CONCLUSIONS

In view of the foregoing survey, several observations emerge in my own mind. 1) The problem of semantics is not easily overcome in a study of literature on the indigenous church principles. What seems to be positive in the terminology for one, is full of aberrations for another. 2) The principles outlined by Venn and Anderson have not only been the object of misinterpretation, but also of misapplication. This was true already during their own lifetime; even in their own experience there were inconsistencies between theory and practice. 3) The continued misinterpretation together with inherent weaknesses in the principles calls for careful analysis prior to any application or practice of the indigenous concepts. 4) Tippett's apparently powerful concept of self-image should be interpreted by other competent people of an indigenous church and supplemented by a comparable study of the "community image" not mentioned heretofore. 5) There is a need to develop a scale to measure the validity of the various selves as found in the writings on indigenous church principles. Smalley's evaluation may be a good starting point. 6) A scale for measuring indigeneity has been developed by professor Charles Kraft and several of his research associates in the School of World Mission at Fuller Theological Seminary. This scale could serve as a standard against which to measure the various indigenous church concepts as expressed and developed by Anderson, Venn, Warneck, Nevius, Allen, Clark, Davis, Hodges, Smalley, Tippett and others. Such a scale should also take into consideration contemporary indigenous church movements in the Third World.

The completion of such studies would not only contribute to a fuller understanding of, but also enhance our appreciation for, the indigenous church principles operative around the world.

Dynamic Equivalence Churches: An Ethnotheological Approach to Indigeneity

Charles H. Kraft

Since the days of Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn in the middle of the nineteenth century, the concept of "indigeneity" has gained greater and greater prominence as an (if not always the only) ideal of much of western missionary activity. Just what indigeneity means and just how one can measure it are not, however, always clear.

From the efforts of these early theorists developed the "three self" definition of indigeneity. Venn came to contend that the aim of his mission (the Church Missionary Society) should be "the development of Native Churches, with a view to their ultimate settlement upon a self-supporting, self-governing and self-extending system" (quoted by Tippett 1969, p. 132), while Anderson was making similar statements concerning his mission (The American Board). The brilliance and farsightedness of this insight and the fact that the "three self" concept has through the dedicated effort of a long line of distinguished missionary thinkers, gained such widespread allegiance have, however, often blinded its adherents to the fact that it may be very easy to have a self-governing Church which is not indigenous...All that is necessary...is to indoctrinate a few leaders in Western patterns of church government, and let them take over. The

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result will be a Church governed in a slavishly foreign manner...but by no stretch of the imagination can it be called an indigenous government (Smalley, 1958, 52).

Without denying the very real advance in missionary theory that the "three self" formula embodied, then it must be recognized that many did not seem to realize that though an "indigenous" church will ordinarily be characterized by the kind of self-functioning embodied in the "three self" formula, not every church that governs, supports and propagates itself can be properly labeled "indigenous" except in a very superficial, formal sense. For "although these three 'self' elements may be present in such a movement, they are essentially independent variables" (Smalley, 51-2), rather than diagnostic criteria of indigeneity. For it is not the mere fact of self-government (or of self-support or self-propagation—as Smalley goes on to point out) that assures that the church in question is "indigenous." The indigeneity (if present at all) lies in the manner in which such selfhood is expressed. That is, a simple evaluation of the forms of government, propagation and support is not sufficient. One has to look also at the ways in which these cultural forms are operated and the meanings attached to them both by the church itself and by the surrounding community.

There is, for example, a church which is advertised by its founding mission as a great indigenous church, where its pastors are completely supported by the local church members, yet the mission behind the scenes pulls the strings and the church does its bidding like the puppets of the 'independent' iron curtain countries (Smalley, 1958, p. 54).

There are many other churches where the real power is no longer either directly or indirectly in the hands of foreigners from a mission but, rather, in the hands of nationals who because of their indoctrination in foreign ways (which they have been taught to consider "Christian") bend every effort to perpetuate the foreign system in the name of Christ. In both these situations the "indigeneity" is in outward form only - the essence, the content, the meanings conveyed, the impressions given are all foreign.

Nor is "indigeneity" necessarily the most appropriate label for the ideal toward which we strive, since something totally indigenous would in appearance, functioning and meaning be no different than the rest of the culture.
As we have seen above the traditional "three self" concept of what an indigenous church should be is quite inadequate since it attempts to measure indigeneity purely with reference to a select few of the forms in terms of which the church is structured, without reference to the way in which these forms operate (function) or the meanings attached to them. A more appropriate model, I believe, is that now in vogue among informed Bible translators. Such translators do not aim for mere "formal correspondence" (i.e., correspondence between the forms of the source language and those of the receptor language) as do literal translations such as the RSV, ASV, and KJV. Such translations have a non-English (i.e., non-indigenous) flavor because the translators have not carried their task far enough to make sure that the English renderings are the functional equivalents (not merely the formal correspondents) of their Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek referents. And the impression is of stiltedness and foreignness since it does not represent the way people talk and write in English.

Such "formal correspondence translations," for example, typically seek to translate literally the word forms of the source language into the corresponding word forms in the receptor language. When, therefore, Paul employs a word which in Greek is used as the name for "bowels," the KJV renders it "bowels" (e.g., Phil. 1:8, 2:1) because, in spite of the fact that the term is clearly being employed figuratively (signifying "affection" or "kindness") in these passages, one might say that the basic meaning of the word when not used figuratively is "bowels." Likewise, a formal correspondence translation attempts insofar as possible to regularly render each given word in the source language more or less mechanically by the same term in the receptor language. Thus the RSV translates the Greek word σῶμα as "body" in each of the following versus: Mk. 6:25; Mk. 5:29; Lk. 17:37; Rom. 12:1 and Col. 2:11, since "body" in English may be taken to be the main meaning of the word and the translators wanted to be "consistent." What they did not seem to understand is that the Greek word and the English word are far from exactly equivalent to each other. That is, the Greek word σῶμα has many more meanings than simply "body" and, if the English translation is to be true to the Greek meaning, should be rendered by one of these other meanings when ever the context so indicates. In Mk. 5:29, for example, the English rendering which most naturally conveys the Greek meaning would be "(her) self." In Lk. 17:37 a more meaningful rendering would be "corpse," in Rom. 12:1 it would be "selves" and in Col. 2:11 it would be something like "lower nature" (rather than the RSV's puzzling but literal "body of flesh"). For further exemplification of this point compare the translations of the following versus in a formal correspondence translation such as KJV, ASV, or RSV and a good dynamic equivalence translation such as Good News for Modern Man (TEV), Phillips or New English Bible: Greek σάρξ, ASV "flesh" (Lk. 24:39; Ac. 2:17; Rom. 8:13; 11:14; 1 Cor. 1:26; 2 Cor. 7:5, 10:3). Greek δικαιοο, RSV "justified" (Mt. 12:37; Lk. 7:29, 16:15; Rom. 3:14, 24).

Literally thousands of such illustrations can be produced from the KJV, ASV and RSV of formal correspondence translations from Greek and Hebrew that obscure and sometimes obliterate the intended meanings. For these translations were produced in adherence to nineteenth-century concepts of the nature of language. These concepts saw languages basically as alternative codes each consisting of a different set of labels for the same reality. Early in this century, however, anthropologists and linguists began to recognize that understandings of reality are structured differently by different cultures and that these differences are strongly reflected in their languages. There is, therefore, no such thing as an exact correspondence between a given word in one language and the most nearly corresponding word in another language. If we depict cultures (including their languages) as geometrical figures divided by lines to indicate the way these cultures segment reality, we can in very oversimplified fashion indicate the difference between the older concept and the modern one.

The Formal Correspondence Concept of Cultural and Linguistic Diversity:
The Modern Formal Non-Correspondence Understanding of Cultural and Linguistic Diversity:

Since cultures and their languages do not correspond exactly with each other, formal correspondence translations frequently are found to create the misimpression that God requires us to learn a foreign (i.e., Hellenized or Hebraized) version of English before we can really understand him. They do this by employing English labels (words) to denote the segments into which the Greek or Hebrew languages are divided, not those into which English is divided. And a good bit of the time of preachers using literal translations has to be devoted to explaining that the apparently English words don't, in the Bible, have their English meanings but, rather, have Greek and Hebrew meanings which only those who have studied the original languages can properly understand and explain.

Much more in line with contemporary translation theory is the Phillips translation in which the translator carried has task beyond mere formal correspondence to the point where he endeavored to be faithful both to the original message and to the intended impact that that message was to have upon the original readers. For Phillips sought to elicit from contemporary readers of the NT a response equivalent to that elicited from the original readers of the slangy, communicative Koine (=common people's) Greek. Thus, in recognition of the non-equatability of languages, he sought renderings that go beyond mere formal correspondence to function in today's English-speaking world meanings that are equivalent to though, due to the non-equatability of languages and cultures, never quite exactly the same as the original meanings in the Greek world but would carry an equivalent impact in English. This type of translation is labelled by E. A. Nida a "dynamic equivalence translation." Such a translation is described as "the closest natural equivalent to the source-language message" (Nida 1964, p. 166). It is "directed primarily toward equivalence of response rather than equivalence of form" (ibid.), and is therefore to be defined in terms of the degree to which the receptors of the message in the receptor language respond to it in substantially the same manner as the receptors in the source language. This response can never be identical, for the cultural and historical settings are too different, but there should be a high degree of equivalence of response, or the translation will have failed to accomplish its purpose (Nida and Taber, 1969, p. 24).

An important concomitant to this dynamic view of Bible translation which is of particular relevance to the present discussion is the fact that this focus points out that translation involves more than simply the conveying of information. According to Nida and Taber

It would be wrong to think...that the response of the receptors in the second language is merely in terms of comprehension of the information, for communication is not merely informative. It must also be expressive of communications such as those found in the Bible. That is to say, a translation of the Bible must not only provide information which people can understand but must present the message in such a way that people can feel its relevance (the expressive element in communication) and can then respond to it in action (the imperative function) (1969, p. 24).

This new concept of what is involved in translating the Bible is considerably more aware of both the complexity of each language and that of the process of moving concepts from one language to another. An oversimplified diagram of the formal correspondence understanding of the process of translation would look like this (C stands for concept):

```
Language A
  C ----Translation---- C
  C ----Translation---- C
  C ----Translation---- C
  C ----Translation---- C

Language B
  C
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Attention was given by the translator to understanding the concept linguistically and to transferring it literally into the receptor language in, insofar as possible, the same number of words as was required in the source language. If the cultural and/or linguistic situation contained implications that the reader of the receptor language could not understand (and they always did) it was considered
invalid to add even brief explanatory phrases to the translation, since the process of translation was (in keeping with certain values of western culture) conceived of as basically word-centered rather than idea-centered. Any such addition of words was considered "paraphrase" and was not allowed in a "translation."

The new understanding of what translation involves recognizes, however, that the central aim is communication, not mere literalness for its own sake (or out of reverence for supposedly sacred words). The Biblical writers intended to be understood, not to be admired or to have their writings so highly thought of that they are transmitted in unintelligible or misleading forms. Faithful translation, therefore, involves doing whatever must be done (even including a certain amount of paraphrase) in order to make sure that the message originally phrased in the functionally equivalent words and idioms of the receptor language. For the real issue in translation lies outside of the mere words of the source and receptor languages in and of themselves—in the impact of the concepts embodies in the linguistic forms on the reader/hearer. If the impact is such that it results in wrong understanding, misunderstanding or lack of understanding on the part of the average (that is, unindoctrinated) reader/hearer, the translation has failed. Thus it is that a primary question asked by the new approach is, "How does the receptor language require that this concept be expressed in order both to be intelligible and to convey an impact equivalent to that experienced by the original readers/hearers?" Whatever of paraphrase must be included in the translation to make it equivalently intelligible and impactful, then, is legitimately to be called "translation" since it is required by the receptor language, not optionally inserted at the whim of the translator.

And all of this is highly suggestive with respect to a new understanding of what churches should look like from culture to culture. Note the importance of each of the following basic understandings of the new approach both to Bible translation and to the concept of "dynamic equivalence churches" (see Nida and Taber 1969, pp. 3-8):

1) "Each language has its own genius," its own distinctiveness, its own special character. Each has its own grammatical patterns, its own peculiar idioms, its own areas of vocabulary strength and its own weaknesses and limitations.

2) To communicate effectively in another language one must respect this uniqueness (both the strengths and the weaknesses) and work in terms of it. Attempts to "remake" languages to conform to other languages have been monumentally unsuccessful. The effective translator is, therefore, "quite prepared to make any and all formal changes necessary to reproduce the message in the distinctive structural forms of the receptor language."

3) "Anything that can be said in one language can be said in another, unless the form is an essential element of the message." Thus, as with poetry, when the form is essential to the full meaning one might say that translation is impossible. However, this is simply an extreme example of the fact that a translation can never mean exactly what the original did—there will always be losses of information contained in the original and gains of information due to the requirements of the receptor language. And this fact of translation is but an example of the fact that "no communication, even within a single language, is ever absolute (for no two people ever understand words in exactly the same manner)." But though translation and communication can never be absolute, they can be adequate if the focus is on the content to be transmitted rather than on the mere preservation of the literal forms of the source language.

4) "To preserve the content of the message the form must be changed." Since it is a fact that different languages express quite similar concepts in very different ways and no concepts in exactly the same ways, the faithful translator in attempting to convey an equivalent message in terms of the genius of the receptor language must alter the form in which that message was expressed in the original language. Good (i.e. bad) examples of ineffective translation due to the refusal of the translators to alter the Greek form occur in the formal correspondence translations (KJV, ASV, RSV) renderings of Mark 1:4 ("baptism of repentance" should be changed into a more natural—for English—verbal expression such as "turn away from your sins and be baptized," TEV); Matt. 3:8 ("bring forth...fruits meet for repentance" should be changed to something like "do the things that will show that you have turned from your sins," TEV); and Lk. 20:47 ("which devour widows' houses" is more naturally rendered in English as "who take advantage of widows and rob them of their homes," TEV).
If, then, an equivalent meaning is to be conveyed, the forms employed must be those natural (with respect to the given meaning) in the receptor language, rather than those which happen to correspond in some formal way to the source language words. If the source language and the receptor language participate in fairly similar cultures (as do e.g., English and any of the European languages) the changes of form in going from one to another will usually not be great. But the greater the linguistic and cultural distance between the source and the receptor languages, the greater the number and extent of the formal changes required to preserve the meaning. And this need not always be distance along a "horizontal" axis as, e.g., between contemporary English and contemporary Zulu or Hindi, it may as well be distance along a "vertical" or nearly vertical axis as, e.g., between contemporary English and seventeenth century (King James) English, or between a contemporary European language and a first century European language like Greek.

5) "The languages of the Bible are subject to the same limitations as any other natural languages" and are, therefore, not to be regarded as too sacred to analyze and to truly translate in the modern sense. These languages are not any more perfect or precise than other languages (e.g., over 700 grammatical and lexical ambiguities have been counted in the Greek Gospels alone!) but, in fact, just like all other languages, show great strengths in certain areas and great liabilities in other areas. Furthermore, as is true of all languages, the Greek and Hebrew vocabulary, idiom and grammar which we see employed in the Bible participate fully in and have meaning only in terms of the cultures in which these languages were used. The authors did not invent unknown words or use them in unknown ways except as anyone is allowed by his culture to innovate on occasion to convey new insight. "All the vocabulary was itself rooted in the finite experience of men and women, and all of the expressions must be understood in terms of this type of background" (p. 7). That is, it is the message of the Bible that is sacred, not the languages themselves, even though it is in terms of these finite, imperfect, culture-bound languages that the sacred message was conveyed.

6) "The writers of the Biblical books expected to be understood." To many Americans, accustomed to hearing and reading God's Word from a literal translation and accustomed to hearing preachers waste most of their pulpit time trying to explain into intelligibility the strange-sounding "translationese" of these versions, the idea that the authors expected to be understood comes as a shock. Yet "the writers of the Bible were addressing themselves to concrete historical situations and were speaking to living people confronted with pressing issues" (p. 7). They were not trying to be obscure. The translator, therefore, is obligated to attempt to produce a translation that makes the same kind of sense in the receptor language as the original writing made in the source language if he is to keep faith with the original authors and the God for whom they spoke.

7) "The translator must attempt to reproduce the meaning of a passage as understood by the writer." It is the writings of e.g., Matthew and Luke that we are to translate, not, as some have contended, the deduced Aramaic words of Jesus which these authors are reporting in Greek. And this is true even when there are apparent contradictions, as when in the Beatitudes Luke quotes Jesus as saying, "blessed are the poor" (Lk. 6:20) while Matthew refers to the "spiritually poor" in the parallel passage (Mt. 5:3).

Nor should the translator read back into the author's words subsequent meanings of these words as has often been done as when, e.g., KJV translates the Hebrew aimah in Isaiah 7:14 "virgin" because it turned out several hundred years after that passage was written that the "maiden" (Jerusalem Bible's rendering) to which that prophecy referred was in fact a virgin and, therefore, when Matthew refers to that prophecy (1:23) he employs the Greek term for virgin; or when The Living Bible translates John 21:15-17 in such a way as to draw a sharp distinction between the two Greek words for "love" used there by John - in spite of the fact that throughout his writing John employs philēo and agapao interchangeably - simply because eventually the Christian Church came to employ agapao to the exclusion of philēo to refer to God's love.

This dynamic equivalence model of translating, then, goes far beyond the formal correspondence model in its understanding of language, the cultural setting of language and the complexity of the translation process itself. This leads to a new and more demanding set of procedures which contrast markedly with the simplistic direct approach to translation diagrammed above. The procedure may be briefly indicated by the following diagram (1).
What is desired, then, is the kind of churchmen (indigenous or expatriate) who will regard the receptor culture and the Biblical cultural expressions of "churchness" as the contemporary Bible translator regards the languages he works with. Such churchmen will work in accord with the basic propositions for translators outlined above. They will (1) recognize, (2) respect and work in terms of the unique genius of the receptor culture in recognition of the fact that (3) anything (such as the church) expressable in one culture is expressable in another. (4) They will not, however, hesitate to alter the (Hebrew and Greco-Roman) forms in terms of which the original churches were expressed because they recognize that it is the content expressed, not the forms in terms of which that content was originally expressed that is sacred. (5) For the Biblical cultures were fully human cultures, dignified by the fact that God worked within them but not sanctified thereby — demonstrating rather God's willingness to work in terms of any culture than his desire to perfect and impose any single culture. (6) The church is meant to be intelligible to the world around it — God expects to be understood by men by means of the church and the faithful churchman is to work toward this end in (7) consciously attempting to produce structures within the receptor culture that are dynamically equivalent to the churches portrayed (though but partially) for us in the pages of the New Testament.

Applying this model to church planting would mean the eschewing of attempts to produce mere formal correspondence between churches in one culture and those in another. A church that is merely a "literal" rendering of the forms of one church — be it an American church or the first century Greco-Roman Church — then, is not according to the dynamic equivalence model, since it is not structured in such a way that it can perform the functions and convey the meanings that a Christian church is intended to participate in a culturally appropriate way. It will always smack of foreignness, of insensitivity to the surrounding culture, of inappropriateness to the real needs of the people and the real message of God to them, since its forms have not been translated or "transculturated" from those appropriate somewhere else into those appropriate in the new setting.

A "formal correspondence church" models itself slavishly after the foreign church that founded it. If that church has bishops or presbyters or elders, the younger church will have them too. If that church operates according to a written constitution, the younger church will as well. If the founding church conducts business meetings according to Roberts' Rules of Orders, the younger church will likewise. And so it will be with regard to educational requirements for leadership, times of worship, style of worship, type of music, structures of church buildings, behavioral requirements for good standing (e.g., refraining from smoking and/or alcoholic beverages), the types of educational, medical and benevolent activity entered into, even the expression of missionary concern (if any) on the part of the younger church, etc. And all of this in utter disregard for the culturally appropriate functional equivalents and the indigenously understood meanings of all of these things in the culture in which the young church is supposedly functioning and to which it is supposedly witness. And the impression such churches give to the people of their cultural world is one of foreignness and outside domination even though the leadership of these churches may well be
"their own people" - though again only in a formal sense, since these leaders have been carefully indoctrinated into the foreign system in order to attain the positions that they have within the system.

The true aim in this as well as in every other aspect of the propagation of Christianity is, however, not such formal correspondence but the same kind of dynamic or functional equivalence discussed above for Bible translation. For, as Nida points out in his fine discussion of what he terms "Biblical relativism" (Nida 1954, 48-52), Christianity is not like Islam which through the Koran "attempts to fix for all time the behavior of Muslims" by setting up an absolutely unbending set of forms which are simply to be adopted, never adapted. The Bible, rather, "clearly established the principle of relative relativism, which permits growth, adaptation, and freedom, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ...The Christian position is not one of static conformance to dead rules, but of dynamic obedience to a living God" (p. 52).

A "dynamic equivalence church," then, is the kind of church that produces the same kind of impact on the people of the society of which it is a part as the original church produced upon the original hearers. In that equivalence the younger church will have need of leadership, of organization, of education, of worship, of buildings, of behavioral standards, of means of expressing Christian love and concern to the people of its own culture who have not yet responded to Christ, etc. But a dynamically equivalent church will employ indigenous forms in the meeting of these needs - familiar, meaningful forms which it will possess, adapt and infill with Christian meanings; forms which at the beginning of their employment by the church may be only minimally adequate to the tasks at hand but which will thereby begin the kind of process of transformation that is so well exemplified in the history of some of the word forms that the early Church "possessed for Christ." Such a word was the Greek word agapao which, according to Kittel, was a weak word, often meaning no more than "to be satisfied with something," but which was transformed by the Church into the distinctively Christian word for "love."

What is desired, then, is the kind of church that will take indigenous forms, possess them for Christ adopt and employ them to serve Christian ends by fulfilling indigenous functions and convey through them to the surrounding society Christian meanings. If this is what is intended by the term "indigenous Christian church" well and good. But, I fear, the impression is often given that such a designation has too readily been assigned on the basis of mere formal correspondence to the sending church rather than on the basis of true dynamic equivalence to the N. T. model for the church. And such formal correspondence, carrying with it as it does the pervasive impression of foreignness and irrelevance to real life, is disturbingly counterproductive in terms of the kind of powerful, relevant impact on human beings that Christianity is intended to have.

**Dynamic Equivalence Churches**

According to the above conception, a dynamic equivalence church would be one that (1) conveys to its members truly Christian meanings, (2) functions within its society in such a way that in the name of Christ it plugs into the felt needs of that society and produces within it the same impact for Christ that the first century Church produced in its society, and (3), is couched in cultural forms that are as nearly indigenous as possible.

It is necessary, though, to attempt to ascertain just what were the N.T. forms, functions and meanings to which the church in the receptor culture is expected to develop dynamic equivalence. For this information, of course, we look to the New Testament, especially to the Book of Acts and the Pastoral Epistles for insights into matters of organization, leadership, fellowship, witness and worship. Insights into behavioral matters are likewise found in these books but also in the Corinthian epistles. Certain other epistles focus more on doctrinal matters. To these models contemporary churches whether in Euroamerica or overseas are to develop dynamically equivalent forms within and relevant to their contemporary cultural matrix.

The techniques of exegesis have, of course, been developed to enable us to discover these N.T. models for application in our own life. It is, however, all too easy to exegese well enough to arrive at culturally appropriate functional equivalents for our own culture and subculture but to then insist on imposing these forms on the members of another culture. This has frequently been the result when missionaries of a particular American denominational (or non-denominational) heritage have simply attempted to organize the church in the receptor culture according to their own denominational pattern with its own particular organizational, doctrinal, and behavioral emphasis.
Whereas the functional equivalence between the N.T. models and their expression in the American denomination may be fairly appropriate, not infrequently much of the functional appropriateness is lost when the missionaries of that denomination export their emphasis to another culture. This is certainly true when it comes to modes of baptism (and especially the apologetics that accompany them), of the Lord's Supper and of church organization, but is also, and perhaps more damagingly true of the forms of worship, doctrine, witness and behavior which we recommend. Why, for example, should more time be given in Asian and African Bible schools to discussions of the proofs of Biblical inspiration and of theories of the atonement (problems which we in our culture may find very important to us) than to dealing with a Christian perspective on evil spirits and ancestor reverence (problems of vital importance within their cultures)? Perhaps we have not learned that just as our American churches need to be dynamically equivalent to the N.T. churches in terms of their relevance to the surrounding American culture so must the churches of mission lands - but in terms of their relevance to their culture, not ours.

In attempting to discover a dynamically equivalent form of preaching I once asked a group of Nigerian church leaders how they felt it would be appropriate to present a message such as the Christian message to the village council. They replied, "We would choose the oldest, most respected man in the group and ask him a question. He would," they continued, "discourse, perhaps at length on the topic and then become silent, whereupon we would ask another question. As he talked others would comment as well. But eventually he and the others would do less and less of the talking and the leader would do more and more. In this way we would develop our message and it would become the topic for discussion of the whole village." I asked them why they didn't employ this approach in church. "Why, we've been taught that monologue is the Christian way," they replied. "Can this be why no old men come to church?," I asked. "Of course, we have alienated them by not showing them due respect in public meetings," was their reply. Thus it is that a preaching form that may (or may not) be appropriate enough in American culture - dynamically equivalent in our culture to the N.T. model - loses its equivalence when exported to another culture and is found there to be counterproductive rather than facilitative with respect to the functions such a form is intended to fulfill.

We see, in fact, not a single, once for all leadership pattern set down for all time in the pages of the N.T., but a series of experiments with cultural appropriateness ranging from a communal approach (Acts 2:42-47) to, apparently, a leadership by a council of "apostles and elders" (Acts 15:4, 6, 22), to the more highly structured patterns alluded to in the Pastoral Epistles. But in each case the pattern alluded to was developed in response to the felt needs conditioned by the culturally inculcated expectations of the members of the culture and sub-culture in which the particular local church operated. Thus we observe certain organizational differences between the Jewish Jerusalem Church and the Greek Churches with which Timothy and Titus were concerned. Likewise we observe, in the Acts account of the appointment of deacons (Acts 6:1-6), the development in a culturally appropriate way of a new form to meet a need not anticipated at an earlier stage in the life of the Jerusalem Church.

There are then, in the Pastoral Epistles, rather detailed lists of the kinds of attributes felt to be culturally appropriate to church leaders in the Greco-Roman part of the first century church picture. But, as is the case with the various types of leaders referred to above, the focus is constantly on appropriateness of function rather than on the standardization of form. The lists of characteristics simply catalogue for the original hearers (and for us) illustrations of some of the things implicit in a person's being regarded as well qualified for church leadership in that society at that time. Such a leader should, according to the author of 1 Timothy, be of unimpeachable character, which implies being "faithful to one wife, sober, temperate, courteous, hospitable," etc. (1 Tim. 3:2 NEB), to attain...
and maintain the proper reputation within and outside of the Christian community.

But, as with the specific forms of leadership and organization in the N.T. so with the specific forms there listed as characteristics of the leaders - it is not the specific forms that provide us with the model to which contemporary churches are to be equivalent, but the functions that lie behind these forms. Contemporary churches need leadership which functions in ways that are as appropriate to the cultural context in which these churches operate as the N.T. examples were to the culture in which they operated. And these leaders are to be just as unimpeachable in character, in terms of their societies' lists of qualifications, as the leaders of the N.T. churches were in terms of the culturally appropriate lists of 1 Timothy and Titus.

But note that as in the case of the Incarnation and also in the case of dynamic equivalence translation the forms in terms of which the content is presented are determined by the receptor culture and language, so must a dynamic equivalence church fulfill its functions in and through the forms of its own culture and language. That is, Jesus Christ, in crossing the cultural barrier between the supracultural and the Hebrew cultural realms adopted the forms of the receptor culture (rather than maintaining allegiance to those of the supracultural realm from which he came - (if indeed there be any) as the media for his life and work. And he so "indigenized" himself that at the formal level he was 100% Hebrew. He looked like a normal product of Hebrew parents at the formal level - not like a foreigner or a formal correspondence translation. Likewise, as stated above, a good translation looks at the formal level like an original work in the receptor language.

Thus, if the church in the receptor culture is dynamically equivalent to the N.T. models, its patterns of church government, leadership, etc. and even its definitions of what constitute proper qualifications (especially unimpeachability) for its leaders will correspond to the forms of the receptor culture rather than to the forms of the N.T. cultures or any other outside culture (such as Euroamerican). And not until there is such correspondence can the contemporary church be labelled dynamically equivalent to the N.T. model.

If, for example, the political structure of the receptor culture is one or another form of democracy, the dynamically equivalent church will manifest the appropriate kind of democratic government. Such a church, further, in imitation of the Scriptural model, will be able to state its own culturally appropriate criteria of idealness on the part of its leaders - criteria which are functionally equivalent to those in 1 Timothy and Titus but are not necessarily the same, since different cultures, while showing a considerable degree of similarity in such matters, focus in on slightly differing aspects according to their differing value systems.

In contemporary American culture this list would include such listed items as: sober, temperate, courteous, a good teacher (or preacher), not given to drink, not quarrelsome, self-controlled, upright, doctrinally sound. Such items as hospitable, dignified, no lover of money might or might not be specified in such a list but would probably also be expected. We would not, however, necessarily be so insistent that our leaders will have already demonstrated their ability to manage a home and family well, since we tend to choose younger leaders than seem to be in focus here - though such a factor would definitely be a consideration with an older man. Nor would we say, as it was necessary to say in Greco-Roman culture, that irreproachability demands that the person never have more than one marriage,(2) since we allow and even encourage a man to remarry after the death of his first wife. Many churches, though, would disallow a pastor, at least, who had remarried after a divorce.

Our list, then, would include most of the items on the Greek list, though some of those specifically mentioned by Paul would probably be left implicit rather than made explicit by us. We would probably want to add a few things such as administrative ability and perhaps even youth. Due, however, to similarities between Greco-Roman culture and our own the lists will be fairly similar.

If, however, we develop an equivalent list for a radically different culture such as many in Africa (e.g., Higi of northeastern Nigeria) we will find some additions and subtractions from the lists and at least one major reinterpretation of a criterion, though the criterion is basically the same. Greed, being the cardinal sin of Higiland, would be one of the major proscribed items and conformance to culturally expected patterns of politeness one of the more important prescribed items. Hospitality and its concommitant generosity would be highlighted to a much greater degree than would be true for either Greco-Roman or American culture. Soberness, temperance, patience
and the like would appear on the Higi list and more highly valued than on the American list. Higis would, in addition, focus on age and membership in the royalty social class. They would, furthermore, strongly emphasize the family management aspect of the matter - certainly much more strongly than Greco-Romans did.

And herein would lie the most significant formal difference between the Higi ideal and either of the others. For, in order for such a leader to effectively function in a way equivalent to that intended for the first century leaders, he would not only have to manage his household well but would have to have at least two wives in that household: "How," the Higi person would ask, "can one properly lead if he has not demonstrated his ability by managing well a household with more than one woman in it?" The Kru of Liberia with a similar ideal state that "You cannot trust a man with only one wife."

If then, we line the lists up side by side (in approximate order of priority) we can see the similarities and differences between the culturally prescribed formal characteristics deemed requisite for Christian leadership:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greco-Roman</th>
<th>American</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Irreproachable:</td>
<td>1. Irreproachable:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One wife (forever)</td>
<td>Faithful to his wife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sober</td>
<td>Sober</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temperate</td>
<td>Temperate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courteous</td>
<td>Courteous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not quarrelsome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Hospitable</td>
<td>2. Doctrinally sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A Good Teacher</td>
<td>3. Vigorous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Not a Money Lover</td>
<td>4. A Good Preacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Manage Household Well</td>
<td>5. Personable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Good Reputation</td>
<td>7. Manage Household Well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Higi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Royal Social Class</td>
<td>4. Irreproachable:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Hospitable</td>
<td>Generous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Mature</td>
<td>Patient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Temperate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Courteous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sober</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Managing well a Polygamous Household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. A Good Teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is here being recommended, then, is an approach to church planting and the evaluation of already established churches that goes beyond the by now rather fuzzy notion labelled "indigenous church" which has so often resulted in churches no more similar to the N.T. churches than the stilted un-English literal Bible translations are like the slangy, communicative "people's Greek" in which the N.T. was originally written. The suggested approach is patterned after the theologically and anthropologically sound contemporary to Bible translation.

This approach would eschew the traditional formal correspondence model of church planting which, in spite of the high ideals of the promoters of "indigenous church principles," continues to simplistically transplant forms of e.g., worship, organization, behavior, witness, ceremonial, etc., from one culture to another with little or no understanding of the fact that Christianity is a matter of the content - the functions and the meanings - as perceived by the receptors rather than of the forms advocated by the source. In operating according to this formal correspondence model in church planting and operation, its advocates betray the same kind of deficiency of cultural (and, ultimately, theological) understanding as do those who hold to the formal correspondence ideal for Bible translating.

It is, however, of considerable interest to note that not infrequently those who demand formal correspondence churches are not thinking of correspondence to the N.T. examples of churchness and contemporary expressions is intended to be. We do this for two reasons: (1) to assist church planters in planting churches properly and (2) to assist those involved in non-ideal church situations to better understand wherein their non-idealness lies and where to look for correctives. For both purposes an analytic procedure is suggested, parallel to that described above as necessary to dynamic equivalence translation.

On the basis of such an analysis it is possible to arrive at more ideal bases for what church planters and builders - both indigenous and expatriate - are really commissioned to be involved with God in. For integral to sound theology at this point (and at most other points as well) is sound anthropology. Dynamic equivalence is the model for churches that we should practice and teach. Formal correspondence models such as the "three-self" concept result in the same kind of foreign, stilted product as the Bible translations produced according to that model - in Chapter VII.
NOTES


2. See such commentaries as The International Critical Commentary, The Moffett Commentary and others on the interpretation of the "one wife" versus (1 Tim. 3:2,12; Titus 1:6) as referring to "digamy" - the marriage of a man to another wife after the death or divorce of his first wife.