DECISION SCIENCES INSTITUTE
Should Expatriate Managers and Foreign Missionaries Share Close Ties, or Not?

(Full Paper Submission)

Shawn T. Miller
Texas A&M International University
shawnmiller@dusty.tamiu.edu

ABSTRACT
Failure rates for expatriate assignments are high (Arthur and Bennett 1995), which is very costly (Farh et al. 2010). Farh et al. say that expatriate managers should develop relationships that help them adjust to their assigned foreign countries. This paper explores the relationships between expatriate managers and missionaries. Missionaries from the same countries as expatriate managers might benefit them personally and professionally, by giving them information about the countries where they are assigned, and by providing them and their family members with emotional support. Also, business managers might benefit missionaries.

KEYWORDS: Global Operations, Cross-Cultural Issues, Knowledge Sharing

INTRODUCTION

This paper explores one possible means by which expatriate business managers can adjust to their assigned countries; that means is having friendly relationships with missionaries from the same home countries. This can be valuable because problems resulting from maladjustment to the countries to which they are assigned can be “extremely costly in terms of business disruption, wasted funding for relocation expenses, and human capital losses for the manager and the organization,” (Farh et al. 2010, p. 434). Some common problems are unhappy spouses, lack of coordination between the firm’s departments, insensitivity related to cultural issues, imprecise goals, and short-term rather than long-term planning (Swaak 1995).

The drawing below illustrates how missionaries might help expatriate managers overcome those problems: between the expatriate managers and success in their foreign assignments, there is a wall of ignorance and discomfort, because they do not know everything that they should about the country in which they find themselves, and they feel uncomfortable there. Missionaries from the home country might guide them onto the path of knowledge and peace, telling them whatever they need to know, and making them feel less alone and more comfortable. This path leads to assignment success for the expatriate managers. Note that the missionaries are not the end for the expatriate managers, but rather they are guides who can show the expatriate managers the entrance to the path that overcomes their ignorance and discomfort, and give them confidence to find solutions which their firms overlook.
It is commonly believed that business is of the realm of the material, whereas religion is of the realm of the spiritual, and the two are inherently opposed (Beaudoin 2005, Brennan 2013, Marques 2012). Yeshe (2004) looks at much of the extant literature about what people think regarding religion and a concern about material matters. He found that it is believed by many authors that the two are mutually exclusive and should not be mixed. He disagrees with this, however. When religious leaders become entangled in material affairs, their flocks might be scandalized. When business professionals allow their religious beliefs to interfere with their best judgments, there is a risk that their management abilities might be impaired, to the detriment of the enterprises they represent. On the other hand, a human being is neither a merely physical beast, nor a purely spiritual angel; the physical and the spiritual are joined substantially in every human person, and so the two realms cannot be separated. On the practical level, expatriate managers might learn from missionaries, and missionaries might learn from them. This paper is a qualitative research, exploring the potential benefits to both expatriate managers and missionaries of close relationships with each other, and addressing the possible dangers involved.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2
There are no previous papers explicitly asking the question of whether or not expatriate managers and missionaries should share close ties, but Navara and James (2002) focus on missionaries as a type of expatriate. They find that compared to business managers, missionaries have more contact with the local population, and in some cases they have a lower social standing. This condition of being immersed among the local population, and living in lower social and material conditions than they are accustomed, causes many of them to report dissatisfaction with their lives in the foreign country. This research was conducted in Nepal.

There are two articles that present the spreading of managerial practices as similar to the spreading of Christianity by missionaries. Acker and Preston (1997) write that people who share the same spiritual values are more loyal to their common cause than people with disparate spiritual values would be, therefore business enterprises can profit by indoctrinating their managers to hold a common vision. “In our view, some new style MD [=management development] programmes have entered an emotional and existential terrain which was previously the province of religion, employing a rhetoric that appeals to similar ideals of self- discovery, faith and commitment,” (p. 689). Such management training can increase the devotion to an enterprise by its employees. The authors question the ethics of such practices, even if they work. A business enterprise is not a religion; it does not give meaning to a person’s whole life nor can it satisfy the longing for a life higher than this one. “If we respect people and their rights, there is something unethical about bending the personality of the individual to the organization, and expecting it to dominate their lives,” (p. 696). Sturdy and Gabriel (2000) concur with Acker and Preston (1997) in proposing that American managerial practices are spread like a religion by missionaries; in their study, the focus is on M.B.A. programs in Malaysia. According to Sturdy and Gabriel, these programs resemble missionaries trying to convert ‘heathens’ when those who teach arrive with “ready-made knowledge packages,” (p. 982) which they teach without receiving anything from the local culture and adapting their message accordingly. This is a type of neo-imperialism, which conquers not violently but seductively, as students in Malaysia are seduced into uncritically accepting management doctrines that are inappropriate for them. The seduction is done not by the excellence of the teaching which convinces all that it is right, but by the wealth of the teachers, who might not be extremely rich as individuals, but who come from a wealthy country and live in luxury while they are in Malaysia. The potential abuse is increased by the traditional Malaysian deferential attitude towards authority; according to Hofstede (2001), Malaysia has the highest Power Distance of any country in the world, meaning that students there would be more likely to accept whatever their professors tell them.

Shaffer et al. (1999) and Molinsky (2007) both emphasize the interplay of cultural and personal factors in expatriates. Countries have different cultures, and some, such as the United States and Canada, are more similar than others, such as Pakistan and Sweden; but individuals within each country differ from each other. In some cases, an individual from one country might not hold the cultural norms prevalent in the home country, and might actually feel more ‘at home’ in the foreign country. When making decisions about who to send to a foreign assignment, firms should try to reduce cultural and personal dissonance as much as possible. When an expatriate finds herself or himself in a foreign land, she or he might suffer from identity conflict, or experience feelings of guilt if forced to act contrary to her or his personal values. The psychological toll can be debilitating long-term for the expatriates. Though they might be able to accomplish the immediate tasks assigned to them, they could suffer psychological problems that could render them less effective managers, and less happy persons, in the future.
Shaffer et al. (1999) surveyed 452 expatriates, of which 89% were male and 83% were married, meaning that there were many expatriate wives (and maybe a few expatriate husbands). The results of the statistical tests carried out using the survey questionnaires were mostly expected, but surprisingly it was found that “fluency in the host-country language exacerbated the effects of role conflict on adjustment,” (p. 575). This is surprising because the ability to speak the local language is normally a positive factor facilitating adjustment and performance in a foreign country; the authors speculate that fluency in the language can in some cases lead to more conflicts, because expatriates who do not know a language, or who do not know it well, would be less likely to notice insults or offenses that would not escape the attention of people who know the language fluently.

The happiness of expatriate managers is important, and their ability or inability to form good bonds with the people among whom they live could increase or decrease their happiness, but from the point-of-view of a multinational enterprise, the subjective happiness of expatriate managers is not the only important thing to consider. Nollen (1996) shows that the issue of expatriate managers adjusting to the cultures of their host countries affects the financial performance of their firms. Different countries have different cultures, and management practices should fit the culture in which they are. Using the five culture dimensions of Geert Hofstede, which are Power Distance, Individualism, Uncertainty Avoidance, Masculinity- Femininity, and Long-Term Orientation, Nollen finds management practices that fit each dimension and then shows statistically that firms that do what is most appropriate for each country’s culture have better financial performance, except for the dimension Uncertainty Avoidance, in which case adjusting management practices to fit the country’s culture did not improve financial performance. Bhagat et al. (2002) reinforces Nollen’s conclusions, emphasizing that cultural differences in the two dimensions individualism/collectivism and vertical/horizontal can impede the transfer of knowledge within an organization from one country to another.

Manev and Stevenson (2001) examine the bonds between expatriate managers, especially focusing on the distinction between ‘instrumental’ ties and ‘expressive’ ties. These ties relate to the informational and emotional needs discussed by Farh et al. (2010). There are six hypotheses, all of which claim that ties that expatriate managers have with others will be stronger if they have something in common with them. These hypotheses are tested by interviewing fifty-five managers in a non-profit, non-government organization that raises funds in nine developed countries and spends those funds on charitable projects in thirty developing countries. A questionnaire was distributed to 273 individuals working for the organization, of which 203 returned surveys that could be used in this research. Though the authors do not reveal the real name of this organization, it is clear that they have chosen an organization that does something similar to what some religious missionary organizations do. The choice of this organization is apropos for our purposes. O.L.S. regressions affirm the hypotheses that expressive ties are stronger between managers with less cultural distance, but contrary to hypotheses they indicate that instrumental ties are stronger when there is greater cultural distance. The authors speculate that this is because expatriates make more effort to gain information, whereas they seek emotional support from those who give it more readily. This is plausible, but it is also possible that people would feel more comfortable, and fulfill their emotional needs, with others who are similar to themselves, but to gain information, instrumental ties with people who differ more could be more helpful because people who are too similar would all have the same knowledge, so learning new knowledge would require communicating with a more diverse group. Perhaps, it is not because expatriates make more
effort to gain information than to gain emotional support, but rather because individuals who are less similar are more able to give the information than individuals who are more similar.

Nebus (2006) looks at whom managers choose when seeking advice. This article is recent enough to include information about new advances in information technology, yet it states that most people would rather get information from those they know rather than through impersonal sources. When choosing someone from whom to receive advice, people consider two factors: “Is the person an expert?” (In other words, is she or he likely to know the information?), and “Can I trust the person?” (In other words, will she or he tell me what I want to know, or refuse to speak with me, or lie?) There are obvious parallels between these two factors with the instrumental ties to satisfy informational needs, and the expressive ties to satisfy emotional needs. In the best situations, a person will have friends who are experts, and thus she or he can trust that the person will be both able and willing to give good advice.

This paper was inspired partially by the two articles mentioned in the abstract, but also by my experiences with an Order of Roman Catholic monks dedicated to contemplative prayer and education, not to proselytizing to convince others to convert to a different religion. Sturdy and Gabriel (2000) “draws on the authors’ personal experiences and perceptions,” (p. 979). Though personal anecdotes are generally inappropriate in an academic paper, their paper emboldens me enough to include what I believe are relevant experiences and observations. I lived in France for six years, first as a student and then as an assistant librarian. During those years, I had close ties with the Order, many of whose members were American. My ‘expressive’ ties with them were weak, because I was not a monk, but my 'instrumental' ties with them were extremely valuable, as they taught me much that helped me to live better. Even at the expressive/emotional level, they helped me immensely by introducing me to individuals who became my intimate friends. Upon returning to Texas, I found a monastery with six members of this Order. At about the same time, a multinational bank headquartered in Spain bought a local bank and sent an executive from Spain to Texas to manage the new acquisition. During the years that he lived here, he and his family had close ties to the Order, all the members of which had lived in southern France, not very far from the border with Spain, for at least three years. I observed similarities between their ties to the Order and mine: the expatriate banker and his family received much useful information from the monks, and though they did not develop close friendships with the monks, they did develop close friendships with people to whom the monks introduced them. As an observer, I would say that the bank manager and his whole family were happy here, and his assignment was successful, in large part thanks to the monks.

Roberto de Nobili is a great example of a missionary who learned the culture of the foreign country to which he was assigned, and could have been of great help to expatriate business managers if he had lived today. He was a Catholic missionary to India in the seventeenth century. When he arrived, he found that the Portuguese had made some flour Christians among the Indian Dalits (a.k.a. the Untouchables). A flour Christian was someone who converted to Christianity, or at least pretended to, so as to receive flour or some other type of food. Unfortunately, the missionaries did not know the local languages, and so they were completely unaware of what their new ‘converts’ actually believed. Nobili broke with the Portuguese, learned several Indian languages, including their sacred Sanskrit, then proceeded to live in the manner of a Sannyasi (a Hindu hermit) and engage the Brahmins (Hindu priests) in reasonable debates. In this way, he developed good relationships with hundreds of Indians, some of whom chose to become Catholic. During his many years in India, Nobili’s greatest critics were the Portuguese, who disapproved of his methods. His religious work, therefore, was hampered, not helped, by contact with Europeans.
Time was precious for him, as he needed to study much to become a great scholar of both Hinduism and Christianity, which required fluency in several languages; conflicts with the Portuguese wasted much of his time and thus reduced the extent of his achievements. If he had had better relations with European merchants in India, then he might have achieved more. The European merchants, likewise, could have benefited from him because of his knowledge of the local languages and culture. If the Portuguese had acted more intelligently at the beginning of the seventeenth century, then perhaps they would not have lost their colonial empire in the Far East to the Dutch and the English. This whole account is largely based on the work of Cronin (1959).

Perhaps the whole idea of converting members of one religion to another is anachronistic; perhaps post-modern, tolerant, enlightened individuals understand that truth is relative and religion is subjective, so the belief that any religion is better than any other is implausible. Recent research indicates, however, that there are some hypernorms which are acceptable to all cultures, and also some illegitimate norms which are incompatible with any genuinely humane society (Donaldson and Dunfee 1999; Otteson 2006). “The ‘Universal Declaration of Human Rights’ (UDHR) (United Nations 1948) and subsequent international agreements, non-discrimination theory (Cortina 2008; Demijnck 2009), cosmopolitan business ethics (Maak and Pless 2009) and cosmopolitan views of social justice (Nussbaum 2000; Sen 2009) are examples of relevant views that inspire our new, non-perceptual, standpoint,” (Oltra et al., 2013, pp. 292-3). When Oltra et al. write non-perceptual, they mean not depending upon the different subjective perceptions of different people holding different points of view. Ferguson (2011) writes of six phenomena founded in Christian cultures that gave the West an advantage over the rest of the world, but which are now being lost by the West and gained by the rest of the world. These six are: competition, science, property rights, modern medicine, consumerism, and the Protestant work ethic. Fukuyama (1995) writes that some cultures promote trust more than others, or direct trust in different directions. In some places, such as China and southern Italy, people trust their relatives but not strangers, whereas in Japan and the United States people are more trusting of strangers, but families are weak, as manifested in the high divorce rate in the U.S. (Putnam 2000) and the low fertility in Japan (Ogawa 2003). The word ‘trust’ can be defined in various ways. Cohen and Dieneshart (2013) state that others define it as “an attitude, inclination, or willingness to act and accept certain risks, given a set of beliefs or expectations about the trusted party – beliefs or expectations that the risks of a trusting action will not materialize, and by extension, that the risks are justified by the potential benefit. . . So-conceived, trust is a form of strategic behavior or rational economic decision making in situations that involve risk and vulnerability,” (p. 1). In other words, people trust others because it is in their own best interests to do so, because they believe that the probable benefits are greater than the possible harm. Cohen and Dieneshart believe that this definition is inadequate, but for our paper we shall accept it. For our paper, it should be understood that ‘trust’ is not blind, but reasonable; people trust those whom they have reason to trust. One of the contentions of this paper is that some expatriate managers might feel that they have good reason to trust missionaries, especially if those missionaries are from the same home country, and/or if the expatriate managers have the same religious beliefs as the missionaries. The lack of trust is detrimental to business, because it increases transaction costs due to the need for security, the legal enforcement of detailed contracts which destroys flexibility, and the opportunities that are lost when people choose not to do business with each other because they fear deception. Because of this, corporations in the United States have grown bigger without government support than in other countries in
which only the government can make an institution grow beyond a very limited size. Business ethics, therefore, is showing that some beliefs are more conducive than others to wealth-creation. Moral/ethical individuals, firms, and countries prosper (Lii and Lee 2011, Nguyen and Cragg 2012, Ghoul et al. 2012, Simha and Stachowicz-Stanusch 2013). Fukuyama shows, however, that at the practical level the same religion can manifest itself differently, and the same morality can be espoused by different religions. Germany and Japan, for example, resemble each other to a large extent, despite the fact that Germany is a traditionally Christian country and Japan is traditionally Shinto and Buddhist. “Contemporary advocates of human rights are frequently not Christians, but they share the Christian belief in the validity of a single, higher universal standard of ethical conduct that applies to people qua human beings,” (p. 287).

I write this paper from the point-of-view of a Christian, but it is meant to be universal, and not limited to the potential benefits of contact with only Christian missionaries. With that in mind, it is important to understand that the benefits expatriate managers might enjoy from contact with missionaries would apply to non-Christian missionaries, such as Buddhists. Buddhism, like Christianity, claims to be a universal religion, in contradistinction to a religion that is tied to one people, as Judaism is to the Jews, and Hinduism is to Indians. Marques (2012) interviews “eight prominent Buddhist scholars,” (p. 27). Marques states repeatedly that Buddhist principles can be adopted by adherents of other religions, because Buddhism is a philosophy, and not dogmatic. Though Buddhism extols contemplation, it is also very pragmatic, with an ethics that takes the consequences of our actions into account, rather than demanding obedience to commandments given at some time in history by a deity. When deciding what to do, we should think of cause and effect, choosing to do what will cause the greatest good for ourselves and others long-term. This might sound like utilitarianism, but spiritual/psychological well-being is judged to be a much greater good than merely physical pleasure or the accumulation of material wealth. The belief that the self and the universe are interconnected, which is one of the important teachings of Buddhism, can coincide with Capitalism, as taught by Adam Smith and Ayn Rand, who both believed that by acting selfishly in an enlightened way each individual can do business efficiently so as to increase his or her own wealth, and thus increase the wealth of the whole nation (Smith 1928, 2000, Rand 1964). Both Buddhism and Capitalism (as taught by Smith and Rand) emphasize that there is no inherent contradiction between doing good for the self, and doing good for others; “If we are all part of one another, then doing good to you equals doing good to myself. . . Nurturing this mindset is beneficial in the workplace, because it helps workers at all levels better cope with the increasing diversity that has also entered workplaces globally, due to increased outsourcing, and migration of people and companies,” (Marques 2012, p. 35). Pace (2013) confirms and supports Marques; he states that Buddhism can prevent people from becoming excessively materialistic, but it does not prevent individuals from loving themselves and trying to realize their potential in ways that are ethical and beneficial to others, including their employees, coworkers, and employers.

**BENEFITS TO EXPATRIATE MANAGERS**

It seems, given the literature explained in the previous section, that religion can benefit business by promoting moral virtues (Guiso et al. 2003). If workers have a certain work ethic, according to which they go to work each day and do not have to be closely supervised to ensure that they actually do work, then fewer managers would be necessary, or the same number of managers could have more workers under them. Fukuyama (1995) tells that in high-trust societies fewer managers are needed for more workers than in low-trust societies. According to Ackers and Preston (1997), global competition is so fierce now that a level of
devotion to an enterprise similar to that of religious faith is necessary to win. Strong loyalty can be fostered by programs of intense management indoctrination, but such indoctrination is unethical. Thus, managers might do well to encourage missionaries to encourage religion so as to make the workers more morally virtuous without brainwashing them to the point where they live only for the companies that employ them, to the detriment of their own humanity. Though some religious attitudes are inhumane, other religious attitudes make their adherents more perfectly human, and therefore would benefit both the enterprises and the employees. Fukuyama (1995) points out, furthermore, that when religion is voluntary, its members are more fervent, yet the society is more open. In countries where one religion is forced upon the people by the government, those who profess that religion might not believe it, but the society as a whole is intolerant towards those who profess anything else. Thomas Aquinas wrote that in places where there were multiple religions and people had to make a choice, people were more knowledgeable about such things; religion is more personal to those who must choose between alternatives: “It is not surprising that [the Samaritan woman] was taught about this, for it often happens in places where there are differences in beliefs that even the simple people are instructed about them. Because the Samaritans were continually arguing with the Jews over this, it came to the knowledge of the women and ordinary people,” (Commentary).

The personal psychological problems for expatriates explained by Shaffer et al. (1999) and Molinsky (2007) can be solved by contact with missionaries. First, Shaffer et al. showed statistically that having previous expatriate experience is an important factor facilitating the adjustment and subsequent success of expatriates. Molinsky writes that firms should consider the personal beliefs of employees when making decisions as to who should get which expatriate assignment. With these two things in mind, who would be better for an expatriate assignment than a former missionary? Most missionaries do not spend their entire lives as missionaries. Some religions, such as the Mormons, expect all their young faithful to spend two years as missionaries, and then live normal lives. “Young Mormon boys are put under great pressure to develop administrative skills,” (Fukuyama 1995, p. 291). Mitt Romney is an example; he spent two years as a missionary in France, then returned to America and had a successful career in business and politics, almost becoming President of the United States. Multinational enterprises thus benefit from having close contact with missionaries because, at some future date, some of those missionaries might become valuable employees.

Second, if an individual expatriate holds profound religious convictions, then she or he might benefit from the counsel of a missionary who holds the same beliefs and has learned to judge between what is essential and therefore should not be compromised, and what is tertiary and so can be adapted if necessary. A Muslim, for example, might absolutely refuse to eat pork or drink alcohol, but when living in Canada he might not keep the Ramadan fast, because the Ramadan fast prohibits eating or drinking while the sun is up, but allows eating and drinking as soon as the sun sets. In Canada, where the sun is in the sky sometimes as much as twenty hours a day during the summer months, abstaining from food and drink would be an unreasonable hardship. An individual might feel guilty about such things, but if a coreligionist missionary were nearby, then she or he could guide the expatriate to properly discern what is and is not permitted, and thus eliminate feelings of guilt. As Nebus (2006) states, the best people for advice are friends who are experts, and shared beliefs can be the foundation of such friendships. Missionaries would normally be religious experts, and also expert in the culture of the country in which they live because they receive training before going on mission, therefore they could be the best advice-givers for coreligionist expatriates.

Contact with missionaries could also be good for expatriate spouses. Research indicates that a spouse’s ability to adjust to the foreign culture can help the expatriate manager to adjust, and
conversely “the inability of the spouse to adjust is one of the major reasons expatriate managers return early from their overseas assignments,” (Black and Stephens 1989). The relationship between work and family in an expatriate’s life might be difficult to manage if the cultural norm in the country of assignment differs from the cultural norm in the home country (Jin et al. 2013). Missionaries who have been in the country longer might be able to help with this adjustment, and explain the distinction between religion and culture as it relates to family issues, so that spouses do not feel that they are violating their religious principles when they conform to local customs.

Many expatriate managers have spouses that are accustomed to working outside the home. “With the increasing number of dual career couples, it is likely that more spouses will want to work,” (Shaffer et al. 1999, p. 574). In some cases, both spouses might be employed by the same company, which could be ideal because then they could support each other emotionally on the job, which research has found significantly reduces stress in men, but only slightly reduces stress in women (Burns et al. 1996). When both spouses are not employed by the same company, one of them might be have trouble obtaining employment in the country of assignment. In many countries, getting a work visa to earn money is difficult, and if the expatriate is well-paid then the spouse would not have to earn money, but doing some type of work is psychologically healthy, so volunteering might fulfill the psychological desire to work. Missionaries could provide many volunteer opportunities for expatriate spouses. If the spouse has a career that cannot be continued while in the foreign land, then the couple would have to decide if the one should temporarily put his or her career on hold, or if the two should live apart for a while. Missionaries might be able to help the couple to make this important decision.

**BENEFITS TO MISSIONARIES**

Missionaries in General

The previous section ends by stating that missionaries could benefit expatriate managers by providing volunteer opportunities for their spouses. This section begins by stating the obvious: if the expatriate spouses do good work as volunteers, then the missionaries will be benefited by having valuable work done by people whom they do not have to pay. Also, just as multinational enterprises can benefit from employing former missionaries, so to missionaries can benefit from employing former business managers. The New Testament tells us that the first head of the Roman Catholic Church, Saint Peter, had been the manager of a fishing business, which consisted of his business partner Zebedee, Zebedee’s two sons, and some hired workers (cf. Mark 1:17-20, Luke 5:2-11, Matthew 4:19-22).

Short of recruiting expatriate managers to become missionaries, there are material benefits for missionaries to having ties with business people. In general, business people have wealth, whereas religious people, by comparison, do not. Religious leaders that attain great wealth are rare, whereas business people commonly attain great wealth. Though a few religious leaders, like the Pope, have more wealth than most ordinary business people, most ordinary business people have more wealth than most ordinary religious leaders, and the wealthiest business people are wealthier than the Pope. 496 of the 500 wealthiest people in the world, according to Forbes, are either businesspersons, or the heirs of businesspersons; none of the 500 have religion as their profession (Brown). On a list of average salaries for college graduates, ranked according to 120 majors, Religious Studies was #109, with an average starting salary of $34,700 and a mid-career median pay of $54,400; Theology was #114, with an average starting salary of $34,700 and a mid-career median pay of $51,300. The five business-related majors on the list (economics, finance, accounting, international business and business) were all ranked much higher, with average starting salaries over
$40,000, and mid-career median pay of over $70,000 (Best Undergraduate College Degrees by Major). This being the case, business people can and do donate some of their wealth to religious organizations, and they would probably be more likely to donate, and to donate larger amounts, to religious groups with whom they enjoy close ties.

**Muslim Missionaries**

Islam began with missionary zeal, much like Christianity. Though it started with one people – the Arabs – in one place – the Arabian Peninsula, it rapidly spread to encompass the entire Middle East, North Africa, and Spain. It later spread east all the way to Indonesia and the southern Philippines, and it has recently been crossing the Sahara into central Africa, and crossing the Mediterranean into Europe. Though some of this expansion was achieved by violence, not all of it was; Muslim missionaries have spread their faith to voluntary converts, and they continue to do so (Lapidus 2002).

During the Middle Ages, the Islamic civilization was in several ways superior to that of Christian Europe (Ferguson 2011), but then something went wrong. Many believe that the Islamic civilization declined because the Mongols came and destroyed Bagdad in the thirteenth century (Lewis 1988). Robert Reilly has a different explanation: there was a theological debate among Muslim intellectuals about God. The Mu'tazilites “would have been in accord with Thomas Aquinas’s proposition that man can apprehend created things with his mind because they were first thought by God. God's intelligibility is the cause of the intelligibility of creation. Averroes held this as well,” (Reilly 2010, location 461 in Kindle edition). Their opponents, the Ash'arites, held that “the primacy of revelation over reason rises from the very nature of what is revealed: God as pure will and power. The response to this God is submission, not interrogation,” (ibid. location 820). According to Reilly, the political leaders of Islam favored the Ash'arites, because their emphasis on obedience benefited those in power, and with this help from governments the Ash'arites were able to win the debate, dominate Muslim society, and prevent the Islamic civilization from advancing for several centuries during which the West surpassed them.

Though few today, as far as I know, have ever heard of the Mu'tazilites, yet many Muslims, especially those who are educated, are embracing the belief that the world God created is knowable, understandable, and that we human beings should seek truth and live reasonably. Among these, there are many who work hard and use their minds to improve life for their families, their nations, and the whole world (Bhutto 2008). Though it does not well represent Muslims throughout the word (it was composed of Muslim students and professors at the University of North Carolina), yet it is interesting to note that Zulkifar (2012) found that the Muslims he questioned had beliefs about work similar to those of traditional Protestants; in other words, they believe as strongly as other Americans that God acts wisely, not arbitrarily, and therefore it is possible and good to seek to understand reality and work hard to improve the world. Such an attitude is appealing to many Westerners who were raised Christian but are not spiritually satisfied with Christianity, and so Muslim missionaries are gaining converts (Lapidus 2002).

How can Muslim business people benefit from contact with these missionaries and their converts? And how might the missionaries benefit from contact with business people who share their religion? The most obvious benefit to these missionaries is financial/material support, in which case they do not differ from missionaries of other religions. Living and traveling in foreign lands is costly, so expatriate Muslims are necessary to provide for these needs. Muslim expatriate business people can likewise benefit in material ways by having
contact with their coreligionists, because Islam requires that its adherents avoid drinking alcohol, eating pork, and eating meat of any kind that has not been drained of its blood. These dietary laws are called halal, and when living in a non-Muslim country it might be difficult to obey them (Lapidus 2002); Muslim missionaries might form communities in which alcohol is absent and all food is halal, thus making life easier for expatriate Muslim business people.

At a more personal/psychological level, the presence of peaceful, law-abiding Muslims in a community, especially if they espouse beliefs similar to the Mu'tazilites, could dispel the belief held by many in America and Western Europe that Muslims are all violent terrorists. In this way, all Muslims in non-Muslim countries – both missionaries and business people – would benefit all other Muslims in those countries simply by providing positive examples that would dispel negative stereotypes.

This section on Muslims is important to show that, as far as expatriate managers are concerned, the differences between religions are less important than the differences in religious attitudes found within each religion. In Islam, the Mu'tazilite attitude which encourages learning, reason, living well in this world, is better for business than the Ash'arite attitude which discourages learning and demands blind faith and obedience. In Christianity, the attitude epitomized by Thomas Aquinas, which sees the world as reflecting God the Creator and teaches that we human beings please God by developing our intelligence, is better for business than Fideism, which most Americans might know as Fundamentalism, which encourages blind faith and discourages intellectual development. Hawkins (1995) rates both individuals and religions on a quantitative scale, the higher numbers being better. Even though his rating system is very subjective, it is interesting to note that he rates Jesus Christ as 1,000, which is the highest possible, equal to Siddhartha Gautama and Lord Krishna, and three hundred points higher than Mahatma Gandhi, but he rates fundamentalist Christians as only 125.

DANGERS FOR EXPATRIATE MANAGERS
Creating Enmities with Locals

In the previous section I wrote of the importance of differences in attitudes within religions, with an open, intelligent attitude having positive effects and a closed, anti-intellectual attitude having negative effects. Though ties with certain kinds of missionaries might benefit expatriate managers, ties to other kinds of missionaries might be harmful. Missionaries dedicated to changing the religious beliefs of the local population, especially if they arrogantly treat the locals with contempt, could tend to make more enemies than friends. Most people do not want to change their profound beliefs, and only a few ever do. Those few are more likely to be converted by a holy example joined to intelligent reasoning, both of which were epitomized by Roberto de Nobili (Cronin 1959). If expatriates are associated with missionaries whom the local population dislike and do not trust, then the expatriates will also be disliked and mistrusted. That is bad both for business, and for the happiness and psychological well-being of the expatriate manager and her or his family.

Creating Enmities with Colleagues

Jealousy is always a danger whenever someone is more successful than her or his peers. This could be an especially grave problem for an expatriate who turns for assistance to people outside of the multinational enterprise instead of to members of the M.N.E.. Such would be the case of someone who develops strong ties with missionaries instead of with coworkers. An expatriate with long experience living and working in a country might look forward to working and socializing with another person from her or his country; and she or he
might feel pride in her or his ability to help the new arrival. If, contrary to expectation, the new expatriate chooses to socialize with missionaries instead of with coworkers, and seeks knowledge from them instead of seeking it from colleagues, then the more experienced expatriates might be saddened because of their disappointed expectations. If the new arrival adapts to the local culture quickly, making good contacts and finding more success than the more experienced expatriate, then the latter might resent her or him, feeling that the other has not suffered the trauma of adjustment to the same degree and therefore does not deserve to enjoy such success.

Another danger might be ‘felt’ contempt. A contemptuous attitude towards locals can have negative consequences, as stated in the previous section. To be successful, expatriates should avoid this. A colleague who has a negative attitude towards religious individuals, for whatever reason, might feel that the religious person thinks that she or he is superior. Even if the religious individual is humble, the fact that she or he practices religion in a visible way, as manifested by close bonds with missionaries, could make some feel that she or he is contemptuous of them; people who feel that they are held in contempt react with resentment, leading in some cases to hatred. Organizations are seriously harmed when some of their members hate other members.

Colleagues might feel that a colleague with close ties to an organization other than the multinational enterprise has divided and conflicting loyalties. For example, it might be in the best financial interest of a multinational enterprise to charge interest on debts owed to the enterprise by customers, but a Muslim might oppose such a policy because Islam forbids the charging of interest. In some cases, the conflict would not be related to any specific teaching of a particular religion, but simply to the allocation of time. If a manager spends much time on religious activities, then she or he has less time to spend working for the benefit of the enterprise.

DANGERS FOR MISSIONARIES
Scandal

Thomas Aquinas defines scandal as an act or word that occasions the spiritual downfall of another person (S.T. II-II, Q. 23, a. 1). It is not an act that is inherently sinful, but rather one that might normally be blameless but becomes blameworthy because of the way that it is perceived. Scandal can be active, as when someone intends to cause another to do wrong, but more often it is accidental, as when someone has no intention to harm another, but the person who is scandalized falls into sin because of the way that she or he receives the otherwise harmless act or words of the person who commits scandal. Examples of this are legion, but as far as contact between missionaries and expatriate business people is concerned, the most dangerous scandal that could harm missionaries would be the impression that they are practicing simony, which is the selling of spiritual graces for material profit, or that they are so closely tied to wealthy foreigners that they do not care about the poor local population (Pullella 2014). This could be far from the truth, yet if it is widely believed to be so, then missionaries could be harmed by losing reputation. Aquinas states that we should forgo material goods, even those to which we have a right, if our possession of them scandalizes weak-minded individuals who misunderstand (S.T. II-II, Q. 23, a. 8). This being the case, missionaries might have to avoid developing close ties with expatriate business people. In some special cases, such as the case of Roman Catholic priests or nuns who have taken a vow of celibacy, it might be necessary to avoid intimate bonds with expatriates lest people imagine that their relationship is sexual in nature.
Worldliness

In the previous section I wrote of the danger of scandal, which assumes that the actions of the missionaries would be innocent, but that weak-minded people might perceive them incorrectly. There is also a danger that the missionaries might actually act badly because of their ties to expatriate business people. Stories abound of religious figures compromising their spiritual good to gain material goods, either wealth or sex (Brower 1989, Kaufman 1988), both of which might be offered by expatriates.

CONCLUSION

Expatriate managers must adjust to life in their assigned countries. If they do, then the enterprises for which they work benefit with improved financial performance; if they fail, then the enterprises for which they work pay high costs, and the expatriates suffer along with their families. Contact with missionaries can help make success more probable, and it can increase the psychological well-being of the expatriates and their family members. There are dangers to be avoided, both for expatriate managers and for missionaries, but the potential benefits of having close ties are great, and if the religious attitudes of the missionaries are such that living intelligently is believed to be better than acting blindly guided by irrational faith, then the answer to the question ‘Should Expatriate Managers and Foreign Missionaries Share Close Ties?’ is affirmative.

While the primary benefit of close ties between expatriate managers and foreign missionaries would be related to the psychological well-being of the managers, which would benefit the organizations for which they work, there are also several other, more specific, benefits, which are shown in Table I, along with some dangers.

Table I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits to Expat. Managers and their Organizations</th>
<th>Benefits to Missionaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase moral virtues (i.e. hard work, honesty, loyalty)</td>
<td>Monetary donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former missionaries are good candidates for expat. assignments</td>
<td>Former expat. managers are good candidates to become missionaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good counsel about distinction between religion and culture</td>
<td>Improve reputation (especially of Muslims)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13
Help spouses live better

Valuable work done by spouses who do volunteering

Improved attitudes about business and religion can benefit both.

Dangers for Expat. Managers

Possible enmity with locals

Dangers for Missionaries

Possible enmity with colleagues

Scandal

Worldliness

FURTHUR STUDY

This paper focuses on the possibility that expatriate business managers might do well to have close contact with religious missionaries, especially ones from their own country, because such relationships can benefit them both practically, and psychologically. Social workers, such as members of the Peace Corps, and students studying abroad, have many of the same characteristics as religious missionaries, therefore it could be thought that expatriate business managers could gain all the same benefits by forming bonds with them, and avoid religious complications. Oberholster et al. (2013) studied a sample of 158 active Christian expatriates whom they label R&H workers, meaning ‘religion and humanitarian’. They found that they differ from other expatriates. Stirrat (2008) argues that the same individuals fulfill all three of the roles that expatriates play – mercenaries, missionaries, and misfits – at different times in their lives. Is it true that the same individuals might go from one to the other, first traveling for adventure (misfits), then living for money when they realize that they need it (mercenaries), and then striving to achieve some higher, more spiritual purpose (missionaries)? Or maybe a person would be a missionary first, during the naïve ideological stage of young adulthood, followed by some years of pointless wandering as a misfit after becoming disillusioned, then finishing her or his life working for a multinational corporation to earn money like a mercenary so as to support a family. More can be done to discern just how unique missionaries are among expatriates. This paper holds that they are unique enough to merit special consideration, but not so different from others that personal relationships between them and expatriate managers would be unfeasible.

REFERENCES


Reilly, R.R. (2010). The Closing of the Muslim Mind: How Intellectual Suicide Created the
Modern Islamist Crisis, Wilmington, DE: ISI Books.


