

Training

FOR CROSS-CULTURAL MINISTRIES

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Missionary Training in the UK

A HISTORICAL STUDY

by David Harley

I recently had the opportunity to undertake doctoral research under the supervision of Dr. Jan Jongeneel of Utrecht University, concerning the development of missionary training in the United Kingdom. While I concentrated on the history of three training institutions that united in 1971 to form All Nations Christian College, I spent some time examining the wider scene of missionary training in Britain during the 20th century. This meant looking at other examples of training institutions, as well as examining the reports of significant missionary conferences and the writings of some key missionary trainers.

It is obviously not possible in a short article to mention everything that might be profitably learned from the history and development of these institutions. Let me highlight a few observations that struck me as being particularly noteworthy and relevant for those who are engaged in the task of missionary training in this new century.

The Importance of Leadership

The history of these institutions clearly demonstrates the importance of leadership and the determinative role that one individual can play in the emergence and development of effective training programmes. Again and again, it was the character, faith, and commitment of the director or principal that

proved to be the most formative factors in shaping the institution and creating its distinctive ethos. We can see this in the case of Mount Hermon Missionary Training College, which was established in 1911 as a result of the vision and energetic personality of Emily Whitefield. We see it too in Ridgeland Bible College, founded in 1919 by Mrs. Howard Hooker, who stamped her personality on the college and, through her godliness and devotion to Christ, left a profound impression on those trained under her.

These examples demonstrate the crucial importance of choosing the right director for a training institution.

But it is in the latter years of All Nations Bible College that we see the influence that one individual can play in the shaping of an institution. David Morris changed not only the name, but also the nature of the college. He recognised the need for a radical new approach to missionary training. He saw the value of co-educational training and the importance of training the whole missionary family. He transformed a small, struggling Bible college into a world-class missionary training school.

As Bob Ferris (1990, p. 104) once wrote, "It is totally incredible that ANCC should have become the institution it is today if God had not raised up Mr. Morris."

These examples demonstrate the crucial importance of choosing the right director for a training institution. Where a person is made director of a training school or Bible college as a sinecure because he could not make it in the pastoral ministry, where the director is appointed on a part-time basis, where the appointee has little missionary experience or comprehension of the missionary task, where he lacks pastoral skills or the ability to create a team around himself, it is extremely unlikely that he will be able to create a vibrant, effective training community.

The Importance of Relationships

Secondly, the story of these training centres illustrates the importance of relationships. Students who attended the centres were impressed and influenced by the lectures and seminars they received, though it has to be admitted that much of what they heard was soon forgotten. They recorded their appreciation for the wisdom and insights that were passed on to them through the classes, but it was the lives and character of those who trained them that made the deepest impact. They commented on the fact that the staff always had time for them and were deeply con-

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Missions
Commission



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cerned for their welfare. They noted their commitment to Christ, their dedication to the work of his kingdom, and the attractiveness of their Christian lives. Those who studied under the leadership of David Morris at All Nations observed that the faculty were made up of strong characters with great gifts and a wide variety of personalities, but they worked together with a remarkable degree of harmony.

The experience of these schools serves as a salutary reminder that in any training centre, missionary candidates may be more influenced by the life and example of their mentors than by their erudition. A well-prepared lecture may impact students' thinking and challenge their attitudes and presuppositions. A godly life, on the other hand, may provide students with a model of Christian living and service that they will seek to emulate throughout their ministry. Those who have the responsibility for making staff appointments in training schools need to bear in mind not only the academic qualifications and teaching ability of potential faculty, but also the likely impact and influence their lives will have on the student body.

The Role of Women

Thirdly, this historical study demonstrates the significant and distinctive role that has been played by women in the training of missionaries. Both Ridgeland and Mount Hermon provide examples of the particular qualities and insights women brought to missionary training; their understanding of the importance of human relationships; their sensitivity towards the pastoral needs and the personal development of their students; and their sense of realism about the challenges and frustrations of missionary life. All Nations Christian College gave equal recognition to the gifts and abilities of both men and women. The council sought to maintain an equal number of men and women on the faculty. Women enjoyed the same status as men and taught the same range of subjects. The presence of several married couples on the faculty also provided students with models of husbands and wives who had

similar gifts and worked harmoniously and effectively together in ministry.

Students' wives were given every opportunity to undertake the full course of studies and so to prepare themselves thoroughly for the ministry to which they and their husbands had been called. It has long been recognised that women provide more than 50% of the missionary force in the world and that they have often been involved in pioneer evangelism. Many of the "faith missions" were founded and led by women, only to be taken over by men once the work had become well established. Women who were permitted to undertake any and every kind of ministry when on the field were often limited to sitting in the pew or doing the flowers in their home country. This was a situation which cried out

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to be rectified. Throughout the history of these schools, women continued to play a major role in the preparation of missionary candidates. They provide excellent examples of the distinctive contribution that women can make, not only in the task of world evangelisation, but also in the training of new workers.

Training the Whole Person

Fourthly, this study shows that it is possible to combine holistic training with academic excellence. All of these colleges gave great emphasis to the training of the whole person. In this, they may have been influenced by the missionary conference held in Edinburgh in 1910, which called for radical improvements in the preparation of missionaries and which identified four areas that must be addressed in any programme of training: the spiritual, the moral, the intellectual, and the physical. The weakness in the early years of these training schools, as in many similar institutions during the first

half of the 20th century, lay in their poor academic standard. Great importance was given to the spiritual life and the development of character, but the theological and missiological content of the programmes was often deficient. This slowly began to change, and after 1971, when the colleges had united, a totally new curriculum was devised which successfully integrated spiritual development, character formation, academic excellence, and practical training. To a degree, it may be fairly said that this united college developed the kind of comprehensive missionary training that had been envisaged in Edinburgh so many years before.

Every training institution struggles to find the balance between the academic and the spiritual. In every Bible school and seminary, we pay lip service to the importance of developing the students' character and their walk with God. In practice, this side of the training often gets squeezed out by the pressure of lectures and assignments. The desire for academic accreditation does not make the task any easier. One of the lessons that comes out of this study, particularly of the history of All Nations Christian College from 1971, is that it is possible to maintain a high academic standard and yet prepare the whole person for mission and ministry.

There is much more that I would love to share, but space does not permit. However, for any who are interested, the full dissertation has been published by Boekencentrum together with the University of Utrecht. It is available from myself (David Harley, c/o OMF, 2 Cluny Road, Singapore 259570) or from All Nations Christian College (Easneye, Ware, Herts, SG12 8LX, UK) at a price of £12 or US\$18, including shipping and handling. 🌐

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Removing Our Cultural Baggage

by Randy Hoffman

If our aim is to train those whom God is calling to missions, then what is the philosophical foundation for our training? How are we seeking to achieve our objectives? Are those objectives biblical?

Our perception—our worldview—can distort the way in which we perceive and apply truth to our life context. This is why it is essential to explore the underlying assumptions through which we view life (Ferris, 1995, p. 4).

The Influence of Hellenism

Dr. Ted Ward writes, “Prior to the time of Christ, the Greek (Hellenistic) culture had developed social models and definitional concepts that can be seen deeply entrenched in the church today” (Elmer & McKinney, 1999, p. 39). They are also entrenched in our Western society as a whole. The faulted concept of knowledge and human development in Hellenism expresses itself in the following characteristics: hierarchy (in a school setting, there are those who know and those who need to know), social distance (individualism), and one-way communication (the lecture method of teaching or speaking, common in schooling and authoritarian leadership). These influences have also molded our contemporary Western leadership model. In the church, besides hierarchical leadership models, these influences have been felt as knowledge as a commodity, learning as acquisition, and knowing as the basis of doing.

The result of these underlying Hellenistic conceptualizations in Western perceptions of growing, improving, and learning is the perception that the more information we absorb, the more spiritual we will become. However, the consumption of knowledge alone actually mitigates against practical application and life reality. Instead of applying this knowledge through a training process, the focus is on the continuing pursuit of more knowledge.

There is a critical difference in understanding and applying the term “knowledge.” In John 8:55, Christ is comparing the Jews’ knowledge of the Father with His own knowledge of the

Father. We could paraphrase this verse by saying, “You don’t have the beginning of knowledge (*gnosis*) of the Father, but I know (*oida*) him completely” (Vine, 1966, p. 298). This verse illustrates that there are those who have some intellectual facts, disconnected from life reality, while others know, understand, and have incorporated truth into their lives—they have experienced it. A Hellenistic educational model focuses on intellectual knowledge. Christian intellectualism is in conflict with biblical learning, because it equates knowing (*gnosis*) with the accumulation of vast amounts of information, rather than knowledge (*oida*) that is also experiential—life reality.

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Individualism

Compounding this problem is the individualism that is a direct offshoot of this philosophy. Because knowledge is viewed as a commodity, those people who have a lot of knowledge seek recognition, position, and status. The status and position create barriers between the learned authority figures and others, modeling individualism to society. Individualism limits biblical learning—which is all about relationship with God, our spouses, the body of Christ, and the world.

The concept of “learning as the basis of doing” affects us in that it focuses only on the intellect. The assumption is that if individuals can understand and accumulate knowledge, then their lives will

be changed. They will act on their knowledge. This is why teaching is practiced in a classroom setting with a lecturer, and why we exalt those who do well in their studies by scoring high grades on intellect-focused tests that seek to evaluate how well the students have absorbed knowledge. The affirmation from these institutions regarding whether individuals can pastor or serve in missions is based on how well students have been able to exercise their intellect.

There are also children of this Hellenistic philosophy, however removed and evolved they may be. These philosophies, such as pragmatism, existentialism, analytical philosophy, process philosophy, and deconstructionism, have all sought to alter truth in various ways (Erickson, 1998, pp. 42-56), while at the same time exalting knowledge, position, status, and individualism. Secondary effects in our society are the prized practices such as time management, social distance (and safety!) through use of the Internet, workaholicism, and efficiency. These effects continue to limit relationship and promote Western individuality and the worship of knowledge. Sadly, much of this worldview has been exported through missions to Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Implications for Training

What needs to be changed in our Western worldview of training? The Bible teaches that the test for learning isn’t knowledge accumulation, but rather character and competence. Does the church elder exhibit godliness, and does he manage his family well (1 Tim. 3:1-7)? There seem to be three areas in which balanced learning takes place, flowing out of communion with God: being (character), relationships (community), and doing (commission) (Elmer & McKinney, 1999, p. 215). This biblical, holistic teaching should take place in community with relational commitment, such as the church (Ferris, 1995, p. 8), and not in institutional isolation.

Where is the true place of knowledge as a part of learning? Theory and knowledge should not be seen as the end goal, but only as part of the process. This process also includes community, learning in a participative dialogical setting, and

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practical application with evaluation. The goal of the process is internalizing and exhibiting godly character and skill competence (Ferris, 1995, pp. 11-13).

In the Christian realm of training in North America, we see the imprint of Greek Hellenism. The training manual, *Send Me!* (Hoke & Taylor, 1999, pp. 12-13), an excellent resource, emphasizes individual learning through its training format. However, most of the world lives in a web of relationships within a family and community that impact every aspect of their lives. These relational societies call for community training, so that they can be effective in incarnating and then reaching the target people. The list of traits for a missionary in the profile chart on pages 26-27 of *Send Me!* is for a veritable do-it-all-yourself, one-man army. Instead, some of these traits could be shared amongst the workers on a team. In Scripture, a team can be two workers or many more. The body of Christ should intentionally train teams who can combine their gifts and express godly relationships for an effective witness to the target people.

Summit Exercises

One example of training in which the author has sought to mitigate the effects of Hellenism is called a Summit. This exercise involves a church planting simulation. Summit participants are divided into teams, and leaders are appointed. Each team is given a description of an unreached Muslim people group, and each team leader is given a series of questions in three sections.

The simulation is divided into three 30-minute time slots, with each slot representing four years on the field. The teams have to answer the questions that relate to each 30-minute period. Teams are assessed by judges in two ways: by their team dynamics and by their answers to the questions. If the teams answer the questions correctly and maintain good team unity, they are awarded converts or church plants.

Random events with which the teams must cope are injected into the sessions. Team members are regularly removed from their teams and then must join other

teams or rejoin their own team, according to the decision of the judges.

We have found this highly participatory, guided learning experience to be effective and well received in North America and in two different Latin American countries as well. It represents a small sample of what can be done to make training a more integrated process than the strict application of the predominant lecture method. My commitment as a missionary trainer is to try to bring balance back into the training process through the application of creative teaching methods that integrate knowledge, character, and skill components in contextually appropriate ways. May this example be useful to the international body of Christ in the task of fulfilling the Great Commission. 🌐

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Randy Hoffman

Having a Role Model, Being a Role Model

by Thomas Schirrmacher

Editor's note: In the May 2000 issue of Training, Thomas Schirrmacher discussed Jesus' role as a master educator and trainer. In the December 2000 issue, he continued the theme of training in the Scriptures by looking at the training done by the Apostle Paul. Here he concludes the series by looking at role models in the Scriptures and the implications for discipling others today.

Scripture considers role models a significant element of preparing the individual for independence. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who, as far as I know, never managed to write on the subject of role models, nevertheless described his vision of the renewed church in these words (Bonhoeffer, 1958, p. 262): "The Church cannot underestimate the value of human 'role models' (originating with Jesus and so highly valued by Paul!): not terminology, but the 'role model' gives its word emphasis and power. (I will write on role models in the New Testament especially! We have almost lost the idea!)"

Peter is in agreement with Jesus and with Paul when he gives the elders the commandment not to rule, but to win their authority by their example. "The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock" (1 Pet. 5:1-3).

The best overview of the New Testament teaching on examples and imitation can be developed by collecting all references to the appropriate terminology.

Who Is a Role Model?

The following texts all use the word "model" (Greek *typos*, *hypotyposos*) and the terms "imitator" or "to imitate" (Greek *mimetes*, *mimeistai*, or *symmimetai*).

1. God

Ephesians 5:1 – "Therefore be imitators of God as dear children."

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2. Jesus Christ

1 Thessalonians 1:6 – “And you became followers of us and of the Lord.”

1 Corinthians 11:1 – “Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.”

3. The apostles, etc.

Philippians 3:17 – “Brethren, join in following my example, and not those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.”

1 Thessalonians 1:6-7 – “And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia.”

2 Thessalonians 3:7 – “For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you.”

2 Thessalonians 3:9 – “... not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us.”

1 Corinthians 11:1 – “Imitate me, just as I imitate Christ.”

1 Corinthians 4:16 – “Therefore I urge you, imitate me.”

4. Men and women of history

Hebrews 6:12 – “... that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”

Hebrews 13:7 – “Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct.”

5. Our spiritual father, who introduced us to biblical truth

1 Corinthians 4:15-16 – “For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me.”

6. The elders

1 Peter 5:1-3 – “The elders who are among you I exhort.... Shepherd the flock of God ... not as being lords over those entrusted to you; but being examples to the flock.”

7. Young men who are true

1 Timothy 4:12 – “Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”

8. Other churches

1 Thessalonians 2:14 – “For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus.”

1 Thessalonians 1:7 – “so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe.”

9. The Old Testament and its people

1 Corinthians 10:6 – “Now these things became our examples.”

1 Corinthians 10:11 – “Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition” (compare the Old Testament examples in verses 1-13).

The role model is an
example not of
perfection, but of growth
(or change).

10. Sound doctrine

Romans 6:17 – “... yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.”

2 Timothy 1:13 – “Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love, which are in Christ Jesus.”

11. All which is good

3 John 11 – “Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good.”

Titus 2:7 – “... in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works.”

Characteristics of Role Models

Being an example does not require perfection, as Lawrence O. Richards (1975, p. 142), the American theologian and educator, explains. He described the role model as an example not of perfection, but of growth (or change). When Scripture itself assumes that mature Christians should serve others as role models, any opposing arguments or fears prove

to be excuses which appear more pious than the Bible itself.

In 1 Corinthians 4:14-16, Paul describes his relationship to the church in Corinth: “I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me.” Paul calls the congregation his beloved children, himself their father. Because he is their spiritual father, he must admonish them (verse 14). Surprisingly, Paul not only identifies himself with the other Christians who serve the Corinthian believers, but he also claims a higher position. He distinguishes between himself and these “instructors” (Greek *paidagogos*). This term referred to slaves who taught children and is the origin for our term “pedagogy.” These instructors were responsible for the intellectual education of their pupils. Paul is saying, “Even if you had 10,000 excellent teachers, who taught you only good and correct things, that would not change the fact that I am your father. From your father, you learn not only doctrine, but also life. And a father questions not only his children’s thinking, but also their actions. He is present not only when all is going well, but also in emergencies and in danger.”

Lawrence O. Richards (1975, p. 30) once described the difference between modern pedagogical methods and those of the Bible in a way which reflects Paul’s ideas. “Much of education is concerned with helping people know what their teachers know; Christian education is concerned with helping people become what their teachers are.”

In the world, a pupil is often expected to know what his teacher knows, but in the church a student should live as his teacher lives. As Richards (1975, 1979, 1981) reminds us, Jesus told his disciples, “A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher” (Luke 6:40). “A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master” (Matt. 10:24-25). After washing his disciples’ feet, Jesus tells them, “For I have given you an example,

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that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him" (John 13:15-16).

Of course, we need knowledge! Without it, a people or a church will lose control (Prov. 29:18), but if a church is dead, knowledge is of no use. Has the modern church neglected role modeling? Isn't it easier to refer to good books or sermons than to share one's life with others as an example? If we want new believers to grow in Christ and remain in the faith, however, we must take an interest in their lives. In order to do that, we must ourselves have a personal relationship to

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Christ and must live according to his law. Can we still challenge others to imitate our example (1 Cor. 4:16)? Is our Christian life worth imitating? Do others experience enough of our lives that they can imitate us in a scriptural fashion?

Theological instructors must become strong fathers and mothers who no longer share only knowledge, but who are available in all aspects of life.

As Wolff (1977, p. 263) states, "Not by chance does the book of Proverbs give the teacher of wisdom the title 'Father' (4:1), and call his pupil his son (13:1; 1:10, 15). Elijah and Elisha are also addressed as 'my father' by their 'children,' the sons of the prophets (1 Kings 20:35; 2 Kings 2:3, 5, 7; 4:1, 38; 5:22; 6:1; 9:1)."

Discipling is significant for the training of spiritual leaders and workers in the church and in world missions. Although the examples of Jesus and Paul, or of Old Testament leaders, can only be imperfectly carried over into modern life,

this is still the best way to train and form the leaders of the future. 🌐

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Thomas Schirmmacher

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Reflections on the Nature of Training

by Ray Morris

Editor's note: Ray Morris is an Australian who has been involved in ministry training programs in Latin America for over 30 years. He has a broad-ranging ministry of teaching and program consultancy. During a recent visit to the Cordoba Missionary Training Centre in Argentina, he shared with the board and staff the following thoughts on "presuppositions" undergirding his ministry.

AS I continue to work in the field of missionary and pastoral preparation, I have some presuppositions that I would take into account as basic in my approach to the educational process.

Education

As a general educational principle, I am more inclined to be "holistic" rather than "dualistic." My inclination is towards balance between the intellectual and the practical, rather than emphasizing one over the other. I am more interested in teaching how to gather and obtain knowledge for oneself, rather than communicating knowledge in and of itself. I am more inclined towards forming "self-taught learners," rather than depending upon the process of being taught knowledge. I would like to see abilities developed which will help to meet life and ministry, rather than provide a theoretical answer for all of life. My inclination is towards being pragmatic and practical.

The Scientific Method

As a scientific method for trans-cultural missionaries, I believe in observation, formation of theory from what has been observed, and then ascertaining whether or not the theory is true or false, as a procedure for learning to live in a new culture.

Orientation in Context

It has been my experience in observing orientation programs for missionaries that in the majority of cases much information is given, but there is poor adaptation to the reality of the new situation. It is not only the information that is necessary, but it is information in the context of its *praxis* and the daily life of

the new culture. It is my experience that there have been many failures due to self-confidence in obtaining data and information and not working under the sovereignty of God. From experience, I am convinced that the worst enemy of our becoming satisfactorily functional as missionaries is our ego. The problem is not so much the external enemy but more the enemy within us.

Expectations

From experience, I would suggest that one of the biggest impediments to effective ministry is our own expectation as ministers. We put our hope in our expectations and not in the Lord. I believe we ought to use education, without losing our confidence in the power and person of the Lord, who is the ruler of the world.

The Self-Image of the Minister

I have seen that another great obstacle to being able to fulfill the ministry satisfactorily is our own inferiority complex. We put confidence in what we are and not in the Lord. When we are in the Lord and are living by his fullness, even though we are naturally incompetent, our faith does overcome the world and our flesh, because Christ is working within us. God is greater than our circumstances and even greater than our inabilities. It is the Lord who is in control not only of our lives, but also of our circumstances.

Building Up the Work of the Ministry

I would like to affirm the method of edification which is found in 1 Corinthians 3:1-12, and I would like to accept it as the power necessary to proceed in ecclesiastical matters. We need to build upon what has already been established by those who have gone before. I do not like reinventing the wheel and starting from zero unless necessary. Building upon that which already exists is a biblical principle and is the most positive manner in which to proceed.

Continuing Education

I would like to encourage the attitude that a missionary should never stop learning in one form or another. Adult educational principles suggest that the whole educational procedure ought to be continuous and for a lifetime. We should never stop studying or learning.

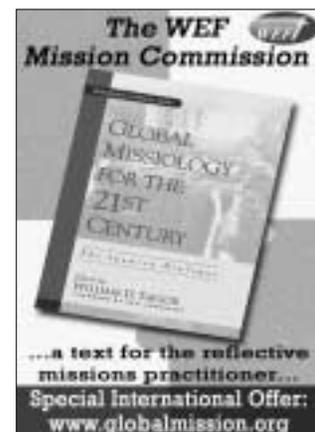
The Predominant Culture Is Decisive

We are products of our own culture and of the formative experiences that we have had within that culture. I believe that even as a Christian I am unconsciously manipulated as a person by my own cultural values. The way out of this dilemma is repentance before God and the giving up of my will to the will of the Lord in a conscious and coherent manner. Without this deliberate act, a person becomes an unconscious victim of his own culture, and he will believe he is acting according to Scripture.

Learning Methods

In light of the above, the type of educational system which I prefer is one which corresponds as closely as possible to daily life, whether by simulation, drama, or immersion in situations similar to those that might confront any missionary.

The principles outlined above are of such importance that they have played a major part in my own value system and are part of the presentational process of education that I accept. 🌐



Resource Access For Missionary Preparation

by Jonathan Lewis
Editor of *Training for Cross-Cultural Ministries*

Over the past few years, the WEF Missions Commission has collectively gained tremendous insight into the training of missionaries. The tangible fruit of conferences and consultations has often been a manuscript which the WEF MC has published. To multiply the blessing, we have always attempted to create culturally relevant translations of these materials in several key languages. But making these print resources accessible to missionary trainers has been a challenge for a number of reasons. First is the difficulty in locating high-quality, low-cost translators. There is more to translation than meets the eye, and more than one enthusiast has been defeated in attempting the task. Even when a book is successfully translated, it is difficult to find a publisher willing to take the risks to print and distribute missions texts, as few of these have made it to the bestseller list. Even if a publisher undertakes the project out of his good heart or "ministry account," these books are usually quite costly—a factor which may keep them out of the hands of those who need them. Bookstores won't usually stock low-demand items, and this means such items are often unavailable for purchase when needed.

How can we address this problem in a low-cost manner that will allow "on demand" and "just in time" delivery of training resources? Widespread use of computer technology is now allowing us to begin to aggressively address these needs and provide access to these materials in new and highly effective ways. The WEF Missions Commission has created a Resource Access for Missionary Preparation (RAMP)



Jonathan Lewis

project to exploit this potential. The concept is simple: We are creating printable electronic versions of our missionary training courses and text materials and plan to distribute them by CD-ROM and the Internet. Trainers will be able to print these courses and materials, make copies as needed, and distribute them to students at their cost and on a just-in-time basis. Phase I of the RAMP program is aimed at simply providing access to some of these materials. Phase II will work in the development of interactive courses that are supported by e-mail and online interaction. Currently, about 30 MC titles in various languages are being prepared for electronic publication.

Last year, we received a rather desperate e-mail from a teacher in a school in the Caribbean. He had just been assigned to teach an introductory missions course at his seminary and had very little time to prepare. He sent the Missions Commission an urgent request for help in identifying, locating, and receiving an appropriate text resource. I was able to point him to a web site from which he was able to download the resource he needed. The next day, I got a thank you note from a very grateful colleague. He had just been the beneficiary of the "just in time" delivery of a key resource. RAMP will be an attempt to multiply this

experience exponentially as, by God's grace, we begin supplying needed materials and other resources to trainers, particularly those working where the resources are scarcest.

For RAMP to succeed, we will need networkers who will be able to coordinate efforts in the various languages and identify worthwhile materials for publication. We will need others to cooperate as mini-distributors of originals for those in their area who may not have access to a computer and printer. These are tangible and practical ways in which members of the IMTF can help each other and cooperate in this great enterprise of equipping God's ambassadors. Join us in this effort by identifying resources that can be distributed in this way. Write to me at JonathanLewis@XC.org. 🌐

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