

# Global People and Diaspora Missiology

## I. INTRODUCTION

On the occasion of Tokyo 2010 being a centennial celebration of Edinburgh 1910, it is fitting to propose “diaspora missiology” and “relational realism” as new paradigms to supplement “traditional missiology” to cope with the new reality of “global people” (i.e. people moving on a global scale or global demographic trends) in the 21st Century.

In this study, “diaspora” refers to “people living outside their place of origin” and “diaspora missiology” is “a missiological framework for understanding and participating in God’s redemptive mission among diasporic groups.”

In line with the vision statement of the Tokyo 2010 Conference, the breadth of our obedience in making disciples of all peoples requires the inclusion of diasporic groups in “Christian mission;” especially among victims of war, famine and human trafficking. When facing the challenge and opportunities of diaspora missions, it is imperative to practice “strategic stewardship” and to employ a “relational approach.” The depth of our obedience in reaching all the world’s peoples includes motivating the Church to practice “diaspora missions” and mobilizing diasporic groups to evangelize their kinsmen on the move, and through them the nationals in their homeland and beyond. A call to action will be issued at the conclusion.

## II. THE NEW REALITY OF GLOBAL PEOPLE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Understanding the reality of “global people” in the 21st Century is a prerequisite to sound mission strategy. The following is a snapshot of that reality:

### 2.1 Scale and scope of diaspora increased globally

The unprecedented movements of diaspora in large scale and higher percentage and frequency have set a global demographic trend that marked the 20th and 21st Centuries. In recent decades, the scale and scope of diaspora has increased - about “3% of the global population live in countries in which they were not born.” Urbanization, international migration and people displaced by war and famine are some of the contributing factors. The diaspora phenomenon is a global trend with intensification and escalation. Listed below are some telling figures:

- “Between 1960 and 2000, the world’s population doubled, while the stock of migrants more than doubled to almost three percent of the population of more developed nations.
- Migrants in more developed nations rose from 48 million to 110 million between 1980 and 2000. In 2005, around 60% of the world’s migrants lived in the developed world (GCIM, 2005). In 1970, migrants comprised 10% of the population in 48 countries; by 2000, the countries with migrants who comprised 10% of the population had increased to 70 countries.
- Migrants in less developed nations rose from 52 million to 65 million from 1980 to 2000.
- From 1990 to 2000, international migration accounted for 56% of the population growth in the developed world, compared with 3% in the developing world. From 1990 to 2000, immigration accounted for 89% of population growth in Europe. From 1995 to 2000, Europe’s population would

have declined by 4.4 million without immigration. From 1996 to 2000, immigration accounted for 75% of the population growth in the US.”

## **2.2 Movement of migrant population**

There is a global trend that the migrant population is moving “from south to north, and from east to west” towards seven of the world’s wealthiest countries — with less than 16% of the total world population, yet 33% of the world’s migrant population is found in those seven countries.

## **2.3 Center of gravity of Christianity shifting**

Philip Jenkins in his book, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford Press, 2001), observed that the center of gravity of the Christian world had shifted from Europe and the United States to the Southern Hemisphere. The fact that there are now nearly 50 million Protestant believers and over 400 million Catholics in South America (Jenkins 2001:57) is an indication of such a shift demographically.

By the year 2050 only one Christian in five will be non-Latino and white, and the center of gravity of the Christian world will have shifted firmly to the Southern Hemisphere. Numerical growth of Christianity in the Southern hemisphere and China has altered the global outlook of Christianity (Jenkins 2001:81-85; 94-105).

# **III. TRADITIONAL MISSIOLOGY AND THE NEW PARADIGM OF “DIASPORA MISSIOLOGY”**

In response to the new reality described above, a new paradigm of “diaspora missiology” is proposed in this study to supplement that of the “traditional missiology.” In contemporary literature the word “diaspora” is used to describe the phenomenon of people on the move or being moved. “Diaspora missiology” is a new missiological paradigm as an alternative to other options. There are organizations (e.g. EAN, IVCF- Canada, Ethnic Harvest) using the “ethnic ministries” approach and publications (e.g. Robert H. King’s *8 Models of Ethnic Ministry: Outreach Alive!*). Others prefer to use the “minority study” approach. There are also organizations and publications using the “international/global migration” approach, especially Catholics. However, the term and concept of “diaspora missiology” is a better choice for it is “descriptive of people’s residence being different from that of their ‘place of origin’ without prejudice (e.g. the connotation of dominance in number or power such as ‘majority’ vis-à-vis ‘minority’) nor confusion (e.g. ‘ethnic’ being inadequate in the context of multi-ethnic population).” Traditional missiology is represented by organizations such as the American Society of Missiology (ASM with the journal *Missiology*) and the Evangelical Missiological Society (EMS with the publication, *Occasional Bulletin*, and a monograph published annually). As shown in Figures 1 and 2 below, the two paradigms are very different in focus, conceptualization, perspective, orientation, paradigm, ministry styles and ministry pattern.

In light of the new reality of “global people” of the 21st Century, diaspora missions is a new approach to traditional missions as diagrammatically shown in Figure 2 below:

Diaspora is a global phenomenon yet diaspora missiology begins at a local level and proceeds to be global in perspective. The FIN movement (Filipino International Network) is a case in point. It began locally in Canada networking among C&MA local congregations and gradually expanded to become inter-denominational and global. For further details, see “The Filipino experience in diaspora missions: a case study of Christian communities in contemporary contexts,” presented by Sadiri Joy Tira & Enoch Wan at the Commission VII: Christian Communities in Contemporary Contexts, Edinburgh, June 12-13, 2009.

**Figure 1 - “Traditional missiology” vis-a-vis “diaspora missiology” 4 elements**

#	ASPECTS	TRADITIONAL MISSIOLOGY ↔ DISPORA MISSIOLOGY	
1	FOCUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>polarized/dichotomized</li> <li>- “great commission” ↔ “great commandment”</li> <li>- saving soul ↔ social Gospel</li> <li>- church planting ↔ Christian charity</li> <li>- paternalism ↔ indigenization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- holistic Christianity with strong integration of evangelism with Christian charity</li> <li>- contextualization</li> </ul>
2	CONCEPTUALIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- territorial: here ↔ there</li> <li>- “local” ↔ “global”</li> <li>- lineal: “sending” ↔ “receiving”</li> <li>- “assimilation” ↔ “amalgamation”</li> <li>- “specialization”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “detritorialization”<sup>1</sup></li> <li>- “glocal”<sup>2</sup></li> <li>- “mutuality” &amp; “reciprocity”</li> <li>- “hybridity”</li> <li>- “inter-disciplinary”</li> </ul>
3	PERSPECTIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- geographically divided: foreign mission ↔ local, urban ↔ rural</li> <li>- geo-political boundary: state/nation ↔ state/nation</li> <li>- disciplinary compartmentalization: e.g. theology of missions / strategy of missions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- non-spatial,</li> <li>- “borderless,” no boundary to worry, transnational &amp; global</li> <li>- new approach: integrated &amp; Interdisciplinary</li> </ul>
4	ORIENTATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- OT: missions = gentile-proselyte --- coming</li> <li>- NT: missions = the Great Commission --- going</li> <li>- Modern missions: E-1, E-2, E-3 or M-1, M-2, M-3, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New reality in the 21st Century – viewing &amp; following God’s way of providentially moving people spatially &amp; spiritually.</li> <li>- moving targets &amp; move with the Targets</li> </ul>

**Figure 2 - Comparing traditional missions & diaspora missions**

#	ASPECTS	TRADITIONAL MISSIONS ↔ DISPORA MISSIONS	
1	MINISTRY PATTERN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>OT: calling of gentile to Jehovah (coming)</li> <li>NT: sending out disciples by Jesus in the four Gospels &amp; by the H.S. in Acts (going)</li> <li>Modern missions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sending missionary &amp; money</li> <li>- self sufficient of mission entity</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- new way of doing Christian missions: “mission at our doorstep”</li> <li>- “ministry without border”</li> <li>- “networking &amp; partnership” for the Kingdom</li> <li>- “borderless church,”<sup>1</sup> “liquid church”<sup>2</sup></li> <li>- “church on the oceans”<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>
2	MINISTRY STYLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cultural-linguistic barrier: E-1, E-2, etc. Thus various types M-1, M-2, etc.</li> <li>- “people group” identity</li> <li>- evangelistic scale: reached ↔ unreached</li> <li>- “competitive spirit,” “self sufficient”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no barrier to worry</li> <li>- mobile and fluid,</li> <li>- hyphenated identity &amp; ethnicity</li> <li>- no unreached people</li> <li>- “strategic partnership,”<sup>4</sup> “relational accountability,” networking &amp; synergy</li> </ul>

At the Forum 2004 in Pattaya, Thailand, the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE) had added a new track on “the DIASPORA PEOPLES” as one of the key issues in global missions. A “Senior Associate for Diasporas” was installed during the Bi-annual LCWE Leadership International meeting in Budapest, Hungary from June 18-24, 2007. Later in January 2008, the Lausanne Diasporas Leadership Team (LDLT) was assembled and held its first meeting in Portland, Oregon, hosted by IDS-US (“Institute of Diaspora Studies”) at Western Seminary. International migration is one of the global issues to be discussed at the upcoming Lausanne Congress III in Cape Town, South Africa, October 16-25, 2010.

In preparation for the Lausanne Congress III, The LDLT convened the Lausanne Diasporas Strategy Consultation in Manila. And the Lausanne Diaspora Theological Forum was held in Nov. 2009 at Torch Tower, Seoul, Korea. In Edinburgh, June 12-13, 2009, the Commission VII: Christian Communities in Contemporary Contexts recognized diaspora as a reality of Christian Mission in the 21st century. Hence, missiologists have recognized the immense potential of “diaspora missions” in ministering to diaspora and ministering through diaspora; even beyond the specific group extending it on regional and global scales.

#### IV. MINISTRY APPROACH OF THE “RELATIONAL PARADIGM”

There are five elements (with related theories in brackets) and five corresponding relational aspects in the “relational paradigm” as listed in Figure 3 below:

#	RELATONAL PARADIGM	
	5 ELEMENTS	5 RELATIONAL ASPECTS
1	PARTICIPANTS (network theory)	RELATIONAL NETWORK
2	PATTERN (structuralism)	RELATIONAL DIMENSIONS/CONTEXT
3	PRACTICE (pragmatism)	RELATIONAL REALITY
4	POWER (functionalism & critical theory)	RELATIONAL DYNAMICS
5	PROCESS (symbolic interactionism, communication science, semiotics: semantics)	RELATIONAL INTERACTION

Due to the limitation of space, there is no discussion on the details of Figure 3 (in the sequel of this study to be presented at the “Korea Diaspora Forum” in May in Seoul); except the following chart is informative of the relational framework for mission(s):

#### V. DIASPORA MISSION AND RELATIONAL APPROACH

Commenting on the traditional approach of Christian missions led by mission leaders/researchers of the West at the gathering of 160 Christian mission leaders from 53 countries in Foz de Iguassu, Brazil in October 10-15, 1999, William Taylor, Executive Director of the World Evangelical Fellowship’s (WEF) Mission Commission listed the following observations in his opening remarks:

“The use of emotive slogans to drive the missions task; a partial understanding of the mission of the church; the application of simplistic thinking and methodologies in the Great Commission; a limited geographic focus [and] the over-emphasis on research and managerial missiology.”

There is some validity to the critique of the ministry approach of “traditional missiology” of the West with the following characteristics: managerial and entrepreneurial (i.e. outcome-based with focus on measurable goals and numerical growth), programmatic and paternalistic (i.e. lack of relational touch and partnership practice). Therefore the “relational paradigm” is proposed to include a relational touch and partnership practice; especially at the occasion of Tokyo 2010 in Asia where positive “relationship” is very essential in daily life and ministry context.

In this study, the terms “mission” and “diaspora missiology” are being defined with a strong relational flavor, focusing on the Triune God – the Originator and basis of all relationships and relational networks:

**Figure 4 - Relational Missiology of “I AM” (missio dei) therefore ‘I am’”**

Relationship Discipline/Action	RELATIONALITY ‘I AM’ (missio dei)	REALITY ‘i am’
General	God presses Himself out & His nature of love, communion & glory (Jn 1:14,18, 3:16; 12:28,13:32; 17:1, 4,5, 10, 24; 21:19; Mt 9:8; 17:1-8; Lk 13:13; 1Jn 4:6-12)	Likewise Christians are to manifest this quality of God’s love, communion, glory (Mt 5:13-16, 10:16; ;Jn 15:16; Act 1:8; Ro 15:6; 1Cor 6:20; 1Pet 2:12;4:16; 1Jn 3:9-19)
Witnessing	- “the Father witness concerning me” (Jn 8:18); - H.S. witnessing → Son (Jn 15:26) - Scripture witnessing → Son (Jn 39)	- “you are my witnesses...” (Ac 1:8) & Christians are to witness (Jn 15:27)
Commission (sending)	- “as the Father sends me, so send I you” (Jn 17:18) - “...all authority... given to me” (Mt 18:18)	- “...H.S. said, ‘Separate...I have called Them’...” (Acts 13:2); “therefore make disciple by going...” (Mt 28:19-20)
Empowering	- Father on the Son by the Spirit in ministry, resurrection & exaltation (Ac 10:37; Ro 1:4; Phil 3:9-10)	- authority given (Lk 10:19) - examples: disciples + Paul (Act 2,4; Ro 5:16-20)
Evangelizing	- God desires many will be saved (2Pet 3:9) - God’s grace is sufficient for all to be saved	- in obedience to God Christians evangelize: moved by the compassion for the lost, empowered by the H.S. with gifts
Glorifying	- the Father glorified the Son (Act 3:13; Jn 12:28) - The son glorified the Father (Jn 17:4; Php 2:11) - Father & Son – mutual glory (Jn 17:1-5) - H.S. glorifies the Son (Jn 16:13-14)	- good testimony glorifying God (Mt 5:16) - failed to give glory ...serious consequence like Herod (Act 12:20-23) - Christians are to glorify God in life, living, labor (service & ministry) (1Cor 6:20; 10:31;2Cr 4:15; 1Tim 1:17; Ro 5:2-20)
Grace	- God’s nature is gracious & He freely gives to all : - Source of grace (Jn 1:14-17; 2Cor 8:9; Act 20:24; Ro 1:5; 2Cor 9:8; 2Tom 1:2,9)	- common grace to all (James 1:17; Eph 1:6-7) - special grace for the chosen (Eph 1:6-7) - changed Saul to Apostle Paul (1Cor 15:9-11; Eph 3:7-13; 1Tim 1:14-16)

Gift	- gifts endowed by the Father, Christ & H.S. (Trinitarian formula X2 in 1Cor 12:4-6, 12-27); Eph 4:7-12)	- special form of grace for service: glorify God & build up the Church -be stewards of gifts (1Pet 3:10-11)
Reconciling	- “God in Jesus Christ reconciling the world to himself...” (2Cor 18-19; Ro 11:5)	- “he has committed to us the message of reconciliation...” (2Cor 5:19-20)

- “mission” is defined as “the missio Dei of the Triune God”
- “diaspora missiology” is defined as “a missiological framework for understanding and participating in God’s redemptive mission among diasporic groups.”

In Figure 4, the two new paradigms proposed in this study are integrated, with “relational paradigm” being the skeleton (in biology) or syntax (in linguistics), then “diaspora missiology/missions” as the flesh/face (in biology) or word/sound (in linguistics).

The FIN (Filipino International Network) is now a global movement and an excellent case study of applying the relational paradigm to diaspora missions. It had a humble beginning two decades ago at a local Filipino church plant reaching out to contract workers, domestic helpers, foreign students in holistic ministry and relational networking locally. In the 1990s, then through partnership with denominational effort, para-church organizations in their ministering to and through the Filipino diaspora first in Canada, then expanded at a global scale to form FIN. Subsequently, the diaspora missions to Filipinos formed the pattern and helped formulate the global strategy of the Lausanne Diaspora Leadership Team (LDLT) – an excellent case of diaspora missions ministering beyond the Filipinos to include other diaspora groups throughout the LCWE network.

**Figure 4b - Relational paradigm “of mission(s)” and diaspora missiology/missions**

RELATIONAL PARADIGM		DIASPORA MISSIOLOGY & DIASPORA MISSIONS
5 ELEMENTS	5 RELATIONAL ASPECTS	
<b>PARTICIPANTS</b> - Triune God & Christians carry out the Great Commission - resistant: Satan, fallen angels	<b>RELATIONAL NETWORK</b> - Triune God is the originator of relationship; the center and foundation of all networks - two camps: God, obedient angels & Christians ↔ Satan	- not programmatic, not entrepreneur, not outcome- based - strong emphasis on relational dimensions between person Being (the triune God) and beings (of humanity and angelic reality) - recognizing the dimension of spiritual warfare
<b>PATTERN (→sending)</b> - Farther → the Son & together → H.S. 1. Father → the Son so → Christians (Jn 17: 18), Christians obeying - H.S. sending: Acts 10:19; 13:2 Christians empowered	<b>RELATIONAL DIMENSIONS /CONTEXT</b> - vertical dimension to God - horizontal dimensions within the Church & beyond - multi-context: divine, angelic, human; changing human contexts due to globalization, diaspora movement, etc.	- vertical dimensions, e.g. “relational accountability” - “glocal” missions <sup>1</sup> in the globalized context - non-spatial, “borderless,” no boundary to worry, transnational -new approach: integrated ministry & interdisciplinary study of Missiology - learning of new demographic reality of the 21st Century & strategize accordingly with good stewardship

PRACTICE 2. Christians participating in God's mission, carrying out the "Great Commission"	RELATIONAL REALITY - God: reconciling the world to Himself in Christ thro Christians - Satan & fallen angels at enmity with God and His followers.	- new reality in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century – viewing & following God's way of providentially moving people spatially & spiritually. - moving targets & move with the targets (diaspora)
POWER - God's love transforms Christians and compels them carrying out His mission	RELATIONAL DYNAMICS - doing missions out of love for God and compassion for the lost - empowered by the H.S.	- micro: love, compassion, Christian hospitality - macro: partnership & networking - holistic Christianity with strong integration of evangelism with Christian compassion & charity
PROCESS 3. God: plan of salvation Provided & the Church carrying out God's mission	RELATIONAL INTERACTION - God's calling, Christ's commissioning, H.S. empowering - Christians obedient to God, Satan resisting God's mission	- "Great commission" + "great commandment" - diaspora mission: ministering to and through the diaspora - relational accountability - strategic stewardship and partnership

The success story of FIN integrating "relational paradigm" and "diaspora missions" has been previously reported in several publications and presentations.

## VI. CALL FOR ACTION

Due to the breadth and depth of our obedience in making disciples of all peoples, it is imperative to call the Church into action, inclusive of all denominations and mission organizations, Christians in the West and beyond.

### 6.1 Point of action #1 – Study Diaspora Missiology and Practice Diaspora Missions (including "mission at our doorstep")

Diaspora mission is a providential and strategic way to minister to "the nations" by the diaspora and through the diaspora. In diaspora missions, one can describe the contemporary situation to be a "borderless world" where people from everywhere are moving to everywhere with hope and despair, with joy and tears; yet providentially opportunistic for Kingdom expansion.

In response to the new reality of the phenomenal diaspora movement, the Church is called to respond to God's way of providentially moving people spatially & spiritually. Diaspora groups are moving targets and we are to move with the targets by practicing "mission at our doorstep" of reaching out to the diaspora in our neighborhood.

NO	YES
-No visa required	-Yes, door opened
-No closed door	-Yes, people accessible
-No international travel required	-Yes, missions at our doorstep
-No political/legal restrictions	-Yes, ample opportunities
-No dichotomized approach	-Yes, holistic ministries
-No sense of self-sufficiency & unhealthy competition	-Yes, powerful partnership

## **6.2 Point of action #2 – Strategic Stewardship and Relational Accountability**

Jenkins observed that the places where Christianity is spreading and mutating are also places where the population levels are rising quickly, and he projected that such a demographic trend will continue throughout the next century. Given such demographic trends globally, the Christian Church is to practice strategic stewardship which is to be defined as “the wise use of God-endowed resources and God-given opportunity to His glory and for Kingdom extension strategically.” There is a relational accountability vertically to God for good stewardship (i.e. see the case of Ezekiel 3:1-21), and to share the Gospel horizontally to the unreached people groups who are desperately in need of the great commandment (see the teaching of Jesus Christ in Mt 25:14-46) and the Great Commission being practiced among them (i.e. see the case of Lazarus and the rich man, Luke 16:19-31).

Western populations are growing at a slower rate than developing nations where receptive people to Christianity are found and phenomenal growth of Christianity is happening in large scale. Thus strategic deployment requires active engagement in Christian outreach in the global South with strategic stewardship (Luke 12:32-48) due to relational accountability (Luke 15:1-16:13) both vertically and horizontally.

## **6.3 Strategic Partnership - Networking and Synergy**

Partnership is “the unique opportunities in working with the Triune God and the Body of Christ to accomplish the *missio Dei* under the power and direction of the Holy Spirit.” And strategic partnership is “partnership characterized by wise use of God-endowed resources and God-given opportunity to His glory and for Kingdom extension.” Strategic partnership is desperately needed in the context of the 21st Century when the center of Christianity is shifting to the Southern Hemisphere to replace Western paternalism and Euro-centric missions.

As we ponder the global demographic trend of diaspora of the 21st century, we should consider it to be part of God’s sovereign design to accomplish His mission. Strategically, people on the move are receptive to the Gospel. Thus ministry to the diaspora is strategic stewardship in action.

Strategic partnership is ministering through diaspora groups in light of the global demographic trend (i.e. the center of Christianity shifting to the global South) to receptive people on the move and their kinsmen in their home land. The day of exclusively practicing missions in the traditional way of solo approach by the Western churches without partnership, is gone. Strategic partnership between missions and various types of Christian organizations, between churches of the post-Christian west and diaspora/native congregations in diaspora missions of ministering through the diasporic groups is to be employed to supplement traditional missions. The synergy from such strategic partnership is not to be underestimated. With a Kingdom perspective and eschatological urgency, synergetic undertaking is not only possible; but imperative and will prove to be fruitful as in the case study of FIN and LDLT.

## **VII. CONCLUSION**

In this study, diaspora missiology and relational paradigms have been presented as new approaches to supplement traditional missiology and to cope with the new reality of global people in the 21st century. Due to the breadth and depth of our obedience in making disciples of all peoples, it is imperative to call the Church into action to engage in diaspora missions.

Missiologists and missionary leadership of our time cannot be ignorant of global demographic trends and can learn from government policy-makers, economists, and social scientists who recognize and maximize the forces and potentials of diasporas of multiple forms and types. These diasporic groups present great challenges and opportunities for the Church today, so much so that it has been selected as one of the global issues for discussion at the upcoming Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization in Cape Town, South Africa from October 16-25, 2010. ([www.lausanne.org](http://www.lausanne.org))



Let us listen to the call of the late Dr. Ralph Winter, one of the keen strategic thinkers in missions of our time, who made the following observation:

“[Diaspora Missiology] may well be the most important undigested reality in missions thinking today. We simply have not caught up with the fact that most of the world’s people can no longer be defined geographically.” (Endorsement of the book *Scattered: The Filipino Global Presence*, 2004)