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A bilingual Khmer-English Theological Journal to give biblical knowledge to its readers as a honeycomb gives strength to exhausted travelers.

October 2002

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บณูติิการ Russell H. Bowers, Jr.






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## Christian Development

 in a Buddhist CountryGlen E. MILLER

## Introduction

There are more than two hundred International Non-Government Organizations (INGOs) with approximately two thousand expatriates currently living and working in Cambodia. Through varied approaches these organizations and people strive to make life better for Cambodians after the devastation of the Pol Pot holocaust. An understanding of the local culture is essential for the development efforts of these INGOs.

Understanding the Cambodian culture requires a grasp of Buddhism and the role of religion in this society. Prince Sihanouk, pointing out the importance of Buddhism in Cambodia, said in 1970, "Cambodia may be compared to a cart supported by two wheels, one of which is the state and the other Buddhism. The former symbolizes power and the latter religious morality. These two wheels must turn at the same speed in order for the cart, i.e. Cambodia, to advance smoothly on the path to peace and progress."

[^0]
## Christian Development Efforts in Underdeveloped Countries

At a recent Mennonite Central Committee staff retreat, I asked MCC Cambodia volunteers to compare how they were perceived by the Cambodians with how they would like to be perceived. The most common answer of how they were perceived was as a person of prestige and power, or one with expert technical expertise. In contrast, many volunteers wished to be perceived as serving to represent Christ, or as a compassionate Christian. There is an obvious wide gulf between power, prestige, and expertise, and how we wish to be perceived as Christians.

MCC volunteers and other Western development agency workers generally come from rich and technologically advanced countries. They see themselves as enlightened, with systems backed by "facts." They pride themselves in their ability to think objectively, and move in linear fashion from planning to fulfillment of goals. Obstacles to reaching desired goals are viewed as challenges to overcome with the combination of proper motivation and the right information. At the same time, Western Christian development workers see themselves as compassionate followers of Jesus.

To the Westerner, "development" means modernization, scientific education, rational thought patterns, and movement from the subjective to the objective-from superstition to truth. The goal is selfsufficiency, self-determination, and independence-freeing people from fatalism and blind traditionalism that inhibit progress. In order to liberate them, and because we are the financial source, we are inclined to feel that we have the right to set the rules and determine the outcomes.

To people in a developing country, the INGOs appears to have superior technology and unlimited funds. With this money and technology come tremendous prestige and power. In this situation, the local national may acquiesce and allow the Westerner to define the problem, prescribe the solution, and implement the remedy. The outcomes as defined by the Western donor may be designed to propel the developing country toward a society that resembles the donor country. Training offered to empower persons in the developing country may be ideal to prepare them for the goals of Western society, but may create unrealistic and unsustainable expectations. In this situation, no matter how compassionate or sympathetic the change agents are, they will tend to be viewed as
"benefactors" or patrons. This sets up a relationship of benefactorbeneficiary, giver-receiver, superior-inferior, or master-slave. In this situation, the recipient will be moved toward dependency. As this happens innate creativity and resourcefulness will be reduced or lost.

In addition to the West-East problems, simple communication problems are significant. Even though the Westerner and person in the developing country may speak the same language fluently. there is great potential for lack of understanding. Consider the following examples from the Cambodian context.
"Community" in idealized Western thought creates an image of a group of people living together harmoniously with peace and justice in caring relationships. However, in post-Pol Pot Cambodia, "community" has the connotation of a group of people living together without regard for human interaction, but formed for the benefit of the state and its purposes. In this context, "community" instills feelings of coercion and repression.
"Peace" in traditionally Christian societies is usually thought of in societal terms, and connotes the lack of conflict among people. On the other hand, when Buddhists speak of peace they are referring to inner peace and absence of desire.

> Peace in this tradition means eradication of desire, which is the root of suffering. It has a countenance quite different from biblical shalom. which incorporates social well-being and justice.?
"God" to Western Christians is commonly thought of as an omniscient, omnipotent, transcendent being, as creator and sustainer of life. To Buddhists "god" means a superhuman being with good or evil connotation, but lacking the "omni" qualities of the Christian God. A group of Catholic catechists opened a dialogue with Buddhist monks with the question, "Is it correct to say that Buddha is God?" Without any hesitation the monks replied, "Oh no, Buddha is greater than any god." They explained that it is the dharma (teaching) that brings

[^1]liberation, and Buddha gave the dharma. Gods are lesser beings in their thought and have no such power. ${ }^{3}$

The problems with Western development as defined above are consciously overstated to make the point that good intentions and sincerity are not enough to avoid the pitfalls of development. Most Western development agencies understand this and are doing excellent development work that is making a difference in the lives of people being served.

## Buddhist Values and Development

Price Sihanouk pointed out the importance of Buddhism in Cambodian society. It follows that an understanding of Buddhism is essential to working effectively in Cambodia. How does the Buddhist worldview affect development? What values do Buddhists hold dear related to development'? How do Buddhist values resonate with Christian values?

Development workers who approach these questions must be open to dialogue in openness, with respect, and willing to encompass a different worldview. We should expect to change even as we seek to bring changes - to be open to enter into a process of mutual transformation. For the development worker, this involves repeated cycles of in-depth encounters, withdrawal, reflection, and integration, with the possibility of change.

There are several traditional Buddhist values that can contribute significantly to the framework of development.

## The Middle Way

Sakyamuni, the original Buddha, left his life as a rich prince and the pursuit of pleasure at age 27 to seek liberation. For several years he practiced severe asceticism. Afterward he articulated the "Eight-

[^2]Fold Path" that leads to right living. This path defines the journey to liberation as a middle way between licentiousness and asceticism.

For many Buddhists, this teaching concerning a Middle Path is taken as a given and already proven fact.... They accept it as taught and then lead their own lives trying to avoid both hedonistic and ascetic imbalance, trying to keep the expectations about things, including themselves, realistic, modest, and free of self-delusion. ${ }^{+}$

The concepts embodied in the Middle Way and the attendant lifestyle could be part of a vision statement of development agencies. The middle way of development neither idealizes poverty nor promotes consumerism. This approach will use technology appropriately. Tom Dooley, the medical doctor-developer in Laos in the early 1960's, said he had no desire to brings Laotians to the same generation of modernity, but only to get them into the same century. "There is more danger to the well-being of recipients in consumerism than remaining in the poverty of rice farmers." ${ }^{5}$

## Interconnectedness

Buddhists see a connection between all animate and inanimate things on earth and in the universe. Thus all that we do has implications for everything else, and positively or negatively affects our well-being in the universe.

> Buddhism embraces a view of reality ... in which all parts of the universe, living and non-living, are understood as being inter-related and inter-dependent. In other words, nothing exists by itself but only in relation to other things on Earth and in the universe. ${ }^{6}$

[^3]Pallis, writing from a Buddhist perspective, suggests a way of achieving interconnectedness through his interpretation of the Christian story of the origin of evil-the Garden of Eden. ${ }^{7}$ The Tree of Life stands in Paradise, a place without disharmony or fear. Adam and Eve participate fully but passively in this setting. The serpent, through Eve, tempts Adam to taste a new experience.

This new experience values things for their own sakes, as if they were entirely separate entities. Adam and Eve, having tasted of the fruit of the Tree of Life, become aware of all that divides them from one another and from every other thing around them. Because of their new perception of separateness, they are aware of their nakedness and try to hide their shame by covering themselves. This artificial selfhood has become the prototype of all human disguise.

The Tree of Life became the Tree of Good and Evil, bowed down with its good and bad fruit, containing the seeds of becoming good or evil. There was now the possibility of good or evil.

It is noteworthy that Paradise contained a serpent. The serpent was necessary in the garden, because Paradise without a serpent would be God. The serpent was necessary in order to introduce imperfection. All created things have a degree of perfection-but that perfection is relative. It is that which lies outside limits of perfection that causes suffering and change. A basic premise of Buddhism is that suffering is the result of participating in life outside the center, which is perfection.

In Buddhism, the idea of creation is absent. Buddhists insist on "non-selfhood"-that all things point away from the ideas of a fixed self and separation from all other beings. In the absence of a creation there is no beginning. But there is an end in Buddhist thought. The end is the integration into the center, the enlightenment, "where the wheel of rebirth is not turning," and one is released from further suffering.

Having accepted that evil is part of the created world, how can we humans get back to Paradise-to the Tree of Life? Pallis postulates that we do that by retracing our ancestor's steps in reverse order. Adam was lured from the center to the periphery. We need to return from the

[^4]periphery to the center-from separateness to interconnectedness. We have been raised on the knowledge of the Tree of Good and Evil. Through this tree we must rediscover the Tree of Life. Enlightenment is the key to reintegration into the center. To reintegrate into the center, we need the Light of Enlightenment. Having achieved reintegration, one transcends the dualities of good and evil, and both are accepted as part of the creation. Then the sting of the serpent will be ineffective.

Whether or not we accept Pallis' theology and the way to interconnectedness, development workers would do well to keep in mind the concept that the changes we facilitate have implications for the local community and ultimately the universe. Villagers may be more aware of this concept than we think. I recall visiting a village in India, isolated by four rivers without bridges, and without radios or newspapers. The people of this village knew about the international conference on ecology that had taken place three weeks before in South America.

## Suffering

Relief from suffering is at the heart of Buddhist thought. Release from suffering represents liberation. The Four Noble Truths of Buddhism form a system of thought to identify and relieve suffering. It is based on a medical model.

- Recognize the symptom (suffering)
- Diagnose the ailment causing the suffering (give it a name)
- Analyze the cause of the suffering
- Apply the remedy to alleviate the suffering

Suffering is extant in the world. We can run away from it; we can build walls to try to shut it out; or we can simply deny its existence. But a person interested in development must first look squarely at suffering and acknowledge its existence. This requires more than a cursory glance. One must have a feel for suffering, while recognizing that those who have never experienced it will have difficulty empathizing with those who have.

Having felt the presence of suffering, we must give it a name. Nameless suffering is easy to ignore. Naming suffering brings it into the realm of conscious thought, making it difficult to ignore.

The next step is to diagnose the cause of the suffering, whether physical, such as hunger; psychological, as in low self-esteem; or spiritual, as in loneliness and separation. As in the medical model, accurately naming and diagnosing the cause of suffering is critical to finding the proper remedy.

The remedy must follow the medical dictum, "First of all, do no harm." The goals and methods of the remedy must correspond to the nature of the need. The remedy after a natural or manmade disaster is immediate supply of the basic requirements of food, shelter, and clothing. These goals clearly differ from those of long-term development. In development, long-term perspectives are needed. Short-term quick fix remedies may create dependencies that cause more suffering over time.

Suffering to Buddhists is being out of step with the divine principle. The divine principle is everywhere present in the world, but people do not tune into it. Suffering results. Our human efforts to create good or shunt aside evil create a selfhood that in itself causes suffering.

Suffering in all forms is then accepted as a measure of the world's apparent remoteness from the divine principle. The principle is absolutely omnipresent in the world, but the world is relatively absent from the principle, this apparent contradiction between 'essence' and 'accidents' is paid for in suffering. ${ }^{8}$

So the process never stops and
our many attempts to abolish given evils will necessarily remain a treatment of symptoms, leaving the deepest causes of unhealth untouched because intellectual discernment, the essential diagnosis, is wanting. ${ }^{9}$

Recognize suffering, name it, devise a remedy, and apply it. These are the Four Noble Truths. Christian development programs could apply the Four Noble Truths to their benefit. This discipline can be applied to individuals, to groups, to villages, or to nations.
${ }^{8}$ Ibid., 46.
${ }^{9}$ Ibid., 48.

## The Buddhist-Animist Worldview

In his attempt to explain why bad things happen, the animist attributes the frightening, the weird, or the eerie to gods, spirits, or spirits of ancestors. Rural Buddhists appropriate animism to help them explain the misfortunes that befall them. ${ }^{10}$ The animist feels that his problems are entirely due to separate and hostile external forces. He can try to avoid these forces, propitiate them by sacrifices, or manipulate them by means of magic, if he has the power to do so.

By contrast, in Buddhist thought evil is seen as working within the person. Evil is the attempt to subvert the individual in his quest for Enlightenment. Evil is overcome by the inner discipline of meditation. Buddha said, "Meditate and do not be slothful, lest afterwards you experience remorse." Evil is overcome by one's own effort. One of Buddha's dying statements was, "Monks, be diligent to work out your own salvation."

To avoid sickness, or to gain riches or power, the animist must manipulate the external world by keeping out of the way of the evil spirits or demons, by offering appropriate sacrifices to keep them happy, or by invoking a higher power. The worldview of the animist contrasts with that of the Buddhist who ascribes evil to the inner working of a person, and focuses on the inner disposition. Imagine the struggle of the village animist who wants to become a Buddhist monk. He must put off his pattern of thinking that evil comes from outside himself, and focus instead on the inner struggle toward perfection.

Dr. Ravi Jayakaran employs "ten seed method" to probe the worldview of villagers. ${ }^{\text {" }}$ Using it, he asked village elders to assess to what extent they thought their lives were controlled by self, by others, or by fate. They rated these parameters for the village as a whole, and for the rich and for the poor. These were the results.

[^5]| Group | Self | Others | Fate |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Village as whole | 5 | 3 | 2 |
| The rich | 8 | 0 | 2 |
| The poor | 2 | 6 | 2 |

He further explored the meaning of fate with the elders:

| Buddha | $20 \%$ |
| :--- | :--- |
| Spirits | $20 \%$ |
| Sprits of ancestors | $30 \%$ |
| Merit from previous lives | $30 \%$ |

He then asked the meaning of spirits, and the elders rated the spirits as follows:

$$
\text { Good spirits } \quad 70 \%
$$

Evil spirits 20\%
Spirits that can be either 10\%

Spirits and gods are seen to play significant roles in the daily life of villagers. This is the mixture of Buddhism and animism that characterizes most rural villagers in South Asia.

It is sometimes said of the Buddhism of South Asia that it is nothing more than a thin veneer covering deep animism rooted strongly in the belief of demons, and that animism is the genuine religion of these lands. ${ }^{12}$

## Christian Development in Buddhist-Animist Countries

How do we go about the work of development? What do we do that is helpful and appropriate? How do we bring about desired change without destroying local initiative, creativity, and resourcefulness? What actually needs changing? How do we work cooperatively with people with a Buddhist or Buddhist-animist worldview?

[^6]Kraus, writing from a Christian viewpoint, suggests five things that need changing in developing countries. ${ }^{13}$ The following five transformations are adapted from his work:

- Transform patterns of violence and greedy self-seeking to community mutuality
- Transform fatalism that stifles hope to appropriate proactivity
- Transform oppressive hierarchical social structures to provide a chance for all people, including the socially disadvantaged
- Transform ill-serving ideas of the cause of sickness and natural disasters to systems that are proven to work, whether traditional or modern
- Introduce appropriate technology

Buddhist social activists have also articulated what changes are desirable to develop societies. Buddhist social action is directed toward minimizing suffering, and emphasizes compassion, equanimity, tolerance, self-reliance, and individual responsibility. To accomplish these goals it is necessary to:

- Help people to overcome ego-centeredness that allows subordination or exploitation, promote high self-esteem, and avoid creating situations of superiority-inferiority
- Offer each person a freedom limited only by the freedom and dignity of others, in order to develop self-reliant responsibility
- Have concern first and foremost with the material and social conditions for personal growth. The Dalai Lama said, "Man takes precedence over progress."
- Support for a middle range of technology that provides adequate range of material goods while maintaining harmony with the environment. ${ }^{14}$

[^7]On the basis of a first reading, there may appear to be little resemblance between the goals of development for Christian and Buddhist organizations. However, rearranging these two lists shows significant congruence.

| Christian Goals | Buddhist Goals |
| :---: | :---: |
| 1. Transform patterns of violence and greedy self-seeking into mutuality in community. | 1. Offer each person a freedom that is limited only by the freedom and dignity of others, in order to develop self-reliant responsibility. |
| 2. Transform the fatalism that stifles hope into appropriate pro-activity. | 2. Exercise concern first and foremost with the material and social conditions for personal growth. |
| 3. Transform oppressive hierachical social structure to provide a chance for all people including the socially disadvantaged. | 3. Help people overcome egocenteredness that allows subordination or exploitation, promote high self-esteem, and avoid creating situations of superiority-inferiority. |
| 4. Transform ill-serving ideas of the cause of sickness and natural disasters into systems that are proven to work, whether traditional or modern. |  |
| 5. Inprove the quality of life through the introduction of appropriate technology. | 5. Support a middle range of technology that provides adequate supply of material goods while maintaining harmony with the environment. |

The first goal for both Christians and Buddhists states that in our self-seeking we should remain always mindful of the needs of others. In the second goal, both Christians and Buddhists refer to the potential for human growth, and support conditions that promote human potential. The third goal of both abhors the structures and systems that create oppression and exploitation. Kraus' fourth goal has no counterpart in
this representation of Buddhist thought. The last goal promotes the proper application of middle-range technology, without idealizing either poverty or consumerism.

An important difference in approach seems apparent. Christian goals suggest that change is initiated by an agency from outside the culture. In contrast, the Buddhist approach is based on individual effort and inner work. As individuals are transformed, the community will be transformed.

## Buddhist View of Christianity

While working in a Buddhist country we need to understand how Buddhists understand Christianity. Buddhism is an atheistic religion, ${ }^{15}$ in contrast to theistic the religions of Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam. Buddhists consider a self-existent and self-caused deity as false. This "principled atheism" is fundamental to how Buddhists view Christians.

- Buddhists believe that if a doctrine is useful to someone it may be appropriate for them. But ultimately Buddhists believe that in order to attain enlightenment and nirvana, the idea of theism must be discarded. In this view, it is permissible for a Christian to believe in a personal God if they find it useful, but ultimately this belief will need to be abandoned to attain enlightenment.
- Buddhists are interested in the Christian concept of selfless love because compassion is central to their concept of ethics. However, the Buddhist concept of selfless love has no basis in transcendence or in Christ.
- "Pseudo-religion" or "religion-surrogate" in Buddhist thought is a religion or system of thought that does not lead to the development of a good moral life and to taking responsibilities for one's own actions. In the Buddhist view,
${ }^{15 \times 4}$ Gods are nothing to do with religion." Stated by a monk to Richard F. Gombrich, and cited in Theravada Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1988).

Christianity with its emphasis on a good moral life does not fall within this definition.

- "Unsatisfactory religion" is one that fosters the good moral life and taking responsibility for one's actions, but has beliefs that are opposed to Buddhism such as belief in God or denial of rebirth. Most of Christianity falls into this category. ${ }^{16}$
The Buddha described the path to fellowship with people of other religions as one of "cultivating selflessness, compassion, freedom from malice, purity of mind. and self-mastery of purpose. ${ }^{17}$


## Proposed Theology in a Buddhist-Animist Country

In attempting to provide a framework for a working theology, I suggest two cautions. In response to Buddhism, we must not be tentative about the transcendent. We must with confidence affirm our experience with the transcendent God. We affirm the God we know as Creator, as Ultimate Reality, the Source of Truth and Unconditional Love, and the Model of Trustworthiness. Our ultimate truth and reality do not come from scientific or rational thought but from God.

Second, we must not overreact to the relativism of the postmodern age by becoming absolutist, with the attitude that we have a corner on the truth. In our interaction with Buddhists, we need to remain open to transformation ourselves.

I am suggesting that there is a balance between the unshakable belief in a transcendent God and the absolutist position of the strict fundamentalist who has the answers to life's questions for all time and all places. This means that not everything is negotiable-that I have a base from which I relate to the world. It also means that I am open to new truth and understanding. It means that life is a process with a motto something like this: "At this time I know what I believe, but what I believe will change as I receive new light and truth."

[^8]What might a theology that is effective and explainable to Buddhist-animists look like? There are several possibilities. I am attracted to using as the starting point the idea that all people are created in the image of God.

God the Creator fashioned humans in God's own image. This fact imparts dignity and potential to all humans. Bearing God's image implies spirituality and ability to contemplate. It also connotes an interconnectedness and unity among all humans. With this view, we approach people without regard to their origin or ethnicity, but with respect and expectancy--respect because they are the carriers of God's image, and expectancy because of their undeveloped potential given by God at the time of their creation.

Through his incarnation, Jesus refurbished the image of God for humankind. Jesus revealed God as Truth, Compassion, and Trustworthiness. Jesus' prayer was that the Kingdom of God would come to earth as it is in heaven. Where the attributes of God (Truth, Compassion, Trustworthiness) are found in good measure, there is found God's Kingdom. In this community people live harmoniously in trust and openness with each other. In this community, justice and compassion prevail, the lame are made to walk, the blind are given sight, prisoners are freed, and the oppressed are raised up.

In Cambodia, the Kingdom will be evident when the rice lasts for twelve months instead of seven, when those who lost legs from landmines are helped to walk again, when people living under the oppression of poverty are freed from subsistence living, when a poor person can get a loan without paying usurious interest, when truth is so common it is assumed, when people live together in peace and harmony based on mutual trust and expressions of compassion between neighbors, and when people work together to actualize the unrealized God-given potential in every human being. Then the people who walked in darkness will see the light.

The Light is the light of God. Jesus brought that light into the world. We are bearers of that light, the light of Jesus. We seek to bring light in areas of darkness. In doing that it is possibly more important how we do that than what we do. As a bearer of the light, we reflect the
demeanor and attitude of Jesus. This is best summed up in the stance of an empowered servant.

Jesus addressed this issue when

> [a] dispute also arose among them as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest. But he said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become the youngest, and the leader like one who serves.... I am among you as one who serves."

Jesus came as a servant. We serve to introduce people to the Kingdom of God under the authority of Christ. We do this in faith that the Spirit of Christ will present God through us in our actions and words. We are serving as the representatives of Christ, with the knowledge that God's Spirit is at work to establish the rule of God. The power at work is the power of the Spirit and not our own power. Our role is to plant seeds. Some will bear fruit. We are not responsible to grow the seeds. God does that. We are to plant the seeds.

Our attitude in service is one of gratitude for God's unmerited grace. Our motivation to serve is thus not to assuage guilt or to gain merit, but in thankfulness to God for unmerited favor. Joy is a normal consequence of thankfulness. Thus we find joy in serving.

Indian Nobel prizewinner Rebindranath Tahore wrote:
I slept and dreamed that life was pleasure,
I woke and found that life was service,
I served and discovered that service was pleasure.

## Is MCC Different From a Secular INGO?

The question of the difference between "Christian" and "secular" INGOs is a recurring discussion in Christian INGO circles. There are many INGOs with well-intentioned staff, deeply concerned for the welfare of those they try to serve, and sincerely wanting to make things better for the poor and marginalized. MCC volunteers struggle with

[^9]this question, while believing that it is not enough to be a good technician. So we search for ways to incorporate our spirituality into our daily lives as we live and work with people of another culture or worldview.

As we work in a Buddhists-animist culture, we need some guideposts to help point us to ways of working that incorporate the spiritual in our work and yet respect the local culture. The following statements are an attempt to set such as framework.

- Assume that the Buddhist-animist has an active spiritual life that significantly shapes his or her worldview
- Become a student of the spirituality of the people and culture
- Assume that full communication has not occurred until the spiritual dimension is considered
- Assume that the spiritual dimension must be part of the development process
- Look for "sacramental moments" ${ }^{19}$
- Use the sacramental moment to incorporate the spiritual dimension in a way that makes sense to both Buddhistanimists and Christians
- Find ways to let people know that your frame of reference is the teachings of Jesus
- Avoid arguments; relax and allow the Spirit of God to do its work
- Expect to be transformed in this process
- In these interchanges, approach out of an in-depth relationship rather than confrontationally
Sacramental moments are those times in everyday life when one's worldview or deeply held beliefs are brought into play. This is a time when one's basic assumptions are tested. As development workers leave their home culture, we bring to the new culture a spirituality and worldview within which we form relationships, make choices, and set priorities. This happens whether or not we are aware of it. We need to assume that the Buddhist-animist has a frame of reference that serves

[^10]him or her in the same way. As we begin to recognize the importance of our own worldview, we will understand the need to recognize the spirituality of those among whom we live.

In our everyday work as Christian development workers, we need to become more aware of where God is at work. As we do that we will also become more sensitive to those places where the spirituality of the Buddhist-animist frames the questions and solutions to the development problems. These are the sacramental moments that give opportunity to communicate our own spirituality. We communicate our deeplyheld beliefs and we seek to understand similar deep beliefs of the Bud-dhist-animist. We do this with respect and gentleness rather than hammering the "truth" of the gospel at the other person. ${ }^{20}$

The story in Attachment $I$, here summarized, illustrates this idea. A well drilling team was deciding where to drill a well. They took soil samples and consulted their charts using the latest technology to make their decision. However, the villagers know that it is the shaman that understands these things and makes such decisions. For them this was a sacramental moment-a time when their beliefs and faith are critical to the choices made. The technicians' soil testing and consulting charts was the stranger's way of doing magic and coming to the decision. Steward says:

> The villagers were wrong to see site selection as magic; they were right to see it as a sacramental moment. They may be superstitious, but they haven't forgotten that the supernatural surrounds and indwells our activities all the time. ${ }^{11}$ (Steward, Attachment I)

[^11]By seizing the sacramental moments, we avoid secularizing the event and give recognition to the supernatural. This need not be done in an offensive, coercive manner. One simply starts with the problemfinding the best place to drill the well-and gives recognition to the Creator God who made a world of order and allows us to understand some of the secrets of nature.

## Conclusion

There are problems inherent in the Westerner coming to "develop" an underdeveloped country. Good intentions alone will not avoid the pitfalls. Sensitivity, humility and in-depth encounter with the people of the new culture are required. In this encounter, the newcomer will need to come to an understanding of the worldview and spirituality of the people. Spirituality is an essential part of this understanding. To ignore our own spirituality and that of the people being served is to have a less than whole picture, and any development program will tend to be superficial and transient in effect. Most "secular" development agencies recognize the importance of including the social milieu worldview in their approach.

However, many Christian development workers take seriously the teachings of Christ on the nature of God and on human relationships as the basis for their spirituality. These development workers recognize the spiritual dimension of the interaction between developer and recipient. We start where she lives and with her worldview. This will include her explanation of evil and why bad things happen. We converse and enter deeply into trying to understand her worldview.

We do this as learner-teachers, with humility, respect, and the confidence that we have a message that has the potential to create a better life for the recipients. The approach and stance of the Christian development worker is best characterized by that of a servant-leader. Recipient people will look to us expectantly as experts in a given field. This expectancy will create opportunities to relate and communicate our own spirituality.

The Christian development worker seeks to transform those beliefs and attitudes that disempower and enslave the recipient person. For example, teaching that gastroenteritis is caused by bacteria opens
the door to teaching the value of sanitation in its prevention. A debilitating factor in their worldview will have been transformed. Development with lasting effect will result when there is transformation that includes a change in beliefs and values. People thus transformed will have values that support healthy living in community. We have repeatedly seen development programs without this transformation die a quick death shortly after the initiating agency leaves the scene.

The goals of development for both Christians and Buddhists have many similarities. This can become the basis for development in a Buddhist country and can become the foundation on which a development program is built.

There are many deeply-held Buddhist values that can contribute positively to any development program. In this process, as the development worker seeks to bring change, he or she must also expect to change. This will be a natural process of give and take. In this daily interaction, the development worker will look for the sacramental moments when the deeply held beliefs and worldview are called into question. This is an opportunity for mutual transformation and should be grasped.

It is essential to have an undergirding theology that grounds what we do and how we do it. A useful theological framework is the idea that all humankind is created in God's own image. This common image inheres in people of all cultures and skin color. With this as a basis, all persons deserve respect. There will be a tendency to look for the commonalties among people rather than the differences. It will be assumed of all people that they have undeveloped God-given potential.

The goal for the Christian development worker is to plant the Kingdom of God-to bring into human existence the attributes of God lived out in human relationships. This work is done in non-coercive ways, with humility, good humor, and love that does not require a return. Christian development workers take on the "mind of Christ" working as representatives of Christ. We plant seeds with kindness, imitating the truth. compassion, and trustworthiness of God. God will take care of the rest.

## Attachment I

Adapted from Biblical Holism, John Steward, pages 65-66.
The well-digging specialist gathers a sample of soil for analysis. A set of government charts is studied. The driller talks over the chart with his team in a language incomprehensible to the villagers. The rig is moved into position. What is happening?

To us, trained and socialized in the West, modern science is at work. Data is being gathered to help select the drilling site for the next well. This is merely technical activity. Nothing superratura! here.

To the villager, there may be an entirely different interpretation. The earth is being consulted through the use of the arcane (hidden, understood by only a few), secret knowledge everyone knows the shamans and witch doctors have. A magic ritual is underway.

Who is right? If we are too quick, too smug in our Western framework of understanding the world, we say, "We are, of course. The villagers are just being superstitious."

A moment longer, a more respectful reflection, might lead us to a more important insight-one that helps us as much as it helps the villager. Our technical knowledge is in fact a reflection of the activity and character of God. Creative, investigative minds-created by a creative, rational, order-making God-discovered the technical knowledge being used to choose well sites.

If we had eyes to see, we would realize that choosing a well site is another sacramental moment. A time to recognize the impact of the work of God in history. A time to stop and give thanks for his gift to us in how best to use his creation.

The villagers were wrong to see the site selection as magic; they were right to see it as a sacramental moment. They may be superstitious, but they haven't forgotten that the supernatural surrounds and indwells our activities all the time.

But this story has another side--a more disturbing darker one. If many of the operational elements of well digging are potentially sacramental moments, then what message do we send to our village friends when we fail to act as if this were true? When we treat the site selection as a simple matter of technical skill, we are doing one of two
things, both of them bad. If we are insensitive to how the village folk may interpret the activity, and make no explanation, we are reinforcing their pre-scientific worldview. Christian technical folk appear to be doing magic.

If we are wise enough to understand how they might interpret site selection, but provide the wrong explanation (the activity is merely a technical activity having nothing to do with magic or the supernatural), we are secularizing their worldview. In fact, we are passing on our own cultural blind spot.

Whether we overlook their interpretation to explain the activity as science, the message is a secular one: God and the supernatural are not present here.



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## Translating for Understanding

Russell H. BOWERS, Jr.

"We have here indeed what may very probably be the most complex type of event yet produced in the evolution of the cosmos." ${ }^{\prime}$ What is this most complex of events? The replication of the DNA molecule? The interaction of subatomic particles? The courtship ritual of a rare jungle bird?

No, it is translation. So many obstacles threaten the process!
Communication consists of one person with an idea trying to replicate that idea-with all its particularities and nuances-in the mind of another. His idea bears neither size, shape, nor weight, but consists only of a flickering mental image. So the speaker must choose codes called "words" to represent it. Depending on how vivid his idea, and how vast his vocabulary and precise his syntax, he may or may not choose appropriate words. Then he must shape with his mouth the words chosen in his mind. But sometimes words stumble as they step

[^24]over tongue and teeth. Thus the words spoken may not match the words chosen.

Next, the hearer must take in precisely what the speaker has sent out. But if a sudden noise interrupts or the hearer's attention wanders, he might miss what was said. "Three" may be heard as "tree" or "free" or "thirty." Even if the correct word is heard, the hearer may assign a different meaning to it. If I say "blue," what do you see? Pale blue like in the sky along the horizon? Royal blue? Navy? Slate? Do abstracts like "love" or "generosity" mean the same to all people?

Richards proposes a schematic to represent communication in one language:

## SOURCE

DESTINATION

## $\mathbf{S} \Rightarrow \mathbf{E} \Rightarrow \mathbf{T} \Rightarrow \mathbf{R} \Rightarrow \mathbf{D} \Rightarrow \mathbf{D v}$



## S-SELECTOR E-ENCODER T-TRANSMITTER

R-RECEIVER D-DECODER Dv-DEVELOPER

Translation requires at least two of these processes in order for communication to succeed. The translator serves as Destination for the Source Language utterance, and then as the Source for the Target Language utterance. Obviously there are many opportunities for "noise"-imprecision and misunderstanding-to enter and derail the process. ${ }^{2}$

Because of such difficulties Heidegger despaired of even the possibility of translation. ${ }^{3}$ Some biblical translators inquire whether certain texts can be translated correctly because of "obligatory categories" in the receptor languages absent from the biblical languages. ${ }^{4}$ Even if translation is possible, none generates the impact of the original.
. . . the work of translation is just like chewing food that is to be fed to others. If one cannot chew the food oneself, one has to be given food that has already been chewed. After such an operation, however, the food is bound to be poorer in taste and flavor than the original. ${ }^{5}$

Be that as it may, Christians must translate. If the church is to disciple all nations as Jesus commanded, and if representatives from every language are to enjoy the Kingdom, the word originally sounded in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek must echo-in Khmer, Angave, and English.

## Basic Approaches

But how do we make that happen? In what ways must the translation mirror the original? What rules govern the process?

[^25]All translation should convey into the receptor language the literal meaning of the original. An English translation should therefore produce in my mind the same picture that comes to yours when you read the Khmer original. Thus when we describe one translation as "literal" we are not referring to meaning, since all translation should convey the literal meaning of the original document. However, not all translation transfers the form of the first to the second. That is, the word order and grammar may differ. In fact, very often they must differ!

There are two basic approaches to translation. The first, the "literal" approach (a poor title since, as mentioned above, all good translation seeks to be literal in meaning), seeks to preserve the linguistic form of the source language. The second, or idiomatic approach, attempts to convey the literal meaning of the original in a linguistic form natural to the receptor language, regardless of whether that form parallels the form of the source. These two basic approaches give rise to four types of translation-the highly literal, the modified literal, the idiomatic, and the unduly free. These lie along a continuum with no sharp lines of demarcation between them. Of these, only the modified literal and the idiomatic are acceptable. ${ }^{6}$

A problem with a highly literal translation is that, though it may accurately duplicate the vocabulary and syntax of the original, the translation conveys muddles or no meaning to the reader. Any translation that the translator wants the readers to understand should be pro-
${ }^{6}$ John Beekman and John Callow, Translating the Word of God (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974), 19-21. Mildred L. Larson, MeaningBased Translation: A Guide to Cross-Language Equivalence (New York: University Press of America, 1984), 17, sees seven types of translation in the continuum-very literal, literal, modified literal, inconsistent mixture, near idiomatic, idiomatic, and unduly free. The translator's goal, according to Larson, is to produce an idiomatic translation. The need for naturalness of expression was recognized by Hans-Georg Gadamer, Truth and Methotl, ed. Garrett Barden and John Cumming (New York: Continuum, 1975), 358: "But no text and no book speaks if it does not speak the language that reaches the other person." Most sources agree that, to generate maximum impact, a translation should not sound like a translation.
duced according to the "absolute rule that translation occurs not between words but between meanings." ${ }^{7}$

Centuries ago Aquila translated the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek, trying to reflect every detail of the original in his translation. The result was that he carried "Hebraism to an extreme, turning the Hebrew literally into Greek in defiance of Greek idiom. ${ }^{\prime 8}$ Consequently his translation "violates" Greek grammar and terminology." The "mechanical and tortured literalness" ${ }^{10}$ of Aquila's work and its often unintelligible Greek ${ }^{11}$ suggest that it was never intended for popular use. Instead it aided teachers who already knew Hebrew, and served in an interpretive rather than a literary role.' ${ }^{12}$ If it is true "that translation occurs . . . between meanings" then perhaps what Aquila produced was not a translation. Highly literal renderings baffle the reader, obscure the message, and make the work seem ridiculous, obviously foreign, and of little relevance. ${ }^{13}$

A highly literal translation is unacceptable because it conveys little meaning, or because it sounds unnatural. An unduly free translation. on the other hand, fails because it changes the source data. Nowlin criticizes the English Living Bible because Taylor was too free with the original, allowing historical, theological, and lexical distortions to sully the work. ${ }^{14}$ Taylor's "translation" is understandable to the English

[^26]reader (unlike Aquila for the Greek reader), but it distorts the meaning of the original.

## Dynamic Equivalence

The safe course for translation lies between these extremes, employing the strengths and abandoning the weaknesses of each. The data of the source document must be retained, but the linguistic forms by which that data is conveyed may be altered to fit the patterns of the receptor language. While retaining faithfulness to the content and intent of the original, we may abandon formal equivalence in structure and opt for dynamic equivalence.

This attention to the response of the reader of the translation, rather than on reproducing the form of the original, has been called a "new focus" in translating. ${ }^{15}$ But it is not entirely new, since Jerome (c. 347-419), Luther (1483-1546), and Dolet (1509-46) all advocated altering form to convey correct meaning. ${ }^{16}$ Rebutting the accusation that he had mistranslated a letter, Jerome laid down the principle that "in translating from the Greek. . . I render sense for sense and not word for word." ${ }^{17}$ However, though the "new focus" is not entirely new, its recent development does parallel the evolution of the new hermeneutic, with its emphasis on the existential concerns and response of the interpreter.

[^27]Dynamic equivalence promotes contextual consistency in word choice over verbal consistency. ${ }^{18}$ Contextual consistency means making each translation of a word fit its context, though that may entail using different words or phrases, depending on context, to translate any one word from the original. This approach excels verbal consistency because the ranges of meaning for words in different languages do not overlap. The English word "know" cannot consistently be translated by the same Khmer word. To know how to do something is jeh plus the verb; to know a person requires skoal. Therefore to correctly translate the English sentence, "I know Tom, and Tom knows how to fix your problem," requires both skoal and jeh for the one English word "know." We must insist on contextual rather than verbal consistency if translation is to succeed.

This seems quite obvious. But dynamic equivalence goes beyond this to evaluate the total impact of a translation upon the reader. Traditionally, a translation was assessed by comparing the original and the translated texts. If the formal and meaningful structures of the two corresponded, the translation was considered faithful. However, dynamic equivalence inquires whether a translation's readers respond in a manner similar to the way the original readers did. This response includes both intellectual comprehension as well as a sense of the text's relevance and motivation to react to it. That is, a good translation embodies an informative function (communication of data), an expressive function (communication of feeling), and an imperative function (communication of a need to respond). The faithfulness of a translation depends upon its ability to elicit the same response as the original. ${ }^{19}$

## The Need to Understand

Before further assessing the value of dynamic equivalence, let us recall that God meant the Scriptures to be understood. Amazingly,

[^28]not all accept that fact, even though the Bible asserts its own perspicuity. Its last book is called the Revelation ('A $\quad$ оок $\alpha \lambda \cup \psi \imath \varsigma$ ). By its very title, then, the book is an unveiling, a disclosure, a making plain; not an obfuscation or muddling.

> Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach. It is not up in heaven, so that you have to ask, "Who will ascend into heaven to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?" Nor is it beyond the sea, so that you have to ask, "Who will cross the sea to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?" No, the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it. ${ }^{20}$

Christ berated both friend and foe who did not understand the scriptures, implying that they should have grasped them. ${ }^{24}$ Even where the intent of a passage is to withhold truth from an unbeliever, it does so not because the language itself is obscure. Rather, it is the spiritual significance of the simple sayings that is withheld. ${ }^{22}$ Ezra's reading of the Law so the people could understand resulted in repentance, obedience, and joy. ${ }^{33}$

The fact that the Bible is God's word implies that its divine author intended communication and understanding, not rote, mechanical preservation of grammatical form. Viewing God's word this way neither flows from nor results in a weakened doctrine of inspiration. But it is evident from both the nature of the text and the history of its transmission that God cares more that the central message be conveyed from generation to generation than that every word and form of the original always be known with certainty. We possess no biblical autographs; if we did some would doubtless worship them as Israel did the bronze snake. Variants and obscurities pepper both the Hebrew and Greek texts. The debate continues between adherents of the majority and critical

[^29]texts. The gospels suggest that Jesus taught chiefly in Aramaic, yet we have no Aramaic originals to tell us "exactly" what he said. The four gospels vary in their portrayal of the same event. The citation of the Old Testament in the New remains a thorny problem. Sometimes writers cite the Masoretic text, sometimes the Septuagint, sometimes neither. What was important was that they convey the sense of the original rather than always its precise words. The conclusion is clear. Although we do not abandon verbal inspiration or minimize scrutiny of the details of the text, we must insist that understanding of, belief in, and obedience to the message constitutes God's main intent in giving us the scriptures. Jesus rebuked those who exercised great agility with the details of the text but failed to grasp its central message. ${ }^{24}$

## Dynamic Equivalence and Understanding

If then communication of meaning is the goal of scripture, and the words and forms serve as means to achieve that objective and not as ends in themselves, it is important to determine which translation approach best facilitates communication.

School studies in the United States suggest that people understand modified dynamic equivalence translations better than they do formal equivalence translations. This is true at all grade and I.Q. levels, and even of students who had exclusively used a formal equivalence translation through twelfth grade. Chappell thus recommends that

> Evangelical churches and schools adopt [the NIV] as the standard text of Scripture. To do any less would seem to totally disregard the facts and to knowingly inhibit our children's understanding of the eternal Word of God. ${ }^{25}$

Some people oppose this conclusion and argue that ease of understanding should not take precedence over preserving the formal structures-and even ambiguities-of the original text. Edgar asserts

[^30]that "accuracy, not ease of comprehension, is the basic goal in translation. ${ }^{י 26}$ But his illustration of simplifying the theory of relativity by restating it as "two times two equals four" misses the point. Edgar cavalierly misstates relativity, whereas good dynamic equivalence translation labors to preserve original meaning. Parunak argues that Christians should not expect the Bible to be easy to understand: spirituality, study and meditation, and teachers and commentaries are necessary. For him a translation philosophy that does not adhere to strict formal equivalence "aims at producing a translation which is clearer than the original, and which short-circuits the God-ordained means of understanding. ${ }^{127}$ Sometimes echoes of this philosophy reverberate in Cambodia - "Translation B is for spiritual infants because it is easy to understand; the mature study the more difficult Translation A." The conclusion of this school of thought is that the "formal correspondence or literal translation is generally best suited for sustained and careful study of the Bible. ${ }^{י 28}$

However, formal equivalence translation may prove less accurate than one that modifies linguistic structures in the interest of comprehensibility. This is because the vocabulary or grammar of the original, or the milieu in which it was written, may presuppose awareness of cultural assumptions that the modern reader will miss unless they are explained. ${ }^{99}$ Parunak nevertheless argues that ambiguities in the original text should remain ambiguities in the translation, and not clarified through interpretation. ${ }^{30}$

[^31]We should, however, observe a distinction between ambiguities intended by the author and inadvertent obscurities resulting from cultural or linguistic naiveté on the part of the reader. To preserve such obscurities is wrong since most authors (particularly the biblical authors) intend to be understood. Generally, the larger context of an obscure phrase helps lift the fog. If not, the translator should attempt in other ways to determine the meaning of the source text rather than simply produce an ambiguous, "literal" rendering. He has at his disposal greater means of determining the author's intent than does the average reader. ${ }^{31}$ Thus "it is best at least to make sense in the text and put the scholarly caution in the margin, rather than to make nonsense in the text and offer the excuse in the margin. ${ }^{132}$ For example, though some may object to an interpretive translation of 1 Corinthians $7: 36-38,{ }^{33}$ it should be remembered that Paul was answering in these verses questions that the Corinthians had posed. Therefore Paul did not intend the text to convey an uncertain meaning or multiple meanings, nor was it received that way by the Corinthians. ${ }^{34}$ To translate it vaguely today, then, violates the sense of the original. Only in cases where the author intended to be ambiguous (as, perhaps, in John 3:3, 7, where $\alpha v \omega \theta \varepsilon v$ can bear two meanings) should the ambiguity be preserved in translation.

Thus identifying "the love of Christ" as either an objective or subjective genitive would be wrong (p. 7). By this kind of thinking, it would appear that the translation of Luke 20:1f in Frederick C. Grant, Translating the Bible (Greenwich, Connecticut: Seabury, 1961), 135, is the style toward which to strive: "And it became in one of the days teaching of him the people in the temple and evangelizing they stood up the high priests and the scribes with the presbyters and they said saying against him, They tell us in such authority these things you do. . . ."
${ }^{3}$ Jean-Dlaude Margot, "Should a Translation of the Bible be Ambiguous!" The Bible Translator 32 (October 1981):408-9.
${ }^{32}$ Nida and Taber, Theory and Practice, 30.
${ }^{33}$ Thomas Edgar, "Celibates Daughters or Fiancées? An Examination of Translation Techniques in 1 Corinthians 7:36-38," Reflections, Summer 1985, 10.
${ }^{34}$ Margot, "Ambiguous?" 410.

## Limits to Dynamic Equivalence

Having concluded that dynamic equivalence, with its focus upon the reader as well as upon the text, will result in a more understandable and therefore more accurate translation, we must now determine what limits to place upon this procedure. What barriers should be erected to arrest the drift toward "so great a flexibility in translation that . . . 'communication' becomes an ideal abstracted from the message to be communicated"? ${ }^{35}$

First, translators must maintain fidelity to historical references. Beekman and Callow thus object to Jordon's Cotton Patch Version of Paul's Epistles, in which 1 Corinthians becomes "A Letter to the Christians in Atlanta," the things offered to idols in $8: 1$ becomes working on Sunday, and the Jews and Gentiles of 10:32 becomes whites and Negroes. ${ }^{36}$ Carson illustrates the value of retaining faithfulness to historical and cultural references:

> If for instance we replace 'recline at food' or 'recline at table' with 'sit down to eat', we are going to have a tough job imagining how John managed to get his head on Jesus' breast. Preservation of descriptions of what is to us an alien custom, reclining at tables, makes it possible to understand a later action, John placing his head on Jesus' breast. ${ }^{37}$

[^32]Second, fidelity to didactic references means that the doctrines of the original must be maintained even should the translator find these objectionable. Nowlin protests against the Living Bible's phrase "as many as wanted eternal life, believed" in Acts 13:48 ${ }^{38}$ (for ' $\varepsilon \pi i \sigma \tau \varepsilon \cup \sigma \alpha \nu$
 gues for such an understanding. ${ }^{39}$

Third, incomplete, extraneous, and different information must not intrude into the translation. The Living Bible clearly violates this principle in Amos 1:1-"Amos was a herdsman living in the village of Tekoa. All day long he sat on the hillsides watching the sheep, keeping them from straying." When compared to the Hebrew text, this rendering contains significant added and deleted material.

## Restating the Goal

These caveats have been placed upon dynamic equivalence translation by its practitioners. Perhaps the theory could be improved by tinkering with its stated objective of producing equivalent response on the part of the reader. ${ }^{40}$ Is such a response either possible or always desirable? The possibility of evoking equivalent response is questionable because of the historical and cultural distance between the original and translation readers. The desirability is called into question by the situational distance between the two.

[^33]For example, the goal of Paul's writing 1 Corinthians 5 was that the church expel one of its members. Should a translation prompt a church today to expel one of its members where none is living in immorality? The situational differences render the goal of equivalent response undesirable. One of Paul's desired responses to the early chapters of Romans was that Jews not feel superior to Gentiles. Differences between the A.D. 60's in the Roman Empire and the early twenty-first century render such an objective generally unnecessary. These differences may even require a reverse reaction--that Gentile Christians not feel superior to the Jews! The response of the Philadelphia church to its letter ( $\operatorname{Rev} 3: 7-13$ ) should have been one of encouragement and an attempt to keep on the same track (see v. 11, "Hold on to what you have"). If the Laodicean church had responded the same way, it would have been disastrous. ${ }^{41}$

Carson argues against
the unwitting assumption that 'response' is the ultimate category in translation. Strictly speaking, that is not true; theologically speaking, it is unwise; evangelistically speaking, it is uncontrolled, not to say dangerous. ${ }^{42}$

To focus so much on generating equivalent response that the text is adjusted to generate that response is to fail in translation's chief purpose-the reproduction of the identical meaning of the source document.

Neo-orthodox theology, which views inspiration in terms of the response of the reader more than in terms of the writing of the original document, naturally supports freer translations. ${ }^{43}$. While such theology by no means provides the sole impetus toward dynamic equivalence, its pressure in this direction should at least be noted.

[^34]Downplaying the role biblical scholars play in producing a translation in favor of stylists should bear careful scrutiny. ${ }^{44}$ Is content now to be demoted from a priority equal to ease of understanding, to a subordinate position? Do scholars inevitably stutter or drone?

If "equivalent response" is not the desideratum, what is? Perhaps better would be that the reader experience "equivalent grasp of and by the message." "Grasp of" includes apprehension of both the data and the tone of the work. "Grasp by" means that the reader perceives its relevance and senses an urgency to obey it to the extent that his circumstances parallel those of the original audience. By making "grasp of and by" the message translation's goal rather than equivalent response, we maintain the proper distance between the original and present readers while still urging a "fusion of horizons."

## Summary

In summary, translation is a difficult task, requiring the transference not of lexical and grammatical forms into a new language, but the meaning and dynamics of the text. Historical and cultural differences mean that translations that promote merely formal correspondence will not accomplish this goal. Understanding is a prime objective of translation, and dynamic equivalence has demonstrated itself more effective in generating understanding.

However, the focus must not rest so exclusively upon the reader that the original is altered to accommodate him or her. If unchecked, the objective of producing equivalent response may encourage that. Therefore the translator should aim at producing a work in which the

[^35]reader experiences equivalent grasp of and by the work. In this way a balance between the demands of text and reader is maintained.

Nida describes two types of Bibles in Thailand. One is an English translation so old that practically no one understands it. Copies of this translation are useful for hotel owners, however, because the mere presence of one in a room deters guests from stealing the linens. The other speaks the language of the people. After reading this latter, a Buddhist abbot agreed to allow each of his monks to receive a copy of "that remarkable book." However, he warned them not to accept one unless they were prepared to lose nights of sleep. ${ }^{45}$

Let us promote scripture translations that cause people to lose sleep, rather than those that merely discourage the pilfering of towels. But let us also encourage translations that do not adjust the message for the sake of supposed "clarity."

## Appendix

The following is part of a letter. dated 3/30/89, written by Rick Speece. At that time Rick was producing for Wycliffe Bible Translators a New Testament for the Angave people of Papua New Guinea.

Over the past two months eight other translators here in PNG have taken turns joining with two Angave people and myself daily in order to recheck Paul's letters and the book of Acts. This followed several months of checking the same documents with many people at the village of Angai. Now some of you may be wondering, "Why so much checking and rechecking?" Let me try to explain why by putting you in the position of someone reading about events which happened in a culture quite unknown to you. Consider the following story which was translated into English from Inibaloi (a Philippine language) by Lee Ballard.
"...One of those who found (some of the buried money) was Juan Bejar... They arrived with it at night at his house, and he did 'kapi' for it that night at his house at Salakoban. Yes, it was at his house where he did 'kapi' for it.
"The next morning, as they were eating the head, the new jaw bone fell down. And it was not tilted when it fell but rather it was upright and it was pointing east. When the old women saw it, they said, 'Do it a second time. Perhaps they have regarded it as insufficient.' And yes, Juan did 'kapi' for it a second time."

Now test yourselves to see whether this English translation is meaningful. Answer the following questions:

What is meant by 'kapi'?
Why did they do 'kapi'?
Who were eating the head?
What kind of head or whose head was it?
What fell down?
The jaw bone of what fell down?
From where did the jawbone fall?
What is the significance of the jaw bone's position?

How did the old women react to what they saw?
Who regarded what as insufficient?
I suspect that you could not confidently answer many of the questions. Why? Simply because the author told this story to his fellow Inibaloi, who share with him the knowledge of certain cultural facts. Therefore he did not need to make them explicit. Now consider a second translation of the same story.
"...One of those who found (some of the buried money) was Juan Bejar... They brought it to his house at night, and he celebrated the feast of 'kapi' with a pig as payment to the ancestral spirits. Yes, it was at his house there in Salakoban that he celebrated the feast of 'kapi' for it.
"The next morning, as they were having the traditional community breakfast following feasts, the jaw bone of the pig that had been sacrificed the previous evening fell down from the eaves of the house where it is traditionally hung, and it was not tilted when it fell but rather it was upright, and it was pointing east where the ancestral spirits are said to live. When the old women saw it, they regarded it all as a bad omen and said, 'Celebrate "kapi" a second time. Perhaps the ancestral spirits have regarded the pig you sacrificed as insufficient payment.' And yes, Juan celebrated 'kapi' for it a second time."

Did you find the second translation of the story more meaningful than the first? Why? Because cultural information that is necessary for non-Inibaloi speakers to understand the story has been supplied in bold print. Now the second translation is different from the first, but it is the same story simply told in a way that is more meaningful to outsiders.

Now I hope you have a better idea about why we find it necessary to do such extensive checking and rechecking of our translations.

Let's now consider two questions recently asked by consultants checking the Angave translation of the book of Acts. You will recall that in chapter 9 Paul escaped from Damascus by going over the wall in a basket. The translation consultant asked, "How did Paul get into the
basket?" When I translated the question into Angave one of the two ladies with whom we were checking responded, "I don't see how Paul could have gotten into a basket." The other lady replied, "God's Spirit must have made Paul tiny so he could fit into the basket." The ladies' answers were shaped by their culture, for neither has ever seen a basket larger than a 3 gallon bucket. They don't know that in the Middle East they commonly make large baskets into which a full grown man would have no trouble fitting. So we decided to qualify the word "basket" in the Angave translation so that it reads "a very large basket." By making that adjustment we have enhanced the translation so that it communicates the meaning Luke intended his readers to understand.

Later in the same chapter is the story of Dorcas dying and Paul raising her to life again. Verse 37 reads: "...she fell sick and died; and when they had washed her body, they laid it in an upper room." The consultant asked, "Why did they wash her body?" The Angave ladies talked it over between themselves and replied, "We don't know why they washed the body. We don't do that when someone dies. Furthermore we don't lay the body down. We truss it up in a sitting position. We think, however, that they were just following their own customs of what they would do when people die." In the light of that answer we felt that the text communicated meaningfully as translated and needed no adjustment even though the customs are foreign to the Angave.



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## The Proud Palm Tree



UON Seila

On a peninsula in Southeast Asia lies a country once called "Kampuchea," meaning "The Land of Gold." During the colonial period the French called it "Cambodge," a name that later evolved into "Cambodia." There are a lot of palm trees in most farming fields in Cambodia. One day our Training of Timothys team was returning from a seminar on unity in Kompong Thom. On the way back to Phnom Penh my team asked me, "Let's stop for a while to shoot a rabbit (i.e., find a rest room)." So I stopped the car and we went to "shoot a rabbit" or "see a man about a dog." and I noticed a palm tree with another kind of tree growing on it. That was interesting! The tree was called Chrey in Cambodian.

As I mentioned in a previous article, ${ }^{1}$ some Cambodian farmers consider the bamboo and palm tree to be husband and wife. The palm tree is very useful. It can be used for building houses, barns, boats, and farming tools. Its leaves can be used to thatch roofs. make hats, mats, containers for rice crops, etc. Its juice can produce sugar. its fruit can be cooked as food, and when it ripens the palm can be used to make Akor and other kinds of cake.

[^41]So the palm tree is very useful from root to leaves. just as is the bamboo. Its trunk is strong and hard. It has sturdy roots. Storms only rarely can cause a palm tree to fall. Its leaves look dark green all year round, similar to a pine tree or Christmas tree. It does not change color as the seasons pass. That is why owners of some five-star hotels and other buildings in Phnom Penh plant palm trees in their yards as decorations. They not only add beauty to the hotel, but also invite people caught up in a rat-race society to think about the peaceful countryside lives of Cambodian farmers. In the 1998 election one political party chose the palm tree as its emblem. Perhaps they thought they could focus the attention of the Khmer people on the strength of the tree and the unchanging evergreen color of its leaves, and so win people's hearts and votes.

I also agreed with that idea! Most Cambodian artists express similar feelings by including palm trees in their paintings of countryside scenery. The palm tree is a strong and useful plant in Cambodia. It can stand firm whether in flood or in storm or in dry season, and it also stands symbolically as a national tree.

But the palm tree will die if there is some dirt on it, even though it is so proud with its beauty and its strength. If the farmer does not come to cut the leaves and they stay attached, some dirt may accumulate where they attach to the trunk. Birds will drop into this dirt on the palm tree their stools carrying seeds of fruits they have eaten. When the rainy season comes. these small seeds will germinate and grow. At first they look too small to bother the tall palm tree. Maybe the palm even looks proud of having two kinds of tree growing together.

But as the years fly by the other tree grows bigger and bigger. Eventually the palm can't get enough of the nutrients that its roots absorb from the ground because the other tree sucks them all away. The palm tree then becomes malnourished, and before long dies.

When we had World Vision staff retreat in Siem Reap two years ago we visited a ruined temple. I noticed that some of the temple walls had been destroyed by the same kind of tree I saw growing on the palm tree. Its root had split the stones from sticking close together. As long as the stones stayed close together the wall looked good. and the beauty of each relief it bore vividly reflected the civilization of the Khmer

Empire. In order to save the temple from falling apart the Ministry of Tourism had workers cut the root of the tree away. Most of the ruin was destroyed by a root that grew between the stones of the temple. These trees had flourished during the long years of the civil war when no visitors came to see the temple. Cambodia was cut off from the world for nearly two decades. Neither local nor overseas visitors came to the temples during the time of the killing fields. So not only were people killed during that time, even the stones were badly damaged.

It reminded me of the relationship that God and his people once enjoyed. In the beginning man and God were close companions, but after the fall of Adam and Eve, sin entered this world and separated man from his creator. For the wages of $\sin$ is death. In order to fix the broken relationship sin must be dealt with first. It is like the stone wall at Angkor Wat. To save it from destruction they need to send some agent from the Ministry of Tourism to cut the root. When it first started growing the root looked very small, but as time went by it grew bigger and bigger. The longer it stayed the worse the damage it caused to the relief.

Sin at first starts very small, but as time passes its results grow worse and worse. Unrepented $\sin$ will ruin a relationship. As Christians please remember the lesson from the palm tree. Don't be proud that we are strong, that we the palm tree are the symbol of the country-the chosen race or kin, and that they use us to decorate five-star hotels. Don't be thrilled with the beauty and honor that we are given. If we forget to allow garden keeper to take away our old leaves we will become dirty, or birds will drop something on us. As an English saying reminds us, "We cannot stop birds from flying over our heads, but we can stop them from building their nests on our heads."

We have to confess our sins to God. But if we confess our sins to God, he will keep his promise and do what is right: he will forgive us our sins and purify us from all our wrongdoing. ${ }^{2}$ If we allow sin to grow bigger and bigger we can never come into the presence of the Lord and we will perish like a palm tree.

[^42]The same can happen in the relationships between friends and churches if we allow sins to grow between us. Like the stone wall at Angkor Wat, our relationship will fall apart. Beware of roots that start to grow between the stones that the builder originally placed close together. When the stones remain close together, they become the image of the four faces at Bayon or Apsara, and they look beautiful. But when tree roots grow in between, the original shape with its beauty and meaning is lost. Not only does it look ugly, but the whole temple may fall as well. Make sure you cut away the roots.

My friends. Jesus wants to fix the broken relationship with all humankind. God and man used to have a very close relationship. But sin separated us from God, and caused that relationship to break down. Because the sacred relationship between God and man broke, all other types of relationships have turned sour as well. Relationships between husband and wife, children and parents, brothers and sisters, nation and nation. race and race. etc.. became spoiled and turned into a mess. Why? It is caused by SIN. But people, races, and societies can live in harmony if they allow Jesus to cut off the root of sin. He is the only name that can save mankind. ${ }^{3} \mathrm{He}$ is the farmer who can clean the palm tree to keep it from being destroying by an invading plant. He is the agent from the Ministry of Tourism who can dig out the roots growing between stones of the ruin.

Conclusion:

- Palm trees can live long and stay strong if they have no other tree growing in their stem.
- Christians can stand strong in their faith if they don't allow sin to grow bigger and bigger in their lives.
- Stones in old ruins can still look beautiful if they stay close to the original place where they were put.
- All kinds of relationships can be in harmony if sin is dealt with first.

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## Watch and Pray

## Neal YOUNGQUIST

Throughout the gospels, Jesus firmly commanded his disciples to watch and pray. As the Good Shepherd, concerned for the imminent dangers confronting his sheep, Jesus repeatedly emphasized the need to guard our souls through watchfulness and prayer.

The need to pray is obvious. But what does it mean to watch? In the original Greek text of Matthew 25:13; Mark 13:33,37, and Luke $21: 36$ the phrase "to
 watch" conveys the need to give strict attention to; be cautious and alert: be vigilant; be sleepless: be on guard for fear that through laziness and looseness some destructive calamity will suddenly overtake one's life.'

With this in mind, on what areas should we as Christians diligently focus? Three main areas deserve our attention: to watch against

[^44]temptation, to be on guard against false teaching, and to prepare ourselves for Christ's return.

## Watching Against Temptation

Jesus said, "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing but the body is weak." ${ }^{2}$ Often we think that temptation is solely external to ourselves. But to misdirect our full attention toward outward attractions leaves us vulnerable to the temp-

## Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.

 Prov 4:23 tations lurking within our hearts. James wrote, "Each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed." We must accept the fact that impure desires lie in wait within our hearts looking for opportunities of expression in various forms. The importance of this cannot be underestimated since Satan, our accuser and tester, is well acquainted with these latent shortcomings, and cunningly seeks to exploit them for his advantage and our destruction.Since the heart is deceitful beyond measure ${ }^{4}$ many of these enticements often take on a subtle form: the persuasive urge to add to our temporal possessions; the consummate desire to position ourselves in the best light; a cunningness to dominate or manipulate people to our advantage; a hidden craving to feed our over-inflated egos; veiled hatred fueled by unforgiveness buried deep within our souls. Sadly, we underestimate our ability to deceive ourselves. Falling under sin's seductive influence we become its slaves at the expense of the vitality and fruitfulness of our spiritual lives. For this very reason Solomon, gifted with great wisdom although well experienced in falling prey to his own vices, urges us to "guard our heart, for it is the wellspring of life."

[^45]Guarding our heart requires real courage to sincerely confront our inborn weaknesses. Such courage requires a consistent commitment to regular, humble self-examination through reading God's word and prayer. David's psalms exclaim the illuminating effect of God's inspired word-"the commands of Yahweh are radiant, giving light to the eyes" ${ }^{6}$ and "the unfolding of your words give light; it gives understanding to the simple." As the word of God shines on receptive hearts it opens one's understanding to the areas of life that are in need of transformation. Revelation of the heart's condition is further magnified through fervent prayer. David cried out to his Creator to search and know his heart, to test and know his thoughts, to reveal any offensive way, and finally to guide him on the everlasting way. ${ }^{8}$

Our travel on the road of righteousness, however, depends on the grace of God as well. The Apostle Paul, who encountered his own frustrations, recognized that personal resources were altogether insufficient to win the battle over the flesh. Victory is realized by reliance on Christ's redeeming work on the cross and the power of the Spirit of God in our lives. ${ }^{9}$ It is God's abundant grace that "teaches us to say 'No' to ungodiness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age." ${ }^{10}$

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me
Jn 10:27

## Watching Against False Teaching

The early church was constantly encountering false teaching. Various heresies, doctrines, myths, and "different gospels" were secretly entering the church and silently eroding the fundamental values and faith of the Body of Christ. Recognizing the dangers of following such pleas-ant-sounding but wayward teachings,
${ }^{6}$ Ps 19:8.
${ }^{7}$ Ps 119:130.
${ }^{8}$ Ps 139:23, 24.
${ }^{9}$ See Rom 6-8.
${ }^{10}$ Tit 2:12.

Paul, Peter, Jude, John, and other church leaders of the day issued strong warnings to guard against deceivers within their midst. Discerning the dangers as well. Jesus admonished his disciples to "Watch out that no one deceives you"' and "Be on guard against the yeast [teaching] of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." ${ }^{2}$

Today, very little is different from the times of the early church. Unsound doctrine, appealing to our carnal appetites, is ever present. With so much deception circling about us how can we keep true to the narrow road before us?

A commitment to studying and meditating upon the truth of the word of God and hiding it within our heart is the first defense against heresy. Second, John exhorts us to not believe every spirit "but test the spirits to see whether they are from God ... every spirit that acknowledges Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God." ${ }^{13}$ And finally, cultivating an intimate relationship with the Lord through prayer and holy living will keep our hearts away from the crooked paths that lead to destruction. The more we know Him the better we can discern between truth and deception.

## Watching for His Return

The timing and events surrounding Christ's return has been passionately debated since the ascension. No doubt, every age had reason to believe that Christ's return was imminent. Yet, our focus must not be diverted on determining the day or hour of the return. Rather, we are to keep alert, preparing ourselves when Christ does come again.

The consequences of ill-preparedness are devastating. As with a guard asleep at his post, dangers abound for those who are consumed by the affairs of this world, unaware of the need to be spiritually ready. As demonstrated by the parables of the foolish virgins without oil in their lamps and the fearful servant who misused his single talent (ref. Matthew 25) the risks of negligence and faithlessness are too great to ignore.

[^46]As children of the light we are to be ever ready, not like those who are "asleep" carelessly partaking in deeds of darkness. Like pilgrims passing through this world our activities must center on courageously investing our lives, talents, and resources for the Kingdom of God. We are

## "No Regrets,

 No Remorse, No Retreat" to be engaged in transforming the temporal nature of earthly things into an enduring quality for God's eternal kingdom. And, in doing so, to ready ourselves for the time when "the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and mortal with immortality." ${ }^{14}$Christ is coming for ready servants awaiting and hastening his return; servants longing for a lasting home; servants enduring hardship rather than the fleeting pleasures of sin; servants perceiving and welcoming the eternal promises from afar; servants making every effort to be found spotless.

All the more reason, therefore, for a commitment to watch over our hearts, guard our minds from errant teaching, and to be ready for Christ's second coming. Such a dedication, surrounded with the grace of God, will gain us a joyous entrance into God's eternal kingdom. With this in view, momentary struggles are worth it; short-term sufferings are bearable; difficulties give opportunity for praise. During our earthly sojourn may the pledge of a faithful servant in China ring true in our hearts: no regrets, no remorse, no retreat. Let that be our anthem as we live ever-watchful lives for God's glory!


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UON Seila

## Meet Ngov Vorn



NGOV Vorn

Pastor Ngov Vorn was born in 1928. He was raised by a Christian farmer who lived in Kdam Ha village, Chhouk Kasarch subdistrict, Baray district, Kompong Thom province. He has one younger sister. Ngov Vorn gave his life to Jesus when he was 17 years old.

In 1950 he took up studies at the Takmau Bible School in Kandal province. After graduating he worked as an evangelist with Christian and Missionary Alliance.

In 1952 he married a Christian woman. Choeun Kim Nonn. Nine children were born into this family. They lost one daughter, along with her husband and their children, in the Pol Pot time. But eight chil-dren-three sons and five daughters-survived. All are Christians. After his wife Kim Nonn passed away in 1983, he married a Christian widow. Ly Kim Ny, whose husband had died in Pol Pot regime. Together they have served the Lord in Kompong Thom since 1990.

There was intense persecution around the time he believed in Jesus, but he is strong in persevering in his faith regardless of whether people look down on him. Pastor Ngov Vorn retained his faith throughout the Khmer Rouge years. God spared his life to testify to us about his amazing grace.

After the Khmer Rouge regime fell, Pastor Vorn set up an independent worship place. No denomination supported the work, but friends from overseas provided some money. He saved it, bought a plot of land, and built a church building in 1998. He named the church "First Baptist Church of Kompong Thom Town." In 1999 he joined with the Baptists.

When asked why he believed in Jesus when his community did not, he answered that he originally did so to please his believing father. At first he knew very little about Christianity, but during Bible school he learned a great deal. In addition, surviving the terror of Khmer Rouge regime taught him even more clearly about the amazing grace of God. who took care of him and drew him closer.

When he first came to faith he frequently asked his father, "Why do we believe in Jesus while everyone else believes in Buddha?" He dared to ask such a question because he was somewhat of a favorite of his grandfather, and he knew that his grandfather would take his side. In recalling this question, Pastor Vorn is dropping a hint to us that in his younger years he was embarrassed because of his family's faith.

Before the Khmer Rouge era there were only fifteen Christians in the whole of Kompong Thom province. After the fall of Phnom Penh, he was arrested and jailed for twenty-two days because they accused him of being an American CIA informer. The reason for this is that before the war, missionaries from Christian and Missionary AllianceHamong and Peterson and some Khmer evangelists-used to come to Kompong Thom to hold evangelistic rallies, and they would come to see him. But God delivered him from the hand of Khmer Rouge, and he was evacuated about forty kilometers from his home village to La Boeuk. There he was designated to work in the plowing corps.

The Khmer Rouge twice tried to kill him, and they demanded, "Are you an American CIA agent?" He answered, "I believe in Jesus, as do the Americans. They believed before I did, and came to tell me
about him. But I do not believe in Americans." Then Khmer Rouge stayed mum. He was not sure what would happen next, because he felt he had spoken eloquently to the Khmer Rouge. But the power of God eased the hearts of the Khmer Rouge soldiers so that they did not kill him.

In 1980 when he returned to his home village, he found that no other Christians had survived. He and his family were the only Kompong Thom Christians that made it through the dark age of three years, eight months, and twenty days. He bicycled throughout Kompong Thom and Siem Reap to search for any remnant Christians, and eventually met a handful in Siem Reap.

Between 1980 and 1988 he worshiped God in his own house, but then went to Phnom Penh to contact other Christians. While there he got some Bibles from Alice Compain. He also cycled to Kompong Cham and met with some Christians in that place. For all these ministries he never received any salary. He was a farmer-and his wife sold things in her small business-all the time he was serving the Lord.

I asked him, "If we compare church growth before the country fell into Khmer Rouge hands with the present rate, in which era did the church grow more rapidly? At present the church is growing rapidly everywhere, emerging like a mushroom even in remote areas. Why?" He answered, because evangelism today is holistic and there is a stronger drive toward evangelism.

When the country was first at war, people scattered everywhere. Some moved to a second country, and of these a portion then went to a third. Still others died. Those who moved to a third country came to believe in Jesus. After peace returned to Cambodia they repatriated, or came to visit their relatives. When they did, they shared with their relatives the good news about God's amazing grace in saving their lives. Because it was now relatives who were sharing and not just foreigners, because many of these relatives had dramatic testimonies of God's deliverance during their escapes, and because these relatives had freely chosen to become Christians in the more affluent West, and not as a ploy to get rice, the gospel had a much greater impact.

Second, people thirst for the Word of God nowadays more than they did before the fall of the country. Previously most evangelists were
only foreigners; therefore when people believed they were labeled as believing in the French God. After the war the gospel had more impact. I believe if God did not let the Cambodian people go through the agony of the civil war, maybe the gospel would not advance as fast as it is doing today. There are two pastors today who survived the war and the Pol Pot regime-Pastor Gnov Vorn and Pastor Seang Aung. Seang Aung escaped to Vietnam during the Pol Pot time, while Gnov Vorn stayed here in Cambodia.

I asked him if he felt sorry that God let Cambodia go through such a war? He said praise the Lord. if God did not allow the Khmer people to go through that suffering, there would not be the rapid spread of repentance and faith that we see today. From this perspective he sees the suffering during the civil war as a blessing from God.

What is the difference between missionaries today when compared with those of the past? Pastor Gnov Vorn answered that in the past missionaries who came to work in Cambodia were narrow-minded. not like those of today. They did not want to go to the countryside. They liked to live in towns and cities. For example in 1965-66 there was only one missionary family, Thompson and his wife, who accompanied Pastor Gnov Vorn to the northeast to share the gospel. Another bad example was a handful of missionaries who preached about love from their Bibles, but did not practice love in their lives. So progress in sharing the good news was slow and not widespread.

We are so grateful to God that he has sent good missionaries to do his work in Cambodia today. They are very friendly to us, and show brotherly love to us and to other Christians in remote areas. This is the real love that God commands in his word-and about which Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 13-that we should love without discrimination or regard to social status. Most missionaries in the present day set good examples for us, and what they have taught reflects the power of God and His word in the Bible. Therefore the gospel that the missionaries share today has more weight and is more holistic. Present church growth is in part the fruit of the missionaries' labor

When asked which ministry can most help restore Cambodian society, he replied youth and children's ministry. If that ministry is well developed, youth will fear God. If they fear God they will become good
leaders, and if we have good Christian government leaders, our country will prosper and be blessed. Pastor Gnov Vorn requests that missionaries from various organizations focus mainly on children's and youth ministry. In the war Cambodia lost a lot of people, and the present population is very young. The reason that he has been able to stand firm in faith so long is because he believed in Jesus when he was young. Even though he went through suffering and persecution, he can stand firm in faith because the word of God was rooted deep in his heart.

He is very grateful that God sent World Vision to Kompong Thom. World Vision initiated a monthly pastors' fellowship. Training of Timothys has helped with pastors' training. May God bless those who came to help us!


[^0]:    'Heinrich Dumoulin and John C. Maraldo, Buddhism in the Modern World (London: Collier MacMillan, 1970).

[^1]:    ${ }^{2}$ C. Norman Kraus, An Intrusive Gospel? Christian Mission in the Postmodern World'(Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 1998), 82.

[^2]:    ${ }^{3}$ François Ponchaud, The Cathedral of the Rice Paddy: 450 Years of History of the Church in Cambodia, trans. Nancy Pignarre and the Bishop Salas Cambodian Catholic Center (Paris: Fayard, 1990). Appendix I, "Insights into the Religious Background of the Khmers."

[^3]:    ${ }^{+}$William R. LaFleur, Buddhism: A Cultural Perspective (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1988), 80.
    ${ }^{5}$ David Wharton, former Buddhist monk in an interview in October 1999.
    ${ }^{\circ}$ Cry from the Forest: A "Buddhism and Ecology" Community Learning Tool, Monk Environmental Education Project (MEEP), Buddhist Institute, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 1999.

[^4]:    ${ }^{7}$ Marco Pallis, A Buddhist Spectrum: Contributions to BuddhistChristian Dialogue (New York: Seabury, 1981).

[^5]:    ${ }^{10}$ Trevor Ling, Buddhism and the Mythology of Evil (Oxford: Oneworld, 1997), 78.
    "The "ten-seed method" is a non-threatening means for villagers to assign relative value to multiple choices.

[^6]:    ${ }^{12}$ Ling, Buddhism and the Mythology of Evil, 12.

[^7]:    ${ }^{13}$ Kraus, Intrusive Gospel, 82.
    ${ }^{14}$ Ken Jones, "Buddhism and Social Action: An Exploration," in The Path of Compassion, ed. Fried Eppsteiner (Berkeley: Parallax, 1985), 78.

[^8]:    ${ }^{16}$ Paul J. Griffiths, ed., Christianity through Non-Christian Eyes (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1992), 146.
    ${ }^{17}$ Ibid.

[^9]:    ${ }^{18}$ Luke 22:25-27 NRSV.

[^10]:    ${ }^{19}$ John Steward, Biblical Holism: Where God, People \& Deeds Connect, An Interactive Workshop (Burwood, Victoria: World Vision Australia, 1994), 125.

[^11]:    ${ }^{20}$ Drs. Nanthachai and Ubonwan, a Christian Thai married couple and former Buddhist monk and nun, wrote their doctoral theses on meekness as a virtue in interfaith dialogue. This approach is based on the Thai worldview and cultural ways of relating. They are devoting their efforts to reeducating Christian missionaries to Thailand. In their view, a direct confrontational approach to communicating the gospel may only drive people further away. Alternatively, a gentle, meek, relational approach starting from the common ground of a desire for ethical and right living, will gradually draw the person toward the Kingdom of God.
    ${ }^{2}$ Steward, Biblical Holism.

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[^16]:    ${ }^{8}$ Ibid.. 46.
    ${ }^{9}$ Ibid., 48.

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    1 Ibid.

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[^24]:    'I. A. Richards, "Toward a Theory of Translating," in Studies in Chinese Thought, ed. Arthur F. Wright (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), 250.

[^25]:    ${ }^{3}$ Allan Bloom, The Closing of the American Mind (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 54. By contrast, some claim that one book-the Biblewas "made to be translated." William Muir, Our Grand Old Bible, $2^{\text {nd }}$ ed. (London: Morgan and Scott, 1911), 233, says, ". . . the record has shown how truly the Bible is a book made to be translated. As has been well said, the Bible of all books loses least of its force and dignity and beauty by being translated into other languages wherever the version made is not erroneous." But he offers no objective data to substantiate this assertion.
    ${ }^{4}$ Roger L. Omanson, "Can You Get There from Here? Problems in Bible Translation," Christian Century 105 (June 22-29, 1988):605f.
    ${ }^{3}$ Kumarajiva, fifth-century A.D. translator of Buddhist texts into Chinese, cited in Fung Yu-Lan, A Short History of Chinese Philosophy, ed. Derk Bodde (New York: Macmillan, 1948), 15. Robert Henry Robins, "Language," in Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15 ${ }^{\text {th }}$ ed., says that almost invariably in translation something of the author's original intent is lost.

[^26]:    'Jacques Barzon and Henry F. Graff, The Modern Researcher, $4^{\text {ih }}$ ed. (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1985), 350.
    ${ }^{8}$ F. G. Kenyon, The Text of the Greek Bible, $3^{\text {rd }}$ ed., rev. and aug. A. W. Adams (London: Duckworth, 1975), 19.
    ${ }^{9}$ Sidney Jellicoe, The Septuagint and Modern Study (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), 314.
    ${ }^{10}$ Frank Moore Cross, Jr., The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies, The Haskell Lectures 1956-1957, rev. ed. (Garden City, New York: Anchor, 1961), 180, n. 26.
    "Jellicoe, Septuagint, 108.
    ${ }^{1}$ IJbid., 77.
    ${ }^{13}$ Beekman and Callow, Translating, 26, 30.
    ${ }^{14}$ Gene Nowlin, The Paraphrased Perversion of the Bible, ed. D. A. Waite (Collingswood, New Jersey: The Bible For Today, 1974).

[^27]:    ${ }^{15}$ Eugene Nida and Charles R. Taber, The Theory and Practice of Translation, Helps for Translators, vol. 8 (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 1.
    ${ }^{16}$ Eugene A. Nida, Toward a Science of Translating (Leiden: Brill, 1964), 12-16.
    ${ }^{17}$ Jerome, Letter 57 "To Pammachius on the Best Method of Translating," in St. Jerome: Letters and Select Works, vol. 6 of A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, $2^{\text {nd }}$ series, trans. with a Prolegomena and Explanatory Notes under the editorial supervision of Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (New York: The Christian Literature Co., 1893), 5 . The deleted words are the parenthetical "except in the case of the holy scriptures where even the order of the words is a mystery". Jerome's exception is unfortunate and should be disregarded.

[^28]:    ${ }^{18}$ Verbal consistency is the goal of the extremely literal (and quite unreadable) Concordant Literal New Testament (Saugus, California: Concordant Publishing Concern, 1966), whose title page boasts that "each word of [the Original] is given a standard exclusive English rendering."
    ${ }^{19}$ Nida and Taber, Theory and Practice, 22-28.

[^29]:    ${ }^{29}$ Deut 30:11-14NIV.
    ${ }^{2}$ Luke 24:25-27; Mark 12:24.
    ${ }^{2}$ Matt 13:10-15; 1 Cor 1:18-25; 2:6-10.
    ${ }^{2}{ }^{3}$ Neh 8.

[^30]:    ${ }^{24}$ Jn 5:39f.
    ${ }^{25}$ Dwight Chappell, A Readability Report on the New International Version (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, n.d.), 8.

[^31]:    ${ }^{26}$ Thomas Edgar, "The Word of God or . . . Merely Equivalent?" Reflections, Fall 1983, 3.
    ${ }^{27}$ Van Parunak, "Notes on Translations," 1974 (mimeographed), 7.
    ${ }^{23}$ Richard A. Taylor, "Philosophies of Bible Translating," Reflections, Summer 1985, 4.
    ${ }^{-9}$ See the letter by Rick Speece of Wycliffe Bible Translators in the Appendix.
    ${ }^{30}$ Parunak, "Notes," 8, says, ". . . understandability is no criterion of accuracy of a translation. In fact, the more understandable a translation is. the more danger there is that the translator has violated the basic principle of translation and said something more clearly than the original did!"

[^32]:    ${ }^{35}$ D. A. Carson, "The Limits of Dynamic Equivalence in Bible Translation," Evangelical Review of Theology 9 (July 1985):211.
    ${ }^{36}$ Clarence Jordan, The Cotton Patch Version of Paul's Epistles (New York: Association, 1968). See also his Cotton Patch Version of Luke and Acts (1969). Such adjustments abound in these works which are "an attempt to translate not only the words but the events. We change the setting from first-century Palestine to twentieth-century America" (Paul's Epistles, p. 7). Beekman and Callow's objection may be found on p. 35 of Translating. By contrast, Charles H. Kraft in Christianity in Culture (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1979), 284f, writes that since such transculterations seek to reach alienated groups of people who are repelled by much that they find in standard translations, these kinds of works "should in many cases be a higher priority than production of even the best kind of translations."
    ${ }^{37}$ Carson, "Limits," 209.

[^33]:    ${ }^{38}$ Nowlin, Paraphrased Perversion, 63.
    ${ }^{39}$ Henry Alford, The Greek Testament: With a Critically Revised Text, a Digest of Various Readings, Marginal References to Verbal and Idiomatic Usage, Prolegomena, and a Critical and Exegetical Commentary, rev. Everett F. Harrison (Chicago: Moody, 1958), vol. 2: Acts. Romans, Corinthians, 153.
    ${ }^{40}$ In their Glossary, p. 200, Nida and Taber in Theory and Practice begin their definition of dynamic equivalence as follows: "quality of a translation in which the message of the original text has been so transported into the receptor language that the RESPONSE of the RECEPTOR is essentially like that of the original receptors." Carson raises this issue in "Limits," 203-6.

[^34]:    ${ }^{4}$ Obviously the Laodiceans required no translation to read the letter to Philadelphia. The point is simply that it may be wrong to expect different readers to respond similarly to the same message.
    ${ }^{42}$ Carson, "Limits," 205.
    ${ }^{43} \mathrm{Nida}$, Science, 27.

[^35]:    ${ }^{44}$ Eugene A. Nida, "Bible Translation for the Eighties," International Review of Missions 70 (July 1981):136f. A better outlook is that of Ernst R. Wendland, "Receptor Language Style and Bible Translation: III: Training Translators about Style," The Bible Translator 33 (January 1982):115-16. He proposes that translators themselves be trained in stylistics. Thus lucid style and learned attention to the original can be interwoven from the start as an integral part of the process. "Style is not a jam that can be smoothly spread on after the bread is buttered-it must be applied right from the start of the translation project" (p. 116).

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[^41]:    'Uon Seila, "Bamboo," Honeycomb 2/2 (April 2001): 10-15.

[^42]:    ${ }^{2} 1$ John 1:9.

[^43]:    ${ }^{3}$ Acts 4:12.

[^44]:    ${ }^{1}$ [Ed. note: These verses use different words: $\gamma \rho \eta \gamma \rho \rho \varepsilon \omega$ in Matt 25:13 and Mk 13:37; $\alpha \gamma \rho v \pi \nu \varepsilon \omega$ in Lk 21:36; $\beta \lambda \varepsilon \pi \omega$ and $\alpha \gamma \rho v \pi \nu \varepsilon \omega$ in Mk 13:33.]

[^45]:    ${ }^{2}$ Matt 26:41.
    ${ }^{3}$ Jas 1:14.
    ${ }^{4}$ Jer 17:9.
    'Prov 4:23.

[^46]:    ${ }^{11}$ Mk 13:5.
    ${ }^{12}$ Lk 12:1.
    ${ }^{13} 1$ Jn 4:1-3.

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