

# Connections

*The Journal of the WEA Missions Commission*

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a Look at

# GLOBALISATION

and World missions



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June 2003

*The Journal of the WEA Missions Commission*

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# from the editor . . .

by William D. Taylor

March 24, 2003

Welcome to the third issue of “Connections”.  
Confession is good for the soul.

“...I realised  
that  
globalisation’s  
golden goose  
would not lay  
her eggs  
equally  
around the  
world.”

A few short years ago I had no discerning understanding of the term “globalisation”, whether written with an “s” or a “z”. Frankly I related it to the global spread of the Christian church paralleled by the spread of its mission movement—just one legitimate facet of the whole. It was not until I studied Friedman’s most readable book, “The Lexus and the Olive Tree” that I began to understand it. Later I learned that the terms themselves were first utilized in 1960 and its broader use and currency later in the 1980s.

As part of my personal reading and learning discipline, I attempt to apply and discern Friedman’s (and those of others writers) theses to the grid and meat of world missions. While his salient points were well taken and enormously instructive, I disagreed with some of his presuppositions. I had to filter his unabashed Americanism, because even then I realised that globalisation’s golden goose would not lay her eggs equally around the world. And the economic golden straitjackets would not benefit all peoples in the same ways.

Over the last three years I have built my library with key works on globalisation, written by its defenders, its adversaries, its Christian critics, whether in book or essay form. Further reflection, as shared by other WEA MC colleagues, led us in early 2001 to convene a team of gifted and deeply committed women and men with a desire “to think Christianly” as reflective practitioners about globalisation and other themes. That in turn led to a March, 2002, task force chaired by our colleague, Richard Tiplady, which in turn generated a strategic publication, “One World or Many: the Impact of Globalisation on World Mission”, edited by Richard and released in May 2003. The next step was to see if the MC Global Leadership Team would approve that we make this the primary focus theme for the next WEA Missions Commission (WEA/MC) international consultation. And so it has gone.

But what does globalisation mean? In this issue of “Connections”, Richard Tiplady introduces us to a textured yet clear working definition as he engages this complex and controversial theme. Then he and some colleagues offer us a preview and an appetizer of our forthcoming WEA/MC international consultation, “The Impact of Globalisation on World Mission” to be held at Trinity Western University May 31-June 6, 2003.

Donald M. Lewis (“Crux” June 2002/ Vol XXXVIII, No. 2, p. 35) offers Anthony Giddens working definition: “Globalization can thus be defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in

such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa.” This approach characterises “One World or Many”, and you will be challenged by the diverse and thoughtful authors, younger and older, with a rich global perspective on God, the Church, mission and current history. It is another gracious and nourishing banquet presented by this team of reflective practitioners.

During “Canada 2003” we expect some 200 participants from over 50 nations who have been convened by God’s empowering presence at work through the WEA/MC. While the first morning plenary session will focus on the interface of the Christian faith with people of other faiths—Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, animism and secularism—the

**“The Impact of Globalisation on World Mission’ to be held... May 31-June 6, 2003.**

second morning plenary and evenings will give us an eight-session introduction to the driving theme of the consultation. We do not expect people to agree on every thing, and we frankly do not seek that. Neither will we attempt to prescribe some kind of statement on globalisation. Our work in part will be descriptive, even predictive as we listen to and engage with our speakers and their themes, as we corporately discuss the issues raised, as our intense weeklong community comes to God in prayer, as we consider the practical implications of globalisation on world mission. I anticipate another great time of reflection bathed in relationship and

worship—done in the context of community. Is this not the way missiology should be done anyway?

Some of our missions-minded friends and colleagues query our decision to examine this apparently esoteric topic when we should be focusing on the unevangelised world of people and peoples without Christ. Well, we do that also, for that is our passions and it is found at the very DNA of each of our working teams, task forces, and networks. We do listen to the cry of the unevangelised. That vision, with the even greater one of the high Glory of God is what ultimately drives us and all the

networks and task forces that are linked to the WEA/MC. We long to do our part to pack heaven with worshippers of every people, tribe, tongue, nation, time, and geography. At the same time, we sense a need to invite and release the reflective practitioners—those women and men of both action and thought, of heart and mind—to cause us to think missiologically about the massive task entrusted to the Christian church in an overwhelmingly complex, violent and disease-saturated world.

We thus press on, and as always, we invite your responses to any of the first three issues of “Connections”.



William D. Taylor  
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## Another perspective on globalisation

by K Rajendran

Christian missions are at a very historical juncture at this time. It is pausing to rethink its directions. It is good, as it will increase the vigour and recommitment and see if it is understood in its totality in the light of a greater understanding of the Great Commission of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Missions took a great leap forward after the Protestant Reformation (though the Reformers were not very mission minded outside of their own geography and culture). Another leap took place during the mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century after the end of European colonialism in various parts

of the world. Now we are at a period where the Two Thirds World missions own the responsibility of the Great Commission with the rest of the world. We all now work with new definitions and concepts on terms like the cross-cultural missionaries, local missionaries, contextualisation, partnership, theories of dependency, being middlemen in the affluent Christian world, social Gospel, the spiritual needs of men, the way of functioning and many other issues.

Today mission organisations are coming to view the mission activities more

broadly. Some trends may take future missions into tangents, such as ministry exclusively to the down-trodden and the poor. Some, by trying to meet the physical needs end up ignoring the Gospel; others even created parallel governments and have caused local governments to relinquish the responsibility of looking after their own people. This has short-circuited funds from discipling people into meeting the humanitarian needs. We must beware of this tangent.

By all means we should help the suffering people, but the sharing the good news of Christ has to become the focal point or else we will have many Red-Crosses, World Health Organisations (WHO) and UNICEFs created. They have their own great places in serving humanity. God bless them. As missions, the focus has to be clear. At the same time, Christian missions will help in meeting the felt needs of the people to whom they are sent.

Missions are also looking at the humanity as a whole and not just in sections. The missionary community, especially in the last two hundred years, looked at the world just as “unreached peoples”. The “unreached peoples” were often the “uncivilised” tribals somewhere who did not live exactly modern lives as the missionaries. Thus to make the sending constituency emotionally involved, there were stories of “pagans and unreached peoples”. In India, the accessible city dwellers, the thinkers, the policy makers in the civil services, and the influencers of the societies were missed out by many—

with singular exceptions such as William Carey, Joshua and Hannah Marshman at Calcutta and a few others.

Today, the nations that colonised many parts of the world in the past five centuries stand in awe at the things happening in the countries that were under them. In many cases the colonisers created a momentum of changes with or without realising the effects of this momentum. One end result is that the whole world now faces the new phenomena of globalisation. The subdued became the bosses! The introducers of English language became minorities in speaking their own language. There are similar cases with French, Spanish, Portuguese and other language dominators. The world is wired and thus the information monopoly is not the property of some. The percentage of literates grew. Even in India 65% are considered educated, which is not small in number. That is a mega 650 million people compared to 50 million in the 1950s.

There are more young people bursting with energy and intelligence across the world who are our new mission field. For example, India’s 65 % of the population is below 30 years of age. Are missions ready to face the challenge or shall we continue to sing a song of “unreached tribals” beyond the horizon and continue to miss these real challenges? Are the missions and churches equipped enough to meet the challenges of the world with understanding and preparing the kind of high calibre missionaries which needs to be created in the new world? Have

missions and churches recognised the need to partner in a new ways, recruiting, training and looking into the new needs of the challenges of missions? Shouldn't the affluent churches and the countries look at the new ventures in partnership with the emerging nations?

Shouldn't churches across the globe realise that the foreigners in their homeland once were oceans away, and are now unusually accessible to be reached with the Gospel. India has its restrictions on expatriate mission workers, but could not the churches and missions focus on Indians in the UK, USA, Fiji, Australia and some other

nations? The millions of Africans across the world are accessible if the churches wake up and start dreaming anew. Shouldn't that be the new mission? Should not the Church continue to send specially trained missionaries but also equip and mobilise the whole Church as neighbourhood missionaries?

We are in a new day in missions, my friends. Think on these things and start planning on the God given opportunities to take the good news of Christ in many new ways that will affect the globalised world. God bless you as you start mulling over these issues. May you be a blessing to the nations.



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## Letter to the Editor



### Member Care

Just know that I have read the last, or more truly, the first two issues of “*Connections*” from cover to cover. “*Connections*” will precipitate critical thinking. The issue on “member care” led me to dig out the invaluable “Too Valuable to Lose” and do some further serious reflection. The talk is good and indeed there’s so much talk on member care that I only hope gets to the grass roots! For now the critical thinking is hope giving. I reserve my other comments till I see what you got on your next cover page, and don’t forget, I appreciate your labor!

Continue to send me “*Connections*”.

**--Peter Akanimoh, Nigeria, West Africa.**

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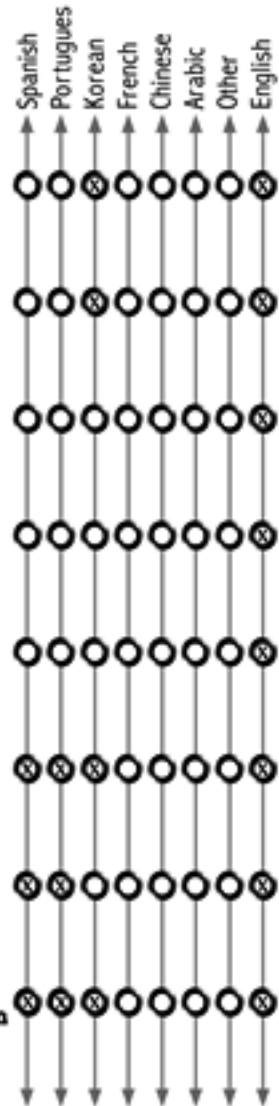
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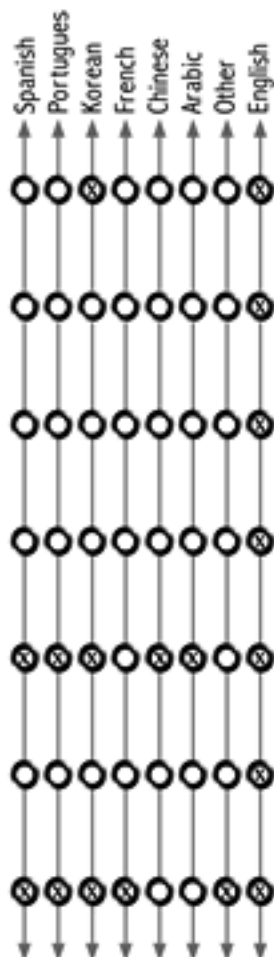
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# One World or Many? Globalisation and world mission

by Richard Tiplady

## Introduction

“Globalisation has, with just reason, become a dirty word. Still, it’s important to distinguish between the multinational might that force-feeds the world of Kylie and Britney, and the healthy cross-pollination of the global village”.

“Globalisation refers to increasing global interconnectedness,...and also influence in turn, other parts of the world. It also refers to an increasing sense of a single global whole.”

In two short sentences, music journalist Neil Spencer sums up the different understandings of globalisation that underpin this book. On the one hand, globalisation is a dirty word. Memories of the protests and riots at the World Trade Organisation meetings in Seattle in 1999, and the G8 summit in Genoa in 2001, conjure in our minds a sense that globalisation is just another word for empire. Western corporations are taking over the commercial and cultural spheres just as effectively as did the empires of previous centuries. Western music and clothing styles are becoming a global norm. And yet, on the other hand, globalisation allows singers and musicians such as Colombia’s Shakira, India’s Midival Punditz, and Senegal’s Labi Siffre to reach previously unreached Western audiences.

At the WEA/MC consultation in Canada, to be held in June 2003, a new book will be launched in the “globalisation of mission” series entitled “One World Or Many? Globalisation and world mission”, its focus is fairly obvious.

But what do we mean by “globalisation”? It’s a word that is thrown around easily, a code word for the state of the world today, a cipher for contemporary trends.

Those who have written for this book were asked to think of globalisation in the following terms:

Globalisation refers to increasing global interconnectedness, so that events and developments in one part of the world are affected by, have to take account of, and also influence in turn, other parts of the world. It also refers to an increasing sense of a single global whole.

This global interconnected whole manifests itself in many different areas of human life. We are probably most familiar with it in terms of economics. Global trading arrangements, negotiated through GATT and its successor the WTO, shape the financial destiny of every nation. It is not just mission that is “from everywhere to everywhere” – so is the distribution of products to the markets of the world. The financial capital markets move billions of dollars or pounds or marks or yen or franks around the world each day, not because they are paying for anything that might be called “real” goods, but simply to take advantage of marginal differences in interest and currency exchange rates. National and regional government bodies court large foreign corporations, hoping through tax breaks and other incentives to attract their capital and their factories, and the jobs and income that accompany them. We are also familiar with globalisation in political terms. The United Nations is (sometimes) seen as a suitable debating chamber for the world’s nations to reach mutually acceptable decisions and to govern their actions. But the impact of

globalisation is also evident in many other areas of human life – in the huge unstoppable migrations of humanity around the globe; in the ubiquity of global brands like Nike, McDonalds and Coca-Cola, in the global reach of the media, and the far-reaching impact of technological developments like the internet and mobile (cell) phones.

### **Right here, right now**

So globalisation includes a lot of things. But how has this single interconnected world arisen?

Estimates of when globalisation started vary. Some suggest it has been developing since the dawn of history, as human societies first learned to trade and exchange both goods and ideas. Others argue that it is closely tied to the emergence of capitalism and the modern era. A further contention is that it is much more recent, and that globalisation is a characteristic of a post-industrial era, a phenomenon of disorganised and highly mobile capital. But whichever may be the case, all arguments accept that there has been a sudden recent acceleration in globalisation in recent years.

Why the acceleration? Probably because of a variety of factors. Technological developments have created the opportunity. Travel is not quite instantaneous yet, but I can be anywhere in the world within 24 hours of writing these words. The words themselves can be anywhere in the world in seconds, thanks to email and the web. Economic factors have taken advantage of the possibilities provided by technology. Corporations have expanded into new and emerging markets, and have shifted

production around the world, in the cause of increased profits and a higher share price. Politically, the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in the late 1980s and early 1990s signalled the end of the bi-polar worldview created by the Cold War, and allowed the emerging multidirectional “new world order” to become more visible. Some have suggested that we have moved from the Berlin Wall to a No Walls world, although I am not sure it is as simple as that. Overall, we can say that there is no one single driver of globalisation. It is rather the outcome of a combination of factors, working together to produce this new sense of global interconnectedness.

Some would dispute whether it is that new. The so-called “world” religions of Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism linked together major regions of the world in the early Middle Ages and before, creating civilisations geographically far larger than most of today’s nation-states. The European empires of the “high” colonial period of 1880-1920 oversaw a massive amount of global trade that declined considerably during the first half of the twentieth century, the era of Depression and protectionism. But medieval civilisations like Christendom knew very little of what was going on elsewhere in the world, and the nineteenth-century colonial empires were controlled and dominated by European nation-states. We should draw a distinction between “internationalisation”, which includes mechanisms to facilitate communication and co-operation between nation-states (which remain dominant), and “globalisation”, wherein the nation-states

are but one group of “players” in the world, alongside trans-national corporations, financial capital markets, free-trade areas and agreements, trans-national political entities like the United Nations and the European Union, and the many informal and less-visible networks of global connectedness that shape our lives.

### **One world or many?**

The book’s title reflects a key question with regard to globalisation. As I have already noted, it is often assumed that globalisation is simply the latest form of Western or (even worse?) American domination by another name. This is held to be the case whether we are talking about economic or cultural domination.

This is undoubtedly an aspect of globalisation. But what makes globalisation more than just a handy synonym for Westernisation is that it includes other things as well. Globalisation is about global interconnectedness, not global American-ness. It includes the global anti-capitalist protest movements that oppose economic globalisation, not just the trans-national corporations and Western governments that are trying to take advantage of it.

The now-famous term “Jihad Vs McWorld” symbolises part of this reality. The spread of Western values and culture is not welcome in many parts of the world, and local cultural resources are drawn on to resist the perceived intrusion of foreign ways of thinking and behaviour. This can be manifested in religious fundamentalisms of various sorts (just as Christian fundamentalism attempted

to resist an encroaching modernity in earlier generations). Ethnic identities can also be reinvigorated as suitable means of resistance.

But the situation is more complex than the simple “either/or” suggested by the term “Jihad vs. McWorld”. Globalisation is not a one-way street, running from the West to the Rest. An interconnected world allows ideas and products from every part of the world to reach every other part of the world. And when they get to their new destination, ideas are not imbibed wholesale. They are adapted to fit the local situation. This phenomenon has been termed “glocalisation”.

### **Baltis and Bollywood, Pokémon and Panasonic, Feng Shui and Falun Gong**

As well as localising reactions, the idea that we are seeing the emergence of a bland, uniform commercial culture based on Western ideas is further undermined by the observation that other cultures are also using the processes of globalisation to expand their reach. Non-Westernisation is as much a feature of globalisation as Westernisation is.

So the most popular meal ordered in restaurants in the UK is the Chicken Tikka Masala. The balti, a Pakistani curry, is also a favourite. The popularity of South Asian food in the UK is shown by the existence of the “Curry Mile” in Manchester, and similar large groups of restaurants in cities around the UK. The Chinese takeaway in the West is ubiquitous. And this movement and adaptation of food styles is not new. Consider that symbol of quintessential Englishness, the cup of tea. Tea is of

course not grown in Britain, but came from China and India (where the British began farming it in 1835 to break the Chinese monopoly, so it’s not that Indian either). Maybe in future a curry will be called an “English”, not an “Indian”?

The Indian film industry, “Bollywood”, is not only bigger than Hollywood, it has plans for global expansion, as shown by the success of recent films like “*Monsoon Wedding*” and the Oscar-nominated “*Lagaan*”. Ang Lee’s film “*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*” was a massive international hit, despite being a Chinese language film with subtitles. Chinese cultural influence on the West can be seen in the popularity of *feng shui*<sup>1</sup> in interior and garden design, and the interest shown in the persecuted Falun Gong religious movement. Even Hollywood itself, the ultimate visual purveyor of the American Dream, shows signs of sharing in this re-shuffle of cultural influence, as some of its biggest studios are now foreign-owned, such as Sony (Japanese) and Vivendi Universal (French).

Pokémon, a cartoon whose rise to global domination of children’s imaginations in 1999-2001 was spearheaded by a yellow, electric-shock-inducing mouse called Pikachu, is Japanese in style and origin from start to finish. Movies, computer

“Ethnic identities can also be reinvigorated as suitable means of resistance.”

games, trading cards and figurines tumbled over one another in a marketing *blitzkrieg* that swept children's allowances and parent's credit cards before it. Japanese goods also dominate the home-entertainment market, and their cars are produced and bought worldwide.

Glocalisation describes the way in which ideas and structures that circulate globally are adapted and changed by local realities. So while Wal-Mart sells Heinz and Del Monte products in its stores worldwide, it also pays close attention to local tastes. The Wal-Mart store in Shenzhen, China, for example, sells chicken feet, Ma-Ling brand stewed pork ribs, and Gulong brand pickled lettuce. About 85% of the products come from 14000 Chinese suppliers.

McDonalds, that supposed pioneer of homogenised consumption, shows similar approaches to its local marketing. One finds numerous examples of adaptation to local tastes, such as the McBurrito in Mexico, McLahua sauce in Bolivia (a local chilli sauce found on every meal table), beer on sale in French McDonalds restaurants, and the Maharaja Mac in India (a vegetarian version of the Big Mac for a country where beef or pork consumption is risky, to say the least). McDonalds recognises that it is viewed by many as an example of American cultural and economic imperialism, and asserts in response that it is instead a confederation of locally-owned companies. It even ran adverts in France that poked fun at Americans and their food choices, emphasising that its food was made in France, by French suppliers, using French products. Even when the American identity of

McDonalds is undeniable, it produces reactions that reinforce local identities. When McDonalds first entered the Philippines, Filipino hamburger chains responded by marketing their products on the basis of local taste (whereas they had previously promoted them on the basis of their Americanness).

Now global corporations like Wal-Mart and McDonalds don't adapt to local preferences because of a philosophical commitment to global diversity. They do so because they have discovered that local tastes are not easily changed or homogenised, but instead show considerable resilience in the face of 'global' flows of ideas and products. So it is possible to conclude that "neither global processes nor modernisation are expressions of a westernisation that removes cultural differences .... localisation is an essential feature of global processes and modernisation" and that what we see are "multiple manifestations of global forces operating in local worlds"<sup>2</sup>.

### **Many voices**

The new book aims to embody the principles of global missiology, featuring different writers from different parts of the world. If globalisation includes the whole world, then by definition any Christian response to globalisation has to include voices from different parts of that world.

But there are not just different cultural perspectives on globalisation. There are different theological perspectives too. Different writers within the book have different opinions about the nature of globalisation, and its ethical and



missiological implications. We have not harmonised these views, but include them within the book as testimony to these divergences. As the one who led the Missions Commission Working Group that looked at the issue of globalisation and mission, and who edited the various chapters, my view of globalisation is probably more sanguine than some of those represented in the book. Both their voices and those that incline more to my own views need to be heard and understood.

This diversity of views might trouble some of us who believe that there must be a single “biblical” response to globalisation. Our discussions as a group of writers showed us that there are different theological themes that can be applied to our subject. Perhaps our pre-existing theological perspectives have shaped our view of cultural and historical trends. Perhaps our pre-existing cultural preferences have shaped the theological themes we wish to emphasise. Perhaps it is a bit of both. The outcome is that, within this book you will find different views expressed, passionately held, but motivated throughout by a desire to be true to the Bible, to honour God and his intention for his creation.

If you come from a tradition that is suspicious or hostile to “the world”, that sees all historical trends as manifestations of the “spirit of the age”, or which views globalisation as neo-colonialism (and all empires as “Babylon”), then you are going to have a hard time seeing anything good in globalisation. You will probably concentrate on the negative aspects of globalisation (and, as the book illustrates,

there are many to focus on), and it will be seen as something to be resisted. This will be especially true for those who equate globalisation with Western domination. Evangelicals have worked hard in the last 30 years to become more sensitive to the cultures of those among whom we work, and rightly so. Likewise, those who see globalisation as something that God is doing to make world evangelisation easier, probably need to curb their enthusiasm a bit. Globalisation is a complex set of phenomena that defy easy analysis.

My theological understanding of culture has shaped how I edited and produced this book. As human beings made in the image of God, we are capable of cultural innovations that are good. As fallen people, all our actions and thoughts are corrupted throughout by sin. But the image of God remains. We may be entirely in need of redemption, but we are not entirely evil. Human cultures are no different to this – as products of human thought and action, they are both good and evil, reflecting both God’s image and also our sinfulness. And just as Jesus said that the weeds would be left with the wheat until the harvest, so will good and evil co-exist until the end of history. Some contributions within this book concentrate on the fallenness manifested in globalisation, identifying things to be resisted in the name of Jesus Christ. Other writers take a less judgemental view, simply observing the trends and considering how we should change in response. There is no easy answer to whether resistance or adaptation is correct. It probably depends on the context and the circumstances. Jesus is both saviour and judge of

globalisation as much as of any other culture. Individual chapters may emphasise one aspect or another. Hopefully the whole presents a more nuanced picture.

### **Navigating the book**

Globalisation impacts every part of human life. This includes our cultural and religious existences. As whole human beings embedded in communities, globalisation has an effect on every aspect of our lives. And so the book aims to take account of this breadth of impact. Some chapters look at broad social trends that all people everywhere are being affected by. Others consider the impact of globalisation on specific regions or issues, trying to embody or “enflesh” the big issues into specific sets of circumstances or situations. And still others consider the implications of globalisation on issues that we usually think of as “missiology” or “theology”. Not that we want to reinforce this distinction unnecessarily. The whole of life is missiological, since the whole of life should be directed to the service of God. There is no part of human life over which Christ is not Lord. Every chapter in this book is missiological, even if not every topic addressed is usually considered as missiology “proper”.

Following this introduction of the forthcoming publication, Section 1 identifies the main features of globalisation. Ruth Valerio looks at the central economic aspects, and discusses the concerns this should arise for anyone

concerned about issues of poverty and justice. The “McWorld” and “Jihad” polarities are neatly repackaged by Sam George as “technoculture and “terrorculture”, which as he notes can both be seen as characteristic of youth culture around the world. The final chapter in this section, by David Lundy, explores the pluralisation that results from globalisation, neatly sidestepping the easy association of globalisation with increased Westernised homogeneity.

Section 2 looks at how globalisation is reflected in specific issues or areas of the world. Miriam Adeney makes a plea that

“...the weeds would be left with the wheat until the harvest, so will good and evil co-exist until the end of history.”

concerns for ethnicity should not be seen simply as a reaction to the dominance of Western culture, but as a crucial element in the God-intended diversity of creation. Ruth Valerio provides a second chapter, this time looking at the impact of globalisation on the environment. Steve Fouch looks at health as a global issue, and presents a strong case for a re-emphasis on the historical missionary commitment to health and medical work. Rose Dowsett looks at “those who hold up half the sky”, and the ways the women, who are often marginalised in their societies, are especially affected by globalisation. Wanyeki Mahiaini provides a useful analysis of the impact of globalisation on one particular continent, Africa, showing how the macro-issues we have identified are working out in one particular region. To conclude this section, Fiona Wilson presents the results

of a survey undertaken by Tearfund of its partners around the world, looking at grassroots perceptions of the impacts of globalisation.

Section 3 looks at the implications of globalisation for areas usually included under the heading of “mission”. Bulus Galadima reflects on the place of religion in a globalising world, and the implications for Christian mission. Marcelo Vargas makes a strong plea for local contextual sensitivity in response to global homogenising pressures. We have two chapters on the implications of globalisation for the Church. Alex Araujo asks the Church to present itself

as an alternative to that offered by globalisation, and Ros Johnson looks at the opportunities that globalisation offers to local churches in terms of their own missionary activity.

The concluding chapter by David Tai-Woong Lee and Steve Moon asks us to consider God’s own globalising intentions in a diverse world united in praise to him. This will only come about through robust world evangelisation, and a strong commitment to global missiology. The ultimate aim of this book, and of all who worked to bring it into being, is that we might be privileged to play a small part in bringing this about.



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<sup>1</sup> There is no truth in the claim that Feng Shui is Chinese for “tidy your room!”.

<sup>2</sup> Both quotations taken from Sverker Finnström, Postcoloniality and the Postcolony - theories of the global and the local, Working Paper on Anthropology #7, University of Uppsala, Sweden. Available at <http://65.107.211.206/post/poldiscourse/finnstrom/finnstrom2.html>

# Mission in a Borderless World

by Sam George

*Oh, my shoes are Japanese  
These trousers English if you please  
The red cap on my head is Russian  
In spite of all my heart is Indian.<sup>1</sup>*

“The process of globalisation has beckoned an unprecedented intermingling of various cultures, producing new complex hybrid cultures, and has intensified our search for identity.”

The spirit of this song has never been more accurate than in the era of globalisation. It reveals two basic human issues: assimilation and identity. The process of globalisation has beckoned an unprecedented intermingling of various cultures, producing new complex hybrid cultures, and has intensified our search for identity. The common metaphor for this phenomenon is “melting pot”. It is true of fusion music, food, film, fashion, etc. But in other areas not much “melting” is taking place, instead many continue to uphold various cultural influences, thus, evolving into a multicultural or hybrid self. Veiled within it is the high volume flow between various cultures and the imperviousness of the cultural boundaries.

Today, we live in a world where borders are merging and new ones are emerging. The fall of the Berlin wall is symbolic of our times where many walls are crumbling even as we erect new distinctions between human societies. From the early days of Christianity, “border” was used as a metaphor for missions. We worship a God who crossed borders to enter human realm; God charged His disciples to cross borders to go to the ends of the world. The mission enterprise throughout its history sailed across many oceans crossing many borders to reach people everywhere with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Missionaries have crossed the barriers of geographic, linguistic and cultural boundaries. The exploration of new frontiers is as old as missions itself. But as our world is becoming increasingly borderless, what is our new metaphor for

missions? What does it mean to be a missionary in a borderless world? How will the new borders change the missionary task?

### **Borders: Where is the line?**

Two of my favourite pastime destinations while living in America contain the word border. One is a bookstore “Borders” - a popular book retail chain and you can tell of my love for reading. And the other is “On the Border” - a Mexican restaurant chain serving spicy food (closer to Indian taste than anything else you can get there). Both of these borders provide food for my mind and stomach!

I have walked, driven, sailed and flown across national borders. Some borders have only boundary markers, while others have barbed wire fences and still others walls or natural dividers. At some borders there are lots of commercial activities, some are deserted and many are armed and heavily guarded. Throughout human history borders have given the geographical regions an identity, its people a sense of security, a larger social reality and means of economic activities. The geographical boundaries were governed by different systems, and the Church of Jesus Christ struggled, prevailed and thrived through it all.

When natural resources or agriculture was the centre of life and economic activities, border was defined distinctively and vigorously defended. But with industrialisation, the socio-economic centre of society shifted and many borders either disappeared or were redrawn. Now as we enter into

information era, borders are being redefined afresh, an understanding that is absolutely essential to the missionary enterprise in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Border Crossing: Across the line**

The term border crossing in some contexts tends to have a negative connotation because of trafficking, illegal migration and smuggling. But these are not the only things that are crossing border these days. Money, images, ideas, arms, terror, diseases, migrants and technology have gained tremendous mobility transcending all kinds of borders. And most fascinating is the relentless flow of information around the globe.

To work in the software Technology Park in Bangalore is like crossing an international border. Indian IT workers undergo instant transformation in their accent and attitude. They are trained to think globally and work locally, living in two worlds everyday and changing both at the same time. Similar and other kinds of border crossings will be characteristics of the world in this new era. Border crossing is a transformative act, not only to the person that crosses the line, but also the regions that they come from and go into.

The borders are becoming more permeable. The increasing flow between cultures indicates dissolution of the link between culture and place even as it establishes new linkages that are not geographically limited. The process of globalisation has made domains of economics, technology and culture more important than geography. The latest technology, transportation and economy

have caused the “death of distance” and time/space compression.

### **Borderlessness: Blurring of boundaries**

On a political map, boundaries may still be intact. But in the business or culture map, boundaries are not that distinct or permanent. Trans-national companies, cross border generations, global consumers, virtual corporations, multilateral alliances are blurring the national boundaries. “Living without boundaries” is not only a slogan, but also an ideology of our times. The emergence of interlinked individuals and economies bring with it the erosion of national sovereignty. The distinctions that existed once and were upheld forcefully are surely fading. This leads to formation of globally spread, globally aware, globally shaped and globally influencing communities of global citizens, consumers and workers.

Some early writers identified globalisation as westernisation or more narrowly as Americanisation. But today, globalisation is not about western culture anymore, but a new form of culture that knows no boundaries and is spreading globally. Culture is no more limited to geographical domains, but it is defined by time and technology. Some believe that the Internet and other forms of technology will break down boundaries and create a global platform for communication, community, prosperity and peace. Instead of creating a colossal uniform system, it is helping

celebrate cultural diversity and countering the tendency toward a single world culture. It is concurrently uniting and dividing people. Believe it or not, a massive scale of reorganisation is taking place in the world on the basis of culture, technology and money.

Many view globalisation dialectically as forces of McWorld and Jihad<sup>2</sup> or Lexus and Olive tree<sup>3</sup>, forces of equal strength in opposite direction. One aims to establish universal markets, while the latter is driven by parochial hatred and territorialism or the value of local culture. But in all cases borders are being changed.

**“Culture is no more limited to geographical domains, but it is defined by time and technology.”**

Some have called our times as the knowledge era. The traditional boundaries between disciplines, industries, government and social enterprises are declining and even disappearing. The knowledge era is an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary time. As the borders fade, the lines connecting those entities and capacity of flow between them become crucial. Could this be our metaphor for missions in the knowledge era: “Connectivity and Bandwidth”? Just as the number of connections and flows across the borders are growing rapidly in the areas of culture, technology and economy, what would it take to increase connections and flow of the gospel from Christians to the seeking world?

### **New Borders: Where shall we draw the line?**

As much we would like to believe that old boundaries are disappearing and the world is becoming a homogenous entity, the reality is far from it. Sure, many boundaries are not important anymore, but there is a resurgence of borders. Existing borders are mutating into newer entities. New ones are birthed everyday and some even die. Some struggle to survive, while others thrive.

The context of our mission enterprise today calls for a deeper understanding of the emerging cultures and our ability to incarnate Christ in them. The mission work in the emerging cultures of the borderless world requires us to be a cultural architect, shaping the cultures even as it emerges. We need a generation of leaders who will free themselves from atrophied practices in missions and risk reaching the emerging generation in the power of the Holy Spirit, knowledge of his word, for the glory of God and building up of His kingdom.

Read further on these themes of the emerging cultures like TerrorCulture and TechnoCulture in the World Evangelical Alliance publication *“One world or many: The challenge of Globalization in World Missions”*, “William Carey Library, 2003.”

### **Ministry in a borderless world: Go into all cultures**

The global society is not a unitary society, nor is it an ideological community or a state, but it is a large power network. Shock waves reverberate

around it, casting down empires, transporting massive quantities of people, materials and messages, and finally, threatening the ecosystem of the entire planet. The Church of Jesus Christ and mission enterprise is not exempt from these ripples or tidal waves. Unless we understand some of these undercurrents of our times, our ministries will fail to have lasting legacies.

Most of us live and serve in organisations designed from Newtonian concept of the world. But the world has quickly changed into a holistic, dynamic and inextricably connected system in which everything seems to affect everything else. It is based

*“...One world or many: The challenge of Globalization in World Missions...”*

on systemic thinking, networks and relationships. Chaos is preferred over order, freedom over control, complexity over linearity, whole over parts. To maximise the talents and abilities of all its members, we must allow participation,

creativity, paradox and radical empowerment. Are we ready for these changes? Will our organisations take a plunge into the new world?

We must recognise that the current global conflicts are not merely political or economic, but also cultural and ideological. The eventual victory lies not in creating a global culture or eradicating poverty or a peaceful co-existence. True victory will go neither to McWorld nor Jihad, but to those who can do what some scholars seem to think

is impossible: resist both the corruption of McWorld and the reactionary impulse of Jihad. This is a ready-made opportunity for Christians to demonstrate the true purpose, power, and meaning of our faith. Are we ready?

In the borderless world, an increased number of ministries will be

**“This is a ready-made opportunity for Christians to demonstrate the true purpose, power, and meaning of our faith.”**

both local and global at the same time (“glocal” as some call it). Although our missionary call stretches to a global horizon, our mission field used to be

geographically, a kind of nearsightedness. Bifocal spectacles would be a good metaphor for glocal mission. Neither lens gives us the whole picture of the world. Our ability to see through both lenses simultaneously and reconceptualize the changing world is

absolutely essential to make Christ relevant in it. So throw away your unifocal and grab a pair of bifocal specs!

Ministries in the new borderless world would call for Christians to be agents of love, compassion, justices, equality and freedom enveloped in the Gospel of Christ. The mission field will not be defined by geophysical borders, but by new cultural borders. The gospel connectivity and flow will determine the nature of mission work. Eventually effectiveness of our missionary task will be determined by our agility for cultural adaptation, mobility of gospel and compatibility with the global missionary enterprise.

Just as the song with which I started this discussion goes beyond external assimilation into heart matters to discover one’s identity, Christian mission in globalised world will require us to dig deeper into our faith, heart longing of people and share Jesus Christ who alone can fill our God-shaped vacuum in our hearts and give us our true identity.



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<sup>1</sup> Song from the Hindi film ‘Sri 420’. Translation mine.

<sup>2</sup> Benjamin Barber, *Jihad and McWorld*, Times Books, 1995.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Friedmann, *The Lexus and the Olive tree*,



# A World Gone Bananas Globalisation And Economics

by Ruth Valerio

“Each one opens us up to different aspects of the complicated world of economic globalisation...”

*Writing this article makes me reflect on the countries that I have touched today. My jeans come from Morocco and my computer keyboard was made in Germany whilst the screen is from China. We have a Japanese woman staying with us, taking a break from work to travel round the world, and I talked today to friends who are moving to Tanzania. My t-shirt comes from Portugal; my coffee from Costa Rica and my banana from the Windward Islands.*

All of these products have a story to tell: who they were made or produced by and how they travelled round the world to reach my house. Each one opens us up to different aspects of the complicated world of economic globalisation: my society’s move from producer to consumer and the benefits that has brought; Export Processing Zones; the role of technology in economics; the flight of companies chasing the “bottom dollar”; the mobile global elite; the intensification of winners and losers... . However, perhaps the one with the greatest story to tell is the humble banana.

The Banana is one of the basic foods of today: indeed the banana is the world’s most popular fruit. Yet, my parents’ generation almost never ate them, so what has happened in the world to make bananas such an ordinary part of life?

Traditionally, Britain and the rest of the European Union bought their bananas from their former colonies, particularly the Windward Islands which have become

almost totally reliant on the industry. Britain invested into the original plantations and Geest, the company that buys and sells most of the bananas, is a British company. The Lome Convention in 1975 formalised the EU's commitment to continue to import bananas from the Windward Islands.

However, 70% of the bananas involved in international trade are controlled by the big three American companies: Chiquita, Dole, Del Monte. Not liking the EU protectionist policy on bananas, America complained to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) who ruled in favour of the USA. When the EU refused to back down, the US struck back and put import tariffs, in the end worth \$191.4m, on EU exports. The American complaint to the WTO came just days after Chiquita donated US\$500,000 to the Democratic Party, and the Republican-controlled Congress enforced the tariffs after Chiquita donated US\$350,000 to them.

The situation today is one where the overwhelming majority of the bananas produced for export are done so in appalling circumstances. The plantation workers live in poverty. In Ecuador, for example, the workers are paid just US\$1 a day and some independent producers get only 3 pence per pound, which does not even cover costs. On average, the producer gets only 5% of the price of a banana.

Vast quantities of chemicals are used to treat the banana during production. Plantations in Central America apply 30 kg of active ingredients per hectare per year – this is more than ten times the

average for intensive farming in industrialised countries. In Costa Rica, three-quarters of banana workers suffer from skin lesions and 20% of the male workers became sterile due to handling pesticides whilst entire communities suffer from indiscriminate aerial crop spraying.

The impact on the environment need hardly be stated, let alone the fact that massive deforestation has taken place to provide the land for the plantations.

The effect that all these chemicals have on those of us who eat them is something many worry about. It is interesting to note the response of a banana worker in Guatemala on a Chiquita plantation on being asked if he ever ate the bananas he produced: “Good Lord, no!... People in places like this don't eat the fruit they cut. I guess we know better”.

The story of the banana sitting in my fruit bowl gives a helpful insight into the complex web of economic globalisation. Whilst leading to inevitable oversimplifications, it is useful at this juncture to outline its main facets and begin to explore some of the implications for mission.

### **1. Economic globalisation is based on the principle of free trade, market capitalism.**

This will hardly be news for most of us reading this, but, in case it is, let us explore it further. Economic globalisation works on the policies of

**“People in places like this don't eat the fruit they cut.”**

trade liberalisation, privatisation and financial market deregulation. It is believed that free trade between nations, with no protective barriers, is the most effective way of increasing global wealth and lifting poorer countries out of their poverty.

This global system only works where there is growth and so the economics of globalisation is profit-driven to the extreme. This drive towards continual growth has led to the emergence, and now dominance, of the Trans National Corporations (TNCs) so that, now, of the world's 100 largest economies, fifty are TNCs. Corporate mergers and acquisitions have thus become a familiar feature of the globalisation landscape. Indeed, the annual number of such mergers and acquisitions doubled

**"...surely we need powerful trans-national Christian agencies."**

between 1990 and 1997 when the total value reached US\$236 billion.

Another aspect of this growth-driven economy is currency speculation and foreign direct investment (FDI). Some say a billion, some say 2 trillion, dollars is turned over each day on the currency markets. As Giddens says, "...in the new global electronic economy, fund managers, banks, corporations, as well as millions of individual investors, can transfer vast amounts of capital from one side of the world to another at the click of a mouse. As they do so, they can destabilise what might have seemed rock-solid economies – as happened in East Asia". Flows of foreign direct investment (FDI) in 1995

reached US\$315 billion, almost a six-fold increase over the level for 1981 – 85: over the same period world trade increased by little more than a half.

Before going any further let us stop and ask ourselves how far the values of globalisation are impacting our churches and missions work. Chester summarises it well:

It is tempting in the face of globalisation to suppose that the church requires corresponding global structures. It is tempting to suppose that the priority of the hour is to strengthen global institutions and create global networks. With globalisation concentrating power in trans-national corporations and international institutions, surely we need powerful trans-national Christian agencies. We need access to the national and global media. We need influence in the halls of power. We need national evangelistic campaigns, mega-churches and a powerful political voice. We want to think big.

How we judge success is a question we must all grapple with in the face of our society's tendency to judge everything numerically and financially. It can be all too easy to listen too much to the influential and disregard the views of those on the margins.

## **2. The rules for how economic globalisation works are governed by the World Trade Organisation.**

The WTO hit the headlines in 1999 when its meeting in Seattle was thrown into disarray by protestors and its trade round stopped by leaders from the

South. Up until this time it was a little known organisation that gained little attention.

The WTO has within its constitution the potential for working to benefit those who are poor. Its Generalised System of Preferences does, at least on paper, recognise that the poorest and least developed nations need positive discrimination, even if recognition alone is not enough. WTO decision-making is via consensus and so is potentially more democratic.

However...

### **3. The WTO has problems**

The reality is that the wealthy countries, particularly the US, Canada, Japan and the EU, dominate it. Its headquarters are in Geneva, Switzerland, which has one of the highest costs of living in the world. There are mountains of paperwork and legal documents attached to any negotiation and a country needs a host of specialised experts and lawyers to be able to deal with these. The wealthy countries are able to have people there permanently whilst poorer countries cannot afford anyone. For example, Japan has 25 representatives while Bangladesh has only one, and over half the least developed country members have none at all. Discussions are thus weighted from the start.

Perhaps the WTO's most significant weakness is that free trade is its sacred cow (as with the IMF and World Bank) and is given priority above all else, at the expense of issues such as the

environment and human rights. Joseph Stiglitz, the former Chief Economist at the World Bank, has said that they take "...privatisation and trade liberalisation as ends in themselves, rather than means to more sustainable, equitable and democratic growth". WTO rulings can even go against laws that are adopted to comply with international agreements. Other examples are where it has prevented legislation to ban cosmetics testing on animals; protected companies trading with Myanmar and prevented Thailand, concerned at the increase in young smokers, from banning cigarette imports. It is a sad fact that the WTO has only once upheld a ruling in favour of social or environmental issues.

The meaning given to "free trade" though seems to change chameleon-like according to the interests of the wealthy. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is a major example and the main reason why the WTO might yet collapse. CAP gives enormous subsidies to European farmers whilst demonstrating great reluctance to open up markets to agricultural produce from the developing world. As the subsidies encourage over-production, excess produce is dumped on other, poorer countries who then see the price of their national produce slump, which affects the livelihoods of the farmers. UNCTAD predicts that the elimination of agricultural subsidies would result in developing countries being better off by around US\$19.8 billion. So far as free trade is concerned, the wealthier countries fail to practice what they preach.

#### **4. Economic globalisation is dominated by the TNCs.**

Our case study of bananas gave us an obvious example of how this works, but this domination affects producers the world over. TNCs are often larger, financially, than the countries in which they operate and hence can control how they do things. This leads to the ‘race for the bottom dollar’, which pushes aside human rights and environmental concerns.

This is demonstrated by Klein who exposes the free-trade zones in countries such as Indonesia, China, Mexico, Vietnam and the Philippines. These Export Processing Zones (EPZs) are the areas in which consumer goods are made and they operate tariff-free: no import or export duties and sometimes no income or property taxes either. It is thought that there are around 1000 EPZs operating in seventy countries, employing roughly 27 million workers. The workday is long (up to sixteen hours) and the workers are mostly young women working for contractors from Korea, Taiwan or Hong Kong who are usually filling orders for companies based in the USA, UK, Japan, Germany or Canada. The working conditions are very much below standard, with the minimum wage seldom reached, and trade unions are banned. The EPZs are designed to attract foreign investors with the hope that they will contribute to lasting development in the chosen country. Thus the tax-free incentives are offered, as well as other things such as, sometimes, the cooperation of a military to suppress any labour unrest. The reality, of course, is that foreign investment rarely touches the country

and the EPZs operate as “off-shore” tax havens benefiting only the companies involved; companies which fly-off to another country as soon as conditions in the EPZs turn against them.

With the WTO only interested in free trade, there are no internationally respected laws to govern TNCs and ensure they are putting people and the environment before their profit-driven shareholders.

Although not all TNCs are American, in the minds of many, globalisation equals Americanisation: the creation of a ‘one Disney McWorld’. This is certainly true of the church. As Peter Harris says, “When you go to a church in a major world city, chances are you could be in LA for all the cultural distinctiveness there is to the theology or forms of worship, whatever the language”. The tools of the internet have enabled Americans to disseminate widely their own literature and courses, often at the expense of other people developing their own material that would reflect their individual cultures more adequately. Northern thinking thus dominates the church because, to put it crudely, they have the money and resources to be able to do that.

This inevitably affects mission thinking and practice since priorities largely come out of that agenda. So, a South African friend living and working in a township told me of the frustrations he had with the “AD2000 and Beyond Movement”. He saw the push from northern mission centres as being of a globalising order, carrying the implication that the rest of them had to

accept the priority of AD2000 missiology. The economics of it made it difficult to resist or ignore and countries in the south tended to lose the theological space to frame their own questions and make their own contribution to global mission. He spoke of contending against the hegemony of AD2000.

The mission scene as we have it today has developed under the old system when the economically wealthier countries today were the big mission senders. However, the church is now strongest in the predominantly poorer countries and we need to provide a new economic system in the worldwide church that encourages missionaries from poorer countries whose churches cannot afford to send them. Perhaps one way would be to change from the colonial system, whereby missionaries were supported by the sending church, and adopt Paul's principle of being supported by the receiving church.

The other side of the 'trips of perspective' that we saw earlier are, what Schut calls, 'reverse missions': when Christians from poorer countries live and teach in the wealthier nations. It is imperative that those from poorer countries are heard and that those from more wealthy churches/mission agencies find the humility to sit at the feet of these others and let themselves be taught by them. This would enable us to discover the positive side to globalisation. David Smith expresses this well when he says that, ".....globalisation allows the opportunity for the wisdom of the whole

church to be brought together. The contribution of the church from the south will bring great wisdom and insight to the global church. Various cultural perspectives will always add refreshing ways of looking at God and the Gospel".

### **6.Those who do not have the resources to participate are pushed into poverty**

- 1.3 billion people have to live on less than US\$1 a day and more than 800 million people do not have enough to eat.
- A Nike quilted jacket costs £100 in a London shop, but only 51p of that goes to the Bangladeshi women who make it.
- In 1976 Switzerland was 50 times richer than Mozambique. In 1997 it was 500 times richer.
- The top 1% of households in the US has more wealth than the entire bottom 95%.
- Whilst financial transactions have been growing fast, 2/3 of them are between the few already-rich countries of the OECD.

A key debate focuses on how far economic globalisation can be blamed for the appalling situation our world is in today. It is inarguable that market capitalism has led to increasing global wealth as the proportion of GDP traded internationally has risen from 5% in 1946 to 25% now. The Sachs/Warner study from Harvard University found that developing countries with open economies grew by 4.5% a year in the 1970s and 1980s, while those with closed economies grew by 0.7% a year.

There are those, therefore, who believe that markets are the way of creating wealth and that those who would stop markets acting efficiently (by making a special case for poor countries) will in the end destroy the wealth of those nations. Take, for example, flower growers in Uganda, producing flowers for export to Europe, which has now reduced its internal subsidies. It is hard work, but it pays better than subsistence farming. Not only do Europeans get flowers in winter but also the Ugandans eat better and are able to school their children. In other words, it may be a tough option but in the long run joining world markets is the only way to create wealth. Such people also argue that many countries are held back not by unfair terms of trade, but by internal corruption or by the lack of an economic infrastructure which would allow them to deliver the goods in world markets (e.g. education, communication systems, trained labour force, etc.). This side of the debate wants markets to do all the work and no government interference.

However, there are also those who see poverty and increased inequality as endemic to globalisation. These people think in terms of power. They see the gap between rich and poor widening and blame the growth of global capitalism for that gap. In the case of our Ugandan flower growers they would question whether, overall, they are better off. Yes, they might have more money, but they now have to buy the basic goods they would have grown, which are now sold more expensively since demand is high. They are now at the mercy of market prices and the chemicals being used to

grow the flowers are threatening both their lands and their health. They might also ask why there was subsistence farming in the first place.

People on this side of the debate point out that the collapse of communism has led to a much more ruthless kind of capitalism. They see that the way to change the operation of multinationals is by exposing their practices in the press and protesting publicly about their power. This side of the debate wants massive intervention to stop poverty caused by capitalism and partnerships between nation-states, NGO's, Multinationals and Global Agencies to bring about reform.

The debate remains polarised and the arguments are often highly complex and technical. However, one thing is clear: in our increasingly globalised world, the different issues involved in the problem must be seen as part of the wider whole, rather than as separate. As Heslam says, "The interests of the environment, economic growth, security and democracy are diverse but also interconnected and therefore need to be treated together, rather than in isolation".

Technology has ensured that globalisation is here to stay, even if the economically wealthier countries become increasingly protectionist in outlook. Capitalism seems to be the best

**"They see the gap between rich and poor widening and blame the growth of global capitalism for that gap."**

way forward for generating wealth and no viable alternatives are being proposed. The key seems to be in channelling globalisation, rather than demanding its demise: channelling it so that the rights of local people and their environment come before the rights of shareholders to increase their profits. Two things are paramount here: one is the reform of the WTO so that this becomes its overriding principle; the second, interrelated, is the establishment of a system of accountability for corporations whereby they would adopt best practice in their work and be accountable for any environmental and social damage.

The implications that the link between economic globalisation and poverty carries for mission seem obvious. Those Christians and churches reaping the benefits of globalisation are increasingly

recognising the responsibility that is held for the sisters and brothers who have been left behind. Globalisation's effects on the poor mean that social concerns must be at the heart of mission and the church as, "Christian compassion will be the only hope of survival for victims of the global economic process".

How might mission engage with this?

This article is an excerpt taken from the forthcoming WEA Missions Commission book "One World Or Many? Globalisation and World Mission", which will be launched at the forthcoming Missions Commission consultation in Canada in June. In the full chapter, Ruth develops a detailed response to the issues raised by economic globalisation. Full references and sources are also provided in that chapter.



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# Goads on Globalisation

by Stan Nussbaum

*“The words of the wise are like goads,” Ecc. 12:11*

“The new  
problems  
create new  
opportunities  
for Christians  
to live  
redemptively...”

**H**ere are some proverbial goads to prick your thought and action as you consider the other articles about globalisation in this issue.

*Old times are old times; the present is the present (Japanese).* We may not like change, especially if it comes pounding in on us like a tidal wave. But God has put us into the time we are in, not the time of our parents or grandparents. We must be God’s witnesses in this time (See Est. 4:14).

*Always something new, seldom something good (German).* It would be very easy to apply this to the movies and music coming out of the USA in these days. We might want to apply it also to globalisation itself, since the forces of globalisation are constantly hitting all of us in new ways and causing new problems. But we must beware of being too cynical about globalisation. The new problems create new opportunities for Christians to live redemptively, shining God’s light in new ways into new forms of darkness (See I Pt. 2:9).

*It is not in the pilot’s power to prevent the wind from blowing (Spanish).* God did not put us into this time in order to curse the wind but to sail the ship. We will not stop the gathering storm of globalisation. We will, with God’s help, harness the forces of globalisation so that those very forces take us in the direction God wants, not the direction they are trying to blow us. (See Gen. 50:20.)

*If one comes to a fork of the road in a strange country, he stops to think (Jabo, Liberia).* This era is “a strange country”, unmapped territory for all of us. If we simply plunge into globalisation, we will become

utterly lost. At every new fork we must stop to think and to pray—"Which way God?" (See Ps. 119:105.)

**"It is not in the pilot's power to prevent the wind from blowing"**

*Learning is like rowing upstream; not to advance is to drop back (Chinese).* Turning the forces of globalisation to the advantage of mission will not be

easy. It will not be solved by one conference, one book or one great idea.

At least for the next decade or two, we will be constantly preoccupied with this topic. If we ever relax, it will sweep us away (Heb.12:13).

*Difficulties teach a man (Turkish).* Globalisation means difficulty. But God is a specialist in difficulty. It was difficulties with a lion and a bear that taught David what he needed to know when Israel ran into a giant difficulty with Goliath (I Sam. 17:37). And if globalisation means all kinds of trials for us, then let us consider it a pure joy (Jas. 1:2).



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### *Do you have a proverb to add to the list?*

If you have a choice proverb from your country which throws some additional light on globalisation as you are encountering it, please send it to us with one or two sentences of application. Email to [<stan@gmi.org>](mailto:stan@gmi.org) or post to Stan Nussbaum, GMI, 15435 Gleneagle Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80921, USA.

# reports

## Crisis and Contingency Management

by Michèle Lewis O'Donnell and Kelly O'Donnell

*A ship in a harbour is safe—but that is not what ships were made for. \* Aslan may not be tame, but he is good.*

“...collective power when it works together in trust and love.”

Workers who serve in cross-cultural settings are often subject to a variety of extreme stressors. Natural disasters, wars, sudden relocation, imprisonment, sickness, and protracted relationship conflicts are but a few of the examples. Agencies that send their people into potentially adverse situations have an ethical responsibility to do all they can to prepare and support them. This thinking is in line with Principle 7 from the *People in Aid Code of Best Practice* which states, “We take all reasonable steps to ensure staff security and well-being.”

A crisis can be defined as “a current or impending situation which is, or has the immediate potential of, creating an unacceptable degree of danger to personnel, the functioning of the mission and its related overseas entities, and/or its essential purpose of being”. Anticipating and preparing for crisis situations is an essential first step in dealing with them. (G. Stephen Goode, *Guidelines for Crisis and Contingency Management, International Journal of Frontier Missions*, 10/95, p. 211). A disaster on the other hand, is a destructive event that adversely affects a whole group or groups of people, requiring outside intervention to meet basic needs. A disaster usually sets off many crises.

One of the goals of our Global Member Care Task Force (MemCa) is to help develop resources in essential areas such as crisis/contingency management. The following presents a grid to help organisations

prepare for and manage crisis situations. Think of it as a roadmap to help navigate “perilous times” (2 Tim. 3:1). It has four steps, each with three key sub-points. Note that the steps overlap and also involve individuals, the organisation, and outside consultants. Use this grid to review your readiness to handle adverse situations as well as your overall organisational/team culture of safety and security.

### Step 1—Preparation

- *Contingency plans*—written procedures to protect individuals, families, teams, agencies, regions  
Estate plan: writing a will, organising and safeguarding important documents, etc.  
Risk assessment/management: monitoring at-risk zones, minimising risks, updates, etc.  
Protocols: forming policies/best practice for natural/man-made disasters, other difficulties
- *Stress training*—coping skills to deal with serious stressors, including accidents and relationships  
Training issues: *in vivo* experiences, simulation exercises, case studies, personal examples
- *Pre-field/field orientation*—review of security guidelines, cultural and medical do’s/don’ts, etc.  
CCC issues for personal growth: competence, character, and compassion development

### Step 2—Survival

- *Using skills to stay healthy/sane*—to manage oneself, resources, and relationships; defusing

*CHOPS for stress issues: cultural/ crises, historical/human, organisational/occupational, psychological/physical, support/spiritual (ch. 23, Doing Member Care Well)*

- *Crisis management teams*—to monitor, contain, and make decisions during the crisis:  
SLIME for contextual issues: security, legal, intelligence, media, ethics/external consultants
- *Human rights advocacy*—to use moral, legal, and political pressure to deal with human injustice  
Sectarian violence, harassment, execution, psychological detention, torture, anti-religion laws

### Step 3—Special Care

- *Practical help to stabilise/protect*—ensure safety, and provide food, shelter, money  
PIE issues for care: proximity, immediacy, expectancy of return to work
- *Debriefing*—CID to tell stories, ventilate, be assessed; also operational and personal debriefings  
RAFT issues for transition: reconciliation, affirmation, farewells, think destiny (ch. 2, *Doing Member Care Well*)
- *Brief services*—additional care for those affected by the critical incident (s)  
Types of specialised services: pastoral/spiritual, physical/medical; training/career, team building/interpersonal; family/MK, financial/logistical, crisis/

contingency, counselling/psychology (Practical Tools For Care—(ch. 1, *Doing Member Care Well*)

#### Step 4—Aftercare

- *Therapy/medical*—provide professional help for psychological and other health problems  
Treatment areas: trauma, anxieties/depressions, chronic fatigue, disease, family/marital issues
- *Organisational review*—evaluate the causes, interventions, results/lessons of the crisis  
Application issues: using crises to build organisational capacity
- *Follow-up*—contact with those affected; implement/evaluate suggested changes  
Ongoing issues: checking in at regular intervals; accountability; needs of national staff

#### How To Use This Grid

- Discuss this grid within your setting—team, organisation, etc.
- Review one or two crisis situations you have already had, discussing what was done well, what could have been done better, and the implications of this past experience for future situations
- Take time to identify the types of crises your people are likely to face; identify some acceptable approaches to handling crises, providing care, and follow-up; and identify available resources to help.
- Read through and discuss some key materials on crisis and contingency management within your respective

agencies and settings. See: “Guidelines for Crisis and Contingency Management” (1995, *IJFM*); “Crisis Care in the Mission Community” (1992, *Missionary Care*); chapters 43-45 in *Doing Member Care Well* (2002); chapters 3, 4 in *Complex Humanitarian Emergencies* (2000, World Vision); *Operational Security Management in Violent Environments* (2000, Overseas Development Institute); *Safety First* (1998, Save the Children); and selected parts of *Sharing the Front Line and the Back Hills* (2002). See also the annotated bibliography in chapter 50 of *Doing Member Care Well* along with the web sites of Mental Health Workers Without Borders ([www.mhwwb.org](http://www.mhwwb.org)) International Society for Trauma Management ([www.istm.org](http://www.istm.org)), and the Mobile Member Care Team ([www.mmct.org](http://www.mmct.org)).

#### Some Perspectives and Quotes

##### Preparation

“Effective pre-mission training must begin with instilling awareness of the need for security and psychosocial support in the culture of organisations. Patched together, ad hoc, or solely programmatic efforts will have only minimal impact. Security and support must be integrated, both structurally and functionally, into the mainstream of pre-field mission operations: mission planning, staffing, and budgeting”.

Yael Danieli, *Sharing the Front Line and the Back Hills* (2002), p. 383

### **Survival**

“We have had to ensure that our philosophy of member care, along with our crisis and contingency management approach, respect what God asks of our workers, even though they sometimes go against the prevailing attitude of “safety, security, and reduction of stress levels at all costs,” that is characteristic of many Western cultures. Although no...worker morbidly...desires others to go through pain...or suffering, we have come to realise that such experiences, according to Scripture and history, normally accompany the spread of God’s kingdom”.

Steve and Kitty Holloway, Responsible Logistics for Hostile Places, *Doing Member Care Well* (2002), p. 447

### **Special Care**

“Specialist care is to be done by properly qualified people, usually in conjunction with sending groups...Specialist services...are essential parts of a member care programme and complement the empowering care that staff provide each other.... Perhaps the

biggest potential disparity between member care approaches lies in the use of and emphasis on a variety of specialised resources. These can be viewed as being too Western, an excessive luxury, or just not possible to develop in one’s situation. The main challenge continues to be providing the appropriate, ongoing care necessary to sustain personnel for the long haul”.

Kelly O’Donnell, A Member Care Model for Best Practice, *Doing Member Care Well* (2002), pp. 18, 20

### **Aftercare**

“Determine if additional care is needed, especially if severe disorders seem to be developing. The most frequent diagnoses in such populations would probably be post-traumatic stress disorder, brief reactive psychosis, phobic disorder, generalised anxiety disorder, and major depressive disorder.... A crisis worker must also ask, ‘Who else is at risk?’”

Laura Mae Gardner, Crisis Intervention in the Mission Community, *Missionary Care*, (1992), p. 145



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# reports

## Mobilising the Local Church on Mission A Canadian case study

by Geoff Tunnicliffe

Given the reality of critical global and national trends that impact the Church in Canada, we must ask how do we mobilise and equip our church for mission? What are the keys to developing a growing global mission focus in the local church?

Missions' consultant Bruce Camp (see Bruce Camp and Ellen Livengood, "Design Your Impact Workshop", 2002) believes local churches must understand their DNA. According to him, DNA refers to the mission, vision, and values of a church. Mission tells us what the Church exists to do. Vision shows how it will accomplish the mission. Values describe the boundaries within which people can freely live out their spiritual gifts without asking for permission.

Camp writes, "In an out-of-control, fast-blurring world like today where all of the rules are changing and major pieces of history are disappearing, churches must take a good long look at themselves and rediscover why God put them here." Today, leaders are looking for helpful resources that will assist

them in developing an effective local church global mission strategy based upon proven principles.

### In Canada

To determine principles that have proven effective, the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, through the Global Mission Roundtable and funding through the Charis Foundation, conducted an extensive study among almost 900 churches of various sizes, location, styles of ministry, and denominational affiliations. From late 1999 to 2001 we received completed extensive surveys from more than 700 churches. We also conducted more intensive research into 150 churches that had been nominated as having best practices in global mission activity.

From this research data we have been able to identify the key differential elements between churches that have seen growth in their mission programme in the last five years and the ones that have not. These key factors, or best practices, help leaders understand how they can develop a healthy, mission-minded, active local church. They have been grouped into three main sections:

**"Values describe the boundaries within which people can freely live out their spiritual gifts without asking for permission."**

foundational practices, development of people, and effective focus and vision.

### **Strong Foundations**

#### **Clear and compelling vision.**

Members clearly understand and embrace a vision. Most churches, however, have not articulated this kind of vision nor have they integrated both Great Commission and Great Commandment. For too long in the Western world we have divided the world into “spiritual and/or material”, or “evangelism and/or humanitarian assistance.” Growing churches seek to constantly integrate these ministries into a holistic gospel that cares for the spirit, soul, and body.

**Systematic teaching.** The ministry includes regular teaching on the biblical foundations of mission and on God’s heart for the world. This counteracts the impact of changing belief systems.

**Prayer focused.** The churches find creative ways to include prayer for their mission strategy, such as in small groups, at mission breakfasts, or on prayer lines.

#### **Functioning administrative and leadership structure.**

The churches have good organisation structures, with the most effective being an intergenerational team or committee with a hard-working leader and members who stay together over several years to guide the programme.

**Understanding culture shifts.** They understand that the changes in our culture are not simply nor primarily the

result of generational influences, but rather come from major worldview shifts in our society.

### **Healthy People**

**Empowering leadership.** Pastoral staff, elders, deacons, and other leaders play a significant role in equipping, enabling, and releasing people in mission.

**Gift-oriented ministry.** Because people no longer want to serve in just any way they can, the churches find ways of encouraging individuals to know and use their gifts and skills for ministry purposes.

**Engaging all ages.** Churches have found creative ways to include people in short-term mission endeavours. Intergenerational teams, family teams, youth teams, professional teams, and work teams that assist in local projects or minister in another country, have a profound impact on the health of the local church, especially when these fit into both a home and field-based ministry strategy.

### **Effective Focus**

**Integrated focus.** Church members do not divide the world into the “here” and “there.” They see global mission as a natural extension of local mission.

#### **Growing their own missionaries.**

The churches develop their own missionaries using training programmes, internships, short-term mission, and discipling programmes to discover and



encourage the right people to consider long-term missionary involvement.

**Relationally connected to ministry partners.** The churches limit the number of in-depth relationships it has with various mission agencies and other ministry partners because they recognise that connecting members closely with the people and projects that they support increases members' commitment to mission.

**Balanced ministry focus.** These churches have a diversified portfolio of local and global ministry projects. They support missionaries from their own country as well as those from churches in other countries. They think outside the box. They try new programmes and are not bound by traditions or attitudes that say, "That is the way we have always done

it." Partnership orientation and collaboration are crucial. Therefore, these churches constantly ask, "What can we do together that we cannot do alone?" Partnerships between churches and other sending bodies are having profound and positive impacts.

### How does your church rate?

**"What can we do together that we cannot do alone?"**

Using the above criteria for developing a growing and healthy mission-minded church how are you doing? What changes do you need to make? Don't be overwhelmed by the task. Begin small with some doable, bite-sized pieces that will begin to make an impact on your church.

Connect with other church and agency leaders and learn from each other. Remember, a world in great spiritual need is waiting for your response. Start somewhere soon and keep at it.



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# reports

## Musings on “Review of Missions on the Web”

by Jim Klaas

Is there a way to link a potential missionary workforce practitioners and isolated workers around the globe, in a sharing of information, expertise and vision? Many believe that the World Wide Web is such a tool. Authors Moreau and O’Rear in “Evangelical Missions Quarterly” Jan 2003, 39 (1) 17-26, invited a selection of missions-related web ministries to describe their work with the hope of stimulating thinking. In order to understand how the web is being used as a resource for the world missionary movement, I studied their descriptions and web sites and made observations.

Full marks go to [missiology.org](http://missiology.org) for a design that is attractive to browse and featuring highlighted information of the day while maintaining an ethos of serious academic intention including a missiological dictionary and bibliography. [Mislinks.org](http://Mislinks.org) goes from the simple to the complex, enabling intuitive exploration of directories and their contents. [Askamissionary.org](http://Askamissionary.org) presents understandable options for the beginner to learn about missions as well as linking to a MissionFocus retreat. [Globalmission.org](http://Globalmission.org) has the largest repository of a searchable organisational

and resource databases for long and short-term opportunities. [Strategicnetwork.org](http://Strategicnetwork.org) seeks to enhance community through 257 email groups giving clear steps to promote participation.

There is a complexity to the databases where the sheer volume of information is overwhelming: 3000 organisations, 1500 courses, 10,000 articles, databases of databases, linkages and cross linkages. Although there are helpful search functions, it is often a question of browsing and descending deeper into directories to find an increasing volume of information. The Internet by definition is without an overarching form and as information multiplies it will be easier to be lose oneself in the subdirectories.

My greatest question is “Where are the non- English speaking mission movements?” A content search can easily give the impression that it is the North American-style organisation that is driving the missionary enterprise even though they are less than half the players. This is understandable given that few agencies in the Developing world have their web pages linked to these data

bases or are published in English. A multidirectional cross-over must be nurtured for national missionary movements using other languages to interface with a large English speaking population in order to reflect the reality of what is happening world-wide.

Suggestions for best practices:

- With the exception of Globalmission.org, it could be made clearer how contributions to the databases are made or if they are welcome.
- Information directories of mission institutions should contain clearer categories for national movements in the non-English speaking world. We must give an accurate portrayal of what is happening in Third World missions.
- A classification index would be helpful to help orient new users to mission information available on the Web. This could be developed into a more sophisticated resource.
- Non-English speakers should be able to load and access the data bases in their language. Gospelcom.org provides a good example with its multi-language online Bibles, language dictionaries, translation of specific

pages and an invitation to link with the web pages of organisations using other languages. The Missions Commission is developing RAMP, Resource Access for Ministry Preparation, which will offer a growing multi-language interface with a goal to addressing a large percentage of the earth's population. Stronger community development and equipping could take place through integrating distance education courses into the web sites. A shared learning platform with multilingual capabilities could service the needs of students from poorer countries who neither have access to expert resources, nor whose national associations could develop the delivery platform.

I echo Moreau and O'Rear's invitation for further dialogue on the best practices of web development which will reduce the web-presence gap between "developed" and "developing" Mission agencies.

**"Where are the non-English speaking mission movements?"**



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## ReMAP II – Study on Retention of Cross-cultural Missionaries

by Detlef Blöcher

The WEA-MC study on Missionary Retention is well underway during these days. Some 3000 mission agencies from 20 countries have been asked to give their insights to critical issues such as: “What makes missionaries successful?”; “What keeps them in active service?” We will also report on their retention records. Just now the first results are coming in and by June 2003 the picture should be complete and preliminary results will be presented at the Canada 2003 conference in Vancouver.

Missionary Retention is not just the opposite of Missionary Attrition studied by ReMAP in 1995; rather, it is a completely different perspective.

“Missionary Attrition” surveys the number of returnees in a given year. Its sample includes very different people: weathered missionaries going into retirement, experienced workers who need to relocate because their old parents need care or for their children’s educational needs; missionaries in their best years who clashed with co-workers (relational problems) and young workers who did not find their role or could not make it through culture shock.

They all are included in the sample of “returnees” of a given year. All of these are valid reasons and these missionaries need our full care and attention during the times of transition. They may need healing and restoration, prolonged encouragement and support and this is an indispensable ministry by their home church and the sending agency.

**“‘Missionary Attrition’ surveys the number of returnees in a given year.”**

Yet, from the viewpoint of mission strategy (mission effectiveness) long serving, experienced missionaries are our greatest assets and they need our best care to keep

them in a fruitful ministry. This is surveyed by “Missionary Retention” which examines: “the percentage of workers still in active ministry after 5, 10 or 20 years of service”. In this case, we have a much more homogenous group (similar age and ministry experience and facing similar challenges and risks) and thus can learn more about “what keeps workers in active service”. We are aware that longevity is not an end in itself. Missionaries can remain for too long instead of handing over the leadership to national leadership. Ill-placed, unproductive or wounded workers need to be brought home with grace, love and dignity.

“Missionary Retention” is indeed a very complex topic with many facets. Besides personal issues it also touches organisational factors of mission agencies such as ethos, values, leadership style, communication and decision making, candidate selection, support structure, member care, transparency in money spending, missionaries’ participation in the organisation’s development, etc. All these factors may contribute to the missionaries’ identification with the agency and longevity (high retention). While the earlier study ReMAP focused mainly on personal factors of sent missionaries, this study focuses especially on the agencies’ values and practices.

In addition, some indicators for the spiritual fruitfulness of ministries have been included in the survey that will hopefully correlate with some organisational factors and Missionary Retention numbers, which will draw our attention further into critical missiological issues.

As mission leaders fill out the ReMAP II questionnaires, they are stimulated to reflect on their own practices and

performance. They are the decision makers who will shape the future of their agency. They need feedback on how they actually perform (in comparison with other mission agencies), creative ideas to think and pray about (provided by the questionnaire) and we believe, that this reflection process in itself will have a major impact on their agencies. It is good stewardship to further develop our agencies.

**“All these factors may contribute to the missionaries’ identification with the agency and longevity (high retention).”**

Thus we pray that ReMAP II will not only be a fascinating academic study of global scope (covering new and old missionary sending countries) and unique perspective (organisational issues of mission agencies) but will also shape the global mission movement as we enter into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Many of you will have received the questionnaire and we kindly ask you for your consideration. We are aware that the last section J (Retention Record) may cause you some work and effort yet your response and experience will be of great valuable – and the global mission movement will bless you for your cooperation.



Detlef Blöcher serves as Executive Director of German Missionary Fellowship (DMG) and is an Associate of the WEA Missions Commission. For further information, write to: [dbloecher@dmgint.de](mailto:dbloecher@dmgint.de)

# reports

## More Global Missiology: Towards a Missional Ecclesiology

by Tormod Engelsviken

The project “Missional Ecclesiology” is part of the larger WEA Missions Commission Task Force on Global Missiology. It emerged as one of the issues raised at the Iguassu consultation in Brazil in 1999 where the need for a new missional ecclesiology was underlined. The background for this again was the need felt particularly in the South to move beyond the “church and mission” paradigm to a “church in mission” or “church as mission” paradigm. This was also inspired by the “missional church” movement in the USA and Europe with names like Lesslie Newbigin, George Hunsberger, Alan Roxburgh and Darryll Guder in the forefront. However, it was felt that a more global and less Western approach was needed in an era characterised by globalisation and the shift of the centre of gravity of the Christian Church from the West to the South.

### High Leigh, England, January 2001

This project was initiated at a consultation of the task force on global missiology convened in High Leigh, England. A smaller international team of five began to work out the purpose, aim and plans for the project. This group consisted of John Amalraj (India), Bertil Ekström (Brazil), Tormod Engelsviken (Norway), Abel

N’djerareou (Tchad) and David Tai-Woong Lee (South Korea).

*The purpose and aim of the project were formulated in the following way:*

“In light of the new global reality of the church, the purpose of this project is to assess anew the nature and role of the church in mission with the aim of involving the whole church in mission. This will be done in

a biblical,  
a historical,  
a theological,  
and a practical/strategic perspective.

The project also aims at showing how mission can be implemented in the local situation in keeping with a global vision.”

The audience of the outcome of project was envisioned to be larger than the WEA constituency, including church and mission leaders, pastors, lay leaders, seminary professors and students around the world.

The vision was that this would be a three year project to be finalised by the end of 2003 with a statement and a book after some smaller consultations. The bulk of the work would, however, be carried out by the individual participants working

within their own contexts. The agenda within the overall framework of the project would be set by local circumstances and decided by the interest, experience and expertise of the participants. The process would be an open one where others would also be invited to participate. A particular concern was that this project should include contributors from all parts of the world, and not dominated by any one region.

#### **Port Dickson, Malaysia, May 2002**

A second meeting was held in connection with the Missions Commission meeting in Port Dickson, Malaysia, where the group was joined by Birger Nygaard (Finland), Steve Spaulding (The Philippines), Wolfgang Simpson (Germany), and Thorbjørn Lied (Norway).

At the end of the meeting in Port Dickson the following was presented to the WEA Missions Commission under the title: “Missional ecclesiology for a global church in a globalised world.” World evangelisation used to be a nice and tidy process of taking the gospel from the “Christian” world to the “pagan” world – until the whole world would be Christianised. This is not so any longer. The church is now global and it exists and serves in a globalised world. Now everything is “multi” cultural, religious, etc. The global church also finds itself in a minority situation almost everywhere. There are no longer any “Christian” territories.

One problem is that most theology and church/mission structures and the resulting spirituality were created in and for a world that no longer exists. Therefore, we must re-examine the basic features of the church, its mission theology, spirituality and missional structures that can facilitate formation of new paradigms for the global church in the new globalised worlds.

The thesis of this project is that the missional nature of the church is not a marginal theological concept, as if mission was optional, but rather, it is the core mode of existence for any church worldwide. Without a real missional

**“Now everything is ‘multi’ cultural, religious, etc. The global church also finds itself in a minority situation almost everywhere.”**

identity and reality no church will survive multicultural secularising globalisation.

#### **Our Situation Today**

The focus of this study process is to identify what the central and essential features of a prevailing missional church are.. One is keenly aware that the present global church is immensely complex and diverse in its forms.

No individual and collective body can describe and understand the whole church. What the project aims at is a much humbler task, but still immense: to identify and describe as if it were the “missional genes” of a missional church; what it is that makes the church missional in its essence: its identity, theology, spirituality, structure and ministry.

*To discover these features, several methods are envisaged:*

First of all one has to go to the biblical roots, to a fresh investigation of the New Testament image of the missional church. One also has to draw on previous and recent missiological studies of the missional church and similar topics.

However, the most important approach may be to do new studies of churches in mission in their own contexts. This may be done as case studies of local missional churches in various forms where new missional models may be identified and developed further. These models may be found in unexpected places, and have a variety of forms. Yet, they may

have several features in common. Studies of such empirical material together with biblical and missiological insights may form a new synthesis out of which a vision for a missional church may grow. Sharing this vision and these experiences may be a great inspiration both for growing and declining churches.

Engelsviken at the Norwegian Lutheran School of Theology in Oslo, Norway, has so far been the leader of the project but due to illness and other problems of communication not much in terms of coordination of the project has taken place. It is still very much in its initial

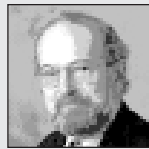
phase and we may have to set a more realistic project date of 2004 to conclude our project.

**“...it was felt that a more global and less Western approach was needed in an era characterised by globalisation...”**

Professor Engelsviken made several case studies of churches in Malaysia and Thailand during a study trip in October, 2002, and is on sabbatical leave to work on the material he has gathered.

There is, however, a need for the group to improve communication and to collect and disseminate information as to what is happening in the various locations. The Missions

Commission consultation in Vancouver this June should enable the team to reconvene and develop the project further. Also others with similar missiological concerns and interests may be invited to join the efforts of this missiological team on Missional Ecclesiology.



Tormod Engelsviken worked as a missionary in Ethiopia with Norwegian Lutheran Mission 1971-73, studied in the US 1973-1976. He is working as a professor of missiology at The Norwegian Lutheran School of Theology since 1984. He has written several books and articles on missiology, religion and the Pentecostal/Charismatic movements. He can be contacted at [Tormod.Engelsviken@mf.no](mailto:Tormod.Engelsviken@mf.no)



# reports

## Member Service Report Key Issues In Mission Today

by Bertil Ekstrom

When I visited Peru for the first time 20 years ago, one of the first things that struck me was the way the Peruvians advertised their national soft drink Inca Cola. Under the bottle with the light green drink the phrase was: “Inca Cola - Es cosa nuestra” (Inca Cola – It’s ours).

During that visit to Peru, I had the privilege to spend some hours at the Orlando Costas Faculty meeting some of the people working there, among them Dr. Tito Paredes. One of the main emphases of the Orlando Costas Faculty is to develop Latin American missiology and to discuss the relevant issues for mission in the continental context.

It was not difficult to see the relation between the advertisement of Inca Cola and the work done by the Latin American missiologists. The question is exactly “what is ours?” Should we only import ideas and theological solutions from other parts of the world? Or should we also discover our own issues and work through our own biblical understanding?

But are not the issues the same all over the world? Of course not! It’s true that there are some themes that are global and that we all need to deal with. One of those is the question of the Uniqueness of Christ. Other such themes could be Globalisation, Pluralism and Unreached People Groups. At the same time there

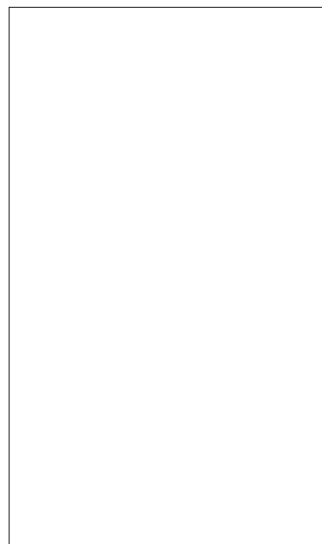
are regional and national issues that are very important for people involved in mission to respond to at their national and regional level.

The Missions Commission of WEA wants to be sensitive both to the global issues and to the regional important questions. Even if the themes are not applicable for the whole worldwide mission community, there are invaluable insights and knowledge in the different regions that we all need to know about. I am thinking on themes such as reconciliation and re-evangelisation in Europe, tribalism in Africa, poverty in Latin America, Asia and Africa, post-modernism in North America and Europe, the AIDS-problem in Southern Africa, the relation between old and new Church traditions in Eastern Europe and the peace-concept in the Middle East. Those can be more relevant for some regions of the world but are also key questions for the whole Christian community.

The other side of the coin is that we are all responsible for making our contributions in answering the key issues. And that, again, has a double reason. Firstly, that theology today is done as much in the South as it is in the North. Secondly, that we all must feel ownership of the reflection process. The increasing number of contributions

on global issues, coming from the Two Thirds World, gives new perspectives on the international scenario and reflects the manifold wisdom of God given to His people around the world.

As Missions Commission, we have already good examples of discussion about both global and regional issues. The Consultation in Iguassu, Brazil, was one of those occasions when a representative group of people from more than 50 nations was gathered for that purpose. The result of the consultation can be found in the book “Global Missiology”. As part of our “Member Service” our aim is to continue offering meeting points for missiological reflection, through consultations, seminars and task forces.



If you have any suggestions in terms of important issues that we should deal with or about the reflection process, please, let us know. The Missions Commission does not have its own fixed agenda but wants to serve you and to be a partner in the dialogue, a sounding board, concerning those issues that you

consider relevant for your situation and ministry.

For instance, it is a pity that you cannot buy Inca-Cola outside Peru!



Bertil Ekström, Associate Director, is the past president of the Brazilian Association of Cross-Cultural Agencies and COMIBAM, the Latin American continental missions network. he serves on the Executive Committee of the WEA Missions Commission. He is a staff member of Interact, a Swedish Baptist mission, and with the Convention of the Independent Baptist Churches of Brazil. He can be contacted at: [bekstrom@worldevangelical.org](mailto:bekstrom@worldevangelical.org)



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## The Two-Third World Mission Movement takes advantage of new models of networking

A report on an emerging WEA/MC network

by David Ruíz

We face new realities of the Christian world, especially as we face the reality that its centre of gravity has shifted from the West (the North) to the Two Thirds World (the South), and most of the growth of the church is taking place primarily in these regions. But the church in the South is also taking advantage of new ways of networking as a new way of carrying out relationship.

We can identify at least three historic stages in the development of cooperation in this part of the world. The first stage can be called “Cooperation on behalf of the Two-Thirds World”. The Western church launched many different initiatives to send missionaries to plant churches and serve in those areas. At the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century protestant missions arrived in Africa. In Asia and the Far East it began in 1807. In India, it began on 1705 with the Royal Declaration given by Frederick IV of Denmark to Ziegenbalg and Plutschau.

A remarkable example of this was the Cooperation Committee in Latin America (CCLA) that began with a 1913 meeting in New York. As a result of those efforts, many mission societies and agencies were established and various cooperative projects were focused on church planting in those regions.

**“...and most of the growth of the church is taking place primarily in these regions.”**

With the emergence of the now established and growing churches in Africa, Asia and Latin America, a second stage of this process emerged with a cooperation that we can call “With the Two-Thirds World”. This kind of cooperation recognises the establishment of an emerging church in the South. The Western church began a cooperative process but with definitions, controls and structures more oriented to the North. Due to these values, this model of cooperation swung back and forth between paternalism and dependency.

The third and most recent stage of cooperation is the result of the awareness

created by the emerged missional church in the southern hemispheres who share unique characteristics, needs and vision. This opens opportunity for a new stage of cooperation that we might call “Between the Two-Thirds World”. When we observe the diverse ways in which leaders in these regions are relating, we discover the high potential to relate and establish strategic alliances between those regions that are also fully owned by them. What might be the key characteristics that facilitate this relationships and strategic alliances?” I suggest four: [1] The reality of limited material resources guides the discussion that is not primarily related to money or other resources but also related to objectives and outcomes. [2] The emerging leadership of the South comes to the table with an open mind and explores new ways of cooperation. [3] Our growing missional churches of the Two-Thirds World provide a high level of enthusiasm along with a growing conscience of the role that we ourselves have to play in global evangelism. [4] The mindset and values that prize the relationship of our people opens our expectations about the way that we can

relate between regions of the Two-Thirds World.

At this very moment, we can see in some regions of the South very fine network processes to relate to the regions, and building a strong and respectful relationship between national, regional or functional networks with clear objectives on mind. The Two-Thirds World Mission Movement can make a very important contribution to the global mission movement through the development of a relational philosophy of networks that engages a world as it moves to a new stage in management—from a hierarchical era to an information era. This new contribution of the Two-Thirds World is creating new paths on how we do mission in the future through respectful relationships as we work together in global evangelisation.

Our emerging WEA/MC Two-Thirds World missions leaders network is committed to create space for us to relate, determine our agenda, cooperate and face the important issues about our emerged mission movement from the South and its impact on the entire world.



David D. Ruiz M. is the President of the Iberoamerican Mission Cooperation (COMIBAM). He also serves as International Coordinator of the Great Commission Roundtable and is a member of the WEA Missions Commission Global Leadership Team representing Iberoamérica where he forms part of the leadership of Two Thirds Word Missions Leaders Network. He may be contacted at [druizm@comibam.org.gt](mailto:druizm@comibam.org.gt).

# reports

## The Refugee Highway Partnership In Search of Hope

The Refugee Highway Partnership brings the church together to serve millions of refugees along the highway that they travel. Each refugee, a statistic to some, is a face, a story, and a friend to others. This week, some of those refugees became faces and friends to me. As my wife and I hosted two Chechen families in our home for dinner, and as our children played with their children, we also heard their story. Here it is, told by our colleague and also our dinner guest, Sam Holdsambeck. It is a story that gives a little glimpse into the challenges and perils along the “refugee highway.”

— Mark Orr,  
Co-facilitator of the Refugee Highway  
Partnership, Athens, Greece

### Flight From War in Chechnya

by Sam Holdsambeck

*“If I could say what I’ve seen  
with my own eyes, I don’t  
think anybody would believe  
me.”* — Isa Dzhabrailov

Prior to November 1994, when war broke out in Chechnya, life was good for Isa and Luisa Dzhabrailov. Luisa was a tailor, and their clothes-making shop

provided them with a comfortable living. Isa had grown up in the village of Chishky, about 25 kilometres from Grozny, and his uncle, who was married to Luisa’s aunt, had introduced them. They had married, set up shop in Grozny, and worked hard. Isa and Luisa now had their own house and were especially proud of their two young sons, Amir-Khan and Tamerlan.

Political troubles always seemed to be swirling around them, but when sudden, all-out war erupted and the bombs started falling in their neighbourhood, it was a complete shock. Many of their neighbours fled immediately for safer territory. Isa was reluctant to leave, but by January of 1995, it became clear that it was too dangerous to stay. Yet travel was extremely hazardous; it was not a matter of simply packing the car and heading out. Over a period of several days, Isa made four trips by car to his parents’ home in the village, traveling at night without headlights, with bombs falling on all sides. His first two trips were in his small personal car, in which he took the children—his own (who were four and two, respectively) as well as various nieces and nephews. Then he borrowed a larger vehicle and made two more trips, transporting Luisa’s parents and her three siblings and their spouses.

Several Russian neighbours, who had nowhere to go, were also welcomed into this home.

In all, 53 people crowded into Isa's parents' house. For about the next four months, they survived on a store of homegrown corn, potatoes, tomatoes, and many other vegetables. But in April and May, the war followed them to the village. Two or three days of intense shelling were followed by the arrival of foot soldiers, who carved a path of looting and pillaging. Russian conscripts are paid very poorly, and they routinely take whatever they want from civilian houses. That fall, Isa's uncle and nephew were murdered by drunken Russian soldiers on a looting rampage.

Life had been reduced to survival. The Dzhabrailovs' house had long since been destroyed, and their business had been ruined. Yet a cease-fire agreement in August of 1996 brought renewed hope. In September, Isa and Luisa returned to Grozny seeking a new start. They rented a flat and tried to repair what was left of their shop. But business was bad, virtually nonexistent. Isa started selling vegetables on the roadside to make ends meet.

Lawlessness reigned on the streets of Grozny for the next two years. Jobs were simply unavailable. All schools were closed. Kidnappings and extortion became commonplace. Whenever Isa left Chechnya to pick up a load of vegetables, he was obliged to pay bribes to get back in. He was forced to begin carrying a gun for protection. The atmosphere reminded him of the

American westerns he had seen. But even though Russia was destabilising the area with an economic blockade and the situation continued to deteriorate, at least it was better than war. By the end of 1998 and early 1999, the shock of the war was finally wearing off a little. Isa and Luisa dared to hope that better times were coming.

But in August of 1999, the Second Chechen War began with a cruel vengeance. Russian President Putin declared that men and youth between the ages of 12 and 60 could not travel outside of Chechnya. (Later, under pressure, he changed this restriction to between 14 and 55.) "The first war was like a holiday compared to this one," states Isa. On October 21, 1999, a Russian cluster bomb attack on the Grozny market left scores of civilians dead and many more mangled and wounded. Isa was nearby and helped transport the wounded and dying to the hospital. More bombs followed in the ensuing days. In this wave of attacks, five of Isa's cousins were killed, the oldest not yet 30. Air and rocket strikes continued well into the following summer.

After the notorious Grozny market attack, the Dzhabrailovs fled back to the village. On November 1, 1999, eight bombs were unleashed on this once peaceful hamlet, one hitting within 20 metres of their house. Luisa suffered a concussion and began bleeding from the ears and nose. Several neighbours were killed. People Isa had known all his life, people who were boyhood school friends, died before his eyes. One neighbour lady was found with only her

upper torso remaining, her internal organs scattered across the yard. Life was no longer just survival; it was a living hell.

They kept on the move, going to wherever it seemed the quietest and safest. But only women and children could move about in relative safety. In the summer of 2000, Amir-Khan, then 10, was hit in the foot by shrapnel during a helicopter attack. Twice Isa was captured by Russian soldiers, beaten, and left for dead. On one occasion he woke up in the hospital, not aware that Luisa had already been told by some friends that he was dead.

A particularly cruel tactic of the Russians was to drop explosives from helicopters disguised as pens, toys (such as dolls), and candy bars. Adults knew not to pick up anything that looked tempting, but children were still susceptible. Amir-Khan one day witnessed a boy get blown up who tried to eat a booby-trapped Snickers bar. According to Isa, 30,000 children died during this conflict. On Russian television, blame was placed on Islamic fundamentalists and Al-Qaeda, as well as the Chechens, for these atrocities. Isa and Luisa find it impossible to believe that the Chechen people would perpetrate these horrors on themselves.

By the summer of 2001, all hope for staying in Chechnya was abandoned. The decision was made that Luisa and the children would leave and Isa would stay behind with his parents, at least for the time being. However, without a man accompanying her, Luisa did not fare

well. At the border checkpoint, her passport was torn up and she was forced to return. Isa's parents urged him to think about his family first, and they convinced him it would be best if the family stayed together. Their flight took them by train to Moscow, then by bus and train across Europe. A ferry ride took them to the shores of Norway, where they landed on August 21, 2001. To pay for all the passports, visas, and necessary tickets, Isa had spent approximately US\$13,000.

The Norwegian government sent the Dzhabrailovs to a refugee resettlement area in the north of the country at Mosjøen. Here they entered language school and met other Chechen, Yugoslavs, Bosnians, Kurds, Somalis, Libyans, Algerians—refugees and displaced people from many nations. Both of the boys were surprised to see men walking around without guns. Even the police did not carry guns! Amir-Khan and Tamerlan were able to enter school for the first time in their lives. To this day, the only formal schooling they have ever had was during the 14 months (September 2001 to November 2002) they were in Norway.

Greece was the only country that would issue a visa to the Dzhabrailovs when they left Chechnya. Once the Norwegian authorities discovered they had Greek visas, they were required by law to deport them to that country. (It is not the purpose of this article to explain the technicalities of European immigration and refugee status laws. The Dzhabrailovs never intended to come to Greece, but not knowing any better, and



being desperate to leave Chechnya, they obtained Greek visas. This meant that in accordance with the Dublin Convention of 1997, they would ultimately be transferred to Greece, and Greece would have to accept responsibility for their application for a declaration as refugees.)

Thus, on November 7, 2002, the family arrived in Greece. They were immediately led away and held in jail at the airport, their luggage confiscated. (The reasons for the detention are by no means clear.) Isa was able to contact some friends in Norway, who contacted the Norwegian embassy in Athens. A week later, a representative from the

embassy came to the jail and obtained their release. This kind woman bought some clothes for the children, gave them some chocolates, and also helped the family find temporary shelter.

Scarcely a month later, on December 12, 2002, the Greek government denied their request for official refugee status. The Dzhabrailovs are now living with another Chechen family, along with five other men of Asian origin, in a small apartment in downtown Athens. Due to

the extreme difficulties of being integrated into life in Greece (e.g., the general xenophobia of the populace, the extremely poor economic conditions, and the lack of any assistance from the government), they are finding life in Greece very trying. Luisa has found some work as a seamstress, but it does not meet their needs. Their boys have not been accepted in any schools. They are people without a country, longing for

an education for their boys, seeking to work at an honest living and to live in peace. Their desire is to immigrate to a country where they can make a fresh start.

**“They are people without a country, longing for an education for their boys, seeking to work at an honest living and to live in peace.”**

For more information on how you or your agency can join hands with other Christians in the Refugee Highway Partnership, please visit the website: <http://refugeehighway.net>.

# reports

## Mission Information Systems

### Proposing a Process for Global Mission Information Cooperation

by Mark Orr

My last *Connections* article was subtitled, “The Integration of Information and Relationships.” In this article, I propose a process which can guide us on the journey of efficiently collecting and sharing mission information within a global community context. I will then suggest how we as a mission community can begin to implement this process over the next year. As you will see, these articles begin with theory but end in practical implementation.

The term “architecture” can be used to describe the designed relationship of various parts of a database to each other or the way a building fits together. However, the term is rather rigid and lacks the dynamic of fluid relationships. In attempting to build an “architecture” of cooperation, a softer approach is necessary, one that has a focus towards ongoing change, innovation, growth, and cycles. The words “process” and “journey” may be useful.

#### Four stages

Stage one starts with a *Mission* and first asking ourselves “Why? What is our motive? What direction do we want to go? More specifically, why do we need information? What kind of information does our mission require? Why should

or must we share it? What values help shape how we go about collecting and sharing mission information?

Stage two is *building and nurturing relationships* within the mission’s information community. During this stage, trust begins to grow among stakeholders. A common will and energy to cooperate takes shape. Doors begin to open, offering clear areas and opportunities for partnership. The relational dimension continues through all stages, but it is critically based on the mission base stage. We are developing relationships, and we are doing so with a focus that draws us together.

Stage three is the *operational stage*, when joint effort is applied to solving problems, tackling issues, and building cooperative efforts. A range of partnerships, from informal to formal, can take shape, as well as ad hoc working groups, consortia, cooperatives, associations, and networks.

Stage four completes the cycle by taking us back to *community*. Here we ask more questions: So what? Whom are we serving? Is our mission still rooted in God’s mandate to the global church, or have we spun off into something else that

is more of our own making and less of the body of Christ? It is the missionary community, that is, the church, that we seek to strengthen through our information sharing partnerships. Out of this healthy missionary community comes a clearer and sharper sense of mission. We then complete our cycle by returning to “mission” in stage one.

It is not so important that we try to complete the cycle in a mechanical, timed manner. The important thing is to be aware on our journey that we are building a mission-focused community.

We are both strengthening relationships and shaping the structures, such as teams and partnerships, that help us do the work of collecting and sharing mission information effectively.

The operational vision, for those of us involved in missions information, is to become a global and culturally relevant “high performance team” as part of the global church. Together, how we work and relate become a part of the witness of the church to our one Lord.

### **A practical way forward**

In practical terms, over the next year, what might the four stages look like for those of us linked within the WEA Missions Commission information network? Let me offer some suggestions:

*Stage one*, mission, could involve the identification of information leaders and operators in the Christian mission world who desire greater cooperation. This outcome could be accomplished through participation in a forum or some other form of consultation. I invite anyone wishing to begin “connecting” to write me an email (mark@globalmission.org). As the response is positive, I will consider ways to connect you to each other. A general feeling, sense, or consensus could begin to emerge about the need for global cooperation in information sharing.

*Stage two* could carry forward ideas from stage one, perhaps with the formation of networks, working groups, or consultations hosted by the WEA Missions Commission.

*Stage three* could follow a partnership development process, in which the various streams and discussions are brought together into an overall global partnership that facilitates and serves the mission and needs of each

working group or project that has developed in stages one and two.

In *stage four* we ask, Does this partnership reflect the missionary community around us (globally, not just in the North)? Are we serving them? Even better, are we a part of them? At this stage, broader efforts can be made

“Out of this healthy missionary community comes a clearer and sharper sense of mission. We then complete our cycle by returning to “mission” in stage one. ”

by the partnership to evaluate whether the information sharing strategy has been able to move beyond the practitioners themselves (the missions community) and into the everyday life and service of the church.

Working through these stages could take a few months or a few years. It is a journey. But it is a real live journey on

which each of you, as stakeholders in the important service sector of missions information, could embark together!

You are invited to respond with comments, opinions, strategies, recommendations, or corrections. But most important, I want to know if you personally are interested in being part of this process.



Mark Orr serves as the Associate for Information Sharing for the WEA Missions Commission. He is currently in Greece working on a collaboration model for the Refugee Highway Project. He can be contacted at [mark@globalmission.org](mailto:mark@globalmission.org).

# Update on Canada 2003

by William Taylor

## Down to the home stretch

As I write this report, we find ourselves in the last weeks of preparation for this most significant consultation called “Canada 2003.” We now have some 230 confirmed participants from 50 nations, who will converge on the campus of Trinity Western University in Langley, B.C., Canada, May 31–June 6.

Focusing on the central theme of the impact of globalisation on world mission, we will open the days with five Bible readings that engage us with the other major faith systems of our world: Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Traditional Religions/Animism, and Secularism. Most of the speakers have come to Christ out of these worldviews; hence, their word will be extraordinarily powerful. We will dedicate a session of prayer after each reading for people of these faiths.

The members of Richard Tiplady’s team are completing their work for the eight plenary sessions on globalisation, which will culminate in a final panel discussion that will grapple with the missiological and contextualised implications of globalisation that affect us all.

We will also release and give each participant a copy of the new book *One World or Many? The Impact of Globalisation on Mission*, edited by Richard and co-published by the WEA Missions Commission and William Carey Library.

## The afternoon programme

The afternoon programme will have a double thrust. First, from 1:30 to 5:30 p.m. each day, the Missions Commission Associates and Task Force members will work in seven groups headed by gifted coordinators. All participants will be given a summary of each Task Force and the programme for the week, but the teams will closet themselves to complete their

outcomes.

The groups and their coordinators are as follows:

1. Building and Serving Vital National Missionary Movements – *Bertil Ekström*
2. Developing and Delivering Member Care Resources – *Kelly O’Donnell and David Pollock*
3. International Missionary Training Fellowship – *Jonathan Lewis*

**“Focusing on the central theme of the impact of globalisation on world mission, we will open the days with five Bible readings...”**

4. Missions Information Services – *Mark Orr*
5. Mobilisation of New Missionaries – *Cliff Newham and Trev Gregory*
6. ReMAP II (attrition and retention study) – *Detlef Blöcher, Seth Anyomi, and Jim Van Meter*
7. Refugee Highway Partnership – *Stephen Mugabi and Mark Orr*
6. Missiological Encyclopaedia Project – *John Corrie and InterVarsity Press, UK*
7. Refugee Highway Partnership – *Stephen Mugabi and Mark Orr*
8. Missiology, Statistics, and the Task Remaining – *Todd Johnson*
9. Impact of the Globalised Labour Market on World Mission – *Stephen Fouch*

In addition, a strong team from TIE (Tentmakers International Exchange) will be meeting during the same time with the MC Global Leadership Team, to discuss how TIE can dock more formally with the MC.

The second thrust of the afternoon programme will be an optional series of strategic sessions offered from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m., for those who are not involved in the MC Task Force teams. Miriam Adeney's session will run for three days; the others will be given once. The current list includes:

1. A Writers Workshop – *Miriam Adeney*
2. Report on Member Care – *Kelly O'Donnell*
3. Report on ReMAP II – *Detlef Blöcher and Jonathan Lewis*
4. WEA Response to HIV/AIDS – *Gary Edmonds*
5. Discussion of Philip Jenkins' *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* – *Joe Kapolyo, Marcos Amado, Sam Chiang, and David Stoner*

10. Report on Singapore 2002 and Unreached Peoples Challenge – *Greg Parsons and Geoff Tunnicliffe*
11. Missions in the Hispanic Churches of North America – *Diana Barrera*
12. Tentmakers International Exchange – *Danny Martin and TIE team*

#### **Prayer points**

How can you pray for this seminar event?

1. Ask God for his empowering presence in the participants, programme, process, and outcomes.
2. Pray for God's provision and protection for those still awaiting visas and for other travel matters.
3. Pray that the mysterious and serious disease, SARS, will not be a detriment to any of our colleagues coming from Asia.
4. Pray that each participant will be open to God and that worship and prayer will saturate our gathering.

In the next issue of *Connections*, we will give you a full report of Canada 2003.

William D. Taylor is the Executive Director of the Missions Commissions, World Evangelical Alliance. Born in Latin America, he and his wife, Yvonne, served there for 17 years before a move to the USA. He is the father of three adult GenXers born in Guatemala. He can be contacted at [btaylor@worldevangelical.org](mailto:btaylor@worldevangelical.org)

# Canada 2003- programme Table

## Thinking New in Southern Africa

Part 1 of a 2-Part Report

by Phyllis Dolislager

"...WMC motivates local churches to adopt a country or language group, to conduct on-site visits to their projects, and to increase their faith promise..."

*New, yet old.  
Using technology, but not abandoning personal contact.*

*Fresh approaches, but still presenting the classic gospel message.*

*Innovative strategies, yet conventional people skills.*

*Contemporary, but following time-honoured traditions.*

**D**onkey churches, micro-businesses, food gardens, the Gospel Taxi Club, Mission School in a Briefcase, a sea-going catamaran, city marches, HIV/AIDS awareness projects, and the Gateway Strategy—these are a few of the tools that World Mission Centre (WMC) uses to take the gospel to unreached people groups in Southern Africa.

No matter how one describes World Mission Centre, since its inception, it has been a “God-thing” all the way.

With a broad base of international contacts and an understanding of how the local church operates, World Mission Centre—located in Pretoria, South Africa—is positioned to establish a global, local-church-driven missions’ network that has the potential to impact the final frontiers in missions today. Using the Gateway Strategy,<sup>1</sup> WMC motivates local churches to adopt a country or language group, to conduct on-site visits to



their projects, and to increase their faith promise programmes for missions through an up-close and real encounter with missions.

WMC researched the 100 least reached people groups of the Southern Africa region and published a description of these people in 1997 in the book *The 100 Least Reached People Groups of Southern Africa: It Can Be Done!* This book is being used as a tool to motivate local churches in South Africa and Southern Africa to take on the challenge of missions through the Gateway Strategy.

In the year 2000, WMC trained 483 missionaries in seven countries of Southern Africa, as well as in South Africa, to go and reach the least reached people groups. To date, there is a church or the beginnings of a church in 98 of these 100 least reached people groups. The work performed so far includes projects such as micro-businesses, medical assistance, food gardens, basic health care instruction, and Bible distribution. These projects not only have benefited the communities in which they have taken place, but also have allowed the start of a spiritual ministry among the people.

When Willie Crew, the International Director of WMC, started this mission in 1989 with his wife Lydia, their vision could in no way have conceived of where they stand now. Willie is a cutting-edge facilitator motivated by Acts 1:8.<sup>2</sup> His gifts as a mission visionary and strategist are surely from God. Willie modeled black/white organisation leadership with Lazarus Selahle for 12 years. Today,

WMC has 38 staff members, 120 indigenous missionaries in Southern Africa, a budget of \$2+ million, and offices in Pretoria and (since 1998) in Columbia, South Carolina.

Willie and Lydia Crew have met their share of challenges along the way. Since the collapse of the apartheid system in 1994, 40% of the white people have left South Africa, taking with them not only their monetary wealth, but also their professional skills. The changing value of the rand has been another hurdle. In 1997, the rate was 3.8 rand to the US dollar. In 2001, it went to 9 rand to the US dollar.

World Mission Centre has been on the cutting edge in designing, testing, and implementing mission strategies. Two exciting strategies have been the Gospel Taxi Club and the Mission School in a Briefcase. Taking a look at some of WMC's other current projects gives one a good overview of this ambitious organisation. Currently, WMC is working in Angola, Botswana, Madagascar, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Swaziland. Comoros and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are being added this year.

### **The Gospel Taxi Club**

Since 1996, the Gospel Taxi Club has prepared special cassette tapes for use in taxis. The tapes feature Christian music interspersed with short, five-minute gospel messages. Added to these messages are brief road safety tips for both drivers and passengers. The tapes are made in seven languages and address issues such as principles of employment, culture vs. Christianity, the greatest

possibility thinker, how to become a believer, and God's answer to AIDS.

A second cassette tape on HIV/AIDS has recently been produced. This tape was distributed during the Easter season to the taxis across South Africa that transported masses of people to the multitude of religious gatherings. It is estimated that at least one million people were exposed to this message.

The Gospel Taxi Club is one of the best mass evangelistic tools available.

#### **Mission School in a Briefcase**

Due to world politics and changing responses to the Western world, it has become necessary to rethink the current approach to living out and obeying the Great Commission. Instead of primarily "sending" missionaries from afar, it is imperative that gifted and committed nationals be trained to evangelise and plant churches in the "back streets" of their own and neighbouring countries in their own languages.

Using the wisdom and counsel of 28 men and women from eight countries, the

curriculum for what is known as the Mission School in a Briefcase was developed at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level and can be adapted to various cultures. Designed with six months of class work and six months of field work, the programme can be adjusted to fit up to a two-year time frame.

**"The Gospel Taxi Club is one of the best mass evangelistic tools available."**

Six hours of instruction in eight world class languages can be put on a single DVD. Thirty-six discs and

the necessary playback equipment—a DVD player with a screen—can all be packaged and transported in a briefcase weighing 10 to 12 pounds. From 20 to 30 national workers are then able to gather in a church room or back street/home type situation to view and interact with the teaching in their own language. The facilitator (a national believer committed to missions) receives 60 hours of training interspersed throughout the lessons via the same briefcase.

Stay tuned for part 2: reports from Angola, Botswana, Linaka and the sailing ship, Madagascar, Mozambique, Swaziland, and Tanzania.



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<sup>1</sup> The Gateway Strategy is a plan that focuses on a particular world region and that utilises "hubs" (networks of local churches) to target the least reached people groups in that region.

<sup>2</sup> Willie Crew also serves as a WEA Missions Commission Associate, representing the strong move of God through creative and sacrificing women and men whose hearts reflect the Father heart of God for the nations.

## Evangelical Missions in Germany Today

by Wolfgang Büsing

“Dynamic, small mission organisations often have only two levels of organisational structure—missionaries and the mission leadership...”

The year 1969 saw the founding of the Association of Evangelical Missions (AEM) in Germany. At that time, since the Lutheran State Church had declared a moratorium on sending out missionaries, many evangelical mission organisations were seeking to establish a new umbrella organisation. In the first few years of AEM's existence, the missiological/theological discussion was very much in the forefront. This state of affairs continued into the 1980s. Today, as many issues continue to be discussed, the focus is on practical cooperation between member organisations.

The State Church, due to its pluralism, views the evangelical mission organisations from its own perspective and tends only to tolerate them. A special love from the State Church for evangelical mission organisations has not occurred. The State Church's positions on key issues have been affected by the surrounding secular environment, and one outcome is that this body views evangelical mission organisations with suspicion. It is difficult for an organisation with a highly structured, bureaucratic system to understand the existence of the many smaller, decentralised mission organisations. Dynamic, small mission organisations often have only two levels of organisational structure—missionaries and the mission leadership—and they appear tiny, inconsequential, and somewhat doubtful. While the State Church is very flexible in its theology, it is quite rigid in its view of structure. Evangelical mission organisations, on the other hand, are very solid in their theology but more flexible in their structure—*at times maybe too flexible.*

At the same time, the State Church in Germany is becoming more marginalised in society, and its financial crisis is taking up much of its time and energies. Hardly anyone in Germany is interested anymore in the many political statements issued by the State Church.

Evangelicals in Germany number close to 1.3 million. At this time, it is difficult to predict how this group will develop. Will evangelicals be infected by the meaninglessness of the State Church, or will they become a strong voice in the country? Within evangelical circles, strong Willow Creek and Alpha-course movements have surfaced. Both movements are a positive development for the evangelisation of Germany.

**“The work among Muslims is becoming more significant in German missions.”**

However, a cross-cultural, international mission focus is not necessarily in the forefront of either movement.

To their credit, many German mission organisations are

actively promoting the truths that Christians have a responsibility to build up the church of God worldwide and that the Great Commission is still in effect today. There are many positive reports about successful joint projects with local churches worldwide. The work among Muslims is becoming more significant in German missions. Many missionaries now have a chance to report about their work among Muslims, and they can help overcome the fear that many people have of this unknown

foreign culture and religion. As of yet, however, there is no strong response in the churches towards working among Muslims. Over the past year, we have actually observed fewer participants in Islamic courses. It almost appears as if Christians fear Islam. Have we allowed ourselves to become influenced by the scare tactics and polarisation of the media?

The effects of the *Spassgesellschaft* (the trend of an “all fun, no work”) attitude in German youth culture, has also affected evangelical youth to a degree. Despite the many negative aspects of this trend on young evangelicals, there are many who are eager to participate in short-term missions projects overseas. Recently, the German government has made it possible for short-term missions experience to be counted as a recognised overseas practicum. In some instances, educational credit is even given towards further studies. Opportunities abound for young people, who receive solid preparation at home and necessary support while in their overseas location. It is in this prefield training of short-termers that a close cooperation between many mission organisations can take place. We also find the potential for many other positive elements in these partnerships. At the same time, a question is raised: Will the German mentality for *Gründlichkeit* (strict thoroughness) prevent or widen our involvement in world missions?

German missions organisations face many challenges at home, and some Christian leaders feel that the problems at home should be solved before workers venture overseas. However, the reality

that approximately 4,000 German missionaries serve worldwide in cross-cultural missions makes it very clear that not everyone ascribes to this view.

We are very thankful that our missionaries are partnering in building

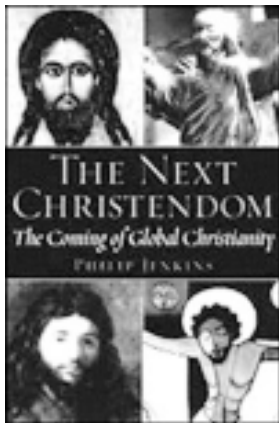
the church of God worldwide. Globalisation has brought many changes. German missionaries, along with all other missionaries from the Western world, must grapple with the challenging question of what role they should play in the future of global missions.



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## The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity

by Bertil Ekström



By Philip Jenkins, Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002. 270 pages.

Philip Jenkins' book *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* is a challenging text for everyone working in and with missions. Jenkins' attempt to project the future of the Christian faith on planet earth gives much food for reflection and, for most of us, raises profound questions about what we are doing as International Mission Movements.

Jenkins bases his projections on some presuppositions. One of these is the relative reliability of the statistics that are available not only from the US Census Bureau and the United Nations, but also from the *World Christian Encyclopaedia*, edited by Barrett, Kurian, and Johnson. Closely linked to this assumption about reliability and partly based on Barrett's projections is the belief that the trends in terms of the growth of Christianity what we see today will continue. A third aspect, which has more to do with terminology, is the use of the word "Christendom" in its broadest sense, resulting in a projection that considers sociological factors much more than missiological ones. The way Jenkins treats the subject does not allow the reader to see and understand the complex situation in both the so-called Christian countries and in the non-Christian nations. For instance, many countries today are not becoming more Christian or more Muslim, but more pluralistic and divided in religious aspects.

Jenkins' generalisations are also a problem when it comes to particular examples that he uses. Pentecostals are portrayed based on a stereotype that cannot be accepted in more serious texts. The book shows more of a prejudice than an objective effort to understand what is happening in the world. A lot of what Jenkins says may be true, but in the name of generalised trends, it cannot be right to ignore the huge differences between the diverse Pentecostal and Charismatic movements of our day. The same applies for the other movements cited, including the variegated groups within the Roman Catholic Church. In his desire to be concrete, Jenkins gives several examples of how churches and movements act in different countries. However, his historic errors about my own country, Brazil, make me wonder about his accuracy regarding parts of the world with which I am less familiar.

In spite of these critical aspects, the book is important because of the questions which it raises. One issue is the new face of Christianity and the implications for our mission strategy. Jenkins is right in seeing the coloured face, the mestizo, as the main representative for Christians today. This is true both to the strong, growing, immigrant churches in Europe and North America and, even more so, to the continuous development of the churches in the Two-Thirds World. Linked to this issue is the "myth of Western Christianity." The author reminds us that the history of the Christian faith has more to do with continents other than Europe and North America, especially in its origin and development during the first centuries.

A second important point is that most of the analysis done on the 20<sup>th</sup> century has ignored the religious changes that occurred, especially during the last 50 years. The growth of Christianity in the South and the new presence of Islam in the West are facts that cannot be denied. The impact of these new religious realities is enormous, with an influence that goes far beyond the religious realm. The lack of acknowledgment of the importance of this religious change is the result of the imbalance in writing church history today. Jenkins affirms that few events happening in the South are reported by Western historians, and very few people from the Two-Thirds World are recognised by the international awarding bodies. In this context of dominance by the North, the crucial question of who establishes the agenda for the church and the world today is extremely relevant. Non-Western mission movement that wants to do things differently must consider the implications seriously.

**"The impact of these new religious realities is enormous, with an influence that goes far beyond the religious realm."**

A third and extremely relevant issue for our time is the tension between Christendom and Islam, between the cross and the crescent. Historically, there have been many conflicts between the paladins of both religions, but as Jenkins notes, Christians and Muslims have often enjoyed good relations. However, the global prognosis is not so good, and Jenkins sees an increasing

crisis of interfaith relations. The conflict involving Iraq and some Western nations must be seen as part of this historical tension, although it is not the only reason for the tension.

A fourth aspect that Jenkins warns us about is the increasing dissatisfaction in the Western churches with the growing churches in the South, because of the new, contextualised models that have emerged. His examples come from the African Independent Churches and from the Pentecostal Movements in Latin America. The church in the West does not recognise the main characteristics of Christianity in these new autochthonous communities. The question of what these communities may signify regarding Christian cooperation in the future between North and South must be addressed. According to Jenkins, the fact that there is increasing hostility to missionary activity in the Western churches is made even more critical by the growing gap between older and younger Christian traditions. A question from our southern horizon is, Who defines the standards and criteria for an evaluation of the New Christendom that emerges full of life and vigour in our countries?

The author's conclusion about the future is that the trends we see today will

continue. The future is not bright, but it can give some comfort to the regions of the world where the Christian church is decreasing today. Regarding the United States, Jenkins says that the situation is very complex. The US is the only country described with this term, probably because Jenkins is most familiar with the situation there. According to my understanding, I would say that complexity is also a reality in other parts of the world.

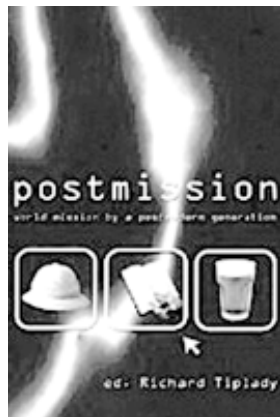
The challenge for those engaged in world missions today is to prove to Jenkins, Barrett, and others that the gospel of the kingdom can reach many more people than sociological and statistical analyses project. One of the factors that should be considered more fully—although Jenkins does mention the trend—is the growing number of evangelical missionaries from the South going to the North. These missionaries are working not only among their own countrymen, but also with the “native people” of the North. As the more liberal and traditional Christendom is losing terrain, the strong, evangelistic, in many ways conservative, and more and more mission minded churches in the Two-Thirds World are advancing and reaching both the less evangelised nations as well as the former Christian countries in the West.

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## Postmission: World Mission by a Postmodern Generation

by Evan Riffée



By Richard Tiplady. Carlisle, UK: Paternoster Press, 2003. 129 pages. Distributed also by the WEA Missions Commission.

*Postmission* collects nine chapters written by participants at the “Holy Island Roundtable” meeting in England in March 2001. Convened and coordinated by Richard Tiplady, the roundtable gathered a representative team of English-speaking, younger evangelicals considered to be within Generation X. The “elder brother and sister” present were Bill Taylor and his wife Yvonne, who have served as spiritual mentors and “godparents” of younger generations.

As a member of the generation known to the world as “X” myself and as a younger world mission practitioner, I found myself drawn strongly to the issues brought out in this book. We, the first generation to be shaped by postmodernity, will be the next generation responsible for carrying out the Great Commission and Great Commandment among the nations. So, *in our terms*, what will the future look like for world missions?

In the chapter by Bevan Herangi, “So Like, What’s With These Xers Man?”, I found myself being irritated that someone dared to describe me or my generation. Sounds like an American Xer, right? However, that description, as well as the next seven chapters written by fellow Xers, gave an excellent expression of the worldview of the postmodern Christian who is grappling with issues of life and world missions. Throughout *Postmission*, various authors affirm that the worldview of the “postmodern Christian” is

significantly different from that of the Veteran or Boomer. Therefore, it follows that the expressions of world mission from the Xer and even younger generations will not look or feel like those of previous generations.

The title for Part 2 of the book, “It’s the End of the World as We Know It,” fails to use the complete REM song title, which continues, “And I Feel Fine.” I think the second part of the song title says much in and of itself about the worldview of the postmodern generations. So where does this mess of modernity vs. postmodernity leave those of us in the missions community? Chapter 5, “Postmodernism Is Not the Antichrist,” by Paula Harris, was a profoundly freeing chapter for me as a Gen Xer to read. Finally, I sensed that someone was saying to me, “Being a postmodern thinker is not inherently bad, and it is certainly not un-Christian.” For those young missions-minded men and women who were born into Generation X or later generations, it is important to understand that they can use their postmodern worldview to explore the Scriptures and examine missions and what that means for them.

*Postmission* might teeter on the edge of offensive for some who represent the Veteran or Boomer generations. However, several times the refrain is heard that the ideal, best practice of the postmodern generations is not to discard the past or what we have learned from past generations, but to keep that which resonates with truth and discard whatever rings of non-biblical modernity. In chapter 6, “Is Postmodern

Organisation an Oxymoron?” Richard Tiplady states, “One could quite legitimately view this book as an attempt to use the power of knowledge, experience, and reason to create the social conditions in which Generation X missionaries can function effectively. This does not mean that you can use this observation to excuse your own (mis)use of power in rejecting this attempt!” I believe this quote very well sums up the struggles that emerge throughout *Postmission*.

Importantly, throughout *Postmission*, reference is made to mission agency leaders and the struggle between them and the younger postmodern missions generations. But I believe the focus on the term “agency” is too narrow for the book’s core implications. As I read *Postmission*, I found myself mentally inserting the term “missions entity” for “missions agency.” The fact is that the issues discussed in *Postmission* relate to a much broader spectrum of the missions community than just missions agencies. I found myself distracted by the word, but I grew to understand that these issues of postmodern worldview—identity, authenticity, self-doubt, freedom, and truth—are relevant to the missions community as a whole and especially to the local church.

As the Associate Missions’ pastor of my local church, I find many of these issues are not only at the forefront of our own church Global Team discussions, but also of our full church staff. Chapters 7 and 8 of *Postmission*, by Sarah and Rob Hay, are particularly valuable, as they help both sides of the generational divide

to understand and learn from one another in a relational and organisational context. In chapter 8, “Don’t Throw the Baby Out With the Bath Water,” Rob discusses the importance of communication: leadership cannot “over-communicate,” especially in a transitional phase or in an organisation in which change is happening. This discussion helps both older and younger generations of mission entities to understand that adaptation and change cannot occur in a vacuum and those forums for open discussion are keys to success.

*Postmission* has book-ends consisting of an introduction and a final chapter written by Bill and Yvonne Taylor, which provide an excellent foretaste and aftertaste for this book. I believe the insights shared by this veteran couple echo those of many who have gone before our own Xer generation, for Bill and Yvonne think younger than their chronological years. Listening to them and personally hearing godly counsel from them and from those like them are invaluable experiences for those of us postmodern thinkers who want to help change the world for God. Richard Tiplady does a great service by including

these chapters. We, the younger evangelicals, must listen to those who have gone before us, in order to gain a clear understanding of where we as a Christian community have been, so that we may know where in the world we are going.

After reading *Postmission*, I am filled with hope for the future of cross-cultural missions—hope that my generation can be used by God to accomplish his purposes in the world through us. We are not perfect—far from it—but God has used many who were considered unworthy throughout biblical history to accomplish great things for the gospel. May it be so with the Xers and those who follow us.

*“If Bono [the lead singer of U2] is one of us, then we have to take on the challenge of what he’s saying. But if we can ostracize him and say that he’s not one of us, we don’t have to think about marginalisation, postmodernity, or the challenges he has laid before the church. If this guy is right, then I have to sort out my life.”*

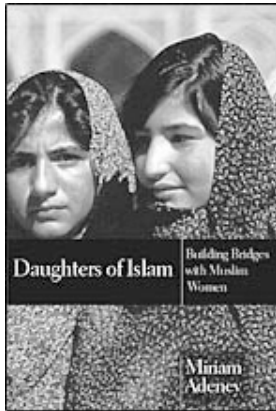
—Steve Stockholm,  
Chaplain, Queens University Belfast



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## Daughters of Islam: Building Bridges With Muslim Women

by Donna Smith



By Miriam Adeney. Downers Grove, IL and London, UK: Inter-Varsity Press, 2002. Pages: 224 .

Wherever I go as a consultant on women's ministries, my colleagues speak highly of *Daughters of Islam*. They not only appreciate the helpful suggestions for their ministries, but they are also greatly encouraged by the personal accounts of Muslim women who have found Christ. Miriam Adeney has given us a book both for women who are new to ministry to Muslims and for those who are experienced in interaction with them.

The stories of how God used weak, imperfect witnesses in the chain of events bringing Muslim women to salvation inspire us as we identify with "foolish" people who loved the women in spite of their imperfections. God uses his servants, even when they cannot think quickly enough to give the best answers. Adeney tells about some surprising witnesses: a woman who passed on a stolen Bible; a roommate who practised sex outside of marriage; an old man who used the King James English to read the Bible. All were links in the chains that drew Muslim women to Christ. So does the author advocate carelessness in methods and strategy? No, she includes many wise and helpful suggestions and promotes effective communication principles, while recognising the overriding grace and power of God.

*Daughters of Islam* intersperses examples of Muslim women finding Christ with chapters full of ideas for carrying out ministry among them. The case studies, based on author interviews, break the stereotypes and generalisations that Christians have often formed

about Muslims. These women come from a variety of countries, social classes, and home situations. The paths that they take to find Christ are varied: some have visions or dreams, others read the gospel story, and others find deliverance from evil spirits. In their early years, some of the women hungered for God or held ideals of righteousness with a desire for justice in their society. Others sought Christ's healing for abusive, dysfunctional, or promiscuous lifestyles. Adeney notes certain milestones that reoccur in their experiences: Scripture, spiritual power encounters, Christian love, sex and beauty issues, and social justice issues.

From my own experiences in ministry to Muslim women and in teaching on this subject, I appreciate the missiological and theological insights that permeate this book. Some of these important points are found in the chapters entitled, "What is Liberation for Muslim Women?", "Family: Sex, Singles, Husbands, Children," "Singing Our Theology," and "Money Matters: Who Pays?" The suggestions come alive because they are encased in illustrations of actual people. The topics chosen belong to the reality of women's life around the world.

I would like to underline several significant contributions from the book:

- Every woman is different, and who and where she is will shape how I present Christ to her. This is the

conclusion to the chapter describing a variety of women: nomads, settled village and urban women, educated professionals, religious fundamentalists, and political activists.

- Muslim women need to know that they are created in the image of God, redeemed by Christ, capable of being empowered by the Spirit, and called to active service in God's world. This is true liberation for women, and it

is described in terms of who Jesus is and why he came, as contrasted with Muslim theology. The oppression of demonic influences and the practices of popular Islam are mentioned. As Muslim background believers respond to God's love, they are able to serve their families and societies and to show the "beauty of righteousness, the wonder of grace, the power of

godliness." This vision for women believers finds an echo in my concern to see them taking their place, with their gifts, in the body of Christ.

- The Muslim world has heated debates on the subject of sex and the status of women. Adeney first looks at examples from the time of Muhammad and then at the teaching of his successors. She also raises the difficult issues of thriving as a single woman in the Muslim world or as a Christian married to a Muslim, hoping to raise her children in the Lord. Adeney's modern-day illustrations emphasise family life and relationships.

**"...some of the women hungered for God or held ideals of righteousness with a desire for justice in their society."**

- A question that I find crucial for any teaching of the Word of God is, “How do people learn?” Adeney aptly examines this subject in her chapter, “Singing Our Theology.” As Westerners, we have often used Bible study materials translated from our methods of propositional arguments. Since most Muslim women prefer oral learning, Adeney gives us suggestions of teaching through picture language and directed activities. She warns, “Neither doctrines nor disciplines can be pulled out of a Western theology book for universal application.” Instead, as teachers of these women, we must consider their needs and hopes and think carefully about how to discuss doctrines, disciplines, and stories in the context of common themes relevant to them.
- The economics of the women’s world is treated in the chapter, “Money Matters: Who Pays?” Again Adeney

tackles a hard question. Many of us have seen individuals and groups ruined because of the unhelpful provision of outside money. First, we must take time to learn what resources are already available to these women. Then we should build on their natural endowments and enter into economic projects humbly.

How appropriate that Miriam Adeney closes her book with a final, stirring, real-life account. We rejoice to read of the amazing way God worked so that an Iranian Muslim woman found Jesus Christ and gladly served him by using his gifts of evangelism and healing.

In our present world climate, this book is a valuable resource for all who desire to reach out to Muslim women. Whether readers are overseas workers or home-based Christian women, *Daughters of Islam: Building Bridges With Muslim Women* is both inspiring and instructive.



Donna Smith after her Bible studies at CBC and teaching in the U.S., went to North Africa in 1963 where she remained for 20 years. Since 1992, she has been based at the AWM International office in England, where she remains in the Personnel Department, giving particular attention to international recruits. She continues to travel in North Africa and the Middle East to encourage the development of ministry to women.

# reflections

## A Missiological Reflection on War and Peace in Days of War

by Rose Dowsett

One of Chairman Mao's favourite sayings was, "Power flows out of the barrel of a gun." Mao, of course, was neither the first nor the last to exult in power, however, violently achieved. The relentless desire to dominate is as old as the fall, and we Christians, of all people, should recognise the fingerprints of sin.

**"...war is always brutal and, at the very least, is a totally ambiguous enterprise.**

"The end justifies the means" is not an instruction in the book of Proverbs!

In recent months, thanks to the obscenity of on-site television transmission, our TVs have been full of images of American and British forces bombarding their way into Iraq. Whatever our views may be about intervening to remove a terrible dictator and (allegedly) bring freedom to an oppressed nation, war is always brutal and, at the very least, is a totally ambiguous enterprise. Military power is always, in some measure, corrupt and corrupting, even when, in the judgement of some, its use seems unavoidable.

It is not, of course, only the West that is awash with guns, nor is it only the West that pours vast proportions of its national

resources into military hardware. The lust to destroy and to dominate is universal. Every corner of our world today bears witness to this dreadful truth.

The events of Passion Week and of Good Friday and Easter remind us tellingly that the Lord Jesus chose another way. He, too, lived under a violent and oppressive regime, which exploited its people ruthlessly. In Jesus' lifetime, the Herods close at hand and the Caesars far away were despotic, volatile, unpredictable, and vengeful. Yet when Peter drew his sword, the Lord rebuked him. When all the powers of darkness were arrayed against him, he subverted them, not by violence but by submission to death on a cross. The One who had all the hosts of heaven at His command chose instead the way of apparent ultimate powerlessness and ultimate weakness—death. The paradox is that this was actually the way of victory and the way of peace.

Christians disagree over whether or not a war can ever be a "just" war and over whether or not pacifism is "more Christian" than taking up arms. It is certainly not my place to imply that within WEA or, more narrowly, within the Missions Commission, we hold to a single committed and agreed-upon

position on this most complex of subjects. Nonetheless, it must surely be an urgent matter for us to reflect on what authentic Christian mission looks like and how it should be carried out in a world filled with war.

Ever since the dawn of Constantinian Christendom, much Christian mission has been compromised by its association with power and, all too often, with violence. Further, in most parts of the world that are least evangelised today, the gospel remains compromised, because what is perceived to be “the Christian West” dominates the world, exploiting it for its own gain through unbridled capitalism, technology, and cultural imperialism.

How careful, then, we must be to engage in mission in a way that repudiates all power, other than that which flows from the cross, the resurrection, and Pentecost. We need to demonstrate that our confidence is in Christ crucified and risen, not in humanly devised strategies or in financial or technological

resources. These may, in very limited ways, be useful tools, but too often as we use them we slip into the worldly, fallen paradigms of power and control. We need to ponder again how the church’s witness in the first centuries was authenticated by its powerlessness, aside from the power of the gospel, the power of the Holy Spirit, and the power of holy living and dying.

What would mission look like where you live and where I live, if we were to recapture that essential pattern, first of all, of God’s power being released in our embraced weakness and, secondly, of a willingness to follow the path of sacrifice and suffering rather than assertion? How would your church or your agency have to change? In a world that leaps too easily to war, how can we demonstrate a different and better way? How can we be peacemakers, reconcilers and healers? And how, in the aftermath of this and every war, every spiral of violence and hatred, can the Lord’s people live and love and pray and serve, to the glory of God and the blessing of the nations?



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# reflections

## World Evangelical Alliance: Why Do We Exist?

by Gary Edmonds

*While I was involved in university studies, my father would write me a letter every month. He informed me about his work and travels, the health of Mom, the activities of my brothers, and general news updates from my home town. There was always something fresh and interesting that allowed me to stay connected to my family, friends, and community. Every month, I looked forward to a touch and message from home. However, Dad always concluded each letter with the same sentence, “Do not forget why you are there.”*

Today, let me address the questions, Why is World Evangelical Alliance there? Why has the Lord raised up such an organisation? What is the driving purpose for WEA?

### **On paper we state:**

*World Evangelical Alliance exists to foster Christian unity and to provide a worldwide identity, voice, and platform to evangelical Christians and churches. Seeking empowerment by the Holy Spirit, they extend the kingdom of God by proclamation of the gospel to all nations and Christ-centred transformation within society.*

In order to put some flesh on these words, let me offer a few comments regarding this purpose statement.

We know that Jesus prayed in John 17:20-23 for all Christians to be one, to be brought to complete unity

reflecting the unity of the Godhead. He indicated that our unity will be critical for the world to believe that Jesus is sent from the Father and that the Father truly loves the world as he loves the Son. Our unity is not an option, but our essence.

However, our sinful nature and human inclination constantly pull us to operate independently or even in competition with each other. We easily separate and function in our own silos. We struggle to establish who gets credit. We speak about “our” sphere of influence. We find ourselves unwilling to work through conflict and differences. Out of fear or arrogance or greed, we stay distant or aloof from each other. But God is not willing for this to continue. He does not delight in walls or barriers that separate his people. The needs and challenges of a broken world are too great and complex for any one church or one organisation to overcome. Consequently, WEA has been established as a strategic instrument that will facilitate a practical, viable, and functioning unity amongst those who follow Jesus as their Lord.

Unity is not an option! It is an ontological necessity. Our own souls are at risk, together with the very image of God to be revealed to the world. The credibility of our message about Jesus is dependent on our trust and love for one another. We exist in order to give the world the gift of seeing the body of Christ.

In order to carry out the calling, WEA will function as an alliance of the national and regional alliances. It becomes a coordinating force of a global network of national and regional alliances that bring together individual Christians and representatives from local churches and organisations. In some instances, a commission will be established to align the expertise and passion of global specialists in the body of Christ, to bring their gifts to bear in nations and regions of acute need. In this coordinating and facilitative role, WEA will be able to provide a worldwide identity, voice, and platform, so that every local church and individual associations of Christians can manifest Christ’s love to individuals, families, neighbours, communities, and nations.

**WEA purposes to provide:**

*An identity:* WEA will help churches and Christians understand who we are theologically, ministerially, and sociologically.

*A voice:* WEA will be positioned to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves, giving global weight to individual voices throughout the world. This provides credibility and hope to the struggling church in a

minority position.

*A platform:* WEA will convene and connect the best that Christians have to offer with those in greatest need worldwide. WEA connects people to

**“This provides credibility and hope to the struggling church in a minority position.”**

people, people to opportunities, and people to resources.

In the book of Acts (19:32), Dr. Luke records an event that is quite humorous but often quite true of ourselves. “The

assembly was in confusion: Some were shouting one thing, some another. Most of the people did not even know why they were there.”

May we not forget why WEA exists.



Gary Edmunds is the newly appointed Secretary General of World Evangelical Alliance. He came to the WEA in July 2002, after three years of executive ministry at Interdev (Seattle, Washington) and 19 years of international missions and ministry experience in Europe.

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