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The Continuity Mindset for Christian Mission

Jack Davison

South Asia

Abstract

Missionaries from the Global North regularly serve as trainers for Christians in the Global South. From personal experience, missionaries are regularly seen as being qualified to do this work simply because of their position. Rather than missionaries assuming they are competent purely on the basis of their titles, I believe they should instead practice the Continuity Mindset for Christian Mission, a mindset that emphasizes the continuity of one's identity and ministry in one's home culture with one's identity and ministry in the host culture. This practice includes elements of vulnerable mission, nonresidential mission, tentmaking, cultural intelligence, and authentic leadership. I propose that the intentional practice of the continuity mindset can help missionaries from the Global North appropriately fulfill training responsibilities or ambitions they may have in the Global South. This article introduces the continuity mindset and how its theoretical foundations can aid missionaries from the Global North in laying down their power in order to better serve those to whom they are sent in the Global South.

As my wife and I prepared to move overseas a decade ago, we noticed a shift had happened within our missions organization from emphasizing direct pioneer church planting among unreached people groups to instead searching for same-culture or near-culture partners to train to reach those groups.

Steffen (2011) and Schattner (2013) both confirm that this is happening in the broader missionary community as well, and several popular missions strategies involve the missionary spending significant time training local believers in evangelism, discipleship, and church planting (e.g., Addison, 2015; Smith & Kai, 2011; Watson & Watson, 2014). On a short-term mission trip prior to being sent long-term, I had already inadvertently leveraged my being a White American—all of 23 years old at the time with two whole weeks in the region—to train South Asians on the concept of Training for Trainers developed by Smith and Kai (2011). At the time, I thought I had simply been walking in the favor of the Lord to be given such an opportunity, but after moving back to the same city a year later and working in the region ever since, my understanding of that experience has drastically changed.

The common practice of missionaries from the Global North training Christians in the Global South is not necessarily bad, but one must ask why missionaries are often assumed to be capable of training believers in an entirely different part of the world. While it may be easy for Christians from the Global North to become self-proclaimed experts in church planting and ignore what people in the Global South have to teach them (Rynkiewicz, 2016), it is hopefully obvious that missionaries from the Global North should not be considered as inherently qualified to train Christians in the Global South in evangelism, discipleship, and church planting. Followers of Jesus in the Global South have a rich Christian history that is often overlooked and ignored (Cooper, 2016; Jenkins, 2008), are the majority of believers in the world today (Zurlo et al., 2020), increasingly send out their own missionaries (Zurlo et al., 2021), and have much to offer to the Global North. In light of these facts, some may ask why anyone from the Global North should serve in any kind of capacity as a trainer in the Global South. This is a fair question, and a question with which I have wrestled. Since unreached people groups are mostly in the Global South (Zurlo et al., 2021), it still arguably makes sense that missionaries, from both regions, should focus on going there—even though this does not seem to be the case since missionaries are usually sent to countries with the greatest number of Christians (Zurlo et al., 2020, 2021). Nevertheless, since I believe God is still calling and sending people to share his message, I assume that this may involve missionaries from the Global North ending up as trainers in the Global South. However, I would not be surprised or discouraged if this number dwindles as more missionaries are sent from the Global South itself.

Being from the Global North, I propose that while missionaries from the Global North should never assume they are inherently capable of training believers in the Global South, neither must they forever avoid the practice. One way they might develop helpful—and I believe necessary—attitudes for such work is by practicing what I call the Continuity Mindset for Christian Mission, a mindset that emphasizes the continuity of one's identity and ministry in

one's home culture with one's identity and ministry in the host culture. In this article, I hope to point out some flaws in the common missionary tactic of "defaulting to being trainers and imparters of Western knowledge, approaches, technologies, and systems" (Tizon, 2018, p. 51). I will describe the continuity mindset and its development and explain how the practices of the continuity mindset can help correct problematic paradigms.

Missionaries as Trainers

To begin, I want to clarify that the continuity mindset is proposed specifically for missionaries whose primary job description is to serve as a trainer for other believers. Missionaries who feel called and gifted to directly pioneer new ministry efforts in unreached locales, practice Business as Mission, or engage in development efforts may not find the continuity mindset especially relevant. With this in mind, it is important to look further at missionaries serving as trainers, including common practices and potential problems.

The Standard Operating Procedure

While preparing to serve in South Asia, my wife and I were taught that the most effective use of our time would be to train local believers how to reach the lost around them. As Smith and Kai (2011) say, "mobilizing and training existing Christians is a high value in CPMs [Church Planting Movements] all over the world" (The Scribe in the Kingdom section, para. 5). This is especially true for believers who are either from the targeted unreached people group or a similar group. Watson and Watson (2014) note several times the importance of training others in the various skills and activities necessary for disciple making. Addison (2015) encourages people hoping to see people movements to train as many people as possible since only a small percentage of the trained apply what they have learned outside of their current social network; by increasing the number of trainees—he implies that missionaries should think in terms of training thousands—then the number of disciple-makers will be sufficient to see an unreached people group reached.

Smith and Parks (2015) write that missionaries interested in seeing movements of people coming to faith should switch "from being church planters to being catalysts that empower reproducing churches to be started" (p. 37). Admittedly, several of the concepts discussed thus far are not without their critics. The concept of unreached people groups is somewhat controversial (e.g., Hendrickson, 2018; Lee & Park, 2018). Similarly, church planting or disciple-making movements, which are at the heart of Training for Trainers and other approaches to training done by missionaries from the Global North, are panned by many (e.g., Massey, 2012; Wu, 2014a, 2014b). In this article, it will be assumed that movements can be understood and used in biblical ways, though I will refrain from promoting any one particular methodology and concede that there are issues with some movement

proponents' hermeneutics and statistics.

From my own experience, it seems fairly easy for missionaries from the Global North to find training opportunities in the Global South. Rynkiewich (2016) comments on how Christians from the Global North are quick "to try to partner, raise money, and provide training" (p. 314) when they hear of Christians in the Global South trying to accomplish a God-sized vision in their home nation. In many contexts, foreign missionaries are welcomed with open arms by local churches and given prominent roles and designations simply for showing up (Godwin & Mutter, 2013). Hibbert and Hibbert (2019) note "the tendency to impose a culturally alien pattern of leadership" (p. 242) by missionaries coming into new cultural settings. The Hibberts (2019) also note that foreign missionaries are able to make this kind of imposition because they are probably entering these settings with a significant amount of power. Baer (2020) argues that at least some Christians in the Global South feel that they are but pawns in missionaries' grand strategies, a means to bring about the foreigners' glorious end visions (p. 147)

Patron-Client Settings

The inherent power with which missionaries from the Global North arrive in the Global South is related to patronage. Georges (2019) asserts that the majority of the Global North are ignorant of how patron-client relationships function (p. 2) and defines patronage as

a reciprocal relationship between a patron and a client. Patrons are the superior party with resources and power to help other people. ... Their generosity protects and provides for the people under their care.

Clients, on the other hand, are social inferiors who attach themselves to a patron in order to secure protection and resources. ... But the client is not as wealthy as the patron, so instead of repaying financially, they repay by honoring the patron. A client offers obedience, gratitude, allegiance, and solidarity to the patron. (p. 9)

Unless the missionary is very intentional, simply being in an area can inadvertently put them in the role of patron for the local Christians, the clients, with whom they are working in their host nation (Dyer, 2017; Harries, 2019; Williams, 2019). In other words, they are now in a position of higher status in the relationships they have with local believers, perhaps without even realizing it. Needless to say, patronage is something that missionaries from the Global North must properly understand and consider if they are preparing to serve in areas where patronage is "the social 'operating system' that shapes relationships" (Georges, 2019, p. 2).

Colonialism and Neo-Colonialism

One may ask why missionaries from the Global North are expected to serve as patrons when they arrive in the Global South (Georges, 2019). The histories of the Christian missions enterprise and colonialism are entwined (Rynkiewich, 2011), though the exact nature of the relationship is debated. Woodberry (2009) argues that the presence of missionaries was generally beneficial to the indigenous peoples in the colonies—citing their influence in the spread of positive educational, scientific, medicinal, and social innovations—though he concedes negative anecdotes are easy to find. Tizon (2018) acknowledges the positive impact missionaries had in the time of colonialism, but also laments their role in enabling and propagating slavery (pp. 43-45). The echoes of colonialism are still resounding today.

Missionaries from the Global North often rely on funds from back home, which complicates their relationships with locals in a variety of ways (Alawode, 2020; Fox, 2006; Harries, 2021). This is particularly messy in the context of neocolonialism, the “apparent political independence but economic control from the outside” (Rynkiewich, 2011, p. 118), a reality that pervades much of the Global South. Kim (2010) writes that “world Christianity is deeply enmeshed within the current neocolonial systems and operations of power. A deeper question, then, is to what extent Christian missions...participate in reinforcing neocolonial realities or...resisting them” (p. 11). Missionaries from the Global North must recognize that colonialism, neocolonialism, and related historical and contemporary phenomena affect their relationships in much of the world.

What to Do?

If missionaries from the Global North can accept that they most likely arrive on the field with more power than the typical local Christian, then they should ponder what to do in light of this fact. I visited a missionary family in East Asia after they had been on the field for a relatively short time. They seemed discouraged and eventually shared that they had basically been advised by other missionaries from the Global North to leverage their White skin and English language skills to step into roles of influence in the community. Some could argue that leveraging the position of power for the greater good is appropriate. Certainly, patronage can be utilized, if understood appropriately, to be a blessing to others (Georges, 2019; Georges & Baker, 2016), so does it not follow that missionaries from the Global North should simply utilize their power to fulfill the calling God has placed on their lives?

One might argue that Paul used his Roman citizenship in a utilitarian fashion at times (e.g., Acts 16:37-39, 22:25-29), though I believe this is not quite analogous to the present discussion. Others might argue from Paul's declaration at the end of 1 Corinthians 9:22, “so that by all possible means I might save some” (NIV), that leveraging power to train and mobilize local

believers in reaching unreached people groups is appropriate, though to do this would seemingly ignore the entire context of the whole passage in which Paul is discussing his having made himself “a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible” (1 Cor. 9:19, NIV).

On the whole, it seems difficult to argue against missionaries from the Global North laying down their power in order to better serve their new neighbors in the Global South. Since Jesus, “who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage” (Phil. 2:6, NIV), it seems like the burden of proof rests on those arguing in favor of missionaries holding onto power.

If missionaries from the Global North can accept that they have the responsibility to lay down their power, as Jesus himself did in his mission to humanity, then how might one go about doing that?

The Continuity Mindset for Christian Mission

I believe that practicing the continuity mindset will help missionaries develop the necessary attitudes to be trainers in the Global South. The main way it does so is by effectively enabling privileged missionaries from the Global North to surrender their power.

The continuity mindset’s name stems from what I perceive to be a general lack of continuity between missionaries’ lives at home and their lives abroad. For instance, upon moving to South Asia, I went from being an insider in my own community—speaking the same language as most of the people around me, having established relationships, and having a somewhat clear sense of identity—to being an outsider who did not speak the language, had no local friendships or history, and had no clue who I was anymore. I sometimes felt shunned as a foreigner while at other times celebrated; in either case, it felt difficult to develop relationships with people, even if I was onstage training an eager audience. I realized that by having two very disconnected and mutually irrelevant lives, I arrived with very little credibility other than my credentials of being a White American male. I eventually began to try integrating those two radically different parts of my life, using my experiences in one setting to assist what I was doing in the other, and thus establishing continuity between the two.

Part of this journey has been wrestling with the clear power imbalance that exists between myself and the South Asian people with whom I have interacted over the past decade. As a white male, it would be ignorant of me to claim that I experience no power imbalances in America, but I believe it happens less frequently in America than in South Asia. In both locations, Jesus’ example calls me to lay down whatever power I have for the sake of others, though in South Asia it requires more effort since I am operating in radically different cultures from my home culture.

I have drawn from a variety of resources to tweak the missionary-as-

trainer paradigm I inherited, including elements from vulnerable mission, nonresidential mission, tentmaking, cultural intelligence, and authentic leadership. By God's grace, as I began to pull from these different resources over the past few years, my closest South Asian friend and confidante noticed a significant positive difference between who I was when we met and who I have started to become.

I believe that if missionaries practice the continuity mindset by utilizing these different elements, then they can develop into the kind of people who are actually equipped to train believers in a variety of contexts without inadvertently abusing the dynamics involved in patron-client contexts or exacerbating lingering issues created and propagated by colonialism and its offspring. The following is a description of the fundamental elements of the continuity mindset.

Vulnerable Mission

According to Dyer (2017), the concept of vulnerable mission concerns missionaries from the Global North who “deliberately choose *not* to assert control, or take authority and power” (p. 39) over the local community by instead using the local language and avoiding the use of outside resources. Williams (2019) clarifies that “resources are not limited to money but include soft resources such as thinking styles” (The Alliance for Vulnerable Mission section). Looking to “the ultimate biblical example of vulnerability ... that of Christ in his incarnation” (Dyer, 2017, p. 42), proponents of vulnerable mission contend that vulnerability is the proper attitude for Christian missionaries.

Vulnerable mission is similar to other lines of missiological thought. Godwin and Mutter (2013) refer to what they call “incarnational practice” (p. 39) as their prescription for missionaries, inspired by Jesus' commission of his disciples in John 20:21, “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you” (NIV, 2011). Broadly defined, this looks like embracing “sacrifice ... [by] setting aside one's own ambitions, agenda, timing, protocol, and expectations in the service of national partners” (Godwin & Mutter, 2013, p. 41). Baer (2020) describes the ideal missionary as a “fellow traveller” (p. 142) and believes learning the local language is “the most important thing” (p. 142) in becoming one. Learning the local language puts the missionary in a position of vulnerability where they desperately need the help of their hosts (Baer, 2020).

I remember upon arrival in South Asia being encouraged by welcoming missionaries to not bother learning the local language since English was widely spoken and it would permit that my wife and I hit the ground running. Thankfully, we had other friends and colleagues saying the opposite, so we spent three years in full-time language study. Not only did we learn the local language, but we also learned that the use of English was not quite as effective as some of the other missionaries had claimed; we also learned a lot about the culture since some things could not easily be translated or understood clearly

in English. Beyond the language and cultural acquisition, we also learned a type of humility that I do not believe we could have otherwise. As Baer (2020) implies, learning a language can be humiliating, which goes a long way in helping missionaries learn that they are not the star of the show.

Nonresidential Mission

The idea of the nonresidential missionary emerged in the late 1980s, at least within the Southern Baptist denomination (Carlton, 2006; Garrison, 1990). Garrison (1990) defines a nonresidential missionary as “a full-time, professional career foreign missionary who is matched up with a single unevangelized population segment...for purposes of concentrating on priorities of initial evangelization and eliminating gaps and inadvertent duplications with other agencies” (p. 13) while residing, as the name suggests, “outside the targeted assignment because legal residence for a missionary is either prohibited or highly restricted” (p. 13). Their nonresidential status and high intentionality in partnering with other Christians to reach a particular unreached people group are considered distinctives (Garrison, 1990, p. 14). A nonresidential missionary has “a firm commitment to strategic planning” (Carlton, 2006, p. 60) in terms of networking with other believers in reaching an unreached people group. Presently, within the Southern Baptist denomination, the term nonresidential missionary has been replaced with *strategy coordinator* (Carlton, 2006).

Obviously, the world has changed since Garrison’s (1990) initial proposal, and while security concerns are still relevant today, there are other reasons to implement this practice. The nonresidential missionary or strategy coordinator role for Southern Baptists would eventually include a focus on catalyzing movements by working with local Christians, as well as the understanding that the foreigner needed “an exit strategy” (Carlton, 2006, p. 211). This thinking mirrors Watson and Watson’s (2014) belief that “great delegators know how to take their hands off in order to create a leadership vacuum that potential leaders will fill if given the chance” (p. 185). The fact that Jesus and Paul were consistently itinerant (Wolff, 2004) also lends credence to the need for creating leadership vacuums.

It seems clear that Jesus’ earthly ministry was less than three years in duration (Votaw, 1905), and from what is clearly mentioned in Acts, Paul’s longest duration in any place after being sent out from Antioch seems to have been three years in Ephesus (Acts 20:31). I submit that at least one of the reasons Jesus and Paul did not stay longer in any particular place is that they were essentially throwing people into the water and trusting the Holy Spirit to help them swim. If anyone could successfully allow people to depend on them, I think it would be Jesus, and yet Jesus clearly told his disciples, “but very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you” (John 16:7,

NIV). Allen (1962) writes that Paul “believed in the Holy Ghost, not merely vaguely as a spiritual Power, but as a Person indwelling his converts. He believed therefore in his converts. ... he believed in the Holy Ghost in them” (p. 149). Paul recognized a missionary’s task was one of planting and watering, “but only God ... makes things grow” (1 Cor 3:7), and he actively fought against people becoming overly attached to him (e.g., 1 Cor 1:10-17; 3:1-23).

Beyond the security and logistical benefits of working as a nonresidential missionary, I believe the most overwhelming benefit is how it can be used to prevent the missionary from becoming the center of the story, a place that should be left for God alone. This is not to say that extended residence in a foreign country can be omitted fully; it may be quite necessary early in a missionary’s career to learn language and culture, two critical components of practicing vulnerable mission. Jesus spent around 30 years on earth before beginning his public ministry (Luke 3:23), and there is at least a decade of near-silence on Paul’s activities in Tarsus and Antioch between his conversion in Acts 9 and his being sent out in Acts 11 (Gal 2:1).

Nonresidential mission does not imply that ongoing communication ceases between the nonresidential missionary and their local contacts. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit would continue to communicate on his behalf to his disciples (John 16:12-14). Several of the books in the New Testament are examples of Paul’s ongoing communication with his friends while he was not physically present, and he was intentional to follow up with these communities in person (e.g., Acts 15:36). Regular communication via the Internet and in-person visits will be normal, especially since authentic relationships have ideally formed between missionaries and their local co-laborers.

In my own experience, my family and I began to consider adopting a nonresidential missionary strategy in light of security concerns in our former location; after spending time talking with nonresidential missionaries and studying the ministries of Jesus and Paul, I began to realize the additional potential benefits of becoming nonresidential. We had the privilege of living in South Asia for a significant length of time before relocating to a nearby country due to security issues. We sensed that such a move would allow for greater fruitfulness in South Asia. Within six months of our departure, things we had helped build fell apart; while at first discouraging, we soon realized that this was revealing how much of the ministry had depended on our physical presence. While we had been intentional to practice vulnerable mission while living in South Asia, we found there was no substitute for simply getting out of the way. Although the last few years have been intermittently painful as we interact with our friends from afar—along with regular in-person visits—we are thankful that God has become more central in the story of our friends’ lives, and we are confident and full of faith that the Holy Spirit will continue to grow what we have planted and watered.

Tentmaking

I refer to tentmaking as something separate from Business as Mission, though the terms are related and at times conflated (Johnson & Rundle, 2006). Johnson and Rundle (2006) specifically define a tentmaker “as a mission-minded Christian who supports himself or herself in a cross-cultural mission context through a vocation such as teaching English, medical work, or working for a locally-owned or international company” (pp. 23-24). My experience concurs with Johnson and Rundle’s claim that many long-term missionaries view tentmaking “as a necessary evil” (p. 24), usually only undertaken as means of obtaining a visa for residing in a foreign country. In the missionary community, I frequently hear this referred to as a platform, a bare minimum job that provides a visa; the less time and energy involved, the better. Initially, I certainly fell into this category, and I now shake my head in embarrassment when I remember explaining our platform to South Asians because it made no sense to them why my family would move across the world to work for what was more or less a shell company.

While there are practical benefits to having a non-ministry job in a foreign country for missionaries, there are also other benefits to tentmaking that should be considered even in countries where it is not logistically required (Malone, 2014). Russell (2006) lists three reasons that Paul made tents: to identify with his target people, to demonstrate that he was credible and “cared more about his message than his money” (p. 169), and to model a life of a regular disciple who is not a professional Christian. On the first point, it is important to remember that identification is a two-way street—Paul was able to better understand his audience, but they could also more readily identify with him. Paul’s work as a tentmaker also freed him from having to become a client to a human patron (Georges, 2019; Lohr, 2007), thus avoiding obligations that could potentially derail his ministry goals.

With all of the above in mind, I understand a tentmaker as a missionary who has a legitimate, income-providing job in their country of residence, without that job being their primary focus; unlike my former platform job in South Asia, this job is appropriate for the particular missionary given their education and work experience. Due to the focus of these missionaries on reaching unreached people groups, it is unlikely that this job can be full-time, meaning that at least part of the missionary’s salary may continue to come from the financial support of believers back home. But I believe such a job can still be useful, beyond providing visas and a partial salary.

For example, after leaving our home in South Asia, I began to work in a field in our current country of residence that aligned with my prior job experience in the United States. It has been a breath of fresh air to not dread being asked about my work. While I definitely benefit from the part-time salary and visa the job provides, I have appreciated the extra benefits mentioned by Russell (2006) even more. I now make sense to everyone I meet;

people are not confused why I would live in a foreign country since I have legitimate employment. The job also places me within a community that includes families who speak the same language as the one I had previously learned and has enabled my family to spend time in South Asian neighborhoods without suspicion.

Having a non-ministry job has also paid off in terms of training Christians since they see that I am bivocational. Before, I would encourage local believers whom I had trained to be bivocational since raising financial support for their ministries was not viable in their location. Essentially, I was telling people, who knew I did little work on my platform, to do as I said, not as I did. When I now encourage pastors to look for part-time work, I actually know what working bi-vocationally means and have paid the associated time and energy costs myself.

Finally, tentmaking may also help missionaries in their practice of vulnerable mission. As one missionary from the Global North shared with me, working in a formal position in her host country under local leadership was a transformative experience as it enabled her to avoid coming into her location in a position of power. In my own experience over the past few years, working in a formal role under someone from the Global South has taught me how to serve someone else's vision rather than only knowing how to have other people serve mine.

Cultural Intelligence

Cultural intelligence is “an individual’s capability to function and manage effectively in culturally diverse settings” (Ang & Van Dyne, 2008, p. 3). While the legitimacy of cultural intelligence as a definable, measurable, and universal construct is not without question (Berry & Ward, 2006; Blasco et al., 2012), a high level of cultural intelligence has been shown to have a positive impact on intercultural effectiveness (Deng & Gibson, 2008; Ersoy, 2014; Rockstuhl et al., 2011), and the research seems to typically reflect positive sentiments towards the construct (Fang et al., 2018). One key premise of cultural intelligence is that it is “malleable” (Van Dyne et al., 2012, p. 303) and can be intentionally developed over time.

Learning about different cultural value dimensions—like individualism versus collectivism, high versus low power distance, and long-term versus short-term orientation—such as those described by Hofstede et al. (2010) or the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness program (House et al., 2004) can increase cultural intelligence and may be useful in combatting ethnocentrism (Northouse, 2019). Critiques of the use of cultural value dimensions often include the dangers of stereotyping and unfairly or incorrectly predicting someone else’s behavior based on various cultural value scales (Beugelsdijk et al., 2017; Brewer & Venaik, 2012; Venaik & Brewer, 2013). While I agree that stereotyping is dangerous and that cultural value

dimensions should not be used to indiscriminately box people in, I also think Richards and O'Brien's (2012) suggestion cannot be ignored: "Generalizations are always wrong and usually helpful" (p. 19).

As I have intentionally developed my own cultural intelligence, I have appreciated the benefits of being able to anticipate rather than predict the concerns and behaviors of others from different cultural backgrounds. I use the verb *anticipate* to convey a cautious use of cultural value dimensions that includes an awareness that every person is unique and will not fit all of their cultural norms. Rather than only having my own cultural background as a context for understanding my friends from the Global South, through developing cultural intelligence I have added awareness of other cultural backgrounds. For example, while the South Asian profile of the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness study (House et al., 2004) may be inaccurate in some respects, knowing that my South Asian friends are likely to be more collectivist than my American individualist self is obviously critical in order for me to better understand them.

Being culturally intelligent also enables people to know when to accept the roadmap of a foreign culture and when to reject it (Livermore, 2015). Going back to the topic of patronage mentioned above, Georges (2019) notes that Paul purposefully avoided taking on clients in Corinth; "the source of the Corinthians' honor was not their relationship with Paul (as either his patron or his client) but their connection with God" (p. 65). In other settings, however, Paul did engage in a different form of patronage where God was understood as the ultimate patron, and Paul and his companions were on equal footing as clients; "healthy patron-client relationships were possible because Paul disciplined early Christians into a transformed view of patronage, as seen in 2 Corinthians 8-9 and Philippians 4" (Georges, 2019, p. 67). Paul's knowledge of the culture in which he ministered allowed him to appropriately interact with cultural norms to most effectively honor God and serve those around him.

Personally, developing cultural intelligence has helped my family handle cultural stress and form strong friendships in the Global South. Rather than forcing people into stereotypes in my mind, I have found that cultural intelligence has enabled me to understand how and when people either do or do not fit their cultural norms, as well as explain my own points of view and opinions on important subjects without being misunderstood because of cultural differences.

Authentic Leadership

This last point regarding cultural intelligence, communicating effectively across cultures, is worthy of further discussion. In addition to skepticism regarding cultural intelligence as a construct, arguments have been made that it is a tool that allows people to "manipulate cultural values and mores in order

to serve the agendas” (M. J. Dutta & Dutta, 2013, p. 252) of the Global North rather than actually serving people in the Global South. Basically, some could interpret my increased effectiveness in intercultural communication as actually increased cleverness at getting my way in relationships with people from the Global South. I must admit that I find this line of reasoning fairly compelling, though I do believe there are safeguards to this abuse of cultural intelligence. Vulnerable mission is obviously helpful in making sure cultural intelligence is used to lovingly serve, rather than selfishly control, others, but practicing authentic leadership may provide even more concrete guiderails to ensure missionaries do not get off track.

Vogelgesang and colleagues (2009) include a description of the four components of authentic leadership when they propose that

authentic leaders—who possess a deep understanding of their actions and feelings (self-awareness), who have the ability to weigh information from both internal and external sources when making decisions about behavior (balanced processing), who have created an open dialogue with their followers (relational transparency), and whose decisions and actions stem from the morals developed within the culture of one’s home country (moral perspective)—will be able to exhibit morally grounded cultural adaptation. (p. 104).

In other words, practicing authentic leadership enables culturally intelligent individuals to maintain alignment with their values or moral perspective. At the same time, cultural intelligence should help an “authentic leader...more fully comprehend the differences between the host culture values and his or her own deeply held beliefs” (Vogelgesang et al., 2009, p. 104). A culturally intelligent authentic leader should be able to maintain their values—such as loving God and avoiding sin—and adjust their culturally conditioned understandings of those values as appropriate, such as worship style preferences or how they demonstrate love for neighbors. Combining cultural intelligence and authentic leadership can help someone working in intercultural settings understand “what behaviour can be adapted without jeopardizing authenticity and what behaviour must align with...[their] own cultural values, thereby remaining authentic” (Green, 2017, p. 265).

A culturally unintelligent authentic leader may not discern whether something is in conflict with their inner values or is simply a new and different experience, such as a missionary from an individualist culture with a strong value for truth-telling not being able to understand why someone in a collectivist culture might use a more indirect communication style (Hofstede et al., 2010). Truth can be shared both directly and indirectly, but not being aware of the cultural values surrounding indirect communication may lead the culturally unintelligent authentic leader to assume an indirect person is simply lying. Not

only may they misunderstand the people around them, but they will almost certainly be misunderstood if they insist on speaking directly in that context.

On the other hand, a culturally intelligent missionary who has not intentionally developed a strong value system may inadvertently adapt to inappropriate behaviors and expectations in a foreign culture, as Vogelgesang et al. (2009) warn. This could look like assimilating into a sinful aspect of the host culture or the aforementioned misuse of cultural values to deceptively get others to do what they want (Dutta & Dutta, 2017; Dutta & Dutta, 2013).

Besides the moral perspective and relational transparency components of authentic leadership, self-awareness and balanced processing—“an individual’s ability to analyze information objectively and explore other people’s opinions before making a decision” (Northouse, 2019, p. 204)—fit easily into the cultural intelligence framework under one of its subdimensions, metacognitive cultural intelligence, which focuses on growing in self- and other-awareness (Livermore, 2015, pp. 29, 144-147). For missionaries from the Global North living in the Global South, practicing cultural intelligence or authentic leadership separately may be unadvisable; however, using the two concepts together seems like it may enable a more complete and effective practice of both.

Conclusion

Missionaries from the Global North training Christians in the Global South has proven to be fruitful in terms of catalyzing movements (Schattner, 2013), so it seems foolish to abandon the approach altogether. However, past fruitfulness should not blind missionaries’ eyes to the real problems associated with the power that those from the Global North typically possess. Missionaries can glean from vulnerable mission, nonresidential mission, tentmaking, cultural intelligence, and authentic leadership to begin practicing the continuity mindset, which I believe is an effective way to create a link between a missionary’s life at home and life abroad.

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