

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	130
MESSAGE OF THE SECAM BISHOPS TO THE CHURCHES OF THE GREAT LAKES REGION AND THE REST OF AFRICA AND MADAGASCAR	
Archbishop Gabriel Gonsum Ganaka	131
L'ÉVANGILE INTERPELLE LES CULTURES; LES CULTURES PEUVENT ENCLAIRER L'ÉVANGILE	
World Council of Churches – Final Message of World Conference	136
THE MIDDLE EAST – THE MISSION OF THE CHURCHES IN LEBANON TODAY	
Helen Mary Haigh, RJM	140
LA MONDIALISATION AGGRAVE LA FRACTURE SOCIALE	
Les ambiguïtés du modèle économique unique	
Eric Sottas	149
THE TIBETAN STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM	
His Holiness the Dalai Lama	157
SUDAN: ANOTHER CHURCH DESTROYED BY THE POLICE IN KHARTOUM	
Comboni Press	159
COMING EVENTS	160

EDITORIAL

We open the issue with a very recent document on the "Great Lakes Region" drafted only a few weeks ago by the STANDING COMMITTEE OF SECAM (Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar) in a special meeting in Nairobi. The SECAM Bishops formulate a strong appeal to all political leaders and the Pastoral Agents to do everything possible to bring to a peaceful solution the various conflicts of the tortured area. —

In November 1996 an important CONFERENCE OF THE WCC on World Mission and Evangelisation was held in San Salvador da Bahia, Brazil. The theme of the well prepared meeting, which gathered Church leaders from all over the world, was: "*Called to One hope — The Gospel in Diverse Cultures*". We are able to offer you the final Message of the international conference. —

At the end of April SEDOS organised a day of reflection on: "*The Prospects of Peace in the Middle East*". Sr HELEN M. HAIGH, RJM, a general councillor with many years of missionary experience in the area, gave a very informative lecture on the different Churches in Lebanon. The Synod for Lebanon is only one of many signs of hope in the region that seeks to unite all its positive forces to move towards a more peaceful future. —

In an important article ERIC SOTTAS from the "Centre Lebreton" reflects on the ambiguity of globalisation. He shows with concern, how as wealth increases, social inequalities become deeper through the exclusion of some sectors.

On the 38th anniversary of the *Tibetan People's National Uprising* (10 March), HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA reflects on the actual situation of his country and the ongoing struggle for freedom, and calls for solidarity.

The May issue ends with a sad report of the continued violence suffered by generous Christian communities in Khartoum, Sudan.



A PROFESSION OF FAITH CANNOT BE EXACTED

"I have given all my adult life to the service of the Church". With these words the 72-year-old theologian and priest of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI), Fr Tissa Balasuriya from Sri Lanka, opens his statement of several pages. On 2 January this year he was excommunicated by the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Pope John Paul II expressly confirmed this decision.

In 1990 Fr Tissa Balasuriya, OMI, had published a book with the title: "*Mary and Human Liberation*". Its content was first criticised by the Sri Lankan Bishops' Conference and in 1994 declared "incompatible with the faith of the Roman Catholic Church". The theologian questioned the traditional concept of Mary which sees in the Mother of God "a divine being rather than a concrete woman of the people". He also asks questions about the teaching of the Church concerning Christ's role as the only and universal Redeemer".

The Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith under its prefect, Cardinal Ratzinger, drew up a long list of critical annotations about the theses of Balasuriya. The theologian analysed on 55 pages the criticism from Rome, which did not motivate the Vatican to give in. Just the opposite: A so-called "Professio Fidei", a profession of faith, was enforced upon him, a Creed especially constructed for him by that Congregation. It says among other things: "I believe as divinely revealed that Mary ever virgin is truly the Mother of God, that she was preserved from the stain of original sin and after she had completed her earthly life was assumed into the glory of Heaven with body and soul". The Profession of Faith also contained the dogma of the infallibility of the Pope. Finally it said: "I acknowledge that Christ, when he called only men as Apostles, was not guided by the sociological or cultural motives of his time, but acted freely and independently. Therefore I believe firmly that the Church has no possibility whatsoever to ordain women to the priesthood".

In his declaration Fr Balasuriya says about the problem of "women and priesthood", that the excommunication process against him was also an "attack against the thinking of the feminist movement in the Catholic world". The priest and religious holds that what he has written "is within the limits of orthodoxy". Many Catholic theologians held views similar to his own. But they had "no comparable sanctions imposed on them".

He asks: "Is this not an unjust discrimination", when some others even hold views quite contrary to official Church teachings, but are not even questioned by Church authorities? "Faith is a free assent to God's revelation. It cannot be extracted by threats such as of excommunication". Then Fr Balasuriya addresses Pope John Paul II directly: "Your Holiness has written recently of the need for repentance for the Church's "intolerance and even the use of violence in the service of the truth". From these painful moments of the past a lesson could be drawn for the future, leading all Christians to adhere to the sublime principle stated by the Council that truth cannot impose itself except by virtue of its own truth, as it wins over the mind "with both gentleness and power".

He wished, "at the age of 72, after 51 years in the Congregation of the Oblates and 44 years a priest, to remain a member of the Catholic Church". He said he would remain in ecclesial and spiritual communion with the Church of Jesus, even "if legally excommunicated by ecclesial authorities".

Deeply disappointed by the decision of the Vatican are the two Catholic organisations MISSIO and MISEREOR in Germany. In a joint declaration they say: "We have experienced Fr Tissa Balasuriya as a person who courageously and selflessly stood up for the Church being a mediator of justice and reconciliation".

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MESSAGE OF THE SECAM BISHOPS TO THE CHURCHES OF THE GREAT LAKES REGION AND THE REST OF AFRICA AND MADAGASCAR

Archbishop Gabriel Gonsum GANAKA of Jos, Nigeria,
President of SECAM

INTRODUCTION

1. Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We, the members of the Standing Committee of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM), and the Presidents or representatives of the Regional and National Episcopal Conferences of Africa, with the participation of all the Bishops of Rwanda and Burundi, in the presence of H.E. Bernadin Cardinal GANTIN and H.E. The Most Rev. C. A. SCHLECK, gathered in serious consultation in the Kenyan capital Nairobi, from 14-18 April, 1997, wish you all the peace that the Risen Lord offered his Disciples on the day of Easter (cf. Jn 20:19).

2. Through this prayerful encounter and fraternal communion, we wanted to respond to the agonising cry to the Church-as-Family of God in Africa and Madagascar, to act concretely and to address prophetically the tragic situations caused by a long, fratricidal war in Rwanda and Burundi, which, in some cases, has reached the point of genocide. We have also looked at similar situations of hostility in Zaire, Algeria, Sudan, Somalia, Uganda, Nigeria, Liberia and Sierra Leone and in several other areas of our continent.

excessive ethnocentrism and particularism arising from pride, jealousy, greed and selfishness;
superiority-complex resulting from arrogance and domination;
domination and oppression of one group by another that trigger off interminable violence;
prejudice and stereotyping that breed contempt, disdain and closing in on oneself;
colonialism which has created artificial nations or rather callously separated ethnic groups for selfish economic interests and political egoism of the Metropole;
support given by Industrial Nations to different ethnic groups or warring factions by supplying them with arms for financial gain at the price of decimating or exterminating African populations;
manipulation of the ideology of ethnocentrism in order to gain and retain power;
spirit of vendetta and the inability to forgive, forget and be reconciled;
disdain for traditional structures of reconciliation used for settling disputes and conflicts;
poverty which drives people to seek their livelihood by any means, fair or foul;
denial of the God-given and inalienable rights of others.

We have also come to realise with regret that at times the irresponsible conduct of some Pastoral Agents have, consciously or unconsciously, contributed to aggravating the situation.

3. We give thanks to the Almighty and All-Merciful God our Father for enabling us to perform our duty that he has, in his goodness, entrusted to us as pastors, priests and prophets. Aware that our ability comes from Jesus Christ, who gives us a new life, we have begun the consultation with a day of prayer with the intention of confiding to the Lord, our pastoral solicitudes for the state of affairs before us and ask for his assistance and inspiration. After listening attentively to the Holy Spirit, we humbly issue this Message.

THE PROBLEM, ITS CAUSES AND MANIFESTATIONS

4. We have become more conscious that the serious and multi-faceted situation facing us is, first of all, the result of sin, committed both by Africans and non-Africans alike. This situation is dehumanising and degrading and completely negates the dignity of the human person created in the image and likeness of God.

5. We have also identified the following as some of the many causes of this human tragedy:

REASONS FOR HOPE

6. All this notwithstanding, we never despair. Our hope is founded on the conviction that God loves Africa. Our religion professes faith in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. It is he who always takes the initiative using us as his poor, unworthy, humble instruments.

7. We also have hope in the fact that all Christ's faithful are with us. The period of misery, uncertainty and hardship that we are going through should be for our people, as it was for the Chosen People of God, a period of grace favourable for reconciliation with God, for conversion and for evangelisation. For it is in these situations of distress that we Christians become true Apostles of the Gospel of love, reconciliation, peace and truth. By our preaching and witnessing, our anguish, our misery and our suffering become an asset for the mission. Even persecution becomes an opportunity for growth for the Church, for it remains ever true that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of Christians".

8. We would like to remind you, dear Brothers and Sisters, that the future of the Church and of humanity in Africa depends above all on Africans and on no one else. We should always keep in mind the words of Pope Paul VI, "You are henceforth your own missionaries". Surely, we may have 'neither silver nor gold to give' to our people; but we have Jesus crucified and risen, the Saviour of humanity, to offer them. In his name we command the African to rise and walk (cf. Acts 3:6).

As for us Bishops, we should be prepared like Christ to give up our lives for the Church-as-Family of God in Africa. We should be apostles, founders of the Church and prophets of a new humanity.

OUR UNITY IN CHRIST

9. By our Baptism, we become sons and daughters of God, brothers and sisters of Christ, members of the Church-as-Family. We receive a new identity. Indeed the Christian identity is totally different from ethnic identity. It is therefore important to deepen that which we have become by our baptism and to be conscious of this fraternity that knows no boundaries.

In the Church-as-Family it is Christ who is the centre and it is he who gives cohesion to our communion. This is manifested in the mutual

respect, collaboration, growth in sharing the joys and sorrows, in the reciprocal love which enables us.

The Church-as-Family is a community founded on the living communion with the Most Holy Trinity, the first of all mysteries of our faith, the beginning and end of all our activities as Christians. It is in the Trinity that the most perfect form of family life, of love, peace, unity and communion is found. The mission of the Church-as-family is to contribute to the emergence of Societies-as-Family. To this effect, it is necessary to form *élites*, priests and laity, men and women, so that together they may work courageously for the salvation of Africa. The lay *élite* is called upon to take on the socio-political ministry of the Church and to forge a healthy co-operation between the Church and the State so that the former may contribute to the establishment of the rule of law and promote the welfare of all citizens. Christ came "so that they may have life and have it to the full" (Jn 10:10).

This is why the Church-as-Family must establish pastoral programmes and strategies that can promote respect for human life in our present day "culture of death".

ETHNICITY IS A GIFT OF GOD

10. Having listened to our brothers from the Great Lakes Region, we wish to affirm that even though ethnocentrism shows its atrocities in this tragedy, ethnicity in itself does not connote a negative attitude. On the contrary, ethnicity indicates a gift of God which makes us different one from the other for our mutual enrichment. It is God who makes each one what he is. Ethnicity gives us our social and cultural identity as well as our security. The individual finds his roots and values in his ethnic group.

11. Loving is a sign of fidelity to the gift of God. Catholics in Burundi, Rwanda and Zaire must know that they are not wrong in loving, respecting and cultivating their own ethnic values. What is wrong and must be rectified without delay is the perversion of this God-given gift into an instrument of contempt, rejection and exclusion of others.

12. We appeal to you Tutsis and Hutus, that you are all created by the same God and Father. You are all therefore, together with your brothers and sisters of other parts of Africa, beloved children of our Creator and Father who can never wish that you kill one another (cf. Ex 20:13). We are with you in the

anguish and trauma of the terrible experience you have gone through. May this tragedy never happen again! We appeal to you to heed the plea of your pastors and all men and women of good will, whether Africans or non-Africans, to forget the rancour of the past, hard as it has been, and have a sincere conversion of hearts. May you be reconciled by the Lord.

A STRONG APPEAL

To Political Leaders in the Great Lakes Region

13. We appeal to you, Political Leaders, to eschew all propensities towards megalomania. Be united in the supreme interests of your nations and your compatriots. We passionately appeal to you to put an end to all lies, political assassinations, State terrorism, any kind of extremism and arbitrary and defamatory accusations.

To the Civil Authorities of Burundi and Rwanda

14. We would like to underline the urgency of improving the conditions of life in the prisons, which we learnt are at present deplorable. It is doubtlessly in the name of justice that the people are incarcerated, but the same justice demands that their dignity as human beings be upheld and respected.

To all African Political Leaders

15. Know that war does not solve any problem. Stop all hostilities and place the good of your compatriots above all personal interests. In the name of God, realise that Africa and Africans have suffered for far too long. Respect the dignity of your people. In your nations, leave no stone unturned to get rid of all forms of intolerance, violence, falsehood, arrogance, discrimination, oppression and domination. Distance yourselves from all forms of ethnocentrism. Work for the national unity, the progress, the security and the peace of your countries. Above all, we plead with you to desist from spending stacks of money on the acquisition of weapons of destruction. Use it rather on development projects for the well-being of your people.

To the International Community

16. We appeal to the International Community to request the industrialised nations to stop supplying or selling arms to Africans and to the Third World Countries for purposes of war and destruction. We condemn this arms trade unreservedly.

To the Youth of Burundi, Rwanda and Zaire

17. The future of your countries is in your hands. Make sure that it is a future you will be proud and happy to enjoy. Disinherit yourselves of all hatred, bitterness and violence. They can only destroy and kill. You deserve a better treatment. Join your brothers and sisters in forming associations, movements and programmes that cut across ethnic boundaries. With Pope John Paul II, we appeal to you to be evangelisers of your peers. We know it has not been easy for you to go through what has happened and is still happening in your countries. However, amidst the atrocities that you have witnessed and lived through in your countries, you have had shining heroic examples of sisters, brothers, Bishops and priests, lay men and women, who preferred to be killed rather than be part of the evil going on. They are a model of virtue for you and us.

To Pastoral Agents

18. We appeal to you priests, religious men and women, catechists, leaders of small Christian communities and other pastoral workers, not to let your painful experience destroy your apostolic fervour. On the contrary, you should see it all as your part of the cross of Christ which he has unequivocally asked us to take up daily and follow him, if we are his true disciples. Please, be healed of your inner wounds and dedicate yourselves to your noble pastoral ministry.

To Refugees

19. We share the suffering you are going through in being far away from your home countries, especially given the horrible circumstances in which you find yourselves. We deplore particularly the sad fate of hundreds of thousands who still roam about in the forests of Zaire, exposed to hunger, sickness and death while the International Community is looking on unconcerned. We strongly desire that all the conditions be rapidly fulfilled that will put an end to your misery so that you will be able to return to your countries and your homes to participate in the reconstruction of your countries.

To Bishops of Rwanda, Burundi and Zaire

20. Your personal intimate sharing of your painful experiences during our meeting touched us deeply. We assure you that we shall live in communion with you in moments of adversity. We have been raising your dear countries in prayer supplication to Almighty God, ever since tragedy struck them, and will continue to do so until peace returns to you. We are in solidarity with all your efforts and shall

incessantly make your apostolate of reconciliation our concern too and that of all our local Churches.

To our Sister Churches

21. We appeal to our Sister Churches in Europe and America to come to the assistance of Rwanda and Burundi, who are in need of funds and technical expertise to reconstruct their society and churches. There is clearly a great need for some sort of a "Marshall Plan" to save Rwanda and Burundi.

22. In this connection we would like to express to those agencies, organisations, parties, Churches and individuals that have expressed their sympathy to Rwanda and Burundi in some concrete way, our deepest sense of fraternal, collegial gratitude and appreciation. Let us join forces in praying for the displaced people, the refugees, widows and widowers, the orphans, the prisoners, and all the bereaved everywhere in Africa who have become victims of our recent tragic history.

To all people of Good Will

23. We take this opportunity to appeal to Catholics all over Africa, and all other well-meaning Africans and non-Africans to conform their lives with the imperatives of the Good News of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us all remember that in Jesus Christ we have become children of a family which embraces everybody, slave as well as freeman, African and non-African, friend as well as enemy. The weapon he has given us to fight evil, to which there can be no defence, is Love. And that Love is invincible.

CONCLUSION

24. Pope John Paul II tells us of the need to preach the "Gospel of life" in this culture of ours that has no respect for life any more. That is why we reaffirm the commandment of God: "Do not kill" (Ex 20:13). Let us build together what Pope John Paul II has called "the Civilisation of Love".

25. May Mary Queen of Peace, Mother of the Church and Queen of the Apostles intercede with her Son, the Wonder Counsellor, Prince of Peace and the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete to inspire and strengthen Africa in these difficult times to become strong in faith, hope and love.

SPECIAL CONSULTATION ON THE CRISIS IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION SECAM, NAIROBI, KENYA, 14-19 APRIL, 1997

RESOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PREAMBLE

We, Archbishops and Bishops representing the Episcopates of Africa and Madagascar, having particularly reflected on the problems of the Region of the Great Lakes and aware that the drama of these nations is somehow like the tree which hides the forest and that really in each African country, such a drama is unfortunately possible;

Aware that ethnicity, in terms of belonging to a group, is an anthropological reality and a fact of human history and geography; that it should be accepted as a gift of God, a source of enrichment through diversity and complimentary differences of each people;

Considering that ethnicity is good in itself because of the values it carries, and that it should not degenerate into ethnocentrism, which is negative, because it is arrogant and exclusive;

Conscious that we must always beware of those attachments to group identity which lead us to the worst kind of behaviour; and that as Christians we are capable of the best comportment if we allow ourselves to be carried along by the power of the Holy Spirit;

RESOLUTIONS

1. We have decided to send to Burundi and Rwanda a delegation of six Bishops, three to each country. Their visit will be for two weeks, during which they will meet the clergy, the religious and different social and political groups, with a view to listening to them and to Africa, Madagascar and the Islands. This resolution should be implemented before the Plenary Assembly of SECAM of September 1997 in South Africa.

2. We ask all the local Churches of Africa and Madagascar to organise a Day of Prayer for the Region of the Great Lakes and other countries of Africa where there are conflicts.

3. We exhort National Episcopal Conferences as well as Religious Congregations and Institutions to forge every possible contact with the Episcopal Conferences of Rwanda and Burundi in order to bring them moral and material support and to offer them assistance in the training of candidates for the priesthood.

4. We commit ourselves to denounce ethnocentrism as an ideology that is perverse, anti-Christian, and condemn it as a means of grabbing or retaining power. Pastoral agents (Bishops, priests, men and women religious, catechists, leaders of small Christian communities) should have nothing to do with it.

5. We look forward to the Church of Burundi and Rwanda publishing the acts of heroism of lay people, religious, priests and Bishops during the period of genocide and blind violence.

6. We are committed to continuing in our different countries the reflections begun in our Nairobi meeting on the serious problems of the Region of the Great Lakes since the roots of similar tragedies exist everywhere.

7. Aware that the natural reflex of intolerance and exclusion cannot be healed except by a long and patient programme of education, we ask, as a matter of urgency, that our Catholic Institutes and Universities undertake an extensive and in-depth study, the kind of study carried out in respect of inculturation and the Church-as-Family of God of the problems of ethnocentrism in Africa, so as to guard against its consequences.

8. We ask SECAM to revive its Committee for Internal Affairs (CAIA) in view of prevention and resolution of conflicts on the continent; to create a special fund to assist Churches in distress.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. As a result of the tragic events that took place in the countries of the Great Lakes, Church infrastructures have been destroyed and looted. To carry out the work of reconstruction, we ask the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples to continue to support the Pastors of this Region with special assistance, and to raise the awareness in the Sister Churches of the world for a more generous solidarity with these Churches in distress.

2. Painfully aware of the sufferings and humiliation to which Africa is subjected these days, and in order to work for the rebirth of our continent, we respectfully ask the African Heads of States and leaders to put the true interest of the peoples of Africa above everything else, and never to give way to being corrupted. Rather, we ask them to do all they can to uphold the dignity, honour and the greater well-being of our continent.

3. We acknowledge that Africans have a part of the responsibility for their own problems — a fact which we invite all to admit. At the same time, we must denounce with all vigour, the conspiracy and the interference of foreign powers which destabilise and weaken the African continent.

4. We earnestly ask African leaders to resist with all their might the proliferation of arms which have become instruments of death for our people and a permanent menace against the stability of the States. We launch a passionate appeal to our Heads of States and our political leaders to devote to the development and improvement of the living conditions of our people the funds being spent on buying arms of destruction, which only go to enrich those who make and traffic in them.

5. Intellectuals have been in the fore-front of the struggle for decolonisation and independence. They seem to be absent today in the face of the many dramatic events now destroying our societies. We strongly urge this same African *élite*, and especially the Christians among them, to take up their responsibility with more courage and honesty and to defend the interests of Africa.

6. We invite the leaders of Africa to find ways and means of organising and developing education for the values of respect for life and for mutual acceptance.

7. We recommend to the Episcopates of the continent to put in place a competent outfit or think-tank which can help them in the analysis of problems and situations so as to alert the People of God in good time and to intervene adequately especially in times of crisis.

Nairobi, 19 April 1997.

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L'ÉVANGILE INTERPELLE LES CULTURES; LES CULTURES PEUVENT ECLAIRER L'ÉVANGILE

Message de la Conférence mondiale sur la mission et l'évangélisation

À l'initiative du Conseil œcuménique des Églises, une Conférence mondiale sur la mission et l'évangélisation s'est tenue à Salvador de Bahia (Brésil), du 24 novembre au 3 décembre 1996, sur le thème: "Appelés à une seule espérance. L'Évangile dans les diverses cultures". L'Assemblée a adopté à la fin de ses travaux le Message suivant (Traduction de l'anglais, établie par le Service linguistique du COE. Titre de la DC):

1. La Conférence mondiale sur la mission et l'évangélisation s'est tenue à Salvador de Bahia, au Brésil, à un moment significatif de notre histoire, alors que nous approchons de la fin de notre siècle et sommes au seuil d'un nouveau millénaire.

2. Dès le début de notre siècle, la première grande Conférence œcuménique sur la mission, réunie à Edimbourg, déclarait: "Le travail [missionnaire] doit se faire dès à présent. Il est urgent et il faut sans tarder lui donner une impulsion nouvelle". Le travail missionnaire, cependant, ne s'est pas révélé aussi simple. Quatre ans après cette Conférence, le monde était englouti dans la guerre. Depuis lors, il a connu des massacres et des déportations massives, une autre guerre mondiale, le développement de nouvelles formes de colonialisme, la menace nucléaire, la destruction des écosystèmes par la cupidité humaine, la montée et l'effondrement du bloc soviétique, la violence des conflits ethniques et des luttes séparatistes, le capitalisme effréné qui creuse le fossé entre riches et pauvres.

3. Nous croyons que la première vocation de l'Église est toujours de persévérer, par la grâce et la bonté de Jésus-Christ, dans la mission de Dieu pour ce monde qui est le sien. Toutefois cette mission, qui a une longue histoire et s'étend sur le monde entier, ne peut aujourd'hui emprunter des sentiers étroits: elle est l'œuvre de chacun; de partout, elle doit aller partout, en englobant chacun des aspects de la vie de ce monde en rapide mutation, fait de tant de cultures qui, aujourd'hui, s'influencent et se chevauchent sans cesse.

4. Pendant notre Conférence, à Salvador de Bahia, nous nous sommes efforcés de mieux comprendre en quel sens l'Évangile interpelle toutes les cultures et comment la culture peut éclairer l'Évangile. Il aurait été difficile de trouver un lieu de Conférence plus approprié. Parmi les nations, le

Brésil se situe en effet au deuxième rang mondial pour la population d'origine africaine. Salvador est un véritable microcosme de la diversité des cultures et des spiritualités qui se partagent le monde. Pourtant, ce lieu nous a fait prendre conscience de la souffrance et des fractures qui sont la conséquence du racisme, conscience aussi du manque de respect envers les autres religions qui existe encore dans certains secteurs des Églises chrétiennes.

5. La Conférence avait pour thème "Appelés à une seule espérance — l'Évangile dans les différentes cultures".

6. L'espérance de l'Évangile s'exprime dans la venue gracieuse de Dieu en Jésus de Nazareth. Depuis la Pentecôte, l'espérance, fruit de la foi, se manifeste dans le combat que mène la communauté des fidèles. Elle atteint tous les peuples de la terre. Avant-goût de cette espérance, notre Conférence entend lui donner une impulsion nouvelle.

7. Au cours de notre rencontre, il nous a été donné de nombreux motifs d'espérer:

a) Une grande diversité de peuples et d'Églises étaient représentés (à Edimbourg, en 1910, la grande majorité des participants venaient d'Europe ou d'Amérique du Nord; à Salvador, plus de six cents chrétiens venus de soixante pays et représentant de multiples cultures ont participé à la vie de la Conférence).

b) Chacun a fait un véritable effort pour écouter les personnes venues d'horizons différents et comprendre leurs manières de vivre et leurs saviors.

c) Nous avons connu l'enthousiasme de participer à la vie d'une communauté où jeunes et vieux, femmes et hommes venus d'Églises chrétiennes du monde entier ont tous pu s'exprimer.

d) Les Églises et les organismes missionnaires ont fait preuve de beaucoup de bonne volonté pour reconnaître leurs erreurs passées et refuser de s'enfermer dans des stéréotypes: ils ont manifesté leur détermination de demeurer ensemble et de travailler ensemble au bien de notre mission commune.

e) Nous avons voulu témoigner notre solidarité en nous rendant sur le quai de Salvador, à cet endroit précis, où, pendant trois cents ans, étaient débarqués les esclaves africains ayant survécu à leur capture et à leur déportation. Près de la pierre des larmes, nous avons ensemble versé des larmes de repentance.

f) Nous avons tous été encouragés à entrer dans le rythme des cultes quotidiens où l'usage et la mise en honneur de sonorités et de langues différentes n'aboutissaient pas à une "Babel" de division et de confusion, mais soufflaient plutôt un air d'unité et d'inspiration évoquant une Pentecôte.

g) Nous avons connu le privilège de partager, pendant quelques jours, la vie d'un continent et de populations qui ont une histoire culturelle riche et des spiritualités religieuses diverses; leurs Églises s'efforcent de traduire l'espérance évangélique en des actes qui répondent aux défis de la transformation sociale et de la pauvreté.

8. Nous espérons de tout cœur que cette dernière grande Conférence missionnaire du XX^e siècle aura clairement montré que, pour produire ses fruits les plus abondants, l'Évangile doit à la fois être fidèle à lui-même et s'incarner dans la culture d'un peuple. Nous avons vraiment vu de nos yeux et entendu de nos oreilles des chrétiens de diverses cultures qui exprimaient leurs luttes et leurs espoirs.

a) Nous avons entendu les cris de souffrance des peuples autochtones qui ont craint l'extermination quasi-totale de leurs communautés et de leurs cultures, et nous nous sommes émerveillés de leur patiente résistance et de leur volonté de construire des ponts entre leur spiritualité autochtone et leur foi chrétienne afin que leur identité ne soit pas éclatée.

b) Nous avons appris de nos hôtes latino-américains l'importance de "faire une

théologie" qui édifie la "communauté nommée Église", laquelle, enracinée dans la vie du peuple où cette Église est dressée, est capable de répondre, par exemple, au sort tragique des enfants des rues.

c) Nous avons entendu la voix des chrétiens du Pacifique qui aspirent à des liens de réciprocité avec leurs partenaires chrétiens d'Occident, et insistent sur le fait qu'un véritable partenariat en mission se traduit par une réciprocité sans paternalisme.

d) Nous avons entendu la colère des représentants des peuples africains, afro-caraïbes, latino-américains et nord-américains d'origine africaine devant les horreurs de l'esclavage, et perçu la manière dont la foi, bien qu'elle leur ait été présentée de manière déformée, a pu se muer en espérance de libération. Nous avons admiré leur détermination à ne pas se laisser piéger dans les regrets du passé mais à resserrer les liens qui unissent en étroit partenariat les peuples africains et les peuples de la diaspora africaine.

e) Nous avons eu le privilège d'entendre le témoignage de ce qu'ont longtemps connu les chrétiens d'Asie, vivant une vie de disciples, parfois en groupes minoritaires vulnérables et menacés, au milieu de sociétés multireligieuses. Nous avons aussi entendu parler de l'élan missionnaire qui jaillit de la base.

f) Nous avons été émus par les catastrophes et les épidémies dont nous ont parlé des Africains en nous disant: "Les temps inclinent à la désespérance". Mais nous avons été étonnés de la force et de la volonté, en particulier des femmes chrétiennes africaines, de partager la souffrance de leurs peuples et de combattre leur désespoir, en travaillant à les nourrir et à leur permettre d'espérer.

g) Nous avons entendu les femmes du monde entier dire leur aspiration à vivre en réel partenariat avec les hommes dans l'Église et la société.

h) Nous avons écouté ce que les jeunes chrétiens nous ont dit: ils ne veulent pas être objets de la mission de l'Église, mais partenaires à part entière dans le travail missionnaire, particulièrement lorsqu'il s'agit de relier la foi aux énergies et aux aspirations de la "culture jeune" d'aujourd'hui.

Nous croyons que la première vocation de l'Église est toujours de persévérer, par la grâce et la bonté de Jésus-Christ, dans la mission de Dieu pour ce monde qui est le sien.

i) Nous avons admiré l'engagement des chrétiens des Églises orthodoxes et des autres Églises de l'ex-Union soviétique et de l'Europe de l'Est, qui sont aujourd'hui déterminés, dans le nouveau climat de liberté religieuse, à servir leurs peuples de manière que la foi, soutien de tant de gens à l'époque des persécutions, leur apporte maintenant une force équivalente face aux enjeux nouveaux. Nous les avons entendus protester contre les agissements de groupes chrétiens étrangers qui cherchent à faire du prosélytisme auprès de leurs membres.

j) Nous avons été émus par ce que vivent les chrétiens du Proche-Orient qui ont le douloureux privilège d'habiter en "terre sainte", cette terre déchirée par les divisions et les injustices; nous avons compris leur indignation devant la manière dont les textes bibliques sont mal interprétés, leur culture si méprisée que certains d'entre eux se trouvent étrangers sur leur propre sol.

k) Nous avons perçu la réticence des chrétiens d'Allemagne devant une certaine précipitation à déclarer que l'Esprit de Dieu est à l'œuvre dans toutes les cultures: ils gardent en effet le souvenir douloureux de la manière dont les Églises, autrefois, ont couru le risque de se trouver inféodées à l'idéologie nazie.

l) Nous avons entendu parler des Eglises nord-américaines que leur enracinement croissant dans la réalité locale risque de conduire à l'isolement et à l'éloignement des réalités mondiales, même s'il renforce leur engagement envers la mission et l'évangélisation dans leur propre environnement.

m) Nous avons entendu parler de la culture post moderne qui domine une grande partie de l'Europe occidentale, et nous avons appris comment les Églises étudient le phénomène de la sécularisation et s'engagent aux côtés de ceux qui se détournent de la foi traditionnelle, cherchant une spiritualité individuelle, "à la carte".

n) Nous avons partagé avec beaucoup le souci de savoir que le monde n'est pas seulement aux prises avec un libéralisme économique qui semble exercer sa toute-puissance même sur des gouvernements

forts, mais qu'il est également exposé à la concurrence des médias dont les images et les messages de toute nature influencent et, selon certains, sapent même la vie communautaire de la foi.

o) Nous avons fait observer, au cours de nos discussions, que c'est peut-être en réaction à cette évolution, que de nouveaux fondamentalismes se sont fait jour dans toutes les grandes religions du monde, ajoutant aux divisions dans un monde déjà déchiré.

p) Nous avons appris qu'il y a des chrétiens, partout dans le monde, qui s'engagent dans un dialogue sérieux avec les croyants d'autres religions, disant l'histoire de l'Évangile, écoutant attentivement l'histoire des autres, et qui, par là

même, acquièrent une compréhension plus claire et plus riche de leur propre foi, contribuant ainsi à bâtir une "communauté des communautés" pour le bien de tous.

9. Grâce à tous ces échanges, nous avons pris connaissance de la manière dont l'Eglise, aujourd'hui, s'engage dans la mission au sein des différentes cultures du monde. À partir des idées qui se sont dégagées de cette Conférence, sur quoi donc maintenant voulons-nous mettre l'accent?

a) L'Église doit s'attacher fermement à ces deux réalités: ce qui la distingue de la culture où elle vit, et son engagement envers cette culture. De cette manière, l'Église ne pourra jamais devenir captive d'une culture donnée ni étrangère à elle; l'une et l'autre s'interpellent et s'éclairent mutuellement.

b) Nous sommes bien conscients que pour faire un tel travail missionnaire aujourd'hui, les chrétiens doivent avoir, plus que jamais peut-être, une compréhension claire de ce que Dieu a accompli dans l'histoire par Jésus-Christ. À cet égard, nous avons compris ce que Dieu exige des personnes, des communautés et des structures. Le témoignage biblique est notre point de départ et notre référence pour la mission; il nous donne le sens de notre propre identité.

Nous croyons que nous devons constamment rechercher l'illumination de l'Esprit Saint afin qu'ils nous aide à mieux discerner là où l'Évangile interpelle, étale ou transforme telle ou telle culture.

c) Nous croyons que nous devons constamment rechercher l'illumination de l'Esprit Saint afin qu'ils nous aide à mieux discerner là où l'Évangile interpelle, éveille ou transforme telle ou telle culture.

d) Nous croyons que la catholicité d'une Église est renforcée par la qualité de relations qu'elle entretient avec les Églises d'autres traditions et d'autres cultures. Cela a des conséquences pour la mission et l'évangélisation, et exige que nous fassions preuve de respect et de sensibilité envers les Églises déjà établies en un lieu donné. L'esprit de concurrence est le plus sûr moyen de saper la mission chrétienne. De même, une forme d'évangélisation agressive, qui ne respecte pas la culture d'un peuple, ne reflète guère l'amour gratuit et l'appel contenus dans l'Évangile.

e) Les communautés paroissiales sont appelées à être des lieux d'espérance et des espaces de sécurité et de confiance dans lesquels les personnes de toutes cultures peuvent être accueillies et reconnues, en signe de l'amour sans exclusive de Dieu. Au fur et à mesure que ces communautés croissent en diversité, il importe qu'elles s'ouvrent à tous les groupes culturels qui constituent la collectivité, sans oublier les personnes déracinées, marginalisées et méprisées. Il est fondamental qu'elles soient soutenues par une spiritualité qui leur permette d'assumer la vulnérabilité qu'entraîne cette ouverture.

f) De modestes initiatives, qui nécessitent audace et courage, peuvent renverser les barrières et créer de nouvelles relations. De telles initiatives sont à la portée de chacun de nous. Elles peuvent être le "miracle" qui change l'image qu'une Église ou une communauté ont d'elles-mêmes et fait jaillir la vie nouvelle donnée par Dieu.

10. La musique qui a accompagné ces journées de rencontre à Salvador a été marquée par le rythme, l'harmonie, la pulsation. En un lieu de profonde tradition africaine, il est naturel que nos célébrations aient souvent été scandées par le tambour qui a fait battre nos cœurs à l'unisson de l'amour de Dieu pour nous et pour tous les peuples. Brûlant de ferveur pour la mission, et priant pour que beaucoup soient comme nous "appelés à une seule espérance", et découvrent "l'Évangile dans les différentes cultures", nous recommandons aux chrétiens et aux Églises, en tout lieu, les conclusions de la Conférence. Notre espérance la plus profonde est qu'ils puissent eux aussi être renouvelés dans leur tâche missionnaire, qui est de faire partager la connaissance du Christ, pour la gloire du Dieu trinitaire.

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THE MIDDLE EAST

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCHES IN LEBANON TODAY

Helen Mary Haigh, RJM

The conference was given at the SEDOS Seminar on Tuesday, 22 April 1997, in Rome.

We could begin by trying to help you understand a little of why and how there are so many Churches in the Middle East; how is it that there are other Catholic Churches; where does our Western experience of Church fit in? Let me list for you the reality of the Church in Lebanon and in the Middle East in general; there are many Churches, among them:

7 Catholic Churches in Lebanon and the Middle East

(* = Patriarchate in Lebanon).

MARONITE *Cardinal Mar Nasrallah Pierre SFEIR, Maronite Patriarch of Antioch and the Orient.* * Bkerkke

CREEK CATHOLIC *His Beatitude, Maximos V HAKIM, Greek Melkite Catholic Patriarch of Antioch, the Orient, Alexandria and Jerusalem.*

* Raboueh (replacing St Anne's in Jerusalem). This Church also has a Patriarchate in Damascus and in Cairo.

SYRIAN CATHOLIC *His Beatitude, Mar Ignace Antoine II HAYEK, Syrian Catholic Patriarch of Antioch.* * Beirut

ARMENIAN CATHOLIC *His Beatitude Jean Pierre XVIII KASPARIAN, Armenian Catholic Patriarch.* * Bzoumar (original destroyed in Armenia)

CHALDEAN CATHOLIC *His Beatitude, Mar Raphaël I BIDAVID, Patriarch of Babylon of the Chaldees.* * Babdah (replacing Baghdad)

COPT CATHOLIC *His Beatitude, Stéphanos II GHATTAS, Copt Catholic Patriarch of Alexandria, Cairo.*

LATIN *His Beatitude Michel SABBAH, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Jerusalem.*

All of these, except the Maronite and the Latin, have an Orthodox parallel Church; there are other

Orthodox Churches also. Add to that a number of Protestant Churches belonging to the Reformed Tradition and you have quite a collection. How did we arrive at this? We need to return to the early centuries of Christianity to understand this plethora of Churches.

A Patriarchate in the early centuries was a Church founded by or on an Apostle. There were originally five great Patriarchates, those of Jerusalem, Antioch, Rome, Alexandria and Constantinople. The first rested on the shoulders of the 12 Apostles; the next two, Antioch and Rome, on those of Peter; Alexandria took its apostolic origin from St Mark the Evangelist and Constantinople from St Andrew the brother of Peter. All these centres, with the exception of Jerusalem, had large Christian communities. We might remember that Peter went to lead the Church in Antioch because there was there a strong community of believers. He later went to Rome because of its importance politically at the heart of the Empire and because of the presence there of a large number of Christians. He was, in fact Bishop of Antioch before he was Bishop of Rome! Later, other communities also became known as Patriarchal but more for the importance attached to their large number of Christians; for example the Armenian Church and the Orthodox Churches of Eastern Europe which have a Patriarch. All the Churches in Lebanon today (Orthodox and Catholic), with the exception of the Latin Church, are "Antiochene" by tradition. We should realise that in the early community at Antioch there existed both Hellenistic and Aramaic groups, with people from both these traditions living together, side by side, from the beginning. The Greek Catholic and Greek Orthodox Churches are "Antiochene"; so are the Syrian Catholic and Orthodox Churches; as also the Maronite and the Chaldean Churches. The Armenian Church was "Antiochene" and this Church, founded in the fourth century, took its tradition with its Hellenistic/Aramaic roots and developed it to form its own proper tradition. As long as the Churches lived this plurality they were all right; when they did

not live this plurality they splintered under the weight of outside influences.

In the fourth century the Roman Empire was divided, for administrative purposes, into Eastern and Western Sectors and from that point onwards Constantinople became the “Second Rome”. It was then too that the apostolic status of the community there was established and St Andrew’s bones were translated to the city. Of course, the Roman administrators took little note of the repercussions of their administrative developments on those who lived within the confines of the Empire, but it just happened that four of the five Patriarchates fell within the boundaries of the Eastern part of the Empire and only one, Rome, was in the Western part. There were, however, many contacts between the two parts of the Empire, it was not a “Berlin Wall” type of arrangement.

The seventh Century saw the advent of Islam and the subsequent and very rapid conquest of the Middle East and North Africa. The three great Christian centres of Jerusalem, Antioch and Alexandria, as well as almost all the other smaller communities of the region, fell to the power of Islam. We can cite the vibrant Christian communities in Carthage, Cyrenae, Damascus, Aleppo, all of which were engulfed by the spread of Islam. We can imagine what that meant when we recall the great source of spiritual richness which emanated from the Middle East in those early centuries. Let us remember the Fathers of the Church like Jerome, Origen, Augustine, Ephraem and the Cappadocean Fathers; the famous theological centres of Alexandria and Antioch; the evolution of monasticism via the genius of Antony of Egypt, Pachomius and Basil. Gradually, as Islam advanced, only Constantinople remained untouched. The communities under the domination of Islam became on the one hand smaller and impoverished, isolated from mainstream Christianity; yet on the other hand there is evidence of a strong Christian culture in Arabic which dates from that epoch, witness surely to the fact that whatever else happened the Church as such did not fade out. The first Maronite Patriarch, St John Maron, was elected in 686, i.e. shortly after the birth of Islam. Christians found work in the courts of the Muslim Califs as scribes, accountants and trusted stewards. Despite periods of great difficulty Christianity remained in the Middle East, especially in the Palestine/Lebanon/Syria area and there are saints, Christian poets, and writers who lived under Muslim rule during those centuries of Islamic expansion and consolidation. The city of Aleppo in Syria, for example, had a Christian

community from the first century and an uninterrupted line of Bishops from the third. Constantinople grew during these centuries to be THE centre of Christianity in the East and, renamed Byzantium, developed a flourishing Christian culture as well as trade relations with such distant peoples as the Finns and Letts via Russia in the North, and Britain and Ireland in the West around the tin which was traded in the Middle East for fabrics and dyes. Byzantine merchants, soldiers and missionaries explored Sudan to find access to Abyssinia by land as this was an important source for incense, myrrh and elephants. Trade with Arabia, both before and after the Muslim conquests, was part of a link with India. Byzantine merchants knew the silk roads and had dealings with Turkish merchants who lived in India and the Punjab. Via other Turkish intermediaries who served at the Courts of Chinese Emperors and then at the Byzantine court, came details of life in China, its power struggles as well as details of the everyday life of the ordinary people. The Byzantines had dealings with the four great Khans who ruled an empire which stretched from Persia to China. They penetrated deep into the Caucasian States both as traders and as missionaries. The “christianisation” of the slavic peoples took place during these centuries. We are not dealing here with an insignificant Christian influence.

Relations with the Church of the West with its centre in Rome were not always easy. After a series of minor separations beginning in the ninth century, the final rupture came in 1054 with the solemn excommunication of the Patriarch of Constantinople in a Bull delivered by an emissary of Pope Leo IX, and the reciprocal excommunication of the Pope’s emissary by the Patriarch of Constantinople. Since that moment the two communities have been separated. The Crusades and the sacking of Constantinople by the armies of the Christian “West” did not help matters at all. However, both Rome and Constantinople would experience diminishment in the 16th century as in the West the Reformation crisis divided the Church from within and Constantinople finally fell to the Muslim Turks. As the Western Catholic Church recovered from its trauma it began to see the need to offer assistance to the Christian communities in the East and so missionaries were sent, Franciscans, Jesuits and others, to help strengthen Christianity in the Middle East. By the beginning of the 18th century some Orthodox Bishops were seeking once again communion with the Bishop of Rome, and in 1734 the first of them from the Greek Church brought some of his faithful with him into communion with the Church headed by the Roman Pontiff. So began the phenomenon of

“Uniate” Churches or Eastern Rite Churches in communion with Rome. As the desire for full communion with the Bishop of Rome spread among the Orthodox communities in the Middle East so a variety of traditions and rites began to re-enter the Catholic Church. At the end of the Second Vatican Council in December 1965, Pope Paul VI met the Patriarch of Constantinople, Athangoras I. *“The resulting change found its historical expression in the ecclesial act whereby ‘there was removed from memory and from the midst of the church’ the remembrance of the excommunications which nine hundred years before, in 1054, had become the symbol of the schism between Rome and Constantinople... The Council thus ended with a solemn act which was at once a healing of historical memories, a mutual forgiveness, and a firm commitment to strive for communion”* (Ut unum sint, n. 52). Yet the Orthodox Churches in communion with Constantinople and the Catholic Churches are not united. Archbishop Philip Nabaa, the late Melkite Metropolitan of Beirut, made the following remark which I will use to sum up this section of the paper. He said,

“We must remember how close the East is to Western Christianity with which it lived for ten centuries in peace and charity in the one faith. If this deep unity was sometimes shattered, shaken or even broken, this was due to a failure to understand one another rather than to bad faith. It arose not so much from a denial of the faith as through sincere attachment to truly Christian traditions. The reasons were not so much the religious as the political and psychological factors that led to separate development in East and West. The first result was a division in charity followed by a division in faith, all of which led to a great rent in the Catholica.... It will not be sufficient to ask our Orthodox brethren to accept our faith and convince them of the truth of our beliefs. We must also meet them in great charity, showing that we respect their great Christian traditions in a catholic spirit. We must show them that Christ’s Church is truly Catholic and open to East as well as West. Our actions must show that the catholicity of the Church enables it to include all human institutions, civilisations and national cultures, all Christian traditions and liturgies, without special privileges for any country, church, rite or person. There can be first class or second class citizens in Christ’s Church, for all are one in Christ”.



And now to Lebanon. This tiny land and its people have enjoyed an illustrious past. Descendants of the famous Phoenicians of old, fearless and adventurous sea-farers who set up commercial city-states along the Mediterranean coast from Greece to N. Africa, these tenacious people have struggled long and hard to maintain their particular outlook on

life and contribution to it. Modern Lebanon is a recent creation, gaining sovereign status only in 1943 after years as a Mandate Territory under the French, and earlier, as part of the Ottoman Empire. Yet the area around Mount Lebanon, had enjoyed, even under the Ottomans, a certain autonomy, and here lived together a mixed community of Maronites and Druzes (an off-shoot of Shi’a Islam which mainstream Muslims hold as heretical) for several centuries alongside their Muslim neighbours. Yet whether it be in this century or earlier, that piece of land has always been a centre of welcome and refuge for people in distress or fleeing from persecution. Refugees from the massacres in Armenia went there during the First World War; Kurds and Palestinians have followed suit, and there were others before them too. I imagine that it was almost taken for granted that this land was like that, ready always to offer safety and shelter, tolerance and security to those in need. In 1992, during his inaugural address to the meeting of A.P.E.C.L., (L’Assemblée des Patriarches et Evêques Catholique au Liban), the Maronite Patriarch said this, *“No one can deny that there are in the world many countries where people of different religions and confessions, especially those of Christianity and Islam, live together. However, what makes for the originality of Lebanon is that the followers of those two religions enjoy the same rights and carry the same responsibilities, without distinction under the law. This is a situation that we do not find anywhere else where the majority impose themselves on the non-recognised minority to the detriment of their equality. We know that religious freedom is respected in Lebanon. The followers of each of the 17 communities here worship God according to their conscience; one prays in the church, another in the mosque, a third in his holy place, and now recently once again, some pray in their synagogue. Others again may choose not to pray at all because all that is a matter of personal conscience and religion may hardly impose itself by force when all judgement belongs to God alone who waits for everyone at the end of their journey”*. When the Lebanese Constitution was drawn up there was this understanding written down. In Article 9 it says, *“Freedom of belief is absolute. The State respects all religions and all confessions, and guarantees freedom of worship, which freedom it undertakes to protect, on condition that this does not disturb public order. It assures to all believers, whatever their confession, the respect of their civil status and their religious interests”*. The revised Constitution of September 1990 declares, *“Lebanon is a democratic, parliamentary Republic, founded on the respect for public liberty, and in first place on freedom of opinion and of belief”*. This large and open vision of itself as a nation and people is founded on an unwritten “Pacte National” of 1943, agreed to by both communities, Muslim and Christian, which in fact is founded on a double “NO” — NO to the EAST and NO to the WEST; a renouncing of the idea by the Muslims of Lebanon to

seek the protection of the Islamic world around them and a renunciation on the part of the Christian Lebanese to seek the protection of the Western powers which, especially France, have supported them. This renunciation is made in view of working together to realise another, richer reality, that of conviviality, living together, sharing an identity which is peculiarly Lebanese.

However, if we return to the Patriarch's inaugural discourse we can see that things were not always so rosy. He says, with great simplicity and honesty, *"...Christians and Muslims have been in Lebanon since the beginning of both religions. Between the two of them there have been conflicts and wars. Each of these religions has nourished ambitions which have not always been inspired by a religious or supernatural spirit. These confrontations (between Christians and Muslims) did not limit themselves to the East; they have spilled over also into the West to the extent that in order to designate themselves there has been recourse to two symbolic expressions which identify one or other of the religions. We say in Arabic, The Dome and the Cross; in French, The Banner and the Cross (I can add that in English we say, The Crescent and the Cross). Thanks be to God we have turned that page definitively, once and for all"*.

When Pope John Paul II called for a Synod for Lebanon he did so in June 1991 BEFORE the war had ended, and he gave as the theme of the Synod, ***"Christ is our hope. Renewed by his Spirit, together, we witness to his love"***. In order to reach ALL the Lebanese he sent his Message to the people by television and it was broadcast on 11th July of the same year. We can note that during his pontificate the Holy Father has spoken 220 times directly to or for Lebanon. We can understand therefore why the Maronite Patriarch can say of Pope John Paul that his concern for Lebanon comes from a heart *"...where Lebanon holds a place equal to that held by his own country of Poland ..."* (Inaugural Discourse —A.P.E.C.L. 1992). The fourth and final part of the LINEAMENTA Document for the Synod is entitled ***"The Historical Vocation of Lebanon"*** and here we find the core of the "genius" or "particularity" of this land and its people. Drawing on several sources emanating from Pope John Paul II in regard to Lebanon the Document says, *"'The historical vocation of Lebanon'! This expression ... signifies that ... Lebanon is 'a message of freedom, of democracy, a land of dialogue and of conviviality between different religions and cultures'"*. This is what justifies his (i.e. the Pope's) declaration that ***"Lebanon is more than a country: it is a message and a model, for the East as well as for the West"*** (Synod for Lebanon Lineamenta, n. 75). During the Synod one of the Muslim "guests"

who had been invited and who offered his intervention during the "Listening Sessions" at the operating of the work, said that there are Muslims in the world and there are Christians, but there cannot exist a Lebanese Muslim unless he has a Christian brother, and there cannot exist a Lebanese Christian without a Muslim brother. That is to say that without a Christian the Lebanese Muslim does not exist; without a Muslim the Lebanese Christian does not exist. Both can be Christian or Muslim but not Lebanese.

It has long been realised in the Middle East that the presence of the Christians in Lebanon has an importance which far exceeds its own particular reality. The survival of Christians in other parts of the region depends to a large extent on the secure and stable presence of Christians in Lebanon. This point has been clearly recognised and expressed in the documentation of the A.P.E.C.L. meetings for at least the last 20 years and the continuing emigration of Christians from Lebanon is a continuing source of anxiety for the Churches there.

I think that from all that we can perceive of the self-understanding of the Churches in Lebanon we can find **three** important aspects to their mission:

1. BEING CHURCH:

- * A source of enrichment for the Universal Church.
- * A specific ecumenical role especially with regard to the Orthodox Churches and an example for a way forward to fuller communion between all the Churches.

2. ISLAMO-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE:

- * A dynamic partner in the Middle East and in the world at large.

3. SOCIO - CULTURAL:

- * A strong contributor in the continuing development of culture proper to the region.
- * A voice of conscience for the poor and marginalised and a force for the insistence on the primacy of justice and peace born of reconciliation and forgiveness.

1. BEING CHURCH

A debt of gratitude to the Oriental Churches for their contribution to the heritage shared in the Universal Church was loudly expressed in the Documents of the Second Vatican Council. Yet we, in the Western Churches do not really realise that what we call the "Catholic" Church

is a collection of Churches in Communion with one another and united under the person of the Bishop of Rome. We are not used to the idea that there are a variety of Churches with different traditions and spiritualities and there are a variety of ways of being "Catholic". The richness of the Eastern Churches is an immense field of study and I cannot do justice to it. At the risk of minimising its richness I will point to some areas where we, in the Western Churches may gain insight and depth.

(a) The importance of the Liturgy.

We cannot see the Eastern Churches from the outside. We must penetrate their world from the inside, via their liturgies. Perhaps, since the reform of our Liturgy after the Council, we have lost something of the sense of the Holy. Our Liturgy seems less solemn than it once was. We have opted for an expression which offers to everyone more access. We have put our liturgy into the vernacular, turned our altars around, built circular churches, all for the very valid and worthy reason of helping the faithful enter more easily and fully into it. Yet the Eastern Churches, some of which like the Maronites have recently renewed their liturgy, have opted to retain the symbols and aids to conserve the sense of awe and mystery. The very set-up of the Byzantine churches with their iconostasis, the use of incense and the practice of processions is another example. Gradually these ways of expressing the mysterious are returning to our Church as we realise the need we have to express the "otherness" of the encounter with God which we experience through the liturgy.

(b) The importance of the Trinity and the role of the Holy Spirit.

The two hands of the Father are the Son and the Holy Spirit; with them he has formed the universe. The Father has divided the history of mankind into three stages. (1) Creation to Incarnation which belongs properly to the Father and which we witness in the marvellous works of Creation and Providence. (2) Incarnation to Ascension which belongs properly to the Son and which we witness in his marvellous work of Redemption. (3) Pentecost to Parousia which belongs properly to the Holy Spirit. We live in this stage, the stage of the Holy Spirit. In the Western Church we place much emphasis now on the Incarnation and the humanity of Jesus Christ. The Eastern Churches emphasise the divinity of Christ. Neither one nor the other diminishes the truth. It is more a question of keeping the balance.

(c) The place of Mary.

The central Marian doctrine is expressed in the word THEOTÓKOS, first introduced at the Council of Ephesus in 431. She is "The Mother of God", and this is a Christological point being made. It is inconceivable for an Oriental Christian to understate Mary without Jesus Christ. You will never find an image of her without Jesus Christ.

All that richness is true of any of the Oriental Churches in their contribution to the Universal Church. The Churches in Lebanon, with great humility, recognised that they themselves had lacked this vision of belonging to the Universal Church, that they needed somehow to rekindle the sense of being Church, to "desegregate" their ecclesial communities, as the Synod Message put it, in order to move away from the inward looking pre-occupation with themselves and live the wider reality of Church; they needed to be freed, or free themselves, from the narrowness of what sometimes bordered on being a ghetto mentality. There was a need to work hard at working together as ecclesial communities. There is much to do inside the country and there is much to do outside also. Therefore the structures of A.P.E.C.L. were strengthened to enable a stronger, more united Catholic community to function as Church, instead of having its energies sapped by lack of unity. Participation from the women religious and the laity is now normal. While there are several religious congregations of men and women of Middle Eastern origin which have undertaken missions "Ad Gentes", there is only one which has gone to communities other than those of their own diaspora. Yet two lines of consciousness have developed during the past few years. One is the realisation that Lebanon is better off than the countries around it as far as the position of the Church is concerned. This has led to a taking of responsibility for other Christians in the region. As the preparation for the Synod got under way there were numerous Congresses in Lebanon to study different aspects of life in the Church. Gradually some were organised to involve the Church in the wider region of the Middle East. The initiative was taken by the women religious who organised a Congress to discuss "Religious Life for Women in the Middle East: Identity and Mission". There were 750 participants from 40 Congregations who came from Egypt, Jordan, Syria, the Holy Land, Iraq and Lebanon itself. A rather charismatic Jesuit who came to address the congress from Egypt, looked at the women gathered in front of him and told us that half of us was enough; the rest should be out and about elsewhere in the region helping the churches there.

And so came about the realisation that Lebanon should do something to form, prepare, train missionaries to go to the poorer Churches in the region: and as well, extend once again its characteristic hospitality and welcome into Lebanon members of the Churches in the region to benefit from the freedom and security which the Church enjoys in Lebanon. Another spin-off from this realisation has been in the area of catechetics. Following a Congress for Catechetics in the Middle East, held in the summer of 1995, there came into being the Catholic Council for Catechetics in the Middle East. The President has just been appointed an "expert" for the Middle East in the Church's official organisation for catechetics so that the specific contribution of the Oriental Churches may be received here too.

A specific ecumenical role especially with regard to the Orthodox Churches and an example of a way forward to fuller communion between all the Churches.

In the Document *Ut unum sint* it states that, "*The division among Christians is a serious reality which impedes the very work of Christ*" (n. 98, quoting *Evangelii Nuntiandi*). There have been gigantic steps taken by the Catholic Church in general with regard to reconciliation with the Orthodox Churches, and those which were formally referred to as "our separated brethren" now are called "our Sister Churches". The Ancient Eastern Churches were considered to be not only schismatic, but also heretical because of the rejection by them of the dogmatic formulations of the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon. The openness of Pope Paul VI which has been continued in the Catholic Church since his time has made it possible for us to declare a common faith in Jesus Christ truly God and truly man even with the Churches which had previously expressed their faith in a way which we considered to be inadequate. Among the Churches in the Middle East there is a real consciousness of the responsibility which they have to continue to foster this ecumenical dialogue, and especially among the "Uniate" Churches (those which have a parallel Orthodox Church) to act as "Bridges", to enable the steps which are necessary for full communion with the Catholic Church to be taken while at the same time preserving the special heritage of those "Sister" Churches. In 1990 the Catholic Churches of the Middle East joined the Middle East Council of Churches, a sister organisation of the World Council of Churches, and their representative has worked hard and long to bring the "Catholic" contribution to that organisation.

There are numerous models for describing the complex reality which is the Church, but one of the most recent ones is that of "Mystery of Communion". This way of understanding the reality of the Church is a very helpful one at the present time when the attraction towards ever closer unity seems to be being felt throughout the Christian community. The Church in Lebanon is an expression of the fact that the diversity within the Church in general, far from being a source of conflict and suspicion, is a source of great riches and value. At a time when ecumenical dialogue is very intense, and when all sides desire a unity of Christians which does not negate the riches of any tradition, it is opportune that the sense of Church as "The Mystery of Communion" should be being experienced and experimented somewhere. As young Churches struggle to find a true identity and be, for example, the Church in Africa, or in Latin America, and we all struggle with inculturation, the sense that diversity is good and of the very nature of the Church is a precious insight. How much less wary we might be if, as members of the Reformed tradition of Christianity, we could see that the way into the mystery of the Universal Church was through communion with a diversity of Churches and not a question of converting, or going over into one Church.

2. ISLAMO - CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE.

Earlier I mentioned the intervention of one of the Muslim "guests" at the Synod for Lebanon and said that the particular "genius" of Lebanon was its conscious realisation of its identity as a nation composed of a whole mosaic of different religious families stemming from Islamic or Christian roots. It is true that 17 different religious families are recognised, protected and represented before the Laws and Constitution of the country. This is unique in the world. Everywhere else in the region of the Middle East the Christians are such a tiny minority as to be in some places almost lost and in many, insignificant. Yet the mosaic which is Lebanon is such that this balance of population has to be protected. Recently there was distress both among the Palestinians and among some Lebanese because the Lebanese Government did not want to offer Nationality status to thousands of refugees. At one level this was perhaps seen as sheer selfishness, on the other, we must remember that the majority of the neighbours of Lebanon, with the exception of the Israelis, are Muslim. To increase further the Muslim population at the expense of the Christian would be to dislocate the fine balance of religious communities. Throughout the 16 years of war, which was seen by some as a religious war between

Christians and Muslims, there were meetings held between scholars of both faiths to continue the dialogue which even the splintering of the people into religious militias could not silence. There are numerous examples of what the Documents of the Church call "the dialogue of life" which were common before the war, continued during it and happen today. I personally know of a group of lay people who sold their jewellery one Christmas at the height of the war and divided the money into three portions. They then crossed the dividing lines in and around Beirut to offer one portion to a Christian orphanage so that the children there could have something for Christmas. They did the same with a Druze orphanage and the same with a Muslim one. The Muslim director of his orphanage told the group that in Islam it is written that when someone does you good you should try to offer him a similar good. He then went to his safe and took out the same amount of money he had received for his orphanage and gave it to the visitors to spend on the Christian children. A friend of our community has a Shi'a Muslim business partner. He is also a close family friend; they named each other's sons. When the war set in and the city of Beirut was divided so that passing from one side to the other became too dangerous, the Shi'a business partner said that they should try to continue as before. He would work with the contracts they had in West Beirut and would divide the money between them; his partner, the Christian, should do the same in East Beirut, also dividing the money between them. When there was peace they would settle the things and continue as before. That was what happened. When we read now the documentation which came from A.P.E.C.L., especially from those meetings which took place during the war, it is clear that the vision of this mission as partners in a very special Islamo-Christian dialogue is sound. Often the statements were somehow lost, shadowed by the noise of cannons and obscured by the confusion of fear, but they stand as a witness that the commitment to this dialogue never faltered. One of the most striking examples of this was when the grand Mufti of Lebanon was assassinated. His residence was in West Beirut and that was cut-off from the Christian sector of the city in East Beirut. Middle Eastern custom decrees that people should go and pay their condolences to the bereaved party, and if the person who has died is of importance politically or religiously there are official visits. If we had not been at war, and the Mufti had simply died, then certainly the dignitaries from the Christian community would have gone to his residence to pay their respects. It was impossible for anyone to go from our side to theirs so the Maronite Patriarch

opened his Patriarchate in Bkerke to receive condolences for his brother the Grand Mufti.

There is one other aspect of this dialogue that has been evident rather discreetly for several years now. It did not come out in the Synod, and does not receive anything like the attention that the Islamo-Christian dialogue does. I will express it by posing a question. What if it is not just political expediency that the Jewish people are back in the region? What if, like he did in the days of Cyrus of Persia, God is writing straight with our crooked lines? The question of the formation of the State of Israel is one of the most painful in our world and it has been since 1948. There is no denying that a just and honest peace must be found to this or there will be no peace worth the name. Yet it is also true that the Jewish people, with the Christians and Muslims, make up the Posterity of Abraham and there is some real connection between them, a kinship in religion and faith which we cannot deny. In Lebanon there are no examples of mixed villages without Christians; the other religious communities do not seem able to live together without the leaven of Christianity. Can this willingness to accept and welcome the other as is the case with the Islamo-Christian conviviality, be extended to the brother who is a Jew? In the present political climate it is very difficult for many people even to think of this let alone act on it, but the "Lebanese Laboratory" and especially the Church ingredient, is beginning to realise a possible role in extending the gift she has for promoting dialogue.

When we look at what has happened in the former Yugoslavia, where Catholics, Orthodox and Muslims have behaved in such a way towards each other that we now have a new term in use in our modern armoury of expressions, **ethnic cleansing**, we might ask ourselves how can all that be brought to reconciliation and a just peace? It was very significant that it was a Catholic, the Pope, who went as a pilgrim of reconciliation to Sarejevo (12-13 April) and was welcomed by the Muslim leaders and people as well as by the Catholics. Who should be a force for reconciliation if not the Catholics? Who else has the vision and the will to be that force, not just in Bosnia but in other parts of the world too. At present the Western world is afraid of Islam. The conquest of Western Europe which the Battle of Lepanto halted in 1571, over 400 years ago is, for some, in full swing again now. Are we going to set up ghettos to seal ourselves off from contact? Or even perhaps take up arms to protect ourselves? Or are we rather going to opt for conviviality? I do not say that only Lebanon can offer us a model. We can

also look at India as another nation which can be seen as having a special vocation for conviviality. But Lebanon has the advantage that the picture is simpler though more concentrated; it involves, on the ground, two religions and their adherents are more or less equal in strength.

3. SOCIO - CULTURAL

Earlier I spoke of the Christian culture in Arabic which dates from the Islamic era in Lebanon. Lebanon has always had a strong cultural expression, be it in the arts, music, and literature, or straightforward education. The natural openness of the Lebanese to others, to the culture of other peoples, challenged and encouraged them to develop and appreciate the cultural heritage which is theirs and to share it with others. The Christians have been a leading partner in all this. The first printing press in the Middle East came to Lebanon in the 17th century with Christian missionaries; the reputation of the universities in Beirut were and are second to none in the region and in the world. The Catholic education system is much older than the State itself and deeply appreciated by Muslim and Christian alike. Ninety per cent of the students in the Catholic schools in the South of Lebanon are Muslims; in other parts of the country where the population still live in mixed villages the schools reflect that religious mix. In recent discussions with the Ministry of Education concerning the post-war economic fate of the private schools it was not only the Catholic schools which took a stand, they invited the Muslim directors of schools and the Protestants to join them in the dialogue with the Minister. A teacher of Arabic in our own school in Beirut is now giving classes in pedagogy to Muslim teachers in Tripoli during the Summer holidays, and at their invitation. These are only some examples of a continuing commitment to the cultural development of the country which the Churches are consciously engaged in.

There are some very harrowing statistics to share with you about the social reality of Lebanon now that the war is over. Six per cent of the population (and it was never a large population at the best of times) have been killed. I actually do not know the much higher figure of those who have been crippled and maimed, 35 per cent of the people left Lebanon and over 50 per cent of these were Christians. Thirty per cent have been displaced within Lebanon and 2/3 of these are Christians. Being displaced means losing your home, your land, your possessions. We should remember that people in the villages of the Middle East do not keep their wealth in bank accounts but in

their land. This is part of the tragedy of Palestine also. You cannot just replace land which has been in someone's family for generations, even with financial compensation. It is a wholly other way of dealing with heritage. Today 1/3 of the Lebanese live below the poverty line. The Middle Class has practically disappeared. There are the very, very rich and the poor, some of whom are now very poor. Two aspects of this poverty are a lack of housing, because over 150,000 homes were badly damaged or destroyed during the war, and the cost of medical care. The speed with which the Government can deal with these problems is totally inadequate to alleviate the suffering of the people. In many areas where the land is owned by the churches (we call this land a **waqf**) there are projects in hand using it to help housing projects with co-operatives or other means of payment so that families can afford to house or re-house themselves with dignity. In the area of health as is the case with education, the traditional role of the Churches and especially through the contribution being made by religious, especially the women, is enormous. There are over 400 religious women nursing and running hospitals in that tiny country. Sensitive to the suffering which is due to a lack of a State Social Security Scheme the sisters themselves set up a "Mutuelle" Medical Insurance with the explicit aim of being of service to the poorest. Their hospitals went into the system and the religious communities also, paying the highest tariff so that families can benefit from a lower one. The Churches insistently, and unitedly call to the consciences of those in the medical sector to heed the needs of the poor and those in the Government to honour their responsibilities.

Almost everything which has been mentioned as part of the mission of the Churches in Lebanon could in fact be true of the mission of the Churches anywhere in the world. Yet we cannot expect of the Church where she is a struggling minority with little or no voice, as is the case in Pakistan for example, to assume this mission, especially that of conviviality between two equal partners. Neither can we expect this of the Church where she is driven underground by persecution from totalitarian regimes. What the Churches in Lebanon have to offer is their long tradition of and practice at the art of conviviality; their centuries' long work of constructing a mosaic of religious traditions and making from that mosaic an environment which is good for people to live in. It is true that the vision of this conviviality has often been clouded, if not almost totally obscured, and the last round of war in Lebanon was in some way about doing just that. Yet the Church in Lebanon has remained faithful to that vision, even if we, who

lived in Lebanon during those years did not hear the message or see that the vision was being preserved.

It would be less than honest to leave the impression that all was well or indeed is well with the mosaic. It is not easy to accept this way of living. The Church, whatever else is true of it as the Body of Christ, is also The Pilgrim People of God and like the prototype in the Old Testament, there are always problems to be faced as we march towards the Promised Land. We spoke earlier of a plethora of Churches and, especially in Lebanon where the Christian population is proportionally more numerous than elsewhere in the region, the difficulty of territorial rights is a particularly tender spot. Rivalry is not unknown between the members of the hierarchy and sometimes there has been what one can only interpret as lack of charity. The Synod was not insisted upon by the Pope in order to congratulate the Churches in Lebanon; one of the primary reasons was to “*begin a period of deep reflection in order to promote spiritual renewal*” (Synod for Lebanon “*Instrumentum laboris*”, n. 1). The aim was to undertake a journey of prayer, penance and conversion which would allow the Catholic Churches to examine themselves before God concerning their fidelity to the Gospel Message and their effective commitment to his service. Cardinal Schotte, who is the Secretary General for the various Synods, mentioned one day during a session that the response of the people of Lebanon to the *Lineamenta* was greater proportionally than the response of any group for any Synod. From where I stood during that period of preparation I can say that we did take it very seriously and worked very hard to respond to the call for this examination of conscience and consciousness of who we were as Church in Lebanon. At all levels, from Patriarchal Assemblies, to parishes, to Bishops’ Conferences, to schools and colleges, there was an eagerness to be involved. (We can remember that at this time too the religious communities were also preparing for the Synod on the Consecrated Life. We had so many meetings it was impressive). At the end of the Synod the “Message” expressed the “Faith” and the “Hope”, of the Churches. It is also the fruit of a humbling experience of reality. “*To hope means to commit ourselves: therefore let us be converted and live the unity of the Church; let us tear down the walls of our communities and strengthen the unity of our people. In solidarity let us place ourselves at the service of our brothers*” (Synod for Lebanon “Message”, n. 3).

To end this reflection without referring to one of the many places in the Scriptures where Lebanon is

mentioned would be unforgivable. So I turn to the Pophet Ezekiel and find this: “*The Lord Yahweh says this: ‘From the top of the cedar, from the highest branch, I will take a shoot and plant it myself on a very high mountain It will sprout branches and bear fruit, and become a noble cedar. Every kind of bird will live beneath it, every winged creature live in the shade of its branches, and every tree of the field will learn that I, Yahweh, am the one who stunts tall trees and makes low ones grow, who withers green trees and makes the withered green. I, Yahweh have spoken and I will do it’*” (Ez 17:22-24).

Whatever else we may say about the mission of the Churches in Lebanon, we can only be grateful for the example of honesty and humility in their willingness to undertake their rather painful self-evaluation, their rather necessary examination of conscience and their fidelity to their vocation to live as part of a mosaic of peoples, faiths and cultures so that the rest of us may have hope and confidence that this is really the way forward for humanity.

LA MONDIALISATION AGGRAVE LA FRACTURE SOCIALE

Les ambiguïtés du modèle économique unique

Eric Sottas

Lors d'un séminaire organisé à Budapest en juillet 1996 par "Pax Romana", Mouvement international des intellectuels catholiques, Eric Sottas, président du Conseil d'administration du Centre Lebrecht, et directeur de l'Organisation Mondiale contre la Torture (OMCT), est intervenu en présentant une contribution substantielle sur les ambiguïtés de la mondialisation. Le thème de la rencontre de Budapest portait notamment sur les fractures sociales dans le cadre de l'Europe post-communiste. Sans vouloir imposer une contre idéologie chrétienne ou renier en bloc les fruits de la croissance résultant des "Trente glorieuses", l'auteur analyse pièce par pièce les éléments clés du système qui se met progressivement en place à l'enseigne de la "mondialisation". Eric Sottas démonte le mécanisme qui, sous couvert d'intégration, se montre éminemment producteur d'exclusion.

Albert Longchamp

La réalité politique de notre époque tourne autour de quelques mots clés dont ceux de *mondialisation* ou *globalisation* et d'exclusion, qui dominent tous les discours actuels. De prime abord, les deux notions semblent antinomiques: le global renvoyant au concept d'*intégration dans un tout* et l'exclusion signifiant *la rupture, la division et la marginalisation*. A regarder de plus près, on s'aperçoit que les deux phénomènes sont intrinsèquement liés. La question est de savoir s'il s'agit là d'une fatalité ou d'une évolution aberrante mais contrôlable du système économique mondial.

1. LES RACINES DE L'EXCLUSION

***L**a mondialisation produit de l'exclusion, en détournant de leurs buts la solidarité, la spécialisation et le monopole. Etonnant? Démonstration.*

Dans une étude du Bureau International du Travail (BIT), citée par Edouard Dommen, de la CNUCED, Silver décrit **trots éléments clés de l'exclusion**: la solidarité, la spécialisation et le monopole.

La **solidarité** est basée sur des liens culturels et moraux qui lient les individus et constitue des collectivités se regroupant en catégories organisant le monde. Ces groupes bâtissent un système de références qui marque les limites du corps considéré. Ceux qui se trouvent à l'extérieur des groupes cessent d'être considérés comme sujets de préoccupation directe par ceux qui sont à l'intérieur. On assiste donc à *une rupture de solidarité*.

A l'inverse, à l'intérieur du groupe, la poursuite de buts commune renforce la cohésion sociale. Ce phénomène peut être observé aussi bien dans le cadre du clan familial que dans les syndicats. Ces derniers négocient au nom de l'ensemble des travailleurs

mais en respectant certains cercles concentriques: ils porteront par exemple une moindre attention aux intérêts du travailleur immigré sans emploi. On relèvera un phénomène identique dans l'action des partis politiques et des organisations sociales ou culturelles.

La **spécialisation**, provient des différences entre les individus — différences de capacités, de formation, d'intérêt, etc. Elle provoque, comme la solidarité, à la fois l'intégration et l'exclusion. Intégration pour celles et ceux dont la spécialisation est recherchée, exclusion pour les autres, qui ne présentent pas les caractéristiques souhaitées.

Le jeu des relations et l'appartenance à divers corps permettent également une certaine intégration. Mais il faut se garder d'un optimisme excessif. *L'intégration sociale passe en priorité par une intégration professionnelle*. Même si une personne est parfaitement intégrée à d'autres niveaux, cela ne peut suffire en cas d'exclusion du monde du travail. Par ailleurs, nous ne sommes pas dans des systèmes étanches. La marginalisation professionnelle entraîne des exclusions, à priori non liées, et se répercute même souvent sur la cohésion familiale.

Or, dans des périodes de mutations rapides comme celles que nous connaissons, une spécialisation très recherchée — et donc facteur d'intégration — peut perdre rapidement de son intérêt et devenir cause d'exclusion. Les exemples abondent. Dont celui des réfugiés politiques qui ont fui la persécution. Ayant réussi leur intégration dans le pays d'accueil, il n'est pas rare qu'au bout de quelques années à peine ils se trouvent à nouveau confrontés à des problèmes de spécialisation.

Ayant vu une première fois leur spécialisation ne pas répondre aux possibilités offertes par la société dans laquelle elles cherchaient à s'insérer; ayant réussi au prix d'un effort considérable à en acquérir d'autres, des personnes se virent à nouveau exclues professionnellement et marginalisées socialement. Leurs cas montrent qu'en dépit de la variété des groupes spécialisés existants, *l'intégration est souvent aléatoire* et l'exclusion beaucoup plus radicale qu'on ne l'imagine.

Le **monopole**, enfin, consiste pour un groupe donné à contrôler une activité en la soustrayant au régime de la concurrence ou à s'assurer une exclusivité dans un domaine spécifique. Il faut distinguer ici les buts poursuivis. Si le monopole est le fait de l'Etat et que cet Etat agit dans un cadre démocratique, il pourra avoir un effet intégrateur. Le fait de soustraire une activité à la concurrence dans le cas d'un service public permet de satisfaire l'ensemble d'une population sans avoir à tenir compte du seul critère de la rentabilité. De ce point de vue, les monopoles sur les transports en commun assurent un service moins excluant qu'un système privé de concurrence.

En revanche, lorsque le groupe constituant le monopole n'est pas soumis à des obligations de service général, il a tendance à provoquer une double exclusion: l'une au niveau des bénéfices économiques, l'autre au niveau des services. Pour reprendre l'exemple des transports en commun, une société monopolistique dans une région peut, en imposant des prix élevés et des salaires bas, exclure d'une partie importante des bénéfices tant les travailleurs que les consommateurs. En renonçant à exploiter certains segments, elle peut également exclure les habitants d'une zone de l'activité contrôlée par le monopole.

2. LA MONDIALISATION ET SA PERCEPTION

*L*a mondialisation est une hydre dont les têtes sont: le principe de la pensée unique, le déséquilibre entre le taux de croissance des entreprises et l'accroissement de la productivité, la délocalisation, l'effondrement des systèmes de protection sociale et le déclin de l'Etat.

Le concept de *mondialisation* — ou pour les anglophones celui de la *globalisation* — évoque pour les uns et les autres des réalités diverses.

Sous un **premier aspect**, la mondialisation se présente comme l'émergence d'une économie où l'interdépendance des acteurs est devenue si forte qu'elle impose un **mode de fonctionnement unifié internationalement**. Le corollaire de cette évolution implique qu'il n'existerait désormais **plus qu'un modèle économique** dans lequel chacun doit faire les efforts nécessaires pour s'intégrer ou disparaître.

Contrairement à la situation qui a prévalu durant ce que l'on appelle aujourd'hui les "*Les Trente glorieuses*" — c'est-à-dire les trois décennies de croissance continue qui en Occident ont suivi la Deuxième Guerre mondiale — il n'existe plus aujourd'hui de modèle performant pouvant servir de référence en matière de développement économique à une périphérie appelée à s'intégrer — même si cette référence était contestable et contestée.

Le phénomène de la mondialisation suggère l'existence d'une nouvelle rationalité contraignant toutes les sociétés à se restructurer selon un modèle unique.

Ce qui frappe en effet à notre époque, c'est que toutes les sociétés semblent acculées à de profondes réformes qui seraient rendues indispensables par les mutations qu'implique une société "mondialisée". Pour les pays en développement, l'intégration à ce nouveau cadre passerait par de douloureuses mais indispensables politiques d'ajustement structurel. Pour les pays européens ex-socialistes, leur participation au modèle émergent serait conditionnée par des politiques de transition très rigoureuses. Mais, phénomène nouveau, les pays industrialisés qui, hier encore, représentaient le modèle du développement réussi, du moins aux yeux de certains, se voient appelés à de profondes restructurations impliquant des politiques de rigueur et d'austérité.

Sous cet angle, le concept de mondialisation a modifié le discours dominant. Alors que dans les années soixante, les tenants du libéralisme concevaient le développement comme un

“rattrapage” qui devait permettre aux pays en “retard” de rejoindre, grâce à l’ouverture des marchés et à l’aide internationale, le niveau atteint par les pays industrialisés — conception opposée à la thèse des pays socialistes préconisant un changement dans les rapports de production et d’échanges — la mondialisation tend à imposer l’idée d’un seul modèle globalisé. Il n’existerait qu’une voie pour chacun de s’intégrer en fonction d’une rationalité économique présentée comme scientifique et inéluctable, s’imposant à tous. En caricaturant, on peut dire que *la mondialisation signifie la fin des choix politiques* au profit de mesures de management imposées **par une rationalité intrinsèque à la sphère économique**. C’est ce qu’on désigne par le règne de la *pensée unique*.

Relance par la croissance: des politiques à revoir.

Le **deuxième aspect** apparent de la mondialisation, c’est **l’accélération**, grâce notamment à l’informatique et à la télématique, d’une profonde transformation dans les modes de production. Les nouveaux outils apparus ces dernières décennies ont permis aux très grandes sociétés, d’une part de se doter de moyens qui génèrent des gains considérables de productivité et, d’autre part, d’installer - souvent de façon provisoire - leurs centres de production dans des pays où le rapport coût/production est le plus intéressant.

En ce qui concerne *le premier élément* on notera que dans le secteur de la production automobile européenne, les constructeurs annoncent, sur cinq ans cumulés, des taux de croissance de leurs entreprises de l’ordre de 6 à 8% mais, que durant la même période, ils enregistrent un *accroissement de la productivité* dépassant les 10%. Ce phénomène débouche sur une croissance génératrice de chômage puisque, plus l’entreprise croît, moins elle a besoin de main-d’œuvre par unité produite. Une telle évolution oblige à revoir les politiques de relance par la croissance.

Le *deuxième élément* bien connu est celui de la **délocalisation** provoquée par la recherche du meilleur rapport coût/production. Même si la productivité, pour des raisons de formation et de maîtrise des techniques, n’est pas forcément toujours supérieure dans un pays où la main-d’œuvre est moins coûteuse, les différences salariales et de protections sociales peuvent rendre intéressant le transfert de tout ou d’une partie de la production dans un pays représentant un avantage sur ce plan-là.

La société recherchera le pays offrant la meilleure combinaison entre les plus bas salaires, la plus grande stabilité politique et sociale pour la meilleure productivité possible. Dans ce domaine, la Chine vient en tête au hit-parade des nations convoitées par les entreprises en voie de délocalisation, et cela grâce à sa main-d’œuvre bon marché, son absence d’organisations syndicales libres, son régime dictatorial stable et ses ouvriers relativement bien formés et très disciplinés.

Sous un **troisième aspect**, la mondialisation signifie **l’effondrement des systèmes de protection sociale**. L’ouverture des marchés nationaux — politique préconisée tant par le Fonds monétaire international (FMI) que la par la Banque mondiale dans le cadre de politique de croissance — implique l’abandon de mesures protectionnistes qui permettaient de maintenir des secteurs devenus non compétitifs. En soi, de telles politiques sont justifiables car il est vrai que la protection outrancière de marchés ou de secteurs peu rentables conduit à un déclin constant de la productivité et finit par un appauvrissement généralisé. L’exemple de nombreux pays européens ex-socialistes le prouve. Il n’est donc pas question de défendre le maintien à tout prix de tels systèmes.

Toutefois, il ne faut pas non plus perdre de vue que, souvent, des entreprises — même peu ou pas rentables — assuraient des emplois à une grande quantité d’ouvriers et d’employés certes souvent mal rémunérés. La disparition de ces entreprises au profit d’unités plus performantes ne va pas automatiquement générer un nombre d’emplois supérieur, ni même égal, pour les raisons décrites plus haut. Dans ces conditions, il faudra faire face à de graves problèmes de chômage et de sous-emploi.

On pourrait imaginer la mise sur pied d’un système de couverture sociale amélioré pour assurer une transition humaine garantissant la réinsertion des sans-emploi et des indemnités adéquates aux chômeurs. Or, très souvent, ces politiques d’accompagnement social ne sont pas mises en place pour deux raisons. Tout d’abord, elles représentent des coûts élevés qui vont peser sur les entreprises, les travailleurs et le gouvernement, et rendre de ce fait moins compétitif le pays qui cherche à attirer des investisseurs. Ensuite, les théoriciens dominants estiment que les mesures de protection sociale — notamment la fixation des salaires minimums — sont assimilables à des rigidités économiques et faussent la loi de l’offre et de la demande dans les domaines du travail. Ils s’opposent donc à la mise en place de tels systèmes sociaux qui, selon eux, ne font que

retarder et ralentir les restructurations nécessaires et privent les pays de l'avantage comparatif que représente une main-d'œuvre peu coûteuse.

Le déclin de l'Etat.

Les chantres néo-libéraux l'ont voulu ainsi: le **déclin de l'Etat** constitue le **quatrième aspect** de la mondialisation en cours. Le rôle de l'Etat a toujours consisté, quelles que soient par ailleurs sa forme et sa légitimité, à gérer la fracture sociale que provoque inévitablement l'activité économique de ses concitoyens. Certes, cette gestion n'était pas toujours, loin s'en faut, démocratique et forcément juste. Mais même si elle se révélait profondément inégalitaire, légitimant des systèmes socialement discutables, elle se révélait efficace. Or, au cours de ces dernières décennies, la capacité même de l'Etat à intervenir efficacement dans les domaines essentiels de sa compétence a été de plus en plus ouvertement remise en cause. François Chesnais montre dans son analyse de la crise du système monétaire européen de juillet 1993, que les Etats européens même coalisés n'ont plus les moyens d'imposer leurs lois aux grands opérateurs du marché globalisé. Comme il le souligne, "en 1990, les liquidités concentrées entre les mains des fonds d'investissements mutuels (SICAV), les compagnies d'assurance et les fonds de pension atteignaient à elles seules 133% du PIB américain et 108% du PIB britannique. La même année, les gestionnaires américains et européens de ces fonds (moins de 500 parmi ceux qui comptent) concentraient entre leurs mains, sans les banques et les fonds de pension japonais, 8.000 milliards de dollars!

Même si environ 5% seulement des fonds étaient investis sous forme de portefeuilles de devises — cette proportion pourrait s'élever aujourd'hui à 12% — ce sont 400 milliards de dollars que ce seul groupe d'opérateurs peut mobiliser. Dès lors, on comprend que les 300 milliards que la Banque de France et la Bundesbank coalisées ont engagé pour tenter de préserver le système monétaire européen en juillet 1993 n'aient pas suffi à arrêter les attaques contre le franc, et que les banques centrales n'ont plus les moyens de punir les spéculateurs".

L'évolution de ces dernières années montre — pratiquement sans exception — un renforcement et une concentration considérable des grands groupes économiques, et un retrait constant de l'Etat dans ce domaine. Retrait sous forme d'abandon des activités économiques traditionnellement contrôlées par l'Etat: les vagues de privatisation ont non seulement touché des activités entrepreneuriales nationalisées, mais également des services publics (transports,

radio, télévision et même prisons!). Retrait de surcroît au niveau normatif: la fameuse déréglementation qui, bien souvent, n'est rien moins que la destruction d'un cadre légal qui tentait de protéger les intérêts divergents des partenaires sociaux.

Là encore, il n'est pas question de contester la caducité de certaines règles qui étaient devenues des entraves au développement des sociétés, mais de s'interroger sur l'opportunité d'un démantèlement généralisé au profit du secteur privé.

Proposition américaine: dissoudre l'OIT!

Deux propositions présentées ces derniers temps montrent, par leur caractère provocateur, jusqu'où peut aller cette tendance. La majorité parlementaire américaine de tendance républicaine conservatrice a fait savoir qu'elle envisageait la dissolution de l'Organisation Internationale du Travail (OIT).

Les rapports entre les administrations américaines successives et cette organisation n'ont pas toujours été aisés. Mais les divergences portaient jusqu'ici sur la politique suivie par la direction ou la majorité au sein de l'organisation, et non sur sa raison d'être. Pour les Républicains, qui ont avancé la proposition de dissoudre l'OIT, ce n'est plus seulement l'orientation qui est en cause, mais la nécessité de maintenir une instance chargée d'établir des normes internationales dans le domaine du travail et de veiller à leur respect.

A leurs yeux, un tel forum se justifiait tant qu'existaient deux systèmes politiques divergents, mais aujourd'hui, où le libéralisme triomphe, il n'est plus nécessaire de maintenir une institution établie au lendemain de la révolution soviétique. Les partenaires sociaux — employeurs et employés — devraient pouvoir librement négocier les conditions régissant les rapports de travail sans que les Etats - et surtout pas une instance internationale — n'interviennent en imposant une réglementation contraignantes.

De telles propositions ne sont malheureusement pas isolées, ni l'apanage des seuls Américains. En 1996, David de Pury, une des têtes pensantes de l'économie suisse, envisageait la privatisation de l'OMC, structure héritée des mécanismes du GATT. Dans une telle perspective, la réglementation internationale en matière de commerce mondial ne dépendrait plus que des négociations entre les représentants économiques concernés.

Même si cette proposition a peu de chances de rencontrer un large soutien, elle met en relief l'abîme existant entre le porte-parole des grandes sociétés transnationales, supportant difficilement les interventions gouvernementales dans les questions commerciales, et les revendications des responsables syndicaux, demandant un meilleur contrôle démocratique sur des institutions qui ne prennent pas suffisamment en compte les intérêts des travailleurs et des masses.

3. LA RICHESSE MONDIALE AUGMENTE — LES INÉGALITÉS SE CREUSENT

N'existe-t-il qu'une voie pour la mondialisation et celle-ci permet-elle de dépasser la fracture sociale?

Le rapport du PNUD, publié le 17 juillet 1996, donne une réponse contrastée. D'une part, jamais comme au cours des quinze dernières années, la richesse mondiale produite par l'ensemble des acteurs de la vie économique n'aura connu une progression aussi forte. En 1993, le PIB mondial représentait 23.000 milliards de dollars contre 4.000 milliards de dollars en 1973. Si l'on s'en tient à ce seul critère, force est d'admettre que la voie suivie est la bonne, et qu'elle permet de substantiels progrès. Malheureusement, et nous le savons par expérience, il n'en est rien. Au cours de la même période les inégalités n'ont cessé de s'aggraver, soit entre les pays, soit, à l'intérieur d'un même pays, entre les différents membres de la société. Certes, une quinzaine de pays asiatiques, les fameux NIC (*New Industrialised Countries*) ont réussi en trente ans un décollage économique qui leur permet de s'asseoir à la table des grands. Mais à l'autre bout de la chaîne, les PMA (*Pays les Moins Avancés*) connaissent, en dépit des programmes spéciaux adoptés en leur faveur, une paupérisation croissante. Et les perspectives de ces prochaines décennies sont sombres.

Par ailleurs, les inégalités ne cessent de se creuser au sein des sociétés développées et plus particulièrement aux Etats-Unis. En présentant son rapport, James Gustav Spet, administrateur (américain) du PNUD, déclarait: "Le monde est actuellement le théâtre d'une polarisation accrue en termes économiques, et cela à l'échelon national comme international. Si les tendances actuelles se poursuivent, les disparités économiques entre les pays industrialisés et les pays en développement ne seront plus seulement inéquitables, mais deviendront inhumaines." (cité par *Le Monde*).

Aujourd'hui déjà le patrimoine des 358 milliardaires (en dollars) vivant dans le monde dépasse les revenus cumulés des pays où vivent 45% de la population mondiale, c'est-à-dire plus de 2 milliards d'habitants.

Une situation doublement préoccupante.

L'inégalité en termes de répartition de la richesse créée n'est malheureusement pas le seul problème qui inquiète les spécialistes.

La croissance du secteur financier par rapport à l'ensemble de l'économie mondiale crée une situation préoccupante dans la mesure où elle est le fruit d'une spéculation qui échappe à tout contrôle. Actuellement, on estime à 6.000 milliards de dollars par année le volume des échanges de l'économie réelle, alors que les mouvements financiers quotidiens sont de 1.000 milliards par jour (chiffres cités par Albertini).

Pour prendre un autre exemple cité par Edouard Dommen, en 1995, "les transactions sur devises ont été 67 fois supérieures aux échanges de biens et services; c'est-à-dire que sur 68 francs échangés sur le marché des devises, un franc concernait quelqu'un qui voulait acheter quelque chose dans le pays en question, et 67 francs avait trait à des mouvements financiers purement spéculatifs."

Cette explosion de la spéculation a des effets dévastateurs et rend plus illusoire que jamais la recherche de prix équitables et rémunérateurs pour les biens produits, notamment dans les sociétés à faible pouvoir financier. *L'offre et la demande ne sont plus les éléments dont dépendent les prix des biens et des services en commerce international.*

Cette excroissance du secteur financier réduit également la part dans les transnationales du secteur industriel. Les bénéfices provenant de l'activité industrielle tendent à baisser au profit des bénéfices générés par le secteur financier. On rappellera à ce propos la boutade présentant Siemens comme une banque qui possède un magasin d'électricité. En effet, en 1995, 70% de son bénéfice a été réalisé dans le secteur financier, et 30% seulement dans la production d'appareils électriques.

Pour conclure sur ce point, nous dirons que la situation actuelle est doublement préoccupante. L'accroissement considérable des richesses s'accompagne d'un creusement des inégalités et d'une montée constante des difficultés sociales,

difficultés qui dégénèrent en violences plus ou moins contrôlées.

Le fait que le Brésil — pays où l'écart est le plus grand entre les 20% de la population la plus riche et les 20% de la population la plus pauvre — soit aussi le théâtre du plus grand nombre d'assassinats d'enfants de la rue par les forces paramilitaires (plusieurs milliers de cas recensés par les organisations de défense des Droits humains), ne doit rien au hasard. L'exclusion, quand elle atteint de pareilles proportions, débouche inévitablement sur de tels drames. On notera par ailleurs des évolutions similaires dans d'autres pays d'Amérique latine et d'Afrique.

Pourtant, des solutions existent.

Pratiques, raisonnables, un certain nombre de solutions permettraient d'apporter une réponse aux problèmes qui viennent d'être esquissés.

En ce qui concerne tout d'abord le problème de la spéculation. Depuis une vingtaine d'années, une proposition a été avancée - connue sous le nom de taxe "Tobin" - prévoyant d'introduire un système de prélèvement sur toute transaction financière. Cette taxe, fixée à un taux extrêmement bas, pourrait avoir un double effet. En premier lieu, vu les très faibles marges bénéficiaires par opération financière (c'est la multiplicité de ces opérations qui génère des surbénéfices), une taxe même modeste agirait comme **un puissant ralentisseur des mouvements spéculatifs** sans pour autant gêner les échanges commerciaux. A ce premier effet bénéfique pourrait s'en ajouter un second si la taxe était affectée, comme le prévoyait son inventeur, à une péréquation permettant de réorienter les flux financiers vers les pays qui en ont le plus besoin.

De la même manière, l'introduction d'une clause sociale dans les accords commerciaux permettrait de rendre illégale, en interdisant la commercialisation des produits, la surexploitation des travailleurs, et notamment du travail forcé et du travail des enfants.

Mais les mécanismes qui servent à l'intégration, nous l'avons déjà vu, peuvent aussi engendrer l'exclusion. La discussion sur ces deux mesures, qui naturellement ne sauraient à elles seules régler tous les problèmes évoqués, mais qui sont intéressantes à

titre exemplaire des enjeux du débat international, illustre les ambiguïtés et les divergences d'intérêt.

La clause "Tobin", par exemple, a fait l'objet de diverses études d'experts de la CNUCED et des instances économiques mondiales. Pour les uns, elle est inutile et

impraticable. Inutile, car les spéculateurs, conscients des dangers que représenterait un excès de leur part, éviteront de provoquer une catastrophe majeure. Impraticable, parce que la globalisation du marché financier est telle qu'il ne serait déjà plus possible de mettre en place les institutions de contrôle nécessaires.

Pour d'autres au contraire, non seulement la taxe est possible, mais elle dépend uniquement de la volonté des grandes puissances de contrôler des marchés qu'elles ont laissé, par la déréglementation, s'emballer de façon incontrôlée. De surcroît elle est souhaitable, non seulement pour éviter une catastrophe économique majeure, mais aussi parce qu'elle serait le moyen de se doter, au niveau international, d'instruments permettant une redistribution et une réorientation des flux financiers vers les pays en développement et particulièrement vers les PMA. Les montants générés par une telle taxe pouvant enfin servir à financer les grands projets de développement indéfiniment différés.

Un troisième groupe d'experts avance une autre thèse. La taxe est possible et souhaitable pour mettre un terme au désordre de la spéculation mondiale. En revanche, il est impensable que les grands pays industrialisés acceptent que les ressources qu'elle va générer soient gérées par une institution internationale intergouvernementale et affectées en priorité au développement. En revanche, ces experts préconisent que la taxe soit prélevée directement au niveau des Etats où s'effectuent les échanges financiers, qui trouveraient là une source supplémentaire de revenu. Cette proposition risque d'être celle qui sera finalement retenue. Elle permettra de

Les débats sur les clauses sociales sont tout aussi révélateurs de l'antagonisme des intérêts. Les clauses sociales, rappelons-le, consistent à établir une liste de conventions réglementant les conditions de travail, et interdisant notamment le recours au travail forcé et au travail des enfants, et à prévoir des sanctions commerciales contre les entreprises ou les Etats qui ne respecteraient pas ces obligations.

lutter contre la spéculation qui gêne les grandes économies mondiales, mais ne remettra en cause la répartition inégale des richesses.

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L'ouverture du marché mondial permet aujourd'hui à certains pays en voie de développement de bénéficier d'un meilleur accès sur les marchés des pays industrialisés où leurs produits, en raison de l'avantage comparatif que leur donnent de plus faibles salaires, se révèlent plus compétitifs. On le voit avec les vêtements ou les articles de sport provenant notamment de Thaïlande ou de Corée, qui envahissent les marchés américains ou européens. Dans la mesure où aucune taxe prohibitive ne vient artificiellement renchérir leurs prix, ces produits sont nettement plus compétitifs que ceux émanant des industries locales ou plutôt, car tout se passe à l'intérieur des transnationales, des entreprises établies localement.

Or, cet avantage comparatif pourrait être remis en cause non plus par le biais de taxes — interdites par les règles du GATT et l'OMC — mais par le biais d'une mesure apparemment destinée à protéger les droits des travailleurs. Echaudés par l'utilisation qui a été faite par le passé, notamment aux USA et en Europe, de règles d'hygiène détournées pour empêcher la commercialisation sur leurs marchés de produits agro-alimentaires, nombre de délégués de pays en développement et de syndicats du tiers monde dénoncent déjà les risques d'un néo-protectionnisme s'exerçant à leur encontre et de façon unilatérale.

D'autres, au contraire, tout en reconnaissant ce risque, argumentent du fait que de telles clauses peuvent éviter la surexploitation des travailleurs si leur respect fait l'objet d'un examen par une instance neutre sur le plan commercial. D'où la proposition de confier au BIT (Bureau International du Travail) le soin de conduire les enquêtes nécessaires et, le cas échéant, de suggérer les sanctions qui s'imposent. En effet, la représentation tripartite de cette organisation permettrait aux travailleurs de participer au

processus décisionnel et éviterait, en principe, les abus. Malheureusement, à ce jour, ni le BIT ni la plupart des Etats ne semblent très disposés à aller dans cette voie.

Sortir du faux débat.

Les deux exemples ci-dessus mettent en relief trois éléments qu'il semble important de prendre en compte.

Tout d'abord, **la fracture sociale mondiale** ne peut être résolue, comme on l'entend trop souvent, notamment dans les milieux onusiens, par un transfert vers la société civile de réalisations au niveau local. En effet, constatant l'incapacité des systèmes intergouvernementaux à mettre sur pied des politiques mondiales efficaces, et devant la perte de contrôle des Etats, certains en viennent à suggérer de faire porter l'effort sur les organisations locales non gouvernementales.

Ces organisations ont certes un rôle à jouer, mais il ne saurait se résumer à celui d'un simple palliatif social face aux carences de l'Etat. Les tontines africaines ne seront jamais la solution pour lutter contre la spéculation mondiale et ne sauraient offrir une alternative aux impasses du système financier institutionnel.

La deuxième conclusion, corollaire de la première, c'est que nous devons faire porter notre effort sur la défense et la protection des **prérogatives de l'Etat**. Prérogatives qui doivent être renforcées et étendues au niveau international. La constitution d'ensembles transnationaux toujours plus puissants et ramifiés suppose la mise en place de mécanismes de contrôle nationaux, régionaux et internationaux dotés de moyens suffisants pour intervenir efficacement.

Troisièmement, il est nécessaire d'approfondir la démocratie non pas comme cela a été préconisé dans le cadre de la BERD (Barque Européenne de Reconstruction et de Développement) ou par certaines instances inter-américaines ou internationales en mettant unilatéralement l'accent sur l'organisation d'élections mais en créant de véritables mécanismes de **participation populaire au processus décisionnel**. C'est dans la mesure où se créeront des lieux permettant une plus grande concertation avant la formalisation des décisions, que la société civile et les ONG pourront pleinement jouer leur rôle, c'est-à-dire, d'une part exiger la prise en compte de l'ensemble des intérêts dans le cadre

des projets en discussion mais également expliciter à la population le sens et les enjeux des débats en cours. La consultation électorale intervient alors dans ce processus comme sanction d'un débat national.

Enfin, il convient dans ce contexte de donner la possibilité aux uns et autres de prendre une part active à la définition du sens et des valeurs qui doivent sous-tendre l'action politique et sociale. Citons ici deux textes, l'un de Gandhi, l'autre de Lebreton.

“Je vais vous donner un talisman, appliquez le test suivant. Rappelez-vous le visage de l'homme le plus pauvre et le plus faible que vous ayez jamais vu et demandez-vous si le pas que vous envisagez d'entreprendre sera de quelque utilité pour lui. Est-ce qu'il y gagnera quelque chose? Est-ce que cela lui permettra de prendre le contrôle de sa propre vie et de sa propre destinée? En d'autres mots, est-ce que cela conduira au Swaraj ces millions d'êtres affamés physiquement et spirituellement?” (*Swaraj* signifie: “empire sur soi et contrôle de sa propre destinée”). **Gandhi.**

“Le développement, comme opération, devient ainsi la série de passages pour une population déterminée et pour toutes les fractions de population qui la composent, d'une phase moins **humaine à une phase plus humaine** au rythme le plus rapide

possible, au coût le moins élevé possible, compte tenue des solidarités entre les sous-populations et entre les populations, l'objectif fixé au développement étant la réussite humaine individuelle et l'élaboration humaine de chaque peuples et de tous les peuples”. **Lebreton**

En conclusion, un mot sur la **responsabilité des chrétiens face à la fracture du monde**, qui va en s'élargissant. Elle n'est ni d'apporter une solution pratique - nous sommes aussi démunis que les autres - ni, et nous cétons souvent hélas à cette tentation, de défendre des valeurs chrétiennes ou de vouloir apporter un supplément spirituel, mais de rappeler que c'est en fonction du plus faible et du plus pauvre que doit s'établir notre système de valeurs et se fonder notre action politique.

Une telle approche, si elle est au coeur de la Révélation chrétienne, n'est pas spécifiquement chrétienne, comme le montre le texte de Gandhi. C'est une approche minoritaire mais universelle et, dans la mesure où nous serons capables de la pratiquer, nous sortirons du faux débat sur la source culturelle des droits de l'homme.

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THE TIBETAN STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

His Holiness the Dalai Lama

In the closing years of the 20th century, as we commemorate the 38th anniversary of the Tibetan People's National Uprising, it is evident that the human community has reached a critical juncture in its history. The world is becoming smaller and increasingly interdependent. One nation's problem can no longer be solved by itself. Without a sense of universal responsibility our very future is in danger.

Today's problems of militarisation, development, ecology, population, and the constant search for new sources of energy and raw materials require more than piece-meal actions and short-term problem-solving. Modern scientific development has, to an extent, helped in solving mankind's problems. However, in tackling these global issues there is the need to cultivate not only the rational mind but also the other remarkable faculties of the human spirit: the power of love, compassion and solidarity.

A new way of thinking has become the necessary condition for responsible living and acting. If we maintain obsolete values and beliefs, a fragmented consciousness and self-centered spirit, we will continue to hold on to outdated goals and behaviours. Such an attitude by a large number of people would block the entire transition to an interdependent yet peaceful and co-operative global society.

We must draw lessons from the experience we gained. If we look back at the development in the 20th century, the most devastating cause of human suffering, of deprivation of human dignity, freedom and peace, has been the culture of violence in resolving differences and conflicts. In some ways, our century could be called the century of war and bloodshed. The challenge before us, therefore, is to make the next century a century of dialogue and non-violent conflict resolution.

In human societies there will always be differences of views and interests. But the reality today is that we are all interdependent and have to co-exist on this small planet. Therefore, the only sensible and intelligent way of resolving differences and clashes of interests, whether between individuals or nations, is through dialogue. The promotion of a culture of dialogue and non-violence for the future of mankind is thus an important task of the international community. It is not enough for Governments to endorse the principle of non-

violence or hold it high without any appropriate action to promote it.

With these convictions I have led the Tibetan freedom struggle on a path of non-violence and have sought a mutually agreeable solution to the Tibetan issue through negotiations in a spirit of reconciliation and compromise. Inspired by the Buddha's message of non-violence and compassion, we have sought to respect every form of life and abandoned war as an instrument of national policy. For us Tibetans the path of non-violence is a matter of principle. And I am convinced that this approach is the most beneficial and practical course in the long run.

As we commemorate this anniversary, we look back at yet another year of escalating repression in Tibet where the Chinese authorities continue to commit widespread and grave human rights abuses.

Under the "Strike Hard" campaign launched by the Chinese authorities in April last year, Tibetans are subjected to increased torture and imprisonment for peacefully expressing their political aspirations. Political re-education conducted by the authorities in monasteries and nunneries throughout Tibet have resulted in mass expulsion, imprisonment and death. I continue to be concerned about the fate of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the boy I have recognised as the 11th Panchen Lama, and whose whereabouts are still not known.

Last year China dropped all pretence of respecting the ancient religious and cultural heritage of Tibet by launching a large-scale reform of its religious policy. The new policy states that "Buddhism must conform to socialism and not socialism to Buddhism". Under the pretext that religion would have a negative influence on Tibet's economic development, the new policy aims to systematically undermine and destroy the distinct cultural and national identity of the Tibetan people.

New measures to curtail the use of the Tibetan language in schools were introduced. The Tibet University in Lhasa has been compelled to teach even Tibetan history in the Chinese language at the Tibetan Language Department. Experimental Tibetan language middle schools, established in the 1980's with the active encouragement and support of the late Panchen Lama, are being closed down.

These schools were very successful and were highly appreciated by Tibetans.

These new measures in the field of culture, religion and education, coupled with the unabated influx of Chinese immigrants to Tibet, which has the effect of overwhelming Tibet's distinct cultural and religious identity and reducing the Tibetans to an insignificant minority in their own country, amounts to a policy of cultural genocide. Today, in most major towns and cities Tibetans are already marginalised. If this population transfer is allowed to continue, in a few decades the Tibetan civilisation will cease to exist.

Tibetans have reacted to all this repression largely peacefully and I believe all people have the right to peacefully protest injustice. However, recent reports of isolated incidents of bomb explosion in Tibet are a cause of deep concern to me. I will continue to counsel for non-violence, but unless the Chinese authorities forsake the brutal methods they employ, it will be difficult to prevent the situation in Tibet from deteriorating further.

Being a Tibetan, I have been giving particular importance to reaching out to the Chinese people, whether they are in China or elsewhere. It is in the interest of both the Tibetan people and the Chinese that there be a deeper level of understanding between ourselves. It has always been my belief that the cultivation of human relationship is of great importance in the creation of an atmosphere conducive to human understanding, mutual respect and peace.

In recent times the people-to-people dialogue between the Tibetans and Chinese is fostering a better understanding of our mutual concerns and interests. The growing empathy, support and solidarity from our Chinese brothers and sisters in China as well as overseas for the plight and fundamental rights of the Tibetan people is of particular inspiration and encouragement for us Tibetans.

The recent passing away of Mr Deng Xiaoping is a great loss to China. I have known him personally. Mr Deng Xiaoping took the initiative to establish direct contact with us to start a dialogue to solve the Tibetan problem. Unfortunately, serious negotiations could not take place during his lifetime. It is my sincere hope that the succeeding Chinese leadership will find the courage, wisdom and vision for new openings to solve the Tibetan issue through negotiations.

The beginning of a new era in modern China presents an opportunity for constructive change and positive development. The recent military clampdown in East Turkestan (Xinjiang), aimed at quelling the Uighur people's demonstrations and the ensuing cycle of violence are tragic and unfortunate. As in the case of Tibet, similarly also in East Turkestan, a lasting and peaceful solution can be found only through dialogue. Another important task ahead for the Chinese Government is the smooth transition of Hong Kong and the implementation of the pragmatic and wise concept of "one country, two systems" in spirit and letter. A constructive approach to these issues provides important opportunities to create a political climate of trust, confidence and openness, both domestically and internationally.

The growing international support for Tibet reflects the inherent human empathy for and solidarity with human suffering and universal appreciation for truth and justice. To portray the support for Tibet as a plot of Western anti-China forces is to evade the truth for political convenience. This is unfortunate because such kind of mental bamboo-walling will continue to prevent a constructive approach to solving the problem.

Ultimately, it is for the Tibetan and the Chinese peoples to find a mutually acceptable solution to the Tibetan issue. Bearing in mind this reality, we have consistently pursued a course of dialogue with the leadership in Beijing. However, Beijing's refusal to listen to and recognise the genuine grievances of our people left us with no other choice but to present our legitimate and just cause to the international community.

The Tibetan people have displayed a remarkable spirit of endurance, courage and patience in the face of the most brutal repression. I urge my fellow Tibetans to continue to resist violent acts of frustration and desperation as a means to protest against injustice and repression. If we give in to hatred, desperation and violence, we would debase ourselves to the level of the oppressors. The way of the oppressors is intimidation, coercion and the use of force. Ours is a belief in and reliance on truth, justice and reason. This distinction is our most effective weapon. The call of the time for us in this period of difficulty is to exert ourselves with greater determination, wisdom and patience.

With my homage to and prayers for the brave men and women who have died for the cause of Tibetan freedom.

Ref.: *World Tibet News*,
The Canada-Tibet Committee,
 Statement of His Holiness The Dalai Lama,
 10 March 1997.

SUDAN: ANOTHER CHURCH DESTROYED BY THE POLICE IN KHARTOUM

Comboni Press, Roma.

On 31st March, Monday after Easter, at 12.00 noon, the police with a bulldozer, demolished the Catholic Centre at El-Tereia destroying the church, the school and all the furniture in them. A courageous woman defied the police, entered the church and removed from the tabernacle the Consecrated Hosts. The Christian community taken by surprise, protested against the unexpected action of the police. No previous information of the impending action had been given by Government authorities; no document or permit for demolition was presented by the police at the request of the Christians. El-Tereia is a shanty town at the southern outskirts of Khartoum, and part of the St Joseph's Parish, entrusted to the Salesian Fathers. The Centre (a compound of 41 x 15 metres), built in bricks and cement, consisted of a large hall (used also on Sunday for Holy Mass), a school for 350 students, and the office of the headmaster.

In the afternoon of 1st April, the Christians of the area assembled for prayer at the spot of the destroyed church. The Archbishop of Khartoum, H.G. Gabriel Zubeir Wako, was unable to attend since he was in the hospital recovering from an operation. But the Apostolic Nuncio of Khartoum, H.G. Joseph E. Ender, was there and described what had happened as "an act of vandalism". The celebration was very long and quite emotional. The words most used in prayer were "Justice", "no more sufferings" "no more discrimination", "freedom". The following day, 2nd April, the police and a demolition team with a bulldozer under the orders of a captain and a security officer moved to destroy the church at Kalakla Gubba, not far from El-Tereia Centre. They wrote on

the wall of the church "La Illah illa Allah — Allah Akbar", and the word "total Destruction". But they had no chance of proceeding with the work. The Christians were not taken by surprise. They came in big numbers, climbed on the walls and roof. One placed himself on the big, plate of the bulldozer. The lawyer of the Catholic Church too was there. The situation became quite tense. After much discussion, threats, punches and a couple of bricks thrown at the Police, the demolition team left the place.

The team moved to the Centre of Wad Amara for the same purpose. They found there too a lot of Christians ready to defend their church and school. Mr Abbas, the leader of the Town Planning Organisation had to escape because someone stripped off his *jallabya* and left him in his undergarment only. The Christians stayed all day and night to keep vigil.

Contacts were made with the Government authorities but none was ready to take the responsibility of having given the order. The Nuncio and the French Ambassador went to visit the broken church and the Christians in El-Tereia. The Sudan Council of Churches was informed, and news of the facts was sent to the representatives of the UNO in Khartoum. Church Leaders went twice to see the second vice-president Mr George Congor, who by name is a Christian, but he refused to receive them. Meanwhile the young people of the parish are keeping watch at the centres.

Ref.: *African Faith and Justice Network*,
4th April 1997.

COMING EVENTS

WORKING GROUPS

Thursday, 15 May Food, Land and Hunger 15.30 hrs. at SEDOS

Thursday, 5 June Pacific 16.00 hrs. at SEDOS

SEDOS ARICCIA SEMINAR 1997 (20 - 24 May, 1997)

(The Residential Seminar is *ONLY* for Member Congregations)

A SPIRITUALITY FOR MISSION INTO THE NEXT CENTURY

Ian Linden, Director CIIR, (London)

- 1) **Global Justice: Essential Element in the Mission of the Church Today**
- 2) **A Spirituality for a Post-Modern Society — The Missionary Challenge of ‘Politics in a Secular World’**

Marie-Angèle Kitewo, SND (Zaire)

- 3) **La Spiritualité de l’Église en Afrique et le ministère de guérison**
- 4) **Une Spiritualité Africaine — Défi à la Créativité d’une Église**

Fr Samuel Rayan, SJ (India)

- 5) **A Spirituality of Mission in an Asian Context**
- 6) **Local Cultures — Instruments of Incarnated Christian Spirituality**