

## **The Challenges of Emancipatory Theological Education for Churches in the Third World**

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Emancipatory theological education is not new. It is as old as the gospel itself. It is yoking a pedagogy attuned to disprivileged peoples with the empowering gospel, thus enabling people to characterize the Kingdom of God in their personal lives and to transform communities. It is both reflective and proactive; personal and social; redeeming and empowering. An emancipatory approach to theological education takes seriously the wounds of history and the resulting present context, bathes them with the Word of God, and gives new strength. It brings healing to downtrodden psyches and aims to develop leaders for a new order. It goes beyond filling the head with knowledge or the heart with devotion—it prepares the whole person to summon the world to the rule of the kingdom.

This essay examines emancipatory education as a means of overcoming oppressive patterns and building leadership. An emancipatory style of teaching is viewed as a means of overcoming the ill effects of history and as such is a fundamental element of a theological education curriculum.

A major emphasis in Third World education that also has roots in Christian theology is the emancipatory or liberatory dimension of learning. The terms “emancipate” and “liberate” connote the presence of oppressive historical factors that have shaped assumptions, values, attitudes, and behaviors in both students and faculty. These traits have had an attenuating effect in developing leaders for the church and society as a whole. In proclaiming the good news of liberty in the Christian gospel, theological schools and churches must practice an emancipatory style of teaching and learning that overcomes the historical patterns of tribalism, colonialism, authoritarianism, and hierarchicalism. The objectives of Philippine theological education, then, must include the preparation of men and women who will lead the church and influence society in transcending these historical patterns.

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Philippine theologian Emerito Nacpil, in his essay "A Gospel for the New Filipino," has identified such characteristics as ability to shape the future, an orientation toward change, and an awareness of human dignity and community responsibility as some of the Christian characteristics needed for modernization.<sup>1</sup> These characteristics are similar to the characteristics of emancipatory education: creativity, the skills of problem solving, decision-making, human relations, and leadership.

Efficacy, creativity, and conscientization represent the philosophical and psychological bases for developing emancipatory skills. Generally, oppressed peoples of the Third World have considerable difficulty with the skills of problem solving, decision-making, human relations, and leadership. They do demonstrate these skills in relation to survival, but not in terms of creating new paradigms and ideas. Hope and Timmel, in *Training for Transformation*, their three-volume handbook for community workers among the masses in Africa, have focused on the development of these skills.<sup>2</sup> This inability is largely due to deeply ingrained feelings of inferiority and dependency, resulting in a corporate sense of learned helplessness.<sup>3</sup> Enabled with an understanding of their efficacy and their newly discovered creativity through the nurturing context of the church and school, awakened to their ability to read and write their world, students will gain confidence to develop the skills needed to change their world.

### A Theology of Emancipatory Education

A holistic view of salvation from a biblical perspective involves one's empowerment by God in restoring the qualities God intended for internal psyches, interpersonal relationships, and the sociopolitical and economic dimensions of life, as well as restoring the freedom to commune with God Himself. In overcoming oppression, Scripture speaks of the liberating powers of the Christian faith. Terms such as confidence (Prov 3:26; Heb 10:19), power (Heb 6:18), courage (2 Chron 15:7; John 16:33), encouragement (Heb 6:18), blessing (Deut 27:9–28:68), clear conscience (Heb 10:22), salvation in relation to both sin and oppressive social forces (Luke 1:57–79), forgiveness (Matt 6:12, 14–15), and hope (2 Cor 3:12–18), to suggest just a few, point to the liberation we have in Christ.

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<sup>1</sup> Emerito P. Nacpil, "A Gospel for the New Filipino," in Gerald A. Anderson, ed., *Asian Voices in Christian Theology* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1976), 117–145; also discussed by Rodrigo D. Tano in *Theology in the Philippine Setting: A Case Study in the Contextualization of Theology* (Quezon City, Philippines: New Day, 1981), 127–130.

<sup>2</sup> Anne Hope and Sally Timmel. *Training for Transformation: A Handbook for Community Workers* 3 vol. (Gweru, Zimbabwe: Mam Press, 1984).

<sup>3</sup> Albert Bandura, *Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1986), 445–458.

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These words, however, reflect our empowerment in Yahweh or in Christ, rather than the self-efficacy of secular psychology. This is observed in Jesus' use, recorded in Luke 4:18–19, of Isaiah's proclamation in Isa 61:1–2.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me  
Because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor.  
He sent Me to proclaim release to the captives  
And recovery of sight to the blind,  
To set free those who are downtrodden,  
To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.

The “year of the Lord” was the Jubilee—meant to be celebrated every fifty years—during which the accumulated injustices and inequalities were erased through the restoration of freedom and property to the original owners. Yoder, in his *Politics of Jesus*, identifies four biblical prescriptions concerning the Jubilee: 1) “leaving the soil fallow,” 2) “the remission of debts,” 3) “the liberation of slaves,” and 4) “the return to each individual of his family's property.”<sup>4</sup> In Jesus' use of Isaiah, He was not only referring to liberation from individual sin and liberation from the corporate injustices of society,<sup>5</sup> but also to the resultant emancipation of psyches starved by a sense of helplessness and powerlessness. The psychological effects of the Jubilee were the restoration of the dignity and empowerment intended for all humanity—needed to be fully human.

On the fiftieth year Israelites were to “proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants” (Lev 25:10). They were to fulfill Israel's covenantal responsibilities for the great liberation. The jubilee trumpet or ram's horn was the Liberty Bell of ancient Israel, proclaiming the “year of the Lord.” Israel, unfortunately, did not faithfully keep the Jubilee, and Jeremiah pronounced judgment upon them for reneging on their Jubilee promise (Jer 34:15–22). Isaiah 61 expands the “favorable year of the Lord” to include Israel's own liberation from their exilic captivity. The Jubilee brought an exhilarating sense of freedom to Israel (Isa 49:8–9). When Jesus quoted Isaiah 61:1–2 in inaugurating His ministry, the message was clear: the Messiah has come to proclaim the Great Liberation! Through His redemption the “slaves” are bought back and the cycle of oppression is broken, along with all its psychological trappings. The void of powerlessness, worthlessness, and hopelessness is filled with the vicarious efficacy of Christ and the enablement of the Holy Spirit.

If the Jubilee was a divine directive for emancipation in an ancient, agrarian, Middle Eastern society, how can this emancipatory Jubilee be contextualized in Philippine society, and specifically in the educational cultures of Philippine theological schools and churches? Perhaps in our zeal to emphasize the fallenness of man we have failed to address the Jubilee liberation and empowerment we have in Christ. Discussed below are the biblical precedents for

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<sup>4</sup> John H. Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 36.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

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seven interrelated elements of education for leadership: efficacy, creativity, conscientization, and skills related to problem-solving, decision-making, human relations, and leadership. Education for leadership may be likened to a suspension bridge. The scriptural text makes up the foundation or deck. The sociocultural context makes up the supporting towers. The cable superstructure, which consists of efficacy, conscientization, and creativity, tethers the supporting vertical cables (problem solving, decision-making, human relations, and leadership, which in turn support the bridge deck. As a complex of knowledge, attitudes, and skills, education for leadership enables students to overcome the personal and psychological effects of structural sin and empowers them to holistically engage their world for Christ.

*Efficacy* is both a self-oriented or individual trait and a group-oriented or collective trait.<sup>6</sup> Perceived self-efficacy refers to “people’s judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances,”<sup>7</sup> that is, “judgments of how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations.”<sup>8</sup> This is the perceived ability to control and regulate one’s world. Since such efficacy is a prerequisite for action, and since oppressed peoples possess low levels of efficacy,<sup>9</sup> its development in Third World Bible and theological students is essential to spiritual and societal development.

From the biblical perspective, efficacy is the psychological manifestation of the vicarious work of Christ and has a spiritual dimension of great significance to Philippine churches and Bible and theological schools. Efficacy is not inordinate pride, conceit, or egoism; nor is biblical spirituality to be associated with self-devaluation. The image of God within us, our redemption in Christ, and our possession of the power of the Holy Spirit are all biblical sources of our significant worth. They are our basis for collective efficacy and self-efficacy. Thus, in Eph 3:20 Paul implied that the power of Christ (*dynamis*—the power to carry out an action) that “works itself out within us” (middle voice denotes reflexive action) is an awesome source of empowerment that goes “beyond all that we ask or think” (*hyperekeperissou*—literally meaning very much more, infinitely more). In Col 1:29 he personalized his efficacy: “For this purpose I also labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.” In Phil 4:13 he concluded, “I can do all things through [Christ] who strengthens me.”

The great majority of early Christians came from groups possessing low efficacy. Paul wrote to the members of the young church at Corinth, “For consider your calling brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble. God has chosen the weak things . . . the base things . . . the things that are not, that He might nullify the things that are . . .” (1

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<sup>6</sup> Bandura, *Social Foundations*, 390–449.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 391.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 122.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 445–453.

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Cor 1:26–28). Yet through their vicarious efficacy in Christ, they significantly changed the Roman world. Theological schools and churches need to consider vicarious efficacy and psychological Jubilee in reference to their particular church and school cultures. If the institutional culture simply reproduces the oppressive power structure of society, it is acting contrary to the proclamation of “good news.” In terms of students from oppressed backgrounds, Jubilee implies the regaining of efficacy vicariously through the efficacy modeled by Christ and transmitted by His redemptive power. Applying these principles, churches and schools must recognize that efficacy is a modeled behavior that is more than imitation. It is identification with Christ’s power and must be expressed in their core values and assumptions, including systems of thought that provide meaning, motivation, ideals, and conscience.<sup>10</sup> Scripture presents for us a living faith, and with it is a sense of efficacy in the power of God, passed on by the discipling of one generation by another (2 Tim 2:2).

Philippine churches and theological schools need to consider Christian behavior in light of the freedom of redeemed persons who have identified with Christ and His people. It is not the result of the legalistic suppression of behavior. Churches and schools should then actively promote individual and group expression and avoid suppression based on rank or status. Self-efficacy is a high predictor of performance, and thus the conditions that build efficacy in the institutional culture should be modeled. Churches and schools should be models of open, encouraging, nutritive atmospheres that emphasize process. A narrow, legalistic, perfectionistic atmosphere fails to build self-efficacy, particularly among students from marginal backgrounds. Churches and theological schools in the Philippines have a biblical responsibility to build efficacy in students. Applying such concepts as the psychological Jubilee and vicarious efficacy to institutional cultures and modeling corresponding behaviors will help shape an educational atmosphere that builds leaders. When these environments enhance personhood through the modeling of vicarious efficacy, then a significant psychological Jubilee will have taken place.

*Conscientization*, as popularized by Paulo Freire, is the ability to think and act critically in relation to one’s world.<sup>11</sup> Freire reminds us that education is never neutral.<sup>12</sup> A theological curriculum that does not confront the structural inequities of a society perpetuates injustice. It is either domesticating—“banking” education by making deposits of knowledge into the head of the student—or liberating, “problem-posing” education.<sup>13</sup> Education for critical awareness must be relevant, problem-posing, dialogical, and praxis-oriented (consisting of reflection and action).

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

<sup>11</sup> Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 1990), 19–21, 101.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 57–74.

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Conscientization is also a style of teaching that enables persons to become more aware and responsible for themselves and their world. From a Christian perspective, it is demonstrated by the prophetic role. Biblical literature abounds with descriptions of the prophets as critical thinkers and actors. Men such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Amos, and John the Baptist, in their critiques of the covenant community of Israel, are models for modern day Bible and theological students. Their prophetic criticism of unjust social structures should induce a sense of boldness in churches and theological schools confronting the many unjust structures of society and personal life. Separating the prophetic role from the Gospel of the Kingdom results in an incomplete gospel, full of “spirituality” but devoid of its biblical expression in society.

Such criticism, of course, begins with critiquing the church, its associated structures, and the personal lives of its members. It is useless to critique society if the church itself, actively or passively, knowingly or ignorantly, perpetuates the ills of the world. For the church, the essential prerequisite for conscientization is holistic self-analysis and repentance. We have so focused on producing leaders for local churches that we have neglected producing leaders for business, local and national politics, and the professions. In the Philippine context we have hardly begun to shape a positive ethic for these areas beyond that of devotional platitudes. We have unwittingly mimicked traditional Roman Catholicism in maintaining a strict separation of the sacred and the secular. Instead of integrating our faith into this world, we only prepare people for the next world. Our understanding of transformation is limited to personal conversion, and as a result our Bible schools develop personal “spirituality” and “character” but are not change agents for the Kingdom.

Critical awareness in education results in transformation of the oppressive elements in society in terms of quality of life, environment, social structures, and community. It is a dynamic process of education and development, and thus cannot be an individual academic exercise, but rather is a group effort. Thus, Bible teachers need to enable students to address societal needs in the context of group dialogue.<sup>14</sup>

Critical awareness in education nurtures the student as subject.<sup>15</sup> Freire often speaks of the student functioning as subject rather than as object in the processes of learning and living. Critical consciousness can only take place from a subject perspective. This concept relates closely to the dichotomy between “banking” education and problem-posing education. If teachers are to follow Freire, they need to value a subject orientation in their students like Jesus, who did not teach a systematized form of theology but, rather, caused His disciples to think critically about the world around them from the perspective of Scripture.

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<sup>14</sup> Hope and Timmel, 1:22–24; also see Ira Shor, *Freire for the Classroom* (Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Boynton/Cook Publishers, 1987), 25.

<sup>15</sup> Shor, 25; see also “Developing Student Autonomy in the Classroom,” *Equity and Excellence*. 24/3: 35–37.

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Finally, critical awareness in education transcends historical conditioning. One's consciousness is conditioned by history. The historical context creates the culture of silence because the oppressed have historically "overdetermined" the powers of the oppressor.<sup>16</sup> Many oppressed people tend to be like the carabao who does not know his own power to break through his corral. He simply accepts his condition as fate.

Third World churches and theological schools are to be arenas for the theological deconstruction of historical presuppositions through critical analysis,<sup>17</sup> as well as through the construction of our own salvation history. In this view, a curriculum designed for the oppressed must be particularly uplifting for building efficacy, creativity, and conscientization. It should provide positive experiences through affirmation and encouragement. Students should be able to verbalize their efficacy as a basis for conscientization. Teachers need to guide students in developing the skills to discern and transcend the elements of historical conditioning.

*Creativity* refers to an individual "quality of intellect," as well as to the "intellectual quality of the school."<sup>18</sup> Creativity is both an awareness of problems and the capacity to find solutions. Any individual or school desiring to transcend traditional patterns must have a degree of creativity.

From a theological perspective, "Creativity is rooted in creation, i.e., man as *imago Dei* (Image of God), and lived out in the context of the community of faith."<sup>19</sup> Creativity is the normal activity of mankind and should not be considered the quality of only a few talented people. Creativity in Scripture is associated with wisdom, both for creative thinking and creative skills (Exod 28:3, 31:3–6). Old Testament wisdom literature and stories, such as Solomon's creative solution to the case of the two women claiming the same child, extol creative wisdom and decision-making as a highly desirable trait (1 Kgs 3:16–28).

Oppression produces a survival-based creativity, but it does not allow for the creation of new ways of thinking or new paradigms. We need to examine church and school structures and teaching methods for their ability to nurture creativity in students whose background emphasizes conformity. If Third World churches and theological schools only emphasize the transmissive purposes of education, they suppress the God-given creative powers of their students. Churches and schools rightly concerned with "correct" doctrine and practice are often overly concerned with conformity to a host of thoughts and actions that

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<sup>16</sup> Freire, 27–56.

<sup>17</sup> Hope and Timmel, 3:3–66.

<sup>18</sup> *Creativity of the School: Conclusions of a Programme of Enquiry*, Centre for Educational Research and Innovation, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (n.p.: n.p., 1978), 15.

<sup>19</sup> Samuel F. Rowen, *Curriculum Foundations, Experiences and Outcomes: A Participatory Case Study in Theological Education*, doctoral dissertation submitted to Michigan State University (1981), 91.

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keep students from creatively expressing their faith and life in Christ. This kind of conformity squelches unique expressions of renewal as well as thwarting the development of contextualized expressions of the Christian faith.

*Problem-solving and decision-making* are implied in what theologians call the cultural mandate of Genesis 1:26–30. In this text mankind is given dominion by God over the earth and is to exercise stewardship in managing its affairs and resources (Ps 8:4–6). Stewardship is a pervasive idea in Scripture. It includes shepherding physical resources (Gen 1:26–29), the ordering of society (Judg 9:8–15), and guarding the gospel itself (2 Tim 1:13–14). It denotes not only faithfulness, but also the problem-solving and decision-making skills associated with functioning as a steward or manager. The development of problem-solving and decision-making skills among our students necessitates decisive action based upon our empowerment in Christ.

In an atmosphere where efficacy, creativity, and conscientization are valued, problem-solving and decision-making skills will find fertile soil for growth. Oppression limits options in solving problems, and as a result, oppressed peoples often narrow their problem-solving skills to traditional patterns, such as appealing to a higher authority. Any deviation from accepted patterns has proven to be a negative reinforcement for change.<sup>20</sup> For example, in order for the oppressed/oppressor relationship to “work,” there must be a perpetuated imbalance of dependency whereby the oppressed defer problem solving to the oppressor. Bandura stated that “perceived self-inefficacy fosters dependence on proxy control, which further reduces opportunities to build the necessary skills for efficacious action.”<sup>21</sup>

Developing problem-solving skills in the indigenous context is necessary to overcoming dependency. Problem-solving involves both thinking skills and information gathering skills. Thinking skills include analysis/synthesis, application/prediction, and evaluation/judgment. Information skills include asking questions, observing, and listening.<sup>22</sup> In theological education, thinking skills and information gathering skills will find fertile soil for growth if practical work and coursework utilize problem solving in the text/context matrix. An inductive approach, such as case study, can elevate problem-solving capacities both for developing the more context-oriented pastor/teacher/counselor skills, as well as the more text-oriented hermeneutical and exegetical skills.

Problem-solving and decision-making are closely related. As a creative act, problem solving emphasizes the skills needed to regulate individual and group processes in discovering workable solutions. Decision-making, on the other hand, relates to the skills needed to examine core values and assumptions,

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<sup>20</sup> Margaret Bell-Gredler, *Learning and Instruction* (New York: Macmillan, 1986), 85.

<sup>21</sup> Bandura, *Social Foundations*, 448.

<sup>22</sup> Edward W. Cassidy and Dana G. Kurfman, “Decision Making as Purpose and Process,” in *Developing Decision-Making Skills*, ed. Dana G. Kurfman, 47th Yearbook. (n.p.: National Council for Social Studies, 1977), 18.



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norms, biases, and presuppositions in choosing between options. For example, one such assumption that affects decision-making is one's perceived self-efficacy. Bandura stated that "decisions involving choice of activities and certain social milieus are partly determined by judgments of personal efficacy."<sup>23</sup>

Decision-making is defined as "making reasoned choices from among several alternatives. Reasoned choices are based on judgments which are consistent with decision-maker's values."<sup>24</sup> Decisions that require the church to take new directions of thought and action will encounter resistance from traditional elements, both among clergy and laity. The rallying cry of traditionalists is, "We've always done it this way." This kind of decision-making abrogates the text/context matrix in decision-making in favor of a form of historical determinism.

A decision-making approach in theological education de-emphasizes knowledge for its own sake and emphasizes the social construction of reality. Utilizing such an approach, students are required to use their knowledge and values in choosing solutions to cases from their own context. The classroom ought to be "wired" into society. Theology should be constructed rather than just transmitted. We evangelicals tend to draw distinct lines between right and wrong that fail to recognize the complexity of Scripture and society. As a result, our simplistic solutions don't fit our world.

*Human-relations skills*, for example, in the context of the hierarchical social structures of the Philippines, emphasize communicating to those of perceived higher status. Emphases on *bahala na* (fatalism), *pakikisama* (getting along), *utang na loob* (sense of indebtedness), and *hiya* (shame) in Philippine society are values that can perpetuate unequal relations.<sup>25</sup> Each of these values has the capacity within its range of meanings to be either a positive or a negative force for development in Philippine society.<sup>26</sup>

Although Scripture affirms respect for authority (Exod 20:12—"Honor your father and mother . . ."), it also affirms the essential equality of mankind in creation and in the brotherhood of all Christians (Gal 3:28—"All [groups] are one in Christ Jesus"). An understanding of the equality of mankind is necessary for encountering the David-and-Goliath situations that Third World theological school graduates will face in their ministries. Another foundational biblical principle pervasive in Scripture is the concept of *Shalom* (peace, well being). It is more than an expression of a desire for the absence of conflict; it is a desire for the well being of another, and as such is the basis of trust and community for the covenant people of God.

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<sup>23</sup> Bandura, *Social Foundations*, 393.

<sup>24</sup> Cassidy and Kurfman, 1.

<sup>25</sup> Gorospe, *Christian Renewal*, 218–224.

<sup>26</sup> For a valuable popular discussion of these values see Evelyn Miranda-Feliciano, *Filipino Values and our Christian Faith* (Manila: OMF Literature, 1990).

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Human-relations training also involves building leadership and participation skills. Shouldn't our students see the gospel as a force for eradicating shame and inadequacy? Emphasis should be given to developing more egalitarian communications patterns across status-related barriers so that those of low status will communicate based upon their vicarious efficacy in Christ and those of high status will not "talk down" to the masses. There should be an emphasis on shared leadership as opposed to the *caudillo* style of many Latin societies. Third World churches and theological schools should also address issues related to administering and receiving self and mutual criticism, building team effectiveness, and using some form of analysis to understand relationships.

*Leadership* is one result of developing the elements already discussed: efficacy, creativity, conscientization, and skills related to problem solving, decision-making, and human relations. Emancipatory learning means little in terms of changing society without the exercise of leadership. Disembodied ideas have little significance apart from their concrete expression in society. "Ivory tower" theologizing cannot be revolutionary apart from leaders willing to bring change. From a theological perspective, the product of education for leadership is not "the socialist man," and not the "rugged individualists" of capitalism, but rather the Christian servant-leader who loves God and loves mankind. As leaders in the early church, Paul, Timothy, James, and Peter refer to themselves as bond-servants (Rom 1:1; Phil 1:1; Titus 1:1; James 1:1; 2 Pet 1:1). The spirituality of the Christian servant-leader finds expression in the personal interaction of text and context, not in separation from the world. The Christian servant-leader knows and applies the Word of God in a praxis relationship with society. Servant leadership is to be identified not only with the vertical relationship with God achieved through prayer and worship, but also with a corresponding horizontal relationship to society.

This understanding of servant leadership in theological education does not require a reinterpretation of the biblical gospel, as has been done by some liberation theologians, such as Jon Sobrino or Gustavo Gutierrez.<sup>27</sup> Emerito Nacpil provides a starting point for theologizing on the preparation of leaders for the 21st century. His "Gospel for the New Filipino" emphasizes: 1) liberation from a cyclical view of time, a sacral universe, and a kinship-based society; 2) responsibility in mastering the earth; and 3) hope—the *telos* or final cause of social change in the Philippines.<sup>28</sup> His views of secularization, however, fail to account for the transcendent nature of God as portrayed in Scripture. Servant leadership will require some personnel to reinterpret their traditional Western theological positions that have ignored the social and structural dimensions of

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<sup>27</sup> Gustavo Gutierrez, "The Hope of Liberation," in Gerald H. Anderson and Thomas F. Stran-sky, ed., *Mission Trends No. 3* (New York: Paulist Press, and Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 64–69; also see D. D. Webster, "Liberation Theology," *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984), 635–637.

<sup>28</sup> Nacpil, 117–145; Tano, 127–129.

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the “good news.” Jesus, quoting Isaiah, proclaimed “good news for the poor” and “liberty for the captives” (Luke 4:18). As seen in these verses, the Kingdom of God is not only identified with a future reality, but also with the annihilation of present evil structures.

Although the servant-leader motif is prominent in Scripture, it must be balanced with other biblical models. In the context of poverty and domination this motif conjures up inappropriate images for peoples who have always known the underside of servanthood. The poor already know very well how to be abased. The ambassador metaphor, carrying an uplifting sense of dignity as well as a sense of mission, corrects the “doormat” mentality many ascribe to servanthood. Together these two metaphors may present a more appropriate model on which to build relationship.

#### **Summary**

In proclaiming the good news of liberty in the Christian gospel, churches and theological schools would do well to practice an emancipatory style of teaching and learning that overcomes the historical patterns of tribalism, colonialism, authoritarianism, and hierarchicalism. The objectives of theological education in the Third World, then, would include the preparation of men and women who would lead the church and influence society in transcending these historical patterns. Within a matrix of text and context, principles of efficacy, creativity, and conscientization were identified as essential principles. Emerging out of these principles, the skills of problem solving, decision-making, human relations, and leadership were identified as key for bringing change to the Third World churches and societies.

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