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In this issue: John Bonzanino in his article, which will be continued in the next Bulletin, describes the situation in Ethiopia from his personal experience and offers some guidelines for missionary activity there. A parallel situation in Mozambique is described by J. Heijke of the Department of Missiology in Leiden. The Statement of the EATWOT Conference at New Delhi continues.

News: In Mozambique two Consolata Fathers and five Consolata Sisters have been abducted from Muvanga, north of Maputo. We assure them of our prayers for their safety.

Congratulations to Sister Helen Mc Laughlin of the Religious of the Sacred Heart, Father MacAulay of the Scarborough Foreign Mission Society and Right Rev. Cornelio de Wit of the Mill Hill Missionaries on their elections at recent General Chapters.

General Chapters are at present being held by the Society of the Divine Word at Nemi and the Society of St. Columban in Peru. We pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit on their deliberations.

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#### Coming Events

Marxism and Mission in Africa: Problems and Opportunities.  
Friday, 29th Oct. 9.00 - 12.00 hrs.  
Tuesday, 2nd Nov. 16.00 - 19.00 hrs.  
FSC Generalate, Via Aurelia, 476.

Executive Committee Meeting: Mon. 25th Oct. 4.00 p.m. Sedos.  
Sedos General Assembly: Thur. 9th Dec. 9.00 - 19.00 hrs.  
FSC Generalate, Via Aurelia, 476.

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MISSIONARY ACTIVITY IN PRESENT DAY ETHIOPIA

John BONZANINO, IMC.

*(Cette conférence a été donnée au cours d'une réunion de Religieux d'Ethiopie, en mars 1982. Le conférencier examine les réactions des trois principales Eglises chrétiennes vis-à-vis de la Révolution. Celle-ci a introduit des transformations radicales en Ethiopie. Si l'on compare son passé avec la situation présente, on ne trouve guère d'explications satisfaisantes. Pour la première fois, nous nous trouvons en face de choses absolument nouvelles, différentes, et même en contradiction avec l'expérience du passé. Les changements d'autrefois paraissent insignifiants par rapport à ceux d'aujourd'hui. Comment alors rester fidèles à la Mission dans l'Ethiopie moderne? La situation suggère ce que l'auteur appelle une "sobriété charismatique". Il examine l'action et la réaction des missionnaires catholiques dans l'Eglise locale et insiste sur le rôle de l'Oecuménisme, compte tenu de l'importance de premier plan de l'Eglise orthodoxe. Il conclut en parlant du coeur du problème: la recherche d'une société où chacun contribue selon ses capacités et reçoit selon ses besoins. Le missionnaire qu'a-t-il à dire, et surtout à faire, dans cette recherche?*

*Cet article comme celui qui parle de Mozambique, présente un intérêt particulier en vue du Séminaire sur le marxisme et la mission en Afrique aujourd'hui. N.D.L.R.*

INTRODUCTION

During the last seven years we, missionaries and religious in Ethiopia, have been ministering in a situation of a revolution which is of Marxist parentage. Marx is a baffling and formidable opponent of Christianity. Baffling, because his message contains principles which are Christian; formidable, because he has gained control of one-third of humanity. Where he arrives, the Christian faith is usually pushed out of the way in a rude and impatient form.

Now, traditional Ethiopia has been catapulted in no time into the socialistic system of Marx, with an event unprecedented in her 2,000 years of history which was dominated by a more or less benevolent despotism of monarchies. Christian churches found themselves utterly unprepared to face this type of revolution, and feared a confrontation based on the fact that atheism is a fundamental pillar of Marxism, while Faith is a fundamental pillar of Christianity. When the two meet, the clash seems to be inevitable. Besides this, Coptic Christianity of Ethiopia has been kept, at least in the last century, within the safe confines of a privileged ecclesiasticism, divorced from the realities of life and very much one with the imperial power. In fact, religion was a kind of trailer of the feudalistic machine.

Revolutionaries, and not only the revolutionaries, were rather disillusioned and intolerant of this type of Christianity which was a cheap substitute for that contained in the Gospel, where there is no separation of the spiritual from the physical, of eternity from time

of prayer from practice, of thought from action. History shows that man turns from religion to revolution. (which can take the form of religion) when this proves to be ineffectual and regressive in providing answers and solutions to the many problems besetting him. The difficulties confronting Ethiopia could not be solved any more by a power which claimed to be Christian and which kept the nation in the bondage of the past while Christianity seemed to be 'purely decorative' (EN 20).

In order to evangelize, we missionaries, have to take into account, I quote from EN 29, *"the unceasing interplay of the Gospel and of man's concrete life, both personal and social... Evangelization involves an explicit message, adapted to the different situations, constantly being actualized..."*

In the shattering of the revolution we remained rather confused and marginalized. The reason for this incapacity to find an incarnational style of the message of the Gospel in the revolution is given by Harvey Cox in his book: *"The Secular City"*. *"The starting point for any theology of the Church, today", he writes, "must be a theology of social change. The Church is first of all a responding community, a people whose task is to discern the action of God in the world, and to join in his work... This is just the trouble. Our doctrines of the Church have come to us from the frayed-out period of the classical Christendom and are infected with the ideology of preservation and permanence. They are almost entirely past-orientated... A Church whose life is defined and shaped by what God is now doing in the world, cannot be imprisoned in such antiquated specifications... We are trying to live in a period of a revolution without a theology of a revolution. The development of such theology should be the first item in the theological agenda of the day". (Page 105)*

We must add that this item should also be the first one on the missionary agenda. There is a film of Gillo Pontecorvo 'the Battle of Algiers' during which the head of the revolution explains to his men the difficulties they have to face. *"To start a revolution", he tells them, "is a concerted effort which may be rather difficult. To keep it going, becomes difficult. To finish it, is going to be even more difficult. But the most difficult task will be to maintain it alive."*

We are now going through this 'most difficult task' which poses a decisive challenge to our missionary activity and we shall have to learn to participate constructively in the rapid and consulative transformation of the country.

### THREE REACTIONS TO THE REVOLUTION

Today, in retrospect, three different types of reactions to the revolution can be evaluated: the Orthodox, the Catholic and the Protestant.

The Orthodox Church, absorbed in the traditional task of a proclamation which is above the material development of life, faced the revolution with a passive and resigned attitude. The position of this Church was that of guardian of the Ethiopian cultural Christian tradition. The country, caught in the blizzard of struggle against the old system, could not find very much help in the guardian of this very system. Neither did it find opposition. In the Ethiopian culture there

is plenty to preserve. The Orthodox Church would do this work of preservation by keeping the 'status quo', while the revolution wanted to use the values of the past as an inspiration for change and modernization. To this the Orthodox Church has submitted, but without a capacity for active participation. Her traditions and ethics could not contribute very much to the revolution. Her confidence is rather concentrated in the conviction that Ethiopia has been a Christian country for 2,000 years in fact the oldest Christian empire of the world and nothing could alter her faith. Her prominence in sharing political power is no more. She is now being pressed into a national symbol stamped with the Cross, but the Gospel expects the Church to be much more than a national symbol. She is to be the salt and the light of the world. (Mt.5:13-14)

The Catholic Church, is a minority Church in Ethiopia. She did not find herself incapsulated in the past. Her reaction to the revolution was one of action and involvement. We missionaries, coming mostly from the Western World, must admit that at times we have found her reactions too cautious. We would have gone for a more denouncing position. It would have been a blunder. The guidance of the local Bishops has been for us to adopt a quiet, vigorous and active role. It has been the right answer. The Hierarchy was not prey to a quick reaction, more typical of the Protestant reaction, or to a passive acceptance, more typical of the Orthodox. Protests are futile in an ebullient revolution and furthermore, the forms of Western criticism are not accepted in Ethiopia, while resignation is useless. There has been no confrontation, as some of us missionaries would have liked, but a reaction of questioning the situation while participating in the work of relief and social activities where there was a need. Perhaps for this reason, the revolution has treated the Catholic Church with respect and consideration, and we missionaries seem to have a better standing now than in pre-revolutionary days.

The protestant reaction was rather radical, at times even prophetic. Here and there, there were clashes of words with the revolution. Our brothers, the Protestants, may be admired for their courage, but can be questioned whether the type of struggle they put up recently in order to retain their property is the one to pursue in a revolution. Besides this, some Protestant groups found themselves accused of political implications, and to this effect the Minister for Foreign Affairs in a statement of 2nd December 1981 called missionaries "to practice in accordance with their beliefs provided that they do not interfere with the Government affairs". The Minister even used church language to emphasize his point, when he said: "It is stated in the Church laws that anybody who violates laws will be excommunicated. In the same way, people who do not obey the rules, will be strictly punished. This is what they do in Rome and in the Middle East at the present time..."

Advice from a Protestant Theologian, Karl Barth, may be of help to us missionaries: "You have to deny to the State the quality of being divine... But you cannot deny to the State your moral cooperation". (Rom.12) Mother Teresa of Calcutta told the Mayor of Dire Dawa that we missionaries make our revolution of love and offered him a Bible as the witnessing to the Gospel of the Missionaries of Charity. This is a good reaction to the revolution.

A PANORAMIC VIEW

Examining the various moments of missionary activity during the years of the revolution in Ethiopia, we can speak of 'pressurised' years of stress and tensions, of anxieties and limitations of activity as well as a more stable situation which allowed more organized work and more participation in social activities, even if here and there we experienced trials to prevent or to "privatize", as one says today, expressions of religion. We have to remember that the Gospel has never been a "comfortable" good news, and in a revolution which is marxist-leninist oriented, it is always difficult to work as bearers of the message of God.

The danger is to fall into that kind of tranquillity of spirit which concludes by saying "we leave everything in the hands of God, and we wait and see". During difficult times, one leaves events in the hands of God, but does not "wait and see". One plans and acts in the dimension of faith. There ~~were~~ attacks on that form of religion "which preaches faith in the might, and not faith in the Almighty". Nobody would revere this religion. We shared the suffering of the missionaries who had to leave their missions. Recently, and even at present, we are subjected to some forms of contestation in some areas. From time to time we hear of episodes of missionaries who are in difficulty. Here a mission is threatened with closure, there a missionary is questioned for hours.

The Labour Proclamation' is of a nature which favours always the workers. We are called to court cases with accusations of being exploiters and discredited by a number of charges which are untrue. We do not have to dramatize, but one cannot be expected to smile spontaneously at these types of abuses.

We must also admit that, considering events in other countries of similar revolutions, like Mozambique, we missionaries in Ethiopia have been treated well.

Our attitude, as I said, has not been that of a sleeping Church, of a blind church, of a frightened church, but that of a prudent and active church. In a revolution, missionaries have to use a combination of opposites: of discretion and enthusiasm; of meekness and strength; of moderation and action; of wisdom and courage; of calculation and optimism.

Some of us feel the consequences of these tensions. There are missionaries who are tired, disappointed, exhausted, bitter; there are some who had to leave after having spent a life of dedication.

It is true that freedom of religion is granted, but it is a marxist freedom where the space for God is very much reduced within the temple. Teaching of religion in mission schools is normally not forbidden, but even here we experience difficulties. In some areas missionaries have been told orally or by letters that they are not to teach religion in schools, or that they are discriminating by promoting only those who pass the religious examination.

These, and others, are disturbing factors and we cannot just solve the problem by appealing to the traditional sense of religion of the people. Our capacity to elaborate a pastoral work for these conditions is still rather timid.

There is the other side of the coin which we have to take into consideration. During the years of the revolution, in spite of difficulties, the expressions of Christian proclamation have been considerable. If we may make a comparison, we could say that the Church has grown more during the years of the revolution than in many decades before. We have to acknowledge this, while admitting the inevitable difficulties and the uncertainty of the future. We have been allowed to keep schools and hospitals, seminaries and convents, while in other countries these have been nationalized. Despite the heavy burden of finance and trouble with teachers, which at times make us wish to give up schools, we **should** not leave them while we are not asked to do so. They remain a field of religious teaching and of formation of youth. They are indeed a heavy administrative cross, but to keep them until such time as a religious sister or lay teacher can teach religion will remain a specifically missionary activity. We must also not ignore the fact that in a Marxist society all educational establishments end up by being nationalized. While we still have the schools we have to find out alternatives for teaching Christianity.

Religious activities: The revolution has also left open the doors to purely religious activities. There has been a continuation of religious services in all areas. Many new Churches and Chapels have been built, and in them there are usually good congregations. Our heart is in this work, because here we find an open field for our proclamation of the good news and the formation of basic Christian communities. And this is exciting for a missionary! While we are grateful for this we must be moving towards new forms of meetings of Christians, because it might become necessary to gather informally and not necessarily on Sunday morning for the Eucharistic Celebrations.

Medial work: The missionary ministry of many Sisters is done in clinics and hospitals. This is one of the points which the Minister for Foreign Affairs touched on in his address to the Church leaders. He said: "In general we appreciate what missionaries have done. They have built schools and hospitals; they have also assisted the poor in all possible ways, during the war and in peace time...". There are, only around Addis Abeba, eleven clinics where Sisters spend their days caring for the sick. This may be one of the best examples of a full time 'missionary profession' done in a revolutionary context. And it is certainly well accepted.

Work with the poor: Another missionary investment, which is willingly left to the missionary by the revolution is work among the handicapped, the blind, the lepers, and with the poor in general. This **is** our privileged field because it expresses in an existential way that essential aspect of the Gospel which is love. One is inclined to think that the very existence of the Church and her 'kerigmatique' action is very much tied up with this type of activity.

Social development: Another very much accepted and visible form of our service is our involvement in the social work of development. Social projects and in general human promotion have, as the EN puts it, "profound links with evangelization". For this reason we would like to have functioning again the "social department" in the Catholic Secretariat, as it was during the days of Fr. Kevin Doheny. It may well be the most important department in a revolution.

#### FIDELITY TO MISSION

There have been cases of failure in communicating the Good News in the context of the revolution, due in the case of missionaries to our western background which conditions us in many ways; and in the case of local missionaries, to their traditional background in which they put a lot of confidence. It is the duty of both these groups to make the mission relevant in the new cultural context which rejects many of our western values and many of the traditional local values.

Before we come to a critical analysis, let us clarify the principle of E.N. according to which, any missionary activity has to be faithful both to the inner thrust of Christian Revelation and also to the need to be encultured among the people who receive the message. (EN 63)

Missionary endeavour should yield a harvest as we can clearly see from Mark 4:26-30. This does not mean numerical success, or visible results, but a harvest in the making of the people of God. And this is the acid test for missionaries. If the missionary is faithful to his mandate something is always bound to happen.

We are usually ready to suffer persecution, if necessary, but we find it difficult to organize ourselves and to undergo the rigorous discipline of inculturation which means learning to communicate the Good News effectively with "adaptation and fidelity" as described in EN 63. Lacking this, our way of communicating the Gospel will be ineffective, misleading and will create negative reactions towards the Church, which in this country, when these things happen, is "sealed".

In Ethiopia, with the coming of the revolution, we can speak of the coming of a new culture, which does not totally disregard the older one, but which is determined to prevail even in spite of the older one. New Ethiopia might well be a blending of the old and new culture. The Ethiopian genius which has emerged from many historical clashes of cultures, may succeed, even this time in joining the best of these two cultures. For this to happen, there must be the contribution of all including the churches. We have to keep in mind that in the bimillennarian history of Ethiopia there has never been an experience similar to the present one.

Radical Transformation: We are in the process of a radical transformation and Ethiopia has never had to face the types of problems which she has to face now. Her past history, as a term of reference, does not help to find solutions for the present. For the first time there are things totally new, different, and even antithetic to the previous experience. Past changes seem rather insignificant compared with the present ones.

We missionaries have to respond to the difficult demands of this present transformation, without disappointment, without negative approach and without that kind of involvement which is active but not relevant.

Our missionary duty is to respond to this new culture with a radiant vitality, nurtured in the meditation of the Word of God, so that we may succeed in being faithful witnesses of Christ in the present time and in present Ethiopia.

Examples: I had mentioned handicaps for us, expatriate missionaries, and for the local ones. I shall exemplify:

There was a missionary who had to spend a time in prison because he got involved in a discussion typical of a western mentality. He meant to defend a western approach to democracy. The result was a confrontation of two systems and an accusation of being anti-revolutionary, with a short time in prison.

Our western ideas of freedom of talk and the press are not accepted and it is not within the scope of our mission to denounce those chosen here and propose ours as better ones. The missionary concerned said that he was ready to suffer for his ideas. But this would not have been for the Gospel. We may be called to pay a high price for our fidelity to Christ, but we are not expected to pay anything for our attachment to a political system which is proper to the country where we come from.

In Addis a missionary was travelling by car, with three Ethiopian friends. They passed in front of a bakery where there was a line of people waiting for bread. The missionary smilingly said, "You see, these things happen only in communistic societies..."

The western society canonizes this form of criticism, while the eastern one ostracizes it. The remark is a mistake in a situation which demands a different approach. The nationalization of the building of Mekane Yesu produce strong and bitter international declarations, because in the western world private property is absolute, is upheld by law and is crucial to the system. In a socialistic society the attitude towards private property is very different. It is considered an act of usurpation. The emphasis is on the corporate responsibilities of the state and on national control.

There are fathers of the Church like St. Jerome and St. Chrysostom who are not far from this same view:

St. Chrysostom writes on the subject: "From where did you receive your wealth?.. How is it that you are rich?.. From your grandfather, you say, from your father. By climbing the genealogical tree are you able to show the justice of this possession. Ofcourse not, you cannot - rather its beginnings and roots have necessarily come out of injustice".

And St. Jerome writes: "Unless one person has lost, another cannot find. Therefore I believe that the popular proverb is true: 'the rich person is either an unjust person or the heir to one'".

## IRRUPTION OF THE THIRD WORLD: CHALLENGE TO THEOLOGY

Statement of the Fifth EATWOT Conference  
New Delhi, August 17-29, 1981  
(Continued)

### Irruption of the Third World

26. Over against this dramatic picture of poverty, oppression, and threat of total destruction has arisen a new consciousness among the downtrodden of their stark situation. This growing consciousness of the tragic reality of the Third World has caused an irruption of the exploited classes, marginalized cultures and humiliated races. They are bursting from the underside of history into the world long dominated by the West. It is an irruption expressed in revolutionary struggles, political uprisings, and liberation movements. It is an irruption of religious and ethnic groups looking for affirmation of their authentic identity, of women demanding recognition and equality, of youth protesting the dominant systems and values. It is an irruption of all those who struggle for full humanity and for their rightful place in history.

27.- Since the vast majority of the Third World people are those of other faiths, the irruption of the Third World is an irruption of a world that is not Christian. It is bursting into history with a voice of its own demanding justice and equality, reaffirming its age-old religions and cultures, and challenging the West-oriented and narrowly Christian understanding of the world and of history. No social revolution in the Third World can be effective or lasting unless it takes into account and incorporates the religious experience of the people. This dawned upon our Conference with a tremendous impact.

28.- The struggles of the oppressed for liberation throughout history are not accidental or isolated events; they are part of a dialectical process. They are a reaction to overwhelming oppression, and as a consequence, they elicit the violent counter-reaction of the oppressors. Threatened by the rising tide of the Third World, the powerful centres of capitalism, together with their local allies in our countries, have used every means to squelch all efforts towards liberation; they have stepped up repression and redoubled their capacity to destroy and to kill. Human and social rights have been suppressed. Imprisonment without trial, torture, disappearances and outright murder have become commonplace in many of our countries. Millions of our people have been displaced, expelled, or forced into refugee camps, uprooting them from home and families. In many countries of the Third World, under the ideology of the national security state, military and dictatorial regimes have been set up to counteract the irruption of the masses. The police and para-military groups act with impunity against their own people, strengthened by the latest technology and systems of amassing information and the most modern instruments of torture and repression. To aggravate matters for Christians, there has been an upsurge of reactionary forces within Christianity that have opposed liberation struggles of all forms and reinforced the repressive stance and policies of their governments.

29.- Our analysis of the world situation and especially of the Third World looks grim and discouraging. But as believers in the person, message, and power of the Risen Christ, we see at the same time signs of life and hope amidst the presence of darkness and injustice. We see hope in the rise of popular movements and the growth of basic Christian communities in Latin America, the anti-colonial struggles and the revival of traditional religions and cultures in Asia and Africa. We see some hope in the pressure for a New International Economic Order and the demand for an effective North-South Dialogue. We see as promising some of the socialist experiments in the Third World and the movement towards people's democracies with a strong anti-imperialist thrust.

The struggle against racism and sexist domination has become reinforced. Marginalized cultures and religions are asserting their will to autonomy and freedom. Communities of Christians and of the other faiths by their commitment to the poor and oppressed are ~~proving that~~ religion is not the opium of the people. Bonds are deepening between the oppressed of the Third World and the exploited minorities of the rich countries. We are encouraged by the developments in the First World such as the feminist movement, the search for alternate life-styles, the ecological defense of nature, anti-war and anti-nuclear organizations and the ~~networks~~ of solidarity with Third World causes.

30.- Lastly, we are strengthened by the reaffirmation of our commitment to the Gospel of life, love, and justice. We believe that life can be more authentically human and in keeping with Biblical revelation through a more egalitarian and communitarian reorganization of our societies. We believe that the fundamental intuitions of pristine socialism are closer to the Gospel teaching than the tenets of capitalism. Yet we are critical of the weaknesses of the existing and historical ~~experiences~~ of socialism while appreciating their accomplishments. Socialism has to face these weaknesses which need to be seriously ~~analyzed~~ and evaluated, and where possible, challenged by prophetic witness to the Gospel values.

31.- We reject capitalism that has been responsible for most of the evils of our societies both from within and outside. The ~~challenge~~ to the Third World countries is to work out viable forms of socialism that would bring about economic development as well as respect their religions, cultures, and human freedom. We commit ourselves to this search with hope and determination and in collaboration with all peoples struggling for the same ideal.

#### Inadequacies of Traditional Theology

32.- After the study of our reality and its challenges, we looked at the response of the Church and theology. We saw that the official mainstream theology of the Christian churches continues to be Western with little relevance to our Third World situation. Though this traditional theology has provided an impetus for personal spirituality and for tremendous missionary expansion, it has been incapable of responding to the social problems of the First World and to the challenges of the Third World. For the Third World, this theology has been alienating. It has not provided the motivations for opposing the evils of racism, sexism, capitalism, colonialism, and neocolonialism. It has failed to understand our religions, indigenous cultures, and traditions, and to relate to them in a respectful way.

33.- The tools and categories of traditional theology are inadequate for doing theology in context. They are still too wedded to Western culture and ~~the~~ capitalist system. Traditional theology has not involved itself in the real drama of the people's lives or spoken in the religious and cultural idioms and expressions of the masses in a meaningful way. It has remained highly academic, speculative and individualistic without regard for the societal and structural aspects of sin.

34.- The Bible itself ~~has~~ not always been used to convey the liberating message of Jesus. Oftentimes it has been used to legitimize Christian participation in oppression, and to benefit the dominant race, class, and sex.

35.- Theology has often been unable to dialogue with other world religions in such a manner as to be enriched by the centuries of wisdom and profound faith experiences of their followers. It has frequently failed to recognize the worldviews that do not correspond to ~~those~~ of the West.

36.- To make theology relevant to the lives of our people, new approaches and perspectives are necessary. In recent years there have been attempts in the Third World to evolve a theology based on Biblical reflection on struggles for liberation. There are also efforts toward the inculturation of theology from the cultural-anthropological perspective.

37.- In the First World these past five years we have noted some changes in theological approach. For the first time, some European theologians are talking about European theology over against the old concept of universal theology. Some theologians in the USA are reviewing their thology and accepting the challenge of liberation theology from Latin America. They are responding to the demands of their own situation as the center of the capitalist world and at the same time the home of many oppressed minorities. Churches and Assemblies in both the First and Third Worlds have begun to undertake the task of ~~revamping~~ ~~theology~~ to make it more relevant to the times and to their constituencies.

#### Elements of an Emerging Methodology

38.- We have realized the inadequacies of traditional theology, and in the last five years, we have made some efforts to develop some general criteria that will make our theology more relevant. In our conference, we both reiterated and reformulated some of the elements of our emerging methodology.

39.- Action in service of the people is necessary for genuine theological reflection, but equally necessary is silent contemplation. To be committed to the people's struggle for social justice and to contemplate God within this involvement - both form the essential matrix of theology. Without this prayerful contemplation, God's face is only partially seen and God's word only partially heard within the participation in God's liberating and fulfilling action in history.

40.- The poor and oppressed are emerging from their culture of silence to speak their word in the world that has long tried to deny their existence. They have the elementary right to think. To reflect on their own lives and their own faith in God, the Liberator, is part of

that right to think and exist. In this context, to do theology is no academic exercise. Many groups of grassroots Christians are reflecting thus from their own liberating praxis - at times together with persons of other faiths and persuasions.

41.- The faith-based life-interpretations of the grass roots-expressed in their cultural idioms, liturgies, workshops, story-telling, drama, songs, and poems, constitute genuine theology. In its formal sense, as an art and a science, theology is a discipline which requires technical or academic competence - but both forms of theology are relevant only if they stem from involvement and a liberated consciousness.

42.- The Bible is an integral basis of our faith reflections. There have been attempts to re-read Scriptures from the underside of history. Some critics consider this method of interpreting the Bible as subjective. With the help of the biblical scholars at the conference, we examined the broad principles of hermeneutics. Among other things, we were reminded that a religious text is based on an event, the praxis of a specific group, for example, the Exodus.

text however does not exhaust the meaning of an event. Every reading is done from the perspective or mind-set of the reader. Even the technical scholar reads out of a particular perspective. The Exodus itself, as the foundational event of the life of Israel was read differently at different stages in the history of the Jewish people, in the Old and New Testaments. So today the reading will be conditioned by our historical experience. And even our present reading will not exhaust the meaning of this event.

43.- Social analysis is an indispensable mediation and basic equipment for a liberating theology. It indicates the way in which the values of the Kingdom of love, justice and truth are being realized or denied in our situations. Without an adequate understanding of our societies, theologians cannot interpret the will of God for our societies and our times.

44.- We are convinced that a relevant theology for the Third World should include both the cultural and socio-economic aspects of the people's lives. In most theological efforts today, stress is on one to the near exclusion of the other. Most of the Latin Americans realize that their liberation theology has failed to include the cultural dimension of their people and the aspirations of marginalized groups of their continent. Some Africans, on the other hand, in stressing anthropology, traditional cultures and religions tend to give little consideration to the contemporary economic and political plight of their peoples. At the Asian Theological Conference in 1979, it was strongly propounded that Asian theology must focus both on Asia's poverty and religiosity. Clearly the synthesis of the religiocultural and socio-economic elements remains a necessary task of Third World theology in the future.

#### Theology from the Oppressed

45.- The starting point of the theologies of the Third World is the struggle of the poor and the oppressed against all forms of injustice and domination. The involvement of Christians in this struggle provides a new locus for theological reflection. This participation is faith in action and the manifestation of Christian commitment which constitute the first act of theology. (Dar-es-Salaam Statement).

46.- The struggle for a just world and full humanity is a participation in God's creative plan. God the Creator, Father/Mother of humanity, entrusted the earth to the whole human race to be developed as means of life and fulfillment for all (Gen. 1:28-21). It is also a participation in Jesus' mission to bring to humankind life in abundance (Jn. 10:10). It is one of the highest expressions of Christian love inspired by faith leading even unto death for the sake of the other (Jn. 15:12-13). It is a new dimension of a long tradition of love and service to one's neighbour that goes to the biblical roots (Lev. 19:9-18; 1 Jn. 3:11). Effective love and the work toward a world of justice for our neighbour is more acceptable to God than holocausts and burnt offerings (Hos. 6:6; Jer. 6:20; Mk. 12:33).

47.- Poverty as experienced by the majority of God's children is a degradation of the divine image on earth and a diminishment of human dignity and personhood. It is a social sin to be attacked and eradicated. The exigencies of the Gospel of love and sharing can be best experienced and articulated by those who are in need, by those who suffer, by those who are abused. It is the wounded who knows the pain of wounds. The oppressed are those who best understand and are receptive to the promises of the Kingdom (Mt. 5:3-11; Lk. 10:21). The oppressor is insensitive to the demands of justice and love.

48.- Poverty and oppression are universal phenomena in the Third World. The groanings, yearnings, and cries for liberation of the masses reach out to heaven, and as in the days of Moses, God continues to be Yahweh the Liberator, who sees the affliction of the people and comes to deliver them. (Ex. 3:7-9). In the struggle against oppression, God is revealed to be the saving God who acts in history. The experience of the Third World as a source of theology must be taken seriously.

49.- Women are especially discriminated against in the Third World. Theology both in the First World and Third World has for too long been a male, white theology and should be liberated from these constraints. The sexist interpretation of Scripture to legitimize the subordination and oppression of women must be recognized as sinful and seriously impairing biblical revelation that God created the human being according to the divine image: "Male and female God created them" (Gen. 1:27). Theology and the Church should be sincere in expressing this act of divine creation, and not merely making more room for women in disciplines and institutions that continue to be patriarchal at heart. The common human experience of women in their liberational struggle constitutes a true source of theology. Christians must seriously consider the grave injustice toward womankind in their action and include the women's perspective in their theological reflection. Otherwise there can be no truly relevant theology, no genuine social transformation, no holistic human liberation.

50.- Racism is another form of oppression for millions of men and women all over the world. It is especially felt in South Africa where, to many Blacks, Christianity is the religion of the oppressor which has long supported the prevailing ideology of apartheid. When Black people struggle to regain their humanity both by their fight against the socio-political structures of apartheid and by their challenge to the distorted image of Christ, God is involved in that struggle against racism, and theology cannot ignore this dimension of God's presence. God works justice for all who are oppressed. (Ps. 103:6)

51.- God has expressed judgement on oppression and rejection of every form of injustice. God assumes the suffering of the weak and powerless in Jesus Christ (Is. 53:4-6). The oppressed are the presence of the crucified God. But the crucifixion is not the culmination of Jesus' life or of our faith. He was raised from the dead and once and for all, he pronounced victory over the forces of darkness and death. In the struggle of the weak and powerless for light and life, the resurrection of Jesus becomes a historical experience and the resurrection of the downtrodden begins.

52.- This is the liberative praxis of the oppressed of the Third World. The faith reflection on this experience is authentic theology and theology born of praxis is theopraxis. In the Third World, the poor and oppressed themselves are beginning to articulate their own reflections in both oral and non-verbal forms. Though unsystematic and non-professional, this theopraxis - this faith-based interpretation of the struggle and religious experience of the poor by the poor - is a rich foundation of theological formulations in the Third World. Since the poor are truly irrupting, then the God-image and expression of the poor must equally irrupt as the most meaningful image and expression of God in today's world.

( To be concluded )

POPE JOHN PAUL II AT COTONOU, BENIN, FEBRUARY 1982

To evangelize then means to inculcate the spirit of the Beatitudes—simplicity of life, uprightness, purity, justice, peace, courage, and above all else, love—the daily relationships of persons with each other and with God, of groups with each other, in families and in society, so as to transform profoundly from within and by the light and strength of the Gospel, the deepest and most abiding realities the customs, the criteria of judgement, the value system, the concerns, the lines of thought, the sources of inspiration and models of life, as well as the institutions which influence them, in a word, the culture (cf Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Nuntiandi, nos 19-20). The graft, which the Gospel is, brings new fruits to the tree nourished by African sap. It is thus that men and women acquire their authentic human and Christian personality, consistent with their own reality, that is to say, their African soul.

Reference: Extract from the Holy Father's Homily during Mass.

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**AFRICAN COUNTRIES WITH A MARXIST-LENINIST ORIENTATION**  
**MOZAMBIQUE**

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J. Heijke

*(Dans un écrit dont cet extrait est pris, Heijke fait une analyse qui introduit à l'étude du capitalisme et du socialisme dans quelques pays d'Afrique. Ensuite il parle de l'attrait particulier qu'exerce le socialisme sur les mouvements qui luttent pour l'indépendance. Pour cela, il s'appuie sur les constitutions de pays socialistes tels que l'Algérie, le Congo-Brazzaville, le Mozambique, l'Angola et l'Ouganda sous Obote en 1968. Ensuite, il étudie longuement le socialisme de la Tanzanie du Président Nyerer, il s'intéresse enfin aux pays d'Afrique qui ont une orientation marxiste-léniniste qui contraste avec celle de la Tanzanie. Les extraits de cet article sont pris dans son analyse de la situation au Mozambique. N.D.E.R.)*

A number of countries in Africa - Like Ethiopia, Angola, Congo Brazzaville and Mozambique - have opted for so-called scientific socialism. They feel part of world-socialism and repudiate any form of African socialism as being utopian and nationalistic. Comparing the set-up of these marxist societies, and looking at their constitutions, the similarities are striking, so much so, that it is difficult to avoid the impression that the elaborated models for such constitutions were ready-made beforehand and hardly conceived on the spot. Of course these countries do differ because of their previous history (French or Portuguese colonialism, or independent feudalism) and because of their socio-geographic situation. Unfortunately it is not possible to deal with all the countries separately and in detail. Instead we have chosen one of them for a more detailed presentation. The differences in these countries will be elaborated when discussing the position of the churches.

Mozambique: After a prolonged guerilla warfare under the leadership of FRELIMO (Liberation Front Mozambique) the country became independent in 1975. So, unlike Tanzania, Mozambique had to pay for its autonomy with much bloodshed. Nevertheless, from the very beginning the FRELIMO-leaders had the same high ideals in mind as those characteristic of Tanzania.

Let us summarize some points of FRELIMO's programme. The Liberation Front (later on transformed into a party) aims at destroying the old man (the type of man propagated by colonialism) in order to let live the new man: liberated, solidary, feeling and acting communally. Individualism must make room for a common effort, profiteers must give way to the people, who have to determine their own lot and destiny. (A New People, 16-17). For the present activating groups represent these people: they transform them into a real power by means of old African methods: the 'palaver', the meetings where faults are discovered and discussed, and 'communalism', which criticizes individualism and rejects alienating obscurantism.

These methods are especially applied in the rural areas, where the population will be regrouped into "Aldeias Comunitárias" or "Comunidades", where a communal style of life will be developed and where the people will work part of their time on collective fields (30,31). The so-called

scholars must learn from the people, because the ordinary people are not ignorant. The society must be organized in such a way that exploitation of one man by another will be impossible. Therefore it cannot be accepted that a small part of the population enriches itself through the labour of the remaining part. Both the land and the means of production belong to the people (37-38). According to Art.27 of the constitution all citizens of the people's republic of Mozambique have the right to participate in the building-up of democracy.

Economic situation (54): Repeatedly the president, Samora Machel, indicated the (im)moral weapons used by international capitalism to confuse the people: individualism, ambition, egoism. Everyone should exert oneself to serve the national security, by signaling sabotage and denouncing corruption. The leaders of the country take great interest in the education of the people. At cadre-schools the youth is being instructed on the aims of the socialist society. Of course schools have been nationalized (77-81). Also in other ways the people's mentality is being influenced, e.g. by public political meetings, addresses, songs. From 'população' (population) the people should develop into 'povo' (people). (84).

Against the background of the country's division into ten large ethnic groups, 80 tribes; 6000,000 Muslims, 1,6000,000 R.Catholics, 1,200,000 Protestants, traditional religion, FRELIMO's achievement is remarkable. In comparison with Angola, where several liberation movements were active, the FRELIMO in Mozambique had the advantage of being the only party.

After Independence various factors negatively affected the development of the country. Portuguese experts, civil servants, teachers, traders and farmers had left the country. Many had been wrecking on a large scale, had taken cattle and cars over the border (Rhodesia), put out of action machinery and means of conveyance, taken away their furniture, in short: a scorched earth policy.

As in Tanzania the prosperous part of the population was not very susceptible to the idea of a socialist society. Moreover, in Mozambique a small upper-class had become Portuguese in orientation. In general they were experts and skilled people, who were indispensable for the building-up of the country. Some went to South Africa or to - as yet not independent Rhodesia. Another part of this privileged upper-class stayed in Mozambique. They were more especially the target of FRELIMO's efforts at re-education. After Independence, for all sorts of reasons, the economic situation of the country continued worsening. Cyclones, drought, floods plagued the country; following an appeal of the UNO in 1976 Mozambique closed the border with Rhodesia, thus depriving itself of an important source of income. Opposition within their own borders could not be tolerated by the party and government of Mozambique. The re-education-camps, sometimes sourly called 'convalescent homes', became crowded with people, who had been sent to these camps only because they belonged to a certain social group.

Formation of cells was begun in firms. It was also effectuated in the quarters of the towns and in the villages (like the ten houses system in socialist Ethiopia). Also education was reorganized. Small units of 20 to 25 pupils together with one or more teachers, formed groups that drew up week-programmes and practised criticism. Not the individual, but the collective achievement was emphasized, while also manual work and agriculture are included in the process of learning.

Corresponding to the re-grouping of peasants in Tanzania, involving 9 million people, the government of Mozambique also aims at villagisation. In 1979 1000 of these socialist villages or 'aldeias comunais' were existing.

The Church in Mozambique: The Roman Catholic Church in Mozambique was closely allied to the Portuguese government, enjoyed all kinds of privileges and rarely took sides with the people. It was mainly foreign religious who became more and more critical of the colonial government during the last years before Independence. Well known are the demonstrative departure of the White Fathers, the exposure by foreign missionaries of the massacres committed by government troops and the courageous stand taken by the bishop of Beira, mgr. Pinto. After Independence the episcopacy of the R.C. Church was hastily africanized (mgr. Pinto stayed) and the church, after a short confession of guilt, was wise enough to promise support to the new government.

The relation between the churches and the party/government can be looked upon from two angles. We start from the perspective of the party/government.

FRELIMO: criticism of churches: In the statements of President Machel and in the party's standpoints one finds both the general current marxist objections against religion and a reckoning of the past of the Mozambican church.

Over and against the idea of Self Reliance looked upon as an important ideological building-stone for the new society, was placed the obscurantism of alienating superstition. Repeatedly FRELIMO has aired its fundamental objections to any form of faith in God. At first it looked as if believers would not be allowed to join FRELIMO. "Belief in an Almighty controlling the destinies of man was seen as inconsistent with belonging to a revolutionary party dedicated to making man master of his own destiny" (47). and

"The people defeated colonialism when they had exchanged belief in God for belief in their own capacity..."(48).

In the weekly Tempo a leading article points out that "according to the Bible the justice of God is nothing but the passivity of the poor..." Tempo, no.372, 1977. In June 1978 the party and the government were still very anxious to join battle with the church. The Resolution on Religious Questions passed at the second Conference of the Department of Ideology is unequivocal about this. Not only man's dependency on God was interpreted as an alienation by FRELIMO, but also the churches' continued dependency on outside support. Dependency - both financially and in decision-making - on churches with their headquarters in Geneva, the U.S.A., or Rome, was thought "inconsistent with FRELIMO which is independent and depends on no one to make its decisions".

A number of other accusations regard the role of the churches, especially the R.C. Church, during the colonial period of Mozambique. The most important ones are:

- 1) during the colonial period the church has collaborated with the oppressor;
- 2) the church was (and still is) European;
- 3) the church preaches resignation and servility;
- 4) the church - i.e. its functionaries - is not productive, but "parasitizes;"

- 5) the church propagates a spritualist view of life;
- 6) the church facilitates dualism in the interpretation of life;
- 7) the church is governed by privileged people, influenced by privileged people and intended for privileged people;
- 8) the church promotes individualism;
- 9) the church is supra-national and cannot back nation-building;
- 10) the church is opportunistic and changes colour as circumstances acquire;
- 11) the church divides;
- 12) the church looked upon the African culture as immoral;
- 13) the church was absent during the fight for freedom;
- 14) the church's pleas *for* the people and *against* the colonial ruler were isolated plea ings or protests and not backed by the ecclesiastical

Beside the official accusations against the church and the consequent restricting measures, the arbitrariness which characterizes the middle cadre's dealing with the churches should also be mentioned. Since this arbitrariness is also found in Angola, Ethiopia and Congo-Brazzaville it can hardly be accidental. It implies unrestrained arrest and release of missionaries, unwarranted expulsion, confiscation of goods, public burning of books, obstruction of divine services especially on feast-days like Christmas, insinuations of the complicity of religious in all sorts of offences or crimes and compulsory concentration of a region's personnel in a city, thus condemning them to idleness for months.

Lately the government's attitude towards the church(es) seems to have become more flexible. "There are signs that the persecution of the church during the first few months and years after the independence of the country in 1975 has given way to a more flexible attitude". During conversations between the Government and the Dutch (R.C.) Missionary Council it was promised that for the education of church leaders new (foreign) personnel would be allowed to enter the country.

The Anglican Church was allowed to found a second diocese in the country, for the north. The Protestant United Theological Seminary of Ricatla near Maputo has a high percentage of students from the north. In 1980 the first candidates from that region got their certificate. Recently a delgation of the Prague Peace Conference under the leadership of a Russian Orthodox bishop was welcomed.

The churches' attitude towards FRELIMO: Prior to Independence the attitude of the R.C. church had not simply been one of submissive collaboration. Yet, because of all kinds of curtailments it was not yet ready to embrace the revolution on the eve of Independence. Yet there were many people, especially among the foreign priests, who warmly welcomed FRELIMO-socialism on the day of Independence. The Catholic church's reaction to FRELIMO-socialism shows both approval and repartee. Without pretending to give an exhaustive survey of all themes involved I mention five.

- a) Christmas message 1975: On the occasion of the year of Independence the episcopacy of Mozambique issued a Christmas message which starts by referring to the prophesy of Zechariah: "Praise to the God of Israel. For he has turned to his people, saved them and set them free.." (Luke 1.68) and to the so often quoted words in the theology of liberation: "...he has sent me to announce good news to the poor, to set at liberty those who are suppressed" (Luke 4.18). The message explicitly refers to the option for the poor:

*God was born poor and defenceless, with nothing to give him importance. He only has his poverty which led him to take the side of the poor (Luke 1.52-53). So we, despoiled of the material goods that placed us on the side of the wealthy now feel ourselves able to give freely what was freely given to us (Matthew 10). Without prestige and without power, we can now more easily identify with the people and share with them their struggle and hopes for liberation.*

This element of the Christmas message implies quite a programme for consideration for all churches in socialist countries as well as elsewhere.

b) Bishop of Nampula: Out of the individual bishops it was the white bishop of Nampula, Mgr. Pinto, who most positively supported the FRELIMO line of thought. This did not prevent him from being critical when necessary. In July 1975 he published an extensive letter, in which he went into FRELIMO's accusations against the church, looking every time for the truth as much as possible. He recommended the positive things in the revolution and formulated a number of practical consequences for the church. The bishop saw in the new situation a new chance for the church.

*The Voice of Samora Machel is not just a voice, it is Providence. His voice does not announce the end of the Church, but rather the beginning (A new people...", 101).*

In 1977 the same bishop published a long letter. He had become president of the Bishops' conference and enjoyed the confidence of FRELIMO. Again he backed the revolution but from a Christian standpoint he frankly gave some specifications. The revolution is not just a transition from capitalism to socialism. It establishes freedom and solidarity. Without these characteristics it is not a revolution.

The bishop also protested against the identification of religion with obscurantism and pleaded for the admission of Christians to party membership or public functions.

c) Basic Christian Communities: Mgr. Pinto had pleaded for basic Christian communities each having its own integrated leaders. Much in the same way the União de Sacerdotes e Religiosos de Moçambique (USAREMO) declared during the 4th General Assembly (1975) in a workshop:

*The revolutionary people are our novice-masters now.  
We have started our second noviciate ("A new people..", 123).*

And elsewhere, during the same 4th General Assembly:

*We will have to accept as a consequence of the revolution that values have changed. What we priests considered to be essential, apostolate pure and simple, has become secondary, because manual labour takes priority now (120).*

This view corresponds with what Julius Nyerere in Tanzania had asked from the religious. Moreover, it fully harmonizes with the advice in 1977 of the Servizio di Documentazione a Studi (SEDOS) - the study group and bulletin of the same name of the Major Superiors of missionary orders and congregations - to those male and female re-

ligious who were working in marxist countries. According to this advice they should learn a profession as much as possible and accept a job apparently of use for the society: i.e. they have to live from an earned income - at least the younger ones - and should be exposed to manual work. (In: Sedos Bulletin 1977, 8, 183 and 1977, 13, 334 - 339).

d) Christian people: Since the means of communication are scanty it is difficult to assess the reaction of the Christians to the revolution. They were represented at the National Pastoral Meeting held in Beira in 1977, where bishops, priests and faithful in a spirit of self-criticism reflected on the situation. From the final conclusions it becomes clear that the church felt liberated from false certainties and knew itself to be en route towards a church at the grass-roots. Here again the theme of an integrated church of small communities with lay leaders emerges.

From sheer necessity the accent shifts from celebration of the sacraments to prayer and service. Also the catechist, who, in the hierarchically structured church was a 'prominent person', is becoming more anonymous. The responsibility of the group prevails. The priest and bishops try to attune their policy to this development as much as possible. Yet the bishops seem to be a bit worried since the increasing responsibility of lay people might become an irreversible process instead of being an emergency measure.

e) Justice: Approval of the socialist striving after a more just society of solidarity and equality; giving up privileges/rights and prominency; standing up for oppressed people; protesting against wrongful restrictions of freedom; cultivating small communities with integrated leadership:- these seem to have been the most important issues for the churches. One doctrinal point should perhaps get special attention. Marxist-leninism in Mozambique and other African countries considers faith in God a factor of confusion and therefore propagates atheism. FRELIMO and similar parties join in a wide-spread critic of religion: religion proclaims the incapacity of man toward emancipative self-liberation and promises instead salvation from God: a sedative.

It remains to be seen whether it will be fruitful for the representatives of the church(es) in Mozambique to enter into discussion about this point of view. An exchange of thoughts (theoretical activity) is always situated in the context of the church's actions in the past which are still so fresh in mind. It will therefore be important to take into account this officially propagated view on God and religion in e.g. catechesis.

Caution against atheism - and especially in Mozambique, considering FRELIMO's reactions - should not only be directed against the atheism of 'scientific socialism', but should be accompanied also (or preceded) by a warning against the hidden atheism of the capitalist system in so far it strives after an unlimited production/consumption for the good of a privileged minority and at the cost of everything. Protest against atheism - if sincere - should imply taking part in the combat against injustice. The church(es) in Mozambique are usually conscious of this.

Reference: Exchange, No.30, December 1981. Vol X. Dept. of Missiology, Leiden.

BOOK NOTES

*Spindler, M.R. and Middelkoop, P.R., Eds.*  
 BIBLE AND MISSION: A partially Annotated Bibliography 1960-1980  
 Dept. of Missiology, Interuniversity Institute: Leiden, 1983.  
 Paperback, Dutch Guilders 10.00.

This bibliography forms part of the International Study project 'Biblical Studies and Missiology' sponsored and coordinated by the International Association for Mission Studies. It contains more than one thousand entries.

The research was guided by certain assumptions among which the basic one was that reference to the Bible is essential to missiology everywhere in the world. It is the task of missiologists to explore the fields of biblical scholarship in order to find material that can be used for their understanding of mission. Conversely, it might be the task of biblical scholars to look for missiological insights that are relevant for their own work. The present bibliography has been compiled in this spirit, taking into account the growing effort toward contextualization of biblical exegesis and theology in all continents.

*Aubin, P. MSC and Cotter, G.MM.*  
 AGENCIES FOR PROJECT ASSISTANCE.  
 Mission Project Services, 204 West 97th Street, New York, NY 10025,  
 1982. Paperback, US\$ 45.00 (\$2.50, Postage and handling; if payment is enclosed this may be deducted).

This is an invaluable aid to missionaries who seek funding for Church sponsored projects in "Third World" countries. It is the result of twelve years experience and presents information in a concise and coherent way. The Manual is divided into three sections: the first has indices which help to identify the kind of projects supported by specific Agencies; the second, divided according to countries, gives profiles of the various agencies; the third presents useful guidelines for the preparation of requests for aid for projects. Fathers Cotter and Aubin have experience of working in "Third World" countries. They visited hundred of Agencies over the years and developed this guide. In all, 283 Agencies are listed in the book.

## CIR ANNUAL REVIEW

Catholic Institute for International Relations, 22 Coleman Fields, London N1 7AF. 1982. Pp 40: No price.

The review contains much interesting information on the activities and publication of the Institute. Publications include:

(1) Comment. A Series of pamphlets varying from Pp.12 to Pp.20 Sample titles: Iran; Paraguay; The Philipines; East Timor; A New International Economic Order.

(2) Church in the World: A series of six pagefolders in large format. Sample Titles: The poor; the Church's First Priority; Justice in the World; The Church the People Want; The Challenge to Christians.

(3) Justice Papers: Sample title: Eucharist and Politics Pp.12. Other Publications include books and pamphlets on Church topics related to International Relations. Some of these are published in collaboration with the Mambo Press, Zimbabwe.