

PRINCESS COOMBS

This is an interaction paper from chapter thirteen of the book: *Soul, Self, And Society A Postmodern Anthropology for Mission in a Postcolonial World*.

The book was published by Cascade Books; and the publishing date is 2011 in Eugene, Oregon. The author of the book is Michael Rynkiewicz.

This paper entails four specific areas such as: a one sentence thesis statement, a one paragraph summary, personal interaction with specific themes in the readings, and two questions for further engaging the topic.

THESIS STATEMENT

“Anthropology has changed, and it would be worthwhile for missiologists to discover anew how fresh insights can contribute to their understanding of local cultures, local Christianities, and the missionary situation.”¹

SUMMARY - PAGES 243 - 249

Rynkiewicz titled this chapter: “The Anthropology of Christianity.” According to Rynkiewicz, he has come to the realization that within the world of anthropology, and missiology, it must be understood that they need to immerse themselves in the life of the subjects that they are evaluating, and that observation alone will not do. He further states that both observation, and participation are needed to be the focus, in order to understand any one group. Rynkiewicz emphasizes his point by saying that if they remove themselves from participation in the “doings” of the people that they are evaluating, then they are deceived; and if the anthropologist participates without observing the group, then understanding the group is also “meaningless.”²

¹ pg.247

² pg.245

PERSONAL INTERACTION

I can identify with Rynkiewicz that to be effective in assessing any one group, that the investigator must be involved with their subjects, to participate , and observe their “doings.”³ For example, in my own ethnographical project, I found that because I was not disconnected from the group, that I was able to understand many facets of their behaviour. For example, I did not only see the things they did, and how they did them, but also their reasons for doing the things they did. From the inception of my project, I went to the group prepared according to the lessons I have learned in fieldwork by anthropologists such as the Claire Sterk’s research and it’s challenges.⁴ and Walcott’s article on “Fieldwork the Basic Arts.” For example, Spradley shares that the primary focus in ethnography is the comprehension of “another way of life from the native point of view.”⁵

In addition, Spradley shares that the possibility to find “the hidden principles of another way of life, the researcher must become a student.”⁶ I found that with these kind of information I received from these authors, and use these same approaches in my interviews, during my ethnographical project, I was never refused any questions I asked. For example, when I asked why NYCCA has become a “commuter Church, I was told by the interviewee that people moved out and went to different places because living in New York became too expensive for them. I also asked about no visible artifacts, I was told by one of the leaders that the church does not have any.

³ Pg.245

⁴See McCurdy, et al, *Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology* (Boston:Pearson,2016),15, pp.20-21

⁵ Ibid.,pg.7

⁶ Ibid.

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TWO QUESTIONS

1. Will the Anthropologist and Christian Communities come together and have round-table talks to make decisions on how to approach the unsaved population?⁷
2. Will the Christian community ever come to the realization that that we need to establish and maintain a holistic approach to wellness concerning engaging people with the Gospel?⁸

⁷ pg.246

⁸ Pg. 249 See # 8 guideline "Incarnation."