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## Book Review: Multiplying Leaders in Intercultural Contexts: Recognizing and Developing Grassroots Potential by Evelyn and Richard Hibbert

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## Book Review

### *Multiplying Leaders in Intercultural Contexts: Recognizing and Developing Grassroots Potential*

By Evelyn and Richard Hibbert

William Carey Publishing, 2023

169 pages

US\$14.99, Paperback

Reviewed by: Mark D. Wood, PhD., Director of Kingdom Leadership Training Center, Darhan, Mongolia.

From the time of Jesus to the present, developing leaders is an ever-present need and challenge in intercultural ministry. Evelyn and Richard Hibbert, who served as pioneer church planters among Turkish speakers in Bulgaria and at Sydney Missionary and Bible College, are well-versed in understanding the need to develop leaders. They have applied their own experience to develop the lessons in this book, *Multiplying Leaders in Intercultural Contexts*. The book is dedicated to Richard who passed away in 2020.

Given the great need for leaders in intercultural contexts, the goal of the book is summed up as “We have to find ways of developing them where they are and which help them to apply the Bible practically to what they face in daily life” (p. 2).

At fourteen chapters and one hundred sixty-nine pages, the book is very accessible and readable; yet it contains a trove of wisdom. Chapters 1-5 explore basic cultural considerations and dimensions related to leadership and leadership development. The Hibberts situate leadership development within the spectrum of discipleship, and advocate that

leaders are to be disciplined like all other Christians (Chapter 4). They put it this way, “Although these leaders needed to be developed, the main issue was not leadership development. They needed to be disciplined” (p. 42). Chapters 6-11 are organized around the four Cs: 1) Community; 2) Character; 3) Clarity; 4) Care. The remaining chapters, 12-14 explore how to apply the principles that are found throughout the book.

I recommend this book because it is a practical approach to developing leaders that reflects the heart of a practitioner. It is neither ethereal nor theoretical; instead, it is the distillation of lives spent training others to lead. I appreciate the recognition of needing to address women as leaders, especially in emerging contexts (pp. 6-7). The book articulates principles of leadership development but is not a step-by-step how-to manual. I view this approach as a benefit in that it is not a rigid plan but an encouragement on a journey asking us, “Have you considered this aspect?” My one suggestion for improvement is that there could be more. After some sections, I was left wanting a fuller treatment, such as a sample curriculum. However, due to the circumstances of Richard’s death and Evelyn’s struggle to finish it, I am truly grateful for her perseverance.

This book will be of interest to those specifically engaged in theological education and leadership development as well as those preparing to teach cross-culturally, whether short or long-term. The book would also be an excellent supplemental or elective text in a leadership development class.

On a personal note, I want to express my thanks to Richard and Evelyn Hibbert—they represent the finest in practical scholarship. Although I have never met them, their various journal articles have been helpful in my own development and research. I was saddened to hear of Richard’s passing. This work stands as a testimony to his life and legacy. Well done, good and faithful servant.