

Agents of International Development
and *Shalom*

Beth Snodderly, Editor



Beth Snodderly
Agents of International Development and Shalom
William Carey International University Press

1539 E. Howard Street, Pasadena, California 91104

E-mail: wciupress@wciu.edu

www.wciupress.org

Copyright © 2015 by Beth Snodderly

Except as provided by the Copyright Act, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior written permission of the publisher.

All rights reserved.

Scripture is quoted from the New International Version unless otherwise stated.

ISBN: 9781518646027

Contents

Introduction – 3

Beth Snodderly

Chapter One – 8

Principles of Transformation

Ravi Jayakaran

Chapter Two – 10

Identity in God's Kingdom

Chong Kim

Chapter Three – 21

Joseph: A Biblical Agent of Change and Blessing

Joel Hamme

Chapter Four – 27

William Carey: A Key Historical Agent for Social Reform and the
Modern Missions Movement

Paul Pierson

Chapter Five – 41

The Embarrassingly Delayed Education of Ralph D. Winter

Ralph D. Winter

Chapter Six – 50

Dan Fountain: Physician, Pedagogue, Prophet

Gerard Hopkins

Chapter Seven – 72

Mother Teresa and Ramesh

Ravi Jayakaran

Chapter Eight – 77

Rabbi Daniel Zion: The Salvation of the Bulgarian Jewish Community
1943–1944

Bill Bjoraker

Chapter Nine – 83
Luis Bush: Transform the World!
BJ Jeoung

Chapter Ten – 96
Being an Alongsider
Don Roslyn

Chapter Eleven – 112
The ACTS Story and Development
Ken Gnanakan

Chapter Twelve – 121
International Development and NIBC
Hakchul Kim

Chapter Thirteen – 129
Deborah Hsu: A Catalytic Leader in the Chinese House Church
Movement
Yalin Xin

Chapter Fourteen – 154
The Local Congregation: God's Instrument to Demonstrate *Shalom*
Brian Lowther and Beth Snodderly

Chapter Fifteen – 157
A Model for Sustainable Development: Lessons Learned from Ethiopia
Ronald L. and Carolyn C. Klaus

Chapter Sixteen – 176
Short Stories of People God Is Using as His Agents of *Shalom*

Epilogue – 213
Beth Snodderly

Currently we are building a “Forward School of Integrity”—a boarding primary school in Omito-Lira with the aim of raising up a generation with high morals and integrity through education since integrity and moral is dying so fast in Uganda. Our big picture is to empower potential leaders to run with the gospel of our Lord to the poorest of the poor since the harvest field is so ripe.

INTERPRETERS AND CHAMPIONS AS “INSIDE” AGENTS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Jim Harries, PhD

WCIU Adjunct Faculty and long-time cross-cultural worker in Kenya

As a 10-year-old boy, I once used a public bathroom. After completing my task, I faithfully rinsed my hands, as teachers and parents had instructed me. An old man was in the bathroom on a similar assignment to mine. “Well done for washing your hands” he told me. I had never seen him before.

Subsequently I pondered on what the old man did. I wondered—if I had not washed my hands, would he have told me off? What business of his was it what I do with my hands after I had completed the necessary? What did he care about me, given that we had never met before (or again, as far as I know), and he did not even know my parents?

Living in Africa, I am a bit like that old man. Sometimes I agonise over what to say or not say. Sometimes I am with other Westerners in African contexts. Should I tell other Westerners when they do things wrong? Are there even wrong ways of doing things? Why should I care whether they say or do silly things? Who am I to speak to them? This task seems to be endless. It is certainly many faceted. I want to give just a few simple examples from personal experience, having lived and worked amongst native Africans since 1988.

TO INTERPRET OR NOT TO INTERPRET AFRICAN CUSTOMS TO WESTERNERS?

People in my home community in Africa are usually very careful not to carry food openly when other people are around, unless it is covered. For example, a loaf of bread should be

carried in coloured bag or basket so that it not be identifiable as a loaf of bread. Local people do this to avoid jealousy and the evil eye. In such a community is it wrong to carry food uncovered? It “seems” wrong because everyone else avoids doing it. When someone does it all eyes are on them. Should I tell visitors “make sure you always cover food that you carry”? Or should I actually encourage visitors to carry uncovered food so as to counteract witchcraft beliefs?

Long ago I was to hold a Bible class with some African people. The books we were to use cost about \$8.00 each. I asked if people were ready to pay, they all said “yes.” I asked who had the money ready, they all said “no.” In order to facilitate the class, I paid for the books, thinking that people would pay me back later. I gave out the books. No one paid me back. That seems to be a common pattern. So then, if someone else comes to start a Bible class, what should I do? Should I advise them “don’t believe the people. They will say that they will pay but they won’t”? Or should I just suggest that they insist on having people pay up front before handing out the books? Or should I just leave outsiders to learn the hard way by giving out books and then not getting their money back?

There is a wedding coming up the next day. Everyone wants to go to the wedding. The American visitor hasn’t realised this, so she invites people to visit her at her home that day. People do not like saying “no,” so when the visitor asks, “you will come to my home tomorrow won’t you?” the response given is “yes,” so as not to offend her. But everyone will be at the wedding. Do I say to the visitor that “yes” means “no” and make her angry, thinking that I am accusing African people of lying? Should I say, “I will not come tomorrow because there is a wedding,” and spoil the congenial atmosphere? Or should I, like my colleagues, say “I’ll come tomorrow,” and then later excuse myself by saying, “but there was a wedding”?

Overseas visitors from the West usually believe profoundly in equality. They come to Africa wanting to prove that old missionaries are paternalistic. Some think that local people would be perfectly capable if the foreign missionary would just get out of the way. As an “old missionary,” should I agree with them? If I do, and “African people are just like us,” the gospel seems to have little left to do. Do the people and society really need transforming? Why am I there anyway? Or should I

explain that the reason people love the Bible is exactly because they are very aware of their shortcomings and their society's shortcomings? The people are different from us after all, so we are not all "equally capable" at everything, which is why "they" do have something to learn from us. (For educated wealthy Westerners it can be harder to see just what we should learn from them.)

"Does money help?" seems to be a never-ending question in mission. Wealthy, influential, and generous donors want to hear a resounding answer "yes." The reality is more complex. Outside money can rob people of a great deal—such as ownership and initiative. Do I dare say "no," that money does not necessarily help?

VULNERABLE CHAMPIONS

These examples illustrate just a part of my work as an agent of international development and shalom in East Africa where I serve as an interpreter and "champion" for the people among whom I live. I define the characteristic of a champion as being the practice of vulnerable mission, which is itself defined as the use of local languages and local resources in ministry to the people being reached.

A champion who represents Christ is one who (after acquiring contextual knowledge of the life of others) endeavours to translate the gospel to them. This is not the role of a conqueror or someone who is "better" imposing onto the lives of those who are ignorant, but instead it is a sharing of the power of God in a context of personal weakness with those who are to be reached.

For example, a local church had invited me to share in some door-to-door ministry in a part of Tanzania. When it was time to leave, a motorised rickshaw was sent to pick us up. I got in and said nothing. My hosts paid for my trip back. I was told that a few years earlier they would have expected a white person like myself to pay for my own trip. My failure to offer to pay transformed me from being an agent from the outside, into a servant under local leadership, who could potentially be entrusted with sensitive local information.

As a champion for the Luo people, I am aware of sensitive information that outside speakers are not able to know about. Coming into western Kenya, outsiders are usually ignorant of a

very pernicious and troubling problem, known locally as chira. This Luo-language term describes the outcome of people's failure to follow ancestral decree. Outsiders' unfamiliarity with the details of what causes chira can prevent them from intelligently articulating and dealing with it. My own position of having learned the Luo language and culture in-depth, and my ability to communicate using the same language, have enabled me to apply healing balm in the form of Christian teaching to this gaping wound in the worldview and conscience of the Luo people.

A champion can also give feedback to the West, as shown in my earlier examples. Such feeding back must be done with sensitivity. Any implication that funding may be reduced or withdrawn as a result of the words of champions puts them into a very delicate position. Hence, in communication back to the West, perhaps the main thing a champion can do is simply to encourage others to be champions, that is, as I am here defining champions: those who use local languages and resources as the basis for at least a part of their work.

Given that dominant models of intervention into the majority world have been found wanting (Africa certainly being a case in point), there is certainly a need for champions. This raises the question of how one is to find these "champions" who can follow alternative "vulnerable" means of intervention. I believe it is biblical teaching and the power of God's Spirit that produces true "champions." The deep influence of Christian teaching in the West over many centuries has continued to influence our secular era. As a result, even many Western people who no longer confess Christ have been so profoundly affected by this kind of ethic as to be able also to appreciate the role of champions. The closer people are to their Christian roots, the more likely they will be able to express this kind of behaviour. The church can, through the production of champions, begin to counter the problems that still plague the people in the developing world who are disenfranchised and dependent.