

Magi cultures are ultimately concerned with the rational integrity of their faith, the just application of faith to life, and the journey of understanding. Adherence to these values shapes a community, which, at its best, exhibits deep knowledge, open discourse, and intellectual curiosity. A penetrating analytic culture makes the church a powerful ally for those in need of advocacy and a formidable foe to those with a different perspective on an issue. It is common in Magi cultures to hear folks talk about issues from a systems perspective and the need to develop safeguards for those with minority status or who lack the power to protect themselves.

Persons in Magi cultures are not averse to the wandering aspect of the faith. Indeed, they often understand faith as the foundation for wandering. This wandering can take many forms. For some, it can take the form of literal journeys with a significant percentage of the membership engaged in travel or pilgrimage, with international lecturers brought onsite, or with leaders engaged in international exchanges. For others, the wandering happens in one place and takes the form of intellectual development or liturgical exploration. It is for this reason that Magi cultures are often located near university campuses, research facilities, or other academic populations

The biblical images that are resonant with Magi cultures include the story of the Magi themselves, the children of Israel in the wilderness, the prophets who spoke to the people of God around the constellation of exiles and returns, the women who traveled about in support of the ministry of Jesus, and the ministry of Jesus himself, traveling around Judea and healing all those oppressed by evil.

Magi cultures value knowledge and understanding. For this reason, they can be perceived as aloof and unapproachable. Because their care for others is

often expressed in terms of fairness or justice, others may misinterpret them as personally cold or uncaring. Their intellectual explorations may leave them open to the charge that they lack commitment to the core values that are important to others. Their tendency to focus on the conceptual side may make it more difficult for them to deal with facility and maintenance issues. If they lose their missional focus they may retreat into esoteric debates and end up being defined by what they think rather than what they *personally* do.

If Magi cultures do not adequately develop the "hearth and home" dimension to their community life, they may find relationships difficult to develop and sustain. They also may overestimate the power of reason to manage the non-rational elements of life which may result in emotions that erupt unexpectedly and without a path for resolution. They may be so focused on larger issues that they underestimate their need for training to develop boundaries, interpersonal skills, conflict resolution, and trust.

Since their dominant reflexes are prioritized around rational understanding, they may not give proper weight to the role of emotion in persuading and enlisting support. Failing to realize that it is emotion that leads to action, they may become frustrated that their decisions do not bring about change. In their quest to be flexible they also may not give enough voice to the values of commitment and clarity which may make it difficult for them to communicate who they are to potential members.

By developing the more relational, emotional and structural aspects of their common life, Magi cultures can add the stability that will help provide sustainability over the longer term. This can also provide the cohesion that will help the community build an identity that is not focused on a particular issue.