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EDITORIAL

In this edition we are once again able to offer you some articles which are the result of a series of conferences organised by SEDOS here in Rome.

Fr **JOHN FÜLLENBACH, SVD**, in his first conference elaborates on how the 'Kingdom' belongs to the very centre of the mission of Jesus, and how this proclamation relates to the Church today. In his second conference, he responds to the question all missionaries continually ask themselves: 'In what does our mission consist today?' - Our third contribution is a very interesting study of the reality of Human Rights in Africa. **JOSEPH KI-ZERBO** shows how human rights are traditionally- rooted in African culture and beliefs. - Fr **XABIER GOROSTIAGA, SJ**, the rector of the Central American University in El Salvador, gave an illuminating conference at the UN Summit in Copenhagen. He concludes that in a changing global reality alternative 'development' is called for. **LAMBERT NYEME KADIAMONOKO** draws an alarming picture of Zaire — starting from recent terrible accidents which killed hundreds of people in Kinshasa unnecessarily.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD — THE CENTRAL MESSAGE OF JESUS SEEN IN THE CHALLENGES OF TODAY —

PART I

Fullenbach, John

(Fr John Füllenbach , SVD., lectures at the Gregorian University and at the Regina Mundi in Rome, he is also a guest lecturer at many other faculties. This conference was given at the SEDOS Seminar on 14 February 1996, in Rome).

Introduction

A question is constantly asked today that touches the very roots of our faith and the mission of the Church as well. Is the message we preach and proclaim today still the message Jesus preached? Or, in other words, is our proclamation of the message so encrusted with traditions and secondary concerns that the people of our time can hardly see the real issues Jesus addressed?

In order to answer these questions we have to go back to Jesus himself and to ask once again what he was all about, what the vision was he treasured, and what he regarded as his mission. Only in this way can we know who we are and on what mission he has sent us as his disciples.

The Vision of Jesus

What is it that Jesus came to bring? What did he communicate so powerfully that people felt impelled to leave everything and to follow this man from Nazareth?

To ask this question is to search for the key which unlocks the real message of Jesus, to seek the all-embracing arch that binds together all his preaching and his actions. The most basic historical fact of Jesus' life is the symbol which dominated all his preaching, the reality that gave meaning to all his activities, that is, the "KINGDOM OF GOD". The Synoptic Gospels summarise Jesus' teaching and preaching with the concise phrase:

The time is fulfilled. THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS AT HAND. REPENT. Believe the Good News (cf. Mk 1:14-15; Mt 4:17; Lk 4:43).

The Kingdom is so central to Jesus that it led Karl Rahner to observe: "Jesus preached the Kingdom of God, not himself". In his teaching Jesus appears as the representative (cf. Lk 17:20-21), the revealer (cf. Mk 4:11-12; Mt 11:25-26), the champion (cf. Mk 3:27), the initiator (cf. Mt 11:12), the instrument (cf. Mt 12:28), the mediator (cf. Mk 2:18-19), and the bearer (cf. Mt 11:5) of the Kingdom of God.

Almost all exegetes and scholars are in agreement on this point: the center of Jesus' preaching and teaching is the Kingdom of God. The word "Kingdom" occurs 160 times in the entire New Testament, with 120 occurrences in the Synoptic Gospels.

The Kingdom is not only the central theme of Jesus' preaching, the reference point of most of his parables and the subject of a large number of his sayings, it is also the content of his symbolic actions. A large part of his ministry consists of activities such as his table fellowship with tax-collectors and sinners as well as healing and exorcism. In his communion with the outcasts Jesus lives out the Kingdom, actively demonstrating God's unconditional love for undeserving sinners (John Fullenbach, "Kingdom of God", pp.3-5).

What is this Kingdom, a symbol we do not find in the Old Testament and yet Jesus used it to carry the weight of his whole life and mission? In Luke Jesus expressed his mission in these words:

“I have come to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were blazing already!” (Lk 12:49).

“Do you suppose that I am here to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division” (Lk 12:51).

“The Kingdom of God is not just words, it is power” (*dunamis*) (1 Cor 4:20).

What is this FIRE, this DYNAMITE he came to bring into this world and by which he himself was apparently being consumed? Both words are symbols. What do they stand for? What does it mean to say, “Jesus’ message is fire and dynamite?” What did Jesus want to say with the symbol of fire? Certainly, fire and dynamite indicate something dangerous, revolutionary. It means not wanting to leave things as they are. Jesus’ message is not just an idea, not even a grand idea which one can store with many other ideas without effecting any change in one’s life. His vision aims at transformation. It has a revolutionary thrust as the phrase that follows Lk 12:52 indicates, “I did not come to bring peace but division”. Jesus is saying: “Do not think that I came to leave you in peace, no, I came to disturb, to upset and to change things. The world will never be the same after I have thrown my fire on it”.

But what was it that drove this man, that consumed him, that gave him an identity, that defined his mission and that he had to communicate to others?

The Two Authentic Words of Jesus: KINGDOM OF GOD and ABBA

Exegetes agree that there are at least two authentic expressions of Jesus in the Gospels: Kingdom of God and the personal reality of the Kingdom which he called ABBA. With the word Kingdom of God Jesus expresses the whole of reality and what is to be done with it. With the word ABBA Jesus expresses the personal reality that gives ultimate meaning to his life — that in which he rests and which in turn does not allow him to rest.

Both realities, Kingdom and Father, though distinct and not simply interchangeable, complement each other. The Kingdom explains God’s being Abba and the Fatherhood of God provides a basis for and an explanation of the Kingdom. Jesus’ concern was the Kingdom and not himself. Everything Jesus said and did was said and done in the light of the Kingdom of God that was coming with him and through him.

The reign of God is the key, without it Jesus is a disincarnated person — a person without a body. Jesus separated from it is a theological construct that does not correspond to the reality. Jesus only loosely connected with it is a phantom that preoccupies the doctrinal interest of the religious authorities but haunts the hearts of people in the street. Jesus without the reign of God is an incomplete Jesus. Jesus whose life and mission are not shaped by it, is not the Way, the Truth, and the Life (Jn 14:6), to use that profound expression in John’s Gospel. Jesus is the Way because his is the way of God’s reign. Jesus is the Truth because his is the truth revealed by it. Jesus is the Life because his is the life empowered by it (C.S. Song, “Jesus and the Reign of God”, pp.8-9).

The “ABBA” Experience

The vision that Jesus came to bring to this earth is first of all a personal experience of God. It was the over-powering experience that God loves this world and human beings unconditionally. Jesus experienced the transcendent God as being so close, so intimate that he called him “ABBA”, Father. He declared God as ultimately good and compassionate towards every creature. God was coming now in him in a definite way to bring all of humankind into that union and communion of life with him that he had promised to accomplish at the end of time. And this end time was breaking in now not in judgement but in unimaginable love and forgiveness.

This image of God that Jesus revealed finds its expression most adequately in the following three statements which form the foundation of our Christian faith:

- (1) God loves every human being unconditionally;
- (2) God forgives us always;
- (3) God is always present to us as the compassionate One.

This was Jesus' vision which determined his whole life. For this vision he lived, suffered and ultimately died. It has been called the 'agapeic vision' of the New Testament. With this vision Jesus offended the just of his time. His proclamation of God as unconditional love was always upsetting. It upset all standards in so far as he saw salvation coming, not from what human beings would do, but from the acceptance of a "God who comes to love us first".

The Foundational Reality of Our Faith

This image of God that Jesus revealed to us is the essence of our faith. His perception of reality as gracious and caring is the presupposition of all Christian life. Without it we cannot live the Gospel demands. Our being disciples of Jesus means to live a life in complete response to the love God has for us. According to St John, love does not mean that we love God but that he has loved us first (1 Jn 4:10). Only in the light of such a God can we see and commit ourselves to the ultimate goal in life as "Loving God with all our heart and all our mind and with all our strength and our neighbor as ourselves" (cf. Mt 22:35-40). This is the vision that should determine our behaviour and our way of life. This knowledge can only fill us with joy, a deep joy in God, and make us radiate this joy to others.

The enjoyment of God should be the supreme end of all spiritual technique; and it is that enjoyment of God that we feel not only saved in the Evangelical sense, but safe: we are conscious of belonging to God, and hence are never alone; and to the degree we have these two, hostile feelings disappear... In that relationship Nature seems friendly and homely; even the vast spaces instead of eliciting a sense of terror speak of the infinite love; and the nearer beauty becomes the garment with which the Almighty clothes himself (William A. Barry, "Paying Attention to God", p.16).

One of the most difficult pastoral tasks today is to develop techniques and practices that will help people to have such a foundational experience and to discover once again the mystery that surrounds us. The question in all renewal is: does the mystery of God touch people on the level of an in-depth experience? Anyone who has conducted renewals knows: the real struggle in such courses is how to reach the hunger and wonder at the core of each person. How can one reach the inner heart where the Spirit dwells?

Jesus had this in-depth experience in mind when he revealed God to us as "Abba". This is the foundation for a way of life which lets God become more and more our core relationship and at the same time the touchstone for all other relationships. The real content of Jesus' message consists, therefore, in his image of God: God loves every human being with unconditional love.

What is the Kingdom that Jesus made the essence of his life and mission?

Jesus' vision expressed with the symbol "Kingdom of God" has something to do with the ultimate meaning of every human being, the fulfilment of the deepest aspiration of every human heart, the plan God has with all of creation. It has something to do with what Saint Augustine expressed in this way: "Restless is our heart, O God, until it rests in you". Or, in the words of M. Gandhi: "Man's ultimate aim is the realisation of God. I live and move and have my being in pursuit of this goal".

The deepest desire of every human heart is complete union with God, a union which includes union with all of God's family and harmony with the universe. It embraces God, all human beings and the world and nature as well. To the vexing question that has haunted millions of people, "Why did God create the universe and human beings?", there is a simple answer that could be phrased as follows: God, the Triune One said: "We enjoy life so much, we want to share it with other beings whom we will create for that purpose". God created us with the sole purpose of leading us to share his own life with him. But it is not only we humans who will participate in his life, it is the whole universe that God's love wants to lead into the fullness of life because God is "a lover of life".

Yes, you love all that exists, you hold nothing of what you have made in abhorrence, for had you hated anything, you would not have formed it. And how, had you not willed it, could a thing persist, how be conserved if not called forth by you? You spare all things because all things are yours, LORD, LOVER OF LIFE, you whose imperishable spirit is in all (cf. Wis 11:22-26).

This plan was unknown up to the coming of Christ and has to be seen as comprehensive including all human beings and the whole of creation.

Concerning the content of the Kingdom I would like to present here three characteristics which are essential for our discussion here:

- (1) The kingdom is a reality that affects this world although its final fulfilment goes beyond the confines of this world.
- (2) The Kingdom is a gift but it is also a task that needs our cooperation. We are called to help bring it about.
- (3) The Kingdom cannot be identified with the Church. It is broader than that.

1. The Kingdom that Jesus Came to Bring is a Vision of Reality that Affects this World and Yet Transcends all Inner Earthly Reality.

The correct interpretation of the Kingdom symbol will show that its content does not signify something that is purely spiritual or outside this world. "It is a total, global and structural transfiguration and revolution of the reality of human beings; it is the cosmos purified of all evils and full of the reality of God. The Kingdom is not to be in another world but is the old world transformed into a new one" (L. Boff).

The symbol, "Kingdom of God", leaves room for interpreting it as belonging to this world as well as for proclaiming a future that cannot be deduced from the circumstances of present history. The future, as the Bible understands it, is something qualitatively new. It lies beyond human planning and capability, something we can only allow to be given to us. While this symbol takes the world and human effort in history seriously, it does not surrender openness to a transcendent future in the fullness of God. Only God can ultimately guarantee the fulfilment of humankind's deepest aspirations. Benedict Viviano expresses the dynamic well when he writes:

Our engagement in this struggle (to make the Kingdom hope come true) can be without illusions because we know by faith that no human programme by itself will bring in the eschaton. Our engagement can also be without ultimate despair, because we believe that, no matter how great our self-created horror becomes, God is faithful to his promise and he will bring the kingdom which has already drawn near to us in his Son ("The Kingdom of God in History", pp.28-29).

Here the Kingdom is viewed as the consummation of history, the final fulfilment of humankind's social destiny, the accomplishment of God's own intention for the whole of creation. We have, therefore, always to be on guard not to regard the Kingdom as a utopia that is situated only on the horizon of history. The Kingdom is a present reality at the heart of history. "The Kingdom is not some kind of extra-terrestrial entity that will be superimposed on this world. Nor is it a process of spiritual or internal change that leaves the outer realities looking much the same. It is the liberation of the world we live in, know, touch, smell, suffer, from all that corrupts and destroys it" (Charles Elliott, "Praying the Kingdom", p.1).

It is incarnated in history, in human society and in the world. Although the Kingdom of God is not purely and simply identical with the world, it is "identifiable" *in* the world. We could also say the Kingdom shows itself in society, it is encountered in society: but this society is not the Kingdom.

To understand the Kingdom as belonging to this world leads to a broader understanding of the concept of salvation. The universality of the salvific will of God (cf. 1 Tm 2:4) is a generally established datum of Christian theology. In the past this notion was considered more in terms of its quantitative and extensive aspect (it includes the pagans). Today we have come to understand it under a more qualitative and intensive aspect. It refers to the intensity of the presence of God and, consequently, of the religious significance of human action in history. The distinction between profane history and salvation history here appears different. There is only one human destiny irreversibly assumed by Christ, who is the Lord

of history. Salvation is seen as an intra-historical reality. It embraces all human reality, transforms it and leads it to its fullness in Christ. The absolute value of salvation gives human history an authentic meaning. It aims at the transformation of history and at its fulfilment in the New Heaven and the New Earth. The Bible is seen as presenting creation not as a stage prior to the work of salvation but as part of the salvific process, indeed its first salvific act.

How can we concretely experience the Kingdom present now?

Where do we find it in our midst? In what form does it appear here on earth now? If God's plan is to lead all human beings into union with him and with each other we can confidently say: Wherever in our midst the following things happen God's Kingdom makes itself present:

- wherever injured people forgive those who have injured them,
- wherever love and care for one another overcomes fear of one another,
- wherever the hungry are fed, the thirsty given a cup of water, the naked clothed, the homeless housed and prisoners are visited (cf. Mt 25:31-46),
- wherever, in other words, there exists a community that is inclusive in principle, there the Kingdom of God is present, there God is bringing about the Kingdom.

Wherever life is enhanced, broken life is restored, wherever we find joy and true happiness, wherever people build community in which life-giving relationships are fostered, there is the Kingdom. In short, wherever life is celebrated and God's ultimate goal of leading all human beings into the great community of brothers and sisters in union with him is promoted, there we can 'smell and touch' the Kingdom as having arrived already in our midst.

God's Kingdom is experienced in the present in companionship with Jesus. Where the sick are healed and the lost are found, where people who are despised are accepted and the poor discover their own dignity, where people who are rigid and fossilized come alive again, and old, tired life becomes young and fruitful once again — there the Kingdom of God begins. It begins as a seed which already germinates in this life, so it can be experienced. Being a seed, it is also the object of hope, but a hope firmly founded on experience and remembrance: the seed wants to grow, the one who has been found wants to return home, those who have been healed want to rise from the dead, and people liberated from some compulsion want to live in the country of freedom (Moltmann, "Jesus", p.19) .

Am I able to notice the Kingdom's presence?

God does not need us so much to bring about the Kingdom as to notice its presence in our midst. We must school ourselves to pay attention to our experience of reality. If we are touched by the Kingdom, we will be able to discern its presence in our daily experiences, we will be able to see its presence and to point it out and to witness to its presence in the midst of people's lives. As Christians we are called to "sniff out" God's Kingdom, to sense it and to celebrate its presence now. The presence of God's Kingdom will be missed if there are no people who notice it and witness to it. Our "staying with the Lord" as disciples is absolutely essential for remaining in tune with the Kingdom. Without celebrating its presence in the liturgy, worship, prayer and song it is not possible to stay in touch with the reality of the Kingdom. But ultimately our actions and behaviour are the touchstone of our remaining in contact with the Kingdom. We can only discover and discern the presence of God's Kingdom on earth if, in practice, we attune our actions to the great goal that God aims at with his Kingdom already present (W.A. Barry, "The Kingdom of God and Discernment", p.6).

2. The Kingdom as a Task

Since God's Kingdom is ultimately his unconditional love for each one of us, there is no arguing that the Kingdom is a gift we can never earn or pay for. Yet the Kingdom, once we have accepted it, becomes our task and demands from all what they are capable of. The main reason for this is that God needs people through whom he can reach other people as we see in the election of Moses. Any call means ultimately being sent to engage in God's own mission to bring about his Kingdom for the salvation of all.

We must avoid the danger of viewing the Kingdom as coming completely without human assistance. This is a perennial temptation in many treatises on the Kingdom of God. Lohfink astutely identifies the pitfall in this way:

There is one sentence in modern exegesis that is constantly repeated: The *basileia* is solely and exclusively God's act. This sentence is then frequently followed by something like this: Human beings must pray for the coming of the *basileia*, they must prepare and be ready for it, orient themselves towards it and asymptotically draw near to it, but they can do absolutely nothing to cause or hasten its coming, nor can they do anything to stop or hinder it ... Now obviously we do not deny that the *basileia* is God's act. However, does that say all that needs saying? (G. Lohfink, "The Exegetical Predicament", p.104).

What about human co-operation? Must we not also say that the coming of the Kingdom is "totally, completely, and entirely" the work of human beings? The gratuitousness of the Kingdom should not lead us to regard ourselves as merely passive objects. The Kingdom of God is ultimately a personal relationship between God and human beings. As in any personal relationship there is always a two-way traffic. We are challenged to respond, and through this response the Kingdom becomes a reality in our midst.

J. Moltmann regards a totally passive attitude towards the Kingdom as an invalidation of everything that the New Testament says about Jesus. If Jesus is God and man then we must say, the Kingdom of God is the affair of Jesus. From here he concludes that:

As the affair of Jesus, the Kingdom of God can be readily experienced and can also be readily practiced in his community. "Seek ye first the Kingdom and righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well" (cf. Mt 6:33). The power of God is indeed experienced in the community of Jesus. And through this experience, human beings become "co-workers in the Kingdom of God" called to perform the same messianic works as Jesus himself. As you go, preach this message: "The Kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons" (cf. Mt 10:7-8). It is the intent of Jesus here to make the Kingdom of God our affair as well as his. God is freedom, and to possess authentic freedom means to walk and work in the Kingdom (J. Moltmann, "Jesus", pp. 21-22).

Equally important besides working for the Kingdom is the "enjoyment of the Kingdom", i.e., the liturgical celebration. In celebrating the presence of the Kingdom in liturgy we are participating in the fullness of the Kingdom to come already now. Praise, thanksgiving and adoration are the very expressions of the new life and the very means to make it effectively present. We possess the Kingdom when we celebrate it and in celebrating it we find the strength and the power for our mission to work for it. Having "savoured its foretaste" we are empowered to engage anew in making it present in our daily lives.

Jewish tradition tells us that to celebrate the Sabbath is to possess "one sixtieth of the Kingdom of God", and every successful celebration of the Lord's day counts for more. It is good to "work and to pray" for the Kingdom but to "rest and to celebrate" should be seen as adding a note of completion to the Kingdom (J. Moltmann, "First the Kingdom of God", p. 21).

That the Kingdom which Jesus offers becomes our task is repeatedly expressed in the Gospels. The most vivid explanation we find in the parable of the Talents (cf. Mt 25:14-30). God gives to each one he calls a concrete task for the salvation of all and he will ask us to account for it. The parable of the Treasure in the Field offers a similar portrayal. In these parables Jesus does not only tell us that the Kingdom is a pure gift, but he also affirms that it unfolds through taking risks and giving everything. In the Gospel of John the coming of the *basileia* is totally and completely God's work, and totally and completely the work of human beings.

Jon Sobrino offers a unique way of looking at the Kingdom as gift and task. He sees the Kingdom as establishing first and foremost a filial relationship with God. We are oriented vertically to God, and thus, we are his children. From this vertical orientation follows the horizontal relationship which makes us brothers and sisters. Both are essential and of equal and primary importance. For him divine sonship is a gift, while the creation of a profound human fellowship is a task. "A dynamic unity exists between gift and task. The gift is accepted precisely by carrying out the task entailed in it. Creating a profound human fellowship means accepting the gift of divine sonship. The God of the Kingdom does not allow us to

choose between these two aspects. He who lets the Kingdom into his life by becoming a child of God will have to show the presence of the Kingdom by trying to make all human beings his brothers and sisters. Here the gift of the Kingdom is sonship and the task of the Kingdom is the bringing about of this sonship in the horizontal dimension through brotherhood”, the creation of a community of brothers and sisters (Jon Sobrino, “Christology at the Crossroads”, pp. 45-46).

Seen from such a perspective, history reveals two aspects, it is first a call to divine filiation by which human persons become God’s children. This is our vocation to complete union with God; our vertical vocation, the deepest aspiration of all persons. Secondly, history is a call to human fellowship by which persons become one another’s sisters and brothers; our vocation to complete union among ourselves.

The achievement of true human fellowship in history becomes an historical realisation of the promise of total communion with God. But as an historical verification of such a promise, it immediately reveals the partial and incomplete character of the Kingdom now and opens up history towards the complete and total communion of human persons with God (G. Gutierrez, “We Drink From our Own Wells”, p.104)

In conclusion we could say: We do not build God’s Kingdom, yet if we do not cooperate with God’s intention of forming a community of brothers and sisters who share in God’s own life, this Kingdom could not be actualized at all. God needs human cooperation to attain his goal for creation. God’s action in history can only be discovered and effectively be operative if we attune our own actions to the one action of God which is the Kingdom here on earth. It is in doing what Jesus did, that we ultimately discover God’s Kingdom and cooperate in building it here on earth. If we attune our actions to the one action of God we will become co-creators of the New Heaven and the New Earth. The Kingdom of God remains God’s gift but he decided to give it to us if we make it ours as well.

3. Church and Kingdom

The majority of theologians hold that the Catholic Church in the Second Vatican Council did separate herself from any identification with the Kingdom in history now. The theological basis for doing so is seen in the Council’s definition of the Church as a “Sacrament of the Kingdom” (*Lumen Gentium*, n. 9). Since God’s saving grace can never be bound exclusively to a sacrament one has to accept that the Kingdom is still broader than the Church. Such a separation is indirectly expressed in article n. 5 of *Lumen Gentium* and in article n. 45 of *Gaudium et Spes*. This separation of Kingdom and Church is seen by a number of theologians as a major achievement of the Second Vatican Council.

The nature and mission of the Church are always to be understood in relationship and in subordination to the Kingdom of God. This principle is expressed in article n. 5 of *Lumen gentium* and again in article n. 45 of *Gaudium et Spes*. It replaces what was perhaps the most serious pre-Vatican II ecclesiological misunderstanding, namely, that the Church is identical with the Kingdom of God here on earth. If it is, then it is beyond all need for institutional reform, and its mission is to bring everyone inside lest salvation elude them. The distinction between the Kingdom and the Church bore immediate fruits in the development of post-conciliar theology, at least in two theological fields: in the theology of Liberation and in the theology of Religions. The symbol of the Kingdom of God provides the horizon for a solution for two theological problems.

First, in the context of Liberation Theology, it supplies the bridge that connects the historical liberation of the oppressed in this world with the eschatological Kingdom still to come in fullness at the end. It shows how the work for justice and liberation inside and outside the Church is intrinsically linked with the Kingdom present now, since the ultimate goal of the Kingdom of God is the transformation of all reality.

Secondly, in the inter-religious dialogue the Kingdom symbol furnishes the theologian with a broader perspective to enter into dialogue with other religious traditions. If the Kingdom is the ultimate goal of God’s intentionality with all of humanity then the question is no longer how these other religious traditions are linked to the Church but rather how the Kingdom of God was and is concretely present in these religions.

The Church herself, while accepting the distinction between the Church and the Kingdom in principle, has been very eager lately to assure that neither one is pulled apart either by Liberation Theology or by inter-religious dialogue. Some theologians, particularly in India, are at the moment afraid that we are heading towards a crypto-identification of Church and Kingdom once again. In the words of F. Wilfred:

Since certain trends in liberation theology and in the theology of religions seemed to highlight the reality of the Kingdom at the expense of the Church and to distance themselves from the Church, the reaction (of the official Church) has taken the form of barring any access to the Kingdom except through the Church. Or to put it another way, instead of understanding the Church in relation to the mystery of the Kingdom, this trend wants to understand the Kingdom of God in terms of the Church, and indeed turn the Church itself into the Kingdom ("Once again... Church and Kingdom", pp. 6-24).

Were such a trend to gain the upper hand in Catholic theology today one of the most powerful sources for the renewal of the Church and her theology could be seriously stifled. Only if we maintain the distinction between Church and Kingdom clearly and uncompromisingly can such a symbol once again become THE religious symbol of our time. It provides us, on the one hand, with a way to relate to this world and its destiny productively and, on the other hand, with a way to enter into a more open and creative dialogue with other religious traditions and ideologies.

Therefore, we have to be on our guard not to allow such an identification once again however subtle it may be. The Church is not the Kingdom now, since the Kingdom makes itself felt outside the Church as well. Her mission is to serve the Kingdom and not to take its place.

From what we have said up to now it becomes clear that our mission in the service of the Kingdom is therefore basically a twofold one: First, we are called to make God's Kingdom present by creating Christian communities anywhere in the world where God's Kingdom shines forth like a symbol, a sign, or a parable, where its presence can clearly be discerned and its final goal appears like a foretaste of what is to come in fullness in God's own time. Secondly, and some see this even as the more important task of mission, we must witness to its presence everywhere in human situations and religious tradition outside of the Church. We are missioned, so to speak, to "sniff it out", point to it, make people conscious of it and willing to co-operate with all people of goodwill to make it the transforming power of human history.

Conclusion

The Kingdom of God is the ultimate referent in which evangelisation is grounded. God's Kingdom is to be seen as God's new order of peace, justice, liberation and salvation. God's Kingdom is being forged in this world, it is pro-world. It is an order of full liberation in that it encompasses every reality and dimension. It is an order that has a preference for the poor. The Kingdom of God is the goal towards which evangelisation labours. God and humanity work together to bring about this Kingdom in history, and evangelisation assists this task. The purpose of evangelisation, then, is to labour for God's reign within the present time and situation. The hope is that our work for God's reign, evangelisation, will produce changes in society so that its structures and institutions reflect more closely the vision of the Kingdom of God.

As the community of those chosen to carry on the vision of Jesus, the Church must define herself in relation to the Kingdom, which is meant for humankind and the whole of creation. Her mission is to reveal through the ages the hidden plan of God (cf. Eph 3:3-11; Col 1:26) and to lead humankind toward its final destiny. She must be seen entirely at the service of this divine salvific plan for all human beings and all of creation which is operative and present wherever people live no matter of what religion or faith they may be.

This was the Kingdom message Jesus came to proclaim. It was a vision of God, the world, humankind and creation as a whole as well as of each individual human person. This is the most grandiose vision the world has ever known. For this vision Jesus lived, laboured, suffered and died. This is the vision he entrusted to his disciples: "As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (cf. Jn 20:21).

CALLED TO MISSION:

— AS THE FATHER HAS SENT ME, SO I AM SENDING YOU —

PART II

Introduction

Let me start with a simple question: What does it mean to be a Christian? The Gospels give a very precise answer to this question in a phrase that occurs 20 times and with a particular stress on the lips of Jesus: Follow me. These two words contain in a nutshell what God wants of us and what we should regard as the ultimate obligation we have towards God in this life. Discipleship is our essential vocation.

Discipleship as Identity-Instilling Image for Today

Over the years particularly after the Council as the identity crisis in the Church increased and in religious life as well, fundamental questions like the following have constantly been raised: Who are we as Church community? Who are we as religious in the Church today? What is our mission in the Church today?

In response to these questions discipleship as the identity-instilling image has been rediscovered once again. Particularly in renewal courses and programmes this identity-instilling image has been used most often and quite successfully. In theology it was the Theology of Liberation which proposed this image as the one that could give a new identity-image to the Church.

Actually it was the Council itself that told us that the following and imitation of Christ is the determining occupation and pattern of life for all Christians.

Since the fundamental norm of religious life to follow Christ as proposed by the Gospel, such is to be regarded by all communities as their supreme law (cf. *Perfectae Caritatis*, n. 2).

In other words the Council in stating that the pattern to be followed and the standard by which everything must be measured is the Jesus who walked this earth.

The last phrase “as he walked this earth” is of great importance. We are called to follow the Jesus who lived our life and who suffered our death. His actions, his behaviour and his attitudes are the pattern to be followed by everyone who calls himself/herself a disciple of Jesus.

Following the Jesus ‘who walked this earth’ not only in theory but in practice will give us the necessary answer to these important questions: Who are we as individuals and as Church community? Secondly, who is Jesus really?

Individual and Community identity: Who am I and who are we as Church Community?

The answer to this question is simple: we are those who have made it our fundamental norm in life to follow the Jesus who walked on this earth. Discipleship can give the individual Christian a foundation for his/her subjective self-understanding and furnishes the Church community with an objective identity definition. As an identity-image it refers us to our fundamental scheme of meaning and the ultimate basis of our standard of judgement.

In the history of our Christian faith a return to this identity image of discipleship was able to function as a powerful tool in two areas. First, it urged reform in the Church and became the most essential aspect for the “revival of Church Life.” Secondly, it was most often discipleship language and imagery that saved theology from an exaggerated concern for abstract truth or an almost exclusive identification of Christian convictions with adherence to intellectual or propositional formulae. Already in the early writings of the Christian martyrs the emphasis is on the practical living of faith over a more intellectualised understanding of it. It was the reference to the historical Jesus that encouraged them and gave meaning to their martyrdom. The Reformers once again refer to discipleship in their concern to emphasize the concrete living of the Gospel over a pre-occupation with speculative the-ology.

Metz uses discipleship as a reforming image for the life of the Church, relying on the identity-instilling capacity of the imagery of following Jesus to call the Church back to her origins and authentic life and mission.

The Church... cannot solve the crisis of its historical identity and its societal legitimation in a purely interpretative or hermeneutical manner, but only by practical identification. The problem of its identity is fundamentally a theory-praxis problem. That praxis whose intelligible and identity-securing power cannot be replaced by interpretation is called discipleship. The Church’s crisis is due to a deficit in discipleship and to difficulties in adapting to Jesus (J.B. Metz, “For a Renewed Church before a New Council: A Concept in Four Theses”).

The most salient sentence in this quotation is the last one concerning the crisis in the Church today. As early as 1968 the German Bishops’ Conference assessing the situation of the Church in Germany and looking for an appropriate response to the then emerging faith crisis in Germany proposed a solution that re-echoed the words of J.B. Metz: “The way out of the situation in which we find ourselves today can only be once again a way into fellowship with Jesus the Lord”. Today almost 20 years later the crisis has intensified and the response proposed at that time seems to be more urgent now than at that time: “the way out ... can only be a way into following the Jesus who walked this earth”.

In the light of the image crisis of the Church today A. Dulles proposed a new conception of the Church which he calls Community of Disciples (A. Dulles, “A Church to Believe In”, pp 1-18). Behind this image we find again an expression of this newly discovered realization that the basic vocation of any Christian is first and foremost to follow the Lord as he walked on this earth. The emphasis here is on following the Lord rather than following the Church, on being constantly on the road rather than having already reached the goal. Church must be seen as the community of those who have made it their life profession to follow the Lord and as such build a community that is called Church.

Latin American theologians in particular have pointed out that to get to know Jesus by following him, most Christologies deal in length with the incarnation of Christ and develop their Christology from there, while others put all the stress on the death and Resurrection of Christ and unfold their Christology from there. What is missing — so the argument goes — is a theology of the Jesus who walked on this earth. In their own words: If one reads the common Christologies one gets the impression that Jesus was born and died but he seemingly never lived. It is not as if these theologians would not deal with Jesus’ public ministry but it is seen and evaluated only from its beginning and end point of view.

But to know Jesus one has to look at him as he walked on this earth and to start doing exactly what he did. There is no other way to know Christ and to understand oneself as a disciple of his than to follow him.

Every attempt to know Christ, to understand him is therefore always a journey, a following. It is only by following and imitating him that we know whom we are dealing with. Following Christ is not just a subsequent application of the Church’s Christology to our life: the practice of following Christ is itself a central part of Christology, if we do not wish to identify the logic of this Christology and of Christianity in general with the purely contemplative *logos* of the Greek (J.B. Metz, “Followers of Christ”, p. 39).

Recently, a number of scholars have developed new interpretative models to come to a deeper understanding of the Jesus who walked this earth by utilizing the social sciences. They start by describing the social and political situation of the time that made up the background against which Jesus proclaimed

his message of the imminent Kingdom. Their findings reveal a more socially involved Jesus than traditional Christology would have it. By looking at Jesus who walked this earth we come to see precisely what Jesus regarded as his mission. Two characteristics of Jesus' behaviour and action show us this most clearly. The first I like to call "Jesus' allergy" and the second is the "key" Jesus used to unlock the way of interpreting and understanding the Torah.

a. The "Allergy" of Jesus

A close look at the earthly ministry of Jesus shows that it is geared towards re-establishing those relationships on which the Covenant was built. Jesus' image of God as the Compassionate One concerned with justice, his constant critique of his opponents for having ostracized whole groups, and his untiring effort to bring those marginalized back into the Covenant community indicate how Jesus understood his mission in terms of establishing God's Kingdom here on earth. He saw his mission in terms of re-establishing such relationships which would give life to those whose life had been "diminished" because of injustices done to them. He came to heal broken relationships which led to marginalization and prevented people from being fully alive.

In whatever way we describe Jesus' challenge to his contemporaries, one element of his behaviour and actions is most obvious: Jesus was extremely sensitive to any kind of discrimination, be it religious, moral, social, cultural, racial, national or sexual. Since he understood his mission as making all human beings children of our common Father and brothers and sisters among ourselves, he struck at anything that would not let this community come about. However, this is often overlooked. It is not so much the individual act of justice that Jesus performed which we must consider here, but rather his whole behaviour that would not tolerate injustice. Jesus was, so to speak, allergic to any kind of discrimination. He demanded establishing God-willed relationships, worthy of the Kingdom which was coming in him.

The consequence of this allergy is obvious: anyone who wants to follow Jesus must catch this "allergy" of Jesus. The disciple's most distinctive mark must be his/her alertness and sensitivity to any kind of discrimination in the way it is revealed in Jesus' whole life.

b. The Key to Unlock the Torah: "Life-giving Relationship and Compassion"

What rule of conduct should determine the disciple's life? How should he/she live his/her mission in terms of basic attitudes? Jesus made it clear that the Pharisaic rulings could never be taken as a pattern for his disciples. Although we have to keep in mind that Jesus was not against the Law, it was not the Law that was wrong, but the way it was interpreted, and consequently applied by the Pharisees to which Jesus objected strongly. As Dunn observes:

It was not so much the Law to which Jesus objected, as it was the way in which it was used. Not the Law itself, but the use of the Law as a barrier to exclude others, was what he reacted against; and particularly the overscrupulous interpretation of the Law which resulted in a negative judgement against those who failed to conform, the over-definition of the will of God so that the channels of God's grace became ever more restricted, the attitude which assumed that only what was acceptable to one's own group was acceptable to God ("Call to Discipleship", p. 84).

Israel's faith survived in exile only insofar and to the degree that the Israelites separated themselves from the influence of the pagan culture. Separation had become a question of religious survival. The common belief was that the Covenant people had been exiled by Yahweh because they had succumbed to paganism in the first place. Their survival now depended on not repeating the same mistake once again. The theological reasoning, however, for this separation was ultimately Israel's Covenant with Yahweh which commanded the people: "You shall be holy, as I the Lord your God am holy". God was holy, and therefore, Israel had to be holy. To be holy became equated with being faithful and being able to survive. The result was that the Jewish social world after the Exile became increasingly structured around the polarities of holiness and separation: clean and unclean, purity and defilement, sacred and profane, Jew and Gentile, righteous and sinner. Holiness became the paradigm by which the Torah was interpreted. The laws in the Torah which placed the emphasis on Israel's uniqueness among all other nations and stressed separation from everything impure, became dominant and particularly important within Israel. In

short, the hermeneutical key for understanding and interpreting the Torah had become the concept of “holiness and purity”. The test of who was a faithful Jew, loyal to the Covenant in the circumstances of the time, became a question of how far one lived up to the demands of holiness and purity. All movements in the post-exilic time are deeply concerned with and formed by these demands. The better-known groups were the revolutionists, the Pharisees and the Essenes.

Jesus’ quarrel and controversy with the different groups has its ultimate root here. He refused to accept their key for understanding and interpreting the Torah, namely holiness and purity. He saw his mission precisely to call those to the Kingdom of God whom the most zealous of Israel had rejected as having put themselves outside the scope of the Covenant. Jesus objected vigorously to this kind of Torah-interpretation since it was in no way compatible with his own experience of God as a compassionate and loving Father. Jesus never opposed the Torah itself; rather, it was his interpretation of the Torah that put him at odds with his opponents. Jesus’ key for interpreting and understanding the law was “justice” (life-giving relationship) and “compassionate love”.

If one reads the Gospels carefully it is easy to discover that Jesus was ultimately rejected and put to death because of his way of interpreting the Torah in terms of justice and compassion. His healing on the Sabbath, his eating with the unclean, his table fellowship with outcasts and sinners had only one aim: to create a new community in which life-giving relationships would guarantee the fullness of life for every one and the end of all discrimination. In acting like this Jesus demonstrated what God’s Kingdom was all about: the creation of a new community in which all would be brothers and sisters, where there would be no marginalization anymore. Here all would be gathered into the one great family of all creatures according to the image and likeness of God the Triune in One.

This was to be the precise mission of his disciples as well: to go out into the whole world and to gather people from all nations and races and cultures into this great new family of God. That this mission consists in establishing God’s justice on the earth is expressed in Matthew 19:28 where he outlines the mission of the twelve as that of “judging” the twelve tribes of Israel. The Greek word *krinein* is not correctly translated with “to judge”. That is too narrow. Its meaning has to be seen in the light of the prophetic announcements of Yahweh’s final coming to “judge” the world. In the prophetic expectation, the phrase, “God’s coming to judge the nations”, means that he will establish justice in the midst of his people and through them among all the nations. He will bring the world into a new relationship of justice and peace. The mission of the Twelve, as described here with the word *krinein*, therefore means “to establish God’s eschatological justice in Israel and in all the nations”. The mission of the disciples (Church) here is fundamentally geared to the Kingdom value of establishing the justice of the endtime (R. Horsley, “Jesus and the Spiral of Violence”, pp. 199-208).

Seen from such a perspective, it is obvious that Jesus’ whole life and ministry was a constant struggle to establish God’s justice here on earth. He came to bring all into God’s life-giving relationship and expected from those who would let themselves be drawn into the Kingdom he preached that they in turn would live from now on in life-giving relationships towards all as well. Justice, therefore, was the key concept of Jesus’ whole life and ministry.

Our Mission: in what does it consist?

Since our basic vocation is to follow the Lord as he walked on this earth the question is: in the light of our discovery of Jesus’ behaviour, in what does our mission consist?

In Mark 3:13-15, we find the answer to the question: In what does following the Lord consist? Here the basic most significant elements that pertain to discipleship as Jesus understood it are presented as: I chose you - to be with me - and to be sent out.

Discipleship is first of all — just like the Kingdom of God — a gift. No one can become a disciple unless it is given to him (cf. Jn 6:65). The core of being a disciple is biblically expressed in the phrase “could come to him”. Being a disciple means to share in a fundamental experience made and communicated by the master. It means to be caught up in the vision of the master, to be on fire with the fire of the master. It ultimately means to become like the master. A disciple is a person who has made the same fundamental experience that Jesus made: God loves every human person with an unconditional,

compassionate love; he forgives us always; he is always with us. A disciple is someone who starts living his daily life out of this experience and who sees his witnessing to this experience as taking part in Jesus' own mission.

To be called by God ultimately means to be drawn into God's own plan, into the mission of his Son in order to be sent and to become a co-worker with God for the salvation-transformation of the world into God's final design. "To be called to be with him" means to "be consecrated" being taken into God's plan. Because of this a person chosen is "holy, consecrated, set apart". But this is done for a purpose: to be sent out, to engage actively in God's mission, to become "fishers of men" (Mk 1:17). Mission is therefore, the ultimate aim of all calling in this life. Being called is not for taking up any special place of honour or to be treated with reverence and awe. It means being sent. Every Christian is called to mission on the basis of the sacrament of Baptism. Baptism is not a passport to heaven or a ticket to enter into eternal life. It is a call to mission. Most people will find eternal life without being baptized. The privilege of being a Christian consists in having been called to participate in a special way in the mission of Christ to save all human beings.

The correct understanding of what it means to be a Christian in terms of mission should not lead us to look at the Church in purely functional terms. The Church community itself is a sacramental anticipation of God's final plan with the whole of humanity. It is the celebration of the final achievement of God's plan of salvation in the here and now that gives meaning and joy to the mission entrusted to those invited to share God's own mission for the world.

The Jesus Option

The message Jesus preached was the Kingdom of God, which by its very nature aimed at the conversion of the people to the Covenant idea. This in turn required the restructuring and transformation of all socio-political structures and institutions. There were three possible ways to actualize this Kingdom vision: the revolutionary, the sectarian and the worldly.

The revolutionists, with their battle cry of "Let us take it", wanted to change the present by overthrowing those who ruled, bringing in God's reign by force. This option was open to Jesus but he neither commanded nor accepted it. The sectarians, following the motto: "Let us create it", insisted on a total withdrawal from society and the creation of a new model of community in which the Covenant would be realized to the full. This was the option of the Qumran community. With this option the world is abandoned as being beyond all repair. Jesus did not choose this option either. He did not join the Qumran community but stayed where the people were and used their marketplaces for his preaching and actions. Jesus chose what Dunn called the "worldly option", with its command: "Live it!" He showed: that the Kingdom is taking place now in the midst of human affairs and that human actions may become the carriers of this Kingdom. To accept the Kingdom means to celebrate its presence now, not in withdrawal but within this world. Jesus' option can be called "worldly" since it asks us to live wholly within this world by other-worldly values, challenging this world to allow itself to be transformed by the values of the Kingdom Jesus came to bring (J.D. Dunn, "Call to Discipleship", pp. 44-52).

This is to me the challenge of today. Scholars who talk about the future of the Church and of Religious Life in the Church refer constantly to small ecclesial communities which are regarded as the ferment for any renewal in the Church as well as Religious Life. Important for such communities is the ability to live as open communities in the world. This is not easy. It needs a deep spiritual life at the core of the community who nourish and share it with each other. Even liberation theologians like Galileo and Gutierrez realize that the members of these communities must be quasi contemplatives, full of the fire and the vision that drove Jesus. Secondly, these communities must have open borders, willing to let others in and willing to go out themselves to others and even allow them to determine the agenda for their actions. Communities that celebrate the presence of the Kingdom in their midst, can see the same kingdom at work around them in the world, are able to point it out and make people aware of its presence. That leads me to the last point of my presentation.

The Two Ways of Mission

How do we situate ourselves in relation to the mission of Jesus and the Spirit?

To answer this question, I would like to return to what I said at the end of our first conference. First we have to keep in mind that following the Lord means to share his “allergy” against any kind of discrimination and to make justice, in terms of a life-giving relationship and compassion, the norm of our behaviour and action.

Secondly, there are two ways of looking at our mission to make God’s Kingdom present in the world. We can spell out the goal of this mission in a two-fold way. One: the Church-community has to be the sign, the socio-historic visibility of the new people of God. To build up such communities of witnesses everywhere in the world, in every culture, among every people, in all geographical regions, is one dimension of mission.

On the other hand, we can see that neither Jesus nor his Spirit have abandoned the world; they continue to be present and active among people. In us, as the community of believers and followers of Jesus, his action, which is present everywhere, acquires a visibility and symbolic reality. Because of this, we are called and sent into the world to serve and to promote the ongoing action of Jesus and the Spirit. The other, more important dimension is to be at the service of and to promote in a collaborative way God’s own continuing action in the world and among people.

These are two interrelated ways of pursuing the one goal of mission which is the realization of the ‘New Heaven and the New Earth’ that is God’s promise to all peoples. One could say that it is in getting actively involved in promoting God’s transformative action in the world that the Church-community will build itself up as an authentic symbol of and witness to that action (M. Amaladoss, “New Faces of Mission”, pp. 21-33).

Here we face a problem: — which is the most important one at the moment? The building up of Church communities or our witness to God’s Kingdom anywhere in the world? Michael Amaladoss thinks the second is more important. The fact is that most of our missionaries, particularly in situations where the Church is a minority, are primarily involved in building up Church communities and feel lost when they are expected to engage in dialogue with other religious traditions. They are just not trained and therefore often unable to even see mission work in the second way as the one most necessary today. If the Kingdom of God is operative anywhere in the world and not just in the Church then our mission is to witness to this present and to ‘sniff it out’, raise people’s awareness of it and celebrate it there were it makes itself present. If our mission is that of Jesus, to proclaim and to bring God’s Kingdom into the world then that very Kingdom demands of us these two ways.

1. Scripture Reading: Luke 4:42-44

At daybreak he departed and went into a deserted place. And the crowds were looking for him: and when they reached him, they wanted to prevent him from leaving them. But he said to them, “I must proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God to the other cities also; for I was sent for this purpose”. So he continued proclaiming the message in the synagogues of Judea.

2. Prayer for God’s Kingdom:

May it come soon
to the hungry,
to the weeping,
to those who thirst for justice,
to those who have waited centuries
for a truly human life.
Grant us the patience

to smooth the way
on which your Kingdom comes to us.
Grant us hope
that we may not weary
in proclaiming and
working for it,
despite so many conflicts,
threats and shortcomings.
Grant us a clear vision
that in the hour of our history
we may see the horizon,
and know the way
on which your Kingdom comes to us.

LES DROITS DE L'HOMME EN AFRIQUE: TRADITION ET MODERNITE

Joseph Ki-Zerbo

Le question des droits de l'homme se pose depuis l'avènement de l'espèce humaine. Elle est universelle dans le temps et dans l'espace. Mais, dans la mesure où le temps et l'espace sont les deux grands maîtres de l'homme, la question des droits humains est conditionnée en grande partie par ces deux paramètres. Cela étant, il faut, dès l'abord, faire la distinction entre les droits en tant que normes acceptées ou proclamées, et les droits comme pratiques inscrites dans les moeurs.

Et pourtant, quelques auteurs, hypnotisés peut-être par les infractions graves et massives perpétrées en Afrique contre les droits humains, continuent à prétendre que "la pratique et même le concept de ces droits sont étrangers à l'approche africaine et islamique de la dignité humaine" : elle serait "une création (artefact) de la civilisation occidentale moderne".

La question est d'importance; car il s'agit de savoir si les cultures africaines, qui sont les plus anciennes du monde, sont restées ignorantes de ce principe si essentiel pour se prévaloir du statut d'être humain.

Il faut croire alors que tout dépend de la définition qu'on donne des droits humains; en somme tout dépend du lieu à partir duquel on parle.

Pour éviter les dialogues de sourds, il importe de s'entendre sur quelques vérités premières, quelques prémisses, ne serait-ce qu'à titre de postulats. Ce balayage sémantique pourrait d'ailleurs commencer par le titre de la présente communication: Tradition et Modernité.

S'agit-il d'une distinction, voire d'une dichotomie entre les deux? Sauf à discriminer entre une modernité au sens étroit, inventée pour baliser une histoire particulière devenue histoire universelle, et une modernité au sens large et dérivé, il s'agit ici manifestement d'un faux problème. (...) En effet, si l'on dénie aux collectivités africaines de naguère l'existence de l'État, de la nation, du droit et de la loi, il faudra bientôt inventer des numéros matricules pour baptiser nos anonymats.

L'essentiel ici, c'est d'éviter le romantisme passéiste pétri d'autosatisfaction aveugle. L'Afrique est loin d'avoir respecté les droits humains tout au long de son histoire. Mais comme les autres continents, avec des modalités originales, elle a élaboré, à travers des épreuves et des tourments, d'origine interne ou externe, des normes et des pratiques qui présentent un profil singulier sinon spécifique. C'est ce tableau que nous voulons présenter brièvement dans un premier temps, avant de montrer, dans un second volet, les cadres globaux (États et sociétés civiles) dans lesquels s'inscrivent les dites normes et pratiques: celles-ci sont plus ou moins induites par l'État et la société civile qu'elles contribuent à leur tour à modeler. Enfin, en troisième lieu, quelques pistes prospectives clôtureront notre propos.

I. LES DROITS HUMAINS DANS L'AFRIQUE SUB-SAHARIENNE AVANT LA COLONISATION

Loin de viser à un tour d'horizon exhaustif, ni prétendre qu'il s'agit de normes omni-présentes à travers tout le continent, trois étapes me semblent intéressantes à parcourir: les droits humains à caractère biologique et socio-économique; les droits socio-politiques; enfin les fondements culturels et éthiques de ces droits.

A. La constellation des droits humains biologiques et socio-économiques

Et tout d'abord, *le respect de la vie et du vivant en général*: il s'agit là d'un trait culturel ou sociologique, historique et non racial; d'une exigence de survie collective dans des conditions écologiques, technologiques et structurelles données.

Même avant de dépouiller un arbre d'une branche ou d'une écorce ou des racines pour en faire un remède, le guérisseur africain se recueillait et lui demandait pardon d'avoir à le mutiler. Mais bien qu'ayant été qualifié abusivement d' "animiste", l'Africain n'a jamais développé envers les animaux dits "de maison", ni des conduites de familiarités fort coûteuses, ni des attitudes quasi zoolâtriques qu'on rencontre ailleurs. En effet l'être humain est radicalement mis à part dans son statut transcendant.

Le cannibalisme rituel, ou pour nécessité de survie, a existé ici ou là en Afrique comme dans tous les autres continents. Mais l'interdiction de verser le sang humain était considérée solennellement. De même en ce qui concerne la torture. Son développement en tant qu'institution semble lié à deux facteurs: les progrès technologiques qui en ont fait dans la période contemporaine l'instrument monstrueux de certaines polices d'État. Mais aussi, il faut tenir compte de l'impact pluriséculaire de la Traite des Noirs qui a précipité l'homme africain au-dessous de la bête. En tout cas, on ne trouve pas en Afrique l'arsenal de supplice, l'ingénierie effroyable de la négation de l'homme mis au point dans d'autres continents.

Le droit à la vie implique surtout *l'accès à l'alimentation*. Dans beaucoup de cas, cet accès est présenté comme un droit direct, immédiat et imprescriptible: par exemple la liberté d'accès gratuit à l'eau et aux puits. Il y a d'ailleurs un rituel éloquent de l'offrande de l'eau à l'étranger et au visiteur. Dans nombre de régions, le passant pouvait se servir directement de quelques épis de maïs ou de mil, des fruits des arbres situés dans un champ, sans autorisation particulière.

Il ne faut pas imposer du dehors des paradigmes, des principes, des procédures marqués du sceau d'une histoire particulière à l'ensemble des sociétés dans tous les continents, chose que même les religions n'ont pas réussie, forcées quelles sont de s'acculturer pour réussir, de s'adapter pour être adoptées.

Cela pose la question du *droit de propriété* caractérisé le plus souvent en Afrique, on le sait, par trois éléments: la dimension communautaire et la caractère d'usufruit qui lui est attaché; enfin l'exigence intergénérationnelle: d'où le concept scabreux avancé par certains colonisateurs qui, ne trouvant pas des domaines lotis, immatriculés et appropriés au sens du droit romain, décrétèrent que c'étaient des "terres vacantes et sans maîtres". Il est hors de notre propos d'apprécier de façon critique le droit de propriété africain, singulièrement le droit à la terre qui ne se vendait pas mais devait être attribuée aux nouveaux venus.

"Comment vendre la terre, disaient les anciens, puis-qu'elle appartenait à nos ancêtres desquels nous l'avons reçue, et que nous la gérons pour la transmettre à nos petits enfants qui en sont les vrais propriétaires?" Ainsi donc cette norme juridique impliquait un parti pris éthique et même idéologique et religieux, avec des retombées économiques et écologiques évidentes. (...) Le droit africain à la propriété se situe donc entre une propriété privée individualiste et l'appropriation étatique, lesquelles ont chacune leurs vertus, mais ont révélé des dérives historiques graves à l'encontre des droits fondamentaux de l'homme. (...) "Il s'agit donc d'un système mixte où individus et groupes sont complémentaires l'un de l'autre. Le groupe n'est une réalité autonome; ils sont complémentaires l'un de l'autre, l'un par l'autre".

Par ailleurs, le droit à l'hospitalité ne signifie pas le droit à la paresse ni à l'oisiveté. Comme l'indiquait Julius Nyerere, on donnait à manger et à boire à l'étranger; mais les jours suivants, on lui donnait un outil. C'est le fameux système du don et du contre-don, du donner et du recevoir, du droit et du devoir, que les anthropologues ont disséqué à loisir et qui est l'une des structures axiales du comportement sociétal humain partout et toujours.

Les normes africaines ont souvent aussi un faible pour les faibles. Cela se vérifie déjà dans les contes et les mythes où les plus faibles au départ arrivent souvent gagnants. Il y a bien sûr les personnes âgées qui ont une place prépondérante au point de verser parfois dans la gèrontocratie. C'est que le *droit des vieillards* se fonde dans le fait qu'ils ont accompli l'humanité. C'est pourquoi l'on dit en bambara: "Tiekoroba Kapsa a son goyé". Le vieillard vaut mieux que son prix... Vaut mieux et non plus: car, en l'occurrence, il s'agit non de la valeur d'échange, mais d'une autre échelle de valeur. "Je juge une civilisation par la manière dont elle traite ses vieillards", a dit Julius K. Nyéréré. "Koroya de ye famaya yé". C'est la vieillesse qui est puissance.

Quant aux *droits des enfants* en Afrique anté-coloniale, je vous renvoie à l'une de mes communications faite à Dakar dans un colloque de l'UNICEF et intitulée: "L'enfant africain à travers l'Histoire". L'enfant était désiré, au point de faire de la stérilité une malédiction. "C'est par les enfants que nous sommes immortels", disait-on. Là aussi, la Traite des Noirs a constitué une étape catastrophique pour les droits de l'enfant africain. *Et les femmes?* Hélas leur sort est loin d'être idéal. En Afrique comme ailleurs, la face féminine de l'effigie humaine est vraiment le revers de la médaille. Non pas seulement par les aspects les plus "médiatisés" comme l'excision, le labeur écrasant et sans fin, en particulier par portages innombrables, mais par la place subordonnée qui semble lui être affectée dans la société.

Mais, d'une part, ce n'est là qu'un cas parmi tant d'autres depuis Caton l'Ancien jusqu'aux femmes de Bosnie. J'ai eu l'occasion de prouver dans une brève étude que la femme africaine, dans la Préhistoire et dans l'Égypte antique, a été la plus libre pendant les périodes les plus longues de l'Histoire. Chez les Romains par contre, voici ce que Caton l'Ancien écrit: "Le mari est juge de sa femme; son pouvoir n'a pas de limite; il peut ce qu'il veut. Si elle a commis quelque faute, il la punit; si elle a bu du vin, il la condamne; si elle a eu commerce avec un autre homme, il la tue". En matière de virginité avant le mariage et d'adultère par exemple, les droits et devoirs des femmes sont extrêmement variés selon les ethnies et les groupes sociaux. Mais il serait aisé de faire de la condition de la femme africaine une lecture alternative, qui montrerait que par certains côtés, dans de nombreuses sociétés sub-sahariennes, la femme avait un statut bien moins déplorable que dans d'autres continents. Des livres entiers ont été écrits sur ce sujet; en particulier les ouvrages de Cheikh Anta Diop sur le système matrilineaire. L'Afrique est le continent où il y a eu le plus de reines et de femmes au pouvoir, depuis les Candaces de Nubie qui résistèrent à l'invasion romaine jusqu'au Royaume d'Abomey au XIXe siècle où des bataillons militaires indépendants de femmes, commandées par des femmes, revendiquaient le droit d'être des unités d'élite pour les assauts de forteresses comme pour les combats en rase campagne. Il n'y a pas eu de loi salique en Afrique noire. (...)

À l'égard des *malades* et en particulier *des fous*, l'option africaine, contrairement à celle qui prévaut dans maints pays du Nord, c'est le refus de l'exclusion, le droit à la présence, le refus de laisser le malade seul. C'est pourquoi le modèle d'hôpital-isoloir-mouroir a été rejeté et transformé en Afrique par l'invasion des bienportants. Beaucoup d'explorateurs européens tombés malades ont bénéficié de soins acharnés jusqu'à la guérison, de la part des femmes et des guérisseurs africains. (...) C'est pourquoi les droits des malades sont mieux défendus sur ce continent que dans beaucoup de pays très riches. La santé n'a pas de prix. Des sommes énormes sont investies dans l'alimentation et dans les communiqués à la radio pour alerter les parents éloignés. Mais le droit moderne n'a pas su encore assumer et gérer ce potentiel formidable d'investissement qui fait office de Sécurité sociale. C'est là où il faudrait, comme dans bien d'autres cas, un ajustement structurel inverse.

Mais ce qui donne aux droits des malades un faciès particulier en Afrique, c'est l'approche psychosomatique de la thérapeutique. La conception de la maladie, malgré ses faiblesses dues à l'ignorance des paramètres biochimiques et microbiologiques, se distingue néanmoins par une vision globale intégrant les relations du corps et de l'esprit. La maladie corporelle n'est qu'un signe d'un déséquilibre plus profond mais invisible qui perturbe la sphère de l'esprit, de la société, voire de l'univers cosmique. C'est à l'interface de la trilogie: malade, guérisseur, milieu naturel que la santé doit être recherchée. Alors qu'une certaine approche scientifique et technocratique privilégie abusivement le bloc guérisseur seul et malade seul, et même le couple remède-malade qui aboutit à l'isolement tragique de ce dernier, l'option africaine de la thérapie a consisté à réunir tous ces éléments dans une totalité où la nature est tour à tour conjurée et associée, où l'ensemble de la communauté est investi de la mission curative, même si certains en sont les spécialistes; bref où le malade n'est jamais condamné au tête à tête inhumain avec un simple produit inerte qui est censé contenir le salut.

Quant aux fous ou ceux qu'on baptise tels, il suffit de citer un dicton de ma langue maternelle pour poser le principe de leur non exclusion dans des espaces spécialisés: "Ga na n'min bwin gana lea! Le fou est une personne (humaine) folle!" D' où la pratique correspondante: le fou, en cas de folie douce, est membre à part entière de la société qu'il va distraire ici et là par des remarques peu orthodoxes. S'il s'agit d'un fou furieux, on lui leste la jambe avec une bille de bois qui, sans l'immobiliser, ralentit sa marche et l'empêche de nuire à autrui. Ici encore, on voit l'équilibre qui préside à l'approche africaine des droits humains. (...)

B. Les droits socio-politiques

La *liberté d'expression* est loin d'avoir été toujours assurée. C'est ainsi que sous le roi du Sosso (à la jonction de la Guinée, du Sénégal et du Mali), redoutable prince réfractaire à l'islam, au début du XIII^e siècle, la terreur qu'il inspirait était telle que lorsqu'on voulait le critiquer, l'on cherchait une grande gourde et l'on y introduisait la bouche pour y exprimer et y enfermer à la fois son opinion. C'est en libérant le Manding de ce joug abrutissant que Sundjata aurait acquis le renom qui, jusqu'à ce jour, aureole son souvenir.

En effet, l'organisation de la parole publique, bien que privilégiant certaines catégories (anciens, hommes, clans princiers, etc.), ménageait à la plupart des groupes un espace de contribution. C'est l'associationnisme africain, qui préférait impliquer tous les groupes s'exprimant comme tels, plutôt que de risquer l'éruption de forces centrifuges qui eussent été alors difficiles à contenir. Ce schéma était vérifié surtout dans les sociétés villageoises où l'accès à la parole publique était plus immédiat et plus ouvert. A ce niveau, pour chaque famille ou clan, la parole était non seulement un droit mais un devoir auquel on ne pouvait se dérober.

Mais même dans les hégémonies impériales comme le Mali de la grande époque, certaines structures sociales permettaient aux catégories dominées de proférer, en certaines circonstances, des critiques ou des censures qui exprimaient la pesée et le sens de l'opinion publique. Les clans ou "castes" les plus éloignés de la noblesse avaient le plus grand accès à la parole. Tel était le griot Douga que l'auteur arabe Ibn Battuta, témoin oculaire, nous décrit au XIV^e siècle se campant devant le souverain du Mali, lui rappelant les bienfaits de ses ancêtres et concluant par une interpellation: "Toi aussi, fais du bien qu'on mentionnera après toi!" Au cours des siècles suivants,

La liberté de déplacement était et demeure l'un des droits les plus populaires du continent africain, se soldant parfois par des fraudes commerciales massives à travers les passoires que constituent les frontières artificielles entre les pays. Le droit d'asile et le droit à la terre au lieu de destination constituaient le facteur attractif complémentaire des facteurs répulsifs cités plus haut.

en particulier dans l'empire du Gao, cette tradition du discours franc et rude ou persifleur, au milieu des convulsions de palais, est souvent attestée. Par exemple, il arrive qu'un imam éminent, dans un accès de cléricalisme, fustige l'empereur (askya) Mohammed. (...)

La liberté d'association était aussi largement assurée et se manifestait dans une infinité de groupes et confréries de travail, de loisirs, d'activités artistiques, initiatiques ou ésotériques, de "classes d'âge"; et dont certains comme les "ton" villageois ou les "naam" ont été revitalisés de nos jours pour dynamiser l'essor socio-économique.

Signalons aussi qu'en matière de droits, ce ne sont pas seulement le lignage ou la profession qui en sont la source mais aussi le simple voisinage; être voisin confère des droits sur les voisins et des devoirs envers eux: une sorte de statut même quand il n'y a pas de mur mitoyen. Le terme mooré de m'yaka exprime bien cette relation.

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les frontières artificielles entre les pays. Ce n'est pas d'aujourd'hui seulement que l'Afrique est le continent des réfugiés (50% du monde). Déjà au niveau familial, les femmes africaines, surtout du fait du maintien de leurs liens /y compris le nom) avec leur famille d'origine, ne se font pas faute d'exploiter le droit à rejoindre cette famille en toute circonstance: à temps, voire à contre-temps. Mais le droit au déplacement, c'est aussi et surtout la liberté de "voter avec ses pieds" pour échapper aux aléas de la vie: tyrannie du pouvoir, épidémies, surpeuplement, etc. La carte ethnique, en forme de puzzle inextricable, est la matérialisation concrète de ce mouvement brownien des groupes sociaux de toute taille et de toute extraction. Le droit d'asile et le droit à la terre au lieu de destination constituaient le facteur attractif complémentaire des facteurs répulsifs cités plus haut.

Au total, ce mouvement permanent, qui a été encore précipité par les affres de la Traite des Noirs, a finalement à mon sens joué un rôle de décélérateur du progrès africain dans la mesure où la stabilité favorise l'accumulation et l'instabilité le désinvestissement; mais aussi dans la mesure où les peuples contenus dans un espace, un champ clos, sont condamnés à gérer et résoudre leurs contradictions par des changements structurels et qualitatifs, alors que, par les départs chroniques, les problèmes restent en l'état, "faute de combattants". L'espace devient ainsi un décélérateur de l'Histoire. (...)

Mais l'immunité protégeait aussi et surtout les envoyés, ambassadeurs et négociateurs. Le principe était que le mandataire chargé de délivrer un message, oral ou écrit, n'est pas responsable du contenu du message et ne saurait être sanctionné au cours et/ou du fait de son mandat. Un dicton imagé dans ma langue maternelle l'exprime de la manière suivante: "La foudre ne tombe pas sur un envoyé, sur un ambassadeur. La a paré dya die wele gana wa".

Ce principe de droit international n'était pas seulement une norme purement théorique et sans vie. Elle fut appliquée concrètement dans certains moments critiques consignés dans des documents historiques. C'est ainsi que lors de la conquête de Ouagadougou par la colonne française du lieutenant Voulet, ce dernier envoya un militaire africain pour enjoindre au souverain mossi de Ouagadougou de se soumettre aux envahisseurs. Furieux, le prince houspilla le tirailleur en ces termes: "Tu as la chance d'être un envoyé; sinon je t'aurais fait trancher la tête immédiatement!" On voit donc que le caractère non-écrit de certaines règles ne les empêchait pas d'être consignées et traduites dans les faits chaque fois que de besoin, et dans les circonstances les plus pathétiques.

Enfin, et pour nous en tenir à ces quelques cas seulement, *la liberté religieuse* est un des traits caractéristiques de l'évolution africaine. Il y a eu bien sûr des conflits liés aux esprits, génies ou "dieux" divers et concurrents de la religion traditionnelle; mais celle-ci, n'ayant pas de dogme révélé à préserver comme dans "les religions du livre", laissait beaucoup plus d'initiatives à ses adeptes pour les rituels liturgiques, les initiations et innovations; tout en gardant un redoutable potentiel de résistance qui n'est pas encore épuisé de nos jours. (...)

C. Les fondements éthiques et culturels

Il n'y a pas de droits humains sans fondement éthique; car le droit lui-même se situe à l'interface de la force et de l'éthique, comme une résultante de ces deux éléments souvent conflictuels. Entre l'exigence de l'idéal humain et la violence des intérêts, il y a le droit. Cette éthique africaine se fonde avant tout sur l'éminente dignité de la *personne humaine*, laquelle est fondée dans les mythes les plus anciens.

L'homme a été créé par Dieu parce qu'il voulait avoir un interlocuteur à qui parler (Kumayon). L'on raconte aussi que Dieu, après avoir créé les êtres du règne végétal et animal, s'est posé la question suivante: "Pour qui luira le soleil?" Et c'est alors qu'il créa l'homme pour que le Soleil, la Nature aient un sens. Mythe éloquent qui établit parfaitement la transcendance de l'homme comme fin ultime, et non moyen, rejoignant la fameuse thèse humaniste du philosophe allemand Kant: "Faire en sorte que l'homme soit toujours considéré comme une fin et jamais comme un moyen". Mais cette assertion rejoint aussi les injonctions des Egyptiens anciens: "N'usez pas de violence contre les hommes à la campagne comme en ville, car ils sont nés des yeux du Soleil; ils sont le troupeau de Dieu". (...)

La deuxième valeur axiale qui fonde les droits humains, c'est la *solidarité*, vertu africaine si profondément ancrée dans les pratiques et les consciences qu'elle finit par inhiber les efforts de

développement par certains effets induits. Mais il est clair que comme fondement des droits humains la solidarité constitue une base beaucoup plus solide que l'individualisme égoïste. Or l'exigence de solidarité est affirmée de mille manières dans la culture africaine: par exemple à travers ce dicton: "Si tu vois des voleurs dépouiller un homme, ne dis pas: laissez cet homme, mais laissez-nous. Si tu vois des vautours s'acharner sur un cadavre d'homme, ne dis pas: laissez ce cadavre d'homme, mais laissez-nous. Car tous les hommes sont solidaires".

Une autre valeur à laquelle les sociétés africaines sont fort sensibles, c'est la justice, que les gens privilégient presque même à la liberté, avant de s'apercevoir que, sans liberté, il n'y a pas de justice. Derrière ces valeurs qui habitent les tréfonds de toute conscience humaine lucide et motivée, il y en a d'autres sur lesquelles les Africains ont mis un accent singulier. Par exemple la pitié, qui n'est pas du misérabilisme ou de la sensiblerie niaise, mais l'élan de compassion qui mobilise les autres valeurs au service des droits humains. La pitié est une valeur démocratique en dehors de laquelle la jungle n'est pas loin. Enfin, c'est la tolérance, l'acceptation presque inconditionnelle de la différence, qui implique qu'on est prêt à défendre farouchement sa propre différence et son identité.

II. LES CADRES QUI GARANTISSENT OU COMPROMETTENT LES DROITS DE L'HOMME EN AFRIQUE

Dans la science sociologique et politique qui traite de l'Afrique, tout un maquis de vocables et de concepts encombre la réflexion et donc l'action, car il s'agit de concepts transférés pour rendre compte de réalités éloignées dans l'espace et dans le temps; d'où un double risque méthodologique d'eurocentrisme et d'anachronisme: individu, État, nation, ethnie, peuple, tribu, etc. Les réalités africaines sont casées de force dans des moules préfabriqués, dont nous retiendrons seulement certains, dans une lecture critique, en évitant de déborder sur l'immense sujet des droits des peuples dans l'Histoire africaine.

Disons que l'État bureaucratique et oppresseur n'a émergé en Afrique au Sud du Sahara que très tardivement en raison de plusieurs facteurs inhibiteurs, parmi lesquels:

- la rareté (pas l'absence !) de l'écriture, facteur capital de la bureaucratie;
- la rareté des véhicules à roue, qui limite aussi la centralisation;
- l'apport tardif des armes à feu, qui ont puissamment contribué à l'absolutisme étatique;
- la rareté de l'unification linguistique autoritaire;
- la rareté de l'imposition d'une religion à ambition universelle.

Le principe fondamental du système africain, plus ou moins inspiré par les réalités, et nonobstant les nombreuses exceptions, c'était donc la socialisation du pouvoir politique et économique. L'État, c'est-à-dire l'appareil qui met en oeuvre le pouvoir, a été souvent réduit au minimum, malgré les apparences gérontocratiques dans les villages et autocratiques dans les royaumes et empires. Par exemple, très rarement l'espace étatique a été identifié à un espace ethnique. Presque toujours, le pouvoir africain était inter et trans-ethnique par un brassage énorme de peuples.

L'un des postulats qui ressort de l'analyse historique, c'est la recherche par les "constituants" africains de l'équilibre entre les acteurs politiques grâce à la mise en oeuvre de trois grandes normes:

- la limitation du pouvoir;
- le partage du pouvoir;
- la réalisation d'un État de droit.

A. Limitation du pouvoir

Montesquieu écrit dans *L'Esprit des Lois*: "Il faut que le pouvoir arrête le pouvoir". Il faut donc des contre-pouvoirs: "Le pouvoir est comme l'oeuf, dit-on; il est trop fragile pour être tenu d'une seule main, il risque de tomber et de se casser".

Il est dit aussi: "Le pouvoir est comme l'oeuf; si vous le serrez trop, il se casse dans votre main; si vous ne le serrez pas assez, il peut glisser et se casser hors de votre main".

Les Africains avaient une nette conscience de la charge de violence potentielle incluse dans le pouvoir, puis-qu'ils l'ont baptisé "la force (panga, fanga)". C'est pourquoi, sur injonction des gens du peuple, dans des serments solennels d'investiture, les futurs chefs s'engageaient à ne pas abuser du pouvoir. Prempeh II, roi des Ashanti, mort en 1970, intronisé en 1931, disait encore dans son serment: "C'est à moi que vous avez offert le fusil. Si je ne vous protège pas et ne gouverne pas correctement comme l'ont fait mes ancêtres, je viole le grand serment."

C'est après ce serment que le peuple, à son tour, par ses représentants, prêtait le serment de le servir et de l'aider à bien gouverner. Il s'agit bien là d'une sorte de contrat synallagmatique, d'une constitution. Car ces serments pouvaient, par la suite, être invoqués contre les parjures. Très souvent, la procédure de plainte, de doléances vers le niveau supérieur était prévue, allant du village (de la colline, au Rwanda et au Burundi) jusqu'au roi, en passant par les chefs inférieurs et supérieurs (cantons, provinces).

La limitation du pouvoir était garantie aussi par une large liberté d'expression (cf. ci-dessus).

La troisième garantie contre les abus de pouvoir à l'encontre des droits de l'homme, c'est la dissociation fréquente du pouvoir politique et du pouvoir économique. Ce qui nous éloigne de la plupart des systèmes politiques africains d'aujourd'hui où pouvoir = avoir et réciproquement. Situation différente aussi du cas des pays industrialisés où le pouvoir est recherché après que l'avoir ait été largement assuré.

En pays akan, le candidat à la chefferie ou à la royauté, dès qu'il était élu, était dépouillé de ses parures personnelles et revêtu de contonnade blanche. Cette même idée réapparaît dans le fait que très souvent le chef politique n'a pas pouvoir sur la terre et sa dévolution. La compétence politique et judiciaire n'est pas foncière. Cette dernière revient aux chefs de terre, souvent descendants des premiers occupants (distinction entre les laman, dugukolotigui, tengsoba d'une part, et les kangam, dugutigui et teng naaba d'autre part).

Comme, en tant que Chef, il devait rigoureusement redistribuer les biens qu'il recevait et non les accaparer, cela contribuait aussi à limiter son enrichissement.

B. Partage du pouvoir

Mais la meilleure façon de limiter le pouvoir, c'est de le partager. Tel était le second principe, selon lequel la meilleure garantie du pouvoir était d'en multiplier les parties prenantes en associant le maximum de groupes. C'est ainsi qu'au Mossi, au Mali, dans l'Ashanti, en pays Yoruba, etc., etc., les princes et nobles sont associés aux ministres du roi qui, eux, sont choisis hors de la noblesse. Dans de nombreux royaumes du Sahel, les hommes de "caste" (forgerons, griots) et les captifs de la couronne, souvent chefs de guerre, participent tous aux conseils royaux avec voix délibérative.

L'armée de métier, constituée très tardivement, était avant tout, jusqu'au XVIII^e siècle, presque toujours un outil de conquête non point du pouvoir, mais de territoires extérieurs.

Souvent, le roi est élu par de grands électeurs non nobles, afin d'observer un principe de neutralité entre les clans nobiliaires en compétition. (...)

C. Un État de droit

L'État africain, dans de très nombreux cas, méritait cette appellation. Le droit ici était dit par la coutume. Le roi, loin d'être au-dessus de la coutume, devait en être le premier serviteur, prisonnier qu'il était d'usages minutieusement codifiés.

Chez les Akan, on pouvait invoquer contre lui un grand serment antérieur à son règne. Usurpateur, il était toujours contesté. Ne pouvant s'adresser directement au peuple, sauf par un intermédiaire porte-parole, le roi était de ce fait à la fois protégé, mais aussi soumis à un contrôle.

Chez les Ashanti, le symbole et l'esprit du royaume n'étaient d'ailleurs pas dans le roi, mais dans le trône d'or censé être descendu du ciel pour consacrer l'union des peuples sous l'égide de l'ancêtre Osei Tutu. Le tabouret était installé lui-même sur son propre trône avec sa cour de dignitaires comme étant le vrai souverain.

Dans maints royaumes africains, le roi était tellement subordonné au peuple que lorsqu'il s'affaiblissait, on estimait que cela pouvait nuire à la prospérité de son peuple et on l'éliminait rituellement. Ce régicide constitutionnel pouvait intervenir aussi en cas de trahison des normes de la coutume (Yoruba).

Dans les sociétés à pouvoir diffus, la socialisation était encore plus grande à travers les groupes d'âge, la parenté et les cultes religieux. (...)

D. Les impacts extérieurs

Quid de l'impact des systèmes extérieurs qui se sont imposés à l'Afrique? En quoi ont-ils influé sur l'évolution des droits humains sur le continent? Sans vouloir tenter des procès faciles ni dresser des bilans unilatéraux, il faut reconnaître que l'Afrique noire a payé un lourd tribut sur ce plan et que les régimes établis par les étrangers, avec souvent la complicité de partenaires africains, ne compteront pas dans les Annales de l'Histoire universelle comme des modèles de protection des droits de l'être humain. Depuis presque cinq siècles, l'Afrique noire n'a pas recouvré son indépendance réelle, à travers les phases d'intervention violente ou sourde, pour ne pas dire d'ingérence, sous le signe de l'intégration au monde. La Traite des Noirs fut motivée par l'intégration de la force de travail négro-africaine dans les circuits du mercantilisme capitaliste: ce fut l'un des épisodes les plus sinistres de l'avilissement de l'homme; surtout par l'image tristement avariée qu'elle a laissée de l'homme africain dans l'esprit de bien des Euraméricains, et de certains Africains eux-mêmes, jusqu'à nos jours. Une seule citation dans une littérature immense: "Généralement le Nègre est inférieur à l'Européen pour les facultés intellectuelles. Chez nous, le front avance et la bouche semble se rapetisser, se reculer comme si nous étions destinés à penser plutôt qu'à manger. Chez les Nègres, le front se recule et la bouche s'avance comme s'il était davantage fait pour manger que pour réfléchir".

Le régime sud-africain de l'*apartheid* a été un mal absolu en matière de droits de l'homme, un épilogue affreux et constitutionnel de la Traite des Noirs.

La colonisation, elle, fut motivée, disait-on, par la nécessité de mettre fin à l'esclavage en Afrique; esclavage justifié en son temps par la nécessité de sauver les âmes (en asservissant les corps). La colonisation, pour restaurer l'Afrique, écrasa de nombreux Africains. C'est le sens du "double mandat" (de civilisation et d'exploitation) énoncé avec le plus d'éclat par le Britannique Lord Lugard.

Ceux de notre génération, qui ont lutté avec une farouche énergie pour l'indépendance, croyaient fermement que celle-ci instaurerait des cadres stables pour la défense et l'illustration des droits de l'homme en Afrique. On connaît la suite qui n'en finit par d'écoeurer le monde et l'Afrique: tyrannies

Le droit à la vie implique surtout l'accès à l'alimentation. Dans beaucoup de cas, cet accès est présenté comme un droit direct, immédiat et imprescriptible: par exemple la liberté d'accès gratuit à l'eau et au puits.

cannibales, dictatures ouvertes ou larvées et masquées, crues et cruelles, ou apprêtées à des sauces assaisonnées d'épices démocratiques, conflits internes ou guerres de frontières, guerres civiles et génocides, exodes d'apocalypse de peuples entiers évacuant en bloc leur espace abandonné aux seigneurs de la guerre, etc., etc. Une photo horrible a fait le tour du monde. Elle présente un enfant du Sud-Soudan dans un village dévasté et désert, accroupi par terre et la tête penchée. Tout seul, cet enfant épuisé attend son heure. Derrière lui, un vautour posté à proximité attend lui aussi l'issue fatale. Qui est responsable des droits ou plutôt de l'absence de droit de cet enfant? En Afrique, comme ailleurs, ce sont les plus faibles qui, comme des fusibles, "sautent" en cas de crises. A concurrence de 70% au moins, ce sont les femmes

et les enfants qui sont les victimes des conflits. Or ce pourcentage est aussi celui des femmes par rapport aux hommes dans la participation aux votes.

Actuellement, l'Angola est parmi les pays au monde qui comptent le plus fort taux d'enfants mutilés, du fait de la guerre civile fratricide marquée par de nombreuses immixtions étrangères.

Aujourd'hui, c'est l'ingérence humanitaire, une fois de plus pour sauver l'Afrique qui ne sait que se perdre. on comprend les réticences. Car quand on a été mordu par le serpent, on se méfie même de toute corde qui traîne. Et puis les sauveurs peuvent-ils être les bons pompiers après avoir joué les pyromanes?

Certes le fondement du devoir d'ingérence humanitaire est irrécusable. Il n'y a pas de souveraineté nationale qui tienne contre des droits de l'homme et des peuples, singulièrement contre ces droits naturels imprescriptibles, ces "lois non écrites" qui datent d'avant les textes ou les droits "positifs" et qu'invoque avec éloquence Antigone devant Créon. Ingérence? Oui mais ... au profit et dans l'intérêt de qui? On ne colonise ni ne décolonise pas innocemment. Peut-on s'ingérer innocemment? Autant dire qu'il y a des conditions, des critères et des limites. Fixés par qui? Le conseil de Sécurité? Mais "qui gardera les gardiens"? Car l'ingérence est de facto unilatérale; elle vient toujours du Nord.

III. ELEMENTS DE PROSPECTIVE

Le tableau des droits de l'homme dans l'Afrique précoloniale, qui a été brossé plus haut, peut paraître partiel et partial. En fait il ne s'agit pas d'autosatisfaction ni de romantisme rétrospectif et subjectif, selon le dicton: "Quand mon ami est borgne je le regarde de profil!" C'est un parti pris pour retenir les principes positifs dans les pratiques africaines. Mais ce tableau n'est pas bien sûr une diapositive statique et figée. c'est plutôt un film qui, aujourd'hui, connaît un nouvel épisode marqué par des changements massifs, profonds et structurels.

Le droit le plus impérieux pour les Africains, aujourd'hui, est le droit de se connaître et d'être connus. "Le droit et le devoir..." Qui sommes-nous? En effet, le mal fondamental qui mine tous les efforts pour redresser l'Afrique et prévenir les attentats contre les droits de l'homme, c'est la désintégration générale et incontrôlée des éléments organiques de notre identité collective. Or, pour être un arbre parmi les arbres dans la forêt de l'Humanité, nous avons droit aux racines, comme aux branches. Droit à l'endogène au moins autant qu'à l'exogène.

Aujourd'hui, nous sommes des billes de bois débitées pour des usages divers. Le premier droit et devoir c'est de bâtir de nouvelles cohérences; une synthèse historique pour un nouveau départ en évitant deux écueils graves et dangereux pour les droits de l'homme. D'abord la fuite en avant vers l'intégration-désintégration, l'intégration suicidaire dans l'ordre mondial, dans le marché libre (pour les autres!) en effaçant au passage l'État tué dans l'oeuf avant même que d'éclore... C'est ce qui résulte de la soumission presque inconditionnelle aux conditionnalités et prescriptions sans appel du P.A.S. (Programme d'ajustement structurel), qui induisent une multitude de déséquilibres microscopiques et particuliers destinés à réaliser les équilibres macroscopiques statistiques, lesquels corrigent les symptômes du mal africain sans toucher aux structures internes et externes qui sont les vraies causes de ces maux. Résultat: les infractions aux droits de l'homme s'aggravent; et notre seule consolation, c'est qu'on nous répète que la potion amère est pour le court terme. Or certains droits de l'homme sont fortement ébranlés: le droit au travail des jeunes, le droit à la santé, à l'éducation, au logement décent, à l'environnement. (...)

Autre dérive grave et majeure: c'est, contrairement à la synthèse nécessaire, le mimétisme du droit public et privé en Afrique par rapport au droit des anciennes puissances coloniales. (...) De même, des groupes ethniques identiques qui obéissent au même droit originel sont souvent assujettis, du fait du partage colonial, à des législations différentes depuis les indépendances. A cet égard aussi, le mythe du droit traditionnel comme entrave et frein à la modernisation doit être dénoncé. Un droit "moderne" suffit-il en lui-même à moderniser un peuple? Comme dit le proverbe: "On peut amener de force un âne au puits, mais on ne peut pas le forcer à boire". L'individu africain consacré sujet du droit à la place du groupe social d'antan n'en devient pas automatiquement un acteur social et politique réel. L'individu africain n'est pas l'individu européen, qui, en général, connaît ses droits et est socialement structuré comme l'était l'Africain d'hier (et parfois encore d'aujourd'hui car le passé est largement présent). L'individu africain qui n'est plus pris en charge par les groupes endogènes, pas encore par les structures

contemporaines souvent inexistantes ou impensables, est l'être le plus fragile, le plus vulnérable et le plus pitoyable qui soit. C'est pourquoi l'État africain peut se féliciter de ce que la société civile obéit toujours à quelques normes traditionnelles qui assument certaines charges énormes à caractère de service public (santé, sécurité, éducation, information, etc.). L'État utilise à fond les rouages traditionnels et informels de la société civile sans leur reconnaître les droits afférents et en les laissant dépérir à petit feu.

Mais, s'il faut refuser la fuite en avant consistant à se réfugier dans le particulier des autres baptisé Universel, il faut aussi rejeter la fuite vers un passé qui ne vaudrait que comme patrimoine momifié. C'est l'endogène vivant dans un mélange indissociable d'ici et d'ailleurs, d'hier et d'aujourd'hui, qu'il faut gérer et transformer. Un puissant effort de refondation collective et de création des conditions d'un essor économique et social autonome s'impose, si nous ne voulons pas continuer à mendier pour survivre. Or ceux qui mendient n'ont qu'un seul droit: recevoir. Et "la main qui demande est toujours en-dessous" (Félix Houphouët-Boigny) même si nous sommes exportateurs nets de capitaux. (...)

Partout dans l'Histoire, l'État et/ou la société civile surtout, de gré ou de force, ont été les artisans de l'essor des droits de l'homme. La société civile africaine (femmes, jeunes, paysans, intellectuels, syndicats, cadres, opérateurs économiques) a déjà bien mérité de ce noble combat.

Mais ce qui reste à faire est encore plus considérable. Cette tâche sera facilitée en dépassant l'État par le bas, par décentralisation vers les communautés de base, foyers puissants de défense et sauvegarde des droits humains concrets et de la démocratie au quotidien. Il importe de dépasser l'État également vers le haut, vers des structures fédérales, seules capables d'exorciser le spectre de la dictature à huis clos dans des micro-États, et aussi d'infrastructurer de façon rentable nos cultures et d'acculturer les apports techniques et scientifiques exogènes.

C'est le lieu de récuser le faux dilemme du particulier et de l'Universel. En matière de droits humains, il y a un espace planétaire qui coïncide avec l'habitable de l'espèce humaine, laquelle est la seule race véritable: nul ne peut s'y dérober en invoquant je ne sais quelle identité culturelle comme un alibi; car le droit à la différence ne peut aller en l'occurrence jusqu'à la différence du droit.

Mais à l'inverse, il ne faut pas imposer du dehors des paradigmes, des principes, des procédures marqués du sceau d'une histoire particulière à l'ensemble des sociétés dans tous les continents, chose que même les religions n'ont pas réussie, forcées quelles sont de s'acculturer pour réussir, de s'adapter pour être adoptées. Chaque société peut entrer dans le même temple des droits, par les portes qui lui sont familières.

Mais finalement, il ne faut jamais oublier que face au droit de l'homme, il y a toujours la meute des intérêts liberticides et fossoyeurs des droits. On proclame, à cor et à cri, les droits et on garde un silence pesant sur les intérêts qui empêchent de les respecter. Il importe donc d'insister pour finir sur l'importance capitale de l'éducation pour les droits de l'homme, qui doit être portée par les militants de cette "cause du peuple" jusque dans le dernier hameau de façon intelligible et directement assimilable par les gens dans leurs langues et leurs cultures.

L'enjeu et l'objectif sont clairs: il s'agit de substituer enfin à la violence qui opère depuis le temps des cavernes comme le seul logiciel de l'Histoire humaine, violence théorisée par les deux grandes idéologies occidentales du XI^e siècle, un autre logiciel, celui de la conscience humaine éclairée et responsable, co-responsable. La conscience, c'est ce que les Egyptiens appelaient le "cœur", lequel était pesé avec rigueur après la mort devant le tribunal d'Osiris.

Toutes les cultures du monde peuvent s'entendre sur cet objectif stratégique. L'Universel, ce n'est pas le particulier des uns imposé à tous les autres. Ce n'est pas la juxtaposition stérile de tous les particuliers. C'est l'agrégation par interfécondation de ce qu'il y a de meilleur, de plus succulent et de plus grand dans tous les particuliers afin d'en faire une raison de vivre suffisamment puissante, une idée force: pour nous arracher à l'étage bestial de l'instinct en vue de répondre à l'appel intérieur qui nous convoque vers les sphères les plus hautes de notre condition humaine.

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CITIZENS OF THE PLANET AND OF THE CENTURY

Xabier Gorostiaga, SJ

This speech was delivered by Xabier Gorostiaga, S.J., Rector of the Central American University in El Salvador at the Social Development Summit in Copenhagen in March 1995. It has been translated from Pastoral Popular, July 1995).

The speed, profundity and character of the transformations that have taken place in the past two decades imply a change in an era dominated by a global conservative revolution that is trying to present as inevitable a neoliberal and homogeneous market economy based on privatisation, competition and the liberalisation of economies under the tutelage of international financial institutions. We are living through a change of epoch rather than an epoch of change.

The dominant paradigm has provoked a globalisation from above that is elitist, and concentrated and centralised on wealth, technology and military and political power that has never been seen before in the history of humanity. At the same time, poverty and unemployment have increased, excluding the vast majority who have become a superfluous population and provoking a greater fragmentation and polarisation of societies, both in the “two-thirds” societies of the North and in the “one-third” societies of the South.

At the same time this has produced a worldwide environmental crisis, which is a product of the style of development and the technological revolution. This has happened simultaneously with a population explosion in the past 20 years in the countries of the South, the majority of which suffer conditions of misery and poverty, provoking a battle for survival that has only added to the environmental catastrophe. Indigenous peoples and peasants, who have preserved the environment for centuries, have been forced by the neoliberal capitalist model to change their way of life and even themselves, becoming predators of Mother Nature in order to survive.

Ten Signs of a Civilisation in Crisis

There are 10 determining factors that exemplify and prove the tendencies aggravating the crisis, which is not only a crisis of the growth model but of civilisation itself.

The civilisation of the champagne glass. We live in a world in which 20 per cent of humanity, which is the upper part of the glass, controls 83 per cent of the world's riches. And the 20 per cent, who form the stem of the glass, survive with only 1.4 per cent of the world's riches. In other words, more than one billion human beings survive on only US\$1 a day and three billion people live on just more than \$2 a day. This injustice in the distribution of wealth is growing. The UN's 1994 Human Development Report indicates that while in 1960 the gap between rich and poor allowed the top 20 per cent to increase their income 30 times more than that of the bottom 20 per cent, in 1993 the same gap allowed the wealthy to increase their income 61 times more than that of the poor.

We are in a time in which flexible capital — product of the technological, managerial and electronic revolution — allows for the concentration and centralisation of power at levels never seen before in history. The cities and empires of the past, founded and based on colonial exploitation, never approached this level of concentration and centralisation of power. There has never been such an abysmal difference between the power and standard of living of a small number of countries of the North and the majority of countries in the South, not even during the colonial era.

The Cognitive *Elites*

The concentration of knowledge is even greater. The North-South disparity of investment in research and development reflects that tendency of an even greater concentration of knowledge in the countries of the North at a time when the intensity of knowledge becomes the key to its accumulation. The recent best seller in the United States, "The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life", by Harvard professors Richard J. Herrnstein and Charles Murray, is provocative and threatening. The authors present us with a cognitive *élite* that consolidates its power in a Technological Society through its high IQ.

These cognitive *élites* reproduce themselves in universities and companies through their ties with the rich and powerful and isolate themselves more and more from the rest of the population. "These tendencies without controls will lead the United States toward a caste society in which the under class will remain at the bottom of society and the cognitive *élites* will consolidate at the top restructuring the rules of society in such a way that will be more difficult for them to lose power". This meritocracy should be supported by federal scholarships, recommend the Harvard professors. Instead of allotting funds for the less qualified, funds should be geared toward gifted students. The champagne glass civilisation has sophisticated defenders who try to demonstrate the nature and logic of social differences.

One billion human beings surviving on \$1 a day. Another three billion surviving with just more than \$2 a day. This unjust distribution of wealth tends to increase.

The accelerated growth of multi-millionaires, who possess personal fortunes of billions of dollars, is also a sign of the times. The July 1994 edition of Forbes Magazine analyzes the great fortunes of the world, presenting statistics that are an aberration from the economic point of view and a true scandal from the Christian perspective.

According to Forbes, there are 358 individuals — we are not talking about transnational corporations — with a combined accumulated wealth of \$762 billion. In other words, these people possess the equivalent of the *per capita* income of 45 per cent of the world's population. That is, the income earned by 2.4 billion poor people. The number of multi-millionaires grew 140 per cent between 1987 and 1994.

The record-holder for new multi-millionaires is Mexico, the country the International Monetary Fund and World Bank hold up as an example of what can be achieved with structural adjustment policies. It is not surprising that the indigenous uprising in Chiapas coincided with the explosion of multi-millionaires and the financial crisis of January 1995, which shows the vulnerability of this structural adjustment model and the fragility of growth based on financial speculation. At the same time, Proposition 187 in California showed that the North American Free Trade Agreement, a central piece of the Mexican model, is only a free market for the capital and goods of the rich and not the labour of the poor.

The peace dividends from the end of the Cold War have not been utilised. Military spending in 1993, the chilling amount of \$815 billion, is equivalent to the *per capita* income of 40 per cent of humanity despite the end of the Cold War. Against whom will these weapons be used? Who is the enemy? Somalia? Rwanda? Haiti? We have gone from an international Cold War to the war of societal and individual insecurity. Private security as a business is prospering in the North as well as in the South and probably earns more than \$100 billion yearly. The 200 million weapons that are in the hands of private citizens in the United States indicate that the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the "evil empire" have not brought about the desired peace. We live on a planet with armed citizens who have weapons to protect themselves from poverty and the poor.

Drug trafficking is also a symptom. According to INTERPOL's May 1994 Report, drug trafficking earns about \$400 billion a year, of which \$100 million are laundered through transnational banks. The recent Naples Declaration (November 1994), which was sponsored by the United Nations and supported by 138 countries, commits countries in the

Globalisation from above and the growing power of transnationals and international agencies is taking over and making the States themselves into transnationals. There is a deeply felt need for endogenous development to overcome the old need of the State to give orders, the same thing that is now being done by the international agencies.

fight against international crime that earns about \$750 billion yearly through drug trafficking, illegal arms sales and prostitution. The lack of meaning in life, the search for an escape through drugs and sex, and political and religious fundamentalism endanger the security of citizens and increase crime.

North and South: Ethical Concepts

The environmental crisis is being produced by the excessive consumption of a small number of countries in the North and the growing poverty of the South. Poverty and the need to survive at any cost represent a new threat to fauna, flora and life in the oceans. The huge cities of the South — Sao Paulo, Mexico, Calcutta, Shanghai, Cairo — that have grown because of irrational development and the massive migration of peasants, reveal a lack of direction, rationality and sensibility in relation to the current technological revolution.

There is growth without employment. Even while we could recuperate growth levels of the past, the world perspective is for growth without jobs where gross domestic product and the labour pool grow faster than job creation everywhere except in Southeast Asia. This will make the “champagne glass” become more concentrated and the inequality gap will grow both in the North and South.

The concentration of wealth and power can even be seen in the United States and the transnational companies. The number of jobs is being reduced while corporate managers, who are looking to reduce the number of jobs, increased their average salary from \$1.2 million in 1992 to nearly \$2 million in 1993.

The new poverty in the North reveals that the growing asymmetry, marginalisation and exclusion of the vast majority of people is a world-wide phenomena that is expanding. North and South are no longer only geographical concepts, but also socio-economic, political and, above all, ethical concepts. In the South we also have our *North*: the rich who are part of the 20 per cent. The North also has its *South*: immigrants and workers marginalised by unemployment or temporary jobs (without the right to form unions or receive benefits) who live in conditions that are more and more like those of the South.

Nicaragua: Question Without Answer

The growth model based on exports is ambiguous and contradictory. During the so-called lost decade in Latin America (the 1980's), exports grew by nearly 60 per cent while imports fell to about 15 per cent of the gross domestic product. That is, it had the potential to be a decade of accumulation of wealth. Nevertheless, the structural conditions that created the external debt, unequal terms of trade and capital flight, caused Latin America to transfer money to the North, thereby decapitalising economies by approximately \$500 billion. The current crisis in Mexico indicates that this situation was not corrected by the structural adjustment policies of the past 10 years.

The case of Nicaragua is paradigmatic. Nicaragua is the only country in the world where *per capita* income today is 59 per cent less than it was in 1960, with *per capita* income equivalent to that of 1945. Nicaragua, together with Guyana, is the country with the highest debt in the economic history of the world, a debt that is six times that of its gross domestic product (\$11 billion in debt and a GDP of \$1.8 billion). In addition, Nicaragua, with the exception of Israel, is also the country that has received the biggest amount of *per capita* foreign aid in the past five years. Despite this, its *per capita* growth continues to be negative and after five years of peace this negative growth is 40 per cent more than that of 1985 which the country was at war. It is a country that could be rich, but has 60 per cent unemployment and 70 per cent of the population living in poverty.

This situation is being prolonged by the strict ESAP (Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation) agreement and the meticulous control of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, that period-ically

monitor the functioning of Nicaragua's economy. Who is monitoring the growing un-governability of Nicaragua and many other countries of the Third World?

This situation makes us ask ourselves where we are and where we are going? At the beginning of the 1990's, Mexico and Nicaragua were considered to be signs of hope for the new economic and political order. In 1995, at the time of the Social Development Summit, Mexico and Nicaragua were two questions without answers. For this, we have to look at the other side of the coin of the development model, analyze its contradictions and find in this dialectic how to overcome the crisis.

Neo-liberalism Questioned

Civil society is emerging at the global level with a community of values, attitudes and interests in response to the common threats found on all the continents. An open globalisation from below, from within nations, has been gaining strength over the past decade. The false prophecy of the inevitability of the market has been answered with alternative proposals embodied in endogenous, participatory and cumulative projects at the local, national, regional and international levels. The summits in Rio de Janeiro (environment), Cairo (population), Madrid (50th anniversary of the IMF and World Bank) and Copenhagen (social development) are examples of the presence of these local-global proposals at all levels and in all sectors. Today, there exists transformative proposals, hopes and visions that are in open contrast to the fear and uncertainty of those who recognise that their stabilisation and adjustment formulas are not working.

The rebellion of cultures in the face of the homogenisation that threatens their identity and idiosyncrasy make it difficult for the new subjects in civil society to be easily incorporated into the paradigm of globalisation from above in which they can only participate as passive consumers and, even further, only if they have a certain level of purchasing power.

These worldwide alternative voices and networks that are breaking onto the scene with protests and proposals to this situation have not found room or answers in the power structures that dominate the so-called "new" order, which demonstrate the inability, fragility and lack of legitimacy and credibility of the Group of Seven, the Bretton Woods System and the paradigm that is presented as inevitable. The Social Summit faced strong opposition because it was held at a time of weakness of the dominant development model and the beginning of a period of accumulation of social forces around alternative proposals worldwide.

The moment is propitious for moving from protest without proposal to proposal with protest. The neo-liberal model is in crisis, it is inevitable.

The number of public criticisms Governments are making about structural adjustment policies is growing both in the South as well as in the North. Former authorities of the Bretton Woods System are also criticising these policies. In addition, the academic and scientific worlds have overcome their vacillations of the mid-1980's and are generally against the Chicago Boys, who are cornered. The most significant thing, however, is the strong debate between international financial institutions, technical-academic sectors and political functionaries. There are numerous internal evaluations and external commissions that severely question the weak, insufficient and failed neoliberal model.

The new rhetoric of the international financial institutions, which "kidnap" the language of the NGOs, including that of Liberation Theology, shows that they are on the defensive and need to re-establish their credibility and legitimacy. The time is right to move from "protest without proposal to the proposal with protest", as the women's movement in Peru recently announced.

The new space opened by the crisis reveals itself profoundly in the declarations of the highest ranking authorities of the international financial institutions. In a surprising speech in 1992, IMF Director Michael Camdessus said, "We, who are in charge of the economy, are the administrators, in part, of this grace of God: alleviating the suffering of our brothers and sisters. And we are the agents of the expansion of freedom. We know that God is with us in the task of expanding brotherhood".

A new space and a new era have opened to redefine development, to begin a strategy of global solidarity for everyone.

Camdessus maintains that the “market is the most efficient organisational model for increased individual and collective wealth. But if the market is left completely without mechanisms there is the great risk that the poor will be trampled. In pure logic, price fixing could be their death sentence. The market needs to be watched, framed in such a way that it continues to be free and also just. We cannot accept market fundamentalism as a substitute for Marxist fundamentalism. The market cannot be abandoned to its own logic because the economy cannot be reduced only to technical aspects but must have the human being as its point of reference. The market is overburdened by the forces of death and life. This reality, over which each and every one of us has a function, a responsibility, is where economic rationality and the construction of the reign of God meet”.

There exists today a civilisation from below that demands that priority be given to the quality of life, sustainability, equity and, above all, shared happiness, the only kind of human happiness. Simplicity is more complex, rich and sophisticated than the reductionism that proposes the total market.

Franz Hinkelammert interprets these declarations as an “attempt to recuperate Liberation Theology for imperialist theology, transforming the option for the poor into the option for the IMF. Camdessus affirms the need for a market ethic because the logic of the market could destroy the market itself”.

Is this a new rhetoric or a revision of the reductionism of the past? Is it an attempt to co-opt Liberation Theology or the elaboration of a market theology for the renovation and permanence of capitalism?

The only thing that is clear on all fronts is that the neoliberal model is showing signs of weakness and that its efficiency and credibility are being questioned. This is inevitable. A new space and a new era have opened to redefine the concept of development, to tie it to alternative subjects and to begin a national and international plan of solidarity for a global strategy of change.

Alternative Development Has Begun

There exist today multiple concrete experiences on all continents that endogenously have arrived with visions, proposals and alternatives coming from their own roots. This enormous collection of micro and meso experiences have common values, interests and attitudes with a high level of similarities in the face of common threats.

There exists today a civilisation from below that demands that priority be given to the quality of life, sustainability, equity and, above all, shared happiness, the only kind of human happiness. In diverse forms, from diverse cultures and people on the five continents emerges a collection of shared priorities that could be conceptualised as the search for a civilisation of simplicity. Simplicity is more complex, rich and sophisticated than the reductionism that proposes the total market.

Alternative development is possible. In fact, it has already started. “The paradigm of new development has started to triumph”, Said Ue Haq, the former Minister for Planning of Pakistan during the last conference of the International Society for Development, held in Mexico in April, 1994. I perceive a white smoke coming from the chimneys of the city of economic growth. The political battle, however, has only just begun.

The fragility and burn out, in addition to the growing contradictions of the actual model, allow for and demand alternative development. The principal obstacle is the ability the system has had up to now to paralyse and destroy all alternative options. The opportunity and challenge of the Social Summit is to mobilize an implementation dynamic, an independent plan of action and mechanisms with evaluation and follow-up. The fatigue experienced after the Rio Conference cannot be allowed this time around.

Solutions need to be endogenous and come from within and from below. But these alternatives need a global frame of reference, space and rules of the games that give rise to the New Economic and Judicial Order worldwide.

Respect Cultural Bio-diversity

Eight basic proposals for emerging alternative development can be summed up based on the accumulation of endogenous experiences.

Overcoming the culture of the antagonistic civilisation, based on confrontation and struggle. Our civilisation is antagonistic with North-South confrontation, male-female confrontation, race confrontation, growth-environment confrontation, homogenisation-diversity confrontation, present-future confrontation, consumerism-happiness confrontation.

There needs to be a culture of harmony and tolerance that integrates the diversity of world and global citizenship. The inevitable explosions created by intolerance and oppression (Chiapas, Somalia, Chechnya, Bosnia, Rwanda...) do nothing more than reaffirm the need for a culture of participation, tolerance and respect for shared diversity.

A new sense of tolerance is born in the alternative experiences that, combined with the growing lack of credibility in the political parties and in politicians, have been able to mobilise and create movements. In civil society there are also signs of a growing lack of confidence in the State and electoral process, a situation that stems from the manipulation of today's ambiguous democracy that does not allow for genuine participation of new subjects in the parties or the Government.

The predominance of geoculture over the geopolitical and the geoeconomic. Not only is culture gaining ground over the traditional sources of economic and political power, but there is a growing confrontation between the two kinds of culture.

The dominant geoculture tries to homogenise culture from above, from global dreams and global images, from a canned culture brought by cable TV in the form of films and global music. Michael Jackson - man or woman, black or white, old or young - is a perfect example of the culture of global images imposed by the total market, as is the Big Mac (the same taste, size and price for everyone, everywhere), Nike and Reebok running shoes, videos, compact disks...

The diverse experiences of alternative development look to overcome the politicisation and "economicism" of the past and try to incorporate the subjects who respond to the world of labour, the environment, gender, culture and the new generations - children and adolescents - the subjects of the future. It is a radical geoculture that looks for its roots in profound simplicity and quality of life, convinced of the inability of the current system to integrate an equitable, sustainable and participatory development because of its *penchant* for accumulation based on maximising profits through high consumption and irrational growth.

Development Cannot Be Imported

The democratisation of the market and the State. The new geoculture cannot continue to "satanise" the market or accept as inevitable the so-called "democratisation of the market". The emphasis should be on the need to democratise the market, transforming it into an instrument for participation and equity that means fighting against the monopolisation that characterises the markets in the world today.

The democratisation of the State, its transparency and accountability to civil society is fundamental, together with greater decentralised participation of municipalities, local Governments and NGO's, if we are going to recuperate the principal of subsidiarity. What can be done locally and by sectors should not be done centrally, not by the State, the parties or by the organisations that make up civil society.

Globalisation from above and the growing power of transnationals and international agencies is taking over and making the States themselves into transnationals. There is a deeply felt need for endogenous development to overcome the old need of the State to give orders, the same thing that is now being done

by the international agencies. The World Bank emphasises this aspect in an excellent and surprising internal evaluation on structural adjustment in Africa (May 1994). The World Bank mentions the failure of international cooperation: by lacking a project from Africa itself it was consumed by the “vampire State” in the past and by the “vampire *élites*” today.

Economic aid does not help and frequently becomes a brake to growth. Aid and transferring technology can only be complements to an endogenous project. Development cannot be imported.

As Southeast Asia has taught us, the State and the market are not contradictions but complement each other. The Asian experience today demands reform and the democratisation of the State as an irreplaceable element for development and a complement to the market. Our world requires small States that are efficient, normative and transparent and that respond to and help generate an endogenous and participatory development project.

Democratise Knowledge

Reaffirm the ability and potential of small and medium-sized producers, and local and municipal organisations as priority actors of development at the national and international level, propitiating the integration, which today is feasible, of these endogenous forces. Without overcoming marginalisation and the exclusion from the market, which today lacks the productive potential of small-sized producers, sustainable development and political stability are impossible.

The macro-micro link in each society is one of the weakest features, but is necessary in the new experiences. The macro-micro link at the State-nation level requires creating the missing link or the intermediate link, which implies the formation of professional and technical human capital that respond to the values and interests of the small and medium-sized producers in civil society more than to the monopolised and transnationalised market.

The democratisation of knowledge is one of the most sought-after tasks. Above all what is needed is the reform of the university that reproduces and strengthens the “champagne glass civilisation”. The lack of education as well as the education system are part of the problem of under-development. The educational systems contribute more to continuing under-development than to overcoming it.

The democratisation of knowledge, its insertion into the service of needs, values and interests of globalisation from below, is part of the new geoculture that is required for alternative development at the end of the 20th century.

The ties between universities and research and technology institutes in the North and South to jointly face the concentration of knowledge may be a new and determining factor in the links between the macro-micro and the meso-mega of globalisation from below. Technological and knowledge *apartheid* is as perverse as racial *apartheid*. But racial or technological integration without a local identity or image may be as damaging as *apartheid* itself. Complementary and equitable integration of diversities is a fundamental element of the new geoculture from below.

Poverty and the need to survive at any cost represent a new threat to fauna, flora and life in the oceans. The huge cities of the South - Sao Paulo, Mexico, Calcutta, Shanghai, Cairo - that have grown because of irrational development and the massive migration of peasants, reveal a lack of direction, rationality and sensibility in relation to the current technological revolution.

Cultural rhythm, identity and idiosyncrasies are as fundamental for economic and technical development as they are for cultural development. It is also essential for the development of each State and each market. Culture is the foundation for harmonic development, in which women and the environment are the most important factors today.

The consensus that is growing among millions of citizens of the planet to search for another world order is more of a threat today to savage capitalism than State socialism was in the past.

Alternative means promoting selective insertion into the world market, overcoming the desperate temptation of the autarchy and of de-linking from the global market, and promoting a selective bond that corresponds to the needs and stages of the particular development project of each region. The South cannot isolate itself from the mega-markets (European Union, NAFTA, Association of Pacific Nations). At the same time it cannot be incorporated into these blocs, submitting to the agendas, priorities and rules of the game that are unilaterally defined by the North. The case of Mexico's "success" is a clear example. Meso-mega integration at the international level (regional integration with the mega-market blocs) is one of the most difficult tasks of alternative development and one of the most difficult challenges to be confronted.

The reform and restructuring of Bretton Woods institutions. The Social Summit is looking to establish an agenda and a time-table for an independent evaluation of the Bretton Woods institutions (World Bank, IMF, World Trade Organisation) that will allow for transparency, accountability internal democratisation and organic integration under the control of the United Nations in order to achieve a complementary relationship and overcome the contradictions that currently exist between the UN Development Agencies and the institutions of the Bretton Woods System.

Citizens of the Planet

The only thing that is permanent in an epoch of changes and even more so in an epoch change is change itself. The most profound revolution in modern times is the equitable, participatory, sustainable and harmonic revolution between human being and the environment. This relationship today cannot and should not be produced only within the nation-state, but at the level of the global citizenship, within our global village.

The technological revolution at the end of the 20th century has allowed for a communication of experiences and has opened a new space for the first time in history for an interdependent solidarity of global citizenship. This emerging consensus is a greater challenge to savage capitalism today than State socialism was in the past.

In this experience, nevertheless, a universal global utopia is not perceived. The crisis of real socialism and the neoliberal paradigm have demonstrated the failure of all-encompassing paradigms because they impose and co-opt from above and outside of local experiences.

The new vision that runs through alternative development is the integration of partial, multiple and accumulative utopias based on endogenous, local projects and in a broad alliance of ethical values and common interests in the face of collective threats. Globalisation from below is a communal, consensual and genuinely democratic effort in new citizenship for the 21st century.

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ZAIRE - NOUS LIBERER DE LA PEUR

Lambert Nyeme Kadiamonoko

Le 1er janvier 1996, nombreux ont proclamé avec le psalmiste: “Voici le jour que le Seigneur a fait pour nous, qu’il soit jour de fête et de joie”. Malgré la crise que traverse notre pays, nous avons dansé de joie en rendant grâce au Seigneur pour la nouvelle année qui commençait.

Cependant, ce jour même, des cris de tristesse se sont élevés à Kinshasa à cause d’un accident de véhicule survenu sur le boulevard Lumumba, qui a tué plus de soixante-dix personnes. Une semaine après, le 8 janvier 1996, des cris s’élevèrent de nouveau à travers la capitale: des familles qui pleuraient les leurs, des enfants affamés qui pleuraient leurs mères tuées par l’accident d’un avion cargo sur le marché Type K: “Mama otiki biso na nzala, nani lisusu moto akoleisa biso?” (Maman tu nous laisses affamés, qui pourra encore nous nourrir?...)

Certains parmi eux n’ont pas reconnu les corps déchiquetés de leurs mères, ainsi gardent-ils encore l’espoir de les revoir un jour, alors qu’ils ne les reverront plus jamais. Ceci étant, quelle que soit l’aide qu’on pourra leur apporter, ces orphelins demeureront inconsolables.

Cette perte en vies humaines a ému plus d’un et nous donne à penser. Comment se fait-il que ce vieil appareil volât encore sur le territoire national sans que l’autorité intervînt? Et c’est seulement après la catastrophe que celle-ci ose se prononcer à ce sujet!

Un jugement critique de ce qui se passe dans notre pays nous fait remarquer que cette catastrophe n’est qu’une conséquence logique de l’exercice nuisible du pouvoir, engendrant ainsi une certaine mentalité à la base du “désordre institutionnalisé” qui règne dans notre pays.

Le peuple demeure sous l’oppression d’une minorité dominante devant qui il n’a rien à dire. Celle-ci dirige non pas dans le souci du bien commun, mais pour son intérêt personnel. Nos dirigeants institutionnalisent le mensonge en faisant croire au peuple qu’ils sont là pour son bien alors qu’ils ne recherchent que leur propre profit. Aussi réduisent-ils la politique au mensonge, alors que l’art de bien gérer l’État se fonde sur la poursuite du bien de tous les hommes et de tout homme.

”Les chefs politiques construisent pour leur prestige personnel pendant que dans les hôpitaux les médicaments manquent. Ou, quand il y en a, les gens n’ont pas d’argent pour s’en procurer”, disait l’abbé J. Mpundu dans “Chrétiens provoqués au courage prophétique”. Ils vivent dans le confort après avoir puisé dans le patrimoine de l’État, pendant que la population dans son ensemble vit dans la misère. Ils ont élevé la réussite matérielle au rang de style de vie, le bien-être placé audelà du plus-être. Ils pensent que le bonheur de l’homme réside dans l’avoir-plus plutôt que dans l’être-plus. Ceci étant, ils ne sont jamais satisfaits. Plus ils ont et davantage ils veulent avoir. Par conséquent, tous les moyens sont bons: vol, corruption, violence, mensonge, achat et utilisation d’engins surannés, sans tenir compte des dangers que cela pourrait provoquer.

«RHA»

Par ailleurs, nos dirigeants confondent droits et devoirs, par exemple le fait de se considérer “père de la nation” par analogie avec père de famille. Ce faisant, on voudra à tout prix rester au pouvoir au détriment du peuple, même s’il l’on en est jugé incapable, préférant sacrifier le peuple en conservant le pouvoir.

Malheureusement, cette mentalité se répand à travers toute la société. La misère que nos dirigeants ont provoquée ont des répercussions très graves. Un peuple affamé, comptant des travailleurs impayés, perd ipso facto la conscience nationale et professionnelle. D’où, il se livre à la corruption, au mensonge, et s’éloigne de la vérité, de la charité, de la justice et de la paix. A Kinshasa, on place anarchiquement de petits marchés en bordure de routes et l’autorité reste muette en attendant la catastrophe. Ainsi, le matin du 9 janvier, un bus échouait dans une pharmacie située sur l’avenue de l’Université — principalement à

l'arrêt Intendance — après avoir traversé un petit marché avoisinant la dite officine. Dieu merci, les vendeurs ne s'étant pas encore installés, il n'y eut aucune victime.

Le respect de la loi n'existe plus dans notre pays, d'où il se meurt. Entre-temps, c'est la jungle, et c'est la loi du plus fort qui prime.

Maintenant que nous cherchons à relever le défi de reconstruire notre pays en vue d'éviter des catastrophes comme celle du marché Type K, et de nous libérer de la misère, ne nous contentons pas de certaines décisions comme la fermeture du dit marché. Notre peuple traversant une situation de crise, le gouvernement doit trouver une solution pouvant permettre aux survivants de reprendre leurs activités avec assurance. Le plus urgent c'est de nous unir dans la justice et la charité afin de lutter contre ce système qui nous opprime. Bannissons notre crainte et luttons pour une nouvelle génération de dirigeants, conscients de rendre les services que nous attendons d'eux, l'exercice du pouvoir politique étant fondé sur l'esprit de service. Nous avons le droit de réclamer notre dû quand les responsables rendent très mal le service que nous leur confions.

Enfin, prions pour que le Seigneur fasse miséricorde à tous nos compatriotes disparus au cours de ces accidents.

Que la terre de nos ancêtres leur soit légère!

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