

REGNUM STUDIES IN GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY
(Previously GLOBAL THEOLOGICAL VOICES series)

Series Preface

The latter part of the twentieth century witnessed a global level of change in Christian dynamics. One significant development was the rise of the churches in the global south, not only in their number but also in their engagement with their socio-cultural contexts. *Regnum Studies in Global Christianity* explores the issues that the global church struggles with, focusing particularly on churches in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe.

The series publishes studies that will help the global church learn not only from past and present, but also from provocative and prophetic voices for the future. The editors and the publisher particularly pray that the series as a public space will encourage the southern churches to make an important contribution to the shaping of a healthy future for global Christianity. The editors invite theological seminaries and universities from around the world to submit relevant scholarly dissertations for possible publication in the series. It is hoped that the series will provide a forum for South-to-South as well as South-to-North dialogues.

Series Editors

Ruth Padilla DeBorst	President, Latin American Theological Fraternity, Santiago, Chile
Hwa Yung	Bishop, The Methodist Church in Malaysia, Petaling Jaya, Malaysia
Wonsuk Ma	Executive Director, Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, Oxford, UK
Damon So	Research Tutor, Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, Oxford, UK
Miroslav Volf	Director, Yale Center for Faith and Culture, New Haven, MA, USA

REGNUM STUDIES IN GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY

**Handbook of Theological Education
in World Christianity**

Theological Perspectives – Regional Surveys – Ecumenical Trends

Dietrich Werner, David Esterline, Namsoon Kang, Joshva Raja (Eds)

Forewords by Ofelia Ortega, Desmond Tutu, Robert Schreier

WIPF & STOCK • Eugene, Oregon

- Esack, Farid and Sarah Chiddy. 2009. Eds., *Islam and AIDS: Between Scorn, Pity and Justice*. Oxford: Oneworld.
- Farley, Margaret A. 2008. "Justice, Faith, and HIV/AIDS in Africa: Challenges for the Twenty-First Century," in Mary Jo Iozzio, Mary M. Doyle Roche and Elsie M. Miranda, eds., *Calling for Justice throughout the World: Catholic Women Theologians on the HIV/AIDS Pandemic*, 45-52. New York: Continuum.
- Frederiks, Martha. 2008. "HIV and Aids: Mapping Theological Responses in Africa," *Exchange* 37, 4-22.
- Jacob, Plamthodathil S. and Paulson Pulikottil. 2006. "Christian Response to HIV/AIDS: A Syllabus for Theological Curriculum," *UBS Journal*, "HIV/AIDS and Theological Curriculum," 4(2), 73-84.
- Kelly, Michael J. 2008. *Education: For an Africa without AIDS*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.
- McCain, Danny. 2008. *Fighting Back: Winning the Battle against HIV and AIDS with a Faith Perspective*. Bukuru, Nigeria: Africa Christian Textbooks.
- Nadar, Sarojini and Isabel A. Phiri. 2009. "Editorial," *Journal of Constructive Theology*, "Feminist Theological Pedagogy in Africa: Special Issue," 14(2), 15(1), 2008/2009, 1-8.
- Okaalet, Peter (with Agatha Verdadero). 2009. *Bridge Builder: Uniting Faith and Science Towards an AIDS-free Generation*. Nairobi: Wordalive Publishers.
- Phiri, Isabel A. 2009. "African Theological Pedagogy in the light of a Case Study on Gendered Violence," *Journal of Constructive Theology*, "Feminist Theological Pedagogy in Africa: Special Issue," 14(2), 15(1), 2008/2009, 109-124.
- Pobee, John S. 1990. "En Voie: Theological Education in Africa," in J. S. Pobee and J. N. Kudadjie, eds., *Theological Education in Africa: Quo Vadimus?* 193-228. Geneva: World Council of Churches.
- UNAIDS. 2008. "Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic: Executive Summary." Geneva: UNAIDS.

(14) THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION BY EXTENSION

DIVERSIFIED THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION: GENESIS, DEVELOPMENT AND ECUMENICAL POTENTIAL OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION BY EXTENSION (TEE)

Kangwa Mabuluki

Introduction

Theological Education by Extension (TEE) has been in existence for over forty years. It has and continues to be an effective method of making sound theological education available to various categories of church leaders and general members. It is one of the most creative efforts in transforming theological education to respond to the challenges faced by the church. There are currently TEE programs in every continent with the most programs in Latin America, Asia and Africa.

This paper seeks to give an overview of Theological Education by Extension within the context of wider forms of diversified theological education, focusing mostly on Africa where it is arguably the fastest growing form of theological education, with new initiatives to make the method accessible to the churches who are faced with the most pressing challenges of rapid growth, insufficiently trained ministers, and insufficient resources to train more ministers to match the growth of the church.

Beginnings of the TEE Method

The TEE method of theological education started as a creative response to a growing crisis in the Presbyterian Church in Guatemala in the 1960s. Among the challenges that the Presbyterian Church in Guatemala was facing was the inability of its only seminary – Seminario Evangelico Presbiteriano de Guatemala – to train enough ministers to cope with the ministerial needs of a rapidly growing church. The church did not have the resources to increase the capacity of the seminary which according to reports had only managed to produce 10 trained ministers in its first 25 years of existence. Most church leaders who were serving in the rural congregations had no training, yet could not leave their families to go to the residential college. Even if they were able to leave their families, the college could only train a few people at a very high cost. Further, pastors trained in seminary developed expectations of a "professional" salary, though minimal, and majority of the churches were too poor to meet those expectations. As a result even those among the limited number trained could not all be employed by the church. According to reports, of all those trained over a period of 25 years, only about 10 could be hired by bigger churches. The seminary was increasingly discovering a change in the attitude and theological approach of those being trained which made it difficult for them to fit back in the community that had sent them to college. This was a compound problem which required a radical response, and the seminary found the solution in decentralizing the seminary. Tutors from the seminary began to prepare courses and go out to where the people were. They established centers where students would come together once a week and have a session with a tutor from the seminary. The tutor would help them review the lesson of the previous week. Using the same text books as those used at the seminary, the tutor would then introduce and give input on the next lesson and give the students work to do at home for the following week. This new approach meant that the seminary could reach more students within their setting, reduce on costs, and also deal with the problems of uprooting the students from their context which brought about the problem of changing their theological

approach. While in 1962 the seminary could only enroll 6 students, with the new approach the enrollment increased to about 200 students.

TEE as a Growing Form of Diversified Theological Education

From Guatemala, the TEE method quickly spread to other parts of Latin America, and later to Africa and Asia, where churches were facing similar problems with regard to theological training. There was an upsurge in TEE programs during the 70s to 80s, in almost all continents. Ross Kinsler in his book *The Extension Method in Theological Education: A Call to the Renewal of the Ministry* records significant growth of TEE in Africa, Asia, Latin America, North America and to some extent Europe. But in many cases this growth was not sustained, leading to a noticeable slowdown in progress or collapse of some of the programs. "Most of the programs which never became institutionalized remained most vulnerable and susceptible to collapse"¹ But also those programs that were denominational rather than ecumenical tended to face the danger of slowing down and/or collapsing all together. Examples of these can be cited in Africa where, for example, the TEE Program in Congo DR under the Anglican Province of Katanga first collapsed because of the civil war. Efforts to revive it soon after the civil war faced severe challenges because it was only based in one church, and therefore the decision by the Bishop to divert resources meant for TEE to other seeming needy areas could not be challenged by anyone. In Tanzania the TEE Program for the Mennonite Church in Lake Diocese was discontinued because a decision was made to concentrate resources in the residential theological college. Several years later there are efforts to revive the TEE program because the diocese needs to train 800 leaders and pastors, but the theological college which caters for the Mennonite Churches in East Africa cannot admit more than 4 students from each diocese. In Burundi, the TEE program initiated by the Free Methodist Church, was discontinued in 1994 in preference for the one started by the Anglican Diocese of Bujumbura which was receiving funding from Trinity Grants Program. This has put the sustainability of the program in serious question. In Zambia, the first TEE program started in 1970 under the Brethren in Christ Church, has drastically slowed down, while the ecumenical TEE program which was started nine years later (in 1979) has grown from two churches to nine churches, and from only being present in two major districts to covering the whole country though largely catering for the training of lay leaders.

In 1994 Fremont and Sara Regier in their report on a Research Project of Africa Nonformal Theological Education² cited some of the challenges which may have led to the decline of TEE. They observed that,

Much of what is called TEE is a far cry from the classical Ross Kinsler model. TEE originally came out of an era of popular liberation movement in Central America stressing bottom-up theology. Much of the TEE training content in Africa is more top down. What is called contextualization (making the training relevant to the particular situation and environment) is too often little more than putting African wraps onto Western thought. Often weekly TEE seminars, intended as facilitated discussion and application sessions, become teaching or even preaching. In too many cases the local TEE program is not really owned by the local church...Some TEE programs are so strongly focused on evangelism that the equipping hardly occurs.³

Two aspects about these evaluative points:

¹ F. Sendegeya and L. Spencer (eds), *Understanding TEE: A Course Outline and Handbook for Students and Tutors in Residential Theological Institutions in Africa* (ANITEPAM, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania), 33.

² By non formal theological education, they meant organized educational programs conducted outside the formal school and higher education system, and by definition, this included many TEE initiatives.

³ F. Regier and S. Regier, *Africa Nonformal Theological Education Research Project* (Commission on Overseas Mission, General Conference Mennonite Church, Newton, KS, USA), 16.

One is that even though they were mainly focused on Africa, they reflect the situation in other regions as well. For example, in Asia where there is the Institute of TEE in Nepal (ITEEN), an evaluation report much later in 2003 reflected the following:

- For too long Theological Education by Extension has been frustrated and handicapped by a number of factors;
- The educational technology and methodology of classical TEE including its discipline and administration has been too often misunderstood, ignored or been inadequately taught in Bible Colleges and missionary training establishments.
 - There remains confusion still among many donor agencies and accreditation organizations as to what actually is TEE and what it is not.
 - Enthusiasts have rushed into TEE without adequate preparation, realistic funding or proper administration.
 - Programmers have failed to build up from grass root levels⁴

The second is that these points, though seemingly negative, were made with the hope of helping revitalize TEE, which was still viewed as an important element in the training of clergy and leaders for the church. Both reports quoted above included very positive affirmative notes. The Regiers made "a call for African church leaders to reflect upon the strengths of TEE, to accept it as a meaningful alternative to formal residential studies, and to work to address the challenges and difficulties TEE programmes sometimes face."⁵

The ITEEN evaluation report also ended with the following affirmation:

The ITEEN program in Nepal is a refreshing and encouraging example of what can be achieved through a very carefully planned and realistically funded TEE Program – a programme that is nationally owned and exceptionally well managed...the evaluation team is certain that this low-cost "grass-root" ITEEN programme is absolutely relevant to the discipleship and leadership training needs of the majority of the economically poor but far growing churches of Nepal.⁶

The TEE Method and Content

Though sharing the philosophy of long distance or open learning form of education, TEE is not just like any other long distance education program. TEE has added distinctives that make it a special training program. The TEE method emphasizes three elements, absence of any of which renders the program not a real TEE program. The three are (1) an element of self study, (2) group study under the guidance of a tutor, and (3) opportunity to put in practice what is being learnt. Ross Kinsler one of the pioneers of TEE in Guatemala offers a succinct and apt description of these three elements as they evolved in the early years of the over forty years of the existence of TEE

"TEE began to develop a distinctive educational design out of pragmatic necessity and along the way discovered very important components for any effective learning system, theological or otherwise, but especially appropriate for grass roots ministerial formation among local church leaders. In Guatemala, since our students were local church leaders, heads of families, mostly employed in secular jobs or subsistence farming, scattered over large areas, we could only plan to meet with them once a week or twice a month at locations accessible for them, though some travel for them and more for our faculty was often necessary. Since those meetings could only last for two or three hours, we had to use that time for

⁴ P. Bisset, "The Institute of TEE in Nepal" in Kinsler R (ed), *Diversified Theological Education: Equipping All God's People* (WCIU Press, Pasadena, California), 116-117.

⁵ Sendegeya and Spencer, *Understanding TEE*, 37.

⁶ Bisset, "The Institute of TEE in Nepal", 117.

discussion and debate, not for lectures or monologue. This in turn meant that the students had to be able to get the basic course content (cognitive, affective, practical) on their own in preparation for each group meeting. So we devised basic self-study materials for the relevant "academic" levels and cultural contexts. The third component, in addition to daily individualized study and weekly or bi-monthly group discussion, was on-going, practical testing or application of the substance and issues of the course material in the students' local ecclesial and social contexts.

At an opportune moment Ted Ward, an educator at Michigan State University met with leaders of the TEE movement and articulated a basic curriculum design that matched our experience and facilitated the communication of the TEE concept. We call this design "the rail fence analogy." It refers to the three basic components mentioned above, and it focuses on the combination and balance of these three components. One rail represents on-going daily or weekly individual home study with appropriate materials and assignments. The other rail, parallel to the first rail, is the ongoing practical application or testing or utilizing of the material being studied in the local church and/or community. The third element, represented by posts holding up, in parallel, the two rails, is the weekly or twice monthly group meeting, with a local or visiting facilitator, to review, clarify, and discuss the material studied and to share experiences with that material in their local context. There are two critical questions regarding this analogy. One is the purpose of the fence, which will determine its size and strength, whether it is meant to keep horses or dogs or chickens, etc. The other is how best to combine and balance the three elements. If the posts are widely separated or too frail, they will not be able to hold up the rails. If the rails are too heavy or too thin or wrongly spaced, they may be unable to fulfill their function.⁷

As would be noticed and clearly exemplified by the rail-fence analogy, the three components are interdependent and together make TEE a stable and effective method of training. The Ethiopia TEE, one of the first TEE programs to be established in Africa, uses the traditional three legged African stool, which is very stable with the three elements as the legs, to illustrate the stability of TEE as a method of diversified theological education

But most challenging of the three is the self study because it is dependent on the material produced. The study material has to be in a long distance study format and must conform to the objective of TEE of offering cognitive knowledge but also pointing to the practical application and leading the student to have effective personal reflection and application to one's context. The material ought to be professionally well written. "If the materials are confusing or abstract or simplistic or if group meetings are too widely separated or irrelevant or boring, students will be discouraged, and many will drop out. When the three basic educational components are ideally combined and balanced, participants are constantly challenged to work effectively toward their mission, the church's mission, God's mission."⁸

Why is TEE a growing method of theological education and why should it be encouraged? In response to this, there are at least three out of the many key aspects, especially in Africa:

Viability

The issue of viability of theological education in general has been one of constant concern. But the focus in the concern of viability has often been "financial viability." The issue of viability is much broader. Konrad Raiser points out that "A viable form of theological education and ministerial formation will...aim at preparing leaders of Christian Communities who are able to inspire new life, to renew and transform the institutional identity of the church"⁹

⁷ R. Kinsler (ed), *Diversified Theological Education; Equipping All God's People* (WCIU Press, Pasadena, California), 26-27.

⁸ Kinsler, *Diversified Theological Education*, 27.

⁹ K. Raiser, "Importance of the Ecumenical Vision for Theological Education and Ministerial Formation, in Pobe J (ed), *Towards Viable Theological Education: Ecumenical Imperatives Catalyst of Renewal* (WCC, Geneva,

One of the reasons that lead to a search and development of the TEE method was that the then existing forms of theological education became inadequate and therefore not viable. It was because of this, as we saw in Guatemala, that the theological educators opted to seek other alternatives to make theological education respond to the challenges of meeting the numerical demand for ministers, as well as the need to train ministers whose theology was tuned to their context because it was developed within their context. Through the over forty years of existence TEE has shown to be a viable means of theological education.

Yeow Choo Lak, talking about financial viability of Ecumenical Theological Formation, points out that besides the decline in resources of the churches in the North which often provide grants, the model of ministry and training also tends to be expensive. Ministers or priests or pastors "are required to undergo full time training, a prerequisite for ordination. A full-scale apparatus (Campus, faculty/teachers, library, office staff, kitchen and ground crew) is needed to provide such an education."¹⁰ Lak then justifies this by arguing it would be more costly to have poorly trained or non-trained pastors or ministers. But the choice is not between having the seminary education and not having theological education at all. TEE proves an alternative financially viable opportunity for ministerial training.

TEE is more financially viable compared to residential theological training. It costs much less to train a bigger number of church leaders and workers through TEE than through residential or seminary training. But as Adrian Chatfield points out, this does not mean TEE is cheap. The development of TEE material which we earlier emphasized needs to be of high quality can be quite costly. But this cost is often one off and indeed goes a long way because once the material is produced it is used over time. Because of the nature of the course material, essential revisions are made from time to time in the process of use. In some cases this misunderstanding that TEE is cheap and does not require much resources is overstressed and leads to the collapse of a program

Secondly it is "contextually viable" and easily adaptable. This is important in dealing with our rapid changing context, which often requires retention of the fundamentals but varying of the method, approach or key players in order to address the relevant areas and issues. It is also important when you are dealing with a highly dynamic subject like theology, which, as we have seen earlier, ought to bring transformation and renewal in the church. TEE gives an opportunity to train church leaders and church workers who will be able to apply their theology to their context because they have the privilege of being trained within that context. TEE is also flexible as a training method that moves "from outside to the inside" bringing theological thought and reflection from those people on the fringes of what is regarded mainline theological centers, namely seminaries and theological schools. It is these people on the fringes of society, as experience has proved, who are mostly affected by the forces of death and dehumanization in society, which is among the key things theology must respond to and address.

Accessibility

TEE is a very accessible method of education and formation. Ross Kinsler in the introductory chapter to the book *Diversified Theological Education*, points out ten accesses: Geographical, Economic, Cultural, Ecclesiastical, Gender, Race, Class, Different abilities, Pedagogical, and Spiritual. A number of these ways in which TEE offers greater accessibility than other forms of theological education are quite familiar and already alluded to, but like many components of TEE these accessibilities are often combined. It is the ecclesiastical, economic, class and pedagogical accessibility of TEE that made it open to the African Instituted Churches where most of the leaders did not have access to formal theological training. "In November 1978, 20 leaders from eleven from African Instituted Churches (known also as African

Switzerland) 55.

¹⁰ Y. Choo Lak, "Financial Viability of Ecumenical Theological Formation" in Pobe J (ed) *Towards Viable Theological Education; Ecumenical Imperatives Catalyst of Renewal* (WCC, Geneva, Switzerland), 96.

Independent Churches) in eight countries across the continent met in Cairo, convened by Bishop Antonious Markos of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Egypt. The meeting established the Organization of African Independent Churches (OAIC) to support and nurture these churches in a variety of ways. In 1980, they initiated the TEE program under the leadership of Agustin and Rosalio Battle. The programme, continental in nature, has produced more than 60 TEE texts in Swahili, English and French.¹¹ The coordinator of TEE Programming for the OAIC, Rev. Helena Hooper, was later to become the first chairperson of the All Africa TEE Association formed at the second All Africa TEE Conference in Livingstone Zambia in 2006 as one effort of revitalizing and strengthening TEE programs in Africa.

The accessibility of TEE has been enhanced where the program has taken on an ecumenical approach. In Zambia, when the program started in the Brethren in Christ Church, despite the need in other churches, the program remained confined to one church in their Bible school. Almost ten years later, the current ecumenical program was initiated with the help of TEE College in South Africa by two churches with a commitment to an ecumenical approach, and thirty years later the program has nine member churches. Although the program is mainly aimed at training lay leaders, it has started by special arrangement to also train pastors in some of these member churches whose pastors do not have access to proper theological training because they do not have a theological college or seminary of their own and these pastors do not have the required academic qualification to go to available theological colleges. In Botswana, the TEE College has given access to theological training to African Independent Churches who are not even members of the OAIC. In Canada, theological education has been made available to the First Nations People through TEE.¹²

TEE dares to open quality theological learning to ordinary members of the church, and in this way also opens the church to the critical theological thought and reflection of the ordinary members. It is this aspect that makes the method a key factor in real ecumenical collaboration and also a vehicle through which the church can respond to the pressing needs of our time, as Ross so well articulates in the second part of this article.

Class accessibility also deserves a brief comment here. At a time when academic education has become a preserve of the powerful and financially able and, therefore a class factor, many people who would otherwise make good church ministers and leaders miss out on good theological education either because they cannot afford to go to seminary and/or because they do not have the academic qualification to enter seminary. This is not to say academic requirements are not important but in a situation where academia is still so much the banking system and unfairly controlled largely by the 'haves' and powerful in society, the church ought to think of ways of providing theological education that is academically flexible, which can accord many a chance to develop their God given potential. Here Paulo Freire's creative thoughts about education (the educator and the learner) come into play. TEE does not necessarily compromise on quality but ensures quality at every level. Though a lot still needs to be done in this respect, there is evidence that TEE makes theological training accessible even to semi-literate or illiterate church leaders and members. In their research project, Fremont and Sara Regler discovered that "In efforts to meet the enormous demand for leadership training in Africa, a beautifully diversified variety of non-formal theological training programs has been devised. These range from the classical TEE extension model to "residential" TEE programs where the TEE material and study/discussion format are used as a full time residential study course. They include programs for non-literate learners and for post secondary level students"¹³ The TEE training officer in Zambia often reports having had to take a day extra in the training program because he had to conduct an oral test to a number of trainee tutors who are not able to sufficiently read and write and

¹¹ Sendegeya and Spencer, *Understanding TEE*, 34.

¹² See J.A.I. MacKenzie, "TEE in First Nations Communities" in Kinsler R (ed) *Diversified Theological Education: Equipping All God's People* (WCIU Press, Pasadena, California), 227-238.

¹³ Regier and Regier, *African Nonformal Theological Education*, 31.

yet have the skills to adequately facilitate a class. One such case was in an Angolan refugee camp where he was preparing church leaders about to be repatriated back to Angola.

The TEE College in South Africa and TEE Zambia are experiencing another break through to do with taking theological training "beyond prison walls." They have a program of conducting regular TEE Courses in prisons. Some of these prisoners graduate and upon release from prison join the ministry or become active trained lay leaders, others even establish their own churches. This experience was shared at the All Africa TEE Conference generating interest from other TEE programs. Follow up discussions will be done at the next All Africa TEE Conference to see if this effort of making TEE accessible to this group, which is perhaps one group that needs theological training most, can be extended to other countries.

TEE study material is often criticized as being too basic and therefore inferior. The danger in response to this criticism is to go to the other extreme of upgrading the program to the higher level in such a way that it leaves out those at the lower level completely. Because of its flexible nature, the TEE program should be increasingly made accessible even to those who require advanced or even specialized theological training, who have the capacity and yet are unable to access it in seminaries and theological colleges for reasons already alluded to. But the situation should not be either/or, nor should one be done at the expense of the other, to maintain the important character of accessibility in TEE. Ross Kinsler advises that whenever you upgrade be sure to also down grade so that no one is left out.

Sustainability

TEE is a very sustainable method of theological education. A close look at most of the theological colleges and seminaries today, reveal that at the centre of the struggle is the sustainability of the program when the funding has been reduced or withdrawn. I must hasten to add that this is to some extent a challenge also to some TEE programs especially those which have been initiated and funded by mission partners. Some such programs have collapsed because funding has been withdrawn or the mission personnel have gone back to their countries of origin. But such cases are fewer with regard to TEE than to formal seminaries and colleges. TEE does not usually carry with it the heavy administrative and structural requirements of the seminary or theological college. To be complete, the seminaries need to include libraries, dormitories or student housing, kitchen or catering facilities, etc. These often become possible at the start but become a burden in terms of the running and maintenance costs. These in their standard form are not a necessity for TEE to run properly. Most necessities like housing, feeding, etc., are taken care of because the students do not leave their home; if they do, it will only be for a few days or weeks within the year. The course material is prepared in such a way that it is self contained and reference books are minimal, cutting out the need for expensive libraries. The major expense as noted earlier is in the preparation of the course material, which, if professionally done, will provide the required cognitive input and also lead the student to undergo meaningful reflection that facilitates new learning and formation.

To talk about the need to focus and pay attention on TEE without neglecting other methods is important and has examples to justify. One case in point is what has been referred to earlier in Tanzania Mennonite Church, Lake Diocese, where a decision was made to close TEE so that the funding could be focused on the Theological College. This seems a very innocent and justifiable move, especially for a church seeking to train ministers to cope with the rise in academic demand in the church. But the result is that the seminary could only train at the most 4 people from any given diocese per year and even that requires much more to train one person than it requires in TEE. The result is that now there is effort to restart TEE because in one diocese there is need to train 800 people within a period of three to four years...is this possible? From experience it is possible through the TEE method. Not that the seminary should be closed, this is not a question of either/or but both, in order to meet the multi faceted theological training needs of the church.

One of the significant aspects of TEE is that it challenges the western styles or models of education or schooling which have permeated even theological education and are held as the standard model because of the traditions inherited. As Norman E Thomas points out,

The powerful drive for schooling among people in developing nations too often results in acceptance of the traditional schooling paradigm as norm for ministry formation. After all, we have the weight of tradition behind such models as the monastic discipline of the Middle Ages in Europe, the University based training of clergy, and the denominational seminary model began in North America. But these are not the only viable models.¹⁴

TEE exists in different structural forms. The first category are those linked to established theological schools or faculties as in the case of Serampore College (India), Guatemala, Brazil, Angola, Ethiopia, Canada. These tend to be more stable because they usually would have a wider structural support of the University or Seminary and would benefit from the availability of a pool of trained lecturers already employed by the University or Seminary. The only challenge is that of flexibility in terms of adjusting the syllabi or curricula to respond to emerging needs. The second category are those that exist as TEE Colleges or Institutes on their own, such as South Africa, Botswana, and Nepal. The advantage of these is that they also have a structural base, but one of their own and therefore with the freedom of adjusting according to TEE demands. The disadvantage is the threat that comes when financial support reduces making it difficult to support the structure which cannot easily be done away with because it is part of the program. Such was the source of severe struggle at Kgolagano TEE College in Botswana where a drop in grant support from partners led to severe reduction of tutors and therefore students. The third category are those that exist as church or ecumenical programs not necessarily taking on the structure of a college but a program with a director or chairman, such as Zambia, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Tanzania. The advantage of these is the flexibility to adjust program and financial wise, but that also becomes a disadvantage in that without a very strong structure the programs easily collapse when faced with weak financial and moral support from churches.

New Initiatives

The holding of the World Council of Churches Assembly in Harare, Zimbabwe in 2001 led to a fresh commitment of the Ecumenical Movement to accompany the church in Africa in responding to their many challenges. The process dubbed "The journey of hope" had among its focus a move to review the whole process of theological education in the continent. In 2002 a "Journey of Hope" Conference was convened by the WCC ETE Program, in Kempton Park, Johannesburg, South Africa. The conference brought together different key players in theological education institutions and organizations, among them, TEE program people from Mozambique, Angola, Zambia, Botswana, Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda. The interaction among these TEE people revealed lack of collaboration among TEE programs which would benefit from mutual collaboration and support. This realization led to the affirmation of the need to strengthen and make available to as many countries the TEE method of theological education. The process that followed led to the holding of the first All Africa TEE Conference in Mukono Uganda, in 2003 under the coordination of Uganda TEE.

At the Mukono Conference it was realized that most of the TEE programs had both slowed down drastically and only existed in name or had collapsed all together. On the other hand, the need for TEE programs was quite clear, churches were growing rapidly, resources to fund theological colleges,

¹⁴ N.E. Thomas, "Partners in Transforming Ministry: Models for a New Millennium" in *Mission and Transformation in a Changing World: A Dialogue with Global Mission Colleagues* (General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church), 105.

seminaries and theological faculties were drastically reducing. Concerns about the levels and quality of TEE were expressed but it did not downplay the relevance and need for effective TEE programs. So the effort was directed to find ways of supporting and reinforcing this method of theological training. The conference resolved among other things to start a TEE Association which would serve as a forum for jointly addressing some of the issues affecting TEE. Right from the start there was a deliberate decision to move slowly but surely, focusing on the core reasons for the Association and to avoid huge structural set up that would require lots of resources to run. A continuation committee composed of seven people from different sub regions was constituted. Uganda TEE was requested to give a chairing role. Further, a decision was made to start planning for the next All Africa TEE Conference in Zambia in two years time (2005). The Director of TEE Zambia was given the task of coordinating the forthcoming conference, which it was hoped would formalize the Association.

The continuation committee provided a good contact point and brought the needs of TEE to visibility, such that when the Ecumenical HIV& AIDS Initiative in Africa (EHAIA) was considering special training of trainers for special groups which are key in contributing to the realization of the goal of an HIV/AIDS competent church in Africa, TEE was also identified as one such group. A Training of Trainers course was conducted at Limuru Conference Centre in 2004. The reorganization efforts were at an early stage and therefore contacts were difficult to make, but a good number of TEE representatives were trained. At this workshop a major decision was reached to request EHAIA to produce an HIV/AIDS sensitive Theological Syllabus for TEE programs in Africa. Up to this point one had already been produced for residential theological schools and seminaries, but this request was in recognition of the uniqueness of TEE method. Further request was made that because of the nature of TEE programs modules be developed for the major parts of the syllabus, which would serve as a resource and starting point for the TEE programs. EHAIA responded positively to this request and set in motion a process to produce the material which was published on CD Rom in 2008

The process of organizing the All Africa TEE Conference and raising the necessary resources for the same proved more challenging than was thought, so the conference could not be held in 2005 but in October 2006. The Conference brought together 34 TEE Practitioners from 15 different countries which included India, Holland, and USA. The conference objectives were:

- To consolidate the efforts for initiating a network of TEE programmes in Africa leading to the formation of Association of TEE in Africa (ATEEA)
- To formally launch the HIV/AIDS curriculum and HIV/AIDS sensitive modules for TEE, and to explore ways of popularizing and effectively using these tools in all TEE and other related programmes in Africa
- To initiate collaboration between TEE programmes in Africa and those of other continents through TEENET¹⁵
- To collectively evaluate and assess the progress on the publication of the book *Mission by the People of God*, which is a follow up to the book *Ministry by the People of God* published by the WCC in 1975.¹⁶

Almost all these objectives were addressed and at the end of the conference the program focus and direction of the new association were adopted as follows:

1. **Standardization of curricula and materials throughout Africa:** While TEE Programs differ from country to country in terms of target group, course format and specific course content, there

¹⁵ TEENET is an International Association of TEE Programs. In 2004 a steering Committee of TEENET representatives at a meeting in Vancouver opted not to have an International TEE Conference but to allow the one planned for Africa to take place with a request that some TEE participants from other continents be invited to the conference.

¹⁶ See background to the publication of this book in the second part of this chapter.

are however certain elements which are critical in making a TEE Program. In order to maintain the integrity of TEE and to maintain there is need to specify common general elements which should characterize a TEE curriculum or course.

2. **Contextualization of TEE programmes and the medium of teaching:** E.g., the use of vernacular in instructions, and local practical examples.
3. **Accreditation of TEE Courses:** The issue of Accreditation of TEE programmes is very important, but it requires time to research the most effective way of doing it. The Executive Committee of AATEEA is mandated to look into the issue of how TEE could get accreditation. But for the meantime, each country can enquire about what their accrediting bodies require and work towards getting the accreditation.
4. **Increase and encourage collaboration between the TEE and the residential theological training programmes:** It is quite apparent from the work of most TEE programs that the collaboration with Residential Theological Colleges and seminaries is critical. Over the years, a lot has been done both to open discussion and to sustain this collaboration. There is need to continue this effort for the mutual benefit of both programs.
5. **Translation of materials from Anglophone to Franco-phone and Lusophone and vice-versa:** Because this is a complex and expensive project which needs to be done properly so as not to lose the effectiveness of the course material, AATEEA should facilitate joint work and fundraising for this project. Local TEE programmes are encouraged to translate the materials into vernacular languages.
6. **Identify and train writers in TEE method of learning, who can also utilise creative local methods of writing:** Work towards organizing at least one training workshop or two sub-regional training workshops before the next conference.
7. **Continue and strengthen work on gender awareness:** We see gender issues as an important cross cutting topic in our theological education and it should be integrated into TEE programmes, to create awareness and affirmation. We also need to have programmes which train women to be trainers.
8. **Pilot test the HIV & AIDS curriculum and modules:** The Ecumenical HIV & AIDS Initiative in Africa (EHAIA) curriculum and modules that have been written should be tried out over a period of 6 months and additions and recommendations from regions made to the Coordinator. Reasonable portions of the curriculum and one or two selected modules should be translated into French and Portuguese so that TEE programs in Portuguese and French speaking countries can also participate in this critical process.
9. **Encourage the writing of TEE Course Materials in such a way that people become increasingly involved in socio-economic issues in their own communities.**
10. **Encourage enhancement of diversified theology:** By encouraging research into local Theologies, Liberation Theology, Theology of Prosperity, etc., to enable TEE students to respond effectively.
11. **Find ways of encouraging ownership and sustainability of TEE programmes by local churches:** E.g. include TEE in their annual budgets, students pre-paying for the materials before the programme begins; fund raising by the churches to offset the cost of logistics. There is also the need for leaders in the church to change their attitude when it comes to giving out funds for TEE as they look for donors, therefore also creating a sense of dependency.
12. **Encourage use the information and communication technology in TEE work:** Where possible look at ways to empower people to be computer literate.
13. **Initiate and encourage Dialogue and collaboration with the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches in TEE studies**

Relevance of any given form of education or formation or even any institution is often brought into question when the context for which it caters changes. The far reaching changes in the world today and the

demands that these changes make on the church call into question the effectiveness and relevance of our theological training or theological formation methods. TEE as we have described it this far is not only a financially efficient method for training clergy and church leaders, or a way of reaching out to those who because of their family situation or academic level are not able to go to residential seminary, but it is a distinct method that can enable effective engagement of church members to theologically and effectively respond to the key challenges facing our world today and in so doing making the church a relevant institution in carrying out God's Mission.

Concluding Remarks

Evidently there is need for the church to give priority to the theological formation of local leaders, especially those who have traditionally been marginalized, because they are the ones most apt to follow the way of Jesus and most able to understand and respond to the challenges and the needs of holistic salvation.

The relevance of the TEE/DTE in this part of the mission of the church has been raised but so has been the fragility of this essential form of theological education which requires continued reflection and effort to sustain.

One other aspect which needs to be raised as a critical point for the survival and effectiveness of TEE/DTE to the mission of the church is the continued discussion regarding better collaboration between TEE and Residential Theological Seminaries and Colleges:

The either/or (Seminary or TEE) debate has been raging for many years. In most cases it has magnified the notion that TEE is in conflict with seminary training and one cannot exist where the other exists. There are certainly major differences as well as advantages and disadvantages on either side, but rather than generate conflict, such differences can be good discussion points to enable the improvement of each form of theological education and in most cases a healthy integration of the two. From the TEE perspective this is what has led to the use of the term "diversified" theological education, a term that enables the exploration of "the reality and the potential of emerging, diverse approaches to theological education,"¹⁷ irrespective of where these approaches are being discovered and applied. Progress has been made in this regard, to the extent that "two global TEE conferences concluded that TEE and traditional residential training programs were not mutually exclusive."¹⁸ But still a lot more effort is needed in this area. MacKenzie, in his contribution to the recent book on Diversified Theological Education, uses the term "Sharks" for barriers that prevent progress in TEE, and the first and major shark he identifies in his context is the power of traditional educational institutions to eliminate extension programs. He notes that there is a systemic element in academic institutions which often makes it difficult to grasp the significance of local community theology.¹⁹

As part of this discussion it must always be borne in mind that the very genesis of the TEE method was the seminary. The method was developed not as a substitute but as a complement, to address those challenges that could not be addressed by the seminary. Yet TEE could not do that task in isolation. The key elements or aspects in TEE must be also in the seminary and vice versa. So the two methods of Theological Education in various diverse forms can be linked without much conflict for the development of the church.

¹⁷ Kinsler R. *Diversified Theological Education*, 7.

¹⁸ MacKenzie, "TEE in First Nations Communities" 236.

¹⁹ MacKenzie, "TEE in First Nations Communities" 236.

Bibliography

- General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church. *Mission & Transformation In A Changing World: A Dialogue with Global Mission Colleagues*. New York. 1998
- Kinsler, F. Ross. *The Extension Movement in Theological Education; A call to the renewal of the Ministry* (William Carey Library, Pasadena, California.1978)
- Kinsler, Ross, ed. *Diversified Theological Education: Equipping All God's People*. William Carey International University Press, Pasedena, Carlifonia.2008
- Kinsler, F. Ross, ed. *Ministry by the People: Theological Education by Extension*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1983.
- Moodie, Ted, ed. *The T.E.E. Journal*. Volume 5(2005) "Curriculum Transformation – Potential, Problems and Progress.
- Pobee, John, ed. *Towards Viable Theological Education; Ecumenical Imperatives, Catalyst of Renewal* (WCC, Geneva. 1997)
- Potter P. *Life In All Its Fullness; Reflections on the Central Issues of Today's Ecumenical Agenda* (World Council of Churches, Geneva, Switzerland. 1981)
- Regier F. and Regier S. *African Nonformal Theological Education Research Project* (Commission on Overseas Mission General Conference Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kansas. 1994).
- Sendegeya F. and Spencer L . (eds). *Understanding TEE; A Course Outline and Handbook for Students and Tutors in Residential Theological Institutions in Africa* .(An ANITEPAM Publication, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. 2001)

(15) CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION: THE CASE OF SENATE OF SERAMPORE COLLEGES IN SOUTH ASIA

Roger Gaikward

Serampore College and Its B.D. Curriculum- A Historical Note¹

Mission heritage during the colonial period

Serampore College was founded by William Carey, Joshua Marshman and William Ward in 1818, at Serampore, or Fredericknagore, then a Danish Settlement in the Bengal region of India. In 1827 the college was incorporated by a Royal Charter by King Frederick VI of Denmark with university rights and immunities and the power to confer degrees. In 1845, on the transfer of the Settlement of Serampore from Denmark to Great Britain, provision was made by the British Government in the Treaty of Purchase for the continuance of the chartered rights, immunities and power of the College. In 1910 and the subsequent two to three years, a re-organization of the College was effected. Bachelor of Divinity (B.D.) and Licentiate in Theology (L. Th.) were the basic theological education programs of the Serampore system from the beginning of its re-organization in 1910. The B.D. Degree was considered as the highest theological degree molded on the pattern of London and Oxford Universities where they were considered to be a research degree.² In 1915 the Convocation of Serampore College was held and the degree of Bachelor of Divinity was conferred for the first time under the Charter of Incorporation of the College.

In 1918 the Bengal Act No. IV of 1918, called the Serampore College Act, was passed by the Bengal Legislative Council. On the basis of this Act, the Council of Serampore College was enlarged and the Senate of Serampore College was constituted having representatives from various Christian communities in India, its members being appointed by the Council. In 1919 when the Senate first met to organize the curriculum of L. Th., it stipulated the following core subjects: Biblical Studies, New Testament Greek, English Language and Literature, Logic, Natural Science, an Indian Vernacular, and Psychology. The B.D. Curriculum covered the following subjects: Old Testament, New Testament, Christian Theology, History of Religion, Church History, Philosophy of Religion, Moral Philosophy, a Classical Language, Liturgiology, Pastoralia, Vernacular language and English Essays.³

After 20 years, the Senate appointed a Curriculum Study Committee in 1939. At its session in 1940, the Senate clarified the purpose of the B.D. program, stating that it "connotes a general training in theology, both intellectual and practical, undergone by students who have previously taken a university course in

¹ Paper originally written under the title: Curriculum Development in Theological Education – Urgencies Priorities: The Example of the Senate of Serampore College India and its Exercise in B.D. Curriculum Revision, 2006-2009 – A South Asian Theological Education Endeavor. The texts in this section are largely extracted from the official Regulations Booklets of the Senate of Serampore College. For example, Regulations Relating to the Degree of Master of Theology (M.Th.), Serampore: Senate of Serampore College, 2007 revised reprint of 1998 edition, 1-2. The texts are almost the same in all the regulation booklets.

² Ravi Tiwari, "Initiating Revision of Curricula", Exercise in Curriculum Revision 2006-2009, Serampore: Senate of Serampore College, 2009, 2.

³ Ibid. 4.