

Guest Editorial: Four Snapshots of Business as Mission

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As guest editor for this year's University of the Nations *Glocal Conversations* on-line journal, I am pleased to present four articles, each reflective of what it means to begin or nurture Business as Mission (BAM). Each paper discusses a unique aspect of BAM, thus showing some of the diversity and complexity representative of the meaning of the term BAM. This 2019 issue includes: 1) an action research report by a team running BAM courses in India and Africa; 2) a research article from Latvia on how BAM has evolved in one company within one's own nation; and 3-4) a partial summary of historical research written as Part One and Part Two examining lessons that can be drawn from missionaries who began BAM in 19th century Hawaii. Here is a brief overview of each contributor's paper.

The first paper (by Jim Jackson - a pseudonym for reasons of security) outlines, in brief, his action research in India and Africa. Action research involves reflection, action and analysis. As is typical in action research, Jackson's paper also provides scope for further research to be done. Action research is a springboard from which other researchers can then seek to validate the results of Jackson's research in other contexts to provide verifiability, as well as seeking to decide if the assumptions made are reasonable. Jackson's paper outlines the educational course that he designed and that has been and is being used in India and some nations in Africa, then he discusses the actions that were taken of implementing the course, along with the attendant results, and Jackson concludes with reflections and analysis on what can be and is being learned through this course. Action research deliberately does not seek to position itself within existing research because it seeks to make connections unhindered by existing thinking. As such, the validity of the research needs further research to be undertaken in other locations to enable the results to be verifiable over multiple contexts, as well as to identify exactly how it fits within the existing body of knowledge in this field.

Kristina Ece's research challenges us to step back and reexamine if our definition of BAM must be limited to only going out to other's nations - nations other than our own, or to view BAM as being effective in one's own nation. Her research investigates the efforts of a successful business in her home country of Latvia that began as a means to provide for the business founders' own family and then grew into and became BAM, bringing relief to some of the poorest families in the nation.

Business as mission is not a new concept. If we look into archives, historical records, we see patterns throughout millennia of those who used business as their mission to further the gospel. We can learn from their mistakes, if we are careful to examine the lessons learned by those who have gone before. We all know that we stand on the shoulders of those who came before us. Hopefully, we can learn from their mistakes as well as be inspired by their successes.

Paul Miller's historical research on the Hawaiian Islands is presented in two parts. Miller's first article, Part One, sets the historical context examining missionary involvement in Hawaii from 1820 to 1896, while the second, Part Two, draws lessons from that for BAM. Miller provides a historical framework for events that occurred ending in Hawaii losing its status as an independent nation and becoming one state among many of the United States. What important lessons can be

drawn from and applied for today's practitioners, of business as mission, who are seeking to establish their business in a culture other than their own?

Lastly, I would like to thank Glenn Martin for his continual support as well as the work he has been doing in getting *Glocal Conversations* published on a yearly basis. He took on the task of uploading this addition, so we could all enjoy the submissions on-line. That is no small task in itself and involves hours of work ensuring the formatting is similar. I appreciate Glenn's passion for Christians having a voice in the academic sphere, and his willingness to engage in making this a reality.

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December 9, 2019