



## A PROPOS DE L'INCULTURATION DU CHRISTIANISME

Par

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Il va sans dire que les réactions en tous sens seront bien accueillies au secrétariat de Telema (B.P. 7245 Kinshasa 1), car cette réflexion s'inscrit dans le cadre de débat.

Dans ces lignes je me propose de dégager le terrain "historique" où il convient de porter le problème de l'inculturation du christianisme. A tort ou à raison, j'ai toujours eu le sentiment que ce problème est posé d'une manière abstraite par rapport aux données historiques. On entend généralement par inculturation l'effort d'adapter le message chrétien à la manière de penser et d'agir des peuples non occidentaux. On est guidé par la volonté "négative" d'éviter l'occidentalisation de ces peuples. Ainsi pensée, l'entreprise de l'inculturation repose sur deux présupposés, à mon sens, faux. On suppose, d'une part, que les cultures, qui sont entrées en contact avec l'Occident, ont gardé leur intégrité; on suppose, d'autre part, que le christianisme est entièrement dissociable de la culture occidentale à laquelle il a été lié pendant vingt siècles.

Si l'on veut se libérer de la hantise d'aller à la recherche d'une Atlantide effondrée, il faut résolument se dégager de ces deux présupposés en acceptant la configuration concrète de notre histoire. Que nous le voulions ou non, nous vivons une époque caractérisée par le phénomène du contact des cultures ainsi que par le conflit qui en résulte. La contingence de cette rencontre marque nécessairement le destin de notre histoire actuelle et future. Que nous le voulions ou non, si le christianisme est la particularité historique de l'incarnation de Dieu en Jésus, il est, de par la loi de l'incarnation et de par son destin historique, lié à l'Occident et c'est dans cette alliance qu'il nous a été présenté.

Si on reconnaît la nécessité des contingences historiques, il est possible de porter le problème de l'inculturation du christianisme sur le terrain du conflit entre les peuples, né du contact des cultures, et obligeant ces peuples à se mettre à la recherche d'une nouvelle identité. Le christianisme est-il capable de contribuer activement à la résolution de ce conflit en aidant les peuples à découvrir leur identité dans le Dieu de Jésus-Christ? Si oui, de quelle manière? Telles sont les deux questions auxquelles je cherche à répondre dans une perspective de stricte mise au point. Il me semble, en effet, que ces deux questions contiennent la possibilité du succès

ou de l'échec de l'inculturation du christianisme. Mais avant d'en arriver là, il convient de déterminer brièvement la nature de l'inculturation.

#### I. LE CONCEPT D'INCULTURATION: SA VISEE

L'inculturation est une forme particulière d'adaptation qui a lieu dans le contexte historique du contact des cultures. En référence à son lieu génétique, l'inculturation pourrait se comprendre comme l'effort délibéré, organisé et donc conscient de la part d'une société touchée par le phénomène de la rencontre culturelle, en vue de former une culture appropriée, satisfaisante, qui tienne compte de l'événement contingent de la rencontre culturelle et considère cet événement comme désormais fondamental et fondateur de son histoire future.

Deux facteurs amorcent le processus de l'inculturation:

- La prise de conscience, de la part des membres de la société concernée par le phénomène du contact des cultures, que cette rencontre contingente constitue le destin inévitable de leur existence;
- La prise de conscience que, pour survivre, la société doit transformer ce destin en destinée, et réconcilier les deux traditions en conflit par la recherche d'une figure parentale nouvelle qui concrétise la physionomie nouvelle de ses aspirations.

Ce qui est en jeu dans le phénomène de l'inculturation, c'est la recherche de son identité par un peuple, à qui il est devenu clair que cette identité ne peut pas se découvrir ni dans la seule politique de l'importation d'une culture étrangère (acculturation) ni, non plus, dans la seule restauration de son passé (tribalisme, nationalisme), mais dans l'acceptation du conflit présent des deux passés hétérogènes dont la rencontre constitue le commencement d'une étape nouvelle de son histoire, lue sous le signe de la réconciliation en espérance des deux traditions qui s'affrontent actuellement.

Ainsi, ce qui caractérise l'inculturation, c'est son élan futur ouvrant une "praxis" destinée à réconcilier les contradictions nées dans une société touchée par le phénomène du contact des cultures et dont le système traditionnel a été profondément bouleversé par les nouveaux besoins révélés ou introduits par la présence de l'étranger. Et, dans la mesure où l'étranger possède les moyens de les satisfaire, sa présence, même si parfois elle ne profite qu'à lui-même, s'impose inévitablement comme indispensable à la survie du peuple, qui, de gré ou de force, l'a accueilli. Par conséquent, l'impossibilité de dominer soi-même son propre présent et l'aperception que l'étranger peut remédier à cette carence poussent un peuple à imaginer un avenir, dans lequel il serait possible d'exploiter les potentialités contenues dans les deux cultures qui façonnent la sombre physionomie de son présent. L'inculturation est ainsi la reconnaissance de la nécessité de la rencontre contingente des cultures et, dans leur affrontement, la détermination de les réconcilier dans un avenir qui convoque à l'action dans l'acceptation de la croix du présent.

## II. L'INCULTURATION DU CHRISTIANISME

### 1. Deux dangers à éviter.

Il est question, ici, de l'inculturation du christianisme. Sous le présupposé de la conscience contemporaine post-coloniale selon lequel chaque culture forme un système incommensurable, valable en soi, des voix se sont levées pour relativiser la culture occidentale, déplorer son "impérialisme" colonial et contester sa prétention d'être l'unique culture capable de transmettre adéquatement le message chrétien. Il s'est opéré alors une scission entre le christianisme et la culture occidentale qui insinua dans les consciences le soupçon que, au lieu de christianiser les peuples colonisés, on les a plutôt occidentalisés. Avant de dire ce que j'entends par l'inculturation du christianisme, il convient certes de dénoncer ce qu'il y a d'abstraitement dangereux dans cette conception.

Le danger de cloisonner les cultures.

Il y a tout d'abord le danger de considérer la culture comme un système clos et statique. Ce danger risque d'institutionnaliser ou de ratifier la politique de l'apartheid culturel basé sur le principe jusqu'ici presque incontesté, mais, en réalité, païen: "Ceux qui se ressemblent s'assemblent".

Il me semble, au contraire, qu'une culture se caractérise avant tout par son ouverture et par son changement au contact de réalités nouvelles. Si l'on convient d'appeler culture l'image que chaque peuple se fait du monde, la culture est alors la conception du monde constituée par l'ensemble de symboles, en intention, univoques et linéaires, qu'un peuple conçoit pour ordonner, signifier et unifier l'expérience de son monde physique, social, historique, politique et religieux. La conception du monde vise ainsi à former une structure intelligible du champ total de l'expérience. Elle est l'unité idéale, produite par la conscience pratique du monde, qui intègre dans l'horizon de la signification l'expérience du vécu.

Mais, la vision du monde, comme système corrélatif de l'expérience et de la signification, est liée à un horizon ouvert par l'apparition d'une réalité qui, dans cet horizon, se donne à l'expérience et à la signification humaines. Dès lors, comme l'horizon qui la circonscrit et s'attache constamment à ses pas, la culture est une grandeur changeante, et le moteur (le "primum movens") de ce changement est l'apparition d'une réalité nouvelle qui ouvre l'horizon de l'expérience et de la signification.

L'horizon de l'apparition de la réalité comprend un moment à la fois commémoratif et prospectif: Il contient une pré-connaissance de ce qui vient; il signifie l'expérience actuelle de la réalité au moyen des catégories des expériences du passé. Cette pré-connaissance est une anticipation besogneuse qui s'efforce de comprendre les nouvelles questions en réalisant le nouveau futur que suggère leur apparition.

Ainsi la culture est une réalité changeante parce qu'elle est constamment aux prises avec du "nouveau" qui vient. Bien plus, lorsque la nouvelle apparition ne trouve aucun écho dans son passé à cause de son hétérogénéité, la culture est obligée de transformer l'héritage de son passé en s'ouvrant à l'avenir

de la greffe étrangère qui devient, à partir de ce moment, solidaire et co-responsable de la destinée nouvelle d'un peuple.

Plus que le cloisonnement irréductible, c'est la communication des cultures qui est le principe fécond et conflictuel pour l'avenir de celles-ci. La vérité est donc que les cultures s'offrent à une même évaluation, et le vrai problème des cultures est celui du critère unique de leur appréciation commune.

L'illusion d'isoler le christianisme à l'état pur.

En deuxième lieu, la scission de la conscience contemporaine post-coloniale entre le christianisme et la civilisation occidentale nourrit l'illusion néfaste qu'il serait possible d'isoler le christianisme à l'état pur. Il suffirait, croit-on, de le désentraver des éléments étrangers empruntés à la culture occidentale pour le manifester dans sa catholicité au lieu d'universaliser sa particularité culturelle. Cette tentation de "l'angélisme" est un "docétisme" de l'universel qui risque d'émousser le tranchant du christianisme, à savoir son incarnation.

Le christianisme n'est pas un abstrait universel qui doit se concrétiser dans chaque culture; il est un concret particulier qui doit s'universaliser par la prédication de l'évangile de Jésus-Christ à tous les peuples. Le christianisme est la particularité singulière de l'homme Jésus de Nazareth qui a une destinée universelle par la force qu'il a de briser toutes les autres particularités.

Si le christianisme ne concrétise pas un universel, mais universalise au contraire le concret de l'homme Jésus et de l'incarnation de Dieu en lui, la scission entre le christianisme et la civilisation occidentale, héritière de Jérusalem et d'Athènes, doit être considérée comme fautive et aberrante. Dès lors, il devient inévitable que le christianisme ait été présenté à d'autres cultures sous sa particularité occidentale. Si le sort du christianisme a été historiquement lié au destin de l'Europe, comme il l'est encore en grande partie, il est normal, en vertu de la particularité de l'incarnation, qu'en accueillant le christianisme on ait même temps accueilli l'Occident et inversement.

Il s'ensuit donc que dans les pays où il doit "s'inculturer", le christianisme vit inévitablement de la contingence de la rencontre de l'Occident avec les autres peuples. Le christianisme est, dès lors, mêlé, qu'on l'accepte ou non, au conflit des rapports qui résultent de cette rencontre.

## 2. Comment poser correctement le problème?

La question de l'inculturation du christianisme doit éviter de partir de la scission abstraite entre le christianisme et la culture occidentale. Le christianisme ne peut pas, sous peine de renier son essence même, s'affranchir totalement de son destin historique européen. La question de l'inculturation du christianisme ne doit pas non plus partir de la crainte d'occidentaliser les autres peuples; l'occidentalisation a déjà eu lieu dans le phénomène de la rencontre culturelle. Le point de départ, à mon sens, satisfaisant doit plutôt consister à

découvrir la particularité chrétienne qui, au regard de la conscience contemporaine, a fait éclater la particularité occidentale après la particularité judaïque et qui, dans le phénomène actuel de la rencontre des cultures, est appelé à faire éclater toutes les particularités en les convoquant à la même destinée.

Mon point de vue est que l'inculturation du christianisme dans l'aire non occidentale de l'humanité dépend de la capacité du christianisme à fonder et à ouvrir une histoire qui engage les peuples, en quête de leur identité, à sortir de l'ambivalence angoissante et angoissée du conflit non dominé des cultures vers un avenir de la réconciliation des peuples en Dieu. Le succès ou l'échec de l'inculturation du christianisme sont suspendus à cette question. Comment le christianisme s'engagera-t-il à présenter le Christ, "notre Paix" comme celui qui réalise l'unité des peuples, parce que, dans sa mort, il a abattu le mur d'inimitié qui séparait les Juifs des Païens (Eph. 3,14)?

### III. ESSAI D'UNE REFLEXION THEOLOGIQUE

#### 1. Nécessité d'une anthropologie christologique pour confronter les cultures.

Pour réussir l'inculturation du christianisme, une tâche s'impose: celle d'élaborer une théologie qui serait essentiellement christologique et, par conséquent, capable d'arbitrer le conflit des cultures. Le Christianisme me paraît, en effet, susceptible de fournir le critère qui permettrait de confronter les diverses cultures dans le même champ d'appréciation. Il est une révolution "copernicienne" de la théologie; il bouleverse la manière naturelle de penser Dieu, l'homme, le monde et leurs rapports réciproques. "Dieu, nul ne l'a jamais vu. Le seul, qui est Dieu et repose dans le sein du Père, l'a fait connaître" (Jn 1,18). La révélation de Dieu dans son Christ interdit à toute culture de se donner pour norme ou modèle et de vérifier sans plus sur le Christ son idée de Dieu qu'elle s'est faite à partir de sa cosmologie, de son anthropologie ou de son histoire. La théophanie expérimentée par les différents peuples - et la théophanie judéo-occidentale ne fait pas exception - doit se laisser éduquer par la Révélation de Dieu dans le Christ.

C'est donc de l'unique anthropologie christologique que procède pour tous les peuples la parfaite connaissance de Dieu. Certes, nous exprimerons l'événement de Dieu en Jésus au moyen des catégories tirées de l'expérience respective de notre existence, de notre univers et de notre histoire. Mais, ce sera à la condition de se rendre compte, d'une part, que ces catégories, dans le champ normal de nos expériences humaines, expriment bien davantage nos aspirations que la réalité de leur remplissement, et, d'autre part, lorsqu'elles serviront à traduire l'événement du Christ, il conviendra d'être attentif à la manière inouïe dont ces aspirations sont exaucées dans le Christ.

Dans la vie, la mort et la résurrection de Jésus-Christ, Dieu s'est révélé fidèle dans l'amour qui justifie et libère l'impie sans poser de conditions. Cette libération s'est manifestée comme la destruction de toutes les barrières que l'angoisse devant la mort a édifiées entre les hommes. Dieu se

revèle donc en Jésus-Christ comme celui qui réconcilie le monde avec lui et non comme celui qui consacre le présent du monde et des hommes en l'assumant dans la présence éternelle et immuable des théophanies expérimentées par toutes les cultures. Dieu ne consacre pas le présent, il le libère, il l'invite à la réconciliation qu'il lui offre dans le Christ crucifié. Le Dieu de Jésus-Christ est le Dieu de l'espérance qui ne déçoit pas, parce qu'il a montré son amour et sa fidélité dans le Christ.

La christologie corrige nos conceptions naturelles sur Dieu en libérant la composante de l'espérance active que leur attachement au présent fait évanouir. Le Dieu manifeste des théophanies, qu'un regard mystique découvre partout dans le monde comme une présence éternelle qui remplit immuablement et immédiatement toutes choses en garantissant l'ordre naturel et social, devient, au regard de l'espérance qui s'est manifestée dans le Christ, le Dieu qui doit venir prendre possession de tout l'univers dans la seigneurie universelle du Christ qui renouvelle toutes choses. Dans le Christ, nous sommes réconciliés avec Dieu, mais en espérance. Nous attendons, avec le retour du Seigneur, la résurrection des morts et la vie du monde à venir.

## 2. Conséquence d'une telle réflexion.

La conséquence, pour la pensée, de l'espérance christologique est d'instaurer une critique permanente du présent en renversant notre manière de penser. Notre présent n'est pas encore le présent de Dieu; il possède seulement les arrhes de l'Esprit qui, dans notre faiblesse, nous aide à atteindre avec patience notre salut.

La pensée de l'espérance christologique libère, à son tour, une "praxis" révolutionnaire de la transformation du monde, qui "gémit dans la douleur de l'enfantement et attend la délivrance pour accéder à la liberté et à la gloire des enfants de Dieu". Comment opère cette libération en Jésus-Christ? Elle se réalise par la destruction des barrières. Entrer dans le mouvement de l'espérance ouverte par la résurrection du Christ d'entre les morts, c'est entrer dans le mouvement de la réconciliation en exhortant, à la place du Christ, le monde à se laisser réconcilier avec Dieu.

La perspective qui s'entr'ouvre donc pour une "praxis" chrétienne est la dédication de sa vie à la destruction des murs que l'inimitié, causée par l'angoisse de la mort, érige entre les hommes. Entrer dans le royaume que Dieu nous promet dans l'avenir ouvert par la résurrection du Christ, c'est donc partager la passion du Dieu de Jésus-Christ pour ceux qui sont en dehors des murs que nous avons construits.

## CONCLUSION

La particularité du christianisme, qui a fait éclater la particularité occidentale après la particularité judaïque, et qui est appelée, au fur et à mesure que se multiplient les ondes des interférences culturelles, à briser la particularité de toute culture et de toutes les cultures réunies, réside dans le souffle de la libération que Dieu accomplit dans la mort et la résurrection de Jésus-Christ. L'inculturation du christianisme est, en cette ligne, moins l'adaptation du

christianisme à la manière de penser et d'agir d'un peuple donné que l'éclatement de cette manière de penser et d'agir.

Si, en effet, pour le christianisme la problématique de l'existence humaine est celle de la libération, il ne peut s'arranger avec le présent d'aucune culture, car une telle attitude présupposerait que la liberté est déjà réalisée et inscrirait une contradiction mortelle dans l'essence même du christianisme. La traduction du message pascal dans les symboles connus par un peuple, à qui ce message est adressé, doit sonner l'exode de ces symboles en conduisant ce peuple en dehors de ses frontières théoriques et pratiques. Le christianisme ne s'incarne pas principalement dans la mesure où il se fait accepter par les hommes, mais dans la mesure où il accepte les hommes et les intègre en les convertissant dans la particularité libératrice du Christ.

En conséquence, pour inculturer le christianisme dans notre contexte historique caractérisé par le contact culturel, il nous faut une théologie essentiellement christologique (et non plus fondamentalement naturelle) qui libère l'espace du dialogue des cultures en les appelant toutes à la liberté que Dieu promet et donne au monde dans le Christ. Concrètement, cela signifie pour les pays nouvellement christianisés que leur effort devra consister à se familiariser tant avec leur culture traditionnelle qu'avec la tradition occidentale dans laquelle le christianisme leur a été prêché. Mais, les deux traditions doivent comparaître devant le Christ pour la même évaluation. Il faut également une "praxis" révolutionnaire selon le renversement des perspectives opéré par la résurrection du Christ: Une Economie dont la loi est principalement la dette de la charité. Libérer l'espace du dialogue entre les cultures, c'est s'engager à créer les conditions objectives d'un dialogue entre pairs dans l'égalité des enfants de Dieu.

Reference: TELEMA, Octobre - Décembre 1977 n° 12 4/77.

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## ASIE

### Bangladesh: L'école catholique

En 1974, on comptait au Bangladesh 39.900 écoles primaires, réunissant un total de 8.531.000 élèves. Les écoles catholiques représentaient 0,61% de ce total, et les élèves 0,39%. En 1966, ces pourcentages étaient respectivement de 0,54 et 0,27. Il y a donc eu une sensible progression du pourcentage des écoles primaires catholiques.

En ce qui concerne les "high schools", elles étaient en 1974 au nombre de 5.880, représentant un total de 1.678.000 élèves. Les écoles catholiques représentaient seulement 0,64% de ce total, et les élèves 1%. Quant aux collèges, ils sont au nombre de deux; en 1977, sur 1.913 étudiants, 190 étaient catholiques.

(Information C.C.I.C.).

Reference: BULLETIN DU CENTRE DE DOCUMENTATION DES ORGANISATIONS INTERNATIONALES CATHOLIQUES D'ENSEIGNEMENT, No. 58 - Octobre 1978.

## BOOK REVIEW

by Fr. Donald M. Wodarz, ssc

Contemporary Missiology: An Introduction by Johannes Verkuyl, translated and edited by Dale Cooper, Wm. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1978, 414 pp., \$14.95.

Because this large long impressive book displays extensive knowledge resulting from years of experience, teaching and research concerning the Church and its mission, and because it represents the thought of those Protestants generally associated with the World Council of Churches, it will set the tone for missiology for the next few years, whether or not one agrees with its premises. The broad range of themes treated in the book shows how universal the agenda facing the Church is. Indeed missiology must increasingly function as the seismograph that registers the shock waves that first occur in other sciences, but which will inevitably come to jolt the theological disciplines. (page 406)

Verkuyl fills the missiological platter by seeing mission as the mission of God and the Church's task as being the instrument of that mission. About the 1950's Protestant missiology came to use "mission of God" to set the foundation of missionary work in the activity of God. Thus "missio Dei" defines mission as the activity of God himself which began with the Father's sending of the Son, and which continues through the sending of the Holy Spirit in the Church until the end of time. The Church is placed at the service of God for the proclamation of the Gospel of the Kingdom. Since the Church cannot be the Church of God unless it takes its share in the mission of God, mission is the basic function of the Church. We note that this concept of "missio Dei" is much wider than the usual notion of missionary activity. Under this concept, everything that needs to be done, everything that God actually does, to enable the communication of salvation to mankind is gathered together and defined as mission.

While this wide notion of mission gives us a grand view of the purpose of the Church, it overwhelms us unless it is divided according to the type of activity the Church uses to fulfill this universal mission. Thus Ad Gentes spoke of pastoral activity, ecumenical activity and missionary activity. Paul VI told us that the Church carrying on the dialogue of salvation initiated by the self-revelation of God is involved in many varying levels of dialogue which correspond to the states of the peoples with whom she is speaking. Pope John Paul II tells us that the Church must continue this dialogue of salvation distinguishing with precision the various circles in which it is to be carried out. (Redemptor Hominis, n. 4 with reference to Ecclesiam Suam, part 3, dialogue).

The reader of Contemporary Missiology must ask himself some questions as he reads along. He must set out to determine for himself the relation of Church and Kingdom of God. He will be challenged to ask himself just what he considers the Church to

be. Is it merely an entity which exists only as it functions in apostolate and "diaconia"; is it only a "happening" on the way to the Kingdom? As I read sections of Verkuyl's book I came to realize that in a missiology which sees the Church primarily as an instrument of mission with apostolate and world service as the main functions of the Church and which sets the world as the writer of the agenda of mission as an effort to correct "ecclesiocentrism", the Church itself is belittled to nearly nothing. A missiology without strong ecclesiology is a body without a skeleton and is about as effective.

The reader would be well advised to elaborate his own ideas of Church and mission before coming to Verkuyl's definition of missiology as the study of salvation activities of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit throughout the world geared towards bringing the Kingdom of God into existence. (page 8) This Kingdom requires a proclamation and a realization of a total salvation, which covers the whole range of human needs and social evils. (page 197). That the kingdom of God is not yet total - we readily admit; for if it were, there would be no need for mission; but at the same time we know that it has already started - if it had not, again there would be no reason for mission. Hence the kingdom exists in a developing mode, it is and it is not yet. It is basically concerned with the reign of God and it means acknowledging Christ as Lord, following him as a disciple, and uniting with other disciples to work for the extension of the Lord's rule. Thus the work of forming the Church (the union of the disciples) is an essential part of advancing the kingdom of God.

Chapter three which gives a quick glimpse at the history of Protestant missiology in the 19th and 20th centuries is well written and should be carefully read. Yet I note with astonishment the absence of Peter Beyerhaus from the list of German missiologists. In view of Beyerhaus' well known book (English edition: The Responsible Church and the Foreign Mission, 1964; German edition, 1956) and the fact Verkuyl cites Beyerhaus (pages 14, 30, 352, 356), this is rather surprising.

The missiologists with whom I am acquainted and who have been included in Verkuyl's lists fare well, save one, Donald McGavran who is accused of being lopsided, one sided and unbiblical (page 192). In comparison to McGavran's thundering criticisms of the World Council of Churches and its meetings at Uppsala, Bangkok, and Nairobi, this is comparatively mild. But when we read statements such as "all missionary research must be designed to answer two questions: what factors and methods yield successful church growth" (page 190) and "as Churches discharge their missionary calling they must gear all their efforts to produce numerical church growth" (page 189) as representing McGavran's missiology, we can wonder in just what proportion scholarship and polemics are combined.

Chapter XIV is one of the best chapters of the book. It is a study and evaluation of ideologies in the developing countries, which though it is sketched in nearly outline form gives a good outline to aid further study. Ideologies have received little attention in theology and yet they are one of the most pressing problems of our time. Ideologies are used to

manipulate and steer human beings in the direction of a new future. They are blueprints for the future drawn by a few in the human community to move the masses, by strategies and methods which hopefully will bridge the gap between the idea and the present, between the future and the existing reality. Since ideologies often become quasi-religions, the Church must criticize ideologies and prevent those caught up in such movements from replacing the transcendent aspects of genuine religion with cult objects of the ideology and from making idols of specific persons, lands, races or classes (pp 391-394).

Chapter XI is good because it gives us an introduction to the Christian thinkers in other lands who are developing theology in their own situations. Verkuyl's long Chapter five, dealing with the Church and the Jewish people should be seen in the light of European consciences seared by the memories of the Holocaust. Chapter XIII dealing with the theology of religions, is one of the few sections where Verkuyl mentions Catholic writers. Verkuyl's treatment of the Moratorium issue (pp 334-340) is sympathetic, sober and well-balanced.

Verkuyl's presentation of what he calls the "missio politica oecumenica" is going to require a lot of study. He defines it as a world wide involvement of the Church for development and the struggle to throw off the shackles of economic exploitation and political and racial oppression in which not only theologians, but sociologists, political scientists, anthropologists, journalists and all the servants of a world diaconate have their role to play in the Missio Dei (page 197). He outlines and gives some further development to this grand task on pages 394-402 and lest the missionary feel inadequate to such a splendid cause Verkuyl assures us that missiology is never a substitute for actually doing the work of mission, that missiology can only determine its validity by actually participating in the missionary task. (pp 407-408) Thank God for missions and missionaries!

In summary, I would recommend this book for study and critical reading. For this purpose the copious bibliographical references at the end of most of the chapters of the book are invaluable. I would again repeat that the book treats of contemporary missiology from the viewpoint of one branch of Protestant mission thinking. There is little reference to Catholic missiology. We Catholics must await someone to write a compendium of Catholic mission thinking.

(Sedos Reference No. for Contemporary Missiology is 6/691 C4.)

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7 CAPITAL SINS OF MODERN TIMES:

Politics without principle  
 Pleasure without conscience  
 Knowledge without action  
 Wealth without work  
 Business without morality  
 Science without humanity  
 Worship without sacrifice  
 Simon Scanlon, O.F.M.

## INSIDE INDUSTRY

By Sr. Molly Mertens, mm

Through the help of a member of St. John's Parish in Kwun Tong, I was able to obtain employment at one of Hong Kong's largest garment factories located in an industrial area with a population of over 500,000. This company is owned and managed by local Chinese, the owner being a Chiu Chau man of unusual business acumen who holds a doctorate from the University of California and converses in impeccable English.

On the first day at work, I was escorted up to the 4th floor of the 10-story building to join 110 workers pushing forward the production apparatus which turns out 800 dozen shirts per day. A total of 1,000 workers are employed in this factory. The 4th floor supervisor explained that I would work in the collar and cuff department rather than on the final inspection table as the latter job would cause the girls to be afraid of me. With an elderly woman who will be 70 years old soon, I would be responsible for the 'sleeve plackets', an extremely uncomplicated procedure consisting solely of feeding individual pieces through a machine the size of a home sewing machine which automatically folds and creases each piece. After several days practice I was able to run 1,500 pieces through with a minimal amount of scorching and incorrect folding. Not bad for a beginner.

On entering the factory floor I became abruptly aware of the deafening noise level created by 110 various types of garment machinery pushing ahead to meet the day's required quota. Add to this the blasts from all the girls' radios tuned, of course, to different stations, plus the commotion when a worker yells at an assistant to bring more thread for her machine, combine all these with the group leaders rushing up and down the aisles for consults on discovery that the cutting room two floors below mis-judged the sleeves for this order. Sometimes the problem is that the button machine has collapsed again from overuse or else it is the men from the sample room desperately in need of 25 collars to be ripped and redone immediately.

The 110 workers are divided into 3 main groups --collars and cuffs, sleeves and body, and final assembly (buttons, buttonholes, etc.) A group leader and several assistants direct the activities of each group. The main supervisor coordinates all facets of production and is directly responsible to the production manager who visits the floor regularly to check on progress.

The girls naturally are surprised to see me at work. It is not possible to chat during work hours without incurring disapproving looks from the group leader, but there are chances to talk during lunch and in the ladies room. Their constant questions present an opportunity to explain my interest in them and to lessen some of the fear they feel in meeting strangers, especially foreign ones. They ask, "Why are you working here and not in the office? You can earn more money in the office! Do you know how to speak English? How much money are you paid

per day? Are you Catholic or Protestant? Do you eat Chinese or Western food?

At the same time I discovered some of the perennial obstacles the leaders face when trying to build solidarity and friendship among factory workers. The general closed attitude to the stranger which permeates Hong Kong society is not absent inside industry. For the most part, the workers are paired off into neat little cliques of 2 or 3 persons, with little interaction, let alone interest, in non-members. (Some individuals provide a delightful exception to this rule, however.) The gossip and animosity existing there is something I find difficult to accept but am determined to not let it affect my intention to reach out to others.

Wages are paid according to the piece-rate system. In the collar department, the girls earn HK \$1.30 (U.S. 25c) per dozen pieces. If they push themselves to the limit (no tea breaks, fewer visits to the ladies' room, regular overtime and begin work before lunch break is officially ended) then they can earn up to HK \$45.00 (US\$8.80) per day. However, the price they pay is physical exhaustion and complaints of stomach-ache, headache, etc. To prevent conversing during work hours, the machines have been arranged with two empty stools separating workers from one another, making it impossible to hear what the other person is saying, due to noise level and distance.

Some general impressions:

1. The long hours at work prevent participation in educational and recreational activities--

From 4 December to 28 December, notice was given that every department would work overtime until 7:30 p.m. Everyone must be on hand at 8:20 a.m. to begin work which amounts to a total work hours of 10 hours per day (excluding meal time). Consequently, many workers drop out of evening school. Some of them, determined to continue, simply eat a few biscuits at 7:30 p.m. and continue to school, without even a 10-minute break between factory and school.

2. The physical effects caused by the fast pace of work, pressure to keep up to day's quota and overtime work--

Common complaints from the girls are dizziness, backache, headache, shoulder pain, eye strain and physical exhaustion. Many of the girls told me they begin to feel tired in early afternoon but continue to push themselves until they feel numb and are no longer aware of their exhausted state.

3. The psychological effects of constant repetition of monotonous work--

"I'm not really skilled at anything but doing the same step over and over again and I'm bored to death but don't know what else I can do," one girl told me today. Often the workers will describe themselves as stupid because they cannot speak English and are night school dropouts.

CONCLUSION:

In spite of the difficulties and burdens of their lives, I find that in contacts with these workers we are being challenged to reach out to them in a creative, concerned way.

They often verbalize a desire to become so much more than they are today, to have an opportunity to receive more education, to find more satisfying work, to form more meaningful relationships with family members, friends and co-workers. They sense already that their value as human beings exceeds the amount of wages they collect for their hard work.

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NEW RESEARCH CENTER IN PARIS  
ON LATIN AMERICA AND THE THIRD WORLD

A new Center for Research on Latin America and The Third World has been established in Paris. Opened toward the end of 1978, the activity (CETRAL) is under the aegis of the Latin American - Third World Association, whose president is journalist M. Claude Julien, and whose Administrative Council includes three Jesuits: Fathers Gonzalo Arroyo, Pierre de Charentenay and André Masse.

The Province of France sees the new Center as answering a real need and plans to take full advantage of it, since Jesuit students from various Provinces of Latin America come to France to pursue studies either at the Centre of Sèvres or at the University.

CETRAL will develop its activities along two principal lines:

- an understanding of social movements, of structures of production, of cultural evolution, and of political changes in the perspective of constructing a more just international order;
- a study of the changes experienced in Latin-American society and an analysis of the inequalities existing between the underdeveloped and the industrialized countries.

The Center itself is not intended to promote theological reflection, but with the aid of other institutions whose role that is in France, Europe, America and Africa, will seek to participate in study of theological problems arising from questions of economic development in the poor countries, and of international justice.

The director of CETRAL is Fr. Arroyo; his Secretary General Fr. de Charentenay. CETRAL's address: 88 rue Jouffroy, 75017, Paris.

Reference: SJ NEWS AND FEATURES, Vol. 7 - No. 1, January 10, 1979.

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Washington Mission Seminar for missionaries on furlough with limited time and those from sending groups that do not have their own programs of renewal. Two weeks of sharing with missionaries from all parts of the world, lectures on topics pertinent to mission today and an introduction to resources for doing reverse mission. June 10-23. Cost: \$230.00. Write: USCMC, 1302 18th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Reference: MISSION INTERCOM, No. 83, March, 1979.

## NESTLE BOYCOTT UPDATE

(We are grateful to the Good Shepherd Sisters for sending us this account as a follow-up to Fr. Crosby's talk last October).

In late October, members of the Board of Directors (the Major Superiors of Congregations that formed Center membership) of the Intercommunity Center for Justice and Peace passed a resolution officially endorsing the boycott against Nestle products.

In November, the New York Province of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd endorsed the boycott and a Memorandum to that effect was sent to all Superiors, Administrators and Fiscal Directors by Mr. Thomas Hansen, our Fiscal Director, who works with the Coalition for Responsible Investment (CRI) division of the Center.

The text of the Center's resolution and of Mr. Hansen's memo follow below, and on the next sheet is a list of the Nestle products we have resolved not to buy:

### TEXT OF INTERCOMMUNITY CENTER RESOLUTION:

WHEREAS breast milk, a natural food resource of considerable economic value to nations, is the ideal food for infants, containing the correct balance of nutrients and providing antibodies capable of fighting off infections present in the environment; and

WHEREAS responsible medical research has shown that the substitution of commercial infant formula for breast milk in areas of the world where poverty, illiteracy, impure water and inadequate sanitation prevail has resulted in infant malnutrition, illness, brain damage and death; and

WHEREAS the promotion practices of infant formula and milk companies encourage women to abandon the natural resource of breast feeding in favor of expensive commercial preparations and feeding bottles; and

WHEREAS the decline in breast feeding represents a threat to the lives and health of poor infants and an economic loss to their families and countries; and

WHEREAS Nestlé S.A., a transnational corporation based in Switzerland, controls over one third of the world's infant formula market but is immune from shareholder action by concerned groups in this country because its stock is not traded on the U.S. market; and

WHEREAS direct appeals to Nestlé to change its sales promotion of infant formula in developing nations have, for the most part, been futile; and

WHEREAS numerous religious and other groups are participating in a boycott against Nestlé, its products, its subsidiaries and their products and services, as a means of protesting the corporation's attempts to shift mothers in the developing world from breast feeding to the use of the corporation's infant formula'.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTERCOMMUNITY CENTER FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE

- 1) Calls on Nestlé S.A. to cease promoting its infant formula in areas where social and economic conditions are such that the use of formula is apt to damage the health and well being of infants; and
- 2) Endorses the international boycott against Nestlé S.A., its products, its subsidiaries, and their products and services until such time that Nestlé's marketing policies and practices are changed and the boycott lifted; and
- 3) Calls upon the member Orders to study this issue as it affects the mission of the Church and take whatever actions they deem wise; and
- 4) Calls on all Christians and other persons of good will to participate in the boycott against Nestle as a means of expressing their concern for the health and well-being of poor infants; and
- 5) Calls on the United States government, in its development assistance programs at home and abroad, to encourage breast feeding and to refuse to support the promotion of infant formula in areas where social and economic conditions may prohibit its safe use by the general population.

TEXT OF MR. HANSEN'S MEMORANDUM - 11/21/78

TO: Superiors, Administrators and Fiscal Directors  
 FROM: Tom Hansen  
 RE: NESTLE BOYCOTT

The Sisters of the Good Shepherd, Province of New York have endorsed the Nestle boycott. The boycott originated when Nestle began the aggressive marketing of infant formula among people who cannot properly use it due to lack of fuel to sterilize bottles, lack of clean water, insufficient wages, illiteracy, etc. Such promotion has led to increased infant malnutrition and mortality in the Third World nations. Since Nestle manufactures 1/2 to 2/3rds of all infant formula in the world and since they have been uncooperative and defensive toward their critics, we have decided to join the boycott. In order that we may facilitate this boycott, I ask that all persons responsible for the purchasing of dietary staples please consider avoiding the purchase of Nestle's products which are listed on the attached sheet.

Thank you for your cooperation.

B O Y C O T T

Nestle's and Nestle's Subsidiary's Products

All Nestle's milk flavoring, candy bars and toll house morsels  
 All Nestle beverages, such as Taster's Choice, Nescafe, Nestea, Decaf and Sunrise,



as that nation is controlled by the present government (of Anastasio Somoza)."

Father Michael H. Crosby, corporate responsibility agent for the Midwest Capuchins, said he hoped the action of Bankers Trust would be "seriously evaluated" by financial institutions such as Citibank, Wells Fargo, First Chicago and Merrill Lynch which have made loans to Nicaragua.

Reference: SUNDAY EXAMINER, March 23rd, 1979, Vol. XXXIII, No.12.

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: Available at Sedos Secretariat, 2 copies of Fr. Crosby's book, :  
: "Thy Kingdom Come" - costs 6,000 lire. :  
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NO OIL FOR RHODESIA!

London (NC) - Church groups are hoping to censure Shell Transport and Trading Ltd., a holding company of Royal Dutch Shell, which is supplying oil to Rhodesia despite United Nations sanctions against trade with the Africar country.

The Church groups are gathering support to present, on May 18 at Shell's annual stockholders' meeting, a resolution censuring the firm's supplying of oil to Rhodesia. The Church groups also want to obtain assurances that the company will not continue directly or indirectly to supply oil to Rhodesia.

To get a vote on the censure motion, they need to get 100 stockholders to request that it be included on the agenda.

Included among the Church groups are: Pax Christi, a pacifist organization; the Catholic Arch-diocese of Westminster; the Presbyterian Church in Ireland; the Quakers; the Presbyterian Church of Scotland; and the Anglican Church in Wales.

Reference: SUNDAY EXAMINER, March 30th, 1979, Vol. XXXIII, No.13.

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Some facts on Burma:

POPULATION: 31,859,000 (1978). ANNUAL GROWTH RATE: 2.2% (1976). ETHNIC GROUPS: Burman 72%, Karen 7%, Shan 6%, Indian 6%, Chinese 3%, RELIGIONS: Buddhist 85%, animist and other 15%. LANGUAGES: Burmese and ethnic languages. EDUCATION: Years compulsory - 8. Percentage attendance - 40. Literacy - 70% (Burmese est.). HEALTH: Infant mortality rate - 60 per 1,000 (US - 17/1,000). Life expectancy - 53 yrs. WORK FORCE (11 million): Agriculture - 65%. Industry and commerce - 20%. Service - 5%.

Reference: Background Notes, department of state, december 1978.

## IS THERE A NEW FUTURE FOR CHRISTIANITY IN CHINA?

Recently the world has focused its attention on China. It is opening up. Thousands of visitors are allowed to enter. Thousands of Chinese students go abroad for studies. There are even signs of more religious freedom. Does this mean that a new future for the Church is growing in China? A new task for CICM eventually? Jeroom Heyndrickx, after his recent visit to Hong Kong, writes briefly on this question.

There is no doubt that dramatic changes have happened within China recently; and it appears that the freedom enjoyed by people there now, is also showing in the field of religion. The question remains however: how long will it last? How far will it go?

Among the thousands who easily obtained visas to visit friends and relatives in China, are many Chinese religious and priests. They met their families, spoke freely with them about their faith and even celebrated Mass. They report about the eagerness of Catholics to receive rosaries and holy pictures, as well as bibles and reading material on religion.

Besides the Nantang - opened since 1971 for the embassies - one other church in Peking and also the cathedrals of Shanghai and Canton are said to be opened. Though this seems to be more for the purpose of pleasing tourists and visitors, the hope is growing that other churches will be opened. Buddhists are also being allowed to celebrate their feasts.

Church circles in Hong Kong receive more letters from China than ever before. They carry bits of news on faith fully alive in groups of Christians. But nobody is able at this time to draw a general picture of the situation of Christianity in China. Perhaps one-third of the number of Christians of 1949 must have died since. Then, how many have been alienated under adverse circumstances? Nevertheless, letters and personal testimonies show clearly that groups of Christians have kept their faith intact and alive. They meet for prayers whenever they can. They are guided by a number of zealous priests. How numerous are they? Will they be given more freedom to practise religion? We hope so.

The bishop of Hong Kong received a letter from mainland China, signed by seven priests. They spoke about people returning to the church and even of conversions, while urgently insisting that we continue to pray for them.

These are signs of hope. But how to interpret them? Rev. Louis Wei - a Chinese priest from Paris, who, after 40 years of absence visited his country again - said that he is "optimistic without any restriction" regarding the future of Christianity in continental China.

However, in spite of some signs of hope, the facts upon which our optimism for the future must be based are still quite limited. Some bishops and priests are still in custody and those

who are in freedom, are - except a few - not engaged in any religious activity at all.

Regular attacks continue to appear in the press against the church for having followed an "anti-science obscurantism".

At present, therefore, with some clear signs of hope, there remain more doubts and questions than answers about a "new future for Christianity".

Nevertheless these signs do challenge the church outside China; and also CICM! Christians and religious congregations in Hong Kong - also our CICM confreres - are more than ever pondering over the question: what can we do for the church in China, now, concretely? Not that we should imagine we can return soon as missionaries, Our responsibility towards China may be much more outside than inside China; except perhaps for some who might go there to teach, as some foreign priests and sisters are doing already in Peking, in Dairen.

Should CICM not, as others already are doing, in a systematic way, gather news about our former mission areas, so that little by little the general picture of what happens there becomes clear? Do people in those areas need any form of help? Can we, directly or indirectly, help to provide for it?

There has been a time when it seemed inadvisable to send any form of help to people in China (though some missionary groups have continued all through the years to send financial support to some of their members in China). Today, sending help has become quite possible and many explicitly welcome it.

Books can enter China before men ever will. Besides, they can reach a wider public. The early SJ missionaries in China understood this well. Their books had great influence. Perhaps we are now in a similar situation, with a much wider reading public.

Christians ask for reading material. The question, with which among others the SJ are dealing, is: how to prepare adapted reading material for Christians and non-Christians who, for 30 years, have heard nothing but criticism about Christianity. Protestants since 1971 have been sending in Bibles, printed in simplified characters, because the traditional characters are no longer understood by young people in China.

Our CICM confreres have received some subscriptions from China for the monthly cards of the "Nameless Movement" (Bond Zonder Naam). Could this perhaps be developed? They wonder also if our correspondence course - adapted and certainly printed in simplified characters - could contribute here.

It is much too early to say if there is a new future for Christianity growing in China. However, the evolution of events is challenging us. Concrete possibilities for contact are numerous. Besides the ones mentioned above, there are still: broadcasting (Radio Veritas), contacts with the thousands of Chinese students in Western Countries etc...By taking advantage of these opportunities we may contribute our part in shaping that new future for Christianity in China. CICM should not and will not miss the chance to cooperate in this missionary task.

Reference: CHRONICA CICM, 49th year, No. 3, March 1979.

## JUSTICE FOR THE OPPRESSED

### Ghana Priests' Priority

ACCRA (AIF) - The Catholic Diocesan Priests of Ghana, meeting here recently in their fourth Annual Congress, issued the following Declaration.

"We, the Catholic Diocesan Priests of Ghana, assembled at our Fourth Annual Congress in Accra, metropolis of Ghana, sensitive to the current moral, socio-economic and political realities of our beloved country, sharing the hopes and anxieties of our peoples, and determined with the help of God to be identified with the search for, and the implementation of, a meaningful National Charter of True Freedom, Peace, Justice, Happiness and Security for all, in the light of the Gospel, and aware that we must work with the Laity, now do hereby declare:

#### CAUSE OF THE OPPRESSED

1. That we cannot be faithful to the Gospel of which we are Ministers unless and until we take up the cause of the oppressed, the poor and the underprivileged, and seek in the Lord the improvement of the quality of life of our people.
2. That, therefore, quite apart from our fundamental rights as citizens, we have the obligation as Prophets of God to denounce all forms of injustices and dehumanizing situations in our society, and to strive for the replacement of unjust structures with just ones by announcing the love of the Father which calls on them in Christ, through the action of the Spirit, to union among themselves and communion with Him.

#### PROPHETIC MISSION

3. That we can fulfil this prophetic mission best by the character and quality of our own lives.
4. That it is our duty to help in the religious formation of our laity, and in the education of the people into an awareness of their dignity, civic rights and duties and the power they have to salvage those when needs be, and so, therefore, resolve:

#### ACTION FOR JUSTICE

1. To work with Christian courage and persistence, whether collectively or individually, from within the centres of the struggles for human liberation as the circumstance of our situation may demand.
2. To help in the realization of programmes that earnestly seek to improve the spiritual and temporal well-being of the people.
3. To set up as a matter of urgency, a working committee of experts, who will regularly resolve the problems of society and propose, solutions for the same and to be a liaison with the Bishops' Consultative Committee on National Affairs.
4. To recommend to the Bishops' Conference the necessity of setting up a Centre for Pastoral Education and Training for the Ongoing Formation of the Clergy, the Religious and the Laity.
5. To recommend to the Bishops' Conference the publication of a booklet on the "Church at the Service of Ghana" in view of the forthcoming Centenary of the Catholic Church in Ghana.
6. To make the education on the social teachings of the Church one of our pastoral priorities.

Reference: SUNDAY EXAMINER, Catholic News of the Week, Vol. XXXIII, No. 11, March 16th, 1979.