

# **Pre-Departure Cross-Cultural Training for Missioners**

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U.S. Catholic Mission Association  
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The U.S. Catholic Mission Association is responsible for collecting data on American Catholic missionaries for the U.S. Catholic Church. According to their data over 6,000 Americans were engaged as cross-cultural missionaries either in the United States or abroad during 2000-2001 (U.S. Catholic Mission Handbook, 2002, p. 22-23). These missionaries participate in programs that last a minimum of one year; the statistics do not include short-term missionaries that serve from a few days to a few months. More than just representing the Catholic Church these 6,000-plus missionaries also represent the United States as American citizens. As representatives of both a religious culture and a national culture this missionary community has a concerted interest in culture and a strong need for cross-cultural communication and training when engaging in missionary activities.

Religious adherence and beliefs are understood within the Catholic Church as being culturally neutral in the sense that Christianity can and does exist in all cultures. Prior to this understanding of culture which developed after Vatican II, mission programs and missionaries deemed cultural differences irrelevant compared with the shared bond of common religious beliefs. For that reason, cross-cultural training took a secondary place in the training of missionaries. This is similar to corporate situations where the assumption might be that job responsibilities or *professional/company culture* are seen as links that would supersede and mediate cultural differences. In the mission context, the assumption was that if a missionary is going into a missionary community with other missionaries and Catholic believers, the religious beliefs would be enough to sustain the missionary in the new cultural environment while the cultural knowledge, especially language training, could be learned in-country either formally or informally.

These assumptions do not hold true to current Catholic teachings about the role that culture has in mission. Current Church policies on mission, evangelization and inculturation show that culture plays a large role in religious beliefs and the work of missionaries (Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, 1965; John Paul II, 1990; Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, 1999). Cross-cultural training therefore gained importance within the Catholic mission community in teaching missionaries about culture and the ways that culture influences their ministry. The goal of this document is to provide further resources that might prove useful in the pre-departure training of missionaries in order to further the collective knowledge of Catholic cross-cultural training.

### ***Purpose of the Study***

During the spring of 2003, a survey of pre-departure training of missionaries was conducted by USCMA staff to address issues of cultural awareness in training. This inquiry is a follow-up study to 2002 study *Gathering the Fragments*, commissioned by the Catholic Network of Volunteer Service, the St. Vincent Pallotti Center and the United States Catholic Mission Association, which comprehensively addressed lay missionary formation. This inquiry chose the cross-cultural section of the *Gathering the Fragments* study and pursued further knowledge about resources available for cross-cultural training of missionaries. The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the current training practices in regards to pre-departure cross-cultural training and, subsequently, to suggest resources that can be used in the cross-cultural training setting.

### ***A Variety of Current Training Practices***

One might imagine that with the hierarchical nature of the Catholic Church structure that mission and cross-cultural training programs are relegated under or supervised by one authority. In fact, the types of programs that send American Catholic missionaries abroad are quite distinct and come from a variety of groups within the Church community. Additionally, the universal Church does not have any set guidelines about how cross-cultural training should be designed or implemented. Church theology does explain concepts of mission and culture in a Catholic context, but does not explain specific skills or knowledge that a missionary needs before engaging another culture on the interpersonal level. Instead, each organization that sends missionaries has the leeway to develop and implement their own versions of cross-cultural training.

For instance, in 2000 the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers celebrated the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their Cross Cultural Services (CCS) division (Maryknoll Cross Cultural Services, 2000). Maryknoll CCS has provided training not only for missionaries within the Maryknoll family but also for other lay and religious missionaries during this time frame.

Due to its relatively long span of operation and its openness to Catholic missionaries outside of the Maryknoll community, the training programs and techniques have a strong impact on the cross-cultural understanding and awareness of a variety of Catholic missionaries that serve abroad. However, Maryknoll CCS, though known for its solid cross-cultural training, is not the only Catholic training organization. Each individual religious or lay group is responsible for the cross-cultural training needs of its own participants within the Catholic mission community.

### ***Resources in Catholic Cross-Cultural Training***

In seeking to review the resources used for cross-cultural training, it is first important to review the historical and modern views of culture and cultural interaction in light of how they relate to mission. Since Catholic cross-cultural training mainly developed 40 years ago, after the theological changes of the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) dealing with mission and culture, it is beneficial to review the theological changes that allowed for a more focused approach to cultural study and awareness within the mission context. This historical shift in the understanding of culture is explained more thoroughly in the definitions section of this study.

In addition to examining the historical and modern views of culture within the Catholic Church it is also beneficial to examine the historical and modern roots of training curricula in the Catholic context. Catholic cross-cultural mission training, then and now, is strongly influenced by psychological concepts of training. Much of the work done on culture and mission came after Vatican II in the 1970s. Current training is largely grounded in those efforts without necessarily looking at current bodies of literature that mix the studies of psychology, cultural studies and international communication.

The level of embeddedness psychology holds in training remains a concern within mission sending organizations. For instance, when presented with the possibility of adding a new training tool to their program, a group of mission program directors initially turned down the possibility. Once it was established through further research and interviews that this training tool was not simply a replica of previously used and discredited psychological principles, this group decided to incorporate the tool (Megeen White, personal communication, 28 March 2003). This example adequately depicts the

initial concern regarding the possibility of the manipulative aspect of psychology in training, especially regarding the use of psychological tests and instruments.

New resources have been developed that deal with this phenomenon concerning cultural understanding and psychology. Not all resources from the past however have become tangential and invalid. Though some resources being used can be somewhat dated, their topics still hold value and continue to be profound resources for current cross-cultural topics. Two common examples of timeless classics of cross-cultural awareness and training are the iceberg model of describing culture (Weaver, 1993) and the theory of cultural shock and transition (Weaver, 1993; Bennett, 1998; Oberg, 1960/2000).

Also, the resources do not need to be ‘Catholic’ training resources. Though the tasks to be performed are religious/missionary tasks, the basic idea of sending an American abroad to engage other cultures and to become knowledgeable about and efficient in other cultures does not always require specific Catholic resources. As new resources are developed in the field of cross-cultural training outside of the missionary experience Catholic mission organizations can tailor the concepts in these new resources to the religious mission context. The resources that have been developed for corporate or diplomatic contexts can then supplement the theology of the Church in regards to mission, culture and cross-cultural training.

### ***Grand Questions***

The first thing that was necessary to discover was whether or not the mission programs even engaged in pre-departure cross-cultural training for their missionaries. Secondly, it was necessary to gauge the types of training that fell under the heading of cross-cultural training. Is cross-cultural training simply survival tactics and information? Is cross-cultural training relegated to language training? Does cross-cultural training encompass training about American values as well as the values and beliefs of the other countries of mission?

This inquiry includes understanding the motivations for training and the goals of the training programs. Focusing on the definition of culture and mission that are fundamental to the organization helps to put the motivations of training into perspective.

The final question in this study concerns whether or not cross-cultural training has been successful in the field of Catholic mission work. Programs were evaluated as to their level of success and failure. Along with that assessment, it was necessary to see what the concerns regarding cross-cultural training were and how additional resources might meet the needs of the organizations for addressing these concerns.

### ***Definitions***

This study dealt with pre-departure cross-cultural training for U.S. Catholic missionaries. With the various definitions of culture and cross-cultural training that are currently in use, it is necessary to first define how the terms *pre-departure cross-cultural training*, *culture* and *inculturation* were used in the context of this study.

#### ***Pre-departure cross-cultural training***

For this study it is important to begin with describing the meaning of pre-departure cross-cultural training. First, *pre-departure* refers to the time in which the

training takes place. This study focuses on any orientation, testing or educational endeavor that is done within the context of preparing a missionary for his or her service before he or she leaves the United States. This refers to preparation that can be done all at once right before the missionary leaves, over a period of time prior to departure or even before the missionary makes a final decision about participation in the program.

The term *cross-cultural training* deals with the content of the training. As in many fields, this term, though in essence the root of the field, is not evenly and consistently defined. For instance, the Intercultural Management Institute (IMI) in Washington, DC (2000) gives the following definition:

Cross-cultural training creates options for handling the challenges of participation in a culturally diverse, global workforce. This term is often used interchangeably with intercultural communication training, which is its major component. Here the training agenda addresses all phases of the adjustment process, from pre-departure orientation to repatriation training. When fully implemented, cross-cultural training can improve job performance, relationships with host country nationals, and the transfer of knowledge within a global organization.

The use of the term in this study has already been confined to pre-departure training only. IMI (2000) states that pre-departure orientation,

combines culture-general and culture-specific learning in order to facilitate the transition to a new environment. Trainees learn the signs of culture shock, and coping mechanisms to ease and shorten the adjustment period. Language training may be included, as well as identification of housing and schooling options.

And finally, the definition that IMI (2000) gives for the key component of cross-cultural training, intercultural training, states,

intercultural communication training focuses on the impact of values and beliefs on the communication process, affecting interactions between people with different cultural background. In a sequence of tasks such as personal inventories, discussion, and role plays, trainees learn to increase awareness and sensitivity to ethnic or cultural difference, gain insight into their own emotional responses during communication, and practice behavior strategies for managing face-to-face interactions across cultures.

In this study, the use of *cross cultural training* encompasses all three definitions with the limiting caveat that this study's scope is only the pre-departure programs.

### *Culture*

Prior to the 1960s and the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, the Church maintained a classical view of culture (Carrier, 1993, p. 20; see Appendix A). Culture was relegated to areas of art, literature and science while addressing theology and faith separately. With the advent of Vatican II in the 1960s and most notably the Council's document, *Gaudium et Spes* (Second Vatican Council, 1965), culture began to take on a more modern anthropological view. As anthropology moved away from pure versions of culture (Kuper, 1999) so, too, did the Catholic Church's view of culture. As noted by Carrier (1993, p.19),

the method of cultural analysis based on the human sciences made it easier to understand the collective behavior, thought patterns, dominant values, aspirations, and contradictions of our time. This anthropological approach would be seen at the Council not only as a necessary preliminary to any moral judgment on our times, but also as an indispensable prerequisite for the discovery of new cultures that are waiting for the Gospel.

This new view of culture created a milieu that was more complex and holistic, allowing culture to permeate all facets of the Catholic Church rather than to be relegated to only the realm of arts and literature. An important junction of this increased complexity is the area of mission and evangelization.

Focusing cross-cultural training on a more anthropological view of culture that encompasses the inter-personal dimension is key to developing training that adheres to the current theological views of culture. The current view of culture within the Catholic Church also focuses on the need for respect, solidarity and mutuality when dealing with cultures other than one's own culture.

### *Inculturation*

The Christian faith is seen as abiding in all cultures whether or not it is manifested within a culture. The interaction described as inculturation acts to extract, deepen, and strengthen the relationship that the Gospel messages, the tenets of the faith, have within the culture and to bring them to a point of indigenous expression (Shaw & Stewart, 1994; Schineller, 1990; Carrier, 1993; Shorter, 1988). Without knowledge about culture, cultural interaction and differences, and cultural awareness of one's self and of others, inculturation as a main task of missionaries cannot be accomplished. This is a key reason for establishing an effective cross-cultural training program prior to departure for mission service.

Prior to Vatican II and continuing until today, the term syncretism was used to describe how indigenous cultural attributes interfaced with Catholic religious beliefs and rituals. Inculturation might be seen as an updated term for syncretism, whereby the symbols of church teachings and doctrine appropriate symbols and teachings from the cultures in which they exist; however, inculturation maintains the positive-negative boundary between the universal Truth of the Gospels being enacted through local cultures (inculturation) and that same universal Truth being tarnished by inappropriate practices or symbols taken from local cultures (syncretism) (Shaw & Stewart, 1994, p. 11).

Stewart and Shaw (1994) discuss how anthropology has reclaimed neutral or positive usage of the term syncretism in contrast to the continual negative view of syncretism in Catholic thought. In Catholic thought, syncretism remains a negative term used to describe the use of inappropriate symbols, teachings or rituals in local expressions of Catholicism. Meanwhile, inculturation is the term that is used to portray acceptable use of cultural symbols, teachings and rituals within Catholic expressions of faith. While the Catholic faith is tarnished by syncretism, it is enriched with local culture by inculturation.

It was, again, the shift in understanding regarding culture after Vatican II that created this shift in terms. Whereas mission and evangelization were previously carried out through the transplantation of Catholic doctrine from Europe to other areas of the

globe, in a somewhat colonial fashion, the new view of interaction between faith and culture sought ways to ‘indigenize’ faith. Vatican II brought about the belief that God’s message is present within all cultures, though not always expressed or known by people within that culture (Schineller 1990, 46; Second Vatican Council, *Ad Gentes* 1965).

This new approach led to examination of the ways that each culture packages its own reality. The process of inculturation of the faith through the Gospel message seeks to strip away the historical cultural packaging of the faith and to bring the essence of the faith to other cultures, allowing the other cultures to repackage the essence with symbols, language, and contexts that are relevant to their cultural reality (Pontifical Council for Culture, 1999). Thus, the Truth of the faith, and therefore, the universality of the Church, is maintained globally while the expression of that Truth and faith maintains its cultural individuality. This process is how the Catholic Church remains a universal religious body, while attempting to contextualize the faith in every region of the globe.

Cross-cultural training for mission should mimic this process by seeking to separate Christian values from American values and creating a more open mindset allowing for new cultural forms and knowledge to become relevant to the individual allowing him or her to become more culturally sensitive while maintaining his or her own cultural identity. The ramification for training is that the missionaries need skills not only to learn about and gain respect for how that culture influences the faith and beliefs but also to know about their own culture and how it has influenced their faith and beliefs. This awareness of cultural contextualization is necessary in order to evangelize and carry out their work more abundantly (Carrier, 1993).

Inculturation is a relatively new movement in the Roman Catholic Church that was developed out of and reflects a shift in the definition of culture used by the church. Being ready to carry out the theology of inculturation means understanding one’s own culture as well as seeking understanding of other cultures. Cross-cultural training is not only important for being able to “translate” one’s experiences and Christian life within the mission assignment, but also to cultivate new ways of knowing and experiencing by participating in the culture.

### ***Continual Need for a Renewal of Resources***

After years of mission sending and training, one would imagine that the Catholic community would have developed the need for cross-cultural awareness and also the materials to deal with this need; however, program directors are continually searching for better ways to prepare their missionaries and for more updated resources to use in missionary training. With the cutback in budgets, if any training is occurring, the trainers may not be as well versed as they could be. Also, many of the trainers are returned missionaries who are not necessarily trained in cross-cultural theories and practices, but who are using only their own anecdotal experience in the country or region that they were assigned to during their mission activity. This can lead to training that is not well versed in other geographical areas or in intercultural and cross-cultural communication theory.

Many of the program directors or coordinators are too busy to be able to do research in the latest training styles and methods to improve their training programs (Kathryn Pierce, IHM, personal communication, March 20, 2003). Through this study USCMA hopes to address this issue by providing a resource list that would be helpful in

developing an orientation or pre-departure program that makes use of the latest research and materials being published in the field of cross-cultural training.

### ***Relation to Theory***

*Missionaries, who come from other Churches and countries, must immerse themselves in the cultural milieu of those to whom they are sent, moving beyond their own cultural imitations. Hence they must learn the language of the place in which they work, become familiar with the most important expressions of the local culture, and discover its values through direct experience. Only if they have this kind of awareness will they be able to bring to people the knowledge of the hidden mystery (cf. Rom 16:25-27; Eph 3:5) in a credible and fruitful way. It is not of course a matter of missionaries renouncing their own cultural identity, but of understanding, appreciating, fostering and evangelizing the culture of the environment in which they are working, and therefore of equipping themselves to communicate effectively with it, adopting a manner of living which is a sign of Gospel witness and of solidarity with the people.*

–John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio*, 1990, #35.

This quote from Pope John Paul II's encyclical letter regarding the permanent validity of the church's missionary mandate summarizes the call to cross-cultural awareness and understanding and the need for appropriate training to ensure that the work of mission is successful. Cross-cultural training for missionaries stems not only from international communication theory but also from Catholic theology and cultural studies relating to mission and inculturation. This section will evaluate three areas that have implications for cross-cultural training for missionaries: the assumption that training yields understanding, the inevitability of transition difficulties, and the need not only for cultural awareness but for critical cultural evaluation.

### ***Training Yields Understanding***

One of the main motivations for cross-cultural pre-departure training expressed by the respondents in this survey was for missionaries to be better prepared for cross-cultural mission in order for the missionary and the program to have a positive mission experience. This motivation led to training content that teaches about cross-cultural awareness and communication skills. Inherent in this progression is the assumption that specific cultures and their trappings of symbols, rituals and beliefs can be taught and learned by people originally foreign to those cultures.

Benhabib (2002) addresses a similar point in her argument against incommensurability. She argues that various cultures are not so different from one another that one culture does not even recognize the patterns and symbols of another. Benhabib admits that cultures might not be directly translatable or understandable, but that there is enough commonness to afford at least a basis of recognition and understanding along cultural lines (p. 31).

It is at this point of commonness that cross-cultural training programs attempt to instill basic levels of cultural awareness and understanding in participants. With the shift in the definition of culture adopted by the Church after Vatican II, mission requires an understanding of the cultures in which the Gospel message is to be inculturated and evangelized. Without comprehending that systems of knowledge and beliefs are different

yet recognizable, missionaries would have difficulties making themselves understood within the new cultural context. Shaw and Stewart (1994) state,

Just as religions are not ‘given’ entities, equivalencies are not simply ‘there’ as channels through which meanings from different religions flow automatically. In order to serve as conduits for integration, they must be perceived as equivalencies and given significance as such. Not only are equivalencies in the eye of the beholder, but even when they are perceived they do not always facilitate synthesis (p.16).

Cross-cultural training is necessary to facilitate equivalencies and effective communication so that missionaries can subsequently carry out their duties in the new cultural environment.

The doctrine of the Church in regards to mission also highlights the duty of understanding the other (Second Vatican Council, *Ad Gentes*, 1965). Using the incarnation of Christ, the Son of God, in a specific temporal and localized culture as an example, Catholic missionaries are obligated to seek out knowledge about other cultures in order to fully grasp how the incarnation can be made comprehensible to believers within that culture (Schineller, 1990, p. 21). The first task of mission through inculturation, as defined by Schineller (1990), is to “become acquainted with the situation in terms of factual data as well as values present or absent” (p. 64), thus gaining insight into the reality of the other within their own cultural setting and drawing upon their cultural practices and beliefs to make the incarnation more tangible to them instead of imposing a foreign version upon them.

The basis for understanding the process of inculturation and the definitions of culture that exist within a theology of mission is that the Gospel message, the incarnation, is relevant across cultures and that cultures can be interpreted in light of this message (Carrier, 1993, p. 64; Shaw & Stewart, 1994, p.11). Inherent in this obligation is the assumption that no culture is out of the reach of being understood if ample diligence is applied.

This underlying basis of inculturation reflects well Benhabib’s (2002) notion that all cultures are readable and that the levels of culture can be deciphered among and between different cultures. She is explaining that while the symbolism, wording and patterns can be different, general meanings and interpretations can be made “understandable” to each group. If the missionary has a more thorough understanding of the culture, then he or she would be able to more adequately adapt the teachings of the Catholic beliefs within that culture. Thus, questions of negative syncretism, or the use of incompatible symbols and meanings, should not arise in the course of tailoring the Gospel message to the new cultural milieu. The missionary should have a good enough grasp to make informed decisions on what facets of culture best influence manifestations of faith, which should be discarded, and which are ripe for challenge and change. That is where pre-departure training concerning cross-cultural communication can be most beneficial and effective within mission preparation.

One key area of equivalence is language. Pope John Paul II mentions in the quote above from *Redemptoris Missio* that missionaries must learn the language of the culture in which they will minister. Anthony Gittins (2002) argues that “the very way that people come to understand what *is*, what is true or real, depends very heavily on language” (p.

36). It is interesting to note that the respondents in this survey placed language learning last or next to last in the ranking of pre-departure training content. Though, organizations did add comments stating that language learning takes place once the missionary has arrived in-country. One thing to note about the responses of the religious communities is that language training was primarily done in-country, sometimes in host-family settings, unless it was a particularly difficult language to learn at which time the language learning would begin prior to departure but separately from the other cross-cultural training.

### ***Transition Difficulties***

*Inculturation requires the respect of difference but also the integration of diversities in a living communion.*

-Carrier, 1993, p.79

The Cabrini Mission Corps stated that one way they gauge the success of their pre-departure cross-cultural training programs is to evaluate if “the missionaries have some background upon which they can draw when they encounter transition difficulties.” Cross-cultural training can prepare the participants for the reality of their values and beliefs being changed by the cross-cultural encounter and to give them tools to help them mediate these changes.

Benhabib (2002) mentions that “as our knowledge of other cultures and of ourselves increases, so does our sense of relativity” (p. 34) meaning that the more cultures learn about each others’ history, practices, and reality, the less judgmental each culture can be of the other because it is more aware of the context of the culture. Being less judgmental can lead to being more accepting. She explains that if the cultures are seen as equals, the interactions will move both cultures. “In this process of making sense, the belief system studied meets one’s own framework. These systems enter into dialogue; they challenge and dislodge each other.” (Benhabib, 2002, p.34)

Benhabib’s terminology seems quite gentle compared with the use of other terms such as culture shock (Oberg, 1960/2000) and transition shock (Bennett, 1998). However, the concept is the same. Weaver (1993) discusses the meeting of belief systems as a collision of two icebergs, a slightly more violent image than Benhabib’s notion of dialogue and dislodging. The tip of each iceberg represents external culture and is shown through behaviors and expressed beliefs. The base of each iceberg represents the internal culture of values and thought patterns. It is at the base under the water, at seemingly imperceptible levels, that the collision and dislodging occurs (Weaver, 1993, p. 160).

To mediate the shock of cross-cultural contact and to prepare participants to be more accepting of different values and beliefs, cross-cultural training affords participants the opportunity to practice non-judgmental acceptance and respect of other cultures through role-plays and simulations. This will allow missionaries to examine situations in light of interpersonal communication but also taking into account the theological values and beliefs that are at play in the scenarios.

The literature on mission and inculturation speaks largely of inculturation being a mutually enriching endeavor that respects the role that culture has in influencing faith, as well as the role that faith has in influencing the current structures of culture (Carrier, 1993; Shorter, 1988; Schineller, 1990; Shaw & Stewart, 1994). As part of understanding

the cultural setting as multi-layered, Carrier (1993) suggests that inculturation examines and judges each layer for alignment with the Gospel message. If values and symbols can be used to better understand the message of faith, they are used. If the values system or beliefs of a culture are deemed to go against the message of faith, then it is necessary to change them. This identifies that cultures are not pure and consist of many parts, allowing inculturation to accept or reject portions of a culture without rejecting the culture as a whole.

### ***Cultural Evaluation***

Cross-cultural training can address the differentiation of cultural layers, give alternative frameworks to examine stereotypes and change worldview focus to seeing culture as a multi-layered entity.

The Church's emphasis and search for universal contextualization of its beliefs, practices and doctrine through mission, inculturation and evangelization addresses this issue of cultural evaluation. Benhabib (2002) notes that cultures can no longer be seen as pure entities; they are "polyvocal, multilayered, decentered, and fractured systems of action and signification" (p. 25-26). The current mission and inculturation literature also takes into account this emphasis on retiring theories of universality based on cultural purity. In order to recognize the layers and complexity of cultures, including one's own, attention must be on gaining a deeper understanding of cultures.

Schineller (1990) echoes this necessary movement away from assumptions of purity. He supports the notion that cross-cultural ministry does not deal with an encounter of two isolated and pure entities; diversity and pluralism are present within a culture and within the cultural encounter (Schineller, 1990, p.6). In addition to recognizing the layers of culture in the 'other,' a person engaging in this process must also be cognizant of how his or her own cultural influences are brought to bear on the encounter, especially in how his or her interpretation of faith is mired in levels of influence (Schineller 1990, p. 68).

Role-play models such as the Khan simulation bring American values into stark contrast with other cultural values and beliefs (Weaver, 1993). Respondents indicated that success of pre-departure program was not known until the participants had been able to engage in cultural interactions in-country. This type of simulation experience works well to address acceleration of experiential learning within the pre-departure program.

Facilitation of role-plays and simulations aids in allowing participants to develop the skills necessary to isolate values and beliefs that are not compatible with their belief systems without disregarding the new culture's value and beliefs systems as a whole. Benhabib (2002) mirrors this understanding of "cross-cultural judgment and evaluation" (p. 41), especially in regards to making distinctions along the lines of moral, ethical and evaluative natures of cultures (p. 40). The training task is being able to accept or understand certain portions of a culture while not understanding or judging other portions; therefore, not disregarding or judging a whole culture because one aspect is not in adherence with your own culture or your own cultural knowledge. Depending on the types of roles that the missionaries will fulfill, this takes on more or less significance. In pointing out the realities of doing mission in a specific profession, the Mission Doctors' response noted,

I see the preparation as giving the individuals the tools they will need to assess their own reactions to the differences in a non-judgmental way. This can be very

difficult for medical professionals who have been trained in a “one way is the right way” world. They are going to a location where the realities of western medicine can be challenged, their finely honed skills can be less useful than they expect.

If the missionaries are unable to differentiate the layers of culture and to separately judge what portions of medical practices within the new cultural environment were beneficial, they eventually decide that the medical profession and practices within the new culture are highly inept and rudimentary (Betty Scanlon, personal communication, 10 April 2003). Cross-cultural training makes missionaries aware that their way is not the only way, and is probably not always the best way.

### ***Conclusion***

This study has attempted to identify pre-departure cross-cultural training programs for missionaries and to evaluate Catholic missionary training in regards to the types of training being done or the amount of training being accomplished. The ultimate goal of this study is to further the discussion within the Catholic mission community as to the benefits and drawbacks of cross-cultural training and possibly to increase the awareness of the importance of such training not only in pre-departure settings but also leading to the importance of continual in-country training, re-entry training and training evaluation.

In addition, this study sought to be a catalyst for the correlation of training materials and resources that would be beneficial to the Catholic missionary community. There are numerous general cross-cultural resources in current literature that would be helpful in developing program specific content and materials. Continual research and resource development is needed to increase the body of knowledge within Catholic cross-cultural training for missionaries. Included in appendix B is a general resource list that has been compiled to help those who are not yet aware of these resources. Other resources exist; this is not meant to be a comprehensive list of all available and relevant resources. Instead, this list is a beginning that will hopefully be increased through the continued cooperation and discussion among mission practitioners.

In addition to providing training resources, further study into how training is approached, structured and carried out within the Catholic missionary context would be beneficial. One of the areas of discussion within the responses to this study is training concerning trauma and violence in the pre-departure setting. The Franciscan Mission Service suggested “readings about primary and secondary trauma in mission,” in addition to “workshops, simulation exercises and role plays.” Dr. Maureen Connors, a consultant who addresses the issue of trauma in cross-cultural training for missionaries, feels that there is still a denial of the need for this preparation (personal communication, 31 January 2003). She also feels that the preparation itself needs changes in how it is structured; moving from a lecture style format limited to just talking to a more activity-based learning format would prove beneficial. An example would be to teach pressure points and stress relief techniques that missionaries would be able to do on themselves when they find themselves in certain stressful and traumatic situations. Thus, the methodology of cross-cultural training could be further developed in the Catholic missionary context to reflect the changing situations in which missionaries are sent.

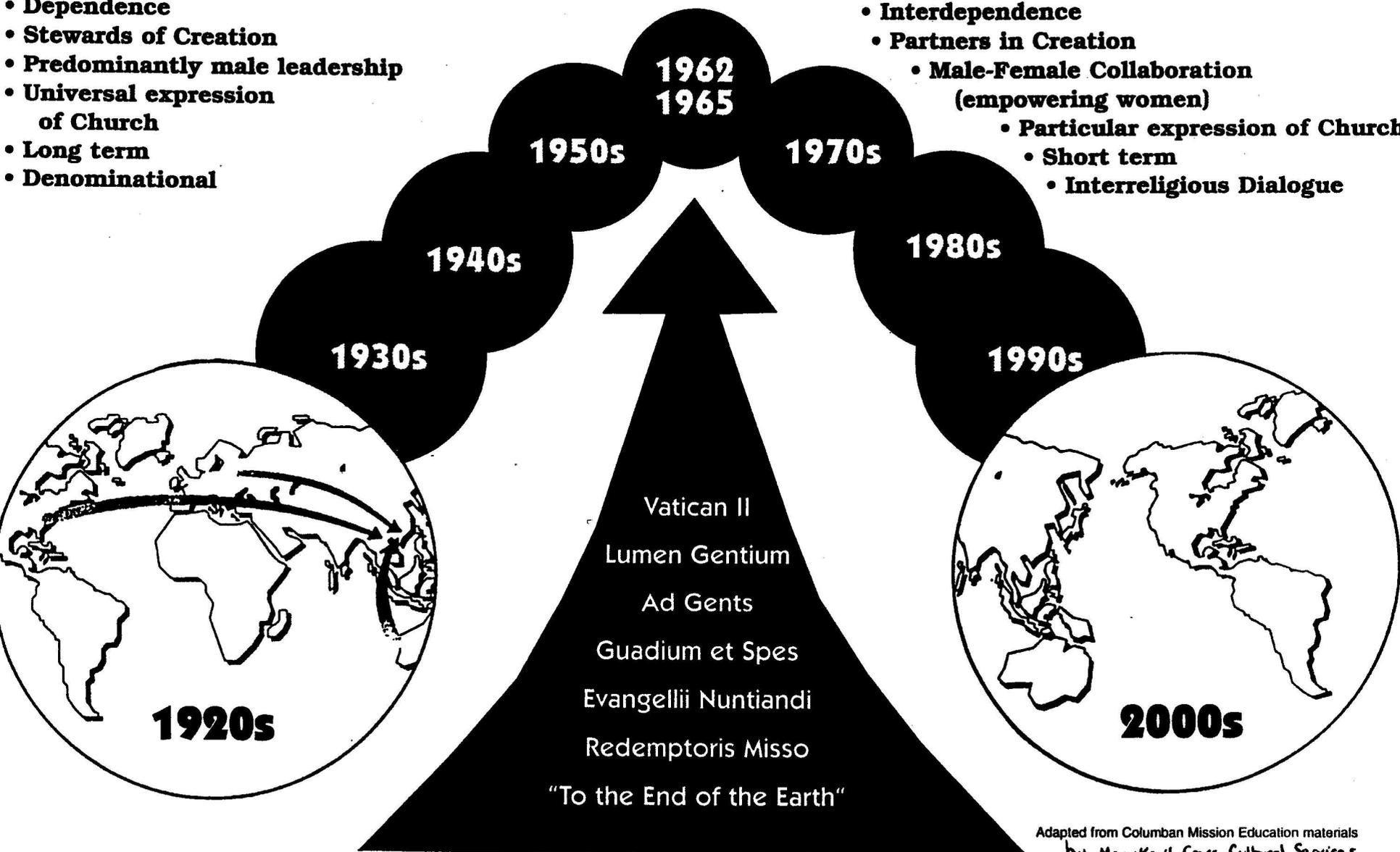
This also became apparent in the responses for the long-term results of cross-cultural training. Two organizations mentioned that their post-experience evaluations indicated that people were not aware of all the information they had absorbed during the trainings until they had the opportunity to put it into practice in their mission service while in-country. Additional opportunities for experiential learning through role-plays and simulations might better equip missionaries with the firsthand experience before they are inserted into the new cultural environment. The propensity for religious communities to allow or require time within a new cultural environment in order to solidify cultural experiences and knowledge also speaks to the long-term results of cross-cultural preparation after a missionary has had time to put cross-cultural skills and training into practice.

The cross-cultural training field is continually renewing the resources used in professional development and training. Similarly, Catholic cross-cultural training is a process continually in flux, changing to adapt to the needs of missionaries in today's global context.

# Change In Mission

- Eurocentered World
- Give and Send
- Working for the Poor
- Mission to "pagans"
- Giving Our Gifts
- Emphasis on Conversion
- Clerical Missioners
- Church-building
- Dependence
- Stewards of Creation
- Predominantly male leadership
- Universal expression of Church
- Long term
- Denominational

- Pacific Rim becomes focus
- Send and Receive
- Walking with the impoverished for justice
- Holy Ground
- Discovering their riches
- Emphasis on dialogue and Inculturation
- Clerical, Religious and Lay Missioners
- Community building
- Interdependence
- Partners in Creation
- Male-Female Collaboration (empowering women)
- Particular expression of Church
- Short term
- Interreligious Dialogue



## *Appendix B*

### *Resources*

These resources are grouped in four sections. The first section pertains to general cultural and cross-cultural theory, training and practice. The second section lists resources that have made links between mission and culture. The third section is a brief overview of the inculturation literature that was used for this study. The fourth and final section is a list of academic journals that have published information regarding international work assignments, intercultural communication and similar issues that would prove insightful to missionaries and trainers preparing for a cross-cultural mission assignment.

#### **Culture & Cross-Cultural**

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 Columbia Journal of World Business  
 Communication Quarterly  
 Compensation of Benefits Review  
 International Journal of Intercultural Psychology  
 International Journal of Intercultural Relations  
 International Management Review  
 Journal of Applied Communication Research  
 Journal of Applied Psychology  
 Journal of Communication  
 Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology  
 Journal of Human Resource Management  
 Journal of International Business Studies  
 National Productivity Review  
 Personnel and Human Resources Management  
 Personnel Journal  
 Training and Development Journal

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