Portable Roots

Portable Roots:
Transplanting the Bicultural Child

By

Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner

To my students at The Black Forest Academy in Kandern, Germany,

Who first taught me about portable roots,

To the former inhabitants of the Basel Mission's Children's Home,

Who tutored me in their tenacity and courage,

To the wise men and women of Princeton, New Jersey,

Who mentored me by their lives of resilience!

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FOREWORD

LIVING ON A BRIDGE

> We are blessed and cursed for the fact that we live on a bridge. I will never be totally American, never totally African. When insecure, which is more common, I don't belong anywhere….I share [my parents'] commitment now, but I still have no roots. (Edgar, the adult son of Protestant missionaries, serving in Ghana)

As a researcher, I find myself on two bridges – one is theological and one is personal. Theologically, on one side of the bridge, the prevailing view in mainstream theological circles is that of post-colonialism which includes a critique of the assumption that one culture has the right to evangelize within another.[1] Reflecting on missions in the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries in particular, theologians question the movement of European or North American missionaries into regions underdeveloped in their economies, medical systems, educational opportunities, and Christian exposure. This discourse often assumes that all missionaries were enacting an imperialistic mindset. On the other side of the bridge, there is lack of interest in exploring the possible connections between forms of colonialism and mission.

In this theological debate, many children have been swept under the bridge of discussion.[2] The children and adolescents who comprised my

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[1] One comprehensive and controversial study, *Re-Thinking Missions: A Laymen's Inquiry After One Hundred Years*, By the Commission of Appraisal, was spearheaded by William Ernest Hocking, funded by John D. Rockefeller, (New York: Harper & Row, 1932). One reaction to the study, John Fitzmier and Randall Balmer's "A Poultice for the Bite of the Cobra: The Hocking Report and the Presbyterian Missions in the Middle Decades of the Twentieth Century," in *The Diversity of Discipleship: Presbyterians and Twentieth-Century Christian Witness,* eds. Milton Coalter, John Mulder, Louis Weeks (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991) actually brings the issues into more recent debate.

[2] There is mention of problems in education of the missionary's children in such works as *Rethinking Missions: A Laymen's Inquiry After One Hundred Years*, ibid., p.297. Hocking mentioned the serious problems of the establishment of special schools, the expenses of tuition and travel, the long separations "at a time when children are going through difficult periods of adjustment to different modes of

earliest research samples were missionary dependents. Their lives were often shaped by their parents' well-intentioned vocational decisions. In the theological assessments of mission strategy, ideologies, and sending agencies, debaters, defenders, and critics inadvertently allow the dependents [the bicultural children] who were/are relatively powerless in the past mission endeavors to be caught in the undertow of inquiry.

I have read a few accounts of privilege[3] yet scores of narratives with tales of sacrifice, deprivation, altruism, and loyalty among missionaries serving nationals. In various wars, missionaries were imprisoned or killed. Medical missionaries created hospitals, started tuberculosis clinics, acquired pharmaceuticals from their home countries, and helped care for the poor, the leprous, and the dying. Education missionaries addressed illiteracy and further helped nationals to go on for higher education in Britain, Canada, and the USA. Some of those nationals chose to stay in these countries and even today are leading researchers, academics, and business professionals.

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, young children of British, Canadian, and USA missionaries often died from cholera, diphtheria, and tuberculosis. Pearl Buck, for example, lost four siblings, all buried in China: Maude died from starvation; Edith died from cholera; Arthur died of a fever; and Clyde died of diphtheria. Pearl's older brother, Edwin, struggled with dysentery but survived it. That left, out of seven children, Edwin, Pearl, and Comfort.

The Basel Mission in Basel, Switzerland, sought to circumvent this risk of infant mortality by requiring their missionaries to leave their young children in the Basel Children's Home (*das Kinderhaus*) until it closed in 1948. I interviewed 39 of these adult children. If their parents went to Africa [Ghana, Cameroon, Nigeria, or Sudan], the separation was 3 years; if India, five years; if China, 8 years. Some of the Swiss and German missionaries to China did not make it back in World War II. The call to missions came with a cost. Let us not forget the children whose lives were shaped by this call.

I also stand on a bridge between the "objects of my research" [missionary children] and my own self as subject. By "objects of research," I do not mean the interviewees are objectified. Rather, they are the topics – as living human documents. Their lives are the raw data of discovery! The bridge on which I stand is perhaps the inter-subjectivity

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living, to different countries, and to different peoples." Hocking concluded there had been no adequate solution to the problem.
[3] For example, Stanley Elwood Brush, *Farewell The Winterline: Memories of a Boyhood in India* (Santa Rosa: Chipkali, 2002).

between subject and object. Empirical research according to astrophysicist Piet Hut needs to name this interaction between subject and "object."[4] In addition to standard questions, compilation of data and responses, recorded interviews, tables, and charts, what else is imbedded in the conscious experience of me, the researcher as subject?

In 1978, I was a schoolteacher in an international school in Europe, a school that was populated largely by children of missionaries from Canada and the USA. I heard the children express their cultural dislocation or dissolution, often in terms of *rootlessness*. The school was neither European, nor North American, rather a hybrid of the two. Dr. James Loder of Princeton Theological Seminary and I discussed the cultural dynamics of these children of missionaries. These children were often separated from their parents, lived in dormitories, and were raised by surrogate parents (dorm parents). Why would I feel so drawn to them? Then, my location on yet another bridge became clear. I had also been raised by a surrogate mother.

The next pages contain true stories of children who lived "on a bridge." At times, the bridge spanned two hemispheres, two continents, two cultures, or two homes. In some cases, the bridge itself was home. I close with a poem from someone living on a bridge spanning North America and Asia:

> Imli, neem, kayla, ahm;
> Sitaphal, guava, papaya, palm;
> Rhododendron, white oak, deodar;
> Acacia, coconut, gul mohar;
> Catalpa, frangipani, cashew, lime;
> Walnut, redbud, spruce, elm, and pine;
> Maples on fire, flame of the forest:
> Two hemispheres – one chorus.[5]

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Imli, Neem, Kayla, Ahm
Verda Hostetler Bialac, Woodstock School, India, 1955

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[4] Piet Hut, "The Evolving Empirical Method of Science," The 2012 William Witherspoon Lecture in Theology and the Natural Sciences, March 23, 2012, Princeton, NJ, Center of Theological Inquiry.

[5] *Living on the Edge: Tales of Woodstock School*, eds. Sally Stoddard, Charlene Connell, Catherine Hinz, Sally Woolever (Mukilteo, WA: Kodai Woodstock International, 2004), p.275.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

When my husband and I were doctoral students at The University of Basel, Switzerland, we often took inexpensive student flights through Reykjavik, Iceland, to get back to the States. These flights seemed so precarious that I used to give the earlier manuscript for this book to a colleague in the event our plane did not reach its destination. I would tell her: "If anything happens to me, make sure it gets published!" This book is my most important work because it contains the narratives of so many courageous people.

First, I must give credit to the vivacious students at The Black Forest Academy in Kandern, Germany. I was newly married to David Moessner and newly-minted from my first teaching position at St. Mary's Episcopal School in Memphis, Tennessee. St.Mary's remains one of the most progressive, well-endowed schools of excellence in the southeastern part of the United States. My difficulty there was in choosing which piece of technology to use in a classroom. Within a few months of my marriage in 1975, I was teaching at the Black Forest Academy where the only piece of equipment (on loan from Ramstein Military Base) was a movie projector with reels! Movies were greatly appreciated in my classes, especially the one on sex education for which I almost lost my job. Needless to say, the rapid contrast in the two settings created a learning curve for me.

Everything I had learned as first a student and later a teacher at St.Mary's Episcopal School was needed. The mentors I had had in Mary Davis, Nat Hughes, Katherine Phillips, Fanny Ware, Mrs. Gilmore Lynn, Presh Baker Gill, and Andy Banks taught me that the classroom is a sacred place of trust. They showed me that a child can learn better in a safe and compassionate environment. Trust, safety, compassion, and mutual respect translated into the Black Forest Academy with its minimum of accouterments.

The students respected me as I respected them, and we learned together. Occasionally, I got a shock as when Jeff Bettig fell out the back window into a vegetable patch. Most often, I was humbled by the gratefulness of the children. This school was founded by the Janz Team of Canada predominantly for children of missionaries although the school attracted children of diplomats, business people, and native Germans. The textbooks were very used books that were no longer in use in the Canadian

Saskatchewan school system. When I taught, I looked at the words written on the spines: REJECT. After some months, I contacted the Women of the Church (Second Presbyterian) in Memphis, Tennessee. In due time, a couple of large boxes arrived in that small village of Germany, boxes from Houghlin Mifflin Co. I watched the ninth graders open those boxes in class. For many of them, it was the first time they ever had a brand new, glossy textbook. To this day, I remember how they sniffed the fresh scent of newness and handled the books like newborns.

It is to them that I dedicate this book. They first articulated to me a sense of "homelessness" or "rootlessness" geographically. They trusted me with their stories and took lengthy questionnaires for my research. Thank you.

The University of Basel invested in my research by awarding me the Karl Barth Stipendium. With the money, I travelled by train and bus all through southern Germany to interview thirty-nine- former inhabitants of the Basel Mission, (*das Kinderhaus der Basler Mission*). These people did not know me, but they all opened their homes and hearths to me. They gave me something to eat and drink; they shared photos and memorabilia with me. They walked me to the train station. They cared for me as I hope to care for their stories. To my dear friends of the Basel Mission, I pray I have been faithful to what you invested in me. I dedicate this book to you.

All the while, a "miscellaneous sample" for my research was growing. This sample contained some seasoned adults who reside in the Princeton, New Jersey, environs. Thanks to an invitation from Princeton's Center of Theological Inquiry, a grant from the University Research Council of Southern Methodist University, and letters of reference from Robin Lovin, Ruben Habito, Elsie McKee, and Shannon Jung – I was able to spend a research leave interviewing these remarkable adults who had come to terms with their "portable roots."

Now I am at peace with the length of time it has taken to see this book into print. I needed to grow with the material. Thank you to my editors at Cambridge Scholars Publishing who believed in this work: Sean Howley, Adam Terry, Keith Thaxton, and Carol Koulikourdi. There were also individuals along the way who were positioned to help me: the late David Laird Dungan, Peter and Jennifer Jenkins, Rev. Dr. Ruth Epting, Dr. Stephanie Klein, Dean James Quick, the late Loulou Cullmann, Blanche Butler Montesi, Karen Lull, Holly Newman, Dr. Roberta Berger, Frau Hannah Brodbeck, Carolyn Douglas, Duane Harbin, Becky Waugh, Mary Davis, Rev. Dr. Susan Sharpe, and Kempie Craddock Jenkins. Jean Moessner prepared the graphics. Deanna Hollas undertook the technical responsibility of preparing this book for print, and she has done it well!

My husband, Dave Moessner, and our two grown children, David and Jean, have always believed in me. Like the Black Forest Academy students smelling their new textbooks, may I never take this for granted!

I speak quite a bit about *resilience* toward the end of the book. During this last phase of the book, one person in particular has modeled resilience in her victory lap with cancer, and that is Kempie Craddock Jenkins. As she has sat in treatment rooms, she has prayed this work into print. Her ability to fathom a larger picture reminds me that this work is more than a compilation of words and sheaves of paper. Thank you, Kempie, for reminding me of the Resilience of God.

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February 18, 2014
Dallas, Texas, USA

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CHAPTER ONE

PORTABLE ROOTS

I have learned for so many years to live with my roots packed in soil, and each place that I go, I brush a little of the soil of the place over the roots, but I never unpack them. [It is like they are wrapped in a burlap sack, penetrable to water.] You just brush a little bit of the soil of the place over it so you're as inconspicuous as possible. (Edgar, missionary son, after his return to the USA from Ghana).

Rootedness

Edgar gave the image of "portable roots" that I needed to begin my investigation. For over four years, I had taught school in what is now being described as a hybrid or "third culture" and had heard from students many variations of "rootlessness" or social dislocation. Edgar was the first to articulate so clearly this feeling of nomadic transience. His "portable roots" were like those of saplings in a plant nursery with a burlap sack around them. "You just brush a little bit of the soil of the place over it [roots] so you're as inconspicuous as possible."

Four years earlier, Edgar had described "living on a bridge" between cultures. This experience of being "betwixt and between" has also been expressed by children of military, diplomats, businesspeople, refugees, and immigrants.[1] In Australia, for example, aboriginal children who are now regarded as the "lost generation" or the "stolen generation" are speaking

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[1] *Unrooted Childhoods: Memoirs of Growing Up Global*, editors Faith Eidse and Nina Sichel, (London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2004). Narratives are from adult children of Foreign Service officers, of professors, of diplomats, of military, of missionaries, of businesspersons. It was not uncommon for the parents to be of two different nationalities. For example, Tara Bahrampour's architect father was Iranian while her singer mother was North American (Californian). Tara has not only grown up in two nations (Iran and USA), but she has watched the two nations at war. See her chapter "To See and See Again," in *Unrooted Childhoods*, p. 199-207.

out in art, film, and literature about their uprootedness.[2] What became significant in the following excerpt is Edgar's introduction of the import of the *religious matrix* for children of missionaries. The faith or religious commitment of the parents not only permeates the missionary community but leads the children to "living on a bridge."

> [Faith] has given our lives their shape. The fact that our parents are committed to it has determined where we are born, where educated, who our friends are, the fact we fit in no culture. We don't. We are blessed and cursed for the fact that we live on a bridge. I will never be totally American, never totally African. When insecure, which is more common, I don't belong anywhere. …I share [my parents'] commitment now, but I still have no roots.

Not all children of missionaries respond to the *religious matrix* in the same way, of course. These responses will be considered in Chapter Five. What is consistent in all the narratives is the refrain of "life on a bridge." One adult daughter of missionaries to Seoul, Korea, described herself as a cultural traveler stuck on a "tenuous log bridge with the washed out road behind."[3] This slippery bridge becomes a balancing act.[4] After her return to the USA, she did enlist in the Peace Corps and was assigned to South Korea for five years. However, the world of her childhood had changed. Like her parents before her, she relied on faith to carry her forward.[5] When one moves forward, there is then the experience of life in a "double world."

> I grew up in a double world, the small white clean Presbyterian American world of my parents and the big loving merry not-too-clean Chinese world, and there was no communication between them. When I was in the Chinese world I was Chinese, I spoke Chinese and behaved as a Chinese and ate as the Chinese did, and I shared their thoughts and feelings. When I was in the American world, I shut the door between.[6] [Pearl S. Buck]

"Double worlds" exist for those intimate with more than one culture. Such were the "worlds" of bicultural children like the writer and philanthropist Pearl Sydenstricker Buck. Buck, the first American woman

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[2] *Half Light Portraits From Black Australia* (Sydney: Art Gallery of New South Wales, 2008).
[3] Donna Sidwell DeGracia, *An Intricate Tapestry: The Acculturation of Missionaries and Their Children* (Minneapolis: Kirk House, 2011), p.168.
[4] Ibid., p.64.
[5] Ibid., p.168.
[6] Pearl S. Buck, *My Several Worlds* (New York: John Day Company, 1954), p.10.

to win a Nobel Prize in Literature (1938), had previously received the Pulitzer Prize for *The Good Earth*, a novel which testifies to her intimacy with China. *Cultural intimacy* is deep understanding and close association with a physical place, a region, a country, or a nation. My research is an exploration of the impact of "double or multiple worlds" on the developing child. It includes both the consolidation, union or merger of these worlds as well as the dissolution, fragmentation, or splitting of these worlds.

In 1900, in the springtime of the Yangtse River Valley, Pearl Buck's worlds split apart with the Boxer Uprising (Yihetuan Movement). "I felt my world splitting unexpectedly into its parts…I could not understand why we, who were still ourselves and unchanged, should be lumped with unknown white men from unknown countries who had been what we were not, robbers and plunderers….I was innocent, but because I had the fair skin, the blue eyes, the blond hair of my race I was hated, and because of fear of me and my kind I walked in danger."[7]

Pearl Buck spent most of the first forty years of her life in China (Chinkiang, Shanghai, Nanhsuchou, Nanking). In 1934, because of conditions in China, and to be closer to Richard Walsh and her daughter Carol who was institutionalized in New Jersey, Buck moved permanently to the USA. She became active in American civil rights and women's rights as well as in cultural exchanges between Asia and the West. She and her husband founded Welcome House, the first international, inter-racial adoption agency. For Amerasian children who were considered "unadoptable," Buck established the Pearl S. Buck Foundation to sponsor funding for literally thousands of children in several Asian countries. In such an odyssey, Pearl Buck came to terms with her several worlds. She summarized: "I have never been an evangelical missionary, and indeed abhor the general notion, and yet I know very well that my missionary beginnings have shaped me to the extent of feeling responsible at least for what I can do personally about a given situation which needs mending."[8]

My research assistant, Deanna Hollas, asked me recently if I had known Pearl Buck personally. My frequent mention of Pearl Buck in my research had prompted this understandable question. Her query allowed me to understand and articulate "why" I had utilized the life and narratives of Pearl Buck so often. Buck was able to articulate with her gift of words and her skills in writing her life as a "bicultural." In addition, almost like a pioneer in the field of psycho-social analysis, she was able to explain the consequences and effects of "double or multiple worlds."

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[7] Ibid., p.33.
[8] Ibid., p.371.

Since the lifetime of Pearl Buck, there has been a groundswell of interest in "rootedness" and the significance of place. Many examples will follow but this sampling will serve as an introduction. In their recent work, *Practicing Care in Rural Congregations and Communities*, authors Shannon Jung, Joretta Marshall, and Jeanne Hoeft make one major claim: physical location, or place, matters to identity, worldview, and way of life.[9] This heightened awareness is particularly acute for those in rural communities. A matter for theological reflection becomes the meaning of "home" and the need of people for a place to belong. "….rootedness is disrupted by the mobility of the postmodern world. The meaning of home and attachment to place might have changed given new virtual realities, but we are nevertheless embodied, emplaced human beings who are always located somewhere."[10] The struggle with rootedness is expressed by novelists such as Jhumpa Lahiri, Indian American author of *The Namesake* and Pulitzer Prize for Fiction winner, who never knows how to answer the question: where are you from? "The question of identity is always a difficult one, but especially so for those who are culturally displaced, as immigrants are, or those who grow up in two worlds simultaneously, as is the case for their children."[11] As the daughter of Bengali immigrants, Ms. Lahiri writes about her feelings of dislocation and rootlessness. "In the U.S., we were rootless, transplanted individuals who had no connection to anybody by blood."[12]

The importance of a child's primary caretakers and the early sensory imprint of "place" are clearly and painfully depicted in the movie "Philomena," based on the true story of Philomena Lee. As an unwed teenager, Philomena was sent to the Sean Ross Abbey in Roscrea, Ireland, where she gave birth to a son, Anthony. As Philomena worked off her debt to the nuns in hard labor, the nuns sold her son for a thousand pounds to an American couple. Philomena searched for her son for fifty years on a journey that took her from Ireland to America. She found that her son had been a successful lawyer in Washington with a devoted partner. Her son died of AIDS some years before her trip to America. Although the Irish nuns thwarted all attempts of Philomena to locate him, although they lied to him that he had "been abandoned" by his mother, Martin chose to be buried in the Abbey's graveyard in Ireland. This is where his mother

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[9] Shannon Jung, Jeanne Hoeft, Joretta Marshall, *Practicing Care in Rural Congregations and Communities* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), p.14.
[10] Ibid., pp.39-40.
[11] Interview with Alexandra Wolfe, "Jhumpa Lahiri: On Dislocation" in Wall Street Journal, September 20, 2013, Life and Culture Section.
[12] Ibid.

eventually "found him," in the place of his birth and earliest human recollection.

The Case of Mike

The elaborate psycho-social excursion of those who spend their childhood and adolescent years in more than one culture is an odyssey. An odyssey is a long journey, filled with challenges, successes, and adventures. Sometimes, the challenge is filled with loss. Mike, son of missionaries, was able to articulate this loss in the interview (below).[13] He, like Pearl Buck, attempted to live in several "worlds" and saw them split apart. At the time of the interview, he did not have the maturity to integrate the cultures as was evidenced by Pearl Buck in her later life.

"So I lost Africa."[14] Mike said this with such sadness that it seemed he had lost part of himself. Mike was the child of two cultures. He was born to Caucasian North American missionaries who founded a small African mission school in Cameroon. Mike attended this school in the late 1970s and grew up through his late adolescence with Africans as his closest friends. He lived in two French-speaking African countries [Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of Congo]. When he was about seventeen, his parents started to tell him: "You've got to start acting like a white man." According to Mike, he had gradually been elevated to the position of elder in the village, even in a culture where age was usually required for such authority. He was expected "to become 'white'" which implied more responsibility and privilege. He was eventually not allowed to eat with his Cameroonian friends. "So I lost Africa. Up to that point, I always thought I would live in Africa the rest of my life…I lost Africa."

His parents sent him to a Bible school in France. There, he chose a French girlfriend. Mike's continuing and understandable attempts to relocate himself from one French-speaking country to another raised the concerns of the North American missionary authorities who decided he was "emotionally unbalanced." He was sent to America. Mike: "Before I could grow emotionally or spiritually, I had to come to terms with my American identity. So I went back to America to satisfy my critics once and for all."

Mike tried to go back to Cameroon alone on business. He was working as a liaison between the mission and the Cameroonian government, and he

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[13] Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner, "Cultural Dissolution: 'I Lost Africa'" in *Missiology: An International Review*, Vol.XIV, No.3, July 1986, p.313-324.

[14] Note: Africa is comprised of 52 distinct countries. I am retaining Mike's wording to illustrate his "worlds" at the time of the interview.

had quite a large salary. "Well to make a long story short, I became malnourished because of the guilt I had of being able to feed myself when kids I had known as a child were going hungry. I couldn't reconcile my rank. …here I was. I was twenty, and I could sit where the governor sat. I couldn't take it…." The "Africa" he had known no longer existed for him.

Mike was a bicultural child who struggled to retain his identity. *Culture* is often considered to be an external system of customs, topography, mores, relationships, foods, celebrations, perspectives that arise out of the shared history of a people.[15] It is to be acknowledged that culture is often depicted as a "porous social reality."[16] Culture has been likened to the "humus" of a person's life.[17] Culture is seen as "the customs of particular peoples viewed as distinct self-contained wholes…."[18] The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA) has a working definition for intercultural studies: "… *culture* is defined as the shared patterns of behaviors and interactions, cognitive constructs, and affective understanding that are learned through a process of socialization. These shared patterns identify the members of a culture group while also distinguishing those of another group."[19]Culture is also an internal system that appropriates and absorbs the above. All five senses work to create this internal system which is maintained through interaction and memory.

At the time of the interview, Mike had not reached the *cultural consolidation* that is assumed in identity formation.[20] Cultural

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[15] H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper & Row, 1951), p.52. Culture is used by Niebuhr to refer to the secondary or artificial environment which people superimpose on the natural: language, customs, habits, social organization, ideas, etc., are involved. I am relying on this definition in addition to the interior world of the participant in culture, an interior world that is imprinted by the secondary and primary environments.

[16] Peter C. Phan, *Christianity with an Asian Face* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2003), p.13: "Rather than as a sharply demarcated, self-contained, homogeneous, integrated, and integrating whole, culture today is seen as a ground of contest in relations and as a historically evolving, fragmented, inconsistent, conflicted, constructed, ever-shifting, and porous social reality."

[17] Ibid., p.18.

[18] Kathryn Tanner, *Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), p.19. Tanner attributes this shift in definition to Franz Boas (1896) who introduced the German meaning of *Kultur* for the English word*, culture.* Tanner's work gives a detailed history of the meaning of "culture" into post-colonial times.

[19] Center for Advanced Research on Language (Minneapolis, MN: 2009), website.

[20] Cultural consolidation for Erikson is a "search for a new sense of continuity and sameness" with the world of skills and tools, with occupational prototypes of the day, with peers, and with the "tangible adult tasks ahead of them" (Erik Erikson,

consolidation as introduced by theorist Erik Erikson is more complex for a missionary child like Mike, a child who has been immersed in two or more cultures. For bicultural children/adolescents, the distinctness of the two or three cultures in which they have spent their adolescent formative years can result in a sense of fragmentation of their cultural identity into distinct cultural components. The cultural consolidation of which Erikson writes is much more arduous for the bicultural child. It is not impossible, it is more complicated. Cultural confusion often translated as a sense of "rootlessness" is pronounced in bicultural adolescents. Often, their cultural equilibrium is upset upon the return to the "first culture," in Mike's case, Cameroon, Africa. (See Colour Figure 1 on insert)

Cultural consolidation can be accomplished by the bicultural or tricultural adolescent or young adult. However, this process is often imbued with loss and struggle. As portraits of mature and generative bicultural adults will show, the depth of the cultural sensitivities, awareness, and intimacies far exceeds that in comparison to a person of one culture.

Margaret Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa* was based on a study of 68 young women between ages 9 and 20.[21] In this publication of her fieldwork in Polynesia, she presented a different picture of the adolescent passage from childhood to adulthood. Mead lived in Samoa and worked through an interpreter. Her findings provoked both agreement and dissension among her colleagues. However, the most lasting legacy of this work was a clearer understanding of the impact of culture on development.

In a similar way, my life among and research of adolescents and children of missionaries away from their country of citizenship will also illustrate the impact of cultures on this passage into adulthood. I lived in Kandern, Germany, from 1976-1978, then in Basel, Switzerland, from 1978-1980, and commuted to the Black Forest Academy. In this Canadian *Internat,* I taught for four years. This "hybrid" culture has been aptly described by sociologist Ruth Hill Useem.[22] This hybrid or "third culture"

Childhood and Society (New York: W.W.Norton, 1963), p.261. In *Identity: Youth and Crisis* (New York: W.W.Norton, 1968), p.31-32, Erikson elaborated on cultural consolidation as a "newly won familiarity of the world" which prevents youth from seeing that which "might destroy this newly won familiarity of the world and expose [him] to all manner of strangeness, and above all, to the fear of death and killing…. The history of cultures, civilizations, and technologies is the history of such consolidations, while it is only in periods of marked transition that innovators appear…." (p.32) Perhaps bicultural children are these innovators!

[21] Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa* (New York: Morrow, 1928).

[22] Ruth Hill Useem, and Richard Dixon Downie, "Third Culture Kids" in *Today's Education* (September-October 1976):103-105. See also Ruth Hill Useem, "The

[the Black Forest Academy with its dormitories] was neither German nor Canadian. I began to interview these "third culture children" [TCKs]. My methodology utilized sociological analysis, statistical analysis, historical literature, and personal narrative of 81 interviewees.[23] There were three distinct samples: 37 former inhabitants of the Basel Mission's *Kinderhaus;* 34 students and alumnae/alumni of the Black Forest Academy, a Canadian *Internat* in Kandern, Germany; a random sample of North American Protestant adult missionary children who had returned to North America. (See Colour Figure 2 on insert)

Let it be said that the bicultural child who is able to consolidate his or her cultural identity emerges as a more capable world citizen, better equipped for interpersonal and intercultural intimacy, poised for generativity, and positioned for ego integrity and leadership. It is simply a more arduous task to get there. With Eriksonian theory as a contrasting backdrop to this complexity, the narratives of bicultural children show how the circuits or "connectors" of culture impact traditional developmental theory.

American Family in India" in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol.368 (November 1966):132-145.

[23] In terms of methodology, this research has, heretofore, utilized sociological analysis, statistical analysis, historical literature, and personal narrative. The project has drawn primarily from eighty-one taped interviews with individuals out of three samples: thirty-seven from inhabitants of the Basel Mission's Children's Home, which closed in 1948, thirty-four students and alumnae/alumni of the Black Forest Academy, a Canadian International School in Germany, in the 1970s and 1980s; and a random sample (10) of North American Protestant overseas missionary dependents with varying ages and denominational affiliations. When this third and more current sample was augmented, *a comparative analysis* was affected between this updated and more recent group of missionary dependents and the group from the Basel Mission, a much older sampling.

The interviews were structured around fourteen questions with ample time for reflections for those being interviewed. The actual taped interviews lasted from 1.5 to 4.5 hours. The interview average was 125.7 minutes. This included the initial introduction, perusal of photos, scrapbooks, and other memorabilia.

In my dissertation, *Theological Dimensions of Maturation in a Missionary Milieu*, (Peter Lang Verlag, 1989), various hypotheses were formulated as descriptive tools. Statistical data undergirds this work. For example, Merton Strommen's Youth Research Survey, a questionnaire with 420-items and computerized results was administered to seventy-six students at the Black Forest Academy; the results were compared with 7,050 young people in a "national [USA] ecumenical sample." Using these finding and other empirical data, generally formulated problems were investigated.

It is noteworthy that traditional developmental theory is depicted in linear notions – with an upward thrust, as a ladder, a pyramid, or some structure of ascendancy. Feminists are challenging separatist linear notions of maturity and are rewriting and revisualizing development.[24] My own depiction of development has been that of a double helix, embedded in a culture(s) with interactive exchanges. In an earlier work, I illustrated physical passages for women's development in the image of the double helix.[25] In the double helix, the connectors of culture are interactive within the development of the individual. Of course, the entire developmental process is imbedded in external culture(s) as well. The internal appropriation of external stimuli and cues is represented by the "connectors" or the small bridges within the helix.
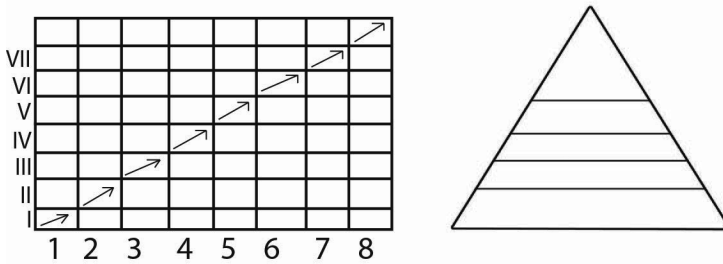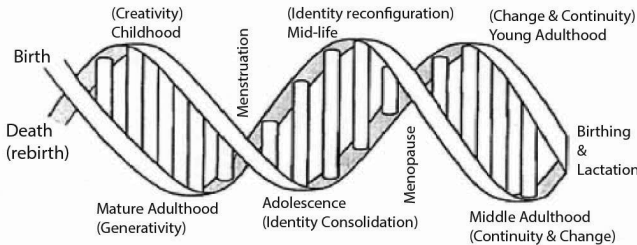

Fig. 1-1. Traditional Images of Development

Fig. 1-2. The double helix

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[24] *In Her Own Time: Women and Developmental Issues in Pastoral Care*, edited by Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), p.2. No one image was used in this volume, rather concentric circles (Pamela Cooper-White), tapestry (Christie Neuger), and double helix (Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner) emerge. The model was constructed to include significant physical passages for women.
[25] Ibid., p.17.

While beginning with missionary children who in their preadolescent and adolescent years were exposed to two or more cultures, this research is a study of a much larger phenomenon: the stresses, strains, and gains of bi- (or tri-) culturalism. From an anthropocentric perspective, this biculturalism has relevance for African, Hispanic, Native American, Asian American, Aboriginals, and other minorities in an Anglo culture. Building on the work of W.E.B.DuBois and his concept of "double consciousness" and Patricia Williams and her "shifting consciousness" of people of color and of women, Barbara Holmes concludes: "Despite resistance, overcoming, and the development of internal bonds of trust, and ostensible social, political, and economic advances, many African-Americans still struggle with issues of identity."[26]

The reality of the bicultural child is increasingly more obvious as children of immigrants and refugees join the voices of people of minorities who have lived "in two or more worlds." Biculturalism alters the findings within much psychological/developmental literature pertaining to childhood, adolescence, and maturity. The theory of maturation that is most closely examined in this book is that of Erik Erikson. In his psycho-social schema of maturation, the meagerness or lack of sophistication in his category of *cultural consolidation* will be highlighted. In doing so, the study of young people who are struggling to find their cultural identities in two (or more) cultures, will disclose a series of phenomena relating to home, homelessness, rootlessness, "portable roots," *cultural dissolution* [my term], and ideally – cultural resolution. The development of cultural intimacy is part of who we are. Hence, the Eriksonian stage of intimacy versus isolation is another core issue which cannot be understood without the impact of the culture(s) on intimacy.

Cultural Intimacy

Cultural intimacy is kinship to a particular form of civilization and affinity and communion through interaction with others. Religious experiences often add complexity to this process of cultural intimacy. The late David Laird Dungan, Distinguished Professor of Humanities at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, critiqued an earlier version of my work with the following observations:

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[26] Barbara A. Holmes, *Race and the Cosmos: An Invitation to View the World Differently* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2002), p.18. Holmes cites Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Fawcett, 1968), p.17, and Patricia Williams, "Response to Mari Matsuda: 1988 Women of Color and the Law Conference at Yale University," *Women's Rights Law Reporter* 14 (1992), p. 229.