

# Mars • Hill Update

MINISTRY THROUGH MEDIA

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## New Translations of The HOPE

### 6 Languages Completed in the First 6 Months of '07

By July 2007, Mars Hill approved check discs for six new versions of The HOPE - Romanian, Telugu, Mandarin, Tibetan, German, and Thai. The HOPE is now in 14 languages with 25+ translations in process, several of which should be completed by year's end.

Interest in The HOPE is growing among missionaries worldwide as they see the value of a powerful media presentation of God's redemptive story from creation to Christ. This is particularly true when their audience lacks the underpinnings of basic Biblical concepts like sin and the reality of a Creator, as may be the case with unreached tribes in Asia as well as modern students in Europe.

In nearly every instance, HOPE translation projects are initiated, not by Mars Hill, but by missionaries who want a version for the people group they are working to reach. Early on, Mars Hill realized it could not meet the need by producing ("in-house") a couple of translations at a time. One option might have been to build the production capacity of Mars Hill in order to produce several projects simultaneously. However, that would have required a great amount of time and resource, and ministry opportunities would have been missed in the interim. So Mars Hill developed a strategy for partnering with ministries and media groups worldwide. The response has been tremendous.

Basically, a partnership consists of: 1) a group of ministries working to reach the same people group, 2) a media production group (usually in the region of the world where the translation is needed, and 3) a facilitator such as Mars Hill or an approved Mars Hill affiliate.

Through partnerships around the world, multiple translation projects are in process at the same time. Each one involves dozens (and sometimes, hundreds) of people from other ministries. The work load, and often much of the financial load, is spread out. And while each partnership is unique, they all share a common passion to complete the Great Commission. It is a beautiful picture of the Body of Christ in action!

## The Romanian HOPE



On set - the Romanian Team sends greetings.

In December 1989, thousands of people in Timisoara, Romania gathered for a public demonstration that was incited

by the government censoring of a Pastor. The army moved in and hundreds were killed. Inspired by the courage in Timisoara, the people of Bucharest rose up, and within a short period of time, one of the most ruthless dictators in all of history was tried and executed for crimes against his people.

On May 21, 2007, the Romanian version of The HOPE was premiered in Timisoara, the birthplace of democracy in Romania. The Romanian HOPE is the result of a partnership between Gospel Communications, Mars Hill, and a Romanian ministry called Alpha and Omega. Praise God, the premiere was just the beginning!

In the schools of Romania today, religious instruction is required. Yet students can choose which religion class they will take. Through Alpha and Omega, school teachers across Romania have already signed up to learn how to use The HOPE to teach the Bible in their classrooms. Based upon prior experience with media in the schools of Romania, Alpha and Omega believes that many students will choose a course with The HOPE over other classes. These students will not only receive a survey of the Bible, they will receive a clear presentation of God's redemptive story from creation through Christ . . . the Gospel!

## The Tibetan HOPE

Northeast of India and Nepal, the region of Tibet stretches deep into China. Northern Word Outreach is our lead partner in the Tibetan HOPE project. This version of The HOPE is perhaps the most unique adaptation created thus far. Our Tibetan partners actually wrapped The HOPE inside another story that tells of a teacher who, in typical Tibetan tradition, travels the countryside sharing his story with villagers. He tells how, as a young man, he traveled far and wide searching for truth, and how he found an elder who had discovered a book that tells the



Our Tibetan Storyteller points to a Thangka created especially for the Tibetan HOPE.

story of the world. To illustrate the story in this book (the Bible), the teacher uses a form of Tibetan storytelling artwork called a Thangka. The Thangkas in this story were created especially to parallel The HOPE.



A Thangka illustrating the first 6 Biblical events shown in The HOPE - creation through the fall.

As the plot develops, the story goes back and forth from The HOPE to the teacher's account of his search for truth. Missionaries to Tibet believe that this creative and culturally relevant version of The HOPE will be a powerful tool in the hands of God!

## The Mandarin HOPE

This has been one of our most difficult projects to date. Many of the hurdles had to do with the Mandarin subtitling which was added as an aid to the hearing impaired. Thankfully, the prob-

lems have been resolved and the subtitled Mandarin HOPE is now ready for mass duplication and distribution.

Yet even before the subtitled version was completed, Mars Hill partnered with the Digital Bible Society to include a (non-subtitled) Mandarin version of The HOPE in a project called Chinese Treasures 2007. CT'07 is basically an entire Biblical resource library on one CD.

This disc contains four Chinese Bibles which are linked to the Mandarin HOPE. It also contains 175 Christian books including Bible commentaries, devotionals, and study guides.



CT'07 is an evangelism, discipleship, and church planting tool, all on a single disc. It will be offered free of charge in mainland China and copying is encouraged. The Digital Bible Society will disseminate as many as 100,000 discs in China this year. For every disc that makes it into China, ten will be copied! Chinese Treasures '07 may well become one of the most strategic ministry tools ever used in China!

## The Telugu HOPE

Telugu is spoken by about 75 million people, mainly in Southeast India. The Telugu version of The HOPE was produced in partnership with the National Training Institute for Village Evangelism. This version took longer than anticipated, but the final result is a very well produced project.



A "movie star" Storyteller result is a very well produced project. Our partners even used an Indian movie star as one of the Storytellers. We are encouraged that the production team on this project wants to produce additional projects for India.

## The Thai HOPE

The Thai HOPE will be used in Laos, Burma and Thailand. Our lead partner, Handclasp International, reports that the



Strategically located for the Gospel in Southeast Asia

65 million Thai speakers in this area are 95% Buddhist, 5% Muslim, and less than 1%

Christian.

Released in May '07, already 9,000 discs have been duplicated for distribution.

## The German HOPE

As one might expect, the German HOPE project was very efficient. Our lead partner for this project is a ministry called Evangeliums-Rundfunk. ERF has been sharing the Gospel with German speakers for over 45 years. With a staff of nearly 180 people, ERF is getting the Word out 24/7 via television, radio, and the Internet.



The ERF production team sends you greetings from Germany.

In an inspiring message to Mars Hill, Glen Carlson (producer of the German HOPE) said, *"Your vision and foresight, and that of your supporters, is enabling the Nations to be blessed with a Gospel presentation explaining God's love story with humanity in a wonderfully compelling and comprehensive way."*

## TheHOPEproject.com



A typical snapshot of one day's activity in June - The dots are the cities from which about 1,200 visitors came to TheHOPEproject.com on that day.

**F**rom the onset of The HOPE, Mars Hill has planned, prayed and prepared for a Website that would play The HOPE in multiple languages, provide resources for seekers and believers, and offer personal follow-up for those who wanted it. Praise God, [TheHOPEproject.com](http://TheHOPEproject.com) was launched in April '07!

This Internet ministry is the result of a partnership between Gospel Communications (GospelCom) and Mars Hill Productions. In the U.S., a ministry called NeedHim (with 200 trained volunteer counselors and staff) will provide personal follow-up. For those who have come to Christ after visiting this site, NeedHim will offer helpful resources including a list of churches near their home.

TheHOPEproject.com is currently averaging around 1,200 visitors a day with no signs of slowing down. In a sampling of traffic between June 6 and July 6 we had 33,688 visits from 2,923 cities in 177 countries. The dots on the map above represent the locations of visitors during a day in June.

To augment The HOPE video, we created a 180 page study guide. This guide can be used online, downloaded, or purchased in book form. By monitoring activity on the web site, we know that many are using this study guide. We have received some great responses from people in a variety of locations as to how God has used this site in their lives.

Work is underway now to add Spanish, French, German and Mandarin versions of The HOPE to [TheHOPEproject.com](http://TheHOPEproject.com).

## Using The HOPE Effectively with International Scholars

Al LaCour, director of RUF (Reformed University Fellowship) on the Georgia Tech campus, has become a true advocate of The HOPE. So much so that he wrote a wonderful 12 part HOPE Study Guide which is posted on our HOPE web site. Al has taken hundreds of students and visiting professors (mostly from China) through this study. Many have come to Christ. This summer Al will lead 70 scholars through another Study built around The HOPE. In June he took a tour of China, visiting Christian professors in seven cities and hand delivering copies of The Mandarin HOPE. It is wonderful to see what God does when someone like Al catches a vision to use The HOPE in their ministry.



Al LaCour speaking to students

## Mars Hill Partners with Vernacular Media Specialists



VMS has 35 staff members and over 50 Vernacular Media Associates worldwide.

The Vernacular Media Specialists is an extraordinary group within the ministry of JAARS, which is a support ministry of Wycliffe Bible Translators. These relationships can be confusing, but basically it comes down to this. After translating a couple hundred Jesus films for people groups under a million, VMS has developed a very efficient and effective system for translating films. VMS now wants to begin doing the same kind of work with The HOPE, also focusing on people groups under a million.

Another example of the cooperation we are seeing within the Body of Christ worldwide, this partnership could result in upwards of 25 adaptations within the next three years!

## Special ESL Application of The HOPE Nears Completion

The global demand for the English language has created an incredible opportunity for communicating the Gospel. To meet this need and seize this opportunity, missionaries worldwide are engaging in a ministry called ESL (English as a Second Language). One such missionary, Pete Cavanaugh, used ESL as a worker for Pioneers. Pete was so compelled by the effectiveness of ESL that he founded a ministry to provide support materials and tools for those who are teaching ESL.

By the end of the summer, Pete expects to complete a special ESL learning and teaching application built around The HOPE. The development of this tool is being funded primarily by Pete's church. This ESL application of The HOPE will include an interactive interface with games and video exercises. It will be effective with any language group. And of course, while students are learning English, they will also learn about God's plan of salvation!



Sample Menu - the ESL HOPE Application

Member of the  
Evangelical  
Council for  
Financial  
Accountability



Mars • Hill is a non-profit ministry dedicated to using media to draw people to Jesus Christ. For more than 25 years, award-winning Mars • Hill films and videos have been used around the world to introduce thousands of people to Jesus Christ.

**[Click here](#)** to further the worldwide ministry of The HOPE.

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