal and aloof. Miller does not discuss the debate about whether Christians and Muslims 'worship the same God'. He emphasises the different concepts of God in His relations with humanity but not the similar convictions regarding the Being of God as the one divine Creator. He next turns to the theme of *a covenant relationship with God*. Islam has at its heart the idea that God has made a covenant with Islamic society (the *Ummah*) mediated by Muhammed. To become a Christian is to repudiate this basic relationship in favour of the New Covenant with the People of God mediated by Christ. A fundamental reorientation is thus involved and must be taken profoundly and seriously. It is a passage from spiritual darkness to light.

Miller follows on with a *practical issue of difference – that in Islam money defines a relationship with a patron, rather than with work as in the West*. Converts often regard a Christian who has influenced them as a new patron and so make requests for help that seem very inappropriate to a westerner. Harm can be caused by the approach, as well as by its blunt rejection, so that Christians working with converts from Islam need care to avoid both the appearance of becoming a patron and the personal rejection of a convert because of what seems a rather unchristian concern to be given favour. Another practical issue follows: *the* **C***hurch must be a genuine family of love*. Muslims take seriously that their religion creates a brotherhood. The Church often speaks highly of Christian relationships while living at a much lower level of friendship and mutual care, hence Muslim background converts may be deeply disturbed by their experience of Christian fellowship. Miller's final little chapter concerns *the value or otherwise of apologetics*. His experience is that most Muslim background converts are more moved by a good experience of Christians than by clever arguments. He recommends that evangelism should be quality-rich in love and kindness, but that Christians should also show they can think about matters Muslims find difficult about Christianity, such as what the Trinity means other than there being three gods.

This book is undoubtedly important because it deals with issues rarely covered in Christian literature and because it does so with a combination of simplicity and great learning. It could perhaps be restructured with clearer sections on matters of belief and practice. Miller's obvious love of liturgical ways will probably irritate more informally-inclined Christians. However, there is here another love of this writer with which all should be impressed – the love of sharing the Christian gospel with Muslims. Christians sharing Christ with their Muslim acquaintances is becoming a high priority as the world becomes a global village. Dr. Miller deserves our gratitude for leading the way for Christians wishing to build good evangelistic and discipling practices towards Muslims.