

## Notes

1. A. C. Thompson drew attention to these parallels in his eulogy at Rufus Anderson's funeral, *Discourse Commemorative of Rev. Rufus Anderson, D.D., LL.D.* (Boston: ABCFM, 1880), p. 39.
2. Cf. R. Pierce Beaver's judicious comments on the Anderson-Venn relationship in *To Advance the Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), pp. 36f.
3. Ruth Rouse, "William Carey's Pleasing Dream," *International Review of Missions* 38 (1949):181-92. The full text of Carey's suggestion to Andrew Fuller, Secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society, written from Calcutta, May 15, 1806, is given in footnote 2, page 355, Ruth Rouse and S. C. Neill, eds., *A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948* (London: SPCK, 1954).
4. Instructions to A. Judson, S. Nott, S. Newell, G. Hall, and L. Rice, Feb. 7, 1812, *Panoplist and Missionary Magazine* 5 (October 1812):233.
5. *Panoplist and Missionary Magazine* 13 (June 1817):279-85.
6. Josiah Pratt and John Henry Pratt, *Memoir of the Rev. Josiah Pratt, B.D.* (London: Seeleys, 1849), p. 185.
7. Anderson's colleague, the Rev. D. Greene, wrote a letter introducing him to the CMS, Sept. 20, 1843 (CMS Minutes, 23:143).
8. American Board of Commissioners Archives (hereafter ABC), Houghton Library, Harvard Univ., Cambridge, Mass., file 2.1, vol. 31, pp. 236-39.
9. ABC, file 14, vol. 3, 1844-60. Includes copy of CMS resolution in response to ABC offer.
10. New York: Scribners, 1869; p. 111, n. 1.
11. ABC, file 14, vol. 3, 1844-60, Aug. 16, 1854.
12. Journal 1854-56, Deputation to India (ABC, file 8.6, vol. 3, pp. 1-4).
13. ABC, file 2.1, vol. 35, June 23, 1856; ABC file 2.1, vol. 38, Feb. 13, 1857.
14. ABC, file 2.1, vol. 40, Dec. 17, 1857.
15. ABC, file 14, vol. 3, 1844-60, Sept. 9, 1854; CMS Committee Minutes, vol. 30, 1854-55, Sept. 11, 1854, p. 329.
16. CMS Committee Minutes, vol. 31, 1855-57, Jan. 1, 1856, p. 100.
17. CMS Archives, file G/AC/17/2, 1838-53, pp. 437-43, Sept. 6, 1854.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid.
22. CMS Archives, file CM/L4 Mediterranean, 1854-64, March 2, 1858.
23. Reprinted in R. Pierce Beaver, ed., *To Advance the Gospel*, p. 103.
24. Nov. 10, 1858, cited in Wm. Knight, *Memoir of Henry Venn* (London: Seeley, Jackson, and Halliday, 1882), p. 313.
25. "The Present Position and Future Prospects of the Church Missionary Society." Address to Islington Clerical Meeting, Jan. 7, 1846, Item 25 in Wilbert R. Shenk, ed., *Bibliography of Henry Venn's Printed Writings with Index* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1975). Hereafter cited as VB.
26. In Anderson's writings (as reprinted in Beaver, *To Advance the Gospel*), pp. 103, 138f.
27. Anderson made the same distinction. Cf. *The Theory of Missions to the Heathen* (in Beaver, *To Advance the Gospel*, pp. 75-77).
28. Instructions to Missionaries, Dec. 5, 1851, VB 57:18-21.
29. VB 80:427.
30. CMS Archives, file CL3/L3, Aug. 22, 1855.

# The Challenge of Anthropology to Current Missiology

G. Linwood Barney

## I. Introduction

### Anthropology and Missions: A Developing Relationship

**M**odern *Missions and Culture: Their Mutual Relations* was the title of a book by Gustav Warneck in 1879 (English trans., 1883). Despite the infancy of cultural anthropology and ethnology as sciences, Warneck was aware of the reciprocal implications between missions and culture.

Considering the time in which Warneck wrote, one is amazed at the insights he expressed regarding the complexities of the sociocultural value systems of peoples and what bearing they have on the proclamation of the gospel. He speaks of culture as being in itself "an entirely neutral concept" which is to be interpreted from the perspective of the *insider* (Kasdorf 1980:105; italics added).

"Missions and Anthropology: A Love/Hate Relationship" was the title of an article by Paul Hiebert nearly a century later (1978).<sup>1</sup> Tracing the sometimes stormy history between anthropology and missions, Hiebert concluded with a wistful, even hopeful, note:

In many ways missions and anthropology have been like half-brothers—sharing, in part, a common parentage, raised up in the same setting, quarreling over the space and arguing the same issues.

It is unfortunate that at times this has led to polarization and mutual hatred; for each had much to learn from the other. With the growing awareness among anthropologists that they must face the overwhelming problems among anthropologists that missionaries have faced so long, and among missionaries that they must deal with people within their sociocultural contexts which anthropology has studied, a greater mutual understanding and exchange of ideas seems possible (1978:178).

There are a number of committed Christians among anthropologists who are currently active in applying the insights of their discipline to the task of missions. This was very evident in the Willowbank consultation on "Gospel and Culture" (Stott and Coote 1979, 1980) sponsored by the Theology and Education Group and the Strategy Working Group of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization in January 1978. Five of the major papers were given by anthropologists.

### Anthropology: A Developing Discipline

Two or three decades ago a common definition of culture in cultural anthropology would be similar to this one from A. L. Kroeber: ". . . the mass of learned and transmitted motor reactions, habits, techniques, ideas and values—and the behavior they induce—is what constitutes culture. Culture is the special and exclusive product of men, and is their distinctive quality in the cosmos" (1948:8).

This is an omnibus definition that includes ideas, values, pat-

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terms of relationships, patterns of behavior, material objects made by people, and so forth. For a century or more ethnographies were produced that sought to describe a given culture within these general categories. These served to inform missionaries about particular peoples and, indeed, many ethnographies were written by missionaries.

With the emergence of the functional/structural schools of anthropology, ethnographies took on more dynamic and systemic configurations. Cultures were presented as organic wholes in which the various parts were interdependent and all contributed to the whole. This development in anthropology caught the attention of many missionaries who then pursued studies in anthropology and applied these insights to missionary principles and practice. For example, the three-self formula (self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating), which had been considered a progressive step forward, was challenged to a deeper understanding whereby its three principles would be expressed in patterns indigenous to the local culture. Concepts of leadership, patterns of organization and support, methods of communicating the gospel, and the process of making religious decisions would be drawn from and identified with the local culture (e.g., William Smalley 1958). Stress was placed on the unique configuration of each culture. Missionaries in evangelism and church growth were challenged to adapt to these differences. Mission strategy recognized the homogeneous unit, which became a working concept for many and a basic principle in missiology to some.<sup>2</sup> An understanding of decision-making by consensus in many such groups confirmed the legitimacy of a people's movement. All of these developments were taught and explored in missiology courses.

However, even as these approaches were being debated in missiology, unprecedented changes were occurring at an accelerating pace around the world. Emerging nations, rapid transportation, instant communication, and multinational corporations were effecting complex changes virtually everywhere. While the analogy of the world as a "global village" seems overdrawn, it has increasing validity. The concept of contextualization is now in vogue and seeks to respond to the current world situation as indigenization sought to do a few decades ago. These new realities challenge anthropology as well as theology and missiology.

Anthropologists, once caught up in the discovery of variety, are now turning back to the search for cultural and human universals. The extreme forms of cultural relativism are now almost dead. Chomsky and other linguists are seeking universals in the basic generative processes of language; Levi-Strauss and other structuralists in the structure of the mind; Bateson, Berlin, Kay and others in common sense processes; and mathematical anthropologists in some fundamental order inherent in the nature of the universe itself (Hiebert 1978:175).

### Culture: A Working Definition for This Study

The 1960s and 1970s have seen a concept of culture being adopted by a growing number of anthropologists that promises to inform and challenge the science of missions in a marked way. One of these anthropologists, James Spradley,<sup>3</sup> has worked with this concept for several years. He has defined culture as "the acquired knowledge that people use to interpret experience and generate social behavior" (Spradley and McCurdy 1975:5). This concept approaches the nature of culture from a different perspective from the omnibus definition given earlier. While the former definition was helpful at a stage in anthropology's development, it did not distinguish between outsider and insider points of view of a particular culture.

This latter concept of culture is a catalyst to many in their understanding of missionary anthropology. To weave it consistently

into one's thinking and practice takes time and experimentation.

### The Posture of This Christian Anthropologist<sup>4</sup>

Probably most members of the discipline of anthropology would not want to address some of the topics that follow. When metaphysical or supracultural matters are considered, their agnostic posture would assert that since these cannot be empirically verified they are outside the purview of anthropology. The writer considers his "acquired knowledge" (see working definition of culture in preceding paragraph) to have been derived not only from the human institutions of family, school, community, and the like, but also from his relationship with God (see Lk. 24:44ff. and Rom. 12:1-2). He considers that his interpretation of today's mission context and the writing of this essay issue from his acquired knowledge.

He comes to this essay, then, not as an antagonist to challenge missiology. He comes as a Christian trained in the discipline of anthropology to present insights, ideas, and suggestions that should challenge missiologists and especially theologians (also Bible scholars and historians) to respond. The tensions can be corrective and creative. Missiology can be stronger if scholars in these various disciplines will constantly challenge one another with their respective skills and insights.

## II. Culture and Missiological Concepts

### Amplification of the Concept of Culture

Culture is the *acquired knowledge* that people use to *interpret experience and generate social behavior*.

Culture is not some innate knowledge that humans possess. It is acquired. This acquisition is a process that begins before one can remember (e.g., what person remembers when he or she distinguished father from mother?) and continues until one dies. The nature of this knowledge is more than mere information. For example, it includes language with its functions of classifying knowledge, holding it in memory, and calling it forth in communication. It includes world-view, presuppositions, values and priorities, patterns of relationships, technology, and all that is normally included in cultural universals. It includes all the appropriate paradigms by which these are related. New information must be classified and processed into this system to become part of the acquired knowledge. It becomes operational when one uses it to interpret one's ongoing experience and to generate appropriate social behavior.

This acquired knowledge may be *tacit knowledge* that the insider uses but cannot talk about, since it is not in his/her conscious awareness. It may be *explicit knowledge*, which the insider can discuss and describe.

To the degree that this acquired knowledge is shared among members of a community, to that degree they have a common culture. This shared cognitive orientation (SCO) prompts similar interpretations of experiences and generates behavior that can be anticipated. This SCO prompts appropriate behavior in any situation but also monitors behavior of others as befitting a situation or not.

This amplification of the concept is very limited but suggestive for the discussions that follow. The writer will seek to discuss a number of concepts and topics that concern missiology and will attempt to give his perspective on these as an anthropologist. These discussions will not be exhaustive but indicative of how this perspective might stimulate critical thinking and provide clarification of issues.

## Toward a Theology of Culture<sup>5</sup>

What follows is hardly more than a beginning. A continuing dialogue between anthropologists and scholars in biblical studies and theology is essential for the development of a theology of culture that would be useful to missiology.

Some of the writer's basic assumptions will be obvious. God is creator, and humankind (used in a generic sense) is creature. Thus *God is* and the *human being becomes*. This person, made in the image of God, was intended to have fellowship with God and is incomplete without that fellowship. Human beings make culture howbeit with God-given capabilities. In self-centeredness all humanity has alienated itself from God and produced culture that reflects that alienation in a self-centered perspective and selfish concerns.

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### ANNOUNCING

The American Society of Missiology will hold its 1982 annual meeting at Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, Illinois, June 18-20. The Association of Professors of Mission will meet June 17-18 in conjunction with the ASM. Further information may be obtained from Wilbert R. Shenk, Secretary-Treasurer of the ASM, Box 1092, Elkhart, Indiana 46515.

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In each generation culture is that acquired knowledge of alienated human beings. Thus a vicious cycle exists in which people make culture and culture makes conforming people. It is a centripetal force with no escape. Each society has its own peculiar pattern of self-oriented culture that obscures any God-oriented perspective or lifestyle. This self-centeredness produces egocentrism on the individual level and ethnocentrism on the corporate level. These concerns prohibit a genuine species-wide perspective or concern.

Reconciliation between God and human beings is initiated by God in his redeeming acts in Jesus Christ and is effected in the experience of people through the dynamic activity of God, the Holy Spirit. However, it is difficult to distinguish between that which in essence is determined by God's activity (supracultural) and that which is a believer's response (cultural). Culture change, which is always in process, only adds to the difficulty. A God/human relationship does not occur in a sociocultural vacuum. Therefore any separation of the supracultural and the cultural is in theory only.

The crucial question would seem to be: Can the supracultural find adequate and meaningful forms of expression in any culture? If the answer is in the affirmative, then the Christian community in a specific culture should be encouraged to develop its own cultural forms for a meaningful expression of the supracultural: its new faith; the communication of the gospel to others; its common life as people of God, and so forth. In this process the essential nature of these supracultural components should neither be lost nor be distorted. Rather, they should be secured and interpreted clearly through the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the "inculturation" of them into this new (different) culture. If the designation of human beings as the source of culture is correct, then any society's self-oriented culture will have to be modified (transformed) and reoriented to reflect the supracultural with its divine source. However, such innovations should not be cultural forms imposed by one society upon another but, rather, relevant changes within a culture—changes that are consistent with the character of the supracultural.

In struggling to present these concepts more clearly to students and to suggest the components in the appropriate categories of the supracultural or the cultural, the writer has found the fol-

lowing model helpful.<sup>6</sup> By definition the *absolute* is that which is underived and unchanging. Conversely, the *relative* is derived (dependent) and changing. God is absolute, underived, and unchanging. But consider the following implication. The gospel is given of God. Therefore it is derived. It cannot be absolute. Is it therefore relative? If so, it is changeable. Yet Paul (Galatians) speaks of the one gospel. Another conceptual category is needed between absolute and relative. It would seem that the term "constant" might meet this need. "Constant" refers to that which, by nature, does not change though it may be derived. It is helpful to add "constant" between "absolute" and "relative" as conceptual categories in our consideration of the supracultural and the cultural. Then it follows that God is absolute. That which he initiates and affirms to humanity in his covenant and redeeming acts is constant. However, the forms in which people respond to God, express their faith, and live out their relationship with God, are tied to their culture and therefore are relative. The absolute and the constant are supracultural but the response of people is relative and varies from culture to culture as each society expresses the supracultural in forms peculiar to its own cultural configuration. Thus a relevant expression of the God/human relationship can preserve the integrity (unique identity) of a culture but in no way needs to compromise the essence and nature of the supracultural.

A precedent and pattern for this approach to a theology of culture is found in the incarnation. The supracultural in a given cultural context seems to reflect the incarnation. In fact, the writer would consider it appropriate to use the term "inculturation," a concept that borrows from enculturation on the anthropological side and incarnation on the theological side. As God has taken both humanity and culture seriously in the incarnation, so must missiology take humanity and culture seriously in crossing cultural borders. As the Christ became a Jewish person in Jewish culture at a given period in history, so the Christian is a human being in a given culture at a given time in history. As Jesus lived in tension with his Judaic culture because he conformed to the will of God, so the Christians in any culture will experience tensions in their respective cultures when they seek to conform to the will of God. The good news is that as Jesus broke through the centripetal force of the vicious cycle of alienated humankind and human culture, even so Christians by the will and power of God can expect to break through that same centripetal force. This is one powerful manifestation of the kingdom of God coming to pass.

### Toward a Functional Definition of Faith

As a missiologist the writer is concerned to identify Christian faith. Is it synonymous with a creed, a system of theology, or church affiliation? An effort toward a functional definition of Christian faith follows: Christian faith is that which establishes and maintains a relationship of fellowship between a person and God apart from the particular forms of any one particular culture. Corollaries to this would include: (1) this faith does not exist in a sociocultural vacuum; (2) it is experienced, expressed, and witnessed to in a specific sociocultural context and utilizes forms of that cultural context; (3) the forms employed by Christians in one culture are not to be imposed on the new believers in a different culture.

This knowledge of Christ and the relationship with God become part of one's acquired knowledge. As it is classified and processed into the overall knowledge it is likely to modify one's interpretation of experiences and also one's social behavior. Priorities, values, and world-view will be reconsidered (cf. Rom. 12:1-2) and be transformed. However, these transformations will not be conformity to another culture (e.g., Western Christianity) but an outworking of the reformulation of knowledge wrought by this

This means then that a believer's natural expression of his or her faith will be evident to others in patterns of behavior and lifestyle that are consistent with this new component serving as a catalyst in the believer's knowledge and life. One's verbal witness to this new relationship with God will not be in the language, borrowed jargon, or style of expression of another culture. This should not disturb the perceptive missionary (outsider) who is observing the new believer (insider). Indeed, it should be reassuring that true conversion is taking place.

### Toward a Functional Definition of Church

As a missiologist the writer is also concerned that the nature and function(s) of the church be fully realized in a given culture. Is the church synonymous with Christendom, with a particular denomination, or with a local congregation? Related to and parallel with the functional definition of faith is this functional definition of the church: In any community the church consists of those who have a relationship of fellowship with God in Christ (faith) and with one another apart from any particular forms or structures of any one particular culture. The similar corollaries to this would include: (1) the church never exists in a sociocultural vacuum; (2) its members experience, express, and witness to their relationship with God in their own sociocultural setting in forms and through structures that are appropriate to that context; (3) the forms and structures of the church in another culture are not to be imposed on this community of new believers.

This new knowledge of Christ and fellowship with God have become part of the acquired knowledge of these new believers. Furthermore, in terms of their shared cognitive orientation (SCO) it tends to make them a close-knit subgroup in the larger community of which they are still members. Their SCO may modify the way that they, as believers, interpret experiences and generate modifications in their behavior and relationships. As a subgroup with a common SCO they will work out the implications of their common new knowledge as it reflects their traditional priorities, values, world-view, and societal commitments (cf. Rom. 12:1-2). These will be reflected in their corporate fellowship with one another as well as with God, and each member will make his or her contribution to the enrichment and vitality of the group (cf. Rom. 12:3ff.).

In this way the community of believers will arrive at a consensus of the most appropriate manner for structuring their fellowship in their locale and how best to express their relationship with God in lifestyle, worship, and witness. Outside observers (e.g., missionaries) should not be alarmed to see unfamiliar patterns emerging. Rather, they ought to be alarmed if the patterns appear too similar to their own.

### III. The Concept of Culture and Contextualization

#### Toward a Strategy in Second-Culture Learning

Traditionally in teaching missiology an area study is considered to be important. The quality of these studies varies according to sources available. An area study normally includes a general introduction to the area in matters of geography, demography, and so forth; a study of the political history summarized in a time chart; a study of the culture, which preferably should be collected and codified in categories such as those presented in the *Outline of Cultural Materials* (Murdock 1971); a study of mission and church history correlated with the political-history chart; an analysis and evaluation of the missionary methods employed; and finally a

church-growth analysis and strategy projection. This kind of area study is still valid and needs to be continued. However, the cultural study is basically the outsider's observations and descriptions. There is need to discover the insider's point of view, to be able to describe it and then to learn it. These stages are parallel to what one seeks to do with regard to language. Language and culture are inseparable.

The term "new ethnography" refers to ethnography as described from the insider's point of view. James Spradley, from whom the writer has borrowed his working definition of culture has also produced *The Ethnographic Interview* (Spradley 1979), which is a manual for the investigator who seeks to do an ethnography from the insider's point of view. This methodology has been developed by Spradley during twelve years of both teaching and doing ethnography. Not only is this a breakthrough in describing culture but it is an effective base for learning a culture as the insider lives it. It appears to be a parallel to developments in descriptive linguistics, which have not only facilitated language analysis but provided significant insights for translation work and second-language learning. It presents a challenge to missionary anthropology and missiology: (1) to incorporate into the curriculum for missionary training actual programs in doing this new ethnography; (2) to produce a resource library of these new ethnographies of sociocultural groups that have priority in missionary strategy; (3) to develop programs of second-culture learning similar to or in conjunction with language-learning programs around the world.

In his own doing of ethnography as well as that done by his students, Spradley has found that this method is effective in working with segments of complex societies as much as with traditional cultures. Thus missionary candidates could develop the skills in segments of their own complex societies and then use these same skills in second-culture learning. This development in anthropology promises a more thorough discovery of and participation in the culture as viewed and experienced by the insider. This seems to be made to order for the present concern about contextualization. The challenge to missiology is to work through the implications of this new ethnography and channel it for more productive results in contextualization.

#### Toward a Strategy for More Adequate Hermeneutics

Culture must be taken more seriously in biblical exegesis and hermeneutics. In a review of *Christiainity in Culture* by Charles H. Kraft (1979), William Dyrness remarks:

... it is impossible any longer to ignore Kraft's contention that hermeneutics is an essentially cross-cultural enterprise. What we see in Scripture is clearly conditioned by the biblical cultures and defined by our own. Kraft calls the interpreter to take full advantage of this by using an ethnolinguistic method of exegesis that goes beyond the traditional grammatical-historical techniques (1980:40).

It is this writer's impression that most biblical exegesis gives more attention to the grammatical than to the historical. Furthermore, when the historical is incorporated it is from a broad general perspective. Here again is a challenge to anthropologists first and then to missiologists to develop an ethnographic resource for biblical study. No one can do the ethnographic interview à la Spradley for biblical cultures. Nevertheless, as further insight into this understanding of culture is developed one should be able to approximate more closely the insider's point of view in the varied times and cultural contexts of the Scriptures. Both biblical text and extra-biblical sources can be used in developing such understanding. Then the anthropologists and exegetical scholars can interact to produce a more incisive exegesis, which in turn should enhance a

sharper and more relevant interpretation (hermeneutics) of the Scriptures.

The sharper focus of good indigenization (or hermeneutics) serves to heighten both the positive points of contact and the confrontation between gospel and culture. . . . In contrast, bad indigenization [or hermeneutics] blunts and emasculates the gospel by denying or concealing those parts of the gospel which contradict basic cultural values or by focusing on non-essential or illegitimate issues (Taber 1979:122).

It may be instructive to realize that the United Bible Societies and other agencies involved in the translation of Scriptures now incorporate anthropological (cultural) segments in their workshops for translators. The same care must be taken in contextualizing (inculturating) the Scriptures in a particular sociocultural context. This carries a challenge to professors of missions in these areas: (1) to evaluate their own use of hermeneutics in biblical teaching; (2) to develop a greater sensitivity to the cultures of biblical times; and (3) to promote the students' evaluation of their own society's understanding of the Scriptures as an exercise in contextualization before attempting to contextualize in another culture.

### Toward a Culturally Informed Perspective of Church and Mission History

Latourette's (1937) approach to the history of the church sought to show the effect of Christianity on its environment and, conversely, of environment on Christianity. The growing insights into the nature of culture and the implications that these have for the contextualization of the gospel need to be applied to an understanding of the history of the church. New insights for anthropology challenge historians to study the concepts of culture and culture change and then, with this added insight, to apply their science to analysis of the history of the church in its success and failure to contextualize. This is a worthy task for missiologists. It could produce a wealth of case studies to enlighten the missionary enterprise in the next decades.

### Toward a Culturally Informed Perspective in Doing Theology

Culture as the insider's point of view has implications for the study of the history of theology and the study of the theologies currently developing. Anthropology challenges the specialist in the history of theology to utilize concepts of culture in reviewing the history of theology as a process in contextualization.

For some it is unsettling to have theological emphases traced back to sociocultural situations at a given period of history. This unease can be alleviated somewhat when they grasp the principle

of contextualization and see many of these developments as processes in apologetics that sought to affirm the Christian faith in a culturally changing world.

In the contemporary effort to do theology in different cultural settings, whether it be liberation theology, black theology, African theology, or Western traditional theology, the influence of culture needs to be recognized in all its aspects and appropriately dealt with. Theology—biblical, systematic, historical, or contemporary—needs to be understood in terms of sociocultural context. Certainly this is an area where missiology, prodded by anthropology, must recognize the impact of culture in the formation of theology.

## IV. Conclusion

Anthropology and missions have been in a conscious relationship (encounter?) for over a century. This encounter issues from a tension that H. Richard Niebuhr (1951) identified as the enduring problem between Christ and culture. This writer shares Hiebert's positive suggestion that the two areas of interest need each other and can learn from each other.

The science of missions is informed from at least two areas of academic discipline, social sciences on the one hand, and Bible and theology on the other. Cultural anthropology is probably the most prominent among the social sciences, and biblical theology seems to stand out at the other pole. When these two disciplines converge in a developing missiology, then many other disciplines may be drawn in and the value of their contribution added to the study of missions as they are informed by anthropology and biblical theology.

This essay has argued that culture is the acquired knowledge that people use to interpret experience and generate social behavior. This concept has been applied to three important areas of missiology—a theology of culture, a definition of the Christian faith, and a definition of the nature of the church. Then emphasis was given to three areas in contextualization, which can be enlightened from this working definition of culture. These imply strategies and not just conceptual analyses—a strategy for cultural learning, a strategy for more adequate hermeneutics, an approach to analyses of church and mission history and an analysis of "doing theology" (interpreting the past and understanding the present).

A rapidly changing world is marked by complex cross-cultural situations and widespread cultural pluralism as this decade of the 1980s begins. Expanding insights and perspectives in anthropology and the other social sciences can serve as catalysts to missiologists. The seeming problems may actually be a forced blessing whereby the transcendent power of Christ and his gospel is most in evidence.

## Notes

1. Paul Hiebert's article not only traces the history of the relationship between anthropology and missions but, in assessing the issues that confront them today, he cites implications that have been suggestive for this essay.
2. This writer's perspective of the homogeneous unit sees it as a significant factor in evangelism, but also as a deterrent to the church in transcending ethnic and class diversity. Spradley and others continue to work out the implications of this concept of culture. In the book by Spradley and McCurdy, 1975, an introductory text in cultural anthropology, the authors reflect this concept of culture across the gamut of universals included in cultural anthropology. Spradley's approach to doing ethnography is exceptionally well devel-

oped and anticipates his book on the ethnographic interview, which is referred to later in this essay.

4. Although an anthropologist, this writer acknowledges that the discipline has expanded beyond his powers to keep abreast of all developments. While his primary concern has been missionary anthropology, yet new nuances in the broader discipline often develop and only later do their applications to missiology emerge. Therefore there may be current developments in the discipline that have not been incorporated in this study.
5. Much of this section is drawn from a paper, "The Supracultural and the Cultural" (Barney 1973). However, that article was written before the author had adopted the Spradley definition of culture. A revised edition