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In this issue Two articles in this issue of the Bulletin address the growing question of how to proclaim the Gospel in places where there is grave lack of justice without taking a stand on this issue. Preaching justice is an integral part of proclaiming the Gospel message. The recent Sedos Research Seminar asked what had been the effect of our responses to injustice. One effect has been to provoke an increase of institutionalized violence with its almost inevitable consequence of increased counter-violence. Where does the prophet stand? Again the Sedos Seminar asked how consistent we were in our commitments to justice. How is it reflected in our policies and in our use of resources? There is no doubt that documents and periodicals coming into the Sedos Documentation Centre show a startling increase in both awareness of and involvement in social justice on the part of member institutes of Sedos.

Bishop Claver, S.J. reflecting on the cold blooded murder of one of his priests in the Philippines admits that from a sheerly human point of view the option to avoid violence makes no sense. An answer can only be attempted in the context of faith. Pablo Richard believes that popular religiosity can be subversive and that the exploited believing people is itself the agent rather than the object of liberation and evangelization. Raymond Pannikar's principles and corollaries concerning direct and indirect proclamation of the Gospel can be applied to our question.

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Coming Events

Executive Committee Meeting	Wednesday, 16th September 4.00 p.m. at Sedos office.
General Assembly Meeting	Wednesday, December 9th, 1981

IS VIOLENCE JUSTIFIABLE?

PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL AND SOCIAL INVOLVEMENT

(The accounts of persecution and martyrdom, increase. Latest reports chronicle the killing of a Sacred Heart priest and the disappearance of a Jesuit priest in Guatemala: the shooting to death of a Jesuit priest in the Philippines and the continuing murders of lay leaders in El Salvador and Guatemala. The following reflections by a Mennonite preacher and a Catholic Bishop on the death of Godofredo Alingal, sj, in the Philippines raise the questions again: Is it possible to proclaim the Gospel today without becoming involved in social economic and political problems? Is there a way of proclaiming the Gospel and working for justice without reacting to murderous violence by a self-defence which involves one in violence? Ed).

TWO MORE MARTYRS FOR JUSTICE

(The following news item appeared in the Jesuit Bulletin Promotio Justitiae, May 1981).

GODOFREDO ALINGAL, SJ.

On the evening of April 13th, the first day of Holy Week, Fr. Godofredo ALINGAL was shot and killed in his own rectory in the small town of Kibawe in the southern Philippines. He was 58. The following account of his assassination is all the more impressive for having been written by a Mennonite preacher, Earl Martin, who knew him well.

On Monday evening before Easter five unidentified men, two bearing revolvers and three others masked in handkerchiefs, entered the rectory (convento) of the priest who served this parish for thirteen years. A minute later Fr. Alingal was shot in the heart by the 45 caliber revolver of the assailant. After the killing the gunmen slightly rummaged the private room of the 58-year-old priest.

Local parishioners here, who came to champion the priest's soft-spoken but persistent defense of the rights of poor farmers, expressed belief that the slaying was 'politically inspired'. While never openly supporting specific political candidates, Fr. Alingal frequently exposed what he believed were abuses of local military and political officials. 'He was very quiet, yet very strong in social justice. Not aggressive in a noisy kind of way', said the head of this Catholic prelate, Bishop Francisco Claver.

The killing of a priest is extremely rare in the Philippines where cultural tradition would place a curse on any individual who harmed a religious personage.

"This is a warning"

The motive for the killing has not yet been fully established, but parishioners in Kibawe recount various threats that Fr. Alingal received over recent years. Just two weeks before his death, during the time of a constitutional amendment plebiscite which the priest had mentioned negatively in his sermons, he received indirect word that he was being watched. This reinforced a written threat Fr. Alingal had received a year ago after a hotly-contested election for the region's governor and mayor. The threat read in part: 'Father, this is a warning! Destruction will strike you if you continue your attacks. It is easy these days to be buried even without coffin. Watch out for your steps and your days are numbered.'

Father Alingal was not unconcerned about such threats. A Catholic sister here said he was known at times to sleep under his bed or to change rooms at night. A week before his death he told a neighboring parish worker with a smile, 'I too will be killed'. Fr. Alingal remained faithful to his convictions even in the face of fear.

Bishop's comment

Father Alingal's Bishop was Francisco CLAVER, SJ, This is what he had to say about his death:

If there is anything certain in the many uncertainties that surround the murder of Father Alingal, it is this: he was gunned down because of his inflexible proclamation of the Gospel of justice... He was for justice, actively uncompromisingly. He was also against violence, just as actively just as uncompromisingly...

LUIS EDUARDO PELLECEER S.J.

There is no account of his death, nobody to be buried, no sermon, no funeral. There is only the following telegram: "Quache' Pelleceer disappeared near Merced June, 9 afternoon. Only his car found so far." It is unlikely anything more will even be known. He will join an estimated 20,000 people that Amnesty International claims have been killed in Guatemala by semi-official death squads since 1966.

'Quache' Pelleceer was 35. He was a member of CIASCA (Centre for Social Investigation and Action of Central America) which, because it stood for social justice, had been obliged to disband some two years ago. Yet he continued his work for landless peasants knowing full well the risks he ran. Last year his Provincial, Cesar JEREZ, declared in a public address in London:

Provincial's comment:

The passion of the Guatemalan Church has begun. It is sharing in the passion of the Guatemalan poor. The entrenched establishment will not allow any voice dissonant with the irrational campaign that attributes every Guatemalan evil to communist conspiracies... Times of discernment and decision lie ahead for the Guatemalan Church, if she is prepared to make good her duty to opt preferentially for and in solidarity with the cause of the poor.

'Quache' Pellencer's option was clear and uncompromising.

THE EMPTY TOMB OF KIBAWÉ

Bishop Francisco Claver

There is an empty tomb in Kibawe, Bukidnon. The townspeople built it for their murdered pastor, Father Godofredo Alingal, S.J. And they would have buried him there on Monday, April 20, a full week after he was cold-bloodedly shot dead by hired killers. But over the people's protest and against all tradition, Father Bernas, Provincial Superior of the Jesuits of the Philippines, decided to hand over the dead body of Father Alingal to his sorrowing 85-year-old mother for burial in Dapitan, the town of his birth in far-off Zamboanga del Norte. As Father Bernas explained it to the people at the final obsequies in Kibawe, he was simply honoring a mother's tearful plea for the body of her son; the people had him in life--his mother should have him in death.

A real resurrection

Nonetheless, there was a real resurrection. The people who came in throngs to the wake and funeral Mass of their pastor were not an intimidated, fearful people, cowed by the violence of his death (it was supposed to be an object lesson to those who would stand up against the powerful). Their numbers spoke not of fear but of courage, not of despair but of hope, not of death but of life. A glorious rising of the spirit.

I pray that the empty tomb, no matter what other heinous crimes will still be perpetrated against the people of Kibawe, will always be a memorial and a pledge of their rising in the spirit from all that now, for them, spells death: poverty, exploitation, injustice, hatred, manipulation, fear, unfreedom, tyranny, violence--the list of evils is long...

Death-dealing evils, all. And because Father Alingal sought in life to fight them, to lessen them, to ease the pain they brought his people, he met a death of violence. Like Christ. Though unlike Christ, he did not himself rise again.

But there are no two ways about it: there will be a rising from the dead, not only in the spirit but in the body as well. The conviction is unshakeable, the faith and the hope firm. But still we mourn. And in our mourning, we ask: Was his death inevitable?

The death on the cross

I would think it was. Just as the death on the Cross. There was only one way Father could have avoided death: by running away, physically and figuratively. He could have kept his peace. He could have closed his eyes to the evils he saw around him. He could have given in to fear, yielding to threats on his life, abandoning his flock to ravening wolves. But no. "The good pastor lays down his life for his sheep." The man who died on the Cross and rose again had set the pattern.

All of which makes us look deeper into ourselves, impels us to scrutinize more closely our commitment to the Gospel--its meaning, its demands, its challenges--in the real life conditions of Bukidnon, of the country as a whole, here and now.

No turning back

Where do we go from here? There is, I am afraid, no other direction: the same way we have been going. There is no turning back. There can be no turning back. The road we have chosen to take over the past ten years as a Church is no easy road. And walking it, we know full well the toll it will wring from us, the burdens we must take on and bear, the pitfalls we must escape. These are not mere figures of speech. They are real--as real as the horror of Father Alingal's violent end.

So we press on. And even as we press on, we take stock of how far we have come, where we must quicken our pace, how we can share and ease the burden of one another. We take stock--in reflective prayer, in common discernment.

Our prayer, our discernment--they will focus on the silent, empty tomb at Kibawe. For this moment, at least, in our life as a Church. Because for all its silence and emptiness, its message is loud and full. As loud and full as any of God's thundering epiphanies from mountain tops.

Yet clear and certain as that message is, we see there is, at its core, a mystery of great transcendence. And it is that mystery we must grapple with now--in faith, in deepest faith.

Proclaiming the Gospel of justice

We start with this one fact: If there is anything certain in the many uncertainties that surround the murder of Father Alingal, it is this: he was gunned down because of his unflinching proclamation of the Gospel of justice. And so we ask ourselves: Should we mute a little our own proclamation of that Gospel lest we suffer the same fate? Or should we push on relentlessly, not rest until all murderers and wrongdoers in Bukidnon are

meted the sentence of justice that they deserve? Or is there a way of proclaiming and working for justice without taking upon ourselves the role of God's avenging angel? The line between justice and revenge can become very thin. Indeed, reach the vanishing point altogether.

Violence?

The above questions move us on to another fact: Despite his strong commitment to justice, Father Alingal never advocated violence--the violence that kills-- and fell victim himself to it. And we ask: Should we avoid violence by any and all means, allow ourselves to be trampled on without so much as a whimper of protest? Or should we take up arms ourselves in justifiable self-defense, turn our conventos and churches, our towns and villages, into out-and-out arsenals? Or is there a way of fighting violence without ourselves going the way of violence? The line between fighting violence and doing violence can also disappear completely.

The tomb at Kibawe does confront us with these hard questions. We can answer them by saying we must suffer injustice and violence patiently, all that matters is the reward exceeding great in heaven. Or alternatively we can say: we must not tolerate injustice, and if the only way to stop it is to kill the perpetrators of injustice, kill we must in justified violence.

But I doubt these are the kind of answers the empty tomb of Kibawe points to. Nor that other empty tomb on whose witness our whole faith rests. I doubt they are the answers either that have been building up in recent years in our communities of faith all over Bukidnon.

If they are not, what is?

For justice against violence

There is a clear answer indicated, I believe, in the two facts noted above about Father Alingal's death--or, better, life: he was for justice, actively, uncompromisingly. He was also against violence, just as actively, just as uncompromisingly. If he had but reneged on the one, he might be alive today, his enemies not finding any compelling reason to kill him. If he had championed the other, he might not have been defenseless himself before the guns of his assailants. His yes to justice, his no to violence --these are the hard facts of the life of the man whose murdered body was meant to fill the lonely tomb at Kibawe.

Father Alingal's answer, I believe, is a perfect exemplification of the consensus that arose from our last general Prelature meeting in February of priests and religious, lay leaders and Church workers. At that meeting we faced up to the problem of armed power in Bukidnon and its consequences for ourselves and our people. The consensus was an option for, to put it into a formula, total vulnerability. In effect, it was a rejection of violence as a way of righting wrongs and an affirmation of the Prelature's thrust for justice. We said no to the "salvaging" of the military, to the "liquidation" of the NPA; yes to the continued striving for justice and the peace that comes through justice.

From a sheerly human--intellectual, political, ideological--point of view, we know the option made no sense. We saw clearly that by our open disavowal of the violence of both the military and the NPA and all other armed powers, we were putting ourselves completely at their mercy; worse, we were inviting, even provoking, the very violence we were rejecting by our insistence on the forceful doing of justice; and possibly, worst of all, we arrived at the option in the clear-eyed conviction that we would never be able to bring about full justice in society but for all that we would have to keep striving mightily for it--even unto death.

Context of faith

It does not make sense. Except in the context of a faith that is able to make sense out of the contradictions of the Cross and the empty tomb and accept their implications for human living.

Weakness is our strength, vulnerability our power, death our life. There is mystery here--deep, unfathomable. We see it in the empty tomb of Father Alingal at Kibawa. And we see its meaning only in the all-encompassing mystery of Christ's own empty tomb.

Only people of faith can take it. And we must be those people.

Malaybalay, Bukidnon,
April 26th, 1981.
(1 Chthys. May 15, 1981)

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CHRISTIANISME POPULAIRE SUBVERSIF

Pablo Richard

(The first part of this study, which appeared in Amérique Latine, No. 4, October-December, 1980, analyzes the development of popular religiosity culminating in the awareness that the exploited and believing people is itself the agent, rather than the object of liberation and evangelization. Pablo Richard sees the full realization of this new approach in the Puebla Conference. He sees it also in the homily of John Paul II delivered at the Zapopan Sanctuary on 30.1.1979 after the Conference. This dealt with popular piety and referred to its Marian dimension.

There is a danger of over-simplifying both the reality and the significance of popular religiosity today, and so we reproduce this serious attempt to study its significance in Central America. Ed).

LA RELIGIOSITE POPULAIRE EN AMERIQUE CENTRALE

Description du problème

On peut considérer comme une opinion commune à tous les praticiens des sciences sociales que la crise actuelle du système capitaliste n'est pas seulement politique et économique, mais aussi idéologique. Cette crise idéologique ne fait pas que "s'ajouter" aux autres, elle exprime une prise de conscience massive de l'illégitimité du système politique et économique. Il s'agit d'une crise généralisée de la société civile, c'est-à-dire du fondement éthique et intellectuel du système de domination. En disant qu'il y a une crise de légitimité du système, nous ne voulons pas dire qu'auparavant le système était légitime. Il ne le fut jamais. Mais il était imposé et accepté par les majorités comme légitime. Aujourd'hui la crise idéologique du système capitaliste implique que le peuple a pris conscience de cette illégitimité; le système est rejeté consciemment comme illégitime.

En Amérique latine en général, mais sous une forme très spécifique en Amérique centrale, la légitimité du système économique et politique est consciemment élaborée en termes de vie et de mort. Le système politique est illégitime parce qu'il tue. Le système économique est illégitime parce que lui aussi tue, parce qu'il n'assure pas la vie des majorités, c'est-à-dire le travail, le pain, le toit, la santé, l'éducation et la sécurité pour tous.

La crise de la légitimité du système: La légitimité du système n'est pas simplement pensée en termes techniques, théoriques, politiques ou idéologiques, mais elle est vécue massivement et directement en termes de vie et de mort. Au nombre des éléments propres à l'Amérique centrale qui ont radicalisé cette crise, il y a le caractère notoirement oligarchique de la domination politique et l'absence quasi-totale par le passé d'expériences démocratico-bourgeoises ou populistes.

S'y ajoutent les multiples et profondes interventions directes des Etats-Unis. La conséquence en fut la maintenance d'un système de domination extrêmement violent, cruel, répressif, incapable de construire une hégémonie, un consensus, une société stable et solide.

La religiosité populaire: Un autre fait essentiel et assez caractéristique de l'Amérique centrale s'ajoute à cette crise de légitimité; il s'agit de l'objet même de notre réflexion: la religiosité populaire. Celle-ci est une manifestation (elle n'est pas la seule) de ce que d'autres auteurs appellent "le facteur religieux" et que j'appellerais "le sens chrétien traditionnel" du peuple. L'un de ses noyaux les plus forts a toujours été l'affirmation de la vie. Dans cette affirmation l'évangélisation a joué un rôle majeur, de la Colonisation à nos jours.

En dépit de ses ambiguïtés séculaires, de ses perversions et manipulations, le christianisme a conservé et transmis le sens évangélique de la vie. Il constitue le noyau central du message chrétien et son expression directe est la foi en la Résurrection de Jésus et l'espérance du Royaume de Dieu.

L'évangélisation en Amérique latine, ici aussi en dépit de ses ambiguïtés, perversions et manipulations, a réellement su transmettre le sens évangélique, spécialement dans les classes et les secteurs les plus pauvres et exploités. Il en découle que le noyau constitutif du sens chrétien traditionnel du peuple est ce sens profond de la vie.

Sens de la vie: Dans la religiosité populaire ce sens de la vie et le rejet correspondant de tout ce qui est mort s'exprime normalement et fréquemment dans les thèmes qui ont trait à la Résurrection du Christ et au Royaume de Dieu. Ces thèmes appartiennent à la mémoire religieuse historique du peuple exploité et n'ont jamais été ni oubliés ni trahis, quelles qu'aient été les manoeuvres idéologiques des classes dominantes.

Les pauvres d'Amérique latine, malgré cinq siècles de domination coloniale "chrétienne" ont su discerner, assimiler et approfondir ce noyau subversif de l'évangélisation référée à la vie.

Ces deux faits, la crise de la légitimité du système et le sens chrétien traditionnel du peuple, ne sont pas parallèles, sans relation entre eux. Ils sont au contraire très liés dans la conscience du peuple latino-américain et plus spécialement en Amérique centrale. La crise de légitimité du système comprise en termes de vie et de mort du peuple comme majorité est consciemment pensée aussi par la conscience religieuse du peuple dans les mêmes termes de vie et de mort.

Menace de mort: Le peuple est affronté au système économique et politique dominant comme s'il affrontait une menace collective et permanente de mort. Ce fait se répercute directement et explicitement sur le sens chrétien traditionnel du peuple. Le sens chrétien de la vie enraciné dans la conscience populaire a permis au peuple de prendre conscience et de réagir face au péril mortel du système de domination.

La conscience politique et la conscience chrétienne du peuple coïncident et se renforcent dans un même mouvement de lutte contre le capitalisme. Cette coïncidence explique en grande partie le caractère massif, profond, violent et conscient de la crise actuelle de la légitimité du système en Amérique latine. La prise de conscience politique a renforcé le sens chrétien et évangélique traditionnel du peuple, et réciproquement.

Mouvements ecclésiaux de base: Trait spécifique de l'Amérique centrale, mais généralisable à tout le sous-continent, les mouvements ecclésiaux de base ont rapidement et facilement été radicalisés politiquement dans leur insertion populaire, sans rien perdre de leur propre identité. Et réciproquement, là où la mobilisation populaire prenait de l'ampleur, naissait facilement un mouvement populaire de renouveau évangélique. Le discours religieux qui affirme le sens évangélique de la vie a une incidence massive et profonde sur la conscience politique du peuple.

Le cas des discours de Mgr. Oscar Romero au Salvador est évident. Et le discours politique a lui aussi une incidence directe sur la conscience religieuse du peuple.

Les caractéristiques propres et spécifiques de la crise de la légitimité du système qui sont aussi celles du sens chrétien traditionnel du peuple expliquent ce phénomène. Les exemples historiques pourraient être multipliés à loisir: il faudrait analyser le mouvement des Communautés chrétiennes populaires au Salvador, la participation des chrétiens à la révolution sandiniste, l'impact de la pastorale populaire sur l'organisation des mouvements de paysans au Guatemala, au Honduras, à Panama, etc.

Les appareils répressifs de tous ces Etats n'arrivent plus à distinguer un mouvement politique populaire d'un mouvement évangélico-ecclésial étant donné le caractère directement subversif qu'ils manifestent également tous les deux. Les partis de gauche et les mouvements de libération en Amérique centrale ont eux aussi compris cette situation, et les schèmes désuets, positivistes et sécularisants, hérités de la vieille gauche, s'écroulent.

Le rôle de la conscience chrétienne: Une conséquence directe de ce qui vient d'être dit est le rôle actif et positif de la conscience chrétienne traditionnelle populaire et de ses manifestations dans la religiosité populaire, dans les mouvements ecclésiaux populaires et dans l'organisation politique des masses en Amérique centrale. Si le sens chrétien traditionnel a joué un rôle actif dans la prise de conscience de la crise de légitimité du système capitaliste et dans la mise en garde des masses contre le péril mortel que cela signifiait il est également agissant dans la construction d'une société civile différente, populaire et révolutionnaire.

Le peuple recourt normalement à sa conscience religieuse et à ses valeurs en tant qu'espace et instrument d'un projet historique, d'une vision du monde, d'un large mouvement éthique et intellectuel, expression de ses plus profondes aspirations politiques et économiques, à une vie meilleure.

CADRE THEORIQUE D'INTERPRETATION

Ce que nous venons de dire d'une manière descriptive nous voudrions maintenant l'interpréter et le mettre en problématique, théoriquement.

Quelques éléments du cadre théorique élaboré par Otto Maduro dans son intéressant ouvrage Religion y lucha de clases fournissent un point de départ. Ici nous intéressons surtout: "Le champ religieux en tant que facteur actif dans les conflits sociaux." Après une analyse du champ religieux comme produit des conflits sociaux (chapitre 2), puis comme terrain relativement autonome de ces conflits (chapitre 3), l'auteur l'envisage comme facteur actif dans les conflits sociaux ou ce qu'il appelle les conditionnements religieux des luttes sociales. L'auteur se situe au coeur de la réalité latino-américaine.

La lutte des classes: Nos observations sur la religiosité populaire en Amérique centrale confirment l'opinion traditionnelle selon laquelle elle est en grande partie un produit de la lutte des classes, partiellement produite par les rapports sociaux et cependant partiellement autonome en tant qu'activité et expression propres et spécifiques.

La religiosité populaire et la vie des Eglises sont fondamentalement déterminées par les conflits sociaux, mais ces conflits traversent la réalité religieuse et ecclésiale en prenant des formes et des caractéristiques qui lui sont propres. Cette opinion, pour fondée qu'elle soit, reste très insuffisante pour expliquer la réalité centro-américaine que nous avons décrite. Il faut aller plus loin et analyser, comme le fait Otto Maduro, l'influence significative que la religion peut exercer sur le développement, la structuration et l'expression des conflits sociaux.

Une vision religieuse: Otto Maduro pose le principe général suivant:

"...pour les groupes sociaux subalternes ayant une vision du monde fondamentalement religieuse, la capacité de transformer leur condition sociale inférieure dépend de leur aptitude à construire une vision religieuse du monde, qui soit indépendante, différente et contradictoire de la vision dominante du monde dans leur propre société". Quand ce principe se vérifie, dans des conditions historiques bien déterminées, la religion des classes exploitées tend à assurer une fonction révolutionnaire.

L'auteur analyse ce degré d'autonomie des classes dominées, qui peut s'exprimer dans le champ religieux, au niveau de la conscience de classe, de l'organisation de classe, de la mobilisation de classe. La religion peut ainsi avoir une influence active sur le développement de la conscience de classe des secteurs exploités. De même, sous certaines conditions, une religion peut fonctionner comme "canal d'organisation autonome des classes subalternes, surtout s'il y a un seul système religieux commun aux classes subalternes, distinct et contradictoire de celui (ou de ceux) des classes dominantes" (p. 194).

Enfin, une religion peut fonctionner comme "canal de mobilisation des classes subalternes contre la domination, surtout s'il existe des conflits déclarés entre un système religieux commun aux classes subalternes et un autre, exclusif, des classes dominantes" (ib.). Ces effets du champ religieux sur les conflits sociaux apparaissent surtout dans des sociétés (comme certaines sociétés féodales) "où le champ religieux constitue la principale institution de reproduction des rapports sociaux". Dans de telles sociétés un changement révolutionnaire est pratiquement impossible sans un changement significatif dans le champ religieux: "...des groupes (exploités) ne peuvent se situer, s'orienter, agir contre les classes dominantes sans transformation religieuses préalables ou concomitantes" (p. 195).

Pour qu'il y ait action du champ religieux sur le champ social et politique, la religion des classes exploitées doit non seulement exprimer sa contradiction fondamentale avec les classes qui les exploitent, mais aussi "conserver une certaine continuité avec les traditions de ces mêmes classes (et surtout avec les traditions religieuses)" (p. 197). C'est cette continuité qui permet à la transformation révolutionnaire de la religion de se communiquer, de se répandre, de recueillir une adhésion collective de la part du peuple.

Application à la religiosité populaire en Amérique centrale: Ce cadre théorique élaboré par Otto Maduro nous semble pleinement valoir pour une analyse de la religiosité populaire en Amérique centrale. Le "sens chrétien traditionnel" du peuple, on l'a vu, a agi sur la prise de conscience politique de la crise de légitimité du système capitaliste et dans l'élaboration d'une société civile différente, populaire et révolutionnaire. Et réciproquement le mouvement politique a vivifié la conscience chrétienne du peuple et ses manifestations dans la religiosité populaire et dans les Communautés chrétiennes populaires.

Le mouvement chrétien populaire et plus précisément le mouvement des communautés de base ont constitué un espace (pas le seul assurément) de formation d'une conscience de classe, d'une organisation et d'une mobilisation de classes contre le système capitaliste dominant.

Le travail d'évangélisation et d'organisation ecclésiale du peuple s'est constamment développé à partir du processus de libération des classes exploitées et en contradiction permanente avec le système dominant. Les martyrs de cette "Eglise populaire", assassinés par les différentes dictatures, sont le meilleur symbole de cette évolution et leur vénération massive par le peuple le confirme.

"Chrétienté" et "Eglise": L'analyse précédente doit être approfondie et enrichie de nouveaux éléments qui nous permettent de mieux interpréter la réalité de la religiosité populaire en Amérique centrale. Un concept-clé pour cette interprétation est celui de "chrétienté" et de la différence entre chrétienté et Eglise. Nous définissons la chrétienté comme un mode particulier d'insertion de l'Eglise dans la société, qui utilise comme médiation le pouvoir politique et social des classes dominantes. La chrétienté ne définit pas directement l'Eglise, mais le rapport Eglise-société.

La réalité de l'Eglise ne coïncide pas entièrement avec la chrétienté et la crise d'un modèle donné de chrétienté n'implique pas nécessairement la crise de l'Eglise. L'Eglise peut s'inscrire aux marges de la société et à l'opposé du pouvoir social et politique des classes dominantes. Dans la chrétienté il y a entre ces deux instances un rapport de mutuelle légitimation, légitimation qui peut être conditionnelle ou inconditionnelle, qui peut se référer à la société politique ou à la société civile, les divers modes de chrétienté variant selon les cas.

Le régime de chrétienté implique en tout cas une intégration de l'Eglise au système politique dominant. L'Eglise cherche à assurer sa présence et son influence dans l'ensemble de la société, moyennant cette intégration.

Forte intégration de l'Eglise à la société: En Amérique centrale, comme dans le reste de l'Amérique latine, a fonctionné, depuis l'époque coloniale, un régime de chrétienté. Le trait propre à l'Amérique centrale est que l'Eglise a non seulement légitimé le pouvoir politique dominant mais qu'elle a aussi joué un rôle particulièrement actif dans la constitution et la conservation de la société civile, c'est-à-dire du fondement éthique et intellectuel de ce pouvoir. Les oligarchies nationales ont été incapables d'instaurer elles-mêmes une société civile solide, authentique et autonome par rapport à l'Eglise. Le mouvement libéral de la fin du XIXe siècle n'eut pas non plus la force suffisante pour construire une telle société civile. En un sens, l'Eglise tint le rôle "d'intellectuel organique" du bloc historique en chaque pays.

Cette situation a profondément engagé l'Eglise avec le système dominant, surtout avec sa base de légitimité, mais d'autre part cette situation a toujours signifié la faiblesse de cette société civile, l'Eglise ne disposant pas toujours des éléments nécessaires ni des cadres intellectuels aptes à la construire.

Large base populaire d'appui: Une autre caractéristique fondamentale de la chrétienté centroaméricaine est sa large base populaire. La base sociale de la chrétienté était constituée fondamentalement par les classes sociales les plus pauvres, les classes moyennes étant relativement peu développées et sans rôle spécialement actif dans la société civile; lorsqu'elles ont eu ce rôle, ce fut plutôt en marge de l'Eglise. L'oligarchie, outre sa faiblesse numérique, dépendait intellectuellement de l'extérieur, et, surtout du fait de l'influence du libéralisme, restait assez méfiante à l'égard de l'Eglise.

Ces deux caractéristiques de la chrétienté centro-américaine - forte intégration de l'Eglise à la société civile et large base populaire d'appui --restent spécialement valides dans le schéma théorique que nous avons esquissé. En temps normal (s'il y eût jamais quelque "normalité" en Amérique centrale), la reproduction des rapports sociaux se structure directement et explicitement dans le champ religieux.

La situation est analogue à celle de la société féodale, où la contestation sociale apparaissait nécessairement comme une hérésie ou une révolte contre l'Eglise même, ce qui affectait directement le rapport entre l'Eglise hiérarchique et le peuple. En temps de crise du système--surtout maintenant où il y a forte crise de légitimité du système--le régime de chrétienté est directement impliqué dans la crise. Autrement dit, en Amérique centrale, la crise du système dominant touche la chrétienté sous une forme beaucoup plus directe et plus radicale. La raison en est justement cette plus forte intégration de l'Eglise dans la société civile et le fait que le peuple soit la base fondamentale d'appui de la chrétienté.

La crise de légitimité du système ou la crise de la société civile coïncident pour ainsi dire avec la crise de l'Eglise elle-même entendue comme partie d'un système de chrétienté. Par ailleurs, la base populaire de cette chrétienté critique nécessairement la légitimité du système en termes religieux qui sont antagoniques et contradictoires de ceux de la chrétienté dominante. Le mouvement populaire prend des formes religieuses qui accélèrent la crise de la chrétienté.

La contradiction fondamentale: Il faut cependant affirmer en toute clarté, en prenant en compte les termes de notre schéma d'analyse, que le mouvement populaire, qui assume des formes et des contenus religieux, n'entre pas en contradiction directe avec l'Eglise hiérarchique, mais avec la chrétienté. La contradiction avec l'Eglise apparaît seulement quand cette Eglise assume le régime de chrétienté.

La contradiction fondamentale et directe est entre le mouvement populaire chrétien et la chrétienté et non entre le mouvement populaire chrétien et l'Eglise hiérarchique. Cette distinction est fondamentale pour comprendre le sens et le caractère de ce que l'on appelle en Amérique latine "Eglise populaire". Celle-ci ne se définit pas comme anti-Eglise ou comme Eglise parallèle, alternative à l'Eglise hiérarchique; elle se définit directement et fondamentalement en contradiction avec la chrétienté. L'Eglise populaire rompt avec elle, non avec l'Eglise hiérarchique; elle cherche à s'insérer dans la société à la marge et contre le pouvoir politique et social des classes dominantes.

Valeurs du royaume: Son seul pouvoir est le pouvoir spécifique de sa foi, de son espérance et de sa charité, le pouvoir de l'Evangile qui trouve ses racines profondes dans le sens chrétien traditionnel du peuple exploité. Du point de vue théologique, l'Eglise populaire possède une ecclésialité authentique et représente la vocation universelle de toute l'Eglise. C'est dans ce contexte que la religiosité populaire trouve sa véritable interprétation, tant par rapport à la conscience politique et au sens chrétien traditionnel du peuple, que par rapport à cette Eglise populaire. La religiosité populaire apparaît ainsi comme le champ de production et de reproduction d'une société civile alternative à la société civile dominante où la conscience de classe, l'organisation populaire et la mobilisation politique révolutionnaire ne rencontrent pas d'obstacle dans la religiosité populaire, mais au contraire un lieu de développement et une motivation fondamentale.

L'Eglise populaire: Par ailleurs, l'Eglise populaire trouve dans cette religiosité populaire comme expression des intérêts, des valeurs, de la culture et de la vision du monde des classes populaires cohérentes avec le sens chrétien qui leur est propre, son espace spécifique de croissance et de développement. Ainsi la conscience révolutionnaire du peuple progresse sans entrer en contradiction fondamentale avec la conscience chrétienne du peuple et avec ses expressions dans la religiosité populaire et dans l'Eglise populaire. Mieux encore, elle y trouve un espace de croissance et un dynamisme qui l'enrichit.

Conclusion: Pour conclure, nous pouvons dire, à partir de l'expérience centroaméricaine, que le peuple exploité et croyant, dans la mesure où il s'affirme comme sujet de sa propre histoire est aussi le sujet propre de la religiosité populaire. La conscience révolutionnaire de ce peuple est aussi le sujet de sa conscience évangélisatrice. La potentialité de sa foi libératrice est liée à sa capacité révolutionnaire et réciproquement. La conscience politique et la conscience chrétienne du peuple exploité et croyant se développent en convergence et se renforcent l'une l'autre.

Dans cette perspective c'est le même peuple qui discerne les éléments aliénants ou libérateurs que peut véhiculer la religiosité populaire. Tant la tâche de conscientisation politique des organisations populaires, que la tâche d'évangélisation libératrice de l'Eglise prennent en compte le peuple comme sujet de sa propre histoire et porteur actif du charisme de l'évangélisation.

Reference: FOI ET DÉVELOPPEMENT, Centre Lebreton, 88, juin-juillet 1981.

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JEAN-PAUL II AUX ORGANISMES CHRÉTIENS DU SERVICE VOLONTAIRE INTERNATIONAL ITALIENS

"Le volontariat est comme le signe et l'expression de la charité évangélique...

N'entendez pas exporter des idéologies ou imposer des modèles culturels. Regardez avec sympathie et amour l'homme dans sa situation concrète, dans la véritable et totale réalité de son être et de son destin...

Votre service exige un esprit de pauvreté...il suppose une attitude d'écoute, une sensibilité aux valeurs culturelles et spirituelles du milieu, de la prudence dans les jugements, du discernement dans les choix, un témoignage de vie authentiquement chrétien"...

Reference: Coopération et Développement, No. 75-- 1981.

INDIRECT METHODS IN THE MISSIONARY APOSTOLATE: SOME THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS

Raymond Pannikar

(Raymond Pannikar a attiré notre attention sur quelques-unes de ses réflexions théologiques remontant à 1970. Elles sont utiles pour les discussions en cours sur l'évangélisation directe. Pannikar se fait l'avocat d'un nouveau type de formation personnelle des chrétiens consacrés et pour une pleine redécouverte de la mission spécifique de l'Eglise centrée autour de l'Eucharistie.)

(A) DEFINITIONS

1. By 'indirect methods' are understood those procedures or activities which do not directly intend, either objectively in themselves or subjectively in the intention of the agent, the immediate aim of the Apostolate, i.e. the salvation of man, but attempt only to prepare the ground for some subsequent direct activity. This 'indirect' preparation presupposes an ontological discontinuity between the indirect means and the direct methods.

2. A direct method is one which is immediately connected with the specific mission of the Church.

3. The mission of the Church is the continuation in space and time of the work of Christ. The work of Christ, the Pantocrator, is being realized not only in and through the visible Church, but also in and through the human person in an inscrutable way. The Church can thus be understood either as the Living Organism, whose vital principle is the Holy Spirit, i.e., as the Mystery, which existing since the beginning of the world was made manifest in Christ, or as the Visible Sacramental Organization which embodies the former, but which cannot be identified with it.

4. The work of Christ was not primarily to found a new religion, but to continue the creative work of God, i.e., to redeem the whole world sending his Spirit for the divinization of the entire cosmos. Likewise, the mission of the Church is not primarily one which could be identified with one religion alone, but of being an instrument of redemption for the whole cosmos, co-operating with the incarnate Son and the Spirit. Thus, under this perspective, there is no place for a sense of frustration, for the Church is neither the nurse nor the educator nor the ruler of the whole of mankind, but the place in and through which mankind reaches its destination, i.e. its final goal.

5. Redemption, here, stands for salvation, and salvation does not mean merely 'liberation' of the 'soul' or healing of the 'body', but man's wholeness, i.e. the full integration of his theandric being, that final--divine--perfection into which the whole cosmos has been called. This process is not automatic, but requires a free human response.

(B) PRINCIPLES

6. To argue that the Church has to rely on 'indirect methods' as a means of fulfilling her mission on earth would smack of pelagianism. It would also be unacceptable, for it would require a policy of strategy and scheming in direct opposition and plain contradiction to the spirit and the letter of the Gospel. Thus, the theology of 'indirect methods' consists in rejecting them altogether as proper tasks of the Church.

7. In order to decide what is an indirect method we have to take into consideration that the Church lives in history and that therefore its own awareness, like that of mankind, varies with the times. Thus, what according to the mental outlook of one epoch was considered a direct method may in another epoch be regarded as indirect.

8. History proves that the Church, as such, never purposely introduced 'indirect methods'; though what was started as a direct method may be considered indirect in the opinion of a following generation, and as such may continue only by virtue of historical inertia. The works of mercy, for instance, which were the crown of glory of the 'missions' and are now becoming the crown of thorns, were started as direct and not indirect means of apostolate.

9. Whenever a method is considered to have become an indirect method, it has to be transferred from the Church as such to such secular or non-ecclesial agencies as are capable of carrying on that particular activity.

10. Men's attitude regarding a particular method and its assessment may vary in different places and also among people living at any one time, though it usually follows a detectable general trend. It is the function of those in authority to discern the signs of the times and to take the necessary steps in line with the dynamism of life of the Church to avoid unnecessary traumas.

COROLLARIES

11. Whereas education, medical care and social uplift were considered direct methods when they were started as Church activities, and are still judged as such by a minority, they have been replaced nowadays in the mind of many Christians by the struggle for human justice in all its aspects, economic, racial, religious, etc., but in as far as the former values can be said to belong to the mission of the Church they are seen in direct connection with the salvation of man.

12. Whatever contributes to a more worthy and integrated human life, i.e. whatever tends towards a complete humanization, which, in traditional Christian terms, could be called a theandric transfiguration, is considered today a direct means of apostolate. The shift in consciousness is caused by that process of ecclesial secularization--to be distinguished from profane secularism--which no longer envisages salvation in a merely disincarnate and transcendent way. The function of the Church is, accordingly not to cultivate only a part of the human being--the spiritual or supernatural--but to integrate the person so that he may reach his theandric fullness: the Church, sacramentum mundi, being the incarnate link between an insufficient immanent secularism and a lop-sided transcendent supernaturalism.

13. A man's personal vocation does not necessarily coalesce with the mission of the Church. A method of apostolate can only be a direct method if it gets hold of the whole person, or, in other words, if the person believes in it as a direct method. Thus, it seems the duty of the authorities concerned to free all those members who no longer consider what they are doing a direct means of apostolate, and to enable them to engage themselves in activities where they may be able to integrate, first, their own personalities and, consequently, those also of the people with or for whom they work.

14. To 'de-freeze' present-day structures without creating confusion or harm to anybody is one of the most urgent tasks of those in authority. One course of action would be to hand over to non-ecclesial agencies all that those agencies are prepared to take, retaining a part, perhaps, of the same personnel, but ceasing to be an ecclesiastical organization.

15. More important still seems to be a positive determination to create, not new cadres on the whole, but a new type of personal formation which would enable consecrated Christians to collaborate in our society, realizing in a less organized but more personalist way the Christian vocation of being salt, leaven and light.

16. The highest importance should, finally, be given to the full recovery of the specific mission of the Church, which is centred around the Liturgy, understood as the integral work, ergon, of the people of God, laos, which finds its culmination in the Eucharistic Mystery.

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BARBARA WARD

The national press has paid the highest tributes to Baroness Jackson, better known as Barbara Ward, who died last Sunday after a long illness. The Times called her "one of the most outstanding and admired women of her generation..." The Guardian described her as "one of the most brilliant contributors to economic and political thought since the 1930s" and such tributes could be multiplied many times. (Tom Burns)

Well or ill she wrote and spoke indefatigably; two of her books "The Home of Man" (1976) and "Progress for a Small Planet" (1979) were written between operations. Her last article, a magistral study of the Brandt Report for the influential American journal Foreign Affairs, was composed when the doctors were counting her life in weeks or even days.

Apart from her faith she had four great concerns: social justice between the rich and poor nations; the protection of the environment; the position of women in society and in the Church (she was national president of the Catholic Women's League for three years in the late forties); and anti-nuclear development. On all these topics she spoke with passionate conviction. (Bishop Gerald Mahon)

Barbara Ward dedicated the last 30 years of her life to the cause of world poverty. On 3 December 1980, when she was dying and unable to receive in person from Prince Philip the Prince Albert Gold Medal for her work, she sent a last message through Sir William Clark who received the medal for her:

"Tell them that the development and betterment of the poorer two-thirds of the world is the most important task of us all in the remainder of this century. We still have a choice: to go the way of 1931 in a competitive enmity, finishing up in darkness and death, or the way of 1947, when the Marshall Plan was a symbol of cooperation between those with surpluses and those with deficits, which gave to the world a quarter of a century of unexampled economic growth and prosperity. That is the message I want to put across as long as I live, and through our Institute for Environmental Studies for longer."

This message contained the key to her life, the aim which she pursued single-mindedly, motivated not by any political, ideological or personal interest but by a pure zeal for the service of God and man.

If at times she assumed the mantle of an Old Testament prophet in her moral indignation at the division of the world into the "haves" and "have nots", Dives and Lazarus (as she did, for example, in her book Rich Nations and Poor Nations), she combined this with a knowledge breathtaking in its scope, and never lost sight of the global measures required in the form of political commitment, economic reform, ecological restraint, and so on, which are the pre-conditions for tackling this greatest problem of our time: the existence of grinding poverty and even actual starvation alongside affluence such as the world has never seen, of the gap between the North and South in the world community. (Fr. Arthur McCormack)

Reference: Extracts from THE TABLET, 6 June 1981.

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SO YOU WANT TO TAKE A SURVEY

In Western thinking particularly, the survey or public opinion poll or research study has become the primary vehicle through which we gain new understanding. It seems like everybody is doing it. It is almost impossible to go through a large daily newspaper without discovering the results of some new survey.

It appears so scientific, so impersonal, so devoid of personal opinion and bias. Rather than go through the emotional experience of debating an issue, we can ask people in the anonymity of an unsigned survey to tell us what they are really thinking.

Look Out!

What seems at first to be a simple task too often ends up as a disaster. We have seen missionaries from the field with cartons of survey data, which on closer examination turned out to be useless. We have seen enthusiastic survey takers collect masses of data which appeared on closer examination to have no meaning. Then there are those excellent research reports based on good survey techniques, which lie gathering dust on the shelves behind an executive's desk. Thousands of pounds and energy have been spent, but now no one seems to know what to do with the results.

What Went Wrong?

The primary problem with most surveys taken within or by Christian organizations is that no one decided what action they were going to take as a result of the survey. There are many different kinds of survey techniques, some simple and some very complex. But ultimately every survey should be designed so that one can either solve a known problem or make a decision that one could not make without it.

Look at the Entire Process

Too often when people think about taking a survey, they focus all their attention on the construction of a questionnaire. They may carefully construct the questions of the questionnaire, discuss them among themselves, and plan to review the results together. But they fail to take a look at the total process. Here are the basic steps that we should go through:

1. Define the problem or decision. What problem do you want to solve or what decision do you want to make that you can not now make without further research? (A good definition of "research" is an attempt to supply missing experience.)

A subset of this is what are you committed to do once you have the information?

2. What data or information do you need in order to solve this problem or make this decision?
3. What questions need to be answered in order to obtain this data?
The data and the answers are not necessarily the same.
4. What questions would you ask in order to answer those questions? This is one place where most amateur surveyors go astray. They assume that the questions they want answered are the ones that people will answer if asked.
5. What is the best way of getting these questions answered? Perhaps a written or interview survey is the way to do it. Perhaps not. As we will discuss below, there are a number of problems that even asking the question might cause.
6. How many people do I need to query? Most of us are familiar with the concept of "sampling", the idea that in order to get a good handle on what a large group is thinking we don't have to ask everyone in the group.
7. What people do we need to question? Are we going to ask everyone? If we are not, how are we going to make sure that our sample is valid?

Surveys Can Change Things

So much for the bare bones of designing a survey. Perhaps one of the least understood things about surveys is the way they have of changing things. Just the asking of the question can often "contaminate" the way people are thinking. To give an oversimplified but rather dramatic example, suppose next Sunday you found a one question survey card in the pew rack in front of you with just one question: "Do you believe Pastor Jones has served our church long enough?" Who's asking this? What are they getting at? Is there a problem in our church? Is he sick?

Extract from CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP LETTER, December 1980.