NOT BY MIGHT OR STRENGTH, BUT BY STRATEGIC PLANNING

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I love this quote from Dutch missiologist Anne-Marie Kool:

> *Without wanting to underestimate the sacrifices of many missionaries and knowing that God in his sovereignty still uses weak human beings as us in his mission work, allow me to make some observations on the current mission movement, as the theme of spiritual transformation may possibly serve as a corrective. I observe that mission work in Central and Eastern Europe and worldwide operates increasingly on the basis of secular business principles instead of theological principles, focusing more on outputs and end results instead of fruits growing in a hidden way, on value for money instead of free grace, on success stories instead of sacrifice and commitment, on quantity instead of quality, on superficial quick results instead of long-term transformation and incarnation, characterized by hanging on to power instead of commitment to offering humble service.*

I wish I could say that she is exaggerating, but I can't; this is a valid criticism of a lot of missionary work that I've seen and I have to admit that I have fallen into this trap myself from time to time. There is a real need for missionaries, agencies and churches to re-examine some of the underlying approaches and assumptions of their work. Much of what passes for missiology, is little more than airport bookstall, secular business methodology.

The quote comes from Kool's chapter in The Mission of God: Studies in Orthodox and Evangelical Mission (not available on Amazon). It's an excellent book and I'll have more to say about it in the next few days.