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Navigating the Seas of Change

Learning from changing paradigms and internationalization today.

In 2003 Samuel Escobar wrote about global mission as being from everywhere to everyone (Escobar, *The New Global Mission*). Well over a decade later, Allen Yeh while assessing the centenary celebrations from Edinburgh 1910, reframed the idea as from everyone to everywhere. (Yeh, *Polycentric Missiology*). Today, global mission reflects these realities as well as the insights from Jay Matenga on Indigenous Mission (Matenga, *Centring the Local*).

Increasingly the importance of globalizing, internationalizing, and indigenizing are paramount for leaders in mission. While our world is polarizing on many levels and tribalism is clearly on the rise, nevertheless, our world becomes smaller all the time. Whether it's the impact of significant migration and the vitality of Diaspora Missiology or the rising impact of Digital Missions, we as mission leaders must prepare ourselves and ready our networks, movements and organizations for this era of the Gospel's growth.

It was these changing paradigms, along with an increasing dissatisfaction with the way mission leadership functioned, that led me to search for a new way of leading. My thesis on Polycentric Mission Leadership unveiled a new theoretical model that had validity in leadership theory but still deserves further testing (Handley, *Polycentric Mission Leadership*). For those interested in exploring the theory further or even submitting their own case studies see Polycentric Leadership.

More importantly than the theories, for those of us navigating the sea changes and tidal waves that keep rising, we should have a keen eye on what we can learn from leading movements. Mission movement missiology and leadership systems and approaches can help us navigate the future. These ideas present us concepts that help move the needle when it comes to internationalization today (Handley, *Leading Mission Movements*). For those wanting to go deeper, more expansive treatment is found in Global Missiology (Handley, *Polycentric Leadership for Kingdom Movements, Parts I & II*).

Central to the theory and leadership model is what Ted Esler addresses as a key topic that will dominate the mission

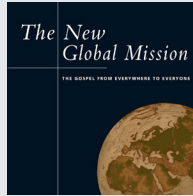
Additional Resources »

discussion for the next 10 years: mutuality (Esler, *The Next Ten Years*). While Ted rightly observes how some of the dialog around that issue can be problematic, still from a redemptive biblical thread, the idea of considering others more highly than oneself (see Philipians 2:3 as well as Romans 12:3 and Proverbs 3:7).

Along this vein, we practice a more communal way of leading, ensuring to listen to others and platform their voices (see for example, Becchetti, *Eastern Voices*). Ultimately, in order to better move toward a more internationalist network or organization, empowering the local and the indigenous so that each country and region as well as each person, is able to shape decisions and discern the direction based on local wisdom and approaches.

At the same time, what holds everyone together? This is where Paul Hiebert's idea about Centered Sets comes into play (Corwin, *Bounded and Centered Sets*). As long as each regional and national leadership owns the core vision, mission and values, how they choose to lead on a local level is completely up to them. They have full freedom to be missional entrepreneurs within their cultural contexts and the glue that holds them all together is the idea of a centered set of the core mission that God has called them all to fulfill. ↗

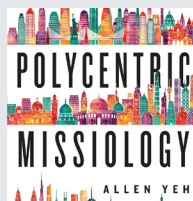
If you have questions, feel free to contact Joe: jhandley@A3.email.



The New Global Mission

Veteran missiologist Samuel Escobar presents an introduction to Christian mission today, exploring the new realities of our globalized world.

<https://amzn.to/3U7ANqa>



Polycentric Missiology

Missiologist Allen Yeh assesses the legacy of Edinburgh 1910 and the development of world Christianity in the following century.

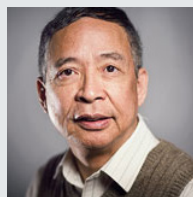
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The Indigenous Future of Missions

In "Centring the Local," Jay Matenga calls on the global missions community to prioritize the local, the host recipients of the gospel.

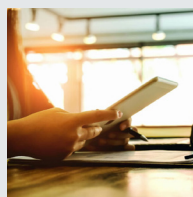
<https://youtu.be/7f3qHQcLIPU>



Diaspora Missiology

In this interview, Enoch Wan introduces the concept of diaspora missiology – God's mission of reconciliation among people outside of their place of origin.

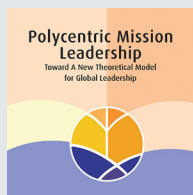
<https://www.jdpayne.org/diaspora-missiology/>



What Is Digital Missions?

This article is about digital missions, Indigitous global leaders Liam Savage and Russ Martin show how to bring the Gospel to new places and spaces.

<https://indigitous.org/article/what-is-digital-missions>



Polycentric Mission Leadership

Joe Handley focuses on the ways leadership is changing in the face of these matters, suggesting a new theoretical model for mission leadership.

<https://amzn.to/3vPzCS4>