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MELANESIAN JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY

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Journal of the Melanesian Association of Theological Schools



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Editorial

Our thanks go to Fr Theo Aerts for his work on last year's special double issue on Roman Catholic-Anglican relations, and to Bishop Paul Richardson for providing the editorial.

In this present issue, we include some preparatory material for the Study Institute on Curriculum Development, to be held by MATS at the beginning of July, 1992. Increasing opportunities for ecumenical cooperation, and the common issues we face, make it advisable for us to share insights, and correlate our curricula. The first three articles were in response to a circular letter, requesting information on work in progress on curriculum development. Then follows a SPATS statement, produced by a conference on a similar topic to that now to be examined by MATS. Then follows a short article, which was drawn to the editor's notice, which deals with the contextualisation of the curriculum, in a way, which may be useful for the Study Institute.

The second section of the Journal includes two articles on Melanesian theology. Firstly, Symeon Yovang writes with a deep sympathy for the culture of his own people, combined with Christian reflection. Then Br Silas SSF takes a sympathetic look at the attitude of a people, among whom he is living. His purpose is not to pass judgment upon the two denominations, which he mentions, but to show the logic behind the method of biblical interpretation used by a local person to solve a dilemma, in which he found himself. Both denominations are treated with respect in the article.

Finally, the writer of the article on "Biblical jokes" has asked that it be submitted under a pseudonym.

Curriculum Design at Newton College

Michael Horsburgh

Introduction

When, in 1991 I offered part of my long service leave to the Australian Board of Missions, it was decided that I should go to Newton College in Popondetta, primarily to conduct some discussions about curriculum. Although I am not a theological educator, I am an educator for a specific profession – social work. In that capacity, I expected to act as a consultant to the staff of the college.

Although I was well received by the college, the fact was that they had not originated the request for my presence, nor had they planned any curriculum review of their own. My first duty, in this paper, is, therefore, not so much to thank Newton College for its having received me so graciously, but to praise it for having entered so heartily into this project, and having made it its own.

My period in Papua New Guinea stretched from 7 January to 7 April, 1991, excepting a period of three weeks in February, when I was an Anglican delegate to the 7th Assembly of the World Council of Churches. During the period before the WCC Assembly, I had an extensive visit to most of Papua New Guinea, visiting all five of the church's dioceses, and speaking with all its bishops.

In the course of this tour, I had the opportunity to observe much of the life of both the nation and the church. The social problems of Papua New Guinea are notorious, both inside and outside the country. Some of them, particularly those relating to the breakdown of law and order, the abuse of alcohol, the growth of squatter settlements, and the presence of groups in obvious poverty, are examples of what might be expected in growing urban areas. The level of violence appears to be very high, a fact which makes even these familiar urban problems take on increased importance. More disturbing, however, is the observation that the urban problems are invading the rural areas.

This observation supports the view that, despite the appearance of many villages as places of traditional culture, the process of social change is being experienced everywhere. The villages will inevitably become increasingly like the town. For this reason, the clergy of the future will need to be trained in dealing with urban issues, even while they continue to live in places, which may look as they have

always looked, and where subsistence agriculture is still the main support of the people. But there will also be a continuing urban drift. The towns will continue to grow, and more ministry will need to occur in them.

The church is thus being pulled in two directions. There is a need for ongoing indigenisation of the faith, but, at the same time, the culture, into which the faith is to be incorporated, is changing. Secularisation will be part of that change.

I also observed some degree of tension between the expectations of some the older clergy, and what they saw to be the products of Newton College. This tension usually took the form of complaining that the newer clergy lacked discipline. On the surface, this meant that they did not say the Office, or celebrate the Eucharist, in the manner, or with the regularity, of their elders. It also included the suggestion that they did not do as they were told. It is apparent that change, not only in the society, but in the individuals, is obvious, and troubling, to many people. It emphasises the point that the adaptation of the church to a changing environment is not simply a matter of ensuring an appropriate education for aspiring priests. The church itself must incorporate the consequences of that education. This will not always be easy.

One of the major problems in conducting a consultation of any kind is to ensure that, when it is over, those involved will own the results, and begin to implement them. Ensuring this result, involves the interplay of a number of complex variables. The process used must tap, both the interests that the participants are willing to raise, as well as allow for those that they are not willing to raise. Formal and overt questions compete for attention within formal and covert questions.

Before setting out the process of the consultation, it is appropriate to describe the college teaching pattern, as I observed it. The college course consisted of four years, the first two, and the last of which, were undertaken in the college itself. Each student spent the third year attached to a parish, and working under the supervision of the parish priest. This practice, I understand, had its origin in a past time, when there were insufficient resources for the number of students, and represented a reduction in the college component from four to three years of study. It also represents part of the tension frequently found professional studies.

The college has a minimum entry level of grade 10 in the PNG schooling system. This means that students may not have completed secondary studies. Given that much theological education teaching material is based on the assumption of university-level entry, this creates potential problems.

The college daily timetable for each of the three years consisted of five periods of 50 minutes each. This, with some free periods, amounted to 70 periods each week. Each student thus had 23 class periods, and an equal division among the staff created a load of about 12 hours each. Such loads are well in excess of what tertiary-level students might expect. Given that all the classes were new teaching periods, the staff teaching-levels were also in excess of what might be expected. In fact, the timetable resembled that of a school, rather than that of a theological college. These facts are relevant, not only to work loads, but to the manner of teaching. There appeared to be an over-reliance on lectures, a reliance assisted by the lack of resources for any alternative teaching methods.

The large number of hours available for teaching also tended to take away the necessity to think clearly about what was to be taught. Critical corporate decisions did not need to be taken, if, in principle, there was room to teach many things.

The Consultancy Process

Implementing my consultancy process, therefore, I began by conducting an exercise to identify the objectives of the course. To do this, I used a taxonomy of objectives for professional education, developed by Richard Carter.¹ The basic outline of the taxonomy is in Figure 1.

This taxonomy has a number of advantages. First, it draws distinctions between personal characteristics, skills, and knowledge. These distinctions are important, because professional practice requires all three. Education, however, tends to concentrate on knowledge, and, principally, on factual knowledge. There are continual tensions between the demands to produce people of a particular kind – those capable of doing particular things, and those who know particular things. Much of the criticism, levelled at the products of professional education courses, seems, to me, to arise from different perceptions of the priority of these factors in the makeup of the professional person. They appeared in many of the comments made to me by parish clergy in PNG. Most often, those comments implied a priority for personal characteristics over either skill or knowledge. These tensions cannot be removed by fiat, or by trying harder, since they are integral to professional practice, itself. Such practice brings together the whole person, in the service of specific tasks, or the solution of specific problems. Nevertheless, the explicit recognition of these different

1. Richard Carter, "A taxonomy of objectives for professional education", *Studies in Higher Education*, 10:2, 1985, pp. 117-134.

kinds of objectives in this taxonomy can help to identify what education can, or cannot, do, or what it should, or should not, do.

Although this taxonomy was produced, originally, for engineering courses, it was of particular usefulness in this exercise, because, possibly unexpectedly, it includes “spiritual qualities”. The author says this about this category:

The final category, that of spiritual qualities, is perhaps less obvious, except in the particular case of ministers of religion. But the category includes qualities, other than those of a religious character. It is concerned with the capacity for awe and wonder, with the ability to appreciate, value, and respond to both the world of nature and the highest levels of human achievement. Some would wish to add, that, most important of all, is the ability to respond to the One, who is the Author of all these things. The importance of spiritual qualities may not lie so much in their utility as in their importance in the development of a balanced and mature person. They may be considered crucial in the development of wisdom. These qualities . . . are not given great weight in education, especially at the tertiary level.²

I gave the taxonomy, as a blank sheet, to all the member of staff, and requested they fill it out individually. I took the results, and collated them into the summary contained in Figure 2. There is, possibly, little to cause surprise in these results. In particular, the “General” group, under “Factual knowledge”, reflects the fact that the students have not completed secondary education, and have many gaps in their general preparation for study. These gaps make it difficult to teach the rest of the curriculum. Also of importance, is “Basic orientation”, under “Mental skills”. For many local groups in PNG, the concept of time is different from the European concept, implicit in the teaching. Thus, it is difficult to teach church history, or biblical subjects. Many groups had no number capacity beyond ten, and a basic understanding of geography is often lacking.

What these results do show, however, is the utility of separating questions of knowledge from questions of skill and personal qualities. Some of the skills, considered necessary, find no obvious place in the list of subjects to be studied. Others of them have definite implications for the way in which the course is taught. In a course, delivered almost entirely by lectures, there is, for example, little opportunity to teach leadership, or to allow for its practice. Matters of administration, and practical skills, also found no place. Similarly, the delineation of personal

2. Carter , p. 145.

qualities forced a consideration of the extent to which the curriculum, as it stood, encouraged imagination, inventiveness, or creativity.

Pervading the whole discussion, but, specifically in these objectives, in only two places, was the issue of contextuality. It appears in “Spiritual qualities” as “Appropriate PNG spirituality”, and in “Factual knowledge” as “Contextual ministry”. Indirectly, it is present in the “Action skills” of “Use and care of machinery”, “Gardening”, “Problem solving”, “Music”, and “First aid”. This is because much ministry will occur in villages, where subsistence agriculture must feed the priest’s family, where solar cells and generators provide power, and where expert help is often not available.

In a counter-fashion, the issue of contextualisation is also present in the “Mental characteristics” of “Imagination”, “Inventiveness”, and “Independence”. In a society, still very traditional in many of its ways, these are among the characteristics, for which little space is found. Traditional societies do not have the future orientation, implied by such characteristics. Their reference is to a past, which dictates how things are to be done. That is not to say that innovative qualities are not called for, in such societies. It is to say that, for them, the value is in the apparent following of the old, not the discovery of the new.

In the other entries, of course, much of the context was assumed. What should not be assumed, however, was that the assumption of context was actually carried into practical effect. Here, as is so often the case in professional education, the teachers tended to reproduce what they themselves had experienced.

Curriculum Shape

This discussion revealed several problems:

1. The need to deal with the pastoral year;
2. The need to introduce additional material of a general educational kind; and
3. The need to reduce the teaching hours.

The pastoral year represented a particular problem. There can be no doubt that practical experience is an essential part of any professional education program. Theological students must not only know about their trade, they must have an

opportunity to learn how to do it. It is not necessary for all practical training to take place entirely outside the college program. Some can take place in the classroom. Role-playing is often more useful than actual experience, because it allows observation and response. Adequate role-playing exercises are made more possible if the sessions can be video-recorded. In this way, the student can see his own performance. If use is made of the local community, small experiences can be incorporated into the curriculum, on a regular basis. An active relationship can be developed with hospitals, prisons, and other community establishments.

Nevertheless, there is a need for direct experience, on an extended basis. But it is also clear that 12 months is too long a period. Experience, it may be argued, never goes astray. But an educational course is not just about gaining experience. It is about taking experience, and making it a conscious part of professional development. This could be done during a year-long, practical period, if there were regular (not less than every two weeks) sessions with field educators, and if the program for the student was set out in some detail. The reality is, however, that the college staff are unable to visit these students at all. Thus, the college has no knowledge whatsoever about what their students are doing, or how they are using their experiences. In this context, writing is not a substitute for direct contact. Neither can it be said that there is any actual program for the students to accomplish during the period, nor any way of ensuring its occurring, if it did exist.

It may be that the year-long, practical period has other functions. Bishops may feel that they get to know their ordinands better. Parishes may receive much-needed assistance. Whatever these arguments may amount to, they are not relevant, educationally. If they represent real needs, they should be addressed directly and not used to bolster what is, essentially, a waste of student educational time.

Shorter periods of field experience help to overcome these difficulties. They allow for a greater specification of what is supposed to be accomplished.

Given that the staff are unlikely to be able to visit the students in the field, the shorter period allows reflection to occur, when the student returns to the college. What will remain lacking, for as long as the staff cannot visit the parishes, is the opportunity to involve the supervising clergy in any discussion. My experience with a similar program in my own Department at Sydney University, shows that the opportunity to involve supervisor, student, and educational staff in a three-way discussion has direct educational benefits, as well as other results. There is also the opportunity to support the parish clergy, and to expose them to new ideas about ministry. The fear that students actually come with more-up-to-date knowledge frequently lies behind adverse reports on their performance.

The fact that grade 10 of the PNG secondary education system is the entry point for the college, means that students arrive less than prepared for their studies. Most of the theological material available to the college assumes, at least, readiness for tertiary-level studies. That assumption, obviously, includes adequate levels of English, but much more is involved. There must be a valuing of knowledge and study itself, as well as adequate general knowledge, and conceptual development. Since most of the material is Western, in its origin, it also requires a general cultural familiarity with West, not only in areas like history, but in basic science, geography, and social thought. Without this, much of the teaching effort is wasted. In these circumstances, the college must make some effort to redress the balance, presumably by some direct introductory input of its own.

Such a decision raises the questions of teaching resources, and the choice of subjects to be studied. The college staff may not have the resources to teach general education subjects, in the way most useful to adult students. There may be a need to use persons from the local community in some areas.

The choice of subject matter also runs the risk of simply creating more pressure to teach. For this reason, there needs to be a strict test of direct relevance, placed on the choice. Obviously, English language is a high priority. This is because it is the language of instruction, and the language, in which any literature, which might be used by graduates in the foreseeable future, will be available.

Study skills also rank highly. This is because one of the purposes of the final two years of secondary education is to develop such skills. Since, however, the students at Newton College have all had other occupations, prior to entering the college, it will have been some years since they last did any study. They will all find the transition to student life difficult.

There is also a need for some form of social studies. Of all the competing substantive subject areas, this is probably the most important. As the society of Papua New Guinea changes over the coming years, clergy will need, both to understand what is happening, and to assess the effects of change, for their own work. The social studies must, therefore, cover both the world at large, and Melanesian society: the world, because it will come ever closer to even the most remote locations, Melanesian society, because it is the world of the PNG church.

Conclusion

When I left Popondetta, just after Easter 1991, I took with me a memory of a community facing some of the greatest challenges that theological education has ever faced. That Newton College appears to be a small institution, in a small nation, should not be allowed to disguise the fact that it faces issues comparable to those faced by theological schools in the Reformation, or by the Tractarians in 19th-century Oxford. In both those cases, the society in which the theological education was placed was changing rapidly. Previous social certainties were being threatened. New theological directions had to be formed. It is the same for Newton College today.

And the stakes are just as high. The fundamental question is whether the church of tomorrow will be equipped to deal with the problems of tomorrow. Education is one of the keys to ensuring that it is. It is not the only thing needed, but it is a necessary part of the process.

Figure 1. Summary of a taxonomy of objectives for professional education

Personal Qualities	Mental Characteristics	Attitudes and values	Personality Characteristics	Spiritual Qualities	Being
Skill	Mental Skills	Information Skills	Action Skills	Social Skills	Doing
Knowledge	Factual Knowledge		Experiential Knowledge		Knowing
	Cognitive		Affective		

Figure 2. Objectives for Professional Education at Newton College

Personal Qualities	Mental Characteristics	Attitudes and values	Personality Characteristics	Spiritual Qualities	Being
	Imagination Inventiveness Independence Objectivity	Acceptance of difference Personal responsibility Concern for social justice	Resilience Courage Integrity Industry	Christ-central spirituality Discipline PNG spirituality Search for God Fruit of the Spirit	
Skill	Mental Skills	Information Skills	Action Skills	Social Skills	Doing
	Reasoning Attention Critical thinking Basic orientation to time/space/number	Value information Find it appropriately Record Apply in new situations	Liturgical behaviour Use and care of Machinery Gardening Problem-solving Music First aid	Leadership Relate to different people Ability to delegate Tact Articulation	
Knowledge	Factual Knowledge		Experiential Knowledge		Knowing
	GENERAL English History Science Geography Current affairs, etc.	THEOLOGICAL Contextual ministry Pastoral studies Bible Church history, etc.	Tap prior knowledge Personal prayer discipline "Priestly" behaviour Social experience Reflect on above		
	Cognitive		Affective		

Divelopmen na Wok Bilong Sios

(Dispela pepa i bin kamap olsem wanpela pepa bilong kirapim toktok bilong ol manmeri i stap insait long wanpela bung bilong ol 4-pela pasto-semineri bilong tupela Luteran Sios (ELC-PNG na GLC-PNG) long Jun 24-29, 1991, long Lae.)

Tok i go pas

Long dispela het tok planti manmeri moa yet i bin kamapim tingting bilong ol na tu planti semina i kamap. Mipela i no inap long i go insait long olgeta dispela tok long wanem mipela i laik soim sampela as tingting bilong wok developmen tasol.

Mipela bai i bihainim rot olsem.

Pastaim mipela tingim, wanem samting ol manmeri i save kolim developmen. Nogut yumi no klia long dispela nem na yumi tok long narapela narapela samting.

Bihain mipela i soim sampela as bilong wanem ol sios i save i go insait long wok developmen. Mipela bai lukluk long sampela tok bilong baibel na long sampela as bilip bilong ol sios.

Wanem stia ol dispela tok i givim long wok developmen bilong sios, dispela mipela tingim aninit long poin 3.

Olsem las wok mipela i laik givim sampela stia tok long wok developmen bilong ol sios.

1. Divelopmen – em i wanem samting

“Namba wan as bilong wok developmen em developmen bilong ol pipel yet. Taim yumi toktok long developmen bilong ol pipel, yumi tingting long gohet bilong olgeta pipel long ol gutpela we i helpim ol tru. Gohet bilong olgeta wanwan man, meri, na pikinini. Dispela gohet i mas helpim olgeta manmeri i kamap manmeri tru.”¹

1. L. Mond, “Divelopmen – em i wanem samting?”, in *Umben* 6/2, 1990, p. 1.

Dispela tingting bilong Ludger Mond mipela i bihainim long dispela pepa.

Sapos yumi askim ol manmeri, ol i gat wanem tingting long dispela het tok bai yumi harim tok olsem: Developmen, em I developmen bilong ekonomi bilong kantri. Narapela i tok em i kainkain projek olsem wokim bris o wara saplai.

Tasol ol dispela kain tok i kisim wanpela hap bilong wok developmen tasol. Long wanem ol dispela kain tok i sut long wanpela hap bilong laip bilong ol manmeri tasol. Na dispela em i wanpela rong bilong planti wok developmen bilong bipo. Em i no ting long strongim laip bilong manmeri olgeta, em i ting, sapos yumi helpim ol manmeri long kisim mani samting o wok bisnis, em inap long mekim ol i sindaun gut. Tasol sapos yumi lukluk long ol ples insait long PNG i gat planti hevi yumi lukim dispela ol ples i gat planti kofi o narapela bisnis samting. Na hevi long ol ples bilong wok gol – o bras – i moa yet. Dispela i soim yumi no ken tingting long kirapim ekonomi tasol long taim yumi tok long developmen.²

Narapela as bilong dispela tok i stap long pasin bilong Melanesia. Ol manmeri bilong dispela hap bilong graun i no save brukim laip long sindaun bilong bodi na long amamas bilong spirit o bilip samting. Dispela em i wanpela samting tasol.³ Olsem na sapos wok developmen i sut long sait bilong bodi tasol, dispela i no inap helpim ol Melanesia tumas.

G. Gutierrez⁴ i kamapim wanpela narapela tok inap long strongim dispela tingting. Em i tok mobeta yumi lusim dispela nem developmen, long wanem planti paul tingting i pas pinis wantaim dispela nem. Mobeta yumi usim “liberation” (mekim ol manmeri i kamap fri tru) tasol long soim ples klia mak bilong dispela wok. Em i mas helpim ol manmeri long i stap fri long olgeta samting i daunim na bagarapim laip bilong ol. Sapos yumi kisim dispela nem “liberation”, yumi no inap tingim sait bilong bodi tasol, em i karapim laip olgeta.

2. John D. May i tok long tingting bilong planti manmeri olsem. Ol i tok yumi mas “developem” ol “underdeveloped” kantri na ol i mas kamap long mak bilong ol kantri i gat planti save na mani. May, i tok dispela em i wanpela kranksi tingting olgeta, long wanem yumi lukim hevi bilong ol “developed” kantri pinis. Olsem na developmen i mas sut stret long pasin bilong wanwan kantri. Yumi no ken tok long olgeta kantri i mas kamap long mak bilong sampela narapela kantri. (Cf. “Towards the Development of Ethics”, in *Catalyst* 17/3, 1987, p. 235.)

3. Cf. K. Kautil, “A Political Theology: Melanesian Milieu”, in *Melanesian Journal of Theology* 5/1, 1989, pp. 20ff; na A. Aime, “Religion as a Way of Life”, in *Catalyst* 20/4, 1990, pp. 313ff.

4. Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1988, 2, pp. 15ff.

Insait long dispela pepa mipela bai i usim yet nem “dvelopmen”, nogut kainkain nem i paulim ol manmeri. Tasol tingting bilong Gutierrez bai i pas wantaim long taim mipela i usim nem “dvelopmen” long dispela pepa.

Olsem na mipela i tok, dvelopmen is mas sut long laip bilong ol manmeri olgeta. Long wanem ol mak dispela tok i sut long en, wampela bung bilong Marga Institute long Sri Lanka long 1986 i bin kamapim ples kliia. Ol i bin tok:

“ . . . any adequate definition of development must include five dimensions:

- an economic component, dealing with the creation of wealth, and improved conditions of material life;
- a social ingredient, measured as well-being in health, education, housing, and employment;
- a political dimension, pointing to such values as human rights, political freedom, enfranchisement, and some form of democracy;
- a cultural dimension, in recognition of the fact that cultures confer identity and self-worth to people; and
- a fifth dimension, called the full-life paradigm, which encompasses symbols and beliefs as to the ultimate meaning of life, and of history.

Integral human development is all of these things.”⁵

2. Bilong wanem sios i gat wok long dvelopmen?

2.1. Tok bilong Baibel

2.1.1. Olpela Testamen

Wanem tingting long sindaun bilong ol manmeri OT i gat, yumi painim pinis long Stat 2 long stori bilong ol dispela lain i kamapim planti tok insait long OT, yumi kolim Jahwist. Long dispela hap yumi harim tok olsem:

- God i wokim man na meri.

5. Citation from D. Goulet, “Ethics in Development”, in *Catalyst* 17/4, 1987, pp. 316f.

- God i tingim ol long olgeta sait bilong laip bilong ol olsem gaden, kaikai, wok, klos, poroman wantaim narapela manmeri na God, toktok na kain samting.

Long OT olgeta yumi no painim pasin bilong brukim manmeri. Laip bilong ol i wanpela tasol na bilip i sut long dispela laip olgeta.⁶

Nem developmen yumi no painim long OT. Tasol long stori bilong wanpela narapela lain i kamapim OT, yumi kolim pris, long Stat 1 yumi harim olsem God i wokim dispela graun na em i wokim gutpela tru. Bihain em i givim dispela ol samting long han bilong ol manmeri na ol i mas lukautim gut.

Long histori bilong ol Juda na ol Kristen wanpela rong i kamap long dispela. Ol i ritim Stat 1:28 na ol i ting, ol i ken bosim olgeta samting long laik bilong ol yet. Tasol nau yumi lukim, planti hevi i kamap pinis, long wanem, yumi no lukautim dispela graun gut, yumi bagarapim tasol.

Tasol dispela wok bilong lukautim na usim olgeta samting bilong dispela graun i stap. Sapos yumi tingim dispela wok stret, em bai i sut long wok developmen tu.⁷

Wanem rot ol manmeri i mas bihainim long taim ol i stretim sindaun bilong ol long dispela graun?

Long OT olgeta yumi painim tok long wok bilong kamapim gutpela sindaun tru long laip olgeta bilong ol manmeri. Nogut wanpela i daunim narapela long laik bilong em yet o givim hevi nating long em. I gat wok long givim bel olgeta long God na long ol narapela manmeri (Lo 6:4-5; WKP 19:18; Mai 6:8).

Long Aisaia 9 na 11, yumi harim tingting bilong God long gutpela sindaun bilong ol manmeri: husat i stap long tudak, em i lukim wanpela bikpela lait (9:2), ol manmeri i gat bikpela amamas (9:3), ol i kamap fri long ol narapela lain i bin daunim ol (ibid.), olgeta pait i pinis (9:5). God i salim wanpela man i kamapim gutpela sindaun na pasin bilong bel isi (9:6). Em bai i bihainim ol stretpela pasin tasol na kamapim dispela kain pasin tasol (11:5).

Olsem na wok lidasip bilong Israel tu i mas sut long ol dispela mak:

6. Cf. C. Westermann, "Theologie des AT", in *Grundzugen*, Gottingen, 1978, p. 81.

7. Cf. R. Tietze, "Ministry for Development", in B. Schwarz (ed.), *An Introduction to Ministry in Melanesia*, Goroka, 1985, pp. 262f.

- Ol lida i mas i stap brata tru bilong narapela (Lo 17),
- Ol i mas mekim ol manmeri i stap aninit long bosman nogut i kamap fri (Sng 72) long dispela hevi,
- Ol i stap wokboi nating na karim hevi bilong narapela (Ais 40-55).⁸

Olsem na yumi lukim OT i wari tru long laip na gutpela sindaun bilong ol manmeri. Long taim God i lukim hevi i stap long laip na bilip bilong sampela mameri, wantu em i salim helpim o stiatok i go long ol.

Dispela kain pasin yumi tingim long taim, yumi tok long wok developmen long OT. Tru, dispela nem developmen i no i stap, tasol long sait bilong pasin yumi lukim God i laikim tru, ol manmeri i ken sindaun gut na amamas long laip olgeta bilong ol. Olgeta samting i daunim na bagarapim laip bilong ol em i laik pinisim.

2.1.2 Nupela Testamen

Long NT tu yumi no painim wanpela tok i sut stret long dispela nem developmen. Tasol sapos yumi tingim ol tok na wok bilong Jisas, yimi save namba wan tok bilong en i sut long kingdom bilong God. Olgeta wok, Jisas i mekim i soim pasin bilong dispela kingdom.

Long taim em i raun mekim wok, em i no save toktok long maus tasol, em i wok na helpim ol manmeri long laip bilong ol olgeta. Em i bin skelim, wanem hevi bilong wanwan man o meri i stap na wanem samting i daunim em stret. Na bihain em i helpim ol long rausim dispela hevi.

Long taim em i lukim ol i sot long kaikai, em i helpim ol long bret na pis (Mk 6:30-44). Long taim ol disaipel i pret na ol i tingim, draipela win bai i kapsaitim liklik bot bilong ol, Jisas i kam na daunim win na pret bilong ol wantaim (Mk 4:35-41). Long taim ol spirit nogut i bagarapim wanpela man, em i rausim ol na dispela man i kamap fri long ol dispela spirit (Mk 5:1-20). Sampela taim Jisas i abrusim lo bilong sabbat, long wanem em i lukim hevi bilong ol sikmameri (Mk 3:1-6). Em i sindaun wantaim ol manmeri i gat nem nogut long ai bilong ol arapela manmeri, long wanem em i laik soim kingdom bilong God long ol tu (Mk 2:13-17). Planti sikmameri em i oraitim (Mk 6:53-56). Em i givim stia long gutpela sindaun bilong ol manmeri long dispela graun (Mk 10:1-12; Mt 5-7). Long taim Jisas i bungim wanpela man i gat planti samting na i laik bihainim em, Jisas i amamas long dispela,

8. Cf. H. W. Wolff, *Anthropologie des AT*, Munchen, 1977, 3, p. 296.

tasol em i lukim tu, dispela ol samting i pasim em long dispela graun. Olsem na em i tokim em long lusim ol dispela na bihanim em. Tasol sori tumas, ol samting bilong graun i winim dispela man (Mk 10:17-27).⁹

Olsem na laip na wok bilong Jisas i soim, em i wari tru long laip olgeta bilong ol manmeri. Em i no save brukim bodi na spirit long tupela hap. Na tu em i tingting planti long sindaun wantaim bilong ol manmeri. Olsem na em i putim ples klia tupela lo i winim na karamapim ol narapela lo: Yumi laikim God na ol arapela manmeri olsem yumi laikim yumi yet. Olsem na yumi mas wari tru long gutpela sindaun bilong ol wankain olsem Jisas i bin mekim. Dispela em i namba wan mak bilong kingdom bilong God.¹⁰

Aposel Pol i strongim dispela tok na lo bilong laikim tru ol narapela i kamap namba wan lo long ol tok bilong en: Rom 13:8-10; 12:9-21; Galesia 2:20; 2 Korin 5:14, 1 Korin 13.¹¹

Gutnius bilong Jon tasol i stap ausait long ol dispela tingting. Em i sut long laikim tru ol bratasusa insait long kongrigesen tasol (Jon 13:34). Olsem na i luk olsem ol lain i kamapim dispela gutnius i no wari tumas long ol ausait manmeri na tu ol i no tingting tumas long stretim sindaun bilong ol.¹²

Long Efesus 1:9-10 yumi painim dispela tok: “. . . God i laik stiaim olgeta samting i go i go, na long dispela taim em i makim pinis, em bai i bungim olgeta samting long Kraisi, ol samting bilong heven na bilong graun tu. Na Kraisi i ken i stap het bilong olgeta samting.”.E. Mantovani i kisim dispela ves na soim klia: God i givim wok long yumi long wari tru long ol samting bilong dispela graun, long wanem God i laik bungim *olgeta* samting aninit long het bilong Jisas.¹³

Olsem na tok bilong NT i skruim tingting bilong OT. Yumi Kristen i no ken larim wok bilong helpim sindaun bilong ol manmeri i go long han bilong gavman tasol, yumi yet i gat wok insait long en tu, sapos yumi laik bihanim tok bilong God. Tasol yumi mas tingim gut. Tok bilong kingdom bilong God i no sut long sait bilong bodi o bilong spirit tasol, em i sut long laip bilong ol manmeri olgeta. Olsem na long taim yumi mekim wanpela wok long kirapim gutpela sindaun bilong ol manmeri, yumi mas tingim olgeta sait bilong laip bilong ol.

9. Cf. long ol dispela tok W. Schrage, *Ethik des NT*, Gottingen, 1982, pp. 131ff.

10. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 82ff.

11. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 82ff.

12. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 176ff.

13. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 296ff.

2.2. Ol tok bilip

Sios bilong Krai i gat tripela wok:¹⁴

- “Kerygma”: Em i mas autim tok na skulim ol manmeri long tok bilong God.
- “Diakonia”: Em i mas helpim ol manmeri long gutpela sindaun bilong ol.
- “Koinonia”: Em i bungim ol Kristen wantaim ol narapela na wantaim God.

Ol dispela tripela wok yumi no inap lusim. Ol i kamap wanpela long wok bilong sios olgeta na long laip bilong ol Kristen. Yumi no ken tok, bilip bilong mi i sut long wok bilong “diakonia” tasol ol long wok bilong autim tok tasol. Olgeta tripela wok i mas i stap wantaim long kirapim tingting na bilip na kisim strong. Sapos yumi tingim laip bilong Krai, dispela i kamap tru long laip bilong en.¹⁵

Ol Luteran sios insait long PNG i save usim wanpela buk long kliaim ol memba bilong ol long bilip bilong ol. Dispela buk ol i kolim “Tok Bilip bilong Yumi/A Statement of Faith”. Sapos yumi lukluk gut long dispela buk, bai yumi painim aut, dispela kain tingting, mipela i tok antap long en, i no kamap strong tumas. Aninit long sapta 13 (The Christian and Society),¹⁶ i gat wanpela sotpela tok tasol, long ol Kristen i gat wok, long givim gutpela stia long ol gavman na ol manmeri na i go insait long dispela kain wok. Tasol dispela tok tu i no go insait tumas.

Ating dispela em i wanpela as na planti Kristen i no klia tumas long wok bilong gavman na developmen na planti paul i save stap.

2.3 Wok developmen bilong ol sios i mas sut long wanem mak?

Sapos yumi tingim ol poin mipela i kamapim aninit long 1 na 2, yumi mas tok olsem:

14. “Should the Church be Politically Involved?”, in *Catalyst* 18/2, p. 139. Long painim sampela tok moa i sut long divelomen na baibel lukluk long S. Rayan, “Development and Biblical Faith, in *Point Series* 2, 1979, p. 91ff.

15. Cf. D. Soelle, *Gott denken*, Stuttgart, 1990, pp. 179ff; and G. Ebeling, *Dogmatik des Christlichen Glaubens* Bd III, Tübingen, 1979, pp. 363f; and W. Joest, *Dogmatik* Bd. 2, Goettingen, 1986, p. 600.

16. Cf. tok i stap antap aninit long 2.1.2.

- Wok developmen bilong ol sios i mas sut long manmeri olgeta (Integral Human Developmen).¹⁷
- Em i mas helpim PNG long kamap independen long olgeta ausait helpim. Long wanem, dispela helpim i pasim rot bilong ol manmeri bilong PNG i painim laip i fit tru long pasin bilong PNG. Na tu ausait helpim i bagarapim “self-respect” bilong ol manmeri.¹⁸
- Em i mas helpim ol manmeri long kamap fri tru long olgeta samting i daunim o kalabusim ol. Long wok insait long sios bilong yumi tu yumi mas lukaut, nogut, yumi sanapim planti banis na lo na ol manmeri i pilim, ol dispela lo i daunim ol moa yet. Yumi mas givim stia long ol, tasol yumi mas soim gut, as bilong dispela lo i stap long soim gutpela ol.¹⁹
- Em i mas kirapim “self-respect” bilong ol manmeri inap long ol i ken save na pilim ol yet i gat strong long bosim olgeta samting bilong laip bilong ol. Ol i ken pilim, ol yet i ken kamapim ol gutpela samting long laip bilong ol na ol i ken amamas long dispela.
- Em i mas helpim ol manmeri long save na pilim as bilong laip bilong ol (meaning and sense of life, identity).²⁰
- Em i mas sut stret long pasin bilong PNG.²¹
- Em i noken bagarapim graun, wara na win bilong dispela graun.²²

17. “A Statement of Faith”, Lae, 1972, pp. 275ff.

18. Cf. J. P. Chao: “Only when the development of whole persons is in focus, can economic and social changes bring about a truly better life” (“Economics”, in B. Schwarz (ed.) *An Introduction to Melanesian Cultures*, Goroka, 1984, p. 187.) Cf. tu R. Tietze, *ibid.*, p. 270; na K. Kalai, “Kirchliche Entwicklungsarbeit”, in H. Wagner, et al, (eds) *Papua New Guinea*, Erlangen, 1989, pp. 361ff; na D. Vincent, “Can We be Both Rich and Christian?”, in *Catalyst* 4/89, pp. 353ff; na L. Mond, *ibid.*; na G. Gris, “Towards the Development of the WholeMan”, in *Point* 1, 1979, pp. 73ff.

19. Cf. F. X. Hezel, “The New Formula for Self-Reliance”, in *Catalyst* 10/2, 1980, pp. 86ff; na “Konstitusen Bilong Independen Kantri Papua Niugini”, Boroko, 1986. Hap tri bilong ol gol bilong kantri na tingting stia.

20. Cf. G. Gutierrez, *ibid.*

21. Cf. N. Mushila, “Unterentwicklung: Verlust der inneren Mitte”, in *Jahrbuch Mission*, Hamburg, 1990, pp. 109ff; na J. D. May, *ibid.*, pp. 237ff.

22. Cf. Konstitusen, *ibid.*

2.4 Wanem kain stia yumi ken givim long strongim wok developmen insait long ol sios bilong yumi?

- a) Sios i gat wok long helpim ol manmeri long laip olgeta. Olsem na wok developmen i mas stap, sapos minin bilong dispela nem “developmen” i sut long ol tok mipela i mekim aninit long 1 na 3. Olsem na olgeta taim sios i laik kirapim wanpela wok, em i mas tingim pastaim:
- Dispela wok i helpim laip olgeta bilong ol manmeri? (Em i helpim Integral Human Developmen?)
 - Em i helpim PNG i kamp independen inap long bosim hap bilong laip bilong ol yet?
 - Em i tingim olgeta kaikai bilong dispela wok long laip bilong ol manmeri (social implications?).
 - Em i fit tru long tingting na pasin bilong PNG?

Sapos yumi mas tok nogat long wanpela bilong ol dispela askim long taim sios i laik kirapim wanpela wok developmen, mobeta yumi lusim na usim ol samting long wanpela narapela wok.

- b) Mipela lukim, insait long sampela sios ol dipatmen i no poroman tumas wantaim. Ol dipatmen i bosim wok developmen, edukesen, helt, na gutnius samting i tingting long ol yet tasol na dispela i pasim rot long ol manmeri i ken lukim olgeta wok bilong sios i poroman wantiam na wanwan dipatmen i kisim wanpela hap wok insait long olgeta wok bilong sios.
- c) Tingting bilong ol lain i wok long developmen i mas sut long ol mak i stap aninit long 3. Planti taim i luk olsem dispela i no kamap.
- d) Yumi mas strongim wok bilong lukautim graun, win na wara bilong PNG na bilong dispela wol olgeta. I gat wanem program long kirapim tingting bilong ol manmeri long dispela? Olgeta wok developmen i mas tingim dispela askim wantaim.²³
- e) Yumi mas strongim “wok profet” bilong sios. Dispela wok i ken kamap long wanwan kongrigesen, tasol em i gutpela tu long strongim wok

23. Cf. J. D. May, *ibid*, p. 238.

bilang PNGCC inap long em i ken kisim maus bilang ol Kristen bilang PNG na long givim strongpela tok long ol gavman long taim ol i lukim i gat rong is stap.

- f) Wok edukesen bilang sios i no ken sut long kisim save long wok mani long ol taun tasol. Em i mas redim ol yangpela tu long mekim wok long ples, long wanem 70% bilang ol sumatin i lusim haiskul i no save painim wanpela wok o narapela skul long skruim save.

Wok edukesen tu i mas sut long ol mak bilang “Integral Human Developmen”.²⁴

Yumi mas strongim wok RI long ol skul. Mipela i lukim planti wokman bilang ol sios i slek long dispela wok, olsem na ol sumatin i no kimsim gut tok bilang God insait long ol skul bilang ol.

Na tu yumi mas strongim ol “social sciences”, long wanem ol manmeri i mas klia moa yet long pasin bilang stretim gutpela sindaun bilang ol.²⁵

24. Cf. “Environment in Melanesia”, *Catalyst* 15/1, 1985. Soosai Arokiasamy i kirapim tingting bilang yumi long wanpela hevi bilang bilip bilang ol Juda na ol Kristen. Ol i save tingim tumas long ol inap long bosim dispela graun. Tingting bilang lukautim em i no stap strong tumas. Arokiasamy i tok tingting bilang ol India i gutpela moa, long wanem ol i save tingim ol manmeri, ol samting bilang graun na graun yet i wanpela tasol. (“Liberation Ethics of Ecology”, in *Jeedvadhara* 18, no. 103/1988, pp. 32ff.)

25. G. L. Chan i tok pinis long 1974: “Western schooling omits agricultural skills, and is teaching our children to be dependent on cash wages from jobs, which do not exist” (“Developing Self-help”, in *Catalyst* 5/1, 1975, p. 41). Dispela em i no wanpela hevi bilang PNG tasol. Udo Bude (“Agriculture in Primary School”, in *Development and Cooperation* 2/1991, pp. 18f) i soim wankain tingting i stap long kantri bilang Africa. Em i kamapim tu wanpela piksa i sut long dispela hevi. Sampela man i gat gutpela tingting long stretpela developmen bilang ol sumatin, tasol sori tumas, ol i tingting long wok mani tasol: Dispela poin i kamapim wanpela hevi long olgeta dispela tok, mipela i mekim long dispela pepa. I luk olsem sampela man na lida tasol bai i amamas long ol tok mipela i mekim antap, tasol planti bai i tok, maski, mipela i laik kisim rot o nupela projek na wanem samting. Na sapos mipela i painim wanpela lain i givim mipela nating, mipela i kisim tasol. Na tu ol i no wari tumas long “Integral human development” o kankain hevi bai i painim ol lain bihain, sapos ol i gat amamas bilang ol nau.

Tasol dispela i soim tasol ol lida i no ken slek long dispela wok bilang kliaim ol manmeri long as bilang trupela wok developmen na wanem samting inap helpim ol tru tru.

Long rot bilang skulim ol manmeri, yumi mas lukaut. Sapos yumi pusim ol tumas, dispela bai i mekim tingting bilang ol strong. Yumi ken wok isi na soim wanpela gutpela piksa long laip bilang yumi long ol, na ol i ken lukim, skelim na painimaut, wanem samting inap helpim ol tru. Long ol dispela tok, cf. tu L. Morauta, “Urban Youth out of Work”, in *Point* 18/1, pp. 73ff; P. Matane, “The Philosophy of Education”, in *Catalyst* 18/2, 1988, pp. 143ff; P. Matane, “Neue Bildungsplanung”, in H. Wagner, et al, *ibid.*, pp. 349ff.

- g) Olgeta developmen projek bilong ol sios i mas i go wantaim pasin bilong strongim bilip, nogut ol manmeri i no klia long as bilong dispela wok.
- h) Yumi mas daunim namba bilong ol projek i wok long ovasis mani tasol inap long lusim olgeta.
- i) Long ol semineri bilong ol wokman bilong sios i mas i gat kos i sut long as bilong gutpela developmen inap long ol i klia long ol mak bilong wok developmen.
- j) Long olgeta developmen projek ol manmeri i mas soim klia, ol i laikim dispela wok Ol i mas putim han wantaim.
- k) Ol lida bilong sios i gat wok long givim gutpela stia long wanem mak wok developmen i sut long en.
- l) Yumi mas putim ples klia, sios i gat wok long givim gutpela stia long ol manmeri long sait bilong spirit na bilong bodi wantaim. Yumi no ken brukim man na tok, sios i gat wok long spirit na gavman long bodi tasol.²⁶
- m) Wanem projek i givim mani tasol long han bilong ol manmeri i no helpim tumas. Planti taim dispela kain mani i bagarapim wok tasol na strongim tingting bilong ol long painim kainkain rot bilong singautim helpim.²⁷
- n) Klostu olgeta dispela kain tingting yumi painim long “Preamble to the Constitution of the independent State of PNG”²⁸ tu. Bilong wanem na yumi no bihanim dispela tok moa?

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Long nid bilong strongim save long wok didiman bilong ol manmeri insait long wok developmen bilong PNG, cf. “Villages: the Forgotten Resource”, in *Catalyst* 12/4, 1982, pp. 317ff; “Evaluating the Impact”, in *Catalyst* 4/4, 1974, pp. 45ff; B. Narokobi, “Nobility of Village Life”, in *ibid.*, pp. 55ff.

26. Cf. J. D. May, *ibid.*, pp. 240.

27. 5-sta progem bilong ol yangpela i fit long dispela kain tingting, cf. W. Strauss, *Wokabaut wantaim ol yangpela*, Madang, 1983, pp. 55ff.

28. Cf. K. Kalai, *ibid.*, pp. 365f; na D. Vincent, *ibid.*, p. 359; na D. Whiteman, “The Case of the Holokama Plantation on South Isabel, Solomon Islands”, in *Catalyst* 12/1, 1982, pp. 15ff.

Proposed Changes to the Diploma of Theology Course at Pacific Adventist College

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Over the last year or two, Pacific Adventist college has, through appropriate committees, and the College Board, been studying its theological training, at both the diploma and degree (B.Th.) levels.

Meetings have been held at the College, near Port Moresby, and in Fiji, and discussions, in Australia, and elsewhere, to ensure that the training offered is adequate for the graduates of these courses, so that they can perform successfully the duties in the ministry that they are called upon to perform.

As a result, a new three-year diploma course in theology is to be introduced in the 1992 school year, which is to replace the present two-year diploma course. It is believed that this new course will better prepare men and women for the work of ministry.

Pacific Adventist College works on the basis that diploma graduates, who have come straight from high school (grade 12), ought to go out into the ministry for at least two years, and have actual experience, before returning to do the degree module. Only those who qualify, with a stipulated level of pass in their diploma work, are accepted into the degree module. The present degree module is a two-year period of study, built on the two-year diploma. Thus, a total of four years is spent to earn the Bachelor of Theology degree (plus the years spent in ministry, referred to, above). A number of students, who have graduated with the current B.Th. degree, have gone on, and have successfully enrolled in M.A. courses overseas.

The College is still studying the question of the new degree module, that is to be built onto the new three-year diploma, that is to be introduced in 1992. Whether this will be a one-year module, has not yet been decided. The Ministerial Training Advisory Committee, that is to look into this question, will most likely do so early in 1992, and make its recommendations to the College Board of Management.

Curriculum Guidelines
Accreditation Committee
Appendix A

South Pacific Association of Theological Schools

Introduction

The purpose of providing curriculum guidelines is to help the schools to review their existing curricula, and, where necessary, make appropriate revisions, so that the school will establish, and maintain, comparable and good standards of theological education for the different recognised levels – certificate, diploma, and degree.

The curricula, developed for the different levels, should be such that candidates can upgrade their level of education, without unnecessary repetition of courses, and avoid excessively long periods of theological studies.

Some guidelines are already indicated in the document on accreditation standards. For the certificate level, the minimum requirement for admission is middle-school graduation, and the minimum length of course is two years. For diploma level, the minimum requirement for admission is high-school graduation, and the length of course is a minimum of three years. For degree level, the minimum requirement is a degree from a college or university, or diploma from an accredited theological school. Degree holders are expected to fulfil leadership roles in theological reflection and religious education.

The proposed guidelines concentrate on the academic and pastoral program. We realise that the overall formation of our students should also include personal and spiritual formation, supported by community relationships and activities. Indeed, these are essential, and not less important, though not outlined here.

General Notes

(a) Language of Instruction

The main language of instruction, at the Certificate level, shall be (one of) the national, or official language, of the country. But the support studies should enable the student to read simple theological books in English or French. At the other levels, the language of instruction shall be English or French.

(b) Orientation Courses

At every level (Certificate, Diploma or Bachelor degree), the program should include some introductory, or orientation, courses at the beginning, so as to equip the students with sufficient study and reading skills, appropriate for the level.

(c) Biblical Languages

At the Diploma and Degree levels, it is desirable that all students are introduced to the biblical languages, both Hebrew and Greek. Appropriate credit should be given to students who satisfactorily complete courses in biblical languages. Colleges may consider the possibility of requiring students, who do not do biblical languages, to compensate by taking other biblical studies courses having comparable weightage.

(d) Coordination between different levels

It is hoped that these guidelines will lead to greater cooperation and exchange among the island schools, and between these schools and the regional schools. Only students with a good record of performance in one level will be encouraged to proceed to the higher level. Students will not normally go directly from Diploma to the Master's level, though it is possible, under exceptional circumstances.

(e) Integration

In order to achieve an integrated curriculum, it is highly desirable that colleges will require the members of the teaching staff to produce course descriptions and outlines (syllabus) of each course they teach, and submit them for interdisciplinary

scrutiny, both when the syllabus is first prepared, and whenever it is revised. The aim of this process is unity and cross-fertilisation among the different disciplines of theological study, as well as mutual learning from one another.

Specific Proposals

We first propose an overall program for each level. Then we develop, for each major section of the program, the appropriate level of studies. The major sections suggested are:

- Biblical Studies (BS)
- Doctrinal Studies (DS)
- History of Christianity (HC)
- Practical Ministry (PM)
- Supporting Studies (SS)

A. Overall Programs

A.1 Certificate of Theological Studies

A.1.1 The program should cover:

- a. Biblical Studies (Weight:) Heavy
- b. Doctrine H
- c. History of Christianity Medium
- d. Practical Ministry H
- e. Supporting Studies Light

A.1.2 Weightage in Semester Hours

The two-year program has 80 semester hours (SH) available 4 x 20 hours per week, each semester. Each individual course will use 2-3 SH

A heavy section is taking 10 to 14 SH, or more

A medium section is taking 6 to 10 SH

A light section is taking 2 to 6 SH

The medium, or light, sections can be essential and integral to the whole program, and should not be considered electives.

A.1.3 Distribution over the 4 Semesters

In all 4 semesters, the proportion between the 5 sections should be more or less as follows:

BS 25% (incl. OT and NT)

DS 25% (incl. Ethics)

HC 15%

PM 25%

SS 10%

The weight of PM could increase from semester 1 to semester 4, and the weight of SS decrease in the same direction. It is very important that the various courses are related to one another, and a real effort of close integration be made.

A.2 Diploma of Theological Studies

A.2.1 The Program should cover:

- a. BS: Old Testament and New Testament with Exegesis
- b. DS: Systematic Theology and Christian Ethics, including the issue of Gospel and Culture or Enculturation
- c. HC: History of Christianity, in the World and in the Pacific
- d. PM: Evangelisation and Mission, Worship, Preaching, Christian Education, Pastoral Care, Church Administration (including Church Law)
- e. SS: Biblical Languages, Religious Studies, Philosophy, Social Anthropology, and other Human Studies

A.2.2 Weightage:

Suggested number of SH:

BS 32

DS 24

HC 20

PM 24

SS 20

This gives a total of 120 SH, divided into 6 semesters of 20 hours per week. It should be borne in mind that the Diploma program normally leads to an appointment as minister, and that the church may have guidelines that will modify our suggestions, or introduce different accents. The program should also enable the student to proceed to the Degree program, though not all students will do so.

A.2.3 Distribution:

In general, the emphasis on BS, DS, and HC can be stronger in the first four semesters, while PM will increase in the last two semesters.

A.3 Bachelor or Divinity (Degree)

- a. BS: OT, NT, Intertestament Literature, Hermeneutics, Exegesis
- b. DS: Systematic, Ethics, Methodology, with ecumenical and contextual emphasis
- c. HC: Besides the History of World and Pacific Christianity, also Methodology
- d. PM: The courses, mentioned under Diploma on a more advanced level, related to and compared with what is done in other churches, also including Communication, Mass media, etc.
- e. SS: The courses mentioned under Diploma, if not done already, and the study of modern ideologies

- f. Project, thesis, or synthesis of theology, as integral part of final product of degree studies

A.3.3 Level of Study

In general, the Degree program should move away from factual information towards critical reflection, from knowledge shared within the (church) community to dialogue and argument in the wider scholarly society. It should bring the student to search and reflect autonomously, and to communicate to others what he knows and understands. Creativity and other attitudes for life-long research and interest are to be encouraged above reception of package-deal convictions. Understanding of reasons and principles more than increase of pure content of knowledge. Experience should be deepened, and brought into contact with what the word and the Spirit are saying to the church today.

B.1 The Main Disciplines

B.1 Biblical Studies

B.1.1 Certificate level:

The program should cover:

OT Background: history of Israel, introduction to the books (yr 1). Bible study of important parts of OT (yr 2); local translation be used now and then, compared to other translations; practical and homiletical objectives.

NT Background: i.e., the situation of the writings in early communities; introduction to the writings, their plan (yr 1). Bible study of important parts of NT; local translations, etc.

B.1.2 Diploma level

The main objective is ministerial information, but also preparation for the Degree program, at least for some. Study methods should be taught, and use of appropriate tools, e.g., concordance, dictionary, etc.

OT: Background of Near-Eastern cultures compared to Pacific cultures, History of Israel: critical interpretation of history and tradition, Introduction to individual books: Canon, Manuscripts. Exegesis: with use of biblical languages of selected passages from each of the main groups: Pentateuch, Historical books, Prophetic literature, Poetic/Wisdom writings.

Homiletical use: introduction to scientific approach, critical use of translations.

NT: Background including Intertestamental literature. Introduction to Writings: Canon, Synoptic problem, Authenticity. Exegesis of selected passages from each of the main groups: Synoptics, Johannine writings, including Revelation, Pauline, Catholic letters.

Use of Greek text (including comparison with local translations) recommended.

B.1.3 Degree level

Study and library skills are needed; the use of biblical languages, Hebrew and Greek is highly desirable; the doctrine of scripture: Inspiration, Authority, presupposed, or covered, in DS.

OT: History of Israel, and its religion in the Near-Eastern context. Introduction to OT: Methodology, History of the discipline, literary Generas, Parallels between ancient Near-Eastern and Pacific religions, Textual criticism, Canon, Exegesis, including History of discipline, detailed exegesis of selected texts.

Theologies in and of the OT: Intertestamental Literature: Judaism; Hellenistic thinking: Neoplatonism and Gnosticism.

NT: Introduction to NT: Methodology, History of Discipline, Textual Criticism, Form Criticism, Canon, Exegesis: using Greek text, Methodology, History of discipline, detailed exegesis of selected texts in all groups, some critical translation work. Theologies of, and in, the NT, compared with non-Christian ideologies, Hermeneutics.

B.2 Doctrinal Studies

B.2.1 Certificate level:

The approach will be that of a factual, but also contextual, grasp of the church's doctrine, and its biblical foundations. Some introduction to development (history) of doctrine. The main divisions (articles) can be followed and explained: God, Creation, Christ, Redemption, Holy Spirit, Church, Sacraments, Ministry, Eschatology. Cultural studies should give the student basic insights in the national cultures(s), especially its myths and rites. Study skills should help to think in concepts and arguments, and enable to dialogue, not only to express convictions.

B.2.2 Diploma level:

Critical understanding of doctrine in historical development, and also in ecumenical context, relationship to the sources of theology, local and contextual theology. Basic texts should be read: ancient, classical, modern. A certain personal synthesis is to be aimed at; also the ability to read and judge general theological literature. The main sectors of systematic theology should be studied:

- Introduction (4 SH) Faith/Reason, Revelation, Inspiration, Biblical authority, Tradition of the church, History of theology
- Systematic reflection, or Christology and Ecclesiology (6 SH)
- Selective courses on Trinity Soteriology, Sacraments, Pneumatology, Eschatology (6 SH)
- Modern Theology Trends (2 SH)
- Fundamental or Introduction to Ethics: Sources, Systems, etc. (4 SH)
- Selected special ethics (2 SH)

Supportive studies are:

- Religious studies, including World religions
- Cultural studies: Regional and Pacific outlook
- Philosophy and Human sciences: Introduction level

B.2.3 Degree level:

Lecture method, gradually to be replaced by seminar and group study, using the method of case study.

All tools available (library, lecturers, interviews) to be used.

- In Systematic theology:

Introduction: aiming at doing theology, using sources critically, hermeneutics of the doctrine of own and other churches (2 SH)

Specific contemporary questions in Christology and Ecclesiology, and in other selected areas, so that at least three or four major topics are dealt with (5 SH)

One major trend in modern theology: in-depth study (2 SH)

- In Ethics:

One obligatory area (e.g., Social justice), and one other selected area, with emphasis on inductive, more than deductive, approach (4 SH)

- Supporting studies: (2 SH)

Languages: sufficient to do research, and write project, Philosophy and Psychology/Sociology of religion as electives

B.3 History of Christianity

B.3.1 Certificate level:

- Introduction: Integral survey of the History of Christianity; including the most important events, persons, movements
- History of Christianity in the country served by the school with special reference to the encounter of Christianity and culture

B.3.2 Diploma level:

- Students, at this level need to be made aware of the main events, movement, and persons in the history of Christianity. They could be arranged according to periods, or themes, or a combination of both, e.g., courses covering periods: beginnings of Christianity, patristic time; Middle Ages; Reformation, Post-Reformation; Modern Times; 19th century, 20th century. Courses covering movements: monastic, missionary, Orthodox, Ecumenical, church and politics; sectarianism, etc.
- The course should cover the whole range of Christianity history, from the beginnings until modern times, and should include a study of the history of Christianity in the Pacific

The course should also give attention to historical developments of the following:

- The spread of the faith
- Beliefs and doctrines
- Patterns of worship and spirituality
- Patterns of organisation, leadership, ministry
- Relationship of Christianity and the church to society, culture and the state
- Ecumenical relationships among the churches

B.3.3 Degree level:

Courses at this level should introduce students to the findings of modern scholarly study of the various periods of Christian history. A critical approach to historical writing should be encouraged. Awareness of historical theory and methodology should be created. Opportunity should be given for students to do original research, using documentary and oral sources for writing history. The curriculum should include a course, or courses, on the history of Christianity in the Pacific. The courses covering periods should give attention to the topics mentioned under Diploma. A more in-depth study of themes is expected.

All courses covering periods should give attention to the topics mentioned under Diploma. A more in-depth study of themes is expected.

B.4 Practical Ministry

B.4.0

The distinction between the different levels, Diploma and Degree, will be more a deepening of the experience, and contents of the course, than introducing radically-new contents and elements. There is a “spiralling effect”, as a student moves to another level, and the course becomes more comprehensive in its depth and treatment of a particular aspect of practical ministry.

The different levels of the course need to take into account the other disciplines being offered at the same level. The different talents and charisms of the students, the policies and needs of the churches, will also determine modifications to the guidelines being offered.

B.4.1 Certificate Level

The following elements may be selectively included, according to the objectives of the college for this level, and bearing in mind the future of the student in the ministry. The courses on pastoral care and church administration may be omitted where the course is intended for lay training.

- a. Evangelisation and Mission:
 - Introduction to the main concepts: both theological and pastoral
 - Scriptural basis for Christ’s mission, the Spirit’s mission, and the mission of the Apostolic church (New Testament/Acts)
 - Methods and practices of evangelisation for the particular churches in the Pacific
- b. Worship:
 - Principles and guidelines according to particular church practice
 - Format of worship and service

- Principles of creativity in worship and liturgy
 - Worship and spirituality: forms of worship and devotional life
 - Church music
- c. Preaching:
- Basic public speaking skills and techniques, building confidence and presence before a congregation
 - Reading sacred scripture in public
 - Methodology and theology of sermons: proclamation and composition of sermons
 - Application of the gospel to realities of life in the context of the local congregation
- d. Christian education:
- Meaning of Christian nurture and growth in faith
 - Introductory techniques and skills before a group: pedagogy
 - Programs for different age groups: teaching biblical lessons and leading bible study groups
 - Familiarity with church programs and syllabus
- e. Leadership training:
- Practical experience of handling responsibilities and authority in the school
 - Learning techniques and procedures of meetings and administration
 - Identifying the *ideal* qualities to be found in a Christian leader
 - People's expectations of a Christian leader
- f. Pastoral care:
- Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of traditional approaches to counselling and pastoral care

- Basic guidelines towards recognition of different levels of pastoral problems and concerns of people (cf. Supporting Studies)

g. Church administration:

- Familiarity with church discipline, written laws, and regulations
- Fundamentals of financial administration: basic bookkeeping of accounts
- Methods and stewardship of fundraising
- Administrative structure of the church: polity, constitution, order

B.4.2 Diploma Level

Note: If the student has completed the Certificate course, the program should be arranged so that unnecessary repetition is avoided.

a. Evangelisation and Mission:

- Theology of evangelisation and mission: developing the scriptural basis in depth
- Practical methods, and practices of evangelisation in the Pacific

b. Worship:

- Worship and spirituality
- Use of different expressive arts in worship: drama, dance, mime
- Forms of worship and devotional life
- Historical development of liturgical worship forms
- Cultural models re worship (cf. Supporting Studies)
- Church music
- Principles and praxis of creativity in worship

c. Preaching:

- Developing skills, using audiovisual techniques
- Communications and modern technology in media

- Construction and practice of sermons/homilies, using a variety of models: expository, story telling, dialogue, etc.
- d. Christian education:
- Meaning of Christian nurture and growth in faith
 - Techniques and skills of teaching, pedagogy
 - Familiarity with general programs for adult and Christian family education
 - Education programs of Christian ethics
 - Preparation of programs for different age groups
 - If applicable, familiarity with the administration of schools
- e. Leadership training:
- General models of leadership in everyday life
 - Leadership through service models
 - Practical experience of leadership and authority in the school and local community: deepen the experience
 - Awareness of personal weakness/strengths relevant for leadership
 - Outside resources can be used
- f. Pastoral care:
- Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of traditional approaches to counselling and pastoral care
 - Basic guidelines towards recognition of different levels of pastoral problems and concerns of people (cf. Supporting Studies)
 - Possibility to introduce CPE program (cf. Supporting Studies and reference to Psychology)
- g. Church administration:
- Familiarity with church discipline, written laws, and regulations for pastors/ministers

- Familiarity with church and civil law re births, deaths, and marriages, and other register work
- Comparative church polities
- Fundamentals of financial administration: basic bookkeeping of accounts
- Methods and stewardship of fundraising
- Development of resources to meet local needs of pastors/ministers

B.4.3 Degree Level

Note: For students who have completed the Diploma course, the program should be so arranged that unnecessary repetition is avoided.

- a. Evangelisation and Mission:
 - History of evangelisation in the Pacific re methods and practice
 - Church growth, in its various practical dimensions
 - Ecumenism in practice
 - Inter-faith dialogue in practice
- b. Worship:
 - Culture and Christianity: traditions re worship forms
 - Development of church music
 - Worship and spirituality
 - Use of different expressive arts in worship: dance, drama, mime, etc.
 - Creativity: practical experience and evaluation
- c. Preaching:
 - Developing skills using audiovisual techniques: praxis and critique
 - Integration of theology
 - Various models of the homily for different occasions

- Construction and practice of sermons/homily using different methods: expository, storytelling, dialogue, etc.
 - Communication and modern technology in media
- d. Christian education:
- Meaning of Christian nurture and growth in faith
 - Techniques and skills of teaching, pedagogy
 - Development of special programs for adult and Christian families according to the context
 - Preparation of programs for liturgical events: weddings, feasts (liturgical), etc.
 - Education programs of Christian ethics
 - Preparation of programs for different age groups
 - If applicable, familiarity with administration of schools
- e. Leadership training:
- Different models of leadership from culture, secular society, and gospel
 - The ideal leadership roles for the pastor/minister
 - Leadership/service/delegation/sharing with community, the responsibilities of the church and administration
- f. Pastoral care:
- Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of traditional approaches to counselling and pastoral care
 - Basic guidelines towards recognition of different levels of pastoral problems and concerns of people
 - CPE program, and related to other programs in the Supporting Studies courses
- g. Church administration:
- Church law (Canon law)

- Constitution studies
- Comparative church politics
- Familiarity with civil law, as applicable to birth, marriage, death, etc.
- Fundamentals of financial administration: basic bookkeeping of accounts
- Methods and stewardship of fundraising
- Development of resources to meet local needs of pastors/ministers

B.5 Supporting Studies

It is recommended that each school will organise these studies according to the needs of the student and the guidelines of the church/churches concerned.

B.5.1 Certificate level

- a. Gospel and culture: Introduction to basic concepts:
 - Culture
 - Model of culture, as an integrated system
 - Culture change
 - Evolution versus creation
 - Values and traditions
- b. English/French language and study skills:
 - Comprehension and expression: written and oral
 - Communication
 - Methodology of study: research and writing

B.5.2 Diploma Level

- a. Gospel and culture: same as Certificate level

- b. Pacific studies
 - Genesis of Pacific cultures
 - Migration
 - Kinship
 - Mythology
 - Oral traditions
 - Ritual/symbolism
- c. Remedial studies, and development of competency skills
 - Use of English/French language at a more advanced level
- d. Psychology I
 - Experimental
 - Developmental

B.5.3 Degree Level

- a. Gospel and culture: same as Certificate level: more advanced
- b. Pacific studies: same as Diploma level: more advanced
- c. Remedial studies
 - Use of English language: comprehension, communication
- d. Sociology
 - Religion and society
 - Social analysis, directed to pastoral praxis
 - Social issues in the Pacific context (seminar/research)
- e. Psychology II
 - Adult psychology
 - Pastoral psychology

The God-talk of the Oppressed: An Asian Contribution

David Kwang-sun Suh

*Reprinted from The Teaching of Ecumenics,
Samuel Amirthan and Cyrus H. S. Moon, eds. Geneva: WCC Publications, 1987*

Towards ideological independence

I have been teaching systematic theology at both undergraduate and graduate Departments of Christian Studies, in the faculty of liberal arts of a traditional mission school in Korea. Like most theological seminaries and academic departments of theology, we organised our four-year undergraduate curriculum with core courses on the Bible, church history, systematic theology, ethics, preaching, religious education, worship, etc.

Most of the teachers in these institutions are recognised by Western institutions of theological education as academically-qualified teachers and researchers, trained in one or more Western languages, besides their own mother tongue. We theological teachers mostly follow, and imitate, what our Western teachers were doing when we were students, sometimes with feelings of inadequacy and frustration, because of the lack of library resources, and the students' limited language ability to read the great Western theological authors. So we become involved in the development of theological textbooks, which are mostly translations of the famous "classical" books we became familiar, with when we were studying theology in the West.

Teaching theology in our part of the world is, thus, mostly translation work: it is to translate Western authors into our native language, and it is also to translate the culture-laden Western Christian theological concepts into our own language, to make them sensible and meaningful.

Problems arise, however, when Western Christian theological concepts and dogmas do not make sense at all in our native language. The traditional way of solving this problem was to memorise the whole body of Christian dogma, letter by letter, without making any connection with the social and historical context, from which these concepts and dogmas had come. These Western missionary theological concepts and dogmas, we swallowed as an important part of believing in the new religion, and of following the way of Jesus Christ. Our missionary theological

mentors were inadequate in translating the difficult theological concepts into the strange language; they had only limited skill in the native tongue, and they were not trained theological teachers. There had been little theological development in the churches in Asia, where the dominant theological ideology was fundamentalism, until the time when the colonised countries gained political independence from Western imperialism in the 1940s.

During the last 40 years, in spite of political independence, or the struggle for it, Christian theology in formerly-colonised countries – like most other academic fields of study in the universities in these countries – has not gained ideological independence. The Korean theologians could speak Korean better than the American missionaries, when they taught theology, and preached in the churches. But the language problem still remained: they had to translate the Western concepts, and Christian dogmas, from English or German into Korean, but such language skill was as limited, as that of the missionary teachers, when they spoke Korean.

Since I came back to Korea from the United States, in the late 1960s, I have enthusiastically introduced my students to the theologies of Tillich, Bultmann, Bonhoeffer, Moltmann, and Harvey Cox, because I was excited about them, when I was studying in American theological schools. But I only created confusion and frustration among my students. Bultmann's demythologisation is not only tongue-twisting; it shocked their fundamentalist, anti-hermeneutic understanding of the Bible. In the theological climate of Korea, where Karl Barth's thinking is condemned as dangerous liberal theology, an introduction of the whole theological enterprise of the last two centuries in the West is, itself, a new way of teaching/doing/learning theology.

What is new about introducing contemporary Western theologians? It is new, because these names are unheard-of, either because of theological ignorance or because of ecclesial prohibition. But, it is also new, because these theologians, themselves, introduced new ways of doing theology in Western society. Paul Tillich took culture seriously, even though the culture he spoke of was high-brow, Western, bourgeois culture. He made me talk positively about our Asian religions, and traditional culture, and about the existential situation, from which theological questions arise. Bultmann opened up a wide horizon to my students, enabling them to read the Bible from an entirely different perspective, even going beyond his existential interpretation of the kerygma. The reading of Bonhoeffer's prison letters, in Korean translation, has made our students think about the political history of Korean Christians, which is filled with martyrs, standing up against the ideological idols of the dominant powers. While Harvey Cox introduced the secular world of the West to our students, they incorporated him into their experience of revolutionary

struggles for the building of a new nation. Moltmann's theological writings stimulated our political imagination, and enabled us to interpret our theological politics.

What is new in these theologians' doing of theology was that they took their world seriously: Bonhoeffer took Nazi Germany seriously; Cox took his secular American society seriously; and Moltmann took the political world of the West seriously. I do not know whether these theologians thought of themselves as doing and teaching theology, from the ecumenical perspective, but, I think, when we take the real, concrete, political and social world seriously in doing theology, it is the ecumenical way of doing theology.

The whole question of theological legitimacy used to be a question of the academic standard set by Western theological schools, and the denominational authorities. But, in the new way of doing theology, I have discovered that theological legitimacy depends on its relation to the world. The new way of doing theology is theologically responsible to the world: it is doing theology *from* the world, *for* the world, and *in* the world. This is, as I learned in my situation, the responsible ecumenical way of doing theology.

Starting from our own world

Once we realise that our Western contemporary theologians are taking this world seriously, in their doing of theology, we do not have to stay with their theological writings alone, thinking about their theological struggles in their Western context. Now, we can turn to our own context, to our own world. That is to say, we start our theologising anew; we do not start from the Western theological package, but from our own world of politics, economics, traditional religions, and our native cultures. As we interpret what Western Christian thinkers are saying in their own context, we begin interpreting the Bible, and Christian traditions, from our own perspective of our own world. When we take our world seriously, and try to respond to it, the problem of hermeneutical suspicion comes up. We cannot simply use the entire Western ideological framework of Christian theology, in our reading of the Bible, and in our mission of word and action. We have to critically question the dominant ideology of Western Christian theologies in our doing/teaching/learning, in our experience of the contemporary political world.

Until I was forced to confront the powerful, military dictatorship of the 1970s in Korea, which was, to me, the most concrete and real world of politics, I did teach systematic theology in the comfortable world of Western philosophy, and liberal

ideologies, interpreting Western political and philosophical theologies. But, when I took the risk of losing my respectable position as a university professor, by signing petitions, and political statements for the Christian and secular student democratic human-rights movement, I was forced to take my political world seriously, in my actual doing and teaching of theology. I had to learn how to articulate my theology, and biblical understanding, as I drafted political statements, and declarations, for the humanisation of politics, and for economic justice for the workers, and disinherited farmers, in the rapidly, and forcibly-industrialising, society of Korea. Our doing theology in such a political situation is critical and confrontational: we have to be critical of the dominant ideology, in both politics, and in the churches; we have to confront the most powerful ideological superstructure of the dominant political system. We also have to discover a new way of reading the Bible, on the basis of our political struggles, and to construct an eschatological vision of the kingdom of God, which is operative in our history.

Our job of doing and teaching theology has not been limited to the confines of classrooms, church podiums, and lecture halls. We have had to go out into the world: holding ecumenical conferences, open forums, and theological debates, drafting political statements, holding seminars with labour union workers, and farmers' movement members. Sometimes, we have been taken into the police torture chambers, for an investigation of our theological lectures and political statements. Some of us have had to end up in prison. And when we come back again into the classrooms to teach Augustine, Barth, Bonhoeffer, Moltmann, Jim Cone, and Gutierrez, we talk about them from the perspective of the world, as we have experienced it. Our theological language can no longer be the *ghetto* language of the comfortable academia of dignity and authority. It should become the humble language of the world, full of anger, ambiguity, and frustration against evil in the world. Thus, our God-talk becomes alive, like the action of God in the world. And our God-talk is, inevitably, iconoclastic and exorcistic. Our teaching of systematic theology has to become a systematic destruction of the ideological idols of Christian religion. And our doing of theology is the exorcising act of casting out the political demons in the world. Identifying and naming the idols and devils in the Christian churches, in our cultures, is the first task of teaching systematic theology. We have to call on the help of those who have been doing "philosophical theology" in a new way. The new way is not to "philosophise" theology, but to make a connection between faith and ideology. The new way of doing theology is not only just to understand what theology is, but to change it, and, with it, to change the world.

The doing of theology, in an ecumenical way, in the traditionally non-Christian world of Asia, includes an extra task. The non-Christian world is based on a religious-cultural-ideological superstructure, which is totally ignorant of, and alien to,

the Christian ideological superstructure of the Western world. The task of doing theology, in a non-Christian world, goes far beyond doing translating work. We must take the language of the non-Christian world seriously, as we undertake the hermeneutical task. We should be liberated from the illusion that the theologians' task is to speak about the Christian God in the heathen world. The language and culture of the heathen world must interpret the gospel, as the heathen world of the Greeks and Romans took up the hermeneutical task of understanding the Christian gospel. Thus, our task of doing theology, in this "heathen" world, has to become *creative*. Going beyond learning and teaching Asian cultures and religions in order to see how this alien Christian gospel took such deep root in the superstructure of Eastern ideologies. Our task of doing theology, in the Eastern, "heathen" world, has to be creative, as we try to interpret the gospel in the language and culture, from which we have come. Like American black theologians, and feminist theologians, we can no longer be consumers of Western theological products – feeling and thinking, as if we have become Western persons. We have to create our own way of speaking about God, from our deep and rich resources of traditional culture, and Asian religions. As we took our traditional culture and religion seriously, we have come to realise that our tradition is not something inferior or incomplete, but is complete and sufficient as part of God's creation.

The need to reshape curriculum

Therefore, the whole theological curriculum has to be reshaped, and reorganised, when you take your own world seriously. Those of us, who do and teach theology in this part of the world, cannot, as in the past, organise our own theological teaching schedules, as our Western theological teachers did. We cannot spend all of our time reading Augustine, Aquinas, Calvin, Luther, Kant, Hegel, Schleiermacher, Feuerbach, Barth, Bultmann, and Tillich, and interpreting them to our young students, who are only awed by our incomprehensible, and irrelevant, language of theology, in the context of their contemporary struggle for living. The bringing of our world into the scene of doing theology cannot be a spare-time, or extra-curricular, effort. So to speak, we cannot only consume the Western-made Christian theological "care"¹ package.

When we take our world seriously, we have to take seriously those contemporary theologians, who took their world seriously. And, when we find

1. Cf. G. Fugmann (ed.), *Ethics and Development in PNG*, Goroka, 1986, pp. ixff. Long tingting bilong usim dispela konstitusen long trupela wok politik bilong nau lukim B. Narokobi, "The Old and The New", in G. Fugmann (ed.), *ibid.*, pp. 3ff.

ourselves doing the dangerous and risky work of idol-breaking and exorcising, we identify ourselves, in solidarity, with those ecumenical theologians, who have been working for the liberation of theology, and for the liberative task of theology. We bring together, in our task of doing theology, Latin American liberation theology, feminist Christian theology, American black theology, and liberational political theology in the Western world. And we learn from them how they have brought together their experience in transforming their hermeneutical framework; how they have related their faith to ideology; how they have broken their own religious and ideological idols; and how they have taken the suffering people's stories seriously. To use Prof. Geense's language, finally, we learn from them how they *confessed* their faith in their particular situation.

Furthermore, when we take the task of theology as liberative and liberating, we bring our own world into our doing of theology. In our doing of theology, we have to understand the basic structural character of our contemporary political-economic world, in order to understand and name the physical, mental, and spiritual suffering of oppression, in order to understand the suffering of God, and what God is doing in this world with people.

In order to understand our Christian religion, we have to examine our hermeneutical framework, our traditional cultural and religious framework, from, and through, which we interpret and understand the Christian gospel. Non-Christian religions are not only the ideological superstructure of our world, but they are also rich resources, from which we can reshape our ideology, in relation to our faith. We must bring non-Christian religions into our task of doing theology, as our theological forerunners have insisted on bringing non-Christian worldviews and myths into their task of doing theology in their world. As they were creative in their doing of theology, we can and ought to be creative in our doing of theology in our world.

As we take our world seriously, we must take the people, who are suffering and struggling for liberation, seriously. The stories of our suffering people, in our particular world, have to be brought into our task of doing theology. And those stories ought to be told, as vividly, and as passionately, as we can. If we ignore, and forget, the socio-biography of the people, we might fall into the serious mistake of ignoring, and forgetting, the spoken socio-biography of the people of Israel, and the voice, with which God has spoken to us. We have to reread our own political history, not just as the history of domination of the powerful, but as the history of the suffering and liberation of the people of God.

The ultimate task of doing systematic theology is to hear, and articulate, the word of God, and to confess our faith in Jesus Christ. Then our experiences:

theological, political, cultural, and socio-biographical, should be brought together to make our theology and confession meaningful and powerful, to change the world, and liberate our theology. Thus, our doing/teaching/learning of systematic theology is a constant writing and rewriting of our confession of faith, and that confession is written, not only in the secluded place of the altar or lecture hall, but also in open, public places, where our act of confession can be seen and heard by the oppressors and exploiters.

Doing systematic theology, in an ecumenical way, is doing theology in the world. And teaching systematic theology, in an ecumenical perspective, is doing it from the perspective of the world, and of the suffering and oppressed people of God. Therefore, doing theology becomes dangerous and risky; it means taking up the costly discipleship, which follows the cross of Jesus Christ Himself. Doing theology, in an ecumenical way, demands commitment to the liberation of theology, and of the oppressed people of God.

Traditional Sickness Healing Among the Kalam

Symeon Schwhyiam Yovang

(This article is an edited version of a diploma paper presented by Symeon Yovang at Newton College in 1991. The editing has been done by the Editor.)

The Kalam people live between the Schrader and Bismark mountain ranges in the Simbai region of the Western Highlands.

The myth and ritual of traditional healing

Local people say that all illnesses have a cause, and all have cures. The cures have been handed down from the ancestors, which enabled the people to survive, before the missionaries, and their medication arrived. The origin of the healing practices was in the descent of a supernatural being (*Wamose*), who descended from the sky, created the earth, and gave all traditional customs. So, prayers (*kunj*) are offered to *Wamose* during the sickness-healing rituals.

Wamose descended from the sky by a bush vine cane, holding in his hand a large flat stone. Below him, there was nothing, so he laid down the stone, as a base, on which to stand. Then he looked up to whence he had come, and called out: "Send me some *ma-an tund* (white strong mud)". When it was given him, he spread it over the flat stone, chanting *kunj* as he did so. Then, in turn, he called for, and laid, with *kunj*, *ma-an fwk* (yellow mud), and *ma-an mosimb* (black mud). After that, he called for, and was given, first every kind of plant, then every kind of animal. Then he built himself a house, and planted all food plants round it. In front of the house, he planted a cucumber and a gourd, and, over these two plants, he kept a close watch, day and night.

Wamose built a place to cook *mumu* food outside his house, and then went hunting. On his return, he saw smoke coming from his house, although he was the only person dwelling there. He came close, and peeped into the house, and saw two ladies preparing a *mumu* meal. He tried to scare them by firing an arrow, without killing them, and breaking a dried piece of firewood, but they would not run away, so he circled round the house, and tried to scare them from the other side. When *Wamose* asked the ladies where they came from, they laughed at him for not

knowing, since it had been he who had planted a cucumber and a gourd vine in front of his house. *Wamose* then smiled, and nodded, and told the ladies to prepare him a separate *mumu* meal, since it would be *shoeung* (defiling) for him, as an initiate male (*muluknumb*), to eat or sleep with females. So, he also built them a separate house to sleep in.

Although, at first, the ladies agreed to keep themselves separate, sometime later they ate the same meal, entered the man's house, and even slept with *Wamose*, so that they both became pregnant, and each bore *Wamose* a son, *Nugulbom* (meaning unknown), and *Be-aiyong* (man from above). *Wamose* told the two ladies that they had defiled them all, but that he and his two sons would undergo purification to become *shoeung* (holy) again, while the two ladies would become sick and die. At that moment, the ladies became sick, and covered with sores, so they pleaded with *Wamose* for mercy. He had pity on them, and said that, to be cured, they had to call upon the names of their sons, *Nugulbom* and *Be-aiyong*, since they had been connected to them by the placenta cord, and had first given them life-giving water, and then the sons would give the ladies ginger to prevent them from becoming sick, and to heal them.

From this myth, we may note three biblical comparisons:

- a) the idea of creation;
- b) the idea of a fall and punishment;
- c) the idea of holiness (*shoeung*), which may be divided into ritual and moral purity.

The two ladies had offended against ritual purity by sexual contact, and against moral purity, by disobeying *Wamose*. As in biblical teaching, there was a link between offences against purity, and sickness, and, in both cases, the remedy was seen to include prayers and sacred food.

About the relation between the creation myth, and the healing ritual, a Kalam informant, Isgwn Diokun, said; "We imitate exactly all that our forefathers did. This includes knowing the traditional creation myth, and its meaning and importance, for all our Kalam customs and traditions were derived from the creation myth. In all our daily life, we follow, and live by, all the customs initiated for us by *Wamose*. One of them is sickness healing, in which we make a prayer of request to *Wamose* through *Nugulbom Be-aiyong* for his aid (healing grace). This is similar to the Christian form of intercession for curing of sickness, and for prevention of diseases entering into our communities."

The first stage in the healing ritual is the preparation of the apparatus by a specialist diviner. The apparatus are: a female pig, which is slaughtered, its blood drained, its inner organs removed, and its reproductive organ cut off, and strung, with a tanget cordyline, a placenta cord to symbolise the presence of *Nugulbom Be-aiyong*, a bush vine, to symbolise the link between heaven and earth, short, sharpened lengths of wood from a fallen tree trunk, and a shrub plant, whose stem and foliage are both used. The diviner summons everyone to lay their hands upon the leaves and stem of the cordyline, and holds the bag of placenta cord aloft, as he recites the following *kunj* (prayer of request) to *Wamose* through *Nugulbom Be-aiyong*:

(translation) “Are we not descendant of *Nugulbom Be-aiyong* through them. May you (*Wamose*) protect us, protect everyone, and protect our bodies.

*Sickness from this land, be gone for good,
May the disasters pass over us
May you (Wamose) jump over and around
Keep us safe in your midst.*

After the *kunj* has been recited, the cordyline stems are dipped in the blood of the pig, and planted in prepared holes at a ritual entrance, through which the people all pass, in order to be protected by *Nugulbom Be-aiyong* from all disasters.

The second part of the ritual is the communal meal, which is prepared near the men’s house, in which women are not permitted. In the first part of the meal, the pig’s giblets are cooked by a *mumu*, in a small shelter called a “*bund*”, and, when the giblets are cooked, the diviner summons all the males, uncovers the leaves wrapped round the *mumu*, chops the giblets into small pieces, as he recites a *kunj*, and distributes the pieces, first to the males, and then to the females, who wait further off. Then the women prepare a second meal from the rest of the pig meat.

These rites are called “*Simbling Kemdev Arr*”, which means “Life-saving act through *Nugulbom Be-aiyong*”. In the rite, *Nugulbom Be-aiyong* acts as mediator between the people and *Wamose*, for their health and well-being, and the people are connected to *Nugulbom Be-aiyong*, through the placenta cord.

When sickness does happen, it is believed to have one or more of several causes, including the power of dead relatives, sorcery, the power of clan totems, ritual impurity, black magic, grievances, “sickness from lower land” (malaria), or clan sickness. In times of sickness, a diviner is sent for, who fasts, and consults his ancestral spirits, and then interviews the patient, studying the patient’s reactions, as he does so. Methods of divining, including pulling the victims hair, while a list of

causes is recited, until the hair makes a sound, when the cause is mentioned, or reciting the causes, as the diviner smokes, until the diviner coughs and chokes, when the cause is mentioned. When the cause is identified, it is necessary for the relatives to mend the broken relationship that has caused the sickness. Another form of healing, is the removal of alien objects from a sick person. The original writer of this article saw this procedure done to his uncle, who had been ill in hospital for two months, without getting better. When a diviner was consulted, he identified the cause of the sickness as poisoned food, given by a spurned girlfriend, and he gave, as the remedy, *Andukmangi* – which means reversing the poison back upon the culprit. Then the diviner took out two round objects, covered in blood, from the victim's neck, and said that these had been preventing the victim from getting well. Then the victim was taken back to hospital, and he quickly recovered.

The Kalam have a belief that people get sick because they do bad things, which upsets their spirit, who, then, turns his back on them, and leaves them to get sick. If a death has occurred, a length of bamboo is used, which grows heavy, when a spirit enters it, and moves rapidly, when the cause, and then the culprit, often a sorcerer, is mentioned. When the relatives have chosen either compensation, or the death of the sorcerer, as their payback, the bamboo moves to carry out the sentence, if it is death. The *Nugulbom Be-aiyong* healing procedure, and also the calling-back of the victim's spirit from the abode of the evil one (*Sum alal Korup*), are carried on, as well as the divining, and dealing with causes.

The causes relate, in one way or another, to the breakdown of relationships. The whole community lives in a web of harmonious relationships towards ancestors, living members of the community, towards other communities, and to the whole environment, and it is when one or more of these relationships is broken that the offence has to be paid for, in order for the sickness to be healed.

The impact of Europeans

The government was only interested in material development, and it was only concerned with the health of the body. The missionaries dismissed traditional beliefs as evil. The people thought the white men were their returning dead ancestors, and they were impressed by examples of quick healing, brought by white men's medicine. They were impressed by preaching about raising the dead to life, and looked forward to a new life, in which they would enjoy the white men's possessions. But, meanwhile, their old problems, with gardens not growing, lack of rain, and sickness, which white men's medicine did not seem to cure, continued, so, while keeping on

the new Christian customs, they began, as well, to return to some of the old customs, to do, with respect for the ancestors.

Before the missionaries came, the Kalams had held an annual pig-kill festival (*Smi*), some time between what is now June to December, during the dry season, whenever the pigs and the food crops were ready. The Kalams numbered the days by the monthly cycle of the moon, and had no idea about weeks, so their pig-kills sometimes fell on a Sunday, and this angered the missionaries. There were also problems between the people and the missionaries over polygamy, since the people did not want to put away wives they had taken, and if they did not do so, they could not be baptised.

The missionaries should have made a close survey of traditional religion, before they condemned it, and then they would have seen some Christian characteristics, and values, in it. The missionaries have not been successful in completely suppressing the traditional culture, which often carries on underneath a show of Christianity, so it would seem best to examine the culture, to see what is good, and then use it in a Christian way.

The old customs provided a worldview that seems to explain a deal with the whole of life, and appeal to people's deepest feelings. Western culture offered new concerns, and new answers, but it failed to look at some of the old ways that were still important to the people. It failed to take seriously the people's need for spiritual help in gardening, in the healing of sickness, and in social relationships; it only provided material answers. Christianity had been too closely linked to Western material culture, and the spiritual help, it could give to local culture, had been ignored.

In fact, both traditional culture and Christianity offered a holistic approach, which dealt with both the spiritual and the material. Both used prayers of request to ask for spiritual help, and looked for spiritual, as well as material, blessings. So, Christianity should be used to correct and fulfil traditional culture, and both should correct the material approach of Western culture.

If we take the example of sickness healing, we see that the Kalams sought, not just to mend their bodies with drugs, as in Western medicine, but to bring wholeness, through the healing of relationships. Such relationships included, not only those with the community, and the environment, but also relationships with supernatural beings, the spirits of the ancestors. The means, whereby wholeness is achieved, include the use of diviners, who act as mediators between the living and the dead, the use of prayers (*kunj*), exorcisms, strict observance of ritual and moral purity (*shoeng*), the eating of a sacred meal, and the passing through a sacred entrance, to bring

deliverance from disaster. All these are meant to nourish life, to enhance life, to give life back, to release life, and to ensure the continuation of blessings, and abundance of life. Is it not possible to see the use of prayers, and a sacred meal, as a God-given preparation for Christian prayer, and the Christian sacrament of the Eucharist? One informant, Emmauel Duk, said: “*Mipela yet bai mi kisim save we, na mekim ol dispela kastam pasin?*” (“Where would we get the knowledge from to perform all the traditional rites?”)

(Chapter 3 deals with ideas of sickness and healing in the Bible. It will be summed up here by saying that the Bible takes a holistic approach to health, which is, at once, material and spiritual, individual and communal, and that sin and sickness are connected, so that healing has to include forgiveness. The Bible lays a greater stress on moral, rather than ritual, purity. The healing work of Jesus was a revelation of God’s love, which opened the way to the final reconciliation of all things with God. In the life of the church, the healing work of Jesus is continued, and in the sacraments of the Eucharist, of anointing, and of penance, people are forgiven, renewed, and made whole. The focus of all Jesus’s healing work was His death and resurrection.)

Traditional healing rituals fulfilled through Christ

The traditional creation story of *Wamose*, *Nugulbom*, and *Be-aiyong* is similar to the biblical story of creation, and of the salvation brought by Jesus Christ, the Son of God. So the Kalam traditional story can be seen as a preparation for the Christian story, and the symbolic rituals of the Kalam people, as preparations for the Christian sacraments. The Christian gospel gives a deeper meaning to the fall of humanity, and their salvation, through Christ, by emphasising that the cause of the fall was not just ritual defilement, but moral disobedience, and so salvation required the perfect moral obedience of Christ, by which He shared with us the free grace of God’s forgiveness.

In the sickness healing rituals of the Kalam, the passing through the entrance, marked by branches dipped in pig’s blood, may be compared, as an act of protection, with the first passover, at which the Israelites smeared blood on the entrance to their houses. The offering of parts of a pig to the spirits of the ancestors, so that they can become sacred, when they are shared in a meal, by the people, to bring healing, can be seen as a preparation for the Eucharist, in which the healing work of Christ is made present for us. Jesus Christ heals not just bodies, but also puts right the many things that spoil, or divide, individuals, and communities, strengthens relationships, lifts up the down-trodden, gives hope, and forgives sinners, and reveals the healing love of God, and reconciles creation to its Creator.

(Editor's note: It would seem that the various methods of divination, used to expose the cause of sickness, do help to discover the broken relationships, that may have been linked with the illness, as sin may also be linked with disease, although not directly, as cause and effect. Yet, when it comes to dealing with broken relationships, or moral, or ritual, impurity, as causes of illness, the Christian way would seem to be, not by demanding compensation, or revenge, or reversing the poison, but by acknowledging that Christ has made all payback necessary on the cross, and so, by applying His reconciling work to the illness in question. By making a link between sickness and broken relationships, and providing for the healing of both at the same time, traditional religion could provide the context for the healing of the whole person, and its rituals given Christian meaning, and adapted for Christian use.)

Conclusion

Every aspect of Kalam life is associated with religion. The Kalam is a religious person. In whatever they do, they focus on powers beyond their reach, and channel those powers to help them in their daily life. These powers would help them to exercise healing in times of sickness, protect and bless them with good crops, pigs, and much wealth, and bring success in hunting, marriage, and childbirth.

The Kalam have a sense of reverence towards their ancestral spirits, the recent dead, and the environment, so they offer sacrifices to their ancestors to atone for wrongs, and strengthen their relationships. The sacrifices involve prayers (*kunj*), as well as action. By their rituals, they ensure harmonious relationships with their ancestors, their own, and other communities, and the environment. By these means, they discover their moral order, and live within it. They have a sense that, to tolerate immoral acts, is an offence, a sin, which would cause breakdown of relationships with the ancestors and the community. Such breakdowns of relationships would cause sickness and misfortune for themselves, their family, and their community. We have seen that the Bible also makes a link between sickness and sin.

In both traditional and biblical ideas of healing, there is a coming together of the deity, and the believing community, to establish, or repair, a relationship through sacrifice. The fulfilment of all these ideas of sacrifice, in order to renew relationships, is the reconciling death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Solving the Problem of the Pigs: a Case Study in Local Theology

Br Silas SSF

The area of the Highlands, referred to in this study, was first evangelised by the Anglican and Lutheran churches in the late 1950s. Their missionaries were mostly Melanesians, and tended to have a “conservative” approach to the local culture – that is, they assumed that local practices were blessed by God, unless they directly contradicted scripture. Accordingly, they opposed fighting (successfully), and polygamy (unsuccessfully), but their overall attitude was that God was with the people in the midst of their traditional life. They stressed the continuity between the ways of the ancestors and the gospel life and, perhaps, neglected the need for a radical, and thorough, conversion of each individual. In many ways, the evangelisation process was too superficial, with discipleship coming to be seen as a change of behaviour, rather than a whole new way of thinking, but the gospel was preached, and, to some extent, heard.

By the early 1980s, there was some disillusionment with the form of Christianity the missionaries had brought. For many people, Christianity was associated with the economic and social improvements that had arrived at the same time – new tools, money, education, health care – and “development” was seen as one of God’s blessings to His faithful people. As development ground almost to a halt, it seemed that, either the gospel had lost its power, or that the people were doing something wrong. At about this time, the Seventh-day Adventists started to proselytise in the area, and won many adherents from disaffected Anglicans. They appeared prosperous, happy, holy, and articulate about their faith. Their zeal for the gospel was obvious to all. Their message, and the theological assumptions, which underlaid it, was quite different. For them, traditional village life was corrupt, and full of temptations to sin. A radical break with the past, with transformed social relationships, was essential. Accordingly, their converts were encouraged to leave their villages, and live in separate compounds, where they could pursue individual holiness, live in obedience to the Law, and wait for Jesus’ return, without disturbance.

Despite the attractions of this radical Christianity, the majority of their adherents “lapsed”, or returned to their original church allegiance, within a few years.

Typically, they complained that the regime was too strict, and, specifically, that they were unwilling to give up the rearing and eating of pigs. This is, apparently, a

very trivial issue, but it has become the main point of contention between the Seventh-day Adventists and the other churches. The difference in the attitude to pigs highlights a difference in attitude to traditional life in general, and raises some serious theological issues for those who have to choose between the churches.

As in many other parts of the Highlands, in this area pigs, are much more than just a source of meat. The killing or exchanging of pigs is a key part of any major event in the life of the clan. A man without pigs will have difficulty acquiring a wife, staging a funeral, seeking forgiveness after a dispute, or finding men to help him with a major work. There is the sense that he is a minor figure, on the fringe of the community. Conversely, many healthy pigs are a sign that a man is blessed, and confer on him power and status. He will be listened to, and looked to, as an organiser and arbitrator, and he knows that he has a place at the very centre of the community's life. For these reasons, pigs symbolise, and represent, the "heart" of the community. God's attitude to pigs is a statement about His attitude to traditional life in general, because such a life is inconceivable without them. If God has declared pigs unclean, traditional life is built on a foundation of sin. There can be no possible continuity between the life of the ancestors and the life of the Christian – they were lost in iniquity. Between the old life in sin, and the new life in Christ, everything must change. All right-thinking Christians should distance themselves from their pig-eating relatives, and all they represent. On the other hand, if God accepts those who eat pigs, there is no reason to believe the traditional community is *fundamentally* corrupt. It may often be very wrong, but it can be healed and restored. It is likely that God was revealing Himself to the ancestors, before they even knew His name; and faithfulness to God will include faithfulness to the members of the community, and their will.

To many, both of the above explanations seem inadequate. The first seems intuitively quite wrong, and flies in the face of their experience. Their principal experience of love, faithfulness, and hope is within the circle of caring relationships, which make up the traditional (pig-eating) community. Only the most alienated of them could believe, from their experience, that the community is founded on sin, and that God is not present there. Very few could, by refusing to have anything to do with pigs, place themselves on the fringe of the community, with equanimity.

But God did, at one time, forbid His people to eat the flesh of pigs. God's laws tend to be seen as roughly equivalent to the "laws of survival": if you put your hand in the fire, it will be burnt; just as automatically, if you flout God's law, you will pay the price. God's laws do not change, any more than the laws of survival, so, if once, He forbade pigs, but no longer, an explanation must be found. The peacefulness and prosperity of the Seventh-day Adventists suggests they may, indeed, be right.

Furthermore, God clearly does demand a radical change, a new creation. It is not enough to affirm His involvement in traditional life, without also indicating how He challenges and transforms it. The theological tension between continuity and radical change, which is expressed by the two different missionary strategies, and, particularly, by their attitude to pigs, is keenly felt, and causes real distress to some. It seems that, whichever church they join, and whichever position they take, they are likely to be wrong.

Resolving the tension: a local interpretation of Mak 5:1-20

One local man solved the problem of whether or not to eat pig meat, to his own satisfaction, in a novel way. He reflected on the gospel story, in which Jesus cast a “mob” of demons out of a man, and into a herd of pigs, which then rushed to their deaths, and concluded that it was a key event in the history of salvation. He speculated that there was an “old” type of pig, which had been forbidden by God to His people. Jesus had gathered all these together in one place, sent the demons into them, and so sent them to their deaths. Jesus had then created, or introduced, a “new” kind of pig, which could be eaten, and which eventually became the mainstay of Highlands’ village life. For my informant, this was the whole point of the gospel story.

This speculation is an admirably neat way of solving, for him, a vexing theological problem, and it contains some profound truth. It implies that pigs are not only good to eat, but may even be the first-born of the “new creation”! If so, the very centre of village life has been redeemed. Before the missionaries arrived, and made it known, Jesus had begun the transformation of village life, and healed its heart, replacing sin with a new, redeemed creation. The love and care experienced at the heart of traditional life is, so the story implies, indeed, a manifestation of God’s own love and care, and not something opposed to it. In this way, the conflicting demands: of loyalty to the community, and, at the same time, a radical conversion, a seeking of God, above all things, can be reconciled, and shown to point in the same direction. The radical Christian does not need to flee the community, and its love, to find his salvation in new ideas, and a detached way of life. Instead, he should seek to live faithfully, at the heart of the community, confident that, at its heart, God’s healing and redemption are to be found.

So the story seems successful in answering some urgent practical and theological questions for my informant, the more so, as its implications are drawn out. But these considerations do not make the story “right”. My initial response was to dismiss it as wild, dangerous speculation. This would probably be the response of

anybody educated in a Western way, because the story conflicts with the way we think about Jesus, and about the world. It certainly seems odd that Jesus would have an interest in recreating pigs, and, surely, the gospel writers didn't intend that we should interpret the story in that way. As a statement of general theological principles, or a speculation on what actually happened, the story is clearly wrong.

To dismiss the story on these grounds is to do it an injustice. The story takes the form of a speculation on what might have happened, but its real concern is to articulate my informant's experience of God, and to act as a vehicle for his theological ideas. The reason it feels "right", to him, is not because it fits the norms of biblical scholarship, but because it works – that is, it reconciles his own, apparently contradictory, views of God, and indicates a course of action to be followed. Its use of scripture is more devotional than discursive, and not concerned with making general statements about God, or the gospels. This devotional and speculative way of using the scriptures has a long and respectable pedigree in the West. The context and general meaning are put aside, the scene is imaginatively entered into, and allowed to speak to the heart, rather than the head. It is a way, in which God speaks to the particulars of our lives, and is quite adequate, as long as the results are not treated as formal theological propositions. This story, within its own terms, "works" in bringing its owner into a deeper understanding of his relationship to the community, and to God. Only if we try to subject it to strict rules of biblical interpretation, do we run into trouble – we must accept it for what it is.

For the same reasons, it is "his" story, but I can never make it "mine". Only those who share his concerns, and his worldview, can share the story. Those of us, who do not, can only help to draw out its implications, and allow it to run its course. For as long as it works, and for whom it works, it is to be encouraged; when the issues it addressed no longer seem important, it will, doubtless, fall into disuse, and be forgotten.

Concluding remarks

Melanesia is a region, where one would expect to see intense theological activity. It has a high concentration of Christians in tight-knit communities, who talk about their faith; Christianity is understood to entail profound changes in ways of thinking and living; the circumstances of life, and the challenges they present, are changing rapidly, and bringing new questions, which demand new answers. I believe such activity is, indeed, taking place, but is often overlooked by church leaders and theologians, because it is informal, and presented in an unconventional way. The people's theological insights should be welcomed, and encouraged by the churches,

but, because they are not readily reduced to the language of formal theology, they are often suppressed as wrong, or relegated to the fringes of church life. In this article, I have tried to show how a speculative, even bizarre, story has been used as a vehicle for some real theological insights. It has some features, which are probably common to most of the emerging local theology of Melanesia, and indicates how they should be evaluated.

- 1) It is *pragmatic*. The story is acceptable to my informant, mainly because it “works”. It successfully resolves his dilemma, and suggests a course of action. The question of whether it is “true” is a secondary one. This sort of pragmatism has been a feature of Melanesian Christianity, from its beginnings. In evaluating a story like this, it is a mistake to begin by looking at its content. The first question to be asked is, “What does it do, and how is it applied?” Local theology must be interpreted *functionally*.
- 2) It is *highly specific*, both in time and place. Because the impetus for constructing the story comes from a specific set of tensions, it is unlikely to “travel well”, be usable, or acceptable, elsewhere. There is, as yet, little common “Melanesian identity”. Melanesian societies show great diversity, and are changing very rapidly. The story has meaning for a particular community, in a particular context, but will probably not endure – the issues will change – or make much general sense. The tendency, in academic theology, is to try to reduce everything to general propositions about God, as valid in Rome as in Rabaul, but Melanesian local theologies are too specific for this: they can only be properly evaluated in the context from which they arose. Local theology must be interpreted *in context*.
- 3) It is *non-literary* and *speculative*. Because the story emerges in a community, where books are almost never read, and where formal education has only had a light influence, it depends on non-literary ways of interpreting scripture, and expressing the results. It clearly departs from the text, on which it is based, and recasts it in the form of a speculative story. Both these features make it less accessible to those of us, taught to treat written texts with respect, and state clearly (i.e., in a non-narrative form) our reflections on them. Story theology cannot be taken apart, piece by piece, without losing its power and meaning: it is, by its nature, open-ended, intuitively, rather than logically, grasped, and difficult to define. The story must be taken as a whole. Local theology must be interpreted *holistically*.

These features, which make the story so difficult to handle theologically, are the ones, which give it its life and power. I believe that most local theologies need to be seen, not as statements about what is true, but as acts of self-revelation by God. If, for a few people, in particular place, it makes God more accessible, and worthy to be praised, then that is enough. It does not matter whether it would do the same in Rome or Rabaul.

Biblical Jokes

Teike Van Lancker

A serious reader might, one day, discover that not everything he reads in “the Good Book” is holy. There are boring lists of laws and names; there are uninspiring pages of history; there are passages, which even the Jews objected to having read in public. But humour is “out”. Thus, Jorge de Burgos, in *The Name of the Rose*, makes the general statement that truth and good are not being laughed at, and that, because laughter begets doubt, it is to be shunned by all true Christians.¹ Can one really believe that the Bible would contradict this opinion? The evidence at hand has prompted a modern theologian to say that, “the total absence of humour from the Bible is one of the most singular things of all literature”.² Surely, the Bible is no joking matter, and that in more than one sense.

As a matter of fact, there is a lot of wit and humour in the Bible.³ This has been recognised for ages, e.g., in the play on words, which are commonplace in the first pages of Genesis. Adam is “the one made from the soil” (cf. Gen 2:7: *'adamah*), hence he is an “earthling” or even a “redskin” (cf. *'adom*: red). Eve (*chavvah*) gets her name because she is “the mother of all living” (Gen 3:20: *kal-chay*).⁴ Cain’s name refers to Eve’s first experience of becoming a mother (Gen 4:1: *qaniti*: I have gotten), while her second-born might have his name Abel because he did not live very long (cf. *hebel*: breath?). Furthermore, as the story unfolds, parents and children are expelled from Eden, the place of delight (cf. *'adan*: to delight). This whole section of the book of Genesis, says W. F. Stinespring, has “a lightness of touch that has long

1. Cf Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose*, London: Book Club Associates, 1984, p. 132, and passim, where he gives all the reasons, and authorities, why Jesus could, but never did, laugh.

2. Cf Lucien Price, *Dialogues of Alfred North Whitehead*, London: Max Reinhardt, 1954, Dialogue 26 (April 5, 1942) pp. 186-196, quotation p. 195. Similar sentiments are expressed on pp. 28, 107, and 351. (Courtesy John Quiring, Center for Process Studies, Claremont.) The furthest A. N. Whitehead goes in allowing humouristic elements in the Bible are Elijah’s taunting the prophets of Baal (1 Kg 18), Haman hanged on his own gallows (Est 7), or, also, the riot of the silversmiths at Ephesus (Acts 19).

3. Gary Webster, *Laughter in the Bible*, St Louis: Bethany Press, 1960, p. 9, has figured out that, adding up the many varieties of laughter, there are over 250 biblical references to it. They are most heavily concentrated in the wisdom literature (Job, Ps, Prov, Qoh), occur frequently in the prophets (Is, Jer), and are also of great significance to the gospel writers. References to more scholarly discussions on wit, humour, and irony in the Bible are given in the first part of the Bibliography, below. In the following notes, we rely especially on W. F. Stinespring’s articles in *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, volume II (1960).

4. There is a further play on words in Gen 2:23b, which is not completely lost in the English translation. Here, Adam says: “She shall be called woman” (*'ishsha*) “because she was taken from man” (*me'ish*).

time been recognised. Who has smiled at the indecent haste, with which the guilty pair clothe themselves, and try to hide among the trees? And how sadly, yet ludicrously human, is it, when the man blames the woman, and she, in turn, blames the serpent? The whole atmosphere contrasts sharply with the austere account of creation that precedes.”⁵

The humorous elements, just noted, still do it, in some modern yarns. But there are many more amusing sections in the scriptures. Think only of Isaiah’s famous satire on the makers and worshippers of idols (Is 44:9-20; furthermore, Ps 115:4-8; Hos 13:2; Wis 13:11-14, 17), or of such incidents, where the statue of Dagon is pushed off his pedestal, and then lies face-down on the floor, with his two hands severed (1 Sam 5:3-4), or where the gods Bel and Nebo are loaded on beasts of burden, and carried off as booty (Is 46:1; also Jdgs 18:24; Dan 11:8; Jer 46:15).

As to religious office-bearers, there is the anecdote of the Samaritan priest, who was sent to Bethel to teach Israelites “how to worship Jahweh” (2 Kgs 17:28), and that of the prophet Balaam, hired to curse Israel, and who, against his own will, repeatedly blesses them (Num 22:5-24, 25), or, finally, the incident of the 70 priests of Bel, who used to feast on the offerings given to their god, and then were exposed by the footsteps they left from a nightly visit to their temple (Dan 14:16-22).⁶

Theologians, too, in the Bible, are the victims of irony and ridicule. One masterpiece of satire, is the book of Job, which continuously criticises the conventional religious ideas of its day, especially the dogma of perfect, and exact, retribution, or justness of reward, for men’s deeds on earth. Even the so-called “friends” of Job add to this effect by the very stuffiness, and conventionality, of their attacks. This is particularly so, because the reader knows in advance what the final outcome will be.⁷

Interesting, too, is the book of Jonah, which has an irony all of its own. Here a broad-minded Jew ridicules his own people, represented by the rebellious prophet, for their lack of missionary zeal, their prejudice against foreigners, and their failure to understand a God of love (cf., e.g., Jonah 4:10-11). Jonah’s theology contrasts with

5. Cf. W. F. Stinespring, *Art, Humour*, op. cit., p. 660B.

6. Compare in the Additions to Daniel also the story of the chaste Susanna. There is, in vv. 54-58, a rhyme (*schion* and *prinon*), and a definite wordplay. The elder, who affirms that he saw Susanna sinning under a small mastick tree, (*hupo schinon*) will be split in two (v. 55: *schizei*), whereas his companion, who indicated a mighty oak tree (*hupo prinon*) will be cut into pieces (v. 59: *prisai*; LXX: *kataprisei*). Only the NEB has attempted to render the pun into English: “under a *clove* tree . . . God’s angel will *cleave* you in two”, “under a *yew* tree . . . He is waiting to *hew* you down”.

7. Cf. W. F. Stinespring, *Art, Irony, and Satire*, op. cit., p. 727A.

the nationalistic outlook, found in the book of Esther, and is not unlike the broad-mindedness of Ruth, which stands up against the exclusiveness, professed in the work of the Chronist. Surely, we pious readers may join in with the One who laughs in heaven (cf. Ps 2:4; Prov 1:26), be it at the expense of pagan gods and their retinue, or even at the expense of Israel's own theologians and exegetes.

The Bible also has several funny stories, in which patriarchs, judges, and kings lose their composure, or are caught in the snares they set for others. For instance, Jacob, the first-born, because he "supplanted" his brother (Gen 27:36: *'aqav*), one day meets his match in Laban, who first marries off Leah to him (Gen 29:23), . . . by reason of birthright! (v. 26).

Then there is Samson, a sort of uncontrollable Till Eulenspiegel, or Peer Gynt. Always bawling, and excelling his rivals in muscular strength, yet, at the same time, no match for feminine wiles. Under his rough exterior, there is a witty, if untutored, mind, quick at repartee, an instinctive devotion to his own people, and a dogged determination in avenging wrongs, which culminates in a self-inflicted heroic death.⁸

There is also King David, who, with abandon, dances and whirls before the Ark, to the utter disgust of Michal (cf. 2 Sam 6:14-16). No. We rather expect people to stride solemnly after an Ark, and not to hop and to skip from it, wearing only a linen ephod! We have, apparently, forgotten that the Lord wants us to rejoice, and to shout for joy, in His presence (cf. Dt 12:18; Ps 33:1).

Things are not very much different in the New Testament.⁹ Some authors have made a lot out of the fact that "Jesus wept" (John 11:35; also Lk 19:41; Heb 5:7), whereas it is nowhere mentioned that He ever did laugh. Still, we must credit Jesus with creating a funny situation, when calling the chief tax collector of Jericho out of his hiding place in a tree (Lk 19:1-10). He also tricked Simon the Pharisee, in pronouncing His own judgment (Lk 43), and the High Priest, in confessing,

8. Something of the flavour of the entire Samson narrative can be sensed in J. Moffat's rendering of the Hebrew jingle in Jdgs 14:18: "if you hadn't used my heifer for your plough, you wouldn't have guessed my riddle now". Another instance, is the following free rendering of Jdgs 15:16: "With a bone of an ass, I've piled them in a mass! With a bone of an ass, I've slain a thousand men". One may also note Samson's straight-faced lies to Delilah in Jdgs 16:7, 11, 13 (cf. Stinespring, op. cit., 726B).

9. Several plays on words appear in the first gospel, the most famous one being probably Mt 16:18: "You are Peter (*petros*; Aramaic: *kepha*), and on this rock (*petra*; Aramaic: *kepha*) I will build My church." A satirical pun occurs, e.g., in 6:16: The Pharisees disfigure (*aphanizousin*) their faces, that they may figure (*phanosin*) in public as fasting. Not unsimilar, are 21:41 (NEB; Knox) and 24:30: The peoples of the earth shall wail (*kopsontai*), and they shall see (*opsontai*) the Son of man". In addition, it is well known that, in 22:23-33, Jesus outwits His opponents, and, in the next chapter, He develops a rather extended satire on the Pharisees, and their proverbial hypocrisy (note esp. 23: 24, 27).

unwittingly, His divine Sonship (Mt 26:64). After the resurrection, He played hide-and-seek with Mary Magdalene (John 20:13-16). And there is also something of a tongue-in-cheek attitude, when Jesus, in one parable, praises the unjust steward (Lk 16:8), and, in another one, has a Pharisee, i.e., a separatist, “standing by himself” (Lk 18: 11: D), and the publican “standing far from him” (v. 13).¹⁰

Even if we credit these, and other more-subtle points, to the gospel writers, they still indicate that Jesus’ biographers did not feel it inappropriate to thus depict our Lord. Nor are the New Testament theologians, John and Paul, reluctant to use humour and irony. Some of John’s examples include 7:42; 8:7; 9:27, 41; and 11:50. While Paul’s Corinthian correspondence shows also several interesting instances (cf. 1 Cor 4 and 9; 2 Cor 3:1; 10:12; 11:4, 7; 12:11, 13, 16). Surely, the New Testament, too, is full of humour!

Now, we must not forget that, between the not-always-cautious inspired writers (or, also, those who feel at home with the original languages), on the one side, and the Bible readers of today, on the other side, there have been whole generations of devout Bible translators. Their linguistic choices did not always allow them to create equivalent plays on words: “Traduttore, traditore”, as the Italians say. But, in addition to this, translators have often imposed their own norms of decency and propriety on the holy scriptures, and have robbed them of much of their humanity and earthliness. Hence, it is necessary, today, to go even beyond the notes of a study bible to discover the numerous puns and plays on words, which are present in the original Hebrew, or Greek.

Some plays on words, we have mentioned already, for instance, regarding Jacob the “supplanter” (cf Gen 27:36). Elsewhere, the patriarch’s name alludes to the child gripping Esau’s heel (Gen 25:26: also *‘aqav*). As to Esau, himself, his name (*‘esav*) is explicitly connected with the fact that his whole body was “like a hairy garment” (Gen 25:25: *khe’adderet se‘ar*), which rather alludes at the land of Seir (*se‘iyir*), the territory later inhabited by Esau’s descendants, the Edomites. Elsewhere, the patriarch’s name is twice related to “the red land” (*‘Edom*), because, at birth, his skin was “reddish” (also Gen 25:25), and later, because he sold his birth privilege for “that red broth” (v. 30: *ha‘adom*), further explained as “a soup of lentils” (v.34).

10. In the gospel story of Mt 9:1-8, parr., Jesus is about to heal the paralytic, when His opponents intervene and blame Him for claiming to have a power reserved to God alone. For the benefit of the teachers of the Law, Jesus seems to change the proposed act of mercy, in an apologetic argument. This is a most unusual argument *a minore parte*. It might also be (as H. Clavier, 1959, p. 14, puts it) that some bystanders had objected that it does not cost any effort just to *talk*, but that a visible proof was needed. In that case, too, Jesus would have taken up the challenge.

Isaac's story, too, is full of puns, which are all hidden, in translation. At his birth, Abraham "laughs" in surprise (Gen 17:17: P), and so does Sarah (18:12: J). Whereas the women folk "rejoice" with her, or maybe "mock" about her late motherhood (21:6). In addition, there is the same hint in Ishmael's "playing" or "making sport" with Isaac (21:9), and, finally, in Isaac's "fondling" of his wife Rebecca (26:8).

A few words might be added on the use of certain euphemisms, although it is not easy to appreciate the exact connotations they had for the original audiences. A well-known instance, is Rachel's treatment of Laban's household gods, which she had stolen, and hidden inside her camel's saddle, and then pretends that "the custom of women" was upon her (cf. Gen 31:35 KJV). This rather unusual way makes one smile, since we are not used to such kind of playfulness in the history of our venerable patriarchs and matriarchs! Yet, one should realise that, in the Semitic culture, there was probably nothing funny about this particular idiom, and that any such impression is only created by the different conventions, which prevail among today's speakers of English. If there is any humour involved at all, it should be in the fact that Laban's tiny household gods are so worthless that even a woman in Rachel's condition does not hesitate to sit on them.¹¹

Then, there is, also, the anecdote of Elijah, making fun of the pagan priests. Although quite in line with the satires of other prophets, his wit is lost in most translations, except in the recent TEV (1 Kgs 18:27: using "relieving himself", against "busy", "retired", "engaged", "moving", "pursuing", in the other versions). Saul, a great king, doesn't fare better, when, traditionally, he goes into a cave "to cover his feet" (1 Sam 24:3 KJV), and only recent translations have dared to drop this euphemism, and refer to a royal relief action (cf. NEB, TEV, NIV).

There is no need to insist further. Translation techniques have changed, meanwhile, so that even some Bible Societies no longer find it *infra dig* to produce biblical cartoons and comic strips. People have come to realise, more easily, that the tricks of the stage were as familiar to the writers of the past, as they are to public speakers of today. Both often use a light-hearted joke to keep the hearers' attention.

11. Cf. J. De Waard, "Do you use 'clean language'?" *The Bible Translator* 22, 1971, pp. 107-115; quoted p. 110.

There is, then, no longer a quarrel with humour in the divinely-inspired, canonical scriptures.

Book Review

Christianity without Festishes: an African Critique and Recapture of Christianity, by F. Eboussi Boulaga. Maryknoll NY: Orbis Books, 1984.

Christianity without fetishes might sound like the war cry of a missionary, bent on eradicating syncretistic practices. In fact, it is a cry *against* the way the Christian faith has been presented to Africans, by missionaries. The signal comes from a West African professor of philosophy, who left the Society of Jesus, and the priesthood, after becoming one of the leading theologians of his region.

Boulaga sees fetishism (“which localises the sacred, or the divine, and endows persons, effects, or things, with supernatural characteristics and powers”) in the institutions and dogmas of Christianity, beginning with the “foundational, and authorising, principle”, the notion of revelation. “We shall escape the fetishism of revelation, only if we *admit*, with all its theoretical and practical consequences, the metaphorical character of the notion, or expression, of “revelation”, or “Word of God”. (Emphasis his.)

He calls into evidence the sinister social and political effects of missionary discourse, that asserts its own absolute truthfulness. The alienating results of such discourse often give the lie to the very truth they claim to announce. A quote from Kierkegaard, in the last paragraph of the book, expresses what is Boulaga’s own concern, that “it would not be of much use to lead thousands to accept the truth, if, precisely by the manner, in which they accepted it, they were to find themselves excluded from it” (p. 229).

Like Kierkegaard, though, Boulaga launches his “attack upon Christendom” with the intention of rescuing Christianity from it. The second half of his book is an attempt to recapture the truth of Christianity, “upstream, as it were, from where dogmas begin” (p. 85). He will accept a reinterpretation of the “Christic phenomena”, he says, only if it meets two criteria:

- (1) that the questions, strivings, aspirations, and tasks of the time of Jesus still be our own “in a certain way”;
- (2) that the gospel furnish us, not with specific, singular content, but with a model of self-restructuring, in and by history.

He attempts to meet both of these, in a 60-page-long reassessment of the evidence about Jesus Christ, an assessment that dwells, in an enlightening way, on the social and political context of Jesus' message.

He could not finish up, of course, with just a new "way to think about Jesus", but takes the constructive work to a practical conclusion in "Rules of Conversion" (chapter 10), and "Sketches for a Plan of Action" (chapter 11).

This is a difficult book, and I confess to not having understood parts of it. Boulaga's philosophical erudition is abundantly clear, but some of us would be helped if allusions were more explicit, and terms, which are technical, and specific to certain disciplines (e.g., linguistics, philosophy, philosophical hermeneutics, deconstruction), were unpacked in this context. His work is not entirely without antecedents, but we are supplied with a mere seven footnotes in 11 chapters; within the text itself, references, by name, to other thinkers, are rare.

In its seriousness, though, the book is an important contribution to the discussion about theology in context, a discussion that he feels is often trivial.

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