

the framework of a chastened realization of the impact of culture on all our theorizing.

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and Cultural Change*

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PROSPECTS FOR A BETTER UNDERSTANDING AND
CLOSER COOPERATION
BETWEEN ANTHROPOLOGISTS AND MISSIONARIES

LOUIS J. LUZBETAK, S.V.D.
Washington, D.C.

INTRODUCTION

There is growing evidence that anthropologists have a hostile rather than a friendly attitude toward missionaries. In discussing this hostility, the present paper has a practical and positive goal in mind -- not so much to take sides as to bring some thoughts together (some original and some not so original) that might contribute toward a better understanding and a closer cooperation between the two antagonistic groups.

But before entering into the two issues before us -- a better understanding and a closer cooperation -- let me indicate three facts that might facilitate a proper interpretation of what I have to say. (1) I am primarily concerned with today's and tomorrow's missionaries rather than with those of the past. (2) I cannot but feel that while the animosity of today's missionaries toward anthropologists is weakening, the hostility of anthropologists toward missionaries on the other hand

seems to be on the rise. (3) Being an anthropologist and at the same time belonging to a missionary order with a strong anthropological tradition, and therefore sharing in the culture of both groups, I cannot but regret this rift and the resulting loss to both sides. I cannot but regret also the loss affecting the societies whose cause anthropologists and missionaries alike, at least in intent and sincere desire, equally champion.

TOWARD A BETTER UNDERSTANDING

Anthropologists and missionaries must talk to one another -- not merely against one another.¹ Dialogue between the two groups is in fact nothing new² and seems even to have become more frequent in recent years, evidenced, for instance, by such studies as Beidelman's Colonial Evangelism,³ such provocative articles as those of Stipe (1980),⁴ Salamone (1976; 1977; 1979), and Hiebert (1978), and the frank discussions at such professional gatherings as the annual American Anthropological Association meetings,⁵ the 1975 Florida Symposium of the Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania,⁶ and the 1983 International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences. Important moves in the direction of dialogue have been made also within missiological and other professional church-related groups, such as the International Association for Mission Studies,⁷ the American Society of Missiology,⁸ the 1978 Bermuda Consultation on the Gospel and Culture convened by the Evangelical Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization,⁹ and even the distinctly one-sided treatment of missionary action by the Barbados Symposium sponsored some seven years earlier by the World Council of Churches.¹⁰

There are especially two obstacles to the desired dialogue that merit our attention: (1) stereotyping and (2) world view barriers. I would like to take up the problem where Stipe's article "Anthropologists versus Missionaries: The Influence of Presuppositions" in Current Anthropology left off.¹¹

A. The First Obstacle to a Better Understanding: Stereotyping

Roger Keesing may have been stereotyping the stereotyper, but he certainly was on the right track when he pointed out:

The caricatured missionary is a strait-laced, repressed, and narrow-minded Bible thumper trying to get the native women to cover their bosoms decently; the anthropologist is a bearded degenerate given to taking his clothes off and sampling wild rites. [1976:459]

Or as others have described this stereotyping, missionaries are "opinionated, insensitive, neurotic [individuals] sent to the heathen because they were misfits at home" (Richardson 1976:482). Stereotyping is often nothing more than wholesale negativism and in the last analysis nothing less than outright prejudice; at times it is a form of reductionism; at times it is a form of ambivalence or some other type of unfounded generalization. Let me explain.

1) Negativism. The negativist does not define what he or she means by "missionary," that all-inclusive label embracing on the one hand a half-educated, or even uneducated, fire-eater and on the other hand someone who happens to be highly educated, with perhaps even a broader educational background and a greater cultural sensitivity than anthropologists normally have but who happens to be associated with a church-related organization somewhere in the non-Western world. In other words, a negativist is one who fails to identify his or her foe. Instead, the label "missionary" is attached to everyone connected with church growth, disregarding all differences -- denominational, national, educational, historical, personal -- and then shooting at will.¹²

2) Reductionism. Such broadsides are not always the result of a Malinowski-type anti-missionary prejudice but are rather what might simply be called "reductionism." Reductionism is a form of overgeneralization consisting in unduly attributing to certain factors, often important in themselves, the character of a lowest common

denominator. In his American Anthropological Association presidential speech in 1978, no less a figure than Francis L.K. Hsu seems to have fallen into this very trap when he tried to reduce missionary action to "expressions of the spirit of free enterprise applied in the religious field," "ethnocentrism," and racism (1979:523-525).

Mission history and missionary motivation, I am afraid, are far more complicated than that. Missionary policies, strategies, and motivations have actually differed not only from one historical period to another (and Christian missionary action is two thousand years old) but have actually differed also within the same period and same church tradition, making broad generalizations about the driving forces behind missionization highly questionable.¹³ The African scene as depicted by Beidelman and the experience in Oceania as described by the Florida symposium of the Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania (both referred to earlier) are good examples of how to treat this complex subject in its true complexity.

Even if ecclesiastical colonialism, imperialism, ethnocentrism, and racism have existed, a fact hardly anyone will deny, and even if to some extent they are still to be found today, such "common denominators" produce only a partial picture at best. Especially to be kept in mind is that today most churches have a broadened and more enlightened understanding of themselves and their role in the modern world, evidenced, for instance, by such landmarks as the Lausanne Covenant,¹⁴ the proceedings of the various international missionary conferences of the World Council of Churches,¹⁵ and especially the documents of the Second Vatican Council.¹⁶ Nor should one overlook the more recent developments in this deeper understanding.¹⁷

One of the greatest weaknesses of reductionism is no doubt the disregard of the personal dimensions involved in missionary motivations and actions. Although missionaries have always been, and will be, children of their times (that is, members of their particular church and citizens of their particular country), there are very relevant individual differences that must not be left out of the picture. Not least important are the differences

in spirituality, a very basic driving force in missionary action,¹⁸ at least as important as any Western entrepreneurship, imperialism, or racism.

3) Ambivalence. Stereotyping takes place also when anthropologists, while condemning their missionary foes, hasten to soften their condemnation with the phony apology "Of course not all missionaries are like that," [implying "There are a few obvious exceptions. But mind you, these are exceptions."] Such ambivalence will never lead to the understanding we are looking for. Such "exceptions," I am afraid, are too frequent to be regarded as exceptions, and such assumptions merely set up barriers between missionaries and anthropologists rather than facilitate the desired dialogue (Burridge 1978:8).

4) Other Generalizations. Some anthropologists seem to vent their anger against church workers of today for the errors of the past, forgetting that they and their foes both live in the twentieth century. The missionary is not a contemporary of Constantine, Charlemagne, the Crusaders, the Inquisitors, the Conquistadors, or of more recent colonialists. This is not to deny that a considerable amount of past mistakes are still being repeated in post-Vatican II Catholicism, post-Lausanne Evangelicalism, and in present-day World Council of Churches.¹⁹ In fact, one of the greatest benefits that the churches might derive from an honest, objective, frank but respectful exchange with anthropologists lies in the ability of culture specialists to point out such undesirable survivals, vestiges, and throwbacks. Dialogue is not destroyed by respectful, constructive criticism.

Constructive dialogue demands that anthropologists look very carefully and objectively at both sides of the ledger. The 19th and 20th century missionaries, for instance, were not only caught in the colonization process of their times but were also the pioneers in decolonization. A closer look at the other side of the ledger would reveal that it was especially the missionary who carried out the role of educator and humanizer throughout the mission world and mission history. The missionary, in a word, was more than an ethnocentric oppressor, colonizer, and imperialist.²⁰ Today, church

workers the world over as a group are in the very forefront, second to no one, in defending human rights and promoting human betterment. Such facts are clearly indicated on that "other side of the ledger," which unfortunately too many anthropologists seem to refuse to look at. Keesing summed up that "other side" well when he said:

But there is another side. Many Christian missionaries have devoted their lives in ways that have greatly enriched the communities where they worked. Many, in immersing themselves in other languages and cultures, have produced important records of ways now vanishing. But more important, in valuing these old ways and seeing Christianization as a challenge to creative synthesis of old and new, the best missionaries have helped to enrich human lives and provide effective bridges to participation in a world community. In a great many colonial regions, missions provided educational systems while colonial governments did not, and consequently, when the stage was set for the emergence of Third World leaders in decolonization, many who took the stage were able to do so because of their mission education. Missionaries, living in local communities where colonial exploitation had tragically disruptive consequences, have often been vocal critics of government policy or practice. No treatment of Christianity in the Third World could wisely overlook this humanitarian side. [1976:462]

Some generalizations that serve as obstacles to dialogue result from a more or less isolated experience that a particular anthropologist may have had with a particular missionary, or vice versa. The inadmissible but not at all uncommon logic seems to be: "If you've seen one, you've seen them all." The episodes one hears of missionary naivete and cultural insensitivity, some true and some not so true, tend to justify the caricature drawn. On the other hand, missionaries have had their experience with anthropologists too and can tell a few interesting stories

of their own. In any case, the bad impression left behind by the anthropologist and the resulting caricaturization of the anthropologists as a result are both uncalled-for and damaging.

What we have said about stereotyping, the first obstacle to dialogue, has been summed up by Frank Salamone when he strongly advised that anthropologists and missionaries alike clearly identify their foes by specifying "which missionaries are likely to have trouble with which anthropologists in which situations" (1980:174).

B. The Second Obstacle to a Better Understanding: World View Barriers

Whether most anthropologists are atheists and agnostics or not, as is sometimes claimed,²¹ what matters is the fact that the majority of anthropologists, without even realizing it perhaps, have a "religion" of their own, being mostly devout and practicing cultural relativists. At one extreme of the spectrum are the absolute cultural relativists; the rest are broken down into various "sects" according to the countless shades of relative cultural relativism.

1. Absolute Cultural Relativism

Absolute cultural relativists reject Christian missionary action outright. Their argument is simple enough: One culture is as good as another, and each culture must be judged by its own standards, within its own context and as an organic whole. Consequently, no society, Christian or otherwise, has the right to disturb this sacred wholeness, especially not with something as "meaningless" as religious beliefs.²² The missionaries are, of course, regarded as the chief offenders in this respect. Missionaries "impose" their "unprovable" values on unwilling, unwitting, and usually defenseless individuals and societies; missionaries "destroy" cultures and "deprive" societies of their self-respect. Missionization is "essentially" and "intrinsically" unjustifiable ethnocentrism, nationalism, and exploitation. Mission action must, therefore, be regarded as a form of "coloni-

alism," "imperialism," and even "ethnocide" and "genocide." (The rhetoric used here is, by the way, taken from actual anthropological literature, sometimes used also in speeches and writings of angry Third World churchmen whose patience with their slow-moving churches has been exhausted.)²³

On the other hand, missionaries -- and I might add, most anthropologists -- insist that the 100% culture-free stance claimed by the absolute cultural relativists for themselves is psychologically impossible and therefore imaginary.²⁴ In fact, such absolutists are "missionaries" and "proselytizers" themselves who try to "impose" their world view on others. While they take pride in respecting all cultures, rightly esteeming the world views of tribal peoples and simple peasant folk and while admiring the philosophies and scriptures of the great non-Christian world religions, these same culture experts seem to forget that missionaries are human beings who live by a culture like all human beings. When the absolute cultural relativists deal with missionaries they throw their live-and-let-live tenets, their laissez-faire ethic, and their professed broadmindedness overboard.²⁵ Their rhetoric clearly betrays an ignorance and total disregard of the missionary's way of life, especially the value system that true Christians live by and the world view that makes them tick. Mission is essential to Christianity; in fact, Christianity is mission. For a Christian to abandon mission, as is being demanded of him by the absolutists, would be to abandon Christianity itself.²⁶

The absolute cultural relativist's rebuttal is quick and simple: Say what you will, Christianity has no demonstrable cross-cultural validity and is therefore intrinsically ethnocentric and its mission is inadmissible.

In other words, an impasse has been reached. The simple fact of the matter is that the two world views, as has been emphasized by Stipe, Hiebert, and others, are incompatible, and dialogue between the two parties has become impossible. The adversary relationship will remain as long as missionaries cling to their absolute culture and the absolute cultural relativists remain absolute

TABLE I
Missionaries vs. Anthropologists:
A Possible Synthesis of Differing World Views
(Some Examples)

		P O L A R I Z A T I O N		S Y N T H E S I S	
		GENERAL MISSIONARY WORLD VIEW	ABSOLUTE CULTURAL RELATIVISM	RELATIVE CULTURAL RELATIVISM	
Logic		"Either/or" Logic	"Either/or" Logic	"Both/and" Logic	
General Orientation		Supernatural, theocentric	Natural, anthropocentric	Natural AND Supernatural	
Supernature		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. God is absolute. 2. God is the Source of all truth, universally normative. 3. Faith is supernatural vision, one's most valued possession. 4. Christianity IS mission. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. God is a cultural creation. 2. Human knowledge and experience are the sole and ultimate source of truth. 3. Faith is ethnocentrism. (Beliefs have value only within a given cultural context.) 4. Christian mission is imperialism. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Absolute can make cross-cultural sense through contextualization.* 2. Faith is compatible with human experience. 3. Faith can make cross-cultural sense through contextualization.* 4. Missions are justified if other faiths are respected and freedom of conscience safeguarded.** 	

TABLE 1

Missionaries vs. Anthropologists:
A Possible Synthesis of Differing World Views
(Some Examples)
(Continued)

		P O L A R I Z A T I O N		S Y N T H E S I S	
		GENERAL MISSIONARY WORLD VIEW	ABSOLUTE CULTURAL RELATIVISM	RELATIVE CULTURAL RELATIVISM	
		"Either/or" Logic	"Either/or" Logic	"Both/and" Logic	
Logic		Supernatural, theocentric	Natural, anthropocentric	Natural AND Supernatural	
General Orientation		1. The individual rather than the society is evil. 2. Human commonalities are more numerous and more important than diversities. 3. Human beings are endowed with a free will. 4. Human brotherhood is universal in extent.	1. Social systems rather than individuals are evil. 2. Human diversity is greater and more important than human similarity. 3. Human beings are subject to deterministic biological, ecological, and psychological forces. 4. The parameters of human brotherhood are determined by the given culture.	1. Individuals AND social systems are evil. 2. Both human similarities and diversities are great and important. 3. Biological, ecological, and psychological factors are compatible with the notion of free will. 4. Universal brotherhood is compatible with culturally defined structures.	
Nature					10
Role Concept		Teach, "make disciples," change cultures!	Observe cultures. Preserve them. Hands-off policy!	Cultural adaptation and human progress call for both change AND preservation.	

* For concept of "contextualization," see Halebian (1983:95-111). For my understanding, see Luzbetak (1981:39-57).

** Infra, footnote 28.

cultural relativists -- in a word, until hell freezes over.

2. Relative Cultural Relativism

Such polarization, however, need not and does not affect most anthropologists and most of today's Christian missionaries. Our chart indicates in broad outline a possible direction that could lead to a synthesis between mission action and cultural relativism and eventually to meaningful cooperation.

The real problem underlying the generally negative relationship between anthropologists and missionaries is the culturally conditioned, typically Western "either/or" logic affecting both groups. To achieve a synthesis, one must think rather in holistic, integrative terms of "both/and" rather than in dissociative, monodirectional terms. A "both/and" thinking habit allows for a wide range of views, from a respectful disagreement or mere tolerance of an Absolute to full acceptance. A closer look at the chart will show that relative cultural relativism can in various degrees be acceptable to most missionaries and to most anthropologists, thus paving the way for mutual respect, understanding, and eventual cooperation.

As indicated in our chart, the general orientation of the absolute cultural relativist might be described as a purely natural outlook on life; the missionary's outlook on the other hand is distinctly supernatural. The relative cultural relativist, like the overwhelming majority of human beings, finds no problem in combining a supernatural with a natural outlook. Similarly, while the missionary conceives his role as conversion and change, the absolute cultural relativist insists on the "sacred wholeness" of cultures that must remain undisturbed and intact, the role of the anthropologist being the observation and preservation of cultures (Hughes 1978:66-78).²⁷ The relative cultural relativist, in turn, hastens to point out that both preservation of cultures and culture change, observation of cultures and sharing of culture through teaching, should go hand in hand, thus enriching cultures and assisting societies in the acculturative process. As Oosterwal expressed it:

Whereas a few decades ago acculturation was not considered a respectable topic in anthropology, today it is a focus of research and study. Some anthropologists have even done away with the concept of cultural relativism and insist that anthropologists should themselves become involved in changing "traditional" society according to certain ideological viewpoints. These changes in orientation may also help to look at Christian missionaries and evaluate their work more as successful acculturation, a process whereby "alternative systems," "meaningful substitutes," and "functional equivalents" have inevitably replaced the old cultures and societies. [1978:34]

But all this is not anthropology. Our underlying problem is not anthropology but differing world views -- differing indeed but reconcilable. One can be a true Christian and at the same time a true anthropologist; one can be a true anthropologist and at the same time respect Christian missions.

On the other hand, to deprive the Christian of the right to offer to his or her fellow human beings in a free and non-manipulative²⁸ manner precisely what Christians value most (their faith) would itself be oppression and imperialism, with the anthropologist as the oppressor.

TOWARD CLOSER COLLABORATION

A. Missiology

It is unfortunate indeed that many, if not most, anthropologists seem not even to be aware of the fact that there is a sizable number of reputable scholars scattered around the world pursuing a field of research called "Missiology."²⁹ Missiology is a multi-disciplinary field concerned not only with the theological and historical aspects of Christian missions but with the psychological, sociological, political, aesthetic, anthropological, and other dimensions of mission as well.³⁰ Missiologists are among the main pace-setters for mission policies, and

missiologists are precisely the ones who are most ready for a positive, mutually beneficial relationship with anthropologists. They readily admit, for instance, the past mistakes that Christian churches have made by allowing themselves to be used by governments for political and expansionistic reasons.³¹ (Anthropologists, by the way, have done the same during more recent colonial times and during and after World War II.) Missiologists also admit the lost opportunities for refining and further developing the centuries-old, potentially significant theory of cultural accommodation encouraged especially by the Roman Catholics (Luzbetak 1977) and the "three-self" theory (the formation of self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating missionary churches) encouraged especially by the Protestants (Beyerhaus, Lefever 1964:41; Kraft, Wisely 1979). Missiologists are generally sympathetic to the pleas of post-colonial Third World and other non-Western churches³² that they be allowed to express their Christian values, symbols, philosophies, and structures, with their own hearts and souls, as Asians, Africans, Latin Americans, and Pacific Islanders.³³ In many ways, therefore, missiologists sound very much like anthropologists. Unfortunately, institutions die hard. Institutions are generally created by societies to facilitate cooperative behavior, but sometimes these very same institutions turn into human traps and cages (Hall 1977:7-21). Often it is not ill will and insensitivity on the part of the Western churches that is involved in the failure to bring about institutional change as much as an honest disagreement in theology, and often also a disagreement about timing and appropriateness of suggested procedures.³⁴ Missiologists are open to, and in fact would welcome, the insights of anthropological theory in dealing with the complex problem of directing desired change. If anthropologists are really concerned about what they call the "injustices" of Christian missions, let them light the proverbial candle instead of cursing the dark; instead, let them look into the very promising direction that modern missiology is leading the churches and extend a helping hand in areas of common interest.

B. Church Authorities

The second justification for an optimistic view regarding a possible closer cooperation between anthropologists and missionaries is the growing, sympathetic understanding of church authorities. The welcome direction of missiologists is not confined to books and therefore is not limited to the purely theoretical level. There are many signs showing that missionary churches are actually in the process of passing from dependence to independence and on to interdependence (Bühlmann 1977), perhaps not so fast as one would wish, but there definitely is movement. In some places, especially where local theologies are making greater headway, we may speak even of a "momentum" rather than of a "movement." Particularly since Vatican II,³⁵ this momentum is seen in such more recent developments as: ecumenism,³⁶ which encourages interdenominational respect and collaboration; decentralization³⁷; a growing pluralism within the churches (Schillebeeck 1970); an ever-increasing appreciation of non-Christian religions and an engagement in inter-faith dialogue, with the consequent better understanding of and a new emphasis on freedom of conscience and religious liberty³⁸; indigenization of local leadership and decision making³⁹; and, above all, the now widely accepted policy of cultural contextualization of Christianity.⁴⁰

C. Missionary Training and Attitudes

There is a third important reason for believing that cooperation between anthropologists and missionaries is possible -- and my statements will be fully documented. Most encouraging is the growing cultural sensitivity of missionaries, largely due to the prodding of local churches themselves. Only a few decades ago missionaries received very little training specifically for cross-cultural work. Their training was in essence identical with that given church workers being prepared for homeland activities, those destined for other cultures taking their preconceived notions and ethnocentrism with them to their respective mission fields. In this sense they were not different from Western government or business people overseas. Especially since World War II, however, even if perhaps not as rapidly and as deeply as

one would wish, exposure to at least the basics of anthropology and sociology in orientation courses and as part of regular missionary training programs has become common and, in some cases, the rule rather than the exception.⁴¹ Opportunities for field experience during the regular training programs as well as opportunities for graduate studies in missiology and anthropology⁴² have greatly increased. Workshops and continuing education programs for returning missionaries and those on leave, with a strong emphasis on cultural issues, are now not at all unusual. Professional missiological associations⁴³ and research and planning centers,⁴⁴ as a rule committed to the principle of cultural adaptation, are now to be found in all parts of the world. Professional missiological journals (Anderson 1971:135-136) with a strong cultural tone have multiplied and taken on new meaning.⁴⁵ It is also not unusual for missions to have professional anthropologists on their staffs at the headquarters, training centers, and in the field working hand-in-hand with grassroots missionaries. In a word, if anthropologists are blind to this healthy development and think of the modern missionary only in outdated terms, we can readily understand why an adversary relationship rather than one of friendly cooperation prevails.

D. Anthropologist and Missionary Collaboration as a Fact

A fourth promising sign is the actual collaboration between missionaries and anthropologists. As a general rule, church workers recognize that they have much to gain from anthropology.⁴⁶ But is there anything anthropology can gain from missionaries?

1. Past Missionary Contributions to Anthropology

Let us look at the record. The indebtedness of anthropology to missionaries is enormous. In fact, one can almost say that missionaries have fathered anthropology, a fact that has led Burridge to see a strain of jealousy, a kind of Oedipus complex, lurking somewhere in the anthropologist's heart (Burridge 1978:5). As Edwin W. Smith in his presidential address to the Royal Anthro-

pological Institute put it, "Because of the missionary's contribution to anthropology, as well as because of the utility of this science for the missionary in his daily activity, social anthropology might almost be considered a missionary science" (1934:xxxvii). Any anthropologist looking objectively at his or her debt to missionaries would recognize what Keesing has called "an old and enduring tradition of great missionary scholarship" (1976:459). The fact is that from the very beginning of mission history missionaries have been the chief observers of cultures. Much if not most of the early folklore of northern and eastern Europe, such as that of the Celts, Germans, Slavs, Greenlanders, has been derived from such 10th to the 13th century missionaries as Canon Adam of Bremen, Helmut of Lubeck, Monk Regino, Nestor, Bishop Kadlubek of Cracow, and many others. During the next three centuries there were even more missionary ethnographers -- John de Plano, John of Corvin, John of Marignola, Jordanus Catalani, and other missionaries to the Orient, to mention only a few. During the period of the great discoveries, it was again the missionary to the Americas, Oceania, and Africa who was the outstanding ethnographer of his times: e.g., Christoval Molino, José d'Acosta, Dobrizhoffer, de las Casas, Ricci, de Nobili, Sahagún, Lafitau. A little less than a century ago, it was R. H. Codrington, the author of The Melanesians (1891).

2. More Recent Missionary Contributions

Although some anthropologists tend to brush aside missionary contributions as amateurish and unreliable, the fact of the matter is that one need not have a degree in anthropology to gain important insight into the way a society copes with its economic, social, and ideational environment. Such individuals may not be able to toss anthropological jargon around or deal with theory and structures as freely as someone with a Ph.D. in anthropology, but their basically ethnographic contributions may nevertheless be very useful. This is particularly true if the missionary in question is acquainted with the fundamentals of anthropology and is assisted at the same time in his or her fieldwork by a qualified anthropologist (cf. Beidelman 1982:6-8; Loewen 1965:158-

190). Present-day experts in local theology like John Mbiti, Henri Maurier, and Raimundo Panikkar⁴⁷ (and there are many others) are delving into aspects of native religion and philosophy and producing information of great value to anthropology. Some of the finest work on tribal religions, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam (by Paul Schebesta and Heinrich Dumoulin, to mention only two examples)⁴⁸ has been done by mission personnel. Valuable also are the contributions not only of professional linguists like Kenneth Pike and Eugene Nida associated with church groups but also of the many non-professionals, who from the earliest times have gathered a veritable treasury of linguistic information.⁴⁹ As Mary R. Haas points out:

The earliest grammars of the 16th and 17th centuries were the result of missionary efforts. Throughout the following centuries there has been a continuing flow of missionary grammars from all parts of the world. Some are good and some are bad and many are totally unknown to anthropological linguists. Many exist only in manuscript form and many have been lost. But the number of unwritten languages in the world is so great that, even near the end of the 20th century, more grammars of unwritten languages are being composed by missionaries than by linguists. Many of the best of these are being done by missionary linguists who have been trained in modern linguistic methods. Anthropological linguists cannot hope to do the job alone. [1976:45]

Important is that last sentence: Anthropological linguists cannot hope to do the job alone.

The greatest impetus in Roman Catholic circles came at the turn of the century with Father Wilhelm Schmidt's appearance on the linguistic and ethnological scene.⁵⁰ To too many anthropologists who unfortunately never or seldom read German and therefore who never or seldom read anything by Schmidt only about Schmidt -- to such, Schmidt is only a diehard diffusionist entangled in something called "Culture Circles." The truth is, however, that

Schmidt's impact on European anthropology, especially in German-speaking countries, and on Catholic missionaries and Catholic missiology in particular, is, as Firth rightly expressed it, "difficult to measure because of its pervasiveness."⁵¹ This impact inadequately appreciated by most non-German historians of ethnology was not overlooked by Lowie in his History of Ethnological Theory when he observed:

Ethnology owes much to Schmidt for the establishment of Anthropos, a journal second to none in the field. With unsurpassed energy Schmidt enlisted the services of missionaries scattered over the globe and thereby secured priceless descriptive reports. [1937:192]

The amount of useful research and publication for which Schmidt and his colleagues and collaborators are responsible is too vast to attempt a summary here (Luzbetak 1980). There is in fact no better proof that a friendly, co-operative relationship can indeed exist between anthropologists and missionaries than the almost eighty years of close collaboration between anthropologists (regardless of their particular Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, agnostic, or what-have-you affiliation) and the Anthropos Institute sponsored by a strictly missionary organization (Luzbetak 1980:17-18; Brandewie 1983c).

CONCLUSION

Let me sum up in one little question all that I have tried to say: Isn't the crux of our problem the fact that too many anthropologists are down on what they are not up on?

NOTES

1. By "talking to one another" and "dialogue" we mean all forms of communication (e.g., publications, workshops) that have as a goal a better, more respectful understanding of opposing views. Dialogue is not polemics or debate but a sharing of information about what a particular side holds and why.
2. One of the pioneers in missionary-anthropologist dialogue was the journal Anthropos, International Review of Ethnology and Linguistics, sponsored by the missionary Society of the Divine Word. The journal, now (1983) in its 78th year, has from its earliest days included among its collaborators not only missionaries of various denominations but also non-missionary professional anthropologists of a variety of persuasions. As a glance through past volumes of the Anthropos will show, the role played by professional, non-missionary collaborators has constantly grown, so that today they outstrip missionaries by far. For more information about the journal and the Anthropos Institute, see Rahmann (1956:1-18); Burgmann (1966:7-10); Saake (1980:1-6); Luzbetak (1980:14-19); Rahmann (1982:657-662); Henninger (1956:19-60). See also E. Brandewie, "Ethnology and Missionaries: One Case of the Anthropos Institute and Wilhelm Schmidt," a paper read at the XIth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, August, 1983, and published in this volume.

Among the early efforts at dialoguing must be included also the workshops known as Semaine d'Ethnologie religieuse held in Louvain in 1912 and 1913, in Tilburg (Netherlands) in 1922, in Milan in 1925, and in Luxembourg in 1929. It is also interesting to note that the Lateran museum, whose first director was Wilhelm Schmidt and which is now located in the Vatican, bore the name of "Missionario-Ethnologico," a name that in itself suggests a close relationship between missionary action and ethnology.

(notes and sources continue through page 53.)