CULMINATION!

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Category: Kouya



It was the last day of Wycliffe's International gathering. For seven days, five hundred leaders of Bible translation organisations from over sixty five countries had met together to pray, to discuss and to seek God's will for the future. As the conference closed, the chair called for a time of prayer and suggested that people should stand up and pray in their mother tongue. One by one, people stood up in the huge conference hall to pray. There were prayers in English, in Spanish and then a young West African stood up to pray...

> *Dide -LagÉ"É". -JejitapÎµ, -mÎ¹ na 'paa fuo, -mÎ¹ na 'paa yuo...*

I buried my face in my hands and sobbed my heart out.

The young man was Didier and he was praying in Kouya.

Didier, whom we first met in his home village of Gouabafla while he was at school, who joined the Kouya translation team in Abidjan and who committed his life to the Lord while working on John's Gospel and who is now the director of a linguistics and translation NGO in Ivory Coast. Didier is now an honoured and respected leader in the international Bible translation movement.

Kouya, the language which people who live within thirty miles of Kouya-land have never heard of. This tiny, little known language from the Ivorian rain forest was being used to worship the Lord alongside all of the famous languages of the world. I've often told the story of the old Kouya man who rejoiced when he saw Kouya written down, saying that now Kouya took its place alongside English, French and German because those languages had paper, and now Kouya had paper, too. As Didier prayed, we saw that principle lived out in practice. A little bit of Revelation 7 Â taking place before our eyes.

Scholars generally highlight two key impacts of Bible translation. God reveals himself to people through his Word and draws them to himself and minority languages and people groups gain dignity

and self worth as vehicles of the Good News. There in that conference hall in Thailand, we saw those two principles worked out in a few simple words as the Kouya people and language took their place on the world stage.

Sue and I were both involved in running that final conference session, so we weren't sitting together, but when the meeting ended we met in the middle of the room and oblivious to everyone else (including the photographer) we wept for joy at what God had done and for the privilege of seeing Him at work.