

CONTEXTUALIZED BIBLE STUDY AND THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN MERU
SOCIETY:
LIBERATION THEOLOGY PRINCIPLES IN THE DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT OF
EAST AFRICA

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Table of Contents

Introduction	7
1. Factors for a Theological Curriculum	8
1.1. Introduction	8
1.2. Theological Education in Liberation Theology	8
1.3. Contextual Bible reading in Liberation Theology	10
1.4. Reading from a holistic viewpoint or from oppression	10
1.5. Conscientisation	12
1.6. TEE as a Style of Education	13
1.7. Inquiry-Based Learning	14
1.8. Traditional Styles of Learning	17
1.9. The Universal Church and Tradition in TE	20
1.10. The Learner	22
1.11. The Teacher	25
1.12 Conclusion	27
2. Holistic TE and Development Principles	28
2.1. Introduction	28
2.2. Oppression in the East African Context: Poverty	28
2.3. Felt-Need Orientated	31
2.4. Ownership	32

2.5. Connecting to common ground	33
2.6. Using existing resources	34
2.7. Utilizing People's initiative instead of working for them	36
2.8. Finances	37
2.9. Women	39
2.10. Conclusion	40
3. Case Study: Meru	42
3.1. Introduction	42
3.2. The land	42
3.3. Religion	45
3.4. Relationships	46
3.5. Education	47
3.6. Poverty	49
3.7. Gender	50
3.8. Oppression	52
3.9. Conclusion	54
4. A TE Curriculum	55
4.1. Introduction	55
4.2. Course Description	55
4.3. A conceptual mind-map showing the relationships between different aspects of the course	56

4.4. Entry Level Survey	57
4.5. Course Rationale	57
4.6. Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)	60
4.6.1. ILO	60
4.6.2. Prioritizing ILOs in the light of the course rationale	62
4.7. Curriculum Unit Organization	63
4.8. Teaching strategies (TS)	63
4.9. The curriculum sequence	65
4.10. Evaluation of the Course	76
4.10.1 Possible Side Effect	76
4.11. Conclusion	77
Conclusion	78
Appendix I	80
Report of a Listening Survey in Meru	80
Appendix II	88
My Personal Experience	88
Appendix III	90
Interviews on Traditional Meru Learning and Pressing-Issues of Society	90
How Much Historical Knowledge Do the Meru Still Have?	121

Appendix IV	125
Evaluation according to Rudnitsky and Posner	124
Bibliography	127

Introduction

Even though this paper looks at different areas of Theological Education (TE) it does not intend to give a complete picture of the whole range of TE. It will look at factors that are important for specific TE for the people living at the foot of Mount Meru, Tanzania.

This paper is a collection of voices and experiences of people in the Meru area who express their pressing-issues and look for developmental and educational opportunities.

On this basis a TE programme is created that serves the people's needs. This means that this paper is not theoretical, but based on the writer's experience; hoping to contribute towards holistic TE in the area.

1. Factors for a Theological Curriculum

1.1. Introduction

Education is a basic human right for every person which many people still lack. The churches' great challenge, therefore, is to bring holistic and developmental education with the Bible as the heart of Theological Education, not just to the professional elite. We can learn from Liberation Theology that theological education can be directed towards the poor and oppressed¹. Theological Education by Extension (TEE) takes education to places where it is needed most. Contextual theology and styles of learning make TE relevant to different contexts. Taking these different approaches into account we will find holistic and contextualized theology to be the outcome as people themselves read and interpret the Bible and thus act upon their own problems.

1.2. Theological Education in Liberation Theology

Liberation Theology approaches TE as communal and contextual Bible reading. In Protestant and Catholic circles Biblical exegesis is often left to professional theologians.

¹ I object to the term "the poor". "The Poor" are not a homogeneous unit but individuals in very different life situations sharing one common factor of poverty. The term is only one adjective among many others to describe a person. It should not be a noun or the only noun describing a person's identity. Even our terminology needs to empower rather than to dis-empower. I prefer the term "people living in poverty" (PLIP), modelled after public health usage of the term "People living with HIV/Aids" (PLWHA). I will use PLIP hereafter instead of "the poor".

The Enlightenment and the understanding of TE as a university discipline brought a high amount of professionalism and the understanding of theology as a research discipline.²

The definition of TE as education for professional clergy shows how much traditional churches have emphasised professionalism against the practice of ‘the priesthood of all believers’.³ The interpretation of the Bible from the historic-critical understanding is helpful but bears the danger of de-emphasising the reading and interpreting of the Bible from the reader’s own context. In Gutierrez words: “The scriptures are not a passive store of answers to our questions. We indeed read the Bible, but we can also say that the Bible “reads us”.”⁴

Liberation Theology as a Catholic movement has discovered the priesthood of all believers in understanding the Bible as interpreted through the reader’s context. Many liberation scholars further emphasise that the Bible must be read from the perspective of the poor and oppressed.⁵

² David H. Kelsey. *Between Athens and Berlin: The Theological Education Debate* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1993), 12ff.

³ David H. Kelsey, *To Understand God Truly: What’s Theological About A Theological School* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 162.

⁴ Gustavo Gutierrez, *We Drink from our Own Wells: A Spiritual Journey of a People* (SCM Press: London, 1984; repr. 2005), 34.

⁵ Christopher Rowland, ed., *The Cambridge Companion To Liberation Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 145, 149

1.3. Contextual Bible reading in Liberation Theology

Here the community does not look at the historical, Biblical background, but at their own context. No prior knowledge of theology is needed.⁶ In fact it is the eyes of people living in poverty (PLIP) and oppressed people that will open the eyes of the scholars too.

Liberation Theologians often pre-suppose that “the poor have a sort of sixth sense which enables them to grasp the message of the Bible.”, according to Hebblethwaite.⁷ That is especially true since PLIP often still live in similar situations to the people in the Bible e.g. both groups of people will still understand what it means to rely on fetching water from wells. It would be a misinterpretation to think that poverty in itself will give a better Biblical understanding.

However, looking to the original readers of the scriptures as a starting point to contextual Bible reading helps as it was directed towards “ordinary” people. Even though the Bible, according to Liberation Theologians, has a bias to the poor and marginalized it has not been written for the poor only.

1.4. Reading from a holistic viewpoint or from oppression

Liberation Theology’s main theme and context is oppression. Salvation and Sin are understood in terms of physical liberation. Sin happens when people do not act alongside PILP. “The solidarity required by the preferential option for the poor forces us back to a fundamental Christian attitude: a grasp of the need for continual conversion.”, explains

⁶ Rowland, *The Cambridge Companion To Liberation Theology*, 7.

⁷ Margaret Hebblethwaite, *Base Communities: An Introduction* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1993), 65.

Gutierrez.⁸ Does that mean that PLIP do not sin? Reality proves otherwise. Sin comes in many different shades and seems to be part of being human, thus poor and rich are in need of salvation.

Bloomberg reminds us that God's "preferential option for the poor" is not for all the economically impoverished irrespective of their spiritual condition, but "for those who love him" (James 2:5).⁹ He sees liberation as holistic: "Your faith has made you whole" (Mark 5:35, 10:52; Luke 7:50, 17:19).¹⁰ Christian faith might enable a farmer to take risks, e.g. leaving old farming methods and trying new ones. As much as we cannot only see sin/salvation as physical liberation, we also need to resist the temptation of seeing it only from a spiritual point of view. Stone pictures liberation as "the holistic restoration of human dignity, purpose and meaning."¹¹

The Bible should be understood from a holistic point of view: For everyone in every situation; not only applying to poverty or oppression. Giving priority to oppression-context reading and thus to certain passages i.e. the Exodus passage¹², presupposed a selective reading by scholars *before* the people do the actual Bible reading; which is in fact contradicting Liberation Theology as people-led-Theology.

⁸ Gutierrez, *We Drink from our Own Wells*, 106.

⁹ Alice Fazer Evans, Robert A. Evans and David A. Roozen, eds., *The Globalization of Theological Education* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1993), 216.

¹⁰ Fazer Evans, Evans, Roozen, *The Globalization of Theological Education*, 217.

¹¹ Bryan P. Stone, *Compassionate Ministry: Theological Foundations* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1996), 83.

¹² Peter Cotterell, *Mission and Meaninglessness: The good news in a World of Suffering and Disorder* (London: SPCK, 1990; repr. 1992), 248.

1.5. Conscientisation

For education in Liberation Theology, Conscientisation is the main thrust and purpose. Freire shaped this term using literacy education as a means of educating people on their own situations of oppression and how to act upon them.¹³ Conscientisation is the method and the content: not leaving education as an aim in itself, but pointing to the people's pressing issues e.g. oppression in Latin America or poverty in East Africa.

It opposes a "banking system" of education where the student is seen as an empty account to be filled with knowledge¹⁴ preferring to realize students' existing prior knowledge as valuable, and thus emphasising the student's self-worth. According to Freire this can only happen if dialogue is the teaching method.¹⁵ "(. . .) Conscientization is first of all the effort to enlighten men about the obstacles preventing them from a clear perception of reality."¹⁶ This also means that Freire sees oppression not only as political but as a complex structure of life including culture, politics and other powers: pointing out that education/Conscientisation plays an important part in raising people's awareness about their own competences, and acquiring tools for their own holistic liberation. Believing in Christ the Redeemer, the church thus must embrace holistic Conscientisation in TE.

¹³ Paulo Freire, *The Politics of Education: Culture, Power and Liberation* (London: Macmillan Publishers, Ltd., 1985), 68.

¹⁴ Peter Schreiner, Ester Banev and Simon Oxley, eds, *Holistic Education Resource Book: Learning and Teaching in an Ecumenical Context* (Muenster: Waxmann, 2005), 93-96.

¹⁵ Freire, *The Politics of Education: Culture, Power and Liberation*, 49ff.

¹⁶ Freire, *The Politics of Education: Culture, Power and Liberation*, 89.

1.6. TEE as a Style of Education

Theological Education by Extension has often been associated with the Church Growth Movement aiming at fast growing church leadership. Programmed texts became the means of instruction, often written by outsiders.¹⁷ Going back to TEE's roots with Kinsler will present a different picture.

TEE itself does not specify a teaching method, only stating that it is theological and by extension. TE happens within the students' context with the potential for reflection on practice and pressing-issues of society. Standardized teaching materials will be difficult to use as each context varies.

Kinsler's opposing of programmed texts suggests that almost every programme will need to develop its own contextualized material.¹⁸ Kinsler laments that still TEE has made too "little use of their greatest resource, the context and experience of their students."¹⁹ The main potential of TEE is dialogue with the students: linking content, experience, context and reflection.²⁰

Conscientisation is practiced by TEE and seen as a purpose, although misunderstanding TEE might falsely give the opposite impression. Reflection often is counter-cultural but

¹⁷ Robert L. Youngblood, ed, *Cyprus: TEE Come of Age* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1985), 19.

¹⁸ F. Ross Kinsler and James H. Emery; eds., *Opting for Change: A Handbook on Evaluation and Planning of Theological Education by Extension* (Pasadena: William, Carey Library; Geneva: WWC, 1991)74-79.

¹⁹ Kinsler, Emery, *Opting for Change*, 5.

²⁰ Christine Lienemann-Perrin, *Training for a Relevant Ministry: A Study of the work of the Theological Education Fund* (Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1981) 198.

transformative in many situations, thus Conscientisation in practice.²¹ Conscientisation is the purpose, TEE the method; complementing and not contradicting each other as Lienemann-Perrin wrongly suggests.²² TEE and Liberation Theology realize the importance of the experiences of marginalized and PILP for theological education, thus empowering and building self-esteem.²³ By TEE the PLIP can be reached with contextualized, holistic TE and a process of Conscientisation; however the links to globalization, tradition and the universal church are challenging.²⁴

1.7. Inquiry-Based Learning

Inquiry-based learning starts with the premise that education has given the students too many answers. Here the student finds the answers. Guided questioning allows for contextualized and individualized learning. Inquiry-based learning thus opposes a “banking system”: “Educators must understand that schools need to go beyond data and information accumulation and move toward the generation of useful and applicable knowledge (. . .),”²⁵

Questioning resulting in critical and independent thinking is a western style of education unknown to many traditional societies.²⁶ The International Baccalaureate Programme is geared towards international education and found inquiry-based learning especially

²¹ Kinsler, Emery, *Opting for Change*, 6.

²² Lienemann-Perrin, *Training for a Relevant Ministry*, 226.

²³ Simon Oxley, *Creative Ecumenical Education: Learning from One Another* (Geneva: WCC-Publications, 2002), 104, 105. Kinsler, Emery, *Opting for Change*, 7.

²⁴ Kinsler, Emery, *Opting for Change*, 58;59;62;63.

²⁵ Thirteen/ed online, “Concept to Classroom: Workshop: Inquiry-Based Learning,” n.p. [cited: 21 April 2008]. Online: <http://thirteen.org/edonline/concept2class/inquiry/index.html>

²⁶ Judith E. and Sherwood G. Lingenfelter, *Teaching Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Learning and Teaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 48-50.

relevant for a multi-cultural student body.²⁷ This shows that inquiry-based learning can be used across cultures.

The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) curriculum focuses on units of inquiry. Holistic and connective learning takes place in trans-disciplinary themes.²⁸ The inquiry is taken from the student's context and therefore will be relevant to him/her. Students existing knowledge and experience is taken into account: valuing but revising and extending this knowledge²⁹, "allow[ing] them the freedom to construct their own meaning.", as the IBO states.³⁰ As the student with his existing knowledge/experience takes the lead in learning the teacher steps aside so teachers and students learn as a team.³¹ "The teacher also becomes a learner by finding out more about the learner and the process of inquiry-learning.", as suggested by the 'Thirteen web'.³²

Does inquiry-based learning guarantee that the student will have covered all the same content as a traditional curriculum? That is not the intent of inquiry-based learning: but rather equipping learners with all necessary tools for inquiry, thus being able to find out independently what *they themselves* want to learn. Could it be that even in TE we have given too many answers and too few questions? Is our syllabus relevant, connecting, holistic and contextually reflecting the students pressing issues?

²⁷ International Baccalaureate Organization, *Primary Years Programme: Making PYP happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education* (Cardiff: Peterson House, 2007), 2.

²⁸ International Baccalaureate Organization, "Primary Years Programme," n.p. [cited 5 February 2008]. Online: www.ibo.pyp/slideb.cfm

²⁹ Information Age Inquiry, "Inquiry-based Learning," n.p. [cited: 21 April 2008]. Online: <http://virtualinquiry.com/inquiry/inquiry7.htm>

³⁰ International Baccalaureate Organization, *Primary Years Programme*, 6.

³¹ Schreiner, Banev, Oxley, *Holistic Education Resource Book*, 101-104.

³² Thirteen/ed Online, "Concept Classroom: Workshop: Inquiry-based Learning," n.p. [cited 21 April 2008]. Online: <http://thirteen.org/edonline/concept2class/inquiry/implementation.html>

“Contextual Bible study begins with the needs and concerns of poor and marginalised communities”, as West describes the start for TE within the context of the learners.³³ A unit of inquiry in TE could lead from experience to text and from text to new/more experience or even on to other texts. IBO quoting Vygotsky states: “[T]he creation of meaning occurs when an individual links new knowledge with (. . .) existing knowledge.”³⁴ Biblical texts can serve to open the learner’s mind to a particular pressing-issue, but then lead to another inquiry into other pressing-issues and other texts e.g. to a book on new farming techniques. Pressing-issues make TE relevant and meaningful to its learners. Leading them to finding their own answers; that is Conscientisation.

Inquiry-based TE will not ensure that topics in Systematic Theology are covered, however it will teach the skills of inquiry relevant to the student’s context. In many parts of the world these will not be library or internet skills, but instead need to focus on existing resources. Conscientisation emphasises that ordinary people have resources for TE, which they themselves will use, resulting in ownership of “their” TE, and raising people’s self-esteem.

³³ Rowland, *The Cambridge Companion To Liberation Theology*, 145.

³⁴ International Baccalaureate Organization, *Primary Years Programme*, 6.

1.8. Traditional Styles of Learning

Incorporating traditional styles of learning and the concept of prevenient grace provide a theological basis using Schreiter's words

[t]o maintain the desired openness and sensitivity to a local situation, it was suggested that the prevailing mode of evangelization and church development should be one of finding Christ in the situation rather than a concentration on bringing Christ into the situation. Without such an attitude, based on the theology of the incarnation one consistently runs the risk of introducing and maintaining Christianity as an alien body in a culture.³⁵

We find Christ in the richness of traditional societies and their learning. The societal and the individual style of learning needs to be taken as a basis for learning that will add transformation and inquiry in a non-threatening way. Ward points out that fear and anxiety can interfere with learning as it is a fear of the unknown or a fear of failure. If fear is part of learning, resistance to change and learning can be the result.³⁶ As learning opens new grounds, fear of the unknown can result. Therefore Kinsler suggests:

“[L]earning proceeds best from the known to the unknown (. . .)”³⁷

Learning in itself is frightening enforced by teachers being ahead of the students in terms of knowledge and authority.³⁸ In an authoritative school system fear of learning is unavoidable.³⁹ A carefully chosen, comfortable, learning style including individual/traditional learning styles, will reduce the anxiety of the unknown: starting with the known reaching towards new transformative ideas.⁴⁰

³⁵ Robert J. Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1985; repr. 2006), 39.

³⁶ Frances Ward, *Lifelong Learning: Theological Education and Supervision* (London: SCM Press, 2005), 153-157.

³⁷ F. Ross Kinsler, *The Extension Movement in Theological Education: A Call to the Renewal of the Ministry* (rev. ed. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1981), 50.

³⁸ Ward, *Lifelong Learning*, 168ff.

³⁹ Appendix II.

⁴⁰ Ward *Lifelong Learning*, 153-156.

Inquiry-based learning will also counteract anxiety to some extent. The student/teacher team let the student take the lead, and not the teacher leading the student into unknown areas. The student feels more secure being in control of the situation, being able to rely on his/her own experiences.

How people traditionally learn skills and gain cognitive information needs to be researched, evaluated, and taken into account in TE teaching. For example, many Maasai⁴¹ resist formal schooling for their children. It is seen as a threat since children learn everything from their father/mother and the related age-group. School will not teach the same things and will deprive the child of the opportunity to learn the really important things in Maasai- life.⁴² Thus a residential school might not be ideal for TE for Maasai people.

Other traditions such as the Traveller communities of Europe have an oral tradition. Thus to have a schooling system based on literacy is a sensitive issue.⁴³ “We cannot presume written texts (. . .) as a sole form of communicating cultural meaning, and therefore theology.”, Schreiter concludes.⁴⁴ This is crucial in cultures that learn through oral traditions and must be seen in contrast to western education that is heavily literacy-based.

⁴¹ Maasai are spread out over many parts in Tanzania and Kenya; Appendix III.

⁴² Aylward Shorter, *Toward a Theology of Inculturation* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2006. Repr Orbis 1999), 25.

⁴³ STELLA, “The Language of Traveller Storytellers,” n.p. [cited: 8 February 2008]. Online: www.arts.gla.ac.uk/sesll/STELLA/STARM/crit/langtrav.htm

⁴⁴ Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, 31; 36.

Lingenfelter states: “The goal of the incarnational teacher is to create a learning context that is familiar to students yet stretches them beyond their previous experience.”⁴⁵

Traditional methods are the starting points but must be stretched to include new methods e.g. inquiry and questioning.

Conscientisation and inquiry-based learning using dialogue and questioning to let the learner take the lead and act upon their pressing issues is very foreign to some societies, and therefore causes anxiety. Incorporating traditional ways of learning can serve as a starting point and then be stretched in a sensitive way to allow less frightening, dialogue-methods.

A lot of traditional societies teach the next generation through observation/imitation. Thus the imitation of the teacher i.e. modelling after the teacher, is familiar. Skills are often learned by increasing the difficulty of the task. Even in education, a new skill can either build on existing skills in small steps, or even use the concept of transfer skills: where skills are already known or are learned in a different setting and then transferred to another context.⁴⁶ Theology often teaches abstract ideas e.g. systematic theology, but even in teaching cognitions, knowledge builds on existing knowledge e.g. by increasing the level of difficulty or transfer of ideas.⁴⁷ Also here, anxiety is reduced by going from the known to the unknown.

⁴⁵ Lingenfelter, *Teaching Cross-Culturally*, 52.

⁴⁶ George J. Posner and Alan N. Rudnitsky, *Course Design: A Guide to Curriculum Development for Teachers* (New York: Wesley Addison Longman, 2001), 158, 159.

⁴⁷ Posner, Rudnitsky, *Course Design*, 162.

Un-adapted learning and teaching will result in a context that is untouched by the content of out teaching. A dual system with Christianity and context existing side by side without touching each other will be the result⁴⁸ e.g. with non-western learners being educated with western structure and theology. This might be the case regardless of where this education takes place. Residential institutions will further remove learners from their context. Learners might return unable to relate to it.⁴⁹ To construct contextual, inquiry-based Conscientisation-learning presents a great challenge to educators exploring new ground as learners of TE teaching.

1.9. The Universal Church and Tradition in TE

TE will include past and present traditions of the global church and other religions in the immediate and wider contexts. This will expand the community's horizons to see how others deal with similar situations utilizing the support of the universal church and opening the inter-denominational and inter-religious dialogue. Kinsler states that in TEE contextualization is generally easier, and globalization more difficult.⁵⁰ However, just teaching a western church history course might not be helpful. Any ecumenical link here must be relevant and, therefore, be empowering.

Schreiter presents three approaches:

- 1) A dialogue with the New Testament Churches.
- 2) A dialogue with great recurring themes of theology.

⁴⁸ Paul G. Hiebert and Eloise Hiebert Meneses, *Incarnational Ministry: Planting Churches in Band, Tribal, Peasant and Urban Societies* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995), 167.

⁴⁹ Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, 48.

⁵⁰ Kinsler; Emery, *Opting for Change*, 58.

- 3) A dialogue of a culture's philosophical systems as it seeks the equivalent in another culture or, if lacking, an equivalent is constructed.⁵¹

The third point presents a great challenge, but also serves to channel the dialogue into content and prevent misinterpretation of similar symbols with different meanings.

However, the construction of equivalent traditions must be looked at critically. Inventing a church calendar for the Maasai just because it is missing still has not brought the awareness that life including church life runs in yearly cycles.⁵² The development of Christian traditions needs to be relevant for existing philosophies to be adapted later on.

Why is this dialogue important?

- 1) Cultural roots are always important. No culture ignores the search for meaning in relationship to the search for identity and roots. So, Christian faith also needs to find present meaning and identity in its roots.⁵³

- 2) Packer rightly sees tradition as a filter: "Tradition is like a filter, which allows us to identify suspect teachings immediately."⁵⁴ Following Cyprian of Carthage in understanding that "an ancient tradition can just be an old mistake"⁵⁵ Packer also wants to judge tradition and reflect upon the search for what is normative in doing and teaching theology.

⁵¹ Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, 76,77.

⁵² The author's experience living with Maasai people.

⁵³ Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, 105.

⁵⁴ Donald Lewis and Alister McGrath, eds., *Doing Theology for the People of God: Studies in Honour of J.I. Packer* (Leicester: Apollos, 1996), 167.

⁵⁵ Lewis, McGrath, *Doing Theology for the People of God*, 160.

3) The dialogue includes the universal church empowering and encouraging the local church. This will be even more important for isolated minorities whose voices are usually not heard in this dialogue.⁵⁶

If we miss the importance of dialoguing with past and present tradition there is a danger of losing our own identity and creating a non-transformative church culture. Local and universal church traditions will be lost.⁵⁷ “Local theology begins with the needs of a people in a concrete place, and from there moves to the tradition of faith.”, states Schreiter.⁵⁸ So both contextualized and universal tradition need each other and thus must be part of TE. The methodology will depend on resources available, but needs a familiar teaching style to channel unknown content.

1.10. The Learner

Is the church taking the side of the oppressed or is it contributing to oppression? Freire heavily criticises the churches for organizing around an elite of professional theologians involved in oppression: “This church, which is freezing to death in the warm bosom of the bourgeoisie, can certainly not tolerate any ideas, even if only verbal, that the elite considers diabolic.”⁵⁹

Western students of TE study at a high academic level with the prospects of a high salary.

However, the majority of professional theologians do not enjoy these benefits and

⁵⁶ Megan Walker in John Pobee, ed., *Towards Viable Theological Education: Ecumenical Imperative, Catalyst of Renewal* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1997), 82.

⁵⁷ Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, 106;107.

⁵⁸ Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, 13.

⁵⁹ Freire, *The Politics of Education*, 131.

education remains an elite privilege. Van der Ven presents a model of theological education that has a very high standard, only targeting the very educated elite that can afford 11 years of studies before engaging in pastoral work.⁶⁰ Freire challenges our understanding of ministry as a profession with an elite education.⁶¹ If the Church doesn't share its expertise in education, i.e. in TE, and nurture Christians, who else would or even could? Kelsey criticises the university research method of TE for defining theology as the profession of a theologian.⁶² The Christian community needs more than elite professional theologians in order to grow.

Protestantism stands on “the priesthood of all believers”. Is elite TE faithful to this principle? What concept of ordination does the church promote? Catholic Base Communities teach us that we are equal in Christ.⁶³ Stallsatt asks: “How long are we going to allow our theology to be imprisoned in cultures dominated and manipulated for the power and privilege of a few? How long will apostolic tradition be used against the gospel?”⁶⁴ TE for the priesthood of all believers is an imperative of the gospel.⁶⁵

Niebuhr sees TE learning in community/ church, with a purpose of living the love of God and neighbour.⁶⁶ That is the community of common Christians, not only the elite.

⁶⁰ Johannes van der Ven, *Louvain Theological Pastoral Monographs 24: Education for Reflective Ministry* (Louvain: Peeters Press, 1998), 222; 266.

⁶¹ Freire, *The Politics of Education*, 139,140.

⁶² Kelsey, *To Understand God Truly*, 162.

⁶³ Hebblethwaite, *Base Communities*, 126.

⁶⁴ Pabee, *Towards Viable Theological Education*, 10.

⁶⁵ The Bible never mentions “professional theologians” – Jesus, as a Rabbi, consciously educated ordinary people contrary to Rabbis of that time. Professional Clergy is a post-NT tradition

⁶⁶ H. Richard Niebuhr *The Purpose of The Church and Its Ministry* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers,1956) 39.

Many churches in the West face a decline in membership and in finances, forcing them to reconsider their understanding of mission, leadership and how the church is structured. Non-professional involvement is proposed not only for financial reasons, but also as the traditional way of offering programmes does suit the needs of its members.⁶⁷ Thus TE needs to be directed not only to professional theologians.⁶⁸ Cell churches practise very consciously the priesthood of all believers. One of their key principles is ‘all members in ministry’⁶⁹: “By its very nature, cell has a wonderful way of drawing out hidden potential and releasing a natural pool of model cell members.”, according to Potter/Jones.⁷⁰ Cell churches motivate and nurture leaders/members by structured TE.⁷¹

TE is the privilege of all. Education of the “lay” people is often mentioned⁷² but the division between “lay” and “ordained” remains.⁷³ This cannot be upheld in holistic TE but academic theologians need to listen to the grass-root theologians and vice versa.⁷⁴ In the body of Christ we all need and depend on each other, as we depend on Christ.

⁶⁷ Perspektiven-Kommision der EKD, *Kirche der Freiheit: Perspektiven fuer die evangelische Kirche im 21. Jahrhundert* (Hannover: EKD Church Office, 2006), 68ff, 93ff.

⁶⁸ Dietrich Werner, *EMW Informationen: Theologie zum Leben bringen: Anforderungen an eine Zukunftsorientierte Ausbildung: Ein deutscher Beitrag zum ÖKW-Studienprozess ueber die “Viability in Theological Education”* (Hamburg: EMW, 1995) 9, 13, 19.

⁶⁹ Laurence Singlehurst, *Loving the Lost: The Principles and Practice of Cell Church* (Eastbourne: Kingsway, 2001), 56.

⁷⁰ Phil Potter and James Jones, *The Challenge of the Cell church* (Oxford: Bible Reading Fellowship, 2001), 130.

⁷¹ Singlehurst, *Loving the Lost*, 141ff; Wolfgang.Simon, *Houses that Change the World: The Return of the House Church* (Emmelsbull: C & P Publishing, 1999, repr. 2005)130.

⁷² Pobe, *Towards Viable Theological Education*, 110.

⁷³ C. Rene Padilla, ed., *New Alternatives in Theological Education* (Oxford: Regnum Books, 1986), 8- 12.

⁷⁴ Rowland, *The Cambridge Companion To Liberation Theology*, 134.

1.11. The Teacher

Lingenfelder presents four prototypes of teacher roles: ⁷⁵

- 1) Teacher as Authority; Role: expert, Method: lecture, knowledge: deposit.
- 2) Teacher as Patron/Parent; Role: patron, helper, Method: story, lecture, knowledge: secret.
- 3) Teacher as Facilitator; Role: friend, mentor, Method: interactive, knowledge: free, open.
- 4) Teacher as Outsider; Role: drill sergeant, Method: busywork, knowledge: betrayal.

The different roles can also overlap. Lingenfelder writes about cross-cultural teaching, however, an outsider is not teaching in the place he was born/lived in. Most teachers therefore are outsiders and still have another teaching style. In inquiry-based learning with its teams of students and teachers, the teacher will take the role of a facilitator. However, this might not always be the traditional teacher role. As the different roles naturally overlap, this can be used specifically to bridge different teaching styles of traditional and new.

Teaching TE is difficult especially in young churches as few role models are available, leaving teachers to draw on their own experiences as students. Their experience often involved being taught by foreigners or being educated abroad: in both cases using Western curricula. Local teaching staff alone does not guarantee contextualized TE.⁷⁶

“The expatriate, as an outside teacher can sometimes hear things going on in a community not heard by a native member of that community.”, according to Schreiter.⁷⁷

The “Johari window” calls this is a “blind spot” of things known to others about a person

⁷⁵ Lingenfelder, *Teaching Cross-Culturally*, 76.

⁷⁶ Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, 20.

⁷⁷ Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, 19.

but not by the person herself/himself.⁷⁸ This is also relevant for a community/culture.

Thus both outsiders and insiders are needed in TE. Usually it is not so much about what someone knows regarding the culture, but about their willingness to listen and to ask questions; the willingness to be a hearer and learner.⁷⁹

However we often hear that people working with the PLIP need to become like them.

Gutierrez does not think it is possible and in fact warns of romanticising poverty.⁸⁰ “[We will] never reach the point of real identification with the life of the poor [and their community]”, as Gutierrez warns in a liberation context.⁸¹ If a middle-aged male teacher would try to copy the culture of his teenage female student it would not be acceptable or even possible.

So a teacher’s 'community-role' is that of 'listener', and in their 'facilitator-role' will require the students' trust and friendship. But mis-interpreting how to identify and show solidarity with the students could make the facilitator ineffective in transformation. Crucially, teachers must use their own unique strength of educational background transformatively - utilizing the 'differences' whilst wholeheartedly being part of the community.

⁷⁸ Alan Chapman, “Johar Window: A Model of Self-awareness, Personal Development, Group Development and Understanding Relationship,” n.p. [cited 21 April 2008]. Online: <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/unssc/unpan022136.pdf>

⁷⁹ Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, 60; 61.

⁸⁰ Gutierrez, *We Drink from our Own Wells*, 125. False romanticism will keep teachers from hearing the pressing issues of PLIP as he will resist transformation or them, thus not listening to them and not becoming an expression of their voices.

⁸¹ Gutierrez, *We Drink from our Own Wells*, 126.

1.11 Conclusion

TE is challenged to empower by seeking to be transformational in a non-threatening way. What is relevant to people both in method and in content as pressing issues in society is the start of learning, but it then stretches beyond to be transformative, contextual and holistic. Students take the lead in the learning/transformation process. Conscientisation is not only the purpose of the process but also the method. As it is foreign to many cultures it needs to be adapted, and start with a basis of traditionally known learning whilst still challenging towards transformation and Conscientisation.

The dialogue with past and present tradition sets the learners in the context of the universal church in a supportive and empowering way. TE being aware of, and teaching towards, PILP marginalized people becomes not only the empowerment of the people but also a voice for unheard people as part of the universal church.

2. Holistic TE and Development Principles

2.1. Introduction

Holistic TE, as such, leads into development for many countries, but the principles for development also apply to TE in general, involving questions of relevance, ownership and sustainability of content and method. In order to apply these principles the nature of oppression and poverty needs to be taken into account in rural developing areas but also in Western programmes, presupposing a Biblical bias for the marginalized. Western TE students will either be part of such a group or will, in their later work, serve such people and/or need to hear and be the voice of these groups of people.

2.2. Oppression in the East African Context: Poverty

Liberation Theology's immediate oppression context was Latin America. South Africa's Liberation movement was/is against Apartheid. In Ferm's chapter on "African Liberation Theology" we find that most theologians referred to are South Africans. It seems to be easier to have a clear understanding of who the oppressors and who the oppressed are: White and Black.⁸² This seems to be similar to Latin American oppression: land owners

⁸² Deane William Ferm, *The World of Liberation Theologies: An Introductory Survey* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1986) 61, 62.

towards landless labourers. In both cases it is clear cut between oppressed and oppressors.

In East Africa it will be hard to identify one group of oppressors. Nothing much has been written by Tanzanian theologians in general i.e. on Liberation Theology.⁸³

Along with many other surveys the Social Watch Report 2006 sees poverty as the main problem of southern countries, with many different dimensions.⁸⁴ It becomes clear that the cause of poverty has deep economic and financial roots supported by countries holding the economic power⁸⁵ which is mainly unknown to rural PILP. It seems that a colour distinction highlights oppression. Where black tribes oppress other blacks tribalism is seen as the problem e.g. Kenya; whose tribal conflicts made it to the world news because of election problems.⁸⁶

Women struggle against oppression within their own tribal system, e.g. much is written about FGM.⁸⁷ Gender divisions would make it easy to identify oppressors: men. However the fact that women themselves promote FGM does not fit most outsiders' view.⁸⁸ West points out that "in Freire's analysis of domination, the poor and oppressed are not only oppressed by external structures and forces, they also internalize and thus participate in

⁸³ Ferm mentions only one Tanzanian theologian. Mainly people quote Mbiti of Kenya. I doubt that an accurate picture of East African Theology can rely on a few/one theologian only.

⁸⁴ Roberto Bissio, ed., *Social Watch Report 2006: Impossible Architecture: Why the financial structure is not working for the Poor and how to Redesign it for Equity and Development* (Montevideo: Instituto Del Tercer Mundo, 2006) 63.

⁸⁵ Bissio, *Social Watch Report 2006*, 19ff.

⁸⁶ BBC, "Deal in Kenya to be Implemented," n.p. [cited 5 March 2008]. Online: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7278667.stm>

⁸⁷ Waris Dirie, *Desert Flower* (New York: William Morrow, 1998).

⁸⁸ Unicef, "Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: 2005 A statistical Exploration" n.p. [cited 5 March 2008] http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/FGM-C_final_10_October.pdf, Table 8, Figure 22.

their own oppression.”⁸⁹ Poverty, internal and external factors play together in keeping PLIP in unidentified oppression.

The concept of social/structural sin has been mentioned in 1.3. PLIP sometimes participate in perpetuating poverty through seeking their own advantages at the expense of others e.g. a village selling large portions of forest for agriculture resulting in less land, less rain and increased erosion; or girl working in a family rather than going to school; modern slavery.⁹⁰ The parents, oppressed by poverty, together with the employer are oppressive.

Often oppressed people support the view of their oppressor e.g. women supporting negative aspects of tradition that will keep them from liberation. Welch identifies oppression as “being shaped by the values of the oppressor. It leads oppressed people to see themselves as they are seen by the oppressor-as less intelligent, less moral, less valuable. This leads oppressed people to act like oppressors even in our work for social change, instituting our own hierarchies, using power over each other.”⁹¹

Identifying oppression is risky as it might result in a revolutionary process against certain areas of society and tradition. A deep identity crisis might also be the result, as often it is

⁸⁹ Rowland, *The Cambridge Companion To Liberation Theology*, 134.

⁹⁰ International Education Systems, “Helping Children Reclaim their Live: Reducing Child Labour in Tanzania Through Education,” n.p. [cited 5 March 2008]. Online: <http://ies.edc.org/news/articles.php?id=44>

⁹¹ Stone, *Compassionate Ministry*, 111.

not possible to separate interwoven aspects of oppression only as a part of tradition. A complete rejection of tradition can be the result.⁹²

2.3. Felt-Need Orientated

Hope/Timmel/ Hodzi suggest that “Emotion is linked to motivation. Only on issues about which they feel strongly will people be prepared to act.”⁹³ A listener needs to listen to people’s emotions to identify important felt-needs.

Objective indicators for poverty⁹⁴ can help to see people’s real needs in perspective beyond the *felt* need. According to Myers: “[W]e must also conclude that poverty is in the eye of the beholder. We see what our worldview, education, and training allows us to see. We need to be aware of this and work hard at seeing all there is to see.”⁹⁵ Outsiders’ emotional sympathy can prevent a realistic view of PLIP’s needs and paralyze transformative potential.

Internalized oppression is further complicated by the “Blind Spot” mentioned in 1.10. , causing oppression not to be felt as, for example by the child-slave in Haiti who does not see herself as a slave nor her “aunt” as the oppressor.⁹⁶ People’s felt-needs provide the

⁹² Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, 106,107.

⁹³ Anne Hope, Sally Timmel and Chris Hodszi, *Training for Transformation: A Handbook for Community Workers* (Gweru: Mambo Press, 1984. Repr. 1990), 35.

⁹⁴ World Bank, “Poverty in Africa”, n.p. [cited 2 April 2008]. Online: www4.worldbank.org/afr/poverty/measuring/Indicators/data_files_en.htm - 65k -

⁹⁵ Bryant L. Myers, *Walking With The Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development*. Maryknoll:Orbis Books, 1999), 81.

⁹⁶ Tagesschau, “Kindersklaven in Haiti,” n.p. [cited 13 March 2008]. Online: www.tagesschau.de/ausland/Kindersklaven2.htm

starting point for TE and development, but need to be taken further to raise the awareness of people's unfelt needs, which needs to be measured according to human rights and thus be Conscientisation. Genuine love and friendship will be the most important tool in listening to people's felt - and unfelt - needs.⁹⁷ As Gutierrez reaches felt-needs with love: "Authentic love tries to start with the concrete needs of the other and not with the "duty" of practicing love. Love is respectful of others and therefore feels obliged to base its action on an analysis of their situation and needs."⁹⁸

2.4. Ownership

In TE we often assume the ownership lies with the institution. In Freire's comparison the ownership of knowledge in the "banking education" is not with the students. Only ownership will bring sustainability and transformation. Development has witnessed this experience over and over again: Only something that is owned by the people is valued and taken care of.⁹⁹ Several questions reach into ownership: finances, management and organization. Often a TE programme is owned by a certain denomination interested in the continuity of their denominational tradition. This is an important consideration, however Conscientisation takes a different approach. As pressing issues of society are the starting point, and Conscientisation and transformation goals of learning, the ownership must lie with the learners in order to avoid "banking education."

⁹⁷ Myers, *Walking With The Poor* , 150.

⁹⁸ Gutierrez, *We Drink from our Own Wells*, 108.

⁹⁹ Peter Batchelor, *People in Rural Development* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1997), 128-129.

Ideally, the Community owns TE but in reality this is very difficult, and sometimes even impossible, due to the human nature of communities including oppression and selfishness.¹⁰⁰ Ownership could lie with local congregations extending the invitation to the whole community but taking the responsibility for the organization. As an organization becomes more institutionalized ownership becomes more difficult for the learners.

Freire's concept/inquiry-based learning provides another key to ownership. Learner-lead inquiry will allow the learner to have ownership of knowledge even though the ownership of the TE programme lies somewhere else. Kinsler realized that a community developing ownership by using their own resources

has the potential of meeting the needs of all and serving them efficiently. (. . .) The underlying assumptions are that local churches are quite capable of discovering and developing among their own members the necessary gifts for all the functions of ministry, that local leaders can be provided opportunities for training in critical theological reflection and pastoral skills without being uprooted from their cultural context and social responsibilities, and that both ministry and formation should be molded by a more dynamic and fundamental interaction of Gospel and culture.¹⁰¹

2.5. Connecting to common ground

Connecting to the felt needs of society as a starting point for TE, and building on existing knowledge and experience to reduce anxiety in learning, as mentioned earlier, is using the principle of connection to common ground. The basis of it is that “[i]f God is the source of all knowledge, he evidently works redemptively through all human communities, empowering people to find and use information that enhances their ability

¹⁰⁰ Batchelor, *People in Rural Development*, 131.

¹⁰¹ Kinsler, *The Extension Movement in Theological Education*, 105-106.

to support life in their respective culture.”, according to Bradshaw.¹⁰² Thus to find God already at work with the community, is the smallest possible common ground for TE/Development. However, building on prior knowledge and experience will usually provide the basis for connecting to common ground with the community in many areas. As felt-needs are the most relevant connection to people, it is the most obvious common ground that can serve as an entrance point for sustainable results.

2.6. Using existing resources

Development work using more technological resources becomes more difficult. Sustainability and ownership often becomes a problem. “Maintaining long term sustainability, as well as care for the environment, for natural resources such as fossil fuel and an active concern about pollution, are essential for Christians.”, in Batchelor’s opinion.¹⁰³ If the maintenance of resources exceeds people’s ability and finances, it will fail.

Therefore, Batchelor opts for more basic resources.¹⁰⁴ Ownership and sustainability thus comes with simplest resources available to the people; low key resource management. Interestingly, usually going back to simple technology is more environmentally friendly and more sustainable in rural areas of poverty calling for a Christian understanding of creation preservation. “Putting the last first” – “Less is More”, choosing simple over advanced technology, is a principle that Jesus in his humility supremely exemplifies.

¹⁰²Bruce Bradshaw, *Change Across Culture: a Narrative Approach to Social Transformation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 196.

¹⁰³ Batchelor, *People in Rural Development*, 89.

¹⁰⁴ Batchelor, *People in Rural Development*, 87, 89, 90.

Bradshaw along with Kinsler¹⁰⁵ calls for “Sabbath economics”: “The Sabbath is the redemptive taboo that serves as the foundation of the environmental ethic.”¹⁰⁶

Resources need to be identified and optimized in rural environments. Seeking common ground opposes the import of resources. The greatest resource is the people themselves bringing their experience and abilities¹⁰⁷ which is what Freire has understood as such.¹⁰⁸ Thus any group of people coming together for learning has great resources.

Recognizing the existing resources in TE has consequences for the method, content and organization of a TE programme. Taking a “Sabbath” approach to organization would help construct a “low-key” organization. This will be easier with TEE programmes than with residential colleges. The bigger the programme is, the more personnel will be needed for organization; moving away from low-key management. Thus the question of ownership influences the organization and the uses of organizational resources.

Teaching-methods involving resources which are not present in the learners’ environments will not provide common ground, and might cause scepticism/fear in the learners and - most importantly - will prevent learners passing-on their knowledge as they do not have the resources.

Myers quotes Musopole: “This is where the African feels his poverty most: A poverty of being, in which poor Africans have come to believe they are no good and cannot get

¹⁰⁵ F. Ross Kinsler, ed., *Diversified Theological Education: Equipping all God’s People* (William Carey University Press, 2008; pre-print copy). 20-32.

¹⁰⁶ Bradshaw, *Change Across Cultures*, 111.

¹⁰⁷ Kinsler, Emery, *Opting for Change*, 5.

¹⁰⁸ 1.4.-1.6. of this paper

things right.”¹⁰⁹ This deep level of internalized poverty can be counteracted by the use of existing resources. In a holistic TE programme participants have the chance to see that they have valuable resources, using them in a productive and transformative way. That not only improves the economic situation of the participant but also raises self-confidence which, along with the effects of the programme, is a step out of the deepest form of internalized poverty. Theologically and practically TE has all the potential, and maybe even the imperative, to use existing resources for the redemptive work of the Kingdom.

2.7. Utilizing People’s initiative instead of working for them

The study in honour of J.I. Packer¹¹⁰ is a wonderful example of practical, relevant contemporary, contextualized theology, unfortunately with a title that withdraws ownership from the learners. Freire’s/Inquiry-based learning principles would name the studies: “Doing theology with the people of God” or, taken one step further, “Letting the people of God do theology”. Sustainability/ownership will depend on people finding out for themselves.

However doing something for the people is often so much quicker, more efficient and more professional at first glance. The differences are seen in the measures and time-frames of evaluation. Grand-looking results might be unsustainable from a long term perspective whereas a small, unspectacular project is maintained for 20 years. Myers calls for frequent evaluation according to a vision-values approach, rather than the

¹⁰⁹ Myers, *Walking with the Poor*, 76

¹¹⁰ Lewis, McGrath, *Doing Theology for the People of God*.

traditional “management-by-objectives approach.”¹¹¹ Again this will involve a low-key approach and a humble teacher not needing credit for their students’ learning, giving learners the space and the right to make their own mistakes.

Sustainable education, including TE and development, cannot be done for someone. Making people aware of their resources and letting people work for themselves instead of doing it for them relieves the utmost state of internalized poverty. In Myers’ words: “When we fail to listen , to see what we can learn, we are in fact telling them they are without useful information, without contribution. By dismissing what they know, we further mark the identity of the poor. Our good intentions deepen the poverty we seek to alleviate.”¹¹² As we have no more important message to pass on than that of the redemptive love of God for each person, we cannot undermine this by employing false values and methods in teaching and development.

2.8. Finances

All values and expertise can be undermined by a big budget from overseas creating dependence and expectations, and giving non-sustainable solutions for poverty.

Batchelor questions: “Is there the danger that, knowing funds are available, church leaders will plan projects that they believe will be acceptable to the funding agencies? If this takes place then local initiative and efforts will be minimal.”¹¹³

¹¹¹ Myers, *Walking With The Poor*, 146.

¹¹² Myers, *Walking With The Poor*, 145.

¹¹³ Batchelor, *People in Rural Development*, 29.

The financial journey of the Theological Education Fund supporting TE in younger churches bears observations:

- even though the aim was to support without creating dependencies, this was later criticized by Bridston as a contradiction in itself “(. . .) he felt that the TEF had frequently accomplished exactly the opposite through its financial grants, namely a stronger dependence upon the west.”¹¹⁴
- He continued, stating critically that “foreign aid often increases the alienation of the receiving intuitions from their own churches.”¹¹⁵
- The Zorn study revealed that on average most TE institutions are/were still dependent on the West for over 70% of their income.¹¹⁶

Financial aid creates problematic dependence and reduces ownership.

Batchelor states that according to a U.S. A.I.D. survey putting money into a project reduces local participation.¹¹⁷ He sees the danger of control by donor agencies, and dependency. Although he does not present a solution to the problem of financial dependency but rather sees the positive effect of money shortage, his approach would hint at a low-key approach.¹¹⁸

Funding, especially for TE institutions, has often taken place over many years while accepting a Western model of education which is often more expensive than a more

¹¹⁴ Lienemann-Perrin, *Training for a Relevant Ministry*, 93.

¹¹⁵ Lienemann-Perrin, *Training for a Relevant Ministry*, 99.

¹¹⁶ Lienemann-Perrin, *Training for a Relevant Ministry*, 184-188. The study refers to 1970 – 77. The data is outdated but the general dependency of developing churches on funds is still accurate.

¹¹⁷ Batchelor, *People in Rural Development*, 29.

¹¹⁸ Batchelor, *People in Rural Development*, 27ff.

contextualized model e.g. TEE. Bringing changes will be difficult. However, improvement and innovation from within given situations will be more beneficial than judging Western TE in non-Western contexts.

Development projects are usually completed after a certain time ending financial dependence as well. TE is a continuous activity of the church thus finances are continuously needed. TE should be financed by the local church however even with a low-key TEE this often unrealistic¹¹⁹, but hopefully a start in the right direction towards financial independence. Yeow Choo Lak reminds us that a ministry- based model can assist but not replace the professionally- paid teaching model¹²⁰, but the split between responsibilities remains challenging. In development steps towards independence would imply the training of trainers who could continue and multiply training.¹²¹ That could be done for some TE but would be more difficult for higher-academic training institutions. These are questions and difficulties in TE/development that have not found satisfactory answers, but it can be concluded that a low-key, a “less-is-more” approach has more potential in creating sustainable programmes.

2.9. Women

TE in general has been the domain of the white male elite.¹²² Transformational development in male-dominated societies struggles to take the potential of women into account and include them in the process of Conscientisation. According to Myers

¹¹⁹ Padilla, *Alternatives in Theological Education*, 37-47.

¹²⁰ Pobe, *Towards Viable Theological Education*, 97.

¹²¹ Appendix I.

¹²² Kelsey, *To Understand God Truly*, 19.

It is commonly agreed that women carry out a disproportionate share of the productive work relating to the family and community and are critically involved in areas that are key to development change. (. . .) Women do not only have information that needs to be part of the development process, but research has shown that much positive social change is correlated with the education and involvement of women.¹²³

Due to traditional structures and limited education it is still very difficult to hear women's voices in TE and in development e.g. 67% of illiterate people are women.¹²⁴ This proves a special challenge to TE/development, makes sensitization about gender issues to be an imperative content of TE, and calls for methods that do not disadvantage women. TE has the potential for hearing and expressing women's voices whilst educating men and women about gender-issues. A low-key TE/TEE approach has the great advantage of including rural and less-formally-educated women. Often the first effect of education is gender-relationships change as people are sensitized about gender-issues as they learn in a mixed environment.¹²⁵ TE here cannot only bring transformation to the community but also provide the basis for gender-equality in the community's development projects.

2.10. Conclusion

To a large extent TE and development can learn from each other and follow the same principles, with Conscientisation as its common goal. These principles can also serve in the evaluation process with set indicators. Sustainability, ownership and finances will be an ongoing challenge. Hopefully a "low-key" approach as described in this chapter might be a step in the right direction towards transformation and empowerment. Kinsler reminds us that

¹²³ Myers, *Walking With The Poor*, 190.

¹²⁴ Bissio, *Social Watch Report 2006*, 86.

¹²⁵ Appendix I

Top-down solutions, locally and globally, are most likely to fail. Among poor and wealthy countries unjust distribution of economic and healthcare resources prevails. So we must turn, sooner or later, to grassroots, community-based movements, where our churches can offer a mission and a message of integral wholeness, shalom, real human development. And we must ask our theological formation programs, especially TEE and DTE, what resources and models and curricula they can offer in response to these vital and urgent challenges of our time.¹²⁶

¹²⁶ Kinsler, *Diversified Theological Education*, 20.

3. Case Study: Meru

3.1. Introduction

The Meru people of Tanzania are the target group for showing how a low-key holistic TE could be created. This chapter will highlight aspects of Meru culture which are of importance in constructing a holistic TE around the pressing-issues of Meru society. This paper does not aim at providing a complete anthropology, or stating facts about the people. This is not the research of expert-development workers conducting a base-line survey over a few days. It is the listening-approach of a team of colleagues of mixed gender and outsiders/insiders over many years reflecting the life experience of the insiders.¹²⁷ This chapter hopes to capture some Meru voices to facilitate these into a constructive dialogue in the of a TE programme.

3.2. The land

The Meru are around 15000 people living on the slopes of Mount Meru in Northern Tanzania. They are agriculturalists. The land is of central importance to the people's life together with a tribal structure focusing on different clans. Before 1650 A.C. different

¹²⁷ Appendix I

clans came to settle on the land. Two of those came from the Usambara area and others joined together forming the tribe of the Meru.¹²⁸

People themselves believe that they share common origin with their Maasai neighbours and a strong influence can be noticed, however, the fact is that the Maasai are relatively new to North Tanzania and the Meru have been there much longer. Another fact is that Meru and Machame people of the Chagga understand each other. The fact is commonly known but does not seem to be very popular.¹²⁹

The land is life and food for people. Pre-Christian religious practices reflect this. “The community of believers among the Meru was traditionally the clan. Since the clan was the important unit socially, politically, and residentially, so it was also the unit within which religious beliefs and practices occurred. There was a well integrated syndrome of land-kin-ancestors; each one required the other or none would prosper.”, as Puritt’s research of 1966-68 shows.¹³⁰ At that time he estimated that about half of the tribe were still following traditional beliefs. Today almost 100% are Christians¹³¹ and most have lost a lot of knowledge about traditional Meru religion.¹³² However, what have remained of importance are the clan and the land.

¹²⁸ Sally Falk Moore and Paul Puritt, *Ethnographic Survey of Africa: East Central Africa 18: The Chagga and Meru of Tanzania* (London: International African Institute, 1977), 93.

¹²⁹ Tim Kelsall, “Research Report No. 129, Contentious Politics, Local Governance and the Self A Tanzanian Case Study,” n.p. [cited 9 April 2008]. Online: <http://www.nai.uu.se/publications/download.html/9171065334.pdf?id=25104>

¹³⁰ Moore, Puritt, *Ethnographic Survey of Africa*, 120.

¹³¹ Tim Kelsall, “Research Report No. 129, Contentious Politics, Local Governance and the Self A Tanzanian Case Study,” n.p. [cited 9 April 2008]. Online: <http://www.nai.uu.se/publications/download.html/9171065334.pdf?id=25104>

¹³² Appendix III

In “Blood on Our Land”, Mbise highlights the importance of the land from the start. Two German missionaries are killed in 1896 because they are seen as a threat to the land.¹³³ The Colonial Government’s answer was the killing of thousands of Meru using Chagga Askaris, and the decimation of large parts of their land.¹³⁴ A census in 1902 showed that only around 5.000 people were left.¹³⁵ Even if the census was vague it means that the massacre was huge. More blood was shed as the Colonial government ordered the evacuation of Leguruki and Ngare Nanyuki in 1951. This became known as the Meru Land Case. A resistance built up, and people refused to move, until the whole area was burned down and several people were killed.¹³⁶ Both incidents are largely unknown to Meru who did not witness the Land Case.¹³⁷

Today the land is threatened by external and internal factors. Meru have an inheritance system where several sons would inherit a piece of land. Census shows that there has been a population explosion of 100,000 in the last 50 years. Inherited land is thus frequently divided and will not be enough for all the sons.¹³⁸ “The land crisis in Meru, together with population growth, meant that even when using ingeniously intensive farming methods, most Meru could not pass on economic parcels of land to their sons. Increasingly, education was regarded as the best means of investing in their future”, according to Kelsall.¹³⁹

¹³³ Ismael Mbise, *Blood on our Land* (Dar es Salaam: Tanzania Publishing House, 1974), 20ff.

¹³⁴ Moore, Puritt, *Ethnographic Survey of Africa*, 94.

¹³⁵ Moore, Puritt, *Ethnographic Survey of Africa*, 97.

¹³⁶ Mbise, *Blood on our Land*, 66ff.

¹³⁷ Appendix I, III

¹³⁸ Kelsall, “Research Report No. 129,” n.p. [cited 9 April 2008]. Online: <http://www.nai.uu.se/publications/download.html/9171065334.pdf?id=25104>

¹³⁹ Kelsall, “Research Report No. 129,” n.p. [cited 9 April 2008]. Online: <http://www.nai.uu.se/publications/download.html/9171065334.pdf?id=25104>

Furthermore, selling or giving land as loan-land and thus selling one's own income source and the inheritance of a son is leading people deeper into poverty.¹⁴⁰ Other problems are de-forestation, erosion and land-degradation. Thus the loss of land is an existential problem but at its root the loss of land is also linked with the loss of identity.

3.3. Religion

Today almost all Meru are Christians, mainly Lutherans and AMEC. The smaller churches are different Pentecostal denominations, Baptist, and Adventist churches. Many Chagga, but also Meru, despite being Christian are still very much involved in their ancestral traditions, celebrated by "matambiko". The missionary influence in Meru has been steady, but Christianity was mostly due to the influence of the early Meru "Evangelists" themselves. "Blood on our land" does not mention a single missionary interaction¹⁴¹ but frequently Meru Evangelists were influential in the struggle.¹⁴²

The present religious situation has its origins in the conflict with their Chagga neighbours resulting in the Meru Religious Crisis of the '90s. Kelsall states:

The Meru have a long history of rivalry with the Chagga, which dates from the time that the Germans employed Chagga warriors to punish Meru for murdering Lutheran missionaries in the nineteenth century. The Chagga have always been slightly more prosperous and politically more successful than the Meru: another source of envy. In particular, the Northern Diocese was dominated by Chagga. Chagga clergy ministered to Meru, and it was believed that Meru contributions funded church projects in Kilimanjaro, while Chagga children were favoured in scholarship competitions. Chagga, it was said, were allowed by their

¹⁴⁰Moore, Puritt, *Ethnographic Survey of Africa*, 107.

¹⁴¹Mbise, *Blood on our Land*.

¹⁴²Mbise, *Blood on our Land*, 94, 105.

pastors to drink beer. Meru felt that they, 'were being treated like Chagga children'. Bishop Kweka, for many Meru, became an icon of ethnic arrogance and religious intolerance.¹⁴³

The movement first had the aim of a new Diocese of Meru within the ELCT, however, others advocated a more "Meru" Christianity i.e. that permitted alcohol. The African Mission Evangelical Church was formed. The religious struggle was marked by violence.

By the time the Meru religious conflict had been quelled, around Tshs70 million of property had been destroyed, over six hundred people had been imprisoned, and at least seven people were dead. The conflict inflicted wounds that have yet to heal. (...) Perhaps one of the most striking observations to be made is that the conflict frequently turned neighbour against neighbour and often divided entire families. The most likely explanation is that the struggle gave form to an inchoate bitterness that festered below the surface of Meru community: a result of land crisis.

observes Kelsall.¹⁴⁴

The land crisis is central to the conflict and will need to be a part of the healing process, remembering that identity and self-confidence are deeply rooted in the religious struggle and in the land crisis. Holistic-Conscientisation-TE has a great potential in this situation, and will be instrumental in ecumenical learning.

3.4. Relationships

In addition to clans and land, the age-groups are of importance. An age-group is marked by the beginning and end of a circumcision period of several years. Birth time is not important for a person's age, but rather the time of circumcision. All young men circumcised during a certain period are part of the same age-group. That group will have

¹⁴³ Kelsall, "Research Report No. 129," n.p. [cited 9 April 2008]. Online: <http://www.nai.uu.se/publications/download.html/9171065334.pdf?id=25104>

¹⁴⁴ Kelsall, "Research Report No. 129," n.p. [cited 9 April 2008]. Online: <http://www.nai.uu.se/publications/download.html/9171065334.pdf?id=25104>

a special connection throughout life. Close friends can only be found within the age-group. Men have an age-group. Women belong to their husband's age-group; however, gender divisions are strong. Friendships usually do not cross gender.¹⁴⁵

Friendship in Western societies is characterized by closeness. Meru friendships are characterized by respect. Any friendship, or even professional relationship, that crosses age-group boundaries and even those within the same age-group will emphasize respect expressed by distance and by keeping taboos.¹⁴⁶

3.5. Education

Traditional learning situations are always part of a relationship. A mother teaches a daughter and a father a son. Elder men teach younger. Mbise describes how a wise elder passes on his wisdom: "But these talks were hardly comprehensible to the little ones because the conversation started with proverbs and was highly metaphorical. This conversation started after the children's normal classes with the old man."¹⁴⁷ Proverb, metaphor, and also stories are taught, but not critical questions. Wisdom is passed on for the answers.¹⁴⁸

The biggest block of teaching occurs during the weeks around initiation/circumcision. Young people are instructed together by a wise person that the society has chosen. The

¹⁴⁵ Moore, Puritt, *Ethnographic Survey of Africa*, 125-128.

¹⁴⁶ Appendix I

¹⁴⁷ Mbise, *Blood on Our Land*, 5ff.

¹⁴⁸ Appendix III

society is afraid that this important phase of teaching is lost by abolishing FGM.¹⁴⁹

Within teachings taboos are respected. If teaching happens within a relationship between mother and daughter sexuality is a taboo that will not be part of the instruction, since only the same age and gender group can talk about this. This sometimes leaves a gap in modern societies as girls face different challenges, and HIV/Aids requires that taboos are broken for the sake of protecting the young people. In PHC/CBHC¹⁵⁰ the mothers discuss these challenges and try to find culturally appropriate solutions to modernity.¹⁵¹

Usually dialogue as part of the Conscientisation/inquiry-based learning is not possible as questioning could be seen as disrespectful. However, dialogue is part of age-group learning as the age-group gets together for a specific project.¹⁵² As the people are together in their own age-group they are freer also with taboo topics. Respectful listening characterizes the dialogue, and criticism is not expressed, rather an alternative suggestion could be made.

Conscientisation-dialogue can be successful within age-group learning and can be transformatively stretched e.g. a class discussion could include both genders, or other age-groups. The sensitivity of not touching taboo-topics or addressing open criticism would need to be kept.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹ Moore, Puritt, *Ethnographic Survey of Africa*, 126; Appendix I;

¹⁵⁰ Primary Health Care/Community Based Health Care

¹⁵¹ Appendix I

¹⁵² Appendix III

¹⁵³ Appendix I

3.6. Poverty

In Meru there are many PLIP but also rich people. In general, it must be stated that people in northern Tanzania are better off than the people in semi-deserts in central Tanzania. For the Meru it is a fact that the people in the western district are better off than in the eastern district.¹⁵⁴ Some indicators can be used to estimate the amount of poverty.

If more than ½ hour is spent to fetch 20l of water this is an indication of poverty as less than the minimum amount of water will be fetched, with serious consequences for health and food supply/growing of food for the family. Thus the accessibility of water is the most important factor for defining poverty.¹⁵⁵ In the eastern district people often spend a whole day, once or twice a week, fetching water. Consequently, girls often cannot attend school as they are needed to fetch water.

Other indicators concern what education is available and how is it attended. Most Secondary leavers move to town for employment. The land and agricultural situation of the family gives further insights among other indicators¹⁵⁶, presenting a distribution of wealth along the so-called coffee belt.¹⁵⁷ Wealth, population density, rain and water are also greater on the western side of the area.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁴ Kaihura F.B.S, Rugangira, "PLEC-Tanzania Technical and Policy Recommendations for sustainable agrodiversity management," n.p. [cited 11 April 2008]. Online: www.unu.edu/env/plec/clusters/Eastafrica/nov2001/Kaihura-2.doc

¹⁵⁵ Maïke Gorsboth, *Identifying and Addressing Violations of the Human Right to Water: Applying the Human Rights Approach* (Stuttgart: Brot fuer die Welt, 2003) 3, 6.

¹⁵⁶ World Bank, "Poverty in Africa", n.p. [cited 2 April 2008]. Online: www4.worldbank.org/afr/poverty/measuring/Indicators/data_files_en.htm

¹⁵⁷ Moore, Puritt, *Ethnographic Survey of Africa*, 99.

¹⁵⁸ Kaihura F.B.S, Rugangira, "PLEC-Tanzania Technical and Policy Recommendations for sustainable agrodiversity management," n.p. [cited 11 April 2008]. Online: www.unu.edu/env/plec/clusters/Eastafrica/nov2001/Kaihura-2.doc

Keslall sees the effects of the people's struggle to be better off: "(. . .), most Meru men (and women) will wish to acquire the outward trappings of modernity and prosperity: to eat meat every day, build a block house, possess a range of imported consumer goods, even own a car." So how can a prosperity gospel not be popular among most people? This understanding of blessings seems to have taken deep root with the Meru people. A very typical expression is: "Thank you, may you receive more in return." The economic struggle is among the most important of the felt-needs.¹⁵⁹

3.7. Gender

One of the taboos within Meru culture is still the division between the genders. Role models are strong. Girls are taught by the mother and boys by the father thus the traditional understanding of gender is reinforced, as also during the teaching period around initiation.¹⁶⁰ These role models present strong guidance and are a security factor within society. Girls are educated to be mothers and wives, depending economically on marriage as most of them lack the education to find employment. This also means a lack of any alternative role-model for their lives as women. Women identify themselves through their children.¹⁶¹

Women are dependent: first on their fathers and, later, on their husbands. Traditionally they do not have the right to inherit. Keslall explains: "Another example of clan-acquired obligations/opportunities occurs when a man is appointed as guardian to the wife of a

¹⁵⁹ Moore, Puritt, *Ethnographic Survey of Africa*, 127; Appendix

¹⁶⁰ Appendix III

¹⁶¹ Appendix I

deceased brother. This will usually entail a sexual relationship. Indeed, it is not uncommon for Meru men who have the means, to support economically one or more extra-marital partners.”¹⁶²

In Sub-Saharan Africa women produce “60-80% of domestically produced food, provide nearly half the farm labour, and shoulder over 90% of the domestic responsibilities. Women work almost twice as many hours as men. (. . .) Nearly all rural women (96%) work on family farms, providing 75% of the farm labour and 60% of farm-derived income.”, according to the IIR.¹⁶³ Meru is no exception. The family income, including the income produced by women, is controlled by men. The land is usually owned by men. Even though women do most of the farm work they lack the resources of training and finances to optimise their farm production. The reproductive work which is work supporting and maintaining the family without producing any income, is done almost exclusively by women.¹⁶⁴

Education will often be one of the few opportunities to change men’s understanding of women, women’s view of themselves, and change relationships. Interestingly, it does not need to be specific gender-teaching, but maybe it is rather the role gender plays in all areas of health, development and TE.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶² Kelsall, “Research Report No. 129,” n.p. [cited 9 April 2008]. Online:

<http://www.nai.uu.se/publications/download.html/9171065334.pdf?id=25104>

¹⁶³ Sustainable Agricultural Extension Workshop Participants, Miguel A. Altieri, forw., *Sustainable Agriculture Extension Manual: For Eastern and Southern Africa* (Nairobi: IIRR, 1998), 70.

¹⁶⁴ Sustainable Agricultural Extension Workshop Participants, *Sustainable Agriculture Extension Manual*, 70-77.

¹⁶⁵ Appendix I

3.8. Oppression

The down-side of the economic struggle is that PLIP even in Meru work towards their own economic goals sometimes at the expense of those who have less. Land issues are a constant problem tied to oppression, where land is taken as a loan by richer Meru.¹⁶⁶ The population density following along the fertility and rain distribution is another problem.¹⁶⁷ The land is simply not enough for the families: resulting in urbanization and poverty. Many women stay in Meru with their families while the husbands go to the city. Very often this kind of arrangement does not bring an additional income back to the family, but leaves the mothers to raise the children on their own. HIV/Aids and other diseases become a threat to those families.¹⁶⁸ Poverty, gender-inequity and HIV/Aids are tightly interwoven. Thus any educational programme should reflect holistic and integrated approaches linking development, spirituality and health.¹⁶⁹

Beer, as one of the privileges of Meru men, is a major economic factor playing an important role in the Meru religious conflict. By supporting this industry some benefit economically and others are ruined.¹⁷⁰ Alcoholism is a serious problem that needs to be addressed, regardless of denominational understandings.

Traditional role-models give stability, but women lack basic rights and alternatives. They depend economically on father, husband, brother-law (in the case of a deceased husband)

¹⁶⁶ Moore, Puritt, *Ethnographic Survey of Africa*, 97.

¹⁶⁷ Kaihura F.B.S, Rugangira, "PLEC-Tanzania Technical and Policy Recommendations for sustainable agrodiversity management," n.p. [cited 11 April 2008]. Online: www.unu.edu/env/plec/clusters/Eastafrika/nov2001/Kaihura-2.doc

¹⁶⁸ Sonja Weinreich and Christoph Benn, *AIDS: Meeting the Challenge: Data, Facts, Background* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2004), 26.

¹⁶⁹ Weinreich, Benn, *AIDS*, 40-45. Kinsler, *The Extension Movement in Theological Education*, 103ff.

¹⁷⁰ Moore, Puritt, *Ethnographic Survey of Africa*, 97.

and, at worst, on extra-marital relationships due to economic-dependency and vulnerability.¹⁷¹ Thus traditional role-models can also be oppressive even though supported by women too.

This dependency and mis-use of power is also dangerous for young women going through different educational programmes economically-dependent on such relationships. HIV/Aids and pre-marital pregnancy/abortions are further threats to their few educational possibilities.¹⁷²

Economic oppression comes with the lack of land and farming. The drop of the world coffee price even impoverishes formerly-rich Meru and a good cash-crop alternative still has to be found.¹⁷³

Land disputes increase as land becomes scarce. Kelsall quotes Larrison: “There is hardly a family on the mountain that has not been involved at some time in a boundary or inheritance dispute. Sons fight fathers for land, brothers quarrel amongst themselves, brothers fight over the claims of sisters.” Disputes seem to have been a traditional burden for Meru as Puritt records:

Little attempt was made to maintain social order, or even to contain conflict, but rather cases of conflict were constantly being aired throughout Meru country almost every day of the week and leaders and participants threw themselves wholeheartedly into the effort of restoring the order which has been destroyed through the conflict.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹ Appendix I

¹⁷² Weinreich, Benn, *AIDS*, 28.

¹⁷³ International Coffee Organization, “Historical Data,” n.p. [cited 11 April 2008]. Online: www.ico.org/asp/display7.asp

¹⁷⁴ Moore, Puritt, *Ethnographic Survey of Africa*, 116.

Conflicts build distrust and jealousy. They cost money, take energy out of life and leave the participants to further poverty.

A problem in Tanzania including Meru is witchcraft, not easily understandable by outsiders.¹⁷⁵ Puritt gives an account of witchcraft in Meru. He describes the difference between herbal healers who try to restore through “medicine and magical practice” and “witches who consciously use magical technique to harm other people. (. . .) Most *vasawi* [witches] in Meru country are women. When a male *nsavi* is caught he is usually found to be of some other society, often a Sambia, who has been hired to kill another person.”¹⁷⁶ Witchcraft is harmful, destructive and expensive, thus oppressive and causing people to live in fear. It challenges Christianity regarding holistic liberation.

3.9. Conclusion

Meru oppression is complex and not solvable by a single TE programme. Conscientisation will cause people to approach their situation holistically, transformatively valuing their tradition as well bringing liberation. The church as an ecumenical movement needs to bring healing and help the voiceless to voice their concerns, as well as celebrate the richness of their experiences. A TE programme will be an invaluable contribution in increasing the educational opportunities for the not-formally educated and marginalized i.e. women.

¹⁷⁵ All outsiders rely on accounts of accounts: Very few people will tell outsiders that they have actually used witchcraft, but they will talk about others having used witchcraft. One person gave me an account of visiting a witch, and a Maasai “Loiboni” is a friend but does not talk much about his “work”.

¹⁷⁶ Moore, Puritt, *Ethnographic Survey of Africa*, 122.

4. A TE Curriculum

4.1. Introduction

Following on from the previous chapters, a curriculum according to Posner/Rudnitsky's model¹⁷⁷ has been developed organized around goals of learning.

Usually the teacher starts by surveying the entry skills of the learners.¹⁷⁸ For this course, the experience of a team listening to the communities over a number of years has provided the basis of this survey.¹⁷⁹ The steps of developing this structure have been followed and the result is presented in this chapter.

4.2. Course Description

A holistic theological and development course designed around the pressing-issues of the adults of Meru society. No prior formal-education requirements are needed. The life-experience of the participants will be the foundation of knowledge to be built on. The learner is to take the lead in the learning process and the facilitator will guide the discussion. The method used is Paulo Frerei's concept of Conscientisation and inquiry-based learning through group discussions and contextual bible-reading according to the pressing-issues of the participants; bringing Bible and life-experience together.

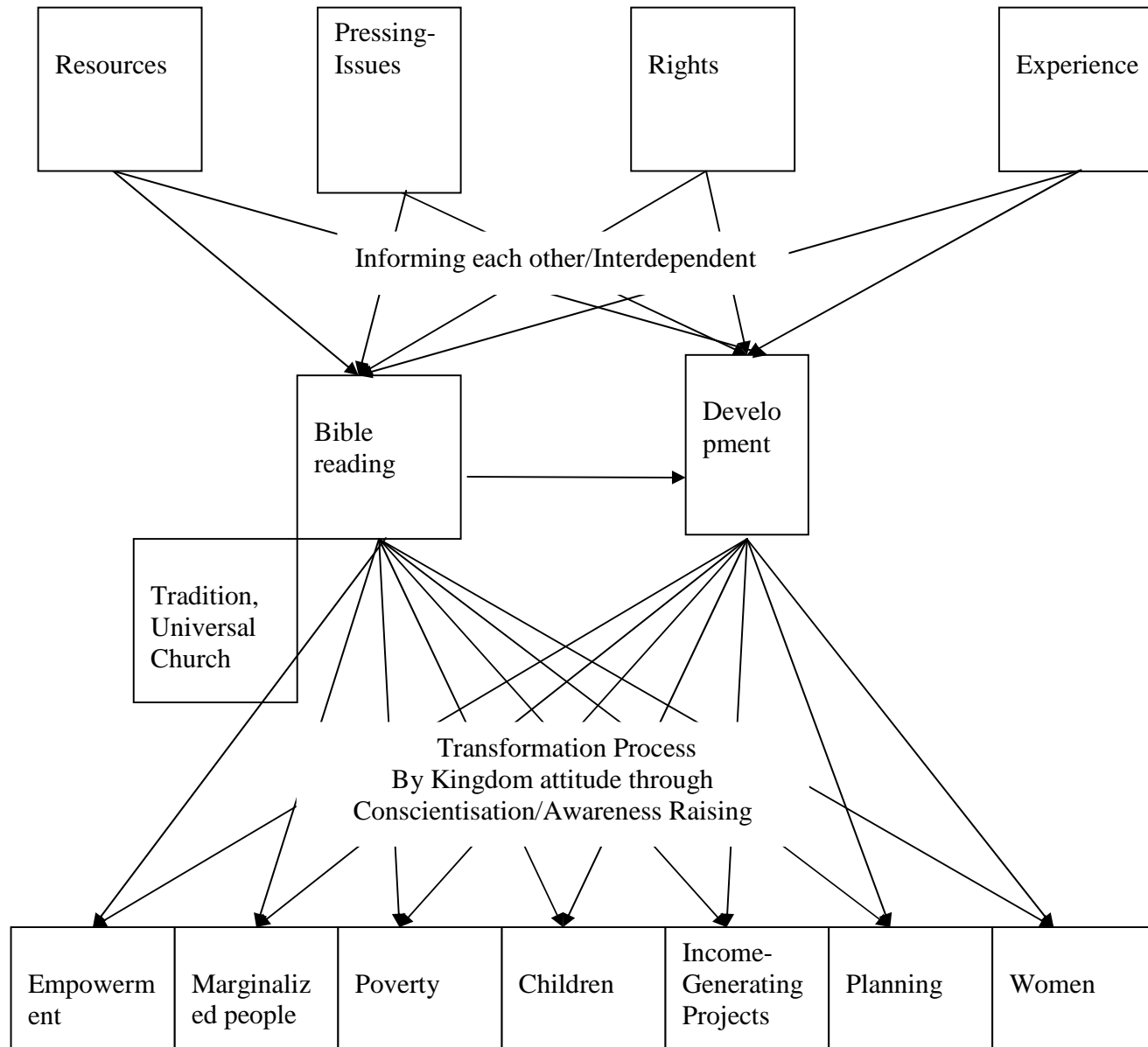
¹⁷⁷ Posner, Rudnitsky, *Course Design*.

¹⁷⁸ Posner, Rudnitsky, *Course Design*, 59-62.

¹⁷⁹ Appendix I

Furthermore, the group will explore the possibilities of improving specific situations by taking development-approaches into account, using resources from within the group and the wider community. In the light of their situation the group learn about the universal church/people of other faiths in the form of a dialogue with past and present traditions.

4.3. A conceptual mind-map showing the relationships between different aspects of the course:



4.4. Entry Level Survey

Being a listener in the community means to learn about people's interests and their abilities as reflected in chapter 3 of this paper.¹⁸⁰ Meru people will be called together by the local church as an open invitation for people of all faiths and denominations to come together. Usually the group will represent rural PLIP of different Christian traditions, but often at least one person of the group comes from another faith tradition; all interested in economic development for their own/community's benefit. In such a group usually there will be a variety of thought and experiences to be shared. Existing resources within the community or close to the community can be used.

Most people have an obvious donor-oriented-attitude: where a donor is expected to provide resources and the means for the people's development. This counteracts student's awareness of their own resources, which is crucial for achieving ownership and lasting developmental transformation. Inquiry-based holistic TE helps not to confuse the teacher's role as a facilitator with a donor's role.

4.5. Course Rationale

People in rural areas are often deprived of educational opportunities due to accessibility or to requisite education. Existing resources are part of people's knowledge: their experience and knowledge gained throughout life in conjunction with the resources surrounding them. This course seeks to make use of these in such a way that learners may recognize and use their own resources towards transformation. As people in rural areas of

¹⁸⁰ Appendix I

Tanzania are very often PLIP seeking to improve their situations, both individual families, but also the community as a whole, are interested in development. This course will promote transformation for individual families and communities. The group, with its dynamics and its combination of resources, is a key value to the course. The teacher may act and guide as a facilitator, but the group with the individual learner will take the lead in holistic learning. Thus learning starts with our faith and goes further towards holistic transformation, resulting in a growing faith. The Bible is valued as a means of hearing the word of God, as the Holy Spirit speaking to each one of us, not only about our faith but about each situation of life.

This course covers only areas relevant to the students. However the learners will have gained skills in areas even beyond the scope of the course. The aim of this course is to equip the participants with the awareness of their own abilities to engage into a holistic transformation process. Through Bible-reading as a group and the discussion of related development issues, transformation is not only put into the context of faith, but the learners will also experience an immanent God who cares for them in their daily lives. Participants will continue to grow in a Kingdom-attitude in their lives, actively participating in living and promoting the values of God's Kingdom here on earth. Furthermore, the learners will learn how to read the Bible and engage in development projects.

4.6. Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO) set the basic structure of the course.¹⁸¹ Cognition can be defined as learning factual knowledge whereas affective understanding usually affects and involves the self. This would lead to another sub-division of skills: affective skill, which is the behaviour-consequence of affective understanding. The application of cognition is a cognitive skill. Psychomotor-perceptual skills are physical skills, observable and outwardly-measurable skills.¹⁸²

4.6.1. ILO

	Cognition (C)	Affective Understanding (AU)	Cognitive Skill (CS)	Affective Skill (AC)	Psychomotor- perceptual skill (PPS)
1	Seeing a God who cares about present day situations	Being aware of our own resources		Using existing resource more efficiently	New methods of agriculture
2	Knowledge of income-generating projects	Being aware of the interdependence of protection of environment and long-term economic benefit	Using income-generating projects	Discovering tools of their own, problem solving abilities	

¹⁸¹ Posner, Rudnistiky, *Course Design*, 85.

¹⁸² Posner, Rudnistiky, *Course Design*, 88-91.

3	Knowledge about loans	Being aware of marginalized people	Decreasing hunger/hunger eradication through better planning skills and more effective resource usage	Better child-care	
4	Knowledge about tradition, church history and the universal church	Bible can be understood by us – speaks to us and has something to say about pressing-issues	Bible-reading skills	Changing the position of marginalized people	
5		Awareness of water rights	How to repay loans	Protecting water rights especially for the poorest people in a village	
6		Awareness of women in society as marginalized people	Possibilities of land protection/rights and how each one of them can be put into practice	Different marriage relations	
7		Being aware of the negative affect of relying on donors		Living our everyday lives from a kingdom-perspective: care for marginalized and environment, making the best out of my own abilities.	
8		Awareness of Land issues		Discovering the Bible	

				speaks to us – instead of having it interpreted by a pastor	
9				Changes in women’s roles and empowerment	

It is noticeable that most skills and understandings are affective understandings and skills. As Conscientisation is both the method and content of this course, it should not be surprising that most ILO are, in their nature, about Conscientisation.

4.6.2. Prioritizing ILOs in the light of the course rationale:

- 1) “Being aware of our own resources” means our own resources in terms of the experience that all learners bring to the course, but also in using resources that the learners have not realized as resources before, or using known resources in a more efficient way.
- 2) Being aware of the interdependence of protection of the environment and long-term economic benefits.
- 3) Being aware that the Bible can be understood by us, speaks to us and has something to say about our pressing-issues.
- 4) Understanding ourselves and our community as part of the worldwide community of brothers and sisters in Christ.

5) Living our everyday life from a Kingdom-perspective: care for marginalized and environment, making the best of my own abilities.

4.7. Curriculum Unit Organization

The approach used for clustering ILOs into units employs the starting point/pressing-issue of society as Instructional Foci (IF) rather than then organizing according to ILO groupings decided on by the teacher beforehand. Thus the pressing-issues of society serve according to this model as instructional foci and the ILOs can be used across units. Rudnitsky/ Posner mention the possibility of clustering units around problems¹⁸³ but usually centre them around IF as an activity.¹⁸⁴

4.8. Teaching strategies (TS)

Designed for people in rural contexts including illiterate people, who should be able to participate, and facilitation should even take place on a level that allows people with primary educational backgrounds to facilitate the course easily. No additional teaching materials should be needed. The dialogue teaching strategy of Freire will be guided by the facilitator who will make the participants be aware of, and use their resources. They will take the initiative in collecting and trying out ideas.

In the Bible-text-discussion the facilitator will ask three questions, first discussed in groups of 3 and then with the whole group. The questions will be: 1) What does the text

¹⁸³ Posner, Rudnitsky, *Course Design*, 111.

¹⁸⁴ Posner, Rudnitsky, *Course Design*, 111ff.

say? 2) Is the text about the pressing-issue discussed in this unit, and what does it say about it? 3) What does the text say to us today, especially in relationship to the pressing-issue of the unit?¹⁸⁵

The dialogue with present/past tradition/universal church takes place in the form of a story resembling the traditional way of storytelling: giving unknown content a familiar structure. A great asset to these dialogues is the fact that people of other religions, even though few, and different denominations will be present.

The development ideas are collected in the group through the sharing of experience or inviting a guest to share their experience. The group will then enter into a dialogue with each other and the invited-guest. Lectures by the facilitator should be avoided. Skills have to be tried out, and evaluated, with or without being observed beforehand; T&E: Trial and Evaluation Method.

All sorts of role-plays and discussion stimuli can be used. Written methods should be avoided as people are not used to note-taking and cannot pay attention to the discussion and writing at the same time.

¹⁸⁵ Rowland, *The Cambridge Companion To Liberation Theology*, 142.

4.9. The curriculum sequence

Introduction: Group collects/reviews pressing-issues

A. Environment

1) This unit shows how environment, and our use of it, is interdependent. Protection results in direct benefits for each family. The issue is pressing as it results in hunger and poverty. The participants will try out and select different methods to be adopted. We will find out that God wants us to take responsibility for our own benefit.

Situation/IF: exploitation, global-warming- lack of rain, lack of harvest, erosion, desertification

ILO: Knowing about Conservation Agriculture and other alternative methods; TS: observation where it has been tried out, T&E

More trees – knowledge about tree planting and practical experience; TS: T&E

Erosion prevention, TS: T&E

Bible: Genesis 1: creation; Protecting the Environment

Story: Heifer Project International¹⁸⁶; Sabbath Ecology¹⁸⁷

How to further? Different methods of agriculture

Planting of trees

Agriculture that prevents erosion

What to plant?

2) A lack of water paralyses the society making even basic development impossible.

Nobody will understand better what “Water of Life” means than the one missing it.

¹⁸⁶ Heifer International, “Charitable Giving that makes A Difference.” n.p. [cited 13 March 2009]. Online: www.heifer.org

¹⁸⁷ Bradshaw, *Change Across Cultures*, 109-111.

Water is a human right. This unit looks at improving the situation from a village level.

Water is also a resource that can be used effectively and protect our environment. Water will expand our agricultural possibilities explored in unit one.

Situation/IF: Lack of safe, affordable and accessible water, girls not getting education because of water-fetching, drowning in water holes, scabies, lack of food

ILO: Awareness about water rights

Knowing different methods of making water accessible

Knowing the relationship of water to health, economics, agriculture, education

Making more water available in the community TS: T&E

Safe drinking water, safe fetching of water, affordable for all especially the poorest;

TS: Discussion on how this can be done: T&E

No more deaths related to water holes

Methods of irrigation TS: T&E

A functioning water-committee TS: T&E

Bible: John 4:37-44 Water of Life

Story: Water war of Cachabamba, Brazil¹⁸⁸

How to go further? Water rights

Wells

Rainwater harvesting

Our water

Vegetable gardens

¹⁸⁸ Sr Elena Rastello, fma and Humphrey Sipalla Jr, Eds, *Faith and Society 12: World Water Crisis: A Challenge to Social Justice* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2007), 62ff.

Scabies

Drip irrigation

3) Most participants experience that available land is getting smaller. It is often exploited and the village people suffer the consequences e.g. a private investor buys a huge farm and cuts the trees down. The village has not only lost land but the rain decreases. For efficient resources-management, resources need protection. To prevent urbanization and poverty we need to have enough land for our families. This unit is about land-rights and land-protection.

Situation/IF: Huge portions of land sold by villages, parents selling land so children have no source of income, inherited land divided among sons – not enough to survive, girls do not traditionally inherit.

ILOs: Awareness of different types of land issues TS: Using a stimulation either in the form of a picture that shows poor people crowded on land, working for the owner, or describing the situation the picture shows.

Knowing about land protection; village leadership/bylaw possibilities; rights to inheritance.

Knowing about, and having strategies in place, in case of violations against rights related to land-ownership.

Bible: Leviticus 25:8-28; The Jubilee, less is more

Story: Brazilian Rainforest Protection¹⁸⁹

How to further? Political protection of land

¹⁸⁹ The World Bank Group, "Pilot Project to Conserve the Brazilian Rain Forest," n.p. [cited: 26 May 2008]. Online: www.worldbank.org/rfpp/docs/resolution/htm

Protected zones

Women's rights to inheritance.

Legal means to protect land/selling of inheritance

4) Many rural families depending on agriculture experience hunger periodically. Unit 1-3 already show how to improve the situation for the families. This unit builds on it further in discussing the better use of resources and better planning skills.

Situation IF: Hunger during dry season

ILO: Income-generating projects prevent dependence only on maize TS: Continue to T&E

Knowledge about predicting maize prices

Planning (knowledge and practice) of alternative use of resource, using different resources TS: T&E

Planning for the future as maize prices are predictable

Knowledge about drip irrigation TS: T&E

Bible: Matthew 15: 29 – 39 Jesus feeds five thousand

Story: Christian Farmer in Chad¹⁹⁰

How to further? Strategies of Planning

Economics of Maize prices

Alternative income possibilities

Irrigation possibilities for gardens

¹⁹⁰ Batchelor, *People in Rural Development*, 152ff.

B. Prosperity Gospel

The concept of God as a bank (Prosperity Gospel) is popular in the area. Blessings have very different aspects. Unit A has taught us how God has given us possibilities to help our material needs. “Material blessings” and Prosperity Gospel is critically evaluated in the light of a biblical bias for PLIP so that Christians are not led into passivity in improving their situations.

Situation/IF: Poverty; traditional understanding of blessing,

ILO: Get an alternative understanding of blessings from the Bible reading

Being aware of the negative effects on relying on donors; TS: Role-play: A donor coming to the village

Know about loans. Know how to plan for refunding loans; TS: T&E

Know possibilities of income-generating projects and adopt one; TS: T&E

Bible text: Biblical text on blessing; Philippians 2, 1-18

Story: Debt Relief Initiative of the Church 2000

How to go further? Learn more about income-generating project

Discuss Pros and Cons to loans

Group projects TS: T&E

C. As the participants have looked at different possibilities to improve their situations, they are now directed towards a Biblical understanding of poverty and marginalization. The rural villagers will evaluate their own situation in that light but especially will be aware of groups of marginalized people in their communities and their responsibility, as Christians participating in the Kingdom, towards them.

Marginalized People

Introduction: Identifying groups of people, where are we marginalized?

1) Situation/IF: PILP

ILO: Awareness of marginalised peoples in our area; means of improving their situation and reducing vulnerability

Knowing possibilities of improving their situation; TS: T&E

Awareness of our own situation as being marginal/vulnerable; TS: Discussion on how income-generating-projects help T&E

Understanding God as caring about each of our situations as a God who has a bias towards marginalized people.

Bible: Bias towards poor and marginalized, Isaiah 1:17

Story: St. Francis; Holiness movement

How to go further? Identifying groups and their needs.

Appropriate responses.

What help is needed?

How can help be organized?

2) HIV/Aids

It is very difficult to think about the fact that we as people stigmatize infected people. It is even more difficult to see ourselves at risk of being infected. This unit will raise awareness and let us take the risk of reaching out to others, being aware and open about our own vulnerability. As Kingdom-participants we can receive the strength from the Father and our brothers and sisters in the group.

Situation IF: Thinking about others/ Thinking about myself in relationship to HIV/Aids –

Self-awareness; stigmatization

ILO: Awareness about living with HIV/Aids – Knowledge and Practice of Prevention

and Opposing stigmatization in word and deed TS: Role-play: village reactions to a

positive test

Using testing possibilities

Awareness of vulnerability of women and girls

Stronger girls and women TS: Being aware of situations; practicing the situation

with a response chosen beforehand

Bible: Mark 2, 13-17; Jesus eating with tax-collectors (provoking the difference between sick-sin; but all stigmatized)

Story: Uganda's success in fighting HIV/Aids with Christian ideals/Churches Role in

Fighting Apartheid in South Africa

How do we continue? Knowledge/Stigmatization

Awareness-raising

Examples

Possibilities in treatment

Prevention

Strong girls and wives

3) Women are a great asset to society. If we do not listen to them and take their gifts into account we are putting our community and families at disadvantage. Tradition provides us with role models; positive values can be taken and still stretched further for women to reach their full potential. Women have rights, of which we need to be aware e.g. in inheriting. The group will explore what education opportunities exist and which could exist. The participants will be aware and promote women's rights within the community and their own families.

Situation/ IF: Disempowered women; women's role; tradition

ILO: Awareness of women and their role in society TS: Role-play where a man plays a wife and a women a husband

Understanding them as marginalized and vulnerable

Empowerment of women

Understanding their own marriage as the starting point for change

Changes in women's role in society

Education opportunities

Understanding women's rights in marriage; in inheriting

Bible: John 4:5-42 Woman at the Well

Story: Beguines¹⁹¹

How to go further? How to empower women?

Education

Role changes

Marriage

¹⁹¹ Abby Stoner, "Sisters Between: Gender and the Medieval Beguines," n.p. [Cited: 12 May 2008] Online: <http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~epf/1995/beguine.html>

Society

4) Children are another marginalized group. We have already seen God being the defender of the marginalized. Children's needs and rights need to be taken seriously so that they grow to their full potential and are/become happy children, but also be in a position to care for their elderly parents later on in life. In a changing world it is important to give them opportunities for their future from within a loving and supporting family.

Situation/IF: Children's role in society: to help; the more the better

ILO: Awareness of Children as marginalized people; TS: Remembering how it felt to be a child.

Awareness of the vulnerability of children

Awareness of children's rights; fighting child slavery

Sending more children to school

Changed role in the family: Awareness of how children learn: negative effects of too much responsibility; learning effect of play TS: Play with a child at home for one hour, Come back to the group to evaluate the experience.

Better Child Care; TS: collecting ideas: T&E

Bible reading: John 6:1-13; The boy with the fish

Story: Child Dream Survey¹⁹²

How to go further? Children's dignity

Education

Fighting Child Slavery

¹⁹² Myers, *Walking With The Poor*, 192.

Why play?

Child development

Empowerment of Children

D. A changing society

1) Families without sufficient opportunities in the village in terms of land and resources will lose some of their family members as they migrate to the city, where poverty will not decrease but get an urban face and often even increase. Hopefully all the afore-mentioned units will help to prevent this. Rural people need to be aware of the negative impacts of urbanization and try to claim the positive ones for their context. At the same time, the young people need to have values that will guide them through a process of urbanization; of claiming urbanization for their village e.g. set the priorities of either bringing a TV or a Clinic to the village.

Situation/IF: Urbanization; Modernity; Increasing Poverty

ILO: Strategies of talking about values with our young people/passing on of values/developing values TS: T&E

Finding and counting on God's presence in new situations

Claiming/working urban benefits for rural situation/A reverse urbanization process

Awareness of rural potential and advantages; TS: Role-play: A city-dweller in the village; a villager in the city.

New alternative/informal education possibilities TS: T&E however over a longer time with village leadership involvement

Bible: Psalms 139

Story: German church in an identity crisis – decline of membership - examining the challenge to be a relevant church

How to go further? Guiding young people into the future

Urbanization/rural development

Urban advantages in the village – village projects

Creating Education

2) Urbanization challenges our faith. A traditional church is often the result of a traditional society. So how can the modern God be found in a modern society. Where is God in the new urban situation? A God of all the situations wants us to participate in the Kingdom. What will that look like?

Situation/IF: God as distant is not taking change into account. What is the purpose of the church? Of our Faith?

ILO: Understanding God as an immanent God.

Awareness and Development of Kingdom-attitude

Understanding a Kingdom-attitude in relationship to economics, politics and family

Bible : Matthew 10:5-10 Kingdom

Story: God in Latin America – Liberation Theology

How to go further on? Consequences of an immanent God

Kingdom-understanding of God

God in economics

God in politics

God in Family

Growing cash crops

4.10. Evaluation of the Course

The evaluation will need to take a wider and more integrated role that goes beyond the scope of the paper and beyond the evaluation suggested by Rudnitsky/ Posner.¹⁹³

According to the author's experience it is valuable to integrate it into the lesson plans as an interactive evaluation i.e. Kinsler's evaluation¹⁹⁴, giving a practical suggestion and external evaluation will also be helpful.

4.10.1 Possible Side Effect

1) Too little guidance by the teacher as the students might not be able or willing to share their experience. Different "experts" might not be available to help present the course, or discourage the group's experience by their expertise. The teacher might continue to lecture if the discussion and sharing of experiences becomes quiet.

2) The students might misunderstand the course as bringing development but not they themselves engaging in the process.

3) The students might understand the teacher as bring finances for starting income-generating projects.

¹⁹³ Rudnitsky, Posner, *Course Design*, 181ff. Appendix V.

¹⁹⁴ Kinsler; Emery, *Opting for Change*.

- 4) The village might see water as a business opportunity.
- 5) The pressing-issues of the community might change faster than course facilitator's ability to adapt to the changes.
- 6) Regular meetings might be disturbed by the domestic responsibilities of women and the agricultural cycle.
- 7) The course could be seen as denominational rather than ecumenical; resulting in participants from only one denomination. Misunderstanding the ecumenical nature might leave none responsible for the organization.

4.11. Conclusion

The designed course gives an insight on how holistic TE in Meru can be organized.

Planning is important but the facilitator needs to leave flexibility for the leaders to have the freedom to change the learning process according to changes in pressing- issues or in unforeseen learning results e.g. if a group decides during Bible reading that really bees are needed for environmental protection the facilitator might need to change his lesson plans.

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The integration of past/present tradition and universal church needs to be evaluated carefully after using the curriculum, since its relevance to the students will be difficult to establish. The cultural differences in the contexts are challenging.

Conclusion

A holistic and transformative TE has been created specifically for Meru People widening their educational, spiritual and developmental opportunities. Thus not every aspect of TE has been assessed in this paper. Specifically targeting PILP and marginalized people it is consciously designed to include less-formally educated people and especially women.

Conscientisation and inquiry-based learning provides a TE where the learners take the lead to make use of their resources and experiences. This will be important to fight the uttermost poverty; poverty that does not recognize self-worth. Both concepts are foreign to society, but are the most effective way of redemptive TE in this context; thus being its content and method, sensitively linked to traditional learning but aiming at transformation, it counteracts internal and external oppression

Holistic learning adds development to TE but at the same time provides principles for relevant TE, starting with pressing-issues of society. It is the people's TE, approached as a low-key programme, allowing easy and cheap implementation.

God is the God who cares about each person and situation. What could be more valuable for TE than to learn about a loving God who meets us in all situations?

Word Count: 16076

Appendix I

Report of a Listening Survey in Meru

Team: Ekaeli Pallangyo, Public Health Nurse; Farmer; Meru

Eli Pallangyo, Public Health Nurse; Farmer; Meru

Eliafura Kitali, Public Health Nurse; Farmer; Meru

Steven Kitomari, Driver; Farmer, Meru

Samuel Wilson, Clinical Officer; Missionary; Eye Specialist; Maasai

Karen Wilson, Nurse; Missionary; German

The team is working together as a PHC/CBHC team in promoting health care for the ELCT-Diocese of Meru. The project is responsible for:

- 1) The education of Village Health Workers and Village Health Committees where village health workers advise their neighbourhood about health and health-related issues.
- 2) This kind of education is multiplied by the training of trainers as village health workers.
- 3) The training of Traditional Midwives (Traditional Birth Attendants).
- 4) General health issues on village request for different groups of peoples.
- 5) Water projects: the establishing of water committees, drilling of wells, building of rainwater-harvesting tanks or other methods of ensuring water supplies.

The mix of gender; insiders/outside helps us to get a well-rounded listening experience among the different villages around Mt. Meru.

We gain a lot of insights from the discussion in the seminars but we gain even more by listening to the people in their homes, churches, shops, markets, wells or schools. Some of our observations will be relevant to this paper:

1) Marriage

Even though our first objective is health education, frequently our participants state in evaluations that the major change is in their relationships to their wives e.g. partners share differently, especially in financial planning. We realize that traditionally a marriage is not marked by being emotionally close. A woman will only share with women of her age-group. The same is true for men. Taboo topics are not discussed in the company of mixed gender. Conflict management is a matter of the wider community but not a matter of the partners. However, Meru live in a changing society where men and women have to work together differently and build strong relationships to protect their family from HIV/Aids and other threats. Many partners are looking for alternatives to the traditional model.

2) Taboos

The main taboo topic is around sexuality and gender. That means that such topics will only be discussed with the same gender and age groups. Working with Traditional Midwives we hear more from the inside of the taboo around sexuality, pregnancy and birth. Traditionally men are not allowed to know anything about that. A pregnancy

will be hidden as long as possible and is definitely not the topic of a public discussion. The way Europeans announce early pregnancies would be very embarrassing for our Meru friends.

In our teaching Taboo topics could be addressed if the groups are divided according to gender/age-group. Carefully chosen vocabulary will show, and allow, respectful addressing of taboo topics. In a recent meeting of the PHC/CBHC team with the village of Ntuwe the men noted that they do not know anything about birth. Wives cannot break this taboo, and the men cannot prepare in case of an emergency. They decided that, since the women could not tell them, maybe the male Clinical PHC/CBHC officer could talk to them as he would not break the taboo by doing so.

3) Respect

In a Meru person's life the closest relationship is the relationship to the mother. The relationship to the father is marked even more with respect which at points certain points also becomes fear. However, in both relationships love is not expressed by a closeness that will result in sharing inner feelings. Love is expressed by respect which results in not crossing the generation borders especially with taboo areas. Thus love's most important expression is respect and respect will often look to outsiders as distance. One of the taboos is sexuality. The respectful relationship will not allow mother and daughter to talk about sexuality. Unfortunately the taboo also crosses age groups. The relationship between mother and daughter is shaped by respect and that includes the respect of keeping taboos. Traditionally mothers and daughters/fathers and sons do not talk about sexuality. This part of teaching was traditionally part of

teaching around initiation. Thus the abolishment or the clandestine practice of FGM leaves a dangerous vacuum where young people do not have adequate and timely information about sexuality available. However, with the pressing importance of HIV/Aids parents are considering and are actually starting to break this taboo.

Seminar discussions help the parents a lot but also the teaching of upper-primary school or confirmation students also helps here. We would not easily be able to talk about sexuality in isolation but awareness-raising of HIV/Aids is accepted, and sexuality in general is part of this. Usually we separate genders for this.

The idea of respect as an expression of love and honour instead of closeness is also expressed by the use of names in Meru. It is considered a privilege to use a name of honour for a person. That will be the “Grandmother’s name”. First names are very rarely used. It is very common in Tanzania to use the name of the oldest or youngest child, to call the parent “Mama N.N.” or “Baba N.N.” Even that is not as common in Meru culture. The use of clan names is more common but it is even more polite to use the grandmother’s name. In Western societies closeness and friendship is expressed by using the first instead of the last name. Meru people would express respect and friendship by using the most distant name of honour i.e. the name given by the grandmother.

3) Initiation

This is the process of becoming an adult. It is a celebration of honour and it has many positive functions in society. One important function is the teaching of taboos. As FGM is abolished alternative ways of teaching and initiation need to be sought after.

Thus we see a changing society where people are looking for alternatives that touch them in their inner most being and understanding of life. It must be said, that

according to our experience in seminars and our observation, most women still practise and support FGM. We usually think a seminar is good when people admit to this practice. In a seminar where all people refuse to acknowledge that this is still a practice we know that it is just practiced underground and that bears even more health risks. Also there is no basis for discussion.

Many Meru women see FGM as part of their identity. Thus any discussion needs sensitivity and listening to alternatives that can only work if of they are desired by the women themselves. Most of all it needs to be emphasised and well-considered where effective teaching will take place if the traditional place at initiation should not be there anymore. Although FGM is an example of internal oppression it needs to be made clear that the abolishment of FGM can never mean the deprivation of privileges for women. It needs to empower not disempower.

4) HIV/Aids

Stigmatization is the main problem we are facing in the villages. Anti-Retroviral are available but still people choose to die as part of their community rather than live alone. However, already a few brave voices of PLWA have made a huge difference. In the past years the number of people who were tested drastically increased. It is a big problem in society. There is no family or community untouched. In many families the parents are missing. The grandmothers take care of the grandchildren without the physical and financial resources needed. We still see our main task as prevention and that mainly to provide an environment where it is safe to talk about HIV/Aids which

is part of the sexuality-taboo. For us it is not important to judge behaviour but to advocate especially for women who are economically dependent on men whether that would be in a marriage relationship or in an extra-marital relationship. HIV/Aids causes many people to rethink their relationships and try innovative models. It is especially crucial to understand the churches importance in this area as, traditionally, no such role models are available, leaving an important role of sensitive guidance to the church. A couple wanting a deeper marital relationship, including, for example, conversations about emotions, will have no role model available, even though they see a strong relationship being the best protection against HIV/Aids. Conscientisation will be a key point as Gender issues cannot be changed from the outside.

5) Women

Already the name of women in Meru shows their dependency on men. They will use the first name of the father as a “surname” which can be followed by the clan name. As she marries she takes on the first name of the husband instead of the father’s name. The question: “What is your name?” can commonly also be asked as: “Whose are you?” Women also change their name with the first child to take the child’s name. That shows that women’s identity is that of a mother and that they identity themselves through their children. A woman without children bears a huge burden in society and often men see that as an excuse to marry a second wife or divorce the first one. It must also be seen that women marry early since there are few educational

opportunities and women do not have many other choices. Women finish their primary education at 14; they might get married at 17, have their first child at 18 and a second at 20. Family-planning is widely propagated but what is not discussed are the implications of a woman settling for a family with few children. From a traditional point of view women will then ask themselves: And what shall I do for the rest of my life if I should not have more children and, in particular, who will I be without children? Family-planning is useful for fighting poverty but it does not solve the identity crisis it can bring to women, besides the fact that childbirth is the only time when the mother can rest for three months and is served the best foods. Women in situations of economic dependency are exposed to the risk of depending on extra-marital relationships which do not actually give her the security she needs. As a widow she will be “inherited” by the husband’s brother. Such a traditional relationship within polygamy at least gives her a status and security. In other relationships she will lack that since polygamy is not accepted by the church. It is also common that in the few educational opportunities that girls have they are also vulnerable to extra-marital relationships due to economic dependencies or men misusing positions of power.

6) Our teaching and influence on Gender

We see our teaching about health as an entrance to facilitate discussion and issues that are important to society but sometimes are in taboo areas. It is very significant that of in all the evaluations that seminar participants do on our courses usually about half of them will say: “It changed the relationship to my wife; we sleep in one room now and

we plan finances together.” None of this has been explicitly said during the seminar.

It is usually the husbands who decide to bring the change. Women often desire change but are not in a position to cause it.

Appendix II

My Personal Experience

My parents became missionaries in Tanzania when I was 15. This gave me an opportunity to get to know people through the eyes of a teenager, who did not have any other function in society. I was given the freedom to view something differently as by I was included without expectation. This was extremely helpful to get a glimpse of an inside view. Even though later on I became a missionary, for most people I was first of all the wife of a Maasai and the mother of Maasai children. Although I am an outsider it still gives me a different status. People know that in comparison to other foreigners I am here to stay. The questions that are relevant to them in their society are also relevant to me, because they are part of my family as well. When we discuss about FGM they know that I am not just teaching about it because of the Tanzanian law, but because we also have to take the decision for our own daughter. Often I have the privilege to talk to people as a fellow mother and not as a missionary. The down side might be that sometimes some men also see me as “just a mother” and I might not have the authority that other missionaries have.

Since people cannot change an identity I will never be an insider but always be someone living between cultures as a “third-culture kid.” Still I can enjoy and benefit from the special position I have in society as someone who has a place in society. One group of Traditional Midwives with whom I am working have settled after much thought and discussion to call me “daughter-in-law.” To them calling me by my name was too

Western, and too “unMeru” for them but since I did not have a Meru grandmother, I don’t have a name of honour that she gave me. “Daughter-in-law” is quite an adequate description of my place in society. My husband and I have been the longest missionaries since Elisabeth Seesemann (1911-1936) and yet we have been “forgotten” in the list of Missionaries.¹⁹⁵ However it does not mean that I know all the details of Maasai and Meru society or, as matter of fact, about my original German society. For me it is rather more important that I can ask questions; that I know how I can ask and what it is I need to ask about. It also means that I do not access society as something static but realise that society is changing in different situations, dynamics and paces.

¹⁹⁵ Abdiel T. Ndosi, Elieshi N. Mungure, Emmanuel Majola, *Kanisa la Kiinjili La Kilutheri Tanzania Dayosisi ya Meru: Historia ya Miaka Mia Moja y Injili Meru (1902-2002)* (Arusha: JMA Printers and Stationary, 2002).

AppendixIII

Interview on Traditional Meru Learning and Pressing-Issues of Society

Interviewee: Rikaeli Daudi, cook; farmer

21/01/08

- 1) a) How do Meru people traditionally learn? It could be that different things are learned differently; so the question could be: Which things are learned in which ways?

Observation e.g. in the kitchen, then try out. If problem, ask question, mother answers. Or by lectures from older people, parents or grandparents, aunts and uncles. It is mainly through observation, whether it is values or skills that are learned, questioning as in inquiry would show a loss of respect. If something is not understood or observation was not enough then to observe then further explanation can be requested.

- b) What is learned by observation/imitation?

Skills are mainly learned by observation, but also values behind certain behaviour.

- c) What is learned as a group and what is learned as an individual?
- The age-group can come together according to gender and discuss community projects that they would like to do together. This way they learn from each other and share their thoughts. Everyone is open to share their view, but without showing open criticism.
- d) Is questioning a traditional method of learning? No, except in age group discussion, but there are no questions of criticism or that would cause embarrassment as it would show that someone would not know the answer.
- e) Is repetition a traditional method of learning? Yes. Either by observation and repetition or even in class room situations repetition is the most common way of teaching.
- 2) How is secret knowledge passed on? By whom? It is passed on at a special time of instruction during circumcision. A wise person is chosen just one age group ahead of the young people. This person will often be used by the community for several years in a row until the age gap is too big. Even for Christians this time of instruction is important although the value of female circumcision will have changed. Also the content changes with Christians as with' better than and also with pressing issues of society. Today, in most cases, it will include instructions about HIV/Aids.

3) How is open knowledge passed on? By whom?

It is passed on by elderly people in the family e.g. Grandparents, aunts and uncles.

4) Is knowledge passed on and preserved by traditional stories?

It will also include traditional stories about the tribe, community, values and religion but only open knowledge.

5) How would you describe the style of learning?

a) Hierarchical and authoritarian in schools.

b) Patriarchal traditional, as knowledge is observed and passed down by older family members and also the family has the responsibility to take care of the younger learner in turn tern.

c) Egalitarian, where teacher and learner are learning together as a team?

This only takes place in the age-groups discussions.

6) Is authority necessary to traditional learning?

Yes, except when the age group discusses communal work together, it is always an elderly person mainly from within the family teaching the younger. A lot of times by telling traditional stories about our tribe, values, traditions and religion.

7) How do you reflect on this style of learning? Should education continue in that way?

Traditional ways of learning are good and should continue. It is so important to pass on old values and traditions to the younger children. They need to learn respect and honour.

8) If not, what should be changed and what should be kept the same?

a) In informal education situations. The system should be kept the same, even though the content might need to change towards new issues. The patriarchal structure should be kept and the relationship of honour towards the teacher and of care towards the student should be kept.

For the planning of small projects, age group discussion and working together should also be kept.

b) In schools and educational institutions
the role as an authoritarian teacher in schools is also good, as it teaches respect and children learn that way.

9) In your opinion, what are the four pressing-issues in today's Meru society?

Development is the most important for the economic progress of families. Other issues are inter-related like women education/ education in general or the supplies of water. It is also important to learn more about the Bible and our faith.

Interview on Traditional Meru Learning and Pressing-Issues of Society

Interviewee: Paskalina Vitalis, Primary school teacher

13/03/2008;

1) a) How do Meru people traditionally learn? It could be that different things are learned differently; so the question could be: Which things are learned in which ways?

My mother would give me oral instructions whenever she wanted me to learn something like water-fetching. I had a long way to go but I went with other adults and they also kept an eye on me if I needed help. She was very good at knowing at which age it was appropriate to learn which skills. Other things I learned by observing. I could always ask questions if I did not understand. In learning in our tribe the boys learn from the father and the girls from the mother. Mixing the genders is a taboo. If I needed something from my dad I would have to ask my

mother and then she would ask him. Skills are often learned by observation and imitation, there is freedom to ask questions but it is not possible to ask critical questions. That would never happen.

b) What is learned by observation/imitation?

Often in family situations.

c) What is learned as a group and what is learned as an individual?

A different learning situation was that my mother called all of us every week to see how we are doing and if we had concerns or problems. However I don't know if that is a tribal tradition or if that was just our family.

There is also a practical learning situation for example if the age group meets and wants to do a project together. They would use a dialogue/discussion style of learning but even in that setting critical questions are not possible.

d) Is questioning a traditional method of learning? If yes, where?

Rarely but in an age group setting, yes in the form of dialogue and trying to understand the content or exchange ideas. But not in the form of critical questions.

e) Is repetition a traditional method of learning? If yes, where?

That is the more common way of learning from fathers and mothers or other people in the society.

- 3) How is secret knowledge passed on? By whom? (e.g. instruction before circumcision).

Some of the stories pass secret knowledge on and they would be told by someone close to the family, either a friend or a relative, but only from the age of 12-13 onwards and again boys and girls would be separated.

Even circumcision goes along with instruction and teaching. That would also be in groups of 3 or 4 children/teenagers. Usually it is someone who is slightly older than the parents but close to the family. It should also be a wise person.

- 4) How is open knowledge passed on? By whom?

Parents, but actually the whole society. People believe that all parents can teach all children especially in punishment. So anyone has the right to beat a child.

Otherwise learning takes place always within a relationship. Ideally as a natural part of a loving relationship – mainly to the parents.

- 5) Is knowledge passed on and preserved by traditional stories?

Yes, especially to model behaviour.

- 6) How would you describe the style of learning?

- a. Hierarchical
- b. Patriarchal X
- c. Egalitarian, where teacher and learner are learning together as a team?

7) Is authority necessary to traditional learning? (Where does the typical style of teaching in primary schools come from? Is it a traditional style of teaching?)
Unfortunately it is an important part of traditional learning, which I do not agree with. It is not necessary and especially not from all adults in the community towards all children. Learning does not need authority as in terms of enforcing it through physical punishment. Children can be guided in other ways. They do not need to be beaten. However the parents still have to do a lot of learning here. Respect as such is good, but that is not the same as misused authority.

8) How do you reflect on this style of learning as mentioned under 8.? Should education continue in that way?
The primary school system takes a bad example from home and continues in such a way. Teachers only have their own bad experiences from school, so they don't know any other way of teaching. So they pass on their own frustrations. Since nobody knows a different style people think this is o.k. It is the children who suffer. But a teacher still should do a proper job of teaching. Some only let one child copy the teacher's notes on the board and all the others copy it from the board.

9) If not, what should be changed and what should be kept the same?

a. In informal education situations:

Group learning should be inquiry-based.

b. In schools and educational institutions:

The children should not be beaten. Smaller classes are needed so that the teacher can see and work with individual children e.g. by dividing them into small groups. Education should work through questioning and inquiry.

10) In your opinion, what are the four pressing issues in today's Meru society?

e.g. role of women, water, agriculture, prosperity gospel, education....

A lack of income/finances;

Water problems;

Lack of health facilities;

Education

Role of Women

Interview on Traditional Meru Learning and Pressing-Issues of Society

Interviewees: Lukas Daudi; Radhi Dimale, farmers; cashiers

13/03/2008;

1) a) How do Meru people traditionally learn?

Usually things are learned by doing them. The child has seen others do it and then the father or mother would ask the children to do the same. It would be explained and if the child did not understand, he/she could ask.

It could be that different things are learned differently; so the question could be:

Which things are learned in which ways?

It always depends on what it is. Skills are usually learned by observing them and then repeating or at least trying.

For secret things it is important to separate girls and boys.

b) What is learned by observation/imitation? – Yes. That is common.

c) What is learned as a group and what is learned as an individual?

If the age-group wants to do something together they would talk about it and ask questions. Then they would decide and try their project.

d) Is questioning a traditional method of learning? If yes, where?

Only if you have not understood something you were told. But children could not start by themselves to ask the questions.

e) Is repetition a traditional method of learning? If yes, where?

Yes, especially while learning skills.

2) How is secret knowledge passed on? By whom? (e.g. instruction before circumcision).

By somebody close to the family but usually older; a wise person. Circumcision is a special time of instruction where the young people learn about life and about being an adult.

3) How is open knowledge passed on? By whom?

First of all parents, but anybody in the society.

4) Is knowledge passed on and preserved by traditional stories?

Yes, there are lots of traditional stories, they are important to us.

5) How would you describe the style of learning?

- a. Hierarchical
- b. Patriarchal X
- c. Egalitarian, where teacher and learner are learning together as a team?

6) Is authority necessary to traditional learning? (Where does the typical style of teaching in primary schools come from? Is it a traditional style of teaching?)

Yes, but in a patriarchal way. The teacher cares for the students like a parent even outside the class room. That would be the same even if the teacher does not come from the same village.

7) How do you reflect on this style of learning as mentioned under 6? Should education continue in that way?

That is a very good way of learning. Our schools are good in that way.

8) If not, what should be changed and what should be kept the same?

- a. in informal education situations
- b. in schools and educational institutions

All should be kept the way it is.

9) In your opinion, what are the four pressing issues in today's Meru society?
e.g. role of women, water, agriculture, prosperity gospel, education....

Education

Development (personal and community)

Agriculture

Increased income

Interview on Traditional Meru Learning and Pressing-Issues of Society

Interviewee: Daniel Samuel Mollel, farmer

15/4/2008

1) a) How do Meru people traditionally learn?

It could be that different things are learned differently; so the question could be:

Which things are learned in which ways?

Parents are observed and imitated. We say: Every father is the father of all and a mother is a mother of all. So all parents teach all children. It is a matter of respect and respect is taught.

b) What is learned by observation/imitation? Yes

c) What is learned as a group and what is learned as an individual?

Age-groups learn certain things together. They have leaders and if someone makes a mistake, the age group and their leader correct him/her.

d) Is questioning a traditional method of learning? If yes, where?

In the age-groups.

e) Is repetition a traditional method of learning? If yes, where? That is common especially when children learn from parents.

2) How is secret knowledge passed on? By whom? (e.g. instruction before circumcision). During initiation one person is in charge like a manager but he will call others to help. They are older, respected people.

3) How is open knowledge passed on? By whom?

Parents, aunts, uncles and grandparents.

4) Is knowledge passed on and preserved by traditional stories?

Yes.

There is also age-group dancing and songs.

5) How would you describe the style of learning?

- a. Hierarchical
- b. Patriarchal X
- c. Egalitarian, where teacher and learner are learning together as a team?

6) Is authority necessary to traditional learning? (Where does the typical style of teaching in primary schools come from? Is it a traditional style of teaching?)

Absolutely. Punishment is part of that too. It has always been like this in schools and is necessary.

7) How do you reflect on this style of learning as mentioned under 6? Should education continue in that way?

It should continue. Even the use of the stick; even though the government wants to stop it.

8) If not, what should be changed and what should be kept the same? No changes needed.

- a. in informal education situations
- b. in schools and educational institution

9) In your opinion, what are the four pressing issues in today's Meru society?

e.g. role of women, water, agriculture, prosperity gospel, education....

- water
- education
- groups for income-generating projects
- Traditional midwives are important and need to be trained.

Interview on Traditional Meru Learning and Pressing-Issues of Society

Interviewee: Remmy Elisaria Mbise, farmer

15/04/2008;

1) a) How do Meru people traditionally learn?

It could be that different things are learned differently; so the question could be:

Which things are learned in which ways?

Practical skills like working in the field are imitated from the parents, but also oral instructions are given. Parents/children learn from the same gender parent.

b) What is learned by observation/imitation?

Yes, but also through play.

c) What is learned as a group and what is learned as an individual?

Age-groups work and learn in smaller groups.

d) Is questioning a traditional method of learning? If yes, where?

If correction is necessary questioning also has a place. Parents can ask children.

e) Is repetition a traditional method of learning? If yes, where?

Children usually imitate what parents are doing.

2) How is secret knowledge passed on? By whom? (e.g. instruction before circumcision).

The person must be older and a person that has respect. This kind of knowledge is passed on during initiation.

3) How is open knowledge passed on? By whom?

That is the responsibility of the parents.

4) Is knowledge passed on and preserved by traditional stories?

Stories and songs are used.

5) How would you describe the style of learning?

- a. Hierarchical
- b. Patriarchal X
- c. Egalitarian, where teacher and learner are learning together as a team

6) Is authority necessary to traditional learning? (Where does the typical style of teaching in primary schools come from? Is it a traditional style of teaching?)

Authority and punishment are necessary.

7) How do you reflect on this style of learning as mentioned under 6? Should education continue in that way?

Even the Bible says that children should be disciplined with a stick. Otherwise they won't learn. It should stay the same. But maybe only two strikes should be allowed.

8) If not, what should be changed and what should be kept the same? I don't think anything needs to change.

- a. in informal education situations
- b. in schools and educational institutions

9) In your opinion, what are the four pressing issues in today's the Meru society?

e.g. role of women, water, agriculture, prosperity gospel, education....

- education
- use of resources i.e. agriculture
- small groups for learning income-generating projects are needed
- water
- health facilities
- kindergartens and schools are needed close to the villages

Interview on Traditional Meru Learning and Pressing-Issues of Society

Interviewee: Yubilate Zakaria, farmer

15/04/2008;

1) a) How do Meru people traditionally learn?

It could be that different things are learned differently; so the question could be:

Which things are learned in which ways?

Fathers teach sons, mothers daughter. It is done through observation and supervision. Children imitate and try out but they also play and try out the things the mother does e.g. cooking mud with a tin and making a small fire.

b) What is learned by observation/imitation? Yes but also playing.

c) What is learned as a group and what is learned as an individual?

In school they learn as a group.

Otherwise age group projects might be learning or doing something as a group.

d) Is questioning a traditional method of learning? If yes, where?

Only in the age group. But also as correction. Children can also ask if they don't understand the purpose of something the father wants to teach them.

e) Is repetition a traditional method of learning? If yes, where?

Yes, in schools but also within the family when children learn by imitating parents.

2) How is secret knowledge passed on? By whom? (e.g. instruction before circumcision).

It should be somebody older and respected.

3) How is open knowledge passed on? By whom?

By parents but also others in the family, their age group.

4) Is knowledge passed on and preserved by traditional stories?

Yes, but also songs are used. But these traditions are getting lost these days since children are in school so they don't have the time.

5) How would you describe the style of learning?

a. Hierarchical

b. Patriarchal X

c. Egalitarian, where teacher and learner are learning together as a team?

6) Is authority necessary to traditional learning? (Where does the typical style of teaching in primary schools come from? Is it a traditional style of teaching?)

Authority and respect is necessary. Children learn better when they are afraid of punishment. But too much is bad as well.

7) How do you reflect on this style of learning as mentioned under 6? Should education continue in that way?

Education should continue as before. Punishment should also continue as it has been done before; with a stick.

8) If not, what should be changed and what should be kept the same? Our education is important and nothing needs to be changed.

- a. in informal education situations
- b. in schools and educational institutions

9) In your opinion, what are the four pressing issues in today's Meru society?

e.g. role of women, water, agriculture, prosperity gospel, education....

- groups for income-generating projects
- water
- children lacking supervision because they are orphans
- education for small children
- HIV/Aids institutions e.g. for testing and counselling

Interview on Traditional Meru Learning and Pressing-Issues of Society

Interviewee: Elly Pallangyo, Public Health Nurse

15/04/2008;

1) a) How do Meru people traditionally learn?

It could be that different things are learned differently; so the question could be:

Which things are learned in which ways?

Usually practical skills are learned from parents by observation and trial. Parents show examples and also give explanations.

b) What is learned by observation/imitation?

From parents we learn by imitation and observation.

c) What is learned as a group and what is learned as an individual?

Groups of the same age-group and gender will work together in that way e.g.

women will get together and help each other in doing their roofing. Then they will also cook and eat together.

d) Is questioning a traditional method of learning? If yes, where?

Yes, among the age-group of the same gender but while learning from mother/grandmother/aunt.

e) Is repetition a traditional method of learning? If yes, where?

That would be common when learning from the mother/grandmother.

2) How is secret knowledge passed on? By whom? (e.g. instruction before circumcision).

The instruction at circumcision usually comes from an aunt or the grandmother, as the family chooses but it would not be the mother or father. Respect plays a big role here but the mother/father is too close.

3) How is open knowledge passed on? By whom?

By all.

4) Is knowledge passed on and preserved by traditional stories?

Yes, often by grandmothers or aunts. They usually have more time.

5) How would you describe the style of learning?

a. Hierarchical

b. Patriarchal X Mothers usually are closer to their children, the fathers relationship to them is usually more marked with fear.

c. Egalitarian, where teacher and learner are learning together as a team?

6) Is authority necessary to traditional learning? (Where does the typical style of teaching in primary schools come from? Is it a traditional style of teaching?) No, that would be disturbing as it makes the children afraid. That will not help the learning.

7) How do you reflect on this style of learning as mentioned under 6? Should education continue in that way?

It should change. This authority-style keeps the children from learning as they are afraid.

8) If not, what should be changed and what should be kept the same?

a. in informal education situations

They can remain the same.

b. in schools and educational institutions

Also children could learn inquiry-based as practiced in adult learning.

9) In your opinion, what are the four pressing issues in today's Meru society?

e.g. role of women, water, agriculture, prosperity gospel, education....

- Income-generating projects

- men/women relationships; in marriage sharing together also with bigger children
in decision-making

- education

- gender-equality

Interview on Traditional Meru Learning and Pressing-Issues of Society

Interviewee: Eliafura Kitali, Public Health Nurse

15/04/2008;

- 1) a) How do Meru people traditionally learn?

It could be that different things are learned differently; so the question could be:

Which things are learned in which ways?

Parents do things together with the children. The father will take his son along to herd animals, let him watch and then ask him to imitate. He will ask him to do a certain task and watch him do it. Mothers will do the same with the daughters e.g. with fetching water. But a good mother takes care that the water bucket for the child is smaller and not too heavy.

- b) What is learned by observation/imitation?

Yes, but it can also be oral instruction sometimes. The father can tell the son.

- c) What is learned as a group and what is learned as an individual?

Not much, but mainly in age-group settings. An age-group also has a leader. That would be practical tasks.

- d) Is questioning a traditional method of learning? If yes, where? Only in an age-group setting.

f) Is repetition a traditional method of learning? If yes, where?

Yes, that is more common since questions can only be asked within the age-group.

2) How is secret knowledge passed on? By whom? (e.g. instruction before circumcision).

By the aunt or the brother of the father for the instruction time that happens after circumcision. But never with children.

3) How is open knowledge passed on? By whom?

Sometimes parents but often grandparents and uncles/aunts.

4) Is knowledge passed on and preserved by traditional stories?

Yes, by the same group of people close to the parents, but often not the parents themselves.

5) How would you describe the style of learning?

a. Hierarchical

b. Patriarchal X

c. Egalitarian, where teacher and learner are learning together as a team?

6) Is authority necessary to traditional learning? (Where does the typical style of teaching in primary schools come from? Is it a traditional style of teaching?)

No, the authoritarian style of teaching is introduced by the government and the law of education but it is not traditional. Traditionally learning is part of a relationship to parents and parent-related people. In the tribe we think that the children belong to all so all are their parents.

7) How do you reflect on this style of learning as mentioned under 6? Should education continue in that way?

No this should change. It just introduces fear to children and then they cannot learn well. Teachers should be the friends of children. Then they can build trust and the children can learn without fear but within this friendship.

8) If not, what should be changed and what should be kept the same?

a. in informal education situations

This is working o.k.

b. in schools and educational institutions

As I have said, the teacher-student relationship should change.

9) In your opinion, what are the four pressing issues in today's Meru society?

e.g. role of women, water, agriculture, prosperity gospel, education....

- women's rights
- income-generating projects
- education, also focusing on adult education
- orphans e.g. due to HIV/Aids but dealing with orphans in general not singling out specific orphans.

Interview on Traditional Meru Learning and Pressing-Issues of Society

Interviewee: Sarikiae Mbise, farmer

15/04/2008

1) a) How do Meru people traditionally learn?

It could be that different things are learned differently; so the question could be:

Which things are learned in which ways?

Fathers teach the boys, mothers the girls. Ploughing using oxen will only be learned by boys. It is usually by conversation and examples.

b) What is learned by observation/imitation?

Skills, language.

c) What is learned as a group and what is learned as an individual?

There are groups working together e.g. women's groups. These are age groups and they have a leader.

d) Is questioning a traditional method of learning? If yes, where?

In an age-group they would ask questions and try out things. They advise each other and discuss their projects.

e) Is repetition a traditional method of learning? If yes, where? Yes, especially respect is important here.

2) How is secret knowledge passed on? By whom? (e.g. instruction before circumcision).

By somebody older teaching the circumcised young people.

3) How is open knowledge passed on? By whom?

By parents mainly, also through songs.

4) Is knowledge passed on and preserved by traditional stories?

Yes songs and story-telling together.

5) How would you describe the style of learning?

a) Hierarchical

b) Patriarchal X

c) Egalitarian, where teacher and learner are learning together as a team?

6) Is authority necessary to traditional learning? (Where does the typical style of teaching in primary schools come from? Is it 'a' traditional style of teaching?)

I think it came from the colonial times introduced by Europeans. Fear is good with learning, that kind of discipline makes children learn well.

7) How do you reflect on this style of learning as mentioned under 6? Should education continue in that way?

That is good and needs to continue. The government abolishing disciplining with the stick will not work well.

8) If not, what should be changed and what should be kept the same?

Nothing should change.

a) in informal education situations

b) in schools and educational institutions

9) In your opinion, what are the four pressing issues in today's the Meru society?

e.g. role of women, water, agriculture, prosperity gospel, education....

- education
- HIV/Aids and prevention
- How to work and take care for the family i.e. income-generating projects.
- Urbanisation: Also rural areas need services, facilities and development.

How Much Historical Knowledge Do the Meru Still Have?

1) Summary of a talk with Erikaeli Daudi about Meru History.

She had not heard of the killing of thousands of Meru men as a response from the colonial government to the killing of two missionaries; however the killing of the missionaries was known.

She had not heard about the Meru Land Case, although her father has been forcibly removed during the incident.

She believed that Meru and Maasai are related, however as it was pointed out to her that Kimeru and Kimachame (Chagga) is the same language she agreed that maybe there is a relationship there. It was a surprise to see how old the Wameru are.

She said that the clans still have a strong role and traditional religion has to do with ancestral worship. She did not know more about traditional religion. But she still remembers traditional houses, which looked a little bit like Maasai houses.

2) Questioning 25 People About Their Historical knowledge

How many people know that the first two missionaries were killed?

25

How people know that a massacre followed where the colonial government used Chagga Askaris to kill thousands of Meru?

1

How many know about the Meru Land Case in 1961?

19

How many know that the Meru have been in this area for about 300 years; which is longer than their Maasai neighbours?

6

How many knew that two clans came from the Sambaa and others joined later?

6

3) An Explanation from Elly Pallangyo

She thinks that people traditionally were and to some extent still are afraid of ancestors due to traditional religion. Therefore they will not be happy to speak about dead people and these important events in history are not passed on to the next generations. History does not seem to be a taboo as such, but the fear of ancestors might have caused people not to talk about history and this could have formed a habit of talking very little about history.

Appendix IV

Evaluation according to Rudnitsky and Posner¹⁹⁶

1. Evidence of Main Effects

1) “Being aware of our own resources” means our own resources in terms of the experience that all learners bring to the course, but also in using resources that the learners have not realized as resources before - or using known resources in a more efficient way.

Evidence of Effect:

- a) The learners are applying an alternative method of agriculture.
- b) The learners are using an income-generating project.

Circumstances: This is observable in the homes of the students, so a visit of the group as encouragement and celebration of learning would be part of the circumstance.

2) Being aware of the inter-dependence of protection of the environment and long- term economic benefit.

Evidence of Main Effects:

- a) More trees are planted; every household has a small nursery.
- b) Erosion prevention is used.
- c) The fields of the participants will have trees between the crops.

¹⁹⁶ Rudnitsky, Posner, *Course Design*, 181ff.

- d) The village has a water-committee.
- e) The village has land-protection content in their bylaws
- f) No widow is driven off her land anymore

Circumstances: Home visits by the group and a visit to village authorities as learning celebrations.

3) Being aware that the Bible can be understood by us, speaks to us and has something to say about our pressing-issues

Evidence of Main Effects:

- a) Women speak in Bible discussion in the big group by the end of the course.

Circumstances: Towards the end of the course in the group.

b) The participants as they are active in church-life relate Bible-reading to pressing-issues as e.g. the evangelists among them preach and others participate in devotions and fellowship groups.

Circumstances: During active church-life

4) Understanding ourselves and our community as part of the worldwide community of brothers and sisters in Christ.

Main Effect:

- a) The learners know they are not alone in their specific situation, and will ask in the second half of the course about Christians in similar situations.
- b) The discussion focussing on dialogue with past and present tradition/universal church will include relating the situation presented to the current situation of the participants.

Circumstance: Within the group discussion in the course.

5) Living our everyday life from a Kingdom-perspective: care for marginalized and environment, making the best of my own abilities.

Main Effect:

a) Changed relationships in marriage and with the children.

Circumstance: Feedback by the participants in a feedback session

b) The village lets the poorer people in the community have water according to their ability, not according to a fixed water price.

Circumstance: A visit to village authorities as a celebration of learning.

c) More girls in school.

Circumstance: This should be observed after a year; looking at school statistics as the group meets for an evaluation/refreshers meeting.

2. Assessment

The course will use indicators and evaluations rather than assessment tools. Many tools can be learned during this course and, as mentioned above, can serve as indicators of a successful application of the course content. Assessment should be a celebration of learning, and of experience applied and new skills gained, thus it will be the opposite of tests and grading-scales.

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