

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *Anvil* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_anvil_01.php

Atola Longkumer

Witnessing Together: Christian Mission and Global Partnership

Atola Longkumer is from India and teaches at Leonard Theological College in Jabalpur. Her article on partnership deals with the realities and complexities of this vital theme in our global context. For those of us located in the West, or global North, it is good to read how our sisters and brothers from other parts of the world understand partnership and our part in it.

Introduction

The global situation has changed tremendously that the traditional barriers and conventional differences between countries and cultures appear to have vanished. Unprecedented speed of social interaction and swift mobilization of resources are the ways of life. In many sense, the world has become a global village, where repercussions/ripple of a local context can be felt/shared in the global neighbourhood. The recent tsunami in Japan, while it was a local tragedy, has certainly impacted people and resources at a larger scale. For instance, the media reported of skilled labourers from India, who had to return to India, which entails social and economic implications. Nations dependent on nuclear energy saw concerns of safety and witnessed protests. The phenomenon of the global web of social interaction and mobilization was most vividly witnessed in the recent Arab uprising.

While these realities of global ripples of local contexts and the social revolutions engendered by the technological revolution cannot be denied, it would be difficult to argue that social equality and economic justice prevail on a global scale. In fact economists and social scientists point to an entirely different reality that contrasts starkly with the seeming global village image. In the midst of unprecedented wealth, poverty persist to continue, women have long attained 'equal status' in the society, yet violence and discrimination against them is almost endemic across cultures, technological explosion has brought people closer as never before but at the heavy price of environmental degradation, democratic values seem to have spread far beyond its foundation, still oppressive hierarchy shows its head, social and religious fundamentalist spectres haunt at the global level.

Despite the progress made, the global is not more than a concept, because fragmentations, dislocation, inequalities, discriminations, and divisions continue to suppress the vision of a global harmony, the kingdom of God. I must hasten to clarify that a global vision need not necessarily mean a homogenous world, rather, it is one where heterogeneous people and cultures dwell in mutual inter-dependence with equality and justice that is holistic and inclusive.

Within this reality of the modern paradox wherein poverty, injustice, alleged homophobia reside together with unprecedented social interaction and collaboration; the task of the church is to proclaim God's love for humanity expressed in the life and work of Jesus. The

community of God's people is to witness to Jesus Christ crucified and risen, participate in ushering God's kingdom where justice, peace and equality is a way of life. The witness to the Gospel is a common witness for the people of God, ie the church and therefore requires working together in the mission of the church. On one hand there is the need to witness together for the global Christian community, on the other this global community is fragmented, identified and located in different contexts of social, economic and political realities. In other words, while the confession of Christ unites Christians around the world into one community of God's people, they are located in multiple contexts with diverse challenges.

Given this scenario of common witness within diverse, sometimes polarized contexts, the present paper will develop a proposal for a common witness based on the principle of partnership between the church of global south and the church in the north. The paper is not so much a theoretical exposition on the concept of partnership but rather suggests some practical areas of viable partnership between the global churches. A discussion on partnership in mission and witness of the church is not a new conversation. Partnership between the church in the global north and the church in the global south has been a lived reality from the early days of mission, albeit it was arguably to a lesser extent with limitations conditioned by mores and historical realities of the times, such as imperialism, missionary superiority, and paternalism.

Drawing from recent articulations on partnership the present paper will add to the conversation on partnership in our common witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and lay out four potential areas for partnership between the church in the global south and the church in the global north. The four areas are: practice of spirituality, economic partnership, women's empowerment, and theological education.

Partnership in mission history

The mission historian Dana Robert informs us of the collaboration between women missionaries and native women, known as 'Bible women' in the whole mission enterprise of the missionary movement. This partnership was forged for various reasons: language, knowledge of the local culture, familiarity with the terrain for travel, access to the often sequestered women in cultures such as in Asian countries. These native women known as Bible women went to places inaccessible to Western missionary women, meeting women in their homes and carrying the catechism and Scriptures. Robert stressed the crucial role this partnership between the missionary women and the native Bible women played in the cross-cultural expansion of Christianity as a world religion. 1

Another aspect of partnership in mission history comes from the chapters of Africa, exemplified in the life and work of Samuel Ajayi Crowther (1807-1891). The convert from Yorubaland in the nineteenth century ordained as the first African, Anglican bishop in the present day western Nigeria. Crowther was known for his language skills which took him to the famous Niger Expedition of 1841 as interpreter and native assistant for the expedition. The work of Crowther is significant in the development of African indigenous Christianity and Africa's engagement with Islam in the nineteenth century. For his visionary leadership and efficient partnership with the Church Missionary Society in the mission task, Andrew F

Walls described him as 'a seasoned pillar of the CMS Yoruba mission.' ² From the history of Christianization of the Ao Naga people of Northeast India comes a different shade of partnership. The American Baptist missionaries in the plains of Assam, the neighboring region came to know of the 'wild tribes of Nagas' and longed to share the Gospel of Christ with the 'heathen' tribes inhabiting the mountains surrounding Assam. The first exploratory venture to the neighboring Ao village was made by a native convert Godhula Brown, sent from the mission centre based in Assam. This part of the history unfortunately has almost been erased and the history of Christian mission among the Ao Nagas privileges the white missionary as the first contact of Christian missions. That partnership is played out in a complex web of human relationships, social-cultural attitudes and not without power dynamics is also demonstrated in plenty of historical incidents, events and mission personalities. Despite the human errors as children of their historical times, the working out of the vision of Christian mission rested significantly upon the partnerships between western missionaries and the native assistants.

Partnership in the task of Christian mission has continued to be a predominant concern in the ecumenical movement, most explicitly pronounced in the Whitby meeting of the International Missionary Council, 1947. Meeting in the context of the aftermath of war and its ravages, the theme of meeting couldn't be more appropriate - 'Christian Witness in a Revolutionary World.' While their country of origin and national identities could not be ignored, the participants of the Whitby meeting affirmed their 'total equality' and common purpose shared by both the 'older church' and the 'younger church.' The imperative need of the time for a common witness to the gospel in complete equality was expressed in the document produced in the meeting titled 'Partners in obedience.' ³

The commitment to partnership as an essential dimension of Christian mission both in its pragmatic implementation and theological reflection is evident in the publications of mission journals such as the *International Review of Mission (IRM)* and *International Bulletin of Mission Research (IBMR)*.

The formation of the United Mission to Nepal in 1954 is another example of partnership in obedience in common witness. Nepal was a closed kingdom when Dr Bob Fleming and two other colleagues were allowed permission to enter in 1949. Seeing the need of medical services, Fleming, a Methodist, invited other Christians to jointly start a hospital. Permission was eventually granted in 1953 to open a hospital in Tansen. ⁴ Thus, the United Mission to Nepal was formed in 1954.

In India, the concept and practice of partnership in Christian mission is gaining new currency in the twenty-first century between mission associations and the so-called mainline denominations, after fractious relationships, plagued by distrust, suspicion and accusations of "sheep-stealing". It is apparent that the contemporary mission tasks of the church demonstrate a respectful partnership, for instance, missionaries and evangelists of the Indian indigenous mission organizations such as the Indian Missions Association (IMA) collaborate with traditional and already existing churches such as the Methodist Church in India (MCI) for the membership of new converts in states like Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh. Also, the Friends Missionary Prayer Band (FMPB) partners with the Church of North India (CNI) in the process of conversion, baptism and membership. Apart from partnership in evangelistic mission, there is an observable trend in the practice of partnership in Christian mission in

areas such as theological education, although it is in its tentative period. The Mizo Presbyterian Church in Mizoram partners with theological institutions in the country by sending and supporting theologically trained personnel to serve as faculty members in theological colleges that might have its historical connections with a church that is not Presbyterian.

True to the modern phenomenon of Christianity that has seen significant growth and influence in the global south, where there are also considerably wealthy churches, due to various factors such as growing economies in the region and large membership, there is collaboration even in the area of financial resources. While it might amount to little more than a symbolic gesture, given the larger global economic reality of disparity, it nevertheless demonstrates the spirit of collaboration in common projects of Christian mission. A Baptist church in Nagaland participated in a project initiated by WARC, now renamed World Communion of Reformed Churches for the recent Edinburgh 2010 celebrations. Another effort towards partnership is also demonstrated in the recent re-structuring of mission societies traditionally originated and based in the global north such as *Communauté Evangelique d' Action Apostolique* (CEVAA), the Council for World Mission (CWM) and the United Evangelical Mission (UEM). These re-structuring efforts are a response to the need of common witness, as Kai Michael Funkschmidt, writes, 'to create structures to enable rather than hinder equal relations between churches in North and South.' ⁵ The re-structuring of the mission societies ensures equal participation of both the member churches in the south and churches in the north in every aspect of the mission, including the crucial areas of decision making and financial management.

Partnership efforts are not limited only between churches in the two global regions but conscious partnership between different church traditions and historically separated churches are taking place. Significant collaboration among ecumenical, evangelical, Catholic and Pentecostal churches are signs of matured partnership noted in recent times. ⁶ For instance, the 2010 World Mission Conference held in Edinburgh was one such global gathering. Furthermore, the most recent development of collaboration in common witness is evident in the document produced together by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, the World Council of Churches and the World Evangelical Alliance. The document is a result of five years of common study and reflection on relevant Christian witness, titled, 'Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Recommendations for Conduct.' ⁷

Areas of Partnership

As demonstrated in the foregoing section, the practice of partnership between Christians of different traditions, different social-cultural contexts and across the economic divide has been a hallmark of Christian mission in witnessing to the Gospel of Christ. In today's context of the global world, where inequality, injustice and conflicts continue to challenge the vision of God's kingdom, where every people and nation have fullness of life, it is vital that Christians around the globe work together in witnessing to the Gospel of Christ. The following section will point out some areas of potential partnership between the global north and global south in carrying out the missional task.

1. Practice of Spirituality

Spirituality is a viable area for partnership between the global north and the global south. A modern phenomenon that has significantly influenced society is the concept and practice of secularism, which can be defined as a social and cultural state that takes little or no cognizance of the sacred in matters of daily life. Secularism has had its deepest impact upon the societies of the global north. The immediate impact is reflected in the dwindling numbers of people in traditional religious institutions such as the Christian church. While it cannot be ignored that there is growing trend of secularization in the global south, still spirituality hold its sway upon the people. It must be noted, however, that it is more complex than this simplified dichotomy of a secular global north and a religious global south. There is the growing reality of religious fundamentalism and its byproduct social fundamentalism as seen manifested in forms of narrow ethnocentrism visible in both the global north and the global south. Hence, spirituality needs to be differentiated from religious fundamentalism that fosters intolerance and often religious violence. The usage of the term spirituality has to be understood in the context of Christianity and its influence and impact upon people's lives to be transformed and give hope to a broken and divided humanity. Examples from places as varied as China, India, and Africa with their growing numbers of Christians bear witness to the fact that spirituality is not inconsistent with a modern and globalised society. In this context of Christian spirituality being relatively vibrant in the global south while it is losing its meaning for many in the global north a partnership of exchange of stories, experiences, and visits between the churches might be a resourceful way to enable the communities to learn from each other. Kenneth Ross offers an excellent case study of a relationship between members of a congregation in Ruchazie, Scotland and a congregation in Baula, Malawi. These twinings, as the partnerships between churches across countries are called, were productive and enlivening to the Christian faith as the people involved made new discoveries of new dimensions of the faith. These partnerships, according to Ross, have the potential to provide the opportunity to read the Bible with new eyes, where often neglected Biblical themes are discovered and put into practice. The coming together and learning of each other's spirituality and its practice is enhanced by the partnership between local-to-local congregations. 8

Despite the often mentioned phenomenon of a diminished Christianity in the global north, there is much to be learned from the churches in the global north: the hospitality many share with the 'other', the awareness of the global socio-economic situation, the active involvement in programmes of justice around the world, the creative liturgical resources among others.

2. Economic partnership

The present global economic situation is more complex than what is perceived through the traditional dichotomy of the wealthy north and the poor south. On one hand, the growing economies in the south such as China and India have brought unprecedented wealth to some in the global south. On the other hand, the recent economic crises and the growing unemployment and poverty in the traditional wealthy north bring factors of complexity to the global economic predicament. However, despite these realities, measured in general, wealth is concentrated largely in the global north. Furthermore, there is unprecedented wealth that is arguably spreading, yet, there is a growing chasm between the rich and the poor. In the midst of unprecedented wealth there is persistent and abject poverty. According to some statistics 40 percent of the world's population lives in poverty and out of this one sixth percent lives in extreme poverty. To combat economic disparities and to create smooth movement of both

people and goods, to enable people to access resources that will enhance their lives, the phenomenon of globalization was launched. In other words globalization was expected to break the economic barriers between nations and create equal opportunity to all, subsequently wiping out poverty. However, the good intentions of globalization have not resulted in economic security for the world's poor; rather it has created wider disparities between the rich and the poor. The following statements from the report of the World Commission on the Social Dimensions of Globalization, 2004, demonstrate the negative impact of globalization:

The current process of globalization is generating unbalanced outcomes, both between and within countries. Wealth is being created, but too many countries and people are not sharing in its benefits. They also have little or no voice in shaping the process. Seen through the eyes of the vast majority of women and men, globalization has not met their simple and legitimate aspirations for decent jobs and a better future for their children. Many of them live in the limbo of the informal economy without formal rights and in a swathe of poor countries that subsist precariously on the margins of the global economy. Even in economically successful countries some workers and communities have been adversely affected by globalization. Meanwhile the revolution in global communications heightens awareness of these disparities...these global imbalances are morally and politically unsustainable. 9

In spite of measures such as globalization undertaken to combat poverty and the divide between the wealthy and the poor, economic power lies among the states and citizens of the global north. This is not to deny that even in the global north there is growing poverty among its citizens particularly as the recent economic crises have accentuated the economic perils of the poor. Within the context of this global economic disparity among nations and within nations as well, it becomes imperative to ensure good quality of life for all God's people. The mission of the church includes a holistic life of contentment for all people. Partnership in Christian mission in this context of economic inequalities should not be limited only to providing funds for projects in the global south. The partnership in mission will need to identify the root cause of such economic disparities. One of the underlying causes of poverty is insatiable human greed and the inherent tendency to accumulate rather than sharing. What is the task of the Christian global community in this context of poverty, wealth and human greed? The 'Commission on Christian Communities in Contemporary Contexts', of the Edinburgh 2010 study process proposed prophetic steps for the global church to alleviate poverty. These include among others, working in partnership, creating awareness campaigns, ensuring implementation of programmes initiated by the state, identifying discrimination that marginalizes the most vulnerable in society, such as women and children, helping to develop programmes to educate and empower the poor etc. 10

There is also the dimension of human responsibility in stewarding the earth's resources. The degradation to the environment and to human dignity itself is seen in unfettered consumerism, which in turn impacts lives and the livelihood of many thereby depriving them of basic needs. Poverty of some sections of the population and unfettered consumerism are not unrelated. It is imperative that global Christians partner in efforts to 'make poverty history' and restore earth's resources by collective stewardship and mutual reforms in lifestyles.

3. Women's Empowerment

Women continue to suffer discrimination, exploitation, marginalization and are victims of violence across cultures, religions and economic status. Women are underpaid, under-represented in parliaments and other decision making bodies, and women's basic human rights continue to be suppressed around the world. These realities are encountered by women despite the initiative, awareness and progress made towards achieving equality for women. Analyses point to many reasons such as illiteracy, poverty, cultural practices. However, the basic force behind the suppression and oppression of women across cultures lies in the patriarchal culture — a cultural orientation that places men as the authority, the representative, the powerful and the decision maker. Expressions of the patriarchal outlook on life are manifest in discrimination, exclusion and victimization of women. Unfortunately, this patriarchal culture has also influenced the history and theology of the Christian community. There are ample instances in every period of church history as well as practices and beliefs of the Christian faith that have negated women. Fortunately, there are certainly gradual changes taking place for women in both the church as well as the larger society. There is recognition, participation and inclusion of women taking place in different areas of society. However, the changes and progress are slow at best and women continue to experience exclusion and victimization at worst. Violence against women in different forms continues to victimize them, there is vehement resistance to women's equal participation in the ministry of the church from some quarters, and basic human rights are persistently denied to women. The empowerment of women is an urgent area that calls for action from the global church, which can be engaged in partnership. How can churches learn from one another's theology and practices that empower women? Resources, theological as well as practical traditions can be shared between the churches in fighting against discrimination and victimization of women. Prophetic words need to be spoken to one another in the mission endeavour of recognition and inclusion of women in the ministry of the church, including the Eucharistic ministry. Suffice here an example from the Northeastern India, where both Baptist and Presbyterian Christians make a vibrant Christian community in partnership with their global counterparts. Sadly, the participation of women in the Eucharistic ministry and acceptance of women into the churches' decision making bodies cannot be counted as an area of partnership within their global Christian communion.

4. Theological Education

Archbishop Desmond Tutu writing in the Foreword for the volume on *Handbook of Theological Education in World Christianity* stressed the crucial importance of theological education for renewing the church's mission and service. Theological education may be seen as the backbone of a vibrant Christian community, for where there is dedicated engagement with the Scriptures and relation to the knowledge of traditions and the changing contexts of the world, there will be renewed understanding, visions and trained personnel for the mission of the church. The centrality of theological education for the growth and future of Christianity itself is explicitly underlined by the editors of the *Handbook*, as they state in the Introduction,

Theological education has the potential to be the seedbed for the renewal of churches, their ministries, mission, and commitment to Christian unity. If theological education is neglected by church leaders or in funding, the consequences are far reaching; they might not be visible immediately, but they will certainly become manifest over time in the theological competence of church leadership, the holistic nature of mission, and the capacities for ecumenical and

interfaith dialogue and the interaction between church and society. Investment in theological education is investment of hope in the future and mission of World Christianity. 11

While the foundational role of theological education in the survival and meaningful influence of Christianity is recognized, the trend observed in recent times is fragmentation, shrinking funds and resources for theological education. Theological education presents a wide range of issues: establishment of institutions, faculty training, establishment of libraries, scholarship assistance to students, new curricula, etc. There is a long history of partnership in all these areas pertaining to theological education as part of Christian mission and the establishment of nascent Christian communities. For instance most of the theological colleges in India have their historical roots in the Western missionary period. The same can be assumed of most seminaries in the global south, except the most recent ones that emerge from indigenous initiatives. In most cases the historical links are maintained between the mission church and seminary in the global south, by way of finances, faculty development, library resources and scholarships for students. One example is the case of *Evangelisches Missionswerk*, Germany (EMW), the Association of Protestant Churches and Missions in Germany and its partnership with the Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College (BTESSC), India. The partnership in theological education encompasses many areas such as library development, infrastructure development and support for faculty training and research programmes among others. It is observed that there is explicit support for an inclusive, holistic curriculum that caters for the need of leadership within the Christian community that is equipped to serve in the context of present India with its diverse challenges. In other words, partnership is not limited to the granting of funds for projects but it is a partnership characterized by accompaniment in the development of both content and form of theological education in India that is viable and contextual. 12 The in-depth and prolonged consultation between the partnering organizations bears witness to the participatory, hands-on partnership.

Another example is the case of the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (USPG) which has a long history of vibrant partnership in theological education both within and outside the country. Assessing the history and development of partnership in theological education, Michael Doe lists five tensions that call for creative and prophetic engagement in theological education in the Anglican context, which can also be applied to other networks and partnership projects. These are: leadership versus ministry, residential versus non-residential, ecumenical versus Anglican, global versus domestic, and ecclesial versus prophetic. Although financial resources and its limitations underlie some of the tensions, an overarching theme that strings together these tensions is often the content of theological education. A basic tension expressed is between the traditional and contextual content of theological education. To address these tensions it is important that theological educators around the world share insights; be open to voices from contexts that are essentially different from oneself, engage in mutual learning from one another's experiences.

Partnership Perils

Having mentioned these areas of partnership that can be continually pursued by churches in the north and the churches in south, it is important to emphasize the perils that can still lurk on the road to partnership. A concern is the efficient implementation of partnership across cultural divides, with historical memories of domination along with the sizeable amount of

wealth still generated from donors and nations in the global north. Partnership poses the danger of continued domination and dependency, as Mary Lederleitner cautions,

a concern is how there can be effective cross-cultural partnerships, with vast sums of wealth coming for affluent donors and nations, without fostering a new form of colonialism now known as "neo-colonialism". Neo-colonialism implies that although there is no physical occupation by a foreign power, wealth and resources are given in ways that still dominate others. Some on the receiving end of mission funding feel demeaned and controlled by the process. For these partners there is a sense that they are losing their voice. Because of this there is a concern whether true partnership, the kind that models genuine mutuality, can ever take place given such a vast disparity of wealth. ¹³

Given the historical realities of imperialism, economic disparities and incidents of human errors on the side of mistrust and arrogance, expressed in attitudes of superiority and domination, it is extremely important that there is mutuality in initiatives as well as response to ventures of partnership. Furthermore, partnership should not result in dependency but rather foster inter-dependence.

Theological Foundations for Partnership

Cathy Ross articulates the foundation for a theology of partnership and affirms the very nature of God and his relationship with the creation as the basis for partnership stating that partnership is 'an idea that is ultimately about God and an idea that is consistent with God's creative and redemptive purposes.' ¹⁴ Ross lists three components for a theology of partnership: the nature of God, God's relationship with humanity, and true human relationship best expressed in partnership. ¹⁵ The Trinitarian concept of Godhead, where there is oneness in the diversity and unity in the uniqueness of the three persons in the Trinity expresses the crucial importance of partnership in working out God's mission with humanity. The Godhead works in partnership in the redemptive work which entails that witness to the proclamation of God's love for humanity as expressed in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It must be carried out in common unity despite the diversities of human cultures and variety of gifts. Secondly, the event of the Incarnation expresses God's relationship with humanity that is characterized by partnership and restored fellowship. Ross comments that God reveals himself, initiates communication and establishes relationship with humanity in the Incarnation. Hence, partnership between God and humanity in restored relationship is initiated in the Incarnation event. ¹⁶ The third point that grounds the theology of partnership in Christian mission, according to Ross, is the nature of the true human relationships that are expressed in mutuality and inter-dependence. The perfect fellowship of reconciled and restored humanity is best exemplified in the New Testament concept of *koinonia*, meaning partaking together, sharing. ¹⁷ The common membership in the community of God with a common vision to witness to Christ is made manifest in the partaking together in partnership between humanity across vastly different contexts and regions.

The many exhortations in the New Testament also provide implications for partnership in mission. Heleen Murre-van Den Berg draws attention to this fact in a Bible study of 1 Corinthians 12, where Paul extols the value of the diversity of gifts, as well as being aware of the tensions that might still be helpful in understanding the body of Christ and its implications

for mission. The community of believers is about 'being the body of Christ, composed out of different elements ("Jews or Greeks, slave or free"), ministering to each other and to the world in a variety of gifts, essentially one and inescapably mutually interdependent.' 18 Among others, the letter of Paul to the Philippians and the book of Romans indicate many instances of relationships and partnership among the early Christians. Drawn from these theological foundations and scriptural directions, partnership in Christian mission across geographical and social-cultural realities for common witness is fundamental to being members of God's community. Therefore despite differences and fragmented realities, we return to mission in honest partnership, speaking the truth in love and sharing the common fellowship in Christ as van den Berg sums up, 'to the practicalities of our institutions, our committees, our meetings and try to share and work together in mission to the best of our knowledge and abilities, not sparing each other or criticism, not covering up for the sake of peace' and when misunderstandings arise reminding ourselves of 'the reality of the body of Christ' with diverse members with a variety of gifts. To do so in partnership is to partake in the 'working out of the ever-working, life-giving triune God.' 19

Conclusion

In a rapidly changing world of diverse people and cultures often in contestation and conflicts, the global Christian community is ever challenged to continue to make our faith in the reconciling and transforming Gospel of Jesus Christ meaningful and inviting.

Globalization, the growing divide between the rich and the poor, human rights abuses, fundamentalism, violence, secularism, environmental degradation, and migration are some of the challenges that require creative and healing attention. The global Christian community must respond in unison by transforming the world into a better place — the Kingdom of God. Despite the vastly different contexts with a variety of challenges, Christians around the world are called to be partners in building God's Kingdom, speaking the truth in love and witnessing together to the Gospel. And in the partnership between Christians of the global south and the global north in carrying out our missional task of witnessing to the fullness of the life in Christ, may we heed the directions of the mission scholar Cathy Ross who has perceptively given the ingredients for a productive and fulfilling partnership: mutual trust, acceptance of responsibilities and willingness to take risks among the partners. 20



Atola Longkumer, a Baptist from the northeastern state of Nagaland in India, is teaching at Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur, MP, India.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Baria, Daryl, and Kirsteen Kim, eds. (2010). *Edinburgh 2010: Witnessing to Christ Today*. (Volume II.) Oxford: Regnum
- Funkschmidt, Kai Michael. (2002). 'Partnership Between Unequals - Mission Impossible?' In *International Review of Mission* (July, Volume 91)
- Hogg, William Richey. (1952). *Ecumenical Foundations: A History of the International Missionary Council and Its Nineteenth-Century Background*. New York, NY: Harper&Brothers;
- Matthey, Jacques. (1999). 'International Relationships in Mission'. In *International Review of Mission* (January, Volume 88)
- Murre-van Den Berg, Heleen. (2002). 'Bible Study 1 Corinthians 12: Mission Relationships and Partnership: New Models of Partnership?' In *International Review of Mission* (Volume 91 No 363)
- Robert, Dana. (2009). *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell
- Ross, Cathy. (2010). 'The Theology of Partnership'. In *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* (July, Volume 34, No 3)
- Stiglitz, Joseph. (2006). *Making Globalization Work*. New York, NY: Penguin Books
- Walls, Andrew F. (2002). *The Cross Cultural Process in Christian History*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis
- Werner, Dietrich, David Esterline, Namsoon Kang, and Joshva Raja, eds. (2010). *Handbook of Theological Education in World Christianity: Theological Perspectives, Ecumenical trends, Regional Surveys*. Oxford: Regnum
-

Endnotes

- 1 Robert 2009: 139
- 2 Walls 2002:143
- 3 Hogg 1952: 336, 341
- 4 Balia and Kim eds. 2010: 129
- 5 Funkschmidt 2002: 396
- 6 Matthey 1999: 107
- 7 See www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents.html
- 8 Kenneth R. Ross, "Like a Mask Dancing: Partnership in Mission Enters a New Mode" in www.Rethinkingmission.org
- 9 Quoted in Stiglitz 2006: 8
- 10 Balia and Kim 2010: 180
- 11 Werner et al, eds, 2010: xxv
- 12 Werner et al, eds, 2010: 317ff
- 13 Balia and Kim, eds, 2010: 132
- 14 Ross 2010: 145-148
- 15 Ross 2010: 145-148

16 Ross 2010: 145-148

17 Ross 2010: 145-148

18 Murre-van Den Berg 2002: 587ff

19 Murre-van Den Berg 2002: 587ff

20 Ross 2010: 145