POLYCENTRIC MISSIOLOGY: SEEKING CONVERGENCE IN THINKING, DECIDING, AND ACTING IN MISSIONS

Felipe Fulanetto[1]

Introduction

Currently, one of the most recurrent terms in the missiological sphere is *polycentrism*, which even appeared among the key concepts of the most recent Lausanne Movement Congress, held in Seoul, South Korea, in 2024. Although relatively new in ecclesiastical vocabulary, the term carries significant practical implications for theology and missionary praxis. Polycentrism seeks to describe and conceptualize a reality already experienced in the daily life of the church—especially in the field of missions—marked by the emergence and strengthening of multiple centers of initiative, sending, and decision-making. Thus, it recognizes that the mission of God is now carried out by a global and diverse network of agents, communities, and traditions whose role in the formulation and implementation of mission has grown remarkably, especially alongside the expansion of churches in various countries.

When Kenneth Scott Latourette published *The Emergence of a World Christian Community* (Latourette, 1951), his analysis reflected a Christian reality already quite distinct from that of William Carey, who, 159 years earlier, had produced maps and statistics to stimulate the modern missionary movement. However, the most significant contrast is not between Carey and Latourette, but between Latourette's world and that of Patrick Johnstone, whose *The Future of the Global Church* (Johnstone, 2014) describes the transformations between 1950 and 2000 as "without parallel in history" (Johnstone, 2017, p. 94). According to Yeh (2016, p. 216), if the nineteenth century was "The Great Century of Missions," the twentieth century became "The Great Century of World Christianity." During this period, the global missionary force expanded dramatically: from about 17,000 missionaries in 1900 to 43,000 in 1962, reaching 200,000 in 2000 and possibly 300,000 in 2010 (Johnstone, 2017, p. 228). This growth resulted mainly from the increasing protagonism of the churches of majority-world countries, which began sending more missionaries than the West itself, confirming González's prediction that "the mission 'to the ends of the earth' would become a mission 'from the ends of the earth'" (González, 2009, p. 558).

The Brazilian experience illustrates this dynamism. According to official data, the evangelical population rose from 9% in 1991 to 27% in 2022, reaching approximately 60 million people across all Protestant traditions. Likewise, AMTB research indicates the presence of about 19,000 Brazilian cross-cultural missionaries (DP-AMTB, 2022). In the Church of the Nazarene, a significant advance is evident after sporadic missionary sending in the 1990s and 2000s. The establishment of Global Missions in Brazil in 2018 initiated a consistent process of sending, resulting in 29 Brazilian missionaries today. Thus, Johnstone's

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[1] Felipe Fulanetto is from Campinas, São Paulo, Brazil. He is married to Jéssika Fulanetto and is the father of Pietro. He holds a degree in Theology and a master's degree in Missiology from the Centro Evangélico de Missões (CEM) and is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Organizational Leadership at California Baptist University (CBU). He is the pastor of the Church of the Nazarene in Campinas, Brazil, and serves as coordinator of the Nazarene Theological Seminary of Brazil (STNB) Campinas Campus, a member of the Research Department of AMTB, and coordinator of Missionary Mobilization in Brazil. He is the author and editor of two books.

(2017, p. 119) prediction that Brazil’s missionary contribution would increase considerably in the global scenario is confirmed.

These aforementioned ecclesiastical statistics are also evident within the Church of the Nazarene, which emerged as a predominantly North American denomination and gradually became a global church, as seen in the nationalities of the six General Superintendents in 2025: two Americans, one Guatemalan, one Colombian, one Mozambican, and one German. Likewise, of the approximately 2.7 million members, 80% are not located in the United States but mainly in countries such as Mozambique, Brazil, Benin, Bangladesh, India, Haiti, Guatemala, Mexico, and Ethiopia (Church of the Nazarene, 2024).

Top 10 countries with the most members	
1. United States	544.383
2. Mozambique	215.087
3. Brazil	150.667
4. Benin	140.405
5. Bangladesh	117.093
6. India	105.026
7. Haiti	104.079
8. Guatemala	97.895
9. Mexico	64.958
10. Ethiopia	59.954

Statistics from the Church of the Nazarene for 2024

Currently, the Church of the Nazarene is present in 165 world areas, with a total of 466 missionaries sent from 60 different world areas and serving in 81 countries. These data clearly demonstrate that the denomination constitutes an international and diverse body. However, this diversity, although significant, is not sufficient in itself. It is necessary to move beyond geographical representativeness and to become, in fact, a polycentric church in which multiple cultural contexts actively participate in theological reflection, decision-making, and missionary sending—and not merely compose a variety of nationalities. For these reasons, the missionary paradigm has changed, and the old models of sending—monocentric and monocultural—must give way to more polycentric and multicultural strategies, such as multilateral partnerships among various countries and cultures.

Culture and Its Influence on Missiology

We all recognize the importance of missiology for theological study and its practical and theoretical implications; however, we must ask ourselves what role culture plays in the development of missional theology. What happens when brothers and sisters from different cultures read the Bible? Do we all interpret the Word of God in the same way? Would there not be a single and universal Christian worldview? Are theology and missiology not supracultural to the point of applying to all peoples?

The answers to these questions are relevant to the whole church in every cultural setting, not only to missionaries living in cross-cultural contexts. Goheen asserted that the theme "is a result of the very nature of the gospel" and adds that it "will inevitably take on a cultural form," therefore, "the question is not whether the gospel is shaped by culture; the only question is whether the contextualization of the gospel is faithful or not" (Goheen, 2019, p. 214).

Hiebert (2010) explained simply and practically how our beliefs directly influence our actions. For him, everything we do, feel, enjoy, or forbid is derived from our most internal values—namely, the worldview of a culture. This understanding of cultures is essential for the missiological framework we will develop below, because Charles Van Engen (2017) exemplified how theological paradigms directly influence individual practice. Just as cultural worldview determines people's practices, so also missiological and theological paradigms directly shape missionary practices. Van Engen argues that all missionary practice emerges from missiological paradigms, but at the same time, every paradigm is directly confronted by practice through critical analysis of actions. Thus, both academia and practice must rely on each other and offer mutual support.

Given this scenario, it becomes essential to understand the missiology of each people, because their vision of mission is directly linked to how the missionary movement is configured within their historical and cultural realities. Only then can we seek a global unity of missiological reflection—that is, a polycentric missiology—which is the fundamental purpose of this work.

Furthermore, we must note that throughout the journey of the Christian church, theologians and ecclesial leaders have continually attempted to make the faith better understood and adapted to contemporary culture. This is certainly not a prerogative unique to the church of today. Therefore, we will present below some of these attempts and their respective terminologies.

Indigenization of Theology

The term *indigenization* dates back to the nineteenth century, to the writings of Henry Venn (1796–1873) and Rufus Anderson (1797–1880), who developed a theory of indigenous churches known as the "three-self" formula (self-propagating, self-supporting, and self-governing).[2] The terminology should not be confused with the English word "Indian"; rather, "autochthonous" is the most accurate and widely used association in Brazil (Nicholls, 2013, p. 25). Venn and Anderson borrowed the concept of *indigenous* from biology, as John Terry explains:

> The term 'indigenous' comes from biology and indicates a plant or animal native to an area. Missiologists adopted the word and used it to refer to churches that reflect the

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[2] Other recent names associated with the indigenization paradigm of contextualization are John Nevius, Roland Allen, Mel Hodges, Donald McGravan, Alan Tippet, and Don Richardson (Van Engen, 2017:149).

> cultural distinctives of their linguistic group." (Moreau, Netland, and Van Engen, 2000, p. 483)

The three-self concept represented an important advancement for the maturation and growth of local churches within their respective cultures in an autochthonous way. However, it did not escape criticism concerning its effectiveness and underlying assumptions (Van Engen, 2017). Although Venn and Anderson did not develop a theology of indigenization per se, later missiologists advanced the concept and shed light on the relationship between theology and cultural reality, emphasizing that newly planted churches should also be able to theologize. Nevertheless, this terminology is closely tied to the colonial period and often conveys the impression of an outsider imposing expectations on local churches. For this reason, the missiological community has largely rejected the use of the term, as affirmed by Bruce Nicholls and Harvie Conn (Nicholls, 2013, pp. 25–26; Moreau, Netland, and Van Engen, 2000, pp. 328–29)

Contextual Theology

Nicholls, in criticizing the term *indigenization*, preferred to use *contextualization* as his alternative, a term previously employed by Shoki Coe and Aharon Sapsezian in 1972 (Nicholls, 2013, pp. 25–26). In his book *Contextualization: A Theology of Gospel and Culture*, written in 1979, Nicholls establishes the foundations of what he considers a contextualizing theology, grounding his thesis in biblical foundations and avoiding the errors of syncretism[3]. It is important to emphasize that our discussion does not concern the well-known concept of "missionary contextualization," which involves presenting the gospel verbally and through actions in ways adapted to the culture in which the missionary is placed. Rather, our focus is the *contextualization of theology* itself.

There are theologians and missiologists, both from majority-world and Western contexts, who, in response to the colonialism imposed in previous centuries, advanced the concept of contextual theology in more progressive directions (Moreau, Netland, and Van Engen, 2000, pp. 225–226). In their effort to develop a theology independent of foreign oversight, dozens of theological models were produced in which the starting point for theological formulation is the context rather than Scripture, thereby creating a type of biblical relativism.[4] Bosch notes that contextual theologies often carry a strong socioeconomic and political–revolutionary emphasis, representing an attempt to make an epistemological break with traditional theology (Bosch, 2009, pp. 503–504). For this reason, the terminology faces restrictions in some theological circles that hesitate to offer it full support (Moreau, Netland, and Van Engen, 2000, p. 329). Moreover, it should be noted that in many cases, contextual theology neglects the theological heritage of previous generations by placing greater emphasis on culture, and the term still conveys the notion of an outsider attempting to contextualize theology for the local people.

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[3] Names that have dedicated themselves to this contextualization paradigm are Shoki Coe, Dean Gilliland, Clemens Sedmak, Stephen Bevans, Adshish Chrispal, Tite Tienow, and Andrew Kirk (Van Engen, 2017:158)

[4] Some examples include Liberation Theology, Prosperity Theology, Feminist Theology, Black Theology, and similar movements.

Local Theology

The next term is more frequently used in the writings of Roman Catholic and ecumenical authors (Moreau, Netland, and Van Engen, 2000, p. 329). The beginnings of discussions concerning local theology are traced to 1962, with the Second Vatican Council, and later to Pope Paul VI in 1975 (Schreiter, 1985, p. 2). In defense of local theology, Schreiter (1985) defined it as a theology produced not by professionals but by the local church community itself through its ecclesial experiences, after which a professional theologian systematizes it but does not determine it. It is worth noting that some Protestant writers use the term *local theology* without the theological connotation found in Catholic thought; they instead employ the word "local" merely as an adjective modifying "theology," without additional theological implications. Again, we observe several loose ends that raise concerns about the epistemology and hermeneutics of local theology, which can lead to serious syncretism and ethnocentrism.

Ethnotheology

This term, *ethnotheology*, follows the global trend in the sciences toward specialized studies of non-Western cultures, such as ethnohistory, ethnomusicology, ethnolinguistics, ethnopsychology, ethnobotany, ethnomedicine, etc. It is derived from the Greek word ἔθνος (*ethnos*), translated as '*ethnicity'* (sociocultural groups), combined with the word *theology*. Therefore, *ethnotheology* would be the application of theology within a sociocultural group (an ethnicity).

Charles Kraft, in his book from the 1970s, proposed ethnotheology, which in his definition is the disciplinary intersection of anthropology and Christian theology "concerned with an interpretive approach to the study of God, man, and human-divine interaction," adding that although ethnotheology has greater missiological implications, it "should not simply serve as the handmaid of missions" (Kraft, 2001, pp. 364–365).

Harvie Conn states that "ethnotheology has found wide, though not widespread, acceptance in Protestant evangelical circles" (Moreau, Netland, and Van Engen, 2000, p. 329). Barbara Burns is one of the critics of Charles Kraft's ethnotheology, asserting that at its core, "culture takes precedence and relativism is the result" (Burns, 2011, p. 78). Conn adds that another problem with ethnotheologies is the lack of connection between particularism and the universality of the gospel, since—as Bosch argues—churches have the characteristic of being particular only by virtue of the catholicity of the one holy church (Bosch, 2009, p. 546).

The same caution we raised regarding contextual theologies applies here as well, since they may fall into the error of ignoring the theologies of past generations by placing greater emphasis on culture. For these reasons, we will not use this terminology in our study.

Transcultural Theology

The fifth terminology we will discuss is *Transcultural Theology*, presented by Paul Hiebert in 1985. Its premise is the relationship between the Bible, theology, and culture, demonstrating that the primary document of theology is the Bible. Yet, all theologies are inevitably products of the cultural and historical contexts of the human beings who produced them. Furthermore, he affirms that all "human theologies are only partial understandings of Theology as God sees it" (Hiebert, 2010, p. 198). For Hiebert, there is a difference between theology with an uppercase "T" and a lowercase "t." The former concerns the immutable supracultural concepts of theology, while the latter consists of the sociocultural expressions of interpreting the Bible and understanding God. It is precisely this relationship between the supracultural and the contextual that gives rise to the greatest theological confusions for a globalized theology.

Hiebert is not naïve about the risks of a transcultural theology; in fact, he identifies several problems, yet in all of them, he continues to advocate for the necessity of giving churches around the world space in theological labor. He points out the error that, in this journey of new theologies, we may fall into the mistake of using Western theology as the final standard for measuring others. For Hiebert, however, the standard is biblical revelation (Hiebert, 2010, p. 215). He also warned about the error that, in the past, Westerners controlled the theology of a new church in another country out of fear that it would not have the true theology (Hiebert, 2010, p. 217). We must admit that this attitude is not exclusive to Westerners, for missionaries from Majority World countries can be just as ethnocentric as Europeans and North Americans were. We need to be careful not to fall into the same error of becoming controlling and assuming ownership of the truth.

In transcultural theology, we understand that there exists a global hermeneutical community which, despite the particular contexts of each church, has the responsibility to listen to the broader church of which it is part, sharing and mutually watching over one another as they develop theology. Thus, Hiebert states that in this dialogue "a transcultural theology may emerge that transcends cultural differences, creating a metatheology that compares theologies, explores the cultural deviations of each one, and seeks to find universal biblical elements" (Hiebert, 2010, p. 218).

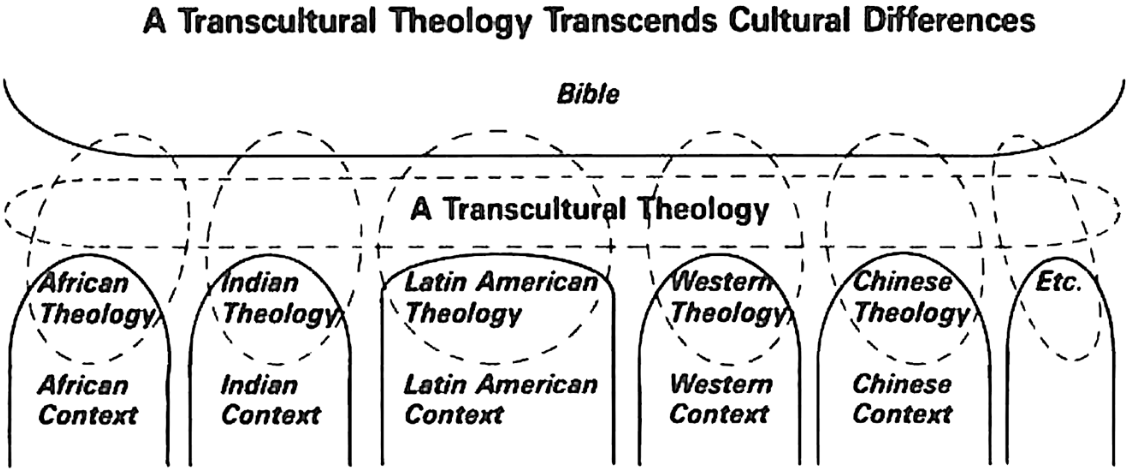

Figure 1 - Transcultural Theology from Paul Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*

Hiebert establishes three principles for transcultural theology, namely: (1) Supracultural. It transcends the limits and prejudices of human cultures despite being developed within their contexts; (2) Historical and Christological. It must center on the acts of God in the history narrated in the Bible and around the person of Christ; (3) Guided by the Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who guides theology to be done in humility, in redemptive love, without condemnation, and in communion (Hiebert, 2010, p. 220).

With these foundations of transcultural theology, we can eliminate the error of Western interventionism that occurs in the indigenization of theology, also casting out the misunderstanding of ethnocentrism found in local theology, and, finally, correcting the isolationism and relativism of contextual theology and ethnotheology by not taking into account the theological development in history and the loss of a supracultural truth. Therefore, transcultural theology is the most assertive theological method for our present proposal, but even so, we prefer to propose another terminology, which we will see below.

Polycentric Theology

We propose using "polycentric theology" for the same method Paul Hiebert attributed to transcultural theology, while changing the name. The proposal of polycentric theology fits well as a metatheology, concatenating concepts from the other terminologies presented here and pointing toward a polycentric dynamic.

Nevertheless, we must first reiterate a foundational principle for the development of polycentric theology, namely, the centrality of the Bible in its theological work. In order not to fall into the aforementioned errors of other methodologies, we must never place the Bible and culture on equal footing; that is, the Bible is the final, objective, and supracultural answer. Without a doubt, culture is important for our biblical/theological understanding—as we have discussed so far—but we must not forget that the Word of God is the absolute truth revealed by God. We must never change our principles to the detriment of culture.

That said, as we proceed with the development of polycentric theology, we lack a definition of polycentrism. It is the combination of two words: the first, derived from the Greek *polus*, meaning many, abundant, many times, etc.; the second, also from Greek, *kentrikós*, meaning center or central. Therefore, polycentrism means that it has more than one center yet is interconnected. The concept of polycentrism is found across various scientific fields, including law, biology, linguistics, architecture, politics, anthropology, geology, and related areas. In missiology, the term's first use is attributed to Allen Yeh in his 2016 book *Polycentric Missiology* (Yeh, 2016).

One reason for defending the use of polycentric theology is the persistent, intrinsic error within us of committing ethnocentrism. Some theologians and missiologists may become aware of the importance of culture in the development of theology and value this aspect to the point of praising theologies originating in cross-cultural contexts, recognizing that there is no theological hierarchy or "purest" theology. Nevertheless, there remains a barrier we must overcome, for it is possible to value and defend the thesis that others should develop their theologies while still not seeking to learn from others—thus maintaining monocentric theology and missiology, in which each one develops their own knowledge without connection or dialogue with others. Polycentric theology suggests breaking this barrier and pursuing a path of mutual reinforcement in the construction of polycentric knowledge.

Why a Polycentric Missiology?

In 1978, Johannes Verkuyl was one of the pioneers in researching how each country perceives the mission of God. In his book *Contemporary Missiology*, he dedicated himself to presenting the missiology of Germany, the Netherlands, England, Scandinavia, Switzerland, France, and the United States in a more consistent way. Africa, Latin America, and Asia are also of interest to Verkuyl, but there is little content, precisely because at the time, material from these regions was scarce, and Brazil receives no more than 39 words, that is, three sentences (Verkuyl, 1978, p. 86).

Years later, William A. Dyrness states that the study of theologies from diverse cultures will be “one of the most important undertakings of theological study in the coming decades” (Dyrness, 1990, p. viii). In the same opinion, González affirms that theologians from majority-world countries will increasingly take the lead in missional and theological endeavors (González, 2009, p. 558). Now, we in the majority world must not continue the vicious cycle of oppressor and oppressed, given the new numerical reality of Christians. We could be tempted to demonstrate the superiority of theology or missiology from majority-world countries, but, on the contrary, we must seek a missiology that reflects the beauty of a truly polycentric global community.

The attempt to develop a local missiology has been a global effort. In 1986, Lesslie Newbigin dedicated himself to developing a Western missiology in his book *Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture* (Newbigin, 1986). Later, we have David Bosch with his postmortem book, *Believing in the Future: Toward a Missiology of Western Culture* (Bosch, 1995). And recently, in 2019, in the book *Introducing Christian Mission Today*, Michael Goheen also dedicated himself to a missiology of Western culture (Goheen, 2014).

In Africa, the development of African theology is marked by the beginning in 1956 with the publication of the article “Theological Education in Africa,” by Paul D. Fueter, which “signaled the recognition of the need to develop an African expression of theology” (Moreau, Netland, & Van Engen, 2000, pp. 45–46). As for the Asian context, we have theological expressions from Japanese theologians such as Kazoh Kitamori with the “Theology of the Pain of God” and Kosuke Koyama with the “Water Buffalo Theology,” developed in the Thai context, as well as the “Minjung Theology” in South Korea and the “Dalit Theology” in India (Moreau, Netland, & Van Engen, 2000, pp. 88–89). For Latin Americans, we have the important milestone of the creation of the Latin American Theological Fellowship (FTL) in 1970, from which emerged figures who developed theology and missiology marked by the struggle against social inequality, such as René Padilla, Samuel Escobar, and Valdir Steuernagel, among others.

It is worth highlighting that the very initiative of the *Global Theology Conference* of the Church of the Nazarene constitutes a concrete example of polycentric missiology, promoting a space of theological convergence built from the voices of sisters and brothers from all regions of the world. Such effort is of inestimable value, for it recognizes the richness of multiple cultural perspectives and encourages the development of a truly global missional reflection.

In view of all this, perhaps we must answer the questions: “Would missiology for macro-regions (the West, Latin America, Africa, Asia) not be sufficient? Is national missiology necessary?” There are indeed many similarities across large cultural blocs, but at the same time, there are many differences between nationalities. For example, within Latin America, we share many common points, but at the same time, we are very different when comparing Brazilians with Peruvians, Argentinians with Ecuadorians, etc. For this reason, we believe that as the church matures, there must be efforts to develop a missiology applicable to each country, but within the scope, as we have already discussed, of polycentric missiology.

We believe that understanding national missiology is of utmost importance, not as a way to satisfy our curiosity, but to impact day-to-day missional practice, directing it toward a mutually reinforcing convulsion between theory and practice; between critical thinking and the preaching of the Word; between missiology and theology; and between the missiologist and the missionary. Thus, as Ott, Strauss, and Tennent warn, “sharing these theologies will give the church a richer and more complete understanding of God’s truth contained in the Scriptures and will help protect each local expression of the Body of Christ from syncretism” (Ott, Strauss, and Tennent, 2010, p. 288).

The Future and Polycentric Missions

We believe this proposed study applies to missionary activities, relevant not only to academia but also to practice. Just as Yeh defended that missiology does not consist only of writing books or academic research, but also music, arts, preaching, conferences, and other expressions, understanding the missiological paradigm of a given country will have direct implications for the mission field, for the theological reflection of mission, for the missionary practices of the church, for the life and strategies of missionaries, for training definitions, and much more (Yeh, 2016, p. 209).

Based on available statistics and the observable reality of recent decades, I am convinced that, both now and in the future, the Latin American, African, and Asian Church will assume an increasingly prominent role as a missionary-sending agent. However, a significant imbalance persists in decision-making. A concerning reality, which unfortunately is reproduced in the ecclesial context, is the principle known in the business world as “who pays, commands.” Majority-world churches still do not possess the same financial resources as Western churches, and this factor directly impacts decision-making processes, in which we often observe the predominance—sometimes unilateral—of brothers and sisters from the Northern Hemisphere.

In the Church of the Nazarene, although significant progress has been made, this asymmetry remains perceptible. Approximately 95% of the resources designated for the World Evangelism Fund (WEF) come from the USA/Canada region, thereby concentrating most of the decision-making capacity there. An example of this is that, in 118 years of history, there has never been a General Assembly held outside the United States; likewise, practically all missionary commissioning services take place on North American soil, and the strategic deliberations of Global Missions continue to emanate predominantly from the headquarters located in that country. I believe that to become truly a polycentric church capable of valuing and integrating the best of each cultural context, it will be necessary to relinquish certain centralized structures and to seek a polycentric consensus, while, of course, preserving our tradition and theological identity.

This transition, however, also requires a profound change within majority-world churches, especially regarding financial awareness. Brazil, for instance, although one of the countries with the highest number of Nazarenes in the world, still faces a challenging reality concerning missionary giving. Even with significant advances in recent years, the percentage allocated to the WEF corresponds to less than 1% of the annual resources received by the churches. I recognize that many countries are still in the process of structuring themselves and do not yet possess sufficient missiological maturity to move forward autonomously; others, even with consolidated structures, continue to operate under a predominantly recipient posture rather than a sending one. Nevertheless, these realities will only be transformed through intense missionary mobilization and the intentional delegation of responsibilities to national leaders, enabling them to fully assume their role. Otherwise, dependence on external resources will continue to be perpetuated.

Another positive aspect of this proposal concerns multicultural missionary teams—common within organizations—which make many positive contributions to ministry but are not free of conflict, as they can produce cultural clashes and discomfort in interpersonal relationships. Precisely in this area of missionary activity, the study of each country's missiological paradigm can help minimize conflicts by allowing us to know beforehand how Brazilian, Swiss, Kenyan, etc., missionaries think and act regarding mission. What are the expectations of missionaries from a given nation concerning their roles? What goals do they desire most? What is the most effective form of evangelism according to their perspective? All these questions are answered through a paradigmatic study, which directly affects missionary praxis.

We must also add the value of this proposal in building relationships between missionaries and the national church. With the global growth of Christianity, missionary work is increasingly carried out in partnership with Christians from the national churches already present in the country. Thus, missionaries must both understand how these churches think and act regarding mission, as well as know themselves to communicate the gospel accurately and build healthy relationships. For example, a pragmatic missiological perspective centered on numbers and productivity may inevitably conflict with a dialogical and relational missiological perspective, which focuses not on numbers but on the quality of relationships.

We may also note that identifying the missiological paradigms of each country can help clarify the expectations of the sending church or organization regarding the missionary. What is a missionary? What is their primary function? What responsibilities do they have toward the church and/or sending organization? All these questions can be answered by systematizing the missiological paradigms of each country and then seeking global convergence toward a polycentric missiology.

Conclusion

The reflection developed in this article highlights the urgency of a polycentric approach to Christian mission in the twenty-first century. We recognize that culture profoundly shapes the understanding of the gospel, revealing that God's mission is manifested in multiple interconnected contexts. In this process, we revisited categories such as "indigenization," "contextual theology," "local theology," and "ethnotheology," identifying their contributions but also their limits, especially when they tend toward syncretism, ethnocentrism, or biblical relativism. In contrast, we proposed "Polycentric Missiology" as a metatheology capable of integrating various theological centers in ongoing dialogue, preserving the supracultural truth of Scripture.

The reconfiguration of global Christianity confirms the relevance of this proposal. The growth of churches in the Global South and East—evidenced by global statistics and by data from the Church of the Nazarene, whose membership is predominantly non-Western—demonstrates that former "emerging churches" have become missionary protagonists. Today, majority-world countries send more missionaries than the West, transforming mission "to the ends of the earth" into mission "from the ends of the earth." In this scenario, the development of national missiologies does not express isolation but cooperation in building a global theological reflection.

Finally, we affirm that a polycentric missiology goes beyond theory: it requires new structures, more equitable relationships, and greater maturity in multicultural work. It is an ethical and practical imperative that calls the global church to a diverse hermeneutical community, faithful to Scripture and committed to God’s mission in the world. I firmly believe that only by thinking, deciding, and acting polycentrically will we be able to complete the task of reaching all unreached peoples, for a globally united church truly has the capacity to proclaim the salvation that exists only in Christ Jesus (Acts 4:12, NIV).

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