Vol 4, No 2 October 1988

MELANESIAN JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY

Journal of Melanesian Association of Theological Schools

K3.00

The *Melanesian Journal of Theology* aims to stimulate the writing of theology by Melanesians for Melanesians. It is an organ for the regular discussion of theological topics at a scholarly level by staff and students of the member schools of the Melanesian Association of Theological Schools (MATS), though contributions from non-members and non-Melanesians will be considered.

The *Melanesian Journal of Theology* is ecumenical, and it is committed to the dialogue of Christian faith with Melanesian cultures. The Editors will consider for publication all manuscripts of scholarly standard on matters of concern to Melanesian Christians, and of general theological interest. Manuscripts should be typed, double-spaced, and in duplicate.

The *Melanesian Journal of Theology* appears twice yearly, in April and October.

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES	DEVELOPING COUNTRIES	DEVELOPED COUNTRIES
Annual subscription	PNG K5.00	US $7.50
Single issue	PNG K3.00	US $5.00
Students per issue	PNG K2.00	
MATS membership (incl. annual subscription)	PNG K10.00	

(Airmail charges supplied on request)

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Journal of the Melanesian Association of Theological Schools

Typesetting by KPI, Madang

Cover design by Br Jeff Daly CP and John Kua

ISSN 0256-856X Volume 4 Number 2, October 1988 PNG K3.00

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[In the original, printed version, page numbering started from the front cover, and there were two blank pages in the introduction. This has been adjusted for this online version, with a difference to the page numbering. –Revising ed.]

EDITORIAL

EVANGELISATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The Melanesian Association of Theological Schools held its students' conference in June, 1988, at Popondetta. The hosts were Newton Anglican Theological College, and guests stayed at the nearby Christian Training Centre. The theme of the conference was "Evangelisation and Development". The conference generated a strong sense of fellowship, and a wish to act together to address current issues of development. At the time of the conference, pollution was a particular concern.

In evangelisation, we proclaim that Jesus is the personal Lord of each of us, and, at the same time, Lord of all creation and history. So He unites all particular beings within a community of love. This love is the power of the Holy Spirit, which is active and organic, promoting growth or "development". As Lord of all, and Lord of each, Jesus Christ redeems us from domination by any power within the world, including the tendency of any society or culture totally to determine the life of its members. Both village-based subsistence societies, and technological nation-states, can smother the identities of its members, for the sake of the society's claim to be totally right in all things. If nothing in the society can be challenged or criticised, then its members are prey to every disturbance that occurs, with no right to take personal control. Hence, both traditional and modern societies can be haunted by fear and superstition of nameless powers. Therefore, it is the gospel of personal salvation from evil that opens the way to true development. It affirms the possibility of personal control, within the overall control of God.

The West has taken the idea of detachment from control by social and natural powers and turned it into an ideology of rampant individualism. Human beings have asserted their right to control social and natural relationships, and have ignored the truth that control is a gift from God, through Jesus Christ. They have turned the means of salvation, release from bondage, into a trick for picking out from life the bits they want, and ignoring the rest. Instead of life as a whole being a gift from God, it is an inert mass of things, from which we extract and consume, like shoppers in a supermarket. The things, the people we cannot make use of are cast aside, like rubbish, waste, and pollution. Hence, the concern for pollution at the conference. Take

the example of a plantation, such as, that for oil palm. The features of plant life, which can be extracted and manipulated for human consumption, are kept and everything else in the "bush", indeed, every feature of village life that does not serve that end, is removed. Then we are surprised to read in the papers (*Times of PNG*, September 15, 1988) of pollution seeping from the edges of the plantation.

We need the gospel to remind us that the incarnation shows us that all life is a sacrament of God's love for us, and needs to be contemplated reverently in prayer, and cared for responsibly in action. Development is about the control of their lives by each particular person, but such control is only possible if we recognise the overall control of God.

MY EXPERIENCE WITH MATS

FR WALTER SIBA

Newton Theological College,
Popondetta

For the last six years, I have been involved with the Melanesian Association of Theological Schools, on its Executive Body, and also in attending many of its Study Institutes. Through its Study Institutes, I have come to realise that all churches in Melanesia are facing and struggling with the same issues and problems, and, through many discussions, involving both staff and students, the Institutes were aiming at addressing them together. This then taught me that we need to work together as one member of the body of Christ, in order to deal with some of our endless problems. This shows that the churches in Melanesia will have to work together in theological education, to prepare our young men to go out and deal with these issues together, in order to be successful. It shows that we are not only preaching unity from our different pulpits, but that we are putting what we said into practice. MATS also helps students in different colleges see that "ministries" is a corporate ministry, and that they have to work together, in order to deal with the issues of today.

MATS makes churches realise the richness of working together in areas of development that Melanesian countries are facing today. Our respective governments will only listen to us if we get together and voice our common stand on particular issues that affect our people today. MATS, as I see it, has to perform the prophetic role in its work and plans in order to provide education that will be relevant to our different societies in Melanesia for many years yet to come.

MATS, through its publication of the *Melanesian Journal of Theology*, enables many people to know that theological education in Melanesia is developing, and not just secular education. It does encourage Melanesian theologians to rediscover the richness of Melanesian religion and theology that it has, which begins to get lost and forgotten by our people, because of secular education and development, which are being imported from overseas.

I can see that the future of our churches' cooperation in all areas of ministries lies in the hands of our Melanesian theologians, and I want to encourage our young pastors and priests to think seriously, and support this Association, if we want to stay relevant to our countries, not only through our respective governments, but through small sects; and our theological education must be that of having vision to prepare our men to handle them in years to come.

I have experienced, and learnt a lot, from this Association, and I believe that it will continue to provide high theological education for our young people of tomorrow.

PERSONAL RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE AS A RESOURCE FOR THEOLOGY BY THE PEOPLE

An Application of the Approach of the Alister Hardy Research Centre

REVD DR CHRISTOPHER GARLAND

Talk of God, by "the people", must be open to God at every step, for God is infinite, and so beyond all human knowing, unless he chooses to reveal Himself. For infinite power to reveal Himself to the people, without dominating them, or destroying them, is an act of infinite love. Therefore, theology is open to the people, so that they may respond in freedom. God expresses Himself in infinite love by creating and caring for the people, in creating them with the capacity to respond to Him in love, and in giving them His Holy Spirit of love to unite them to Himself in love. When the people fail to respond to His love, God Himself takes the first step to save and renew their fallen humanity, by coming down to their level to raise them to His own. So, God entered human history in the person his Son, Jesus Christ, and renewed His own purpose in creation of involving the people in the relationship of love between the Trinity. So, seen "from above", theology is, at every stage, the free activity of God's grace. Yet, because it is an activity of God's gracious love, it always makes possible the free response of the people. No doctrinal statement can be used as the "last word" to close the conversation between God and the people, but every contribution opens the way for a further contribution. No human culture or group can claim to have produced an absolute statement of Christian truth, which closes the way for another culture to have its say. God expresses His love to the people of every culture by creating and caring for them, by giving them the capacity to respond in their own way, and by sending the Holy Spirit to arouse them to respond. By word and sacrament, the Son offers His presence, in a way that can be embodied in every culture.

In Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, God makes Himself known to the people, within a personal relationship. People know each other

personally, not as meaningless collections of sensations, nor as propositions, with a fixed meaning, but as mutual participants in a continuing conversation. Conversation or "communication" between persons does not just take place at the conceptual level of talk, but involves the whole person, as one person or people reaches out with body, feelings, thoughts, and intentions to the senses, heart, mind, and will of the other, and invites response. Such a "transcendental method" of knowing requires that we be attentive, intelligent, rational, and responsible, as Bernard Lonergan would say.[1] We are reminded of the command to love God "with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength (Mark 12:30). When we attend with the senses, we receive a preconception impression of another person. Inasmuch as we are motivated by genuine interest and concern to "know" someone for their own sake, and not just for what we can get out of them, and, in as much as we are not passive victims of data pressed upon us, our knowing will be an act of love. Even at the level of the senses, information is not just received as scraps of "data". The other levels of our knowing already join here, within a sense of holistic reality of that of which we are aware. A body is never just a body, it is always the outward form of a person, and stands as a symbol of the whole person. So, at the level of attentiveness, we already have a grasp of overall form, given in "body language", through gesture, sign, "looks", behaviour, glance, cry, or vision. At the level of intelligence, or understanding, these signals are interpreted as thoughts or feelings, intuitions, hunches, moods, myths, or dreams. Yet, such isolated insights need to sifted and set within a system or theory, if they are to be explained according to "reason". Further**,** the more we respond to an experience, or a person, the more we truly "know" it or them. It is by re-enacting, writing about, or picturing someone, or something, that we make it symbolically available to our conscious mind. So, all the levels of consciousness work together, within the context of two-way exchange relationships, to produce what we call "knowledge". In this way, knowledge is not abstract, but concrete, and to deny its bodily, sensate base is to empty it. This is important in a theology of the people, for it affirms that value of all the experience of the people at its most everyday "gut level",[2] and challenges a merely "academic" theology imposed from above. Although we may be said to evolve or "emerge" from lower to higher levels of consciousness, we need to bring with us all we have learnt at previous levels, to allow it to be "sublated", or integrated, within a more-fully-organised way of knowing.

We usually identify revelation with the concepts that are the end product of the human organising of knowledge. Yet, in the Bible, we see all the stages of the delivery and reception of knowledge in use. Gestures, moods, visions, events, signs, symbols, are all used to convey knowledge of the relationship between God and man. As all these levels of consciousness are present in the delivery or "externalisation" and "objectification" of revelation, so they can be present in its "internalisation", or reception.[3]

To any new knowledge, we bring a "pre-understanding", which is the result of the two-way interaction between our social inheritance and our personal capacity. As a result of that pre-understanding, the same event would be experienced very differently by a person from one culture to the way it was experienced by a person from another culture. Yet, in as much as a person committed himself to all the levels of consciousness involved in truly "knowing" a person, or experiencing them, the person or experience would make a distinctive impression upon him that was true to the person or experience, and not just the prejudices of the experiencing person. The "pre-understanding" will serve to develop the consciousness of the person, so that they have the skills and categories to cope with the new experience. The new experience will have power, more or less completely, to transform the understanding of the experiencing person. In this way, it is possible to say that all previous experience, especially religious experience, can serve to provide a "pre-understanding" of, a preparation for, the reception of, the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. At the same time, that revelation will have the power to transform and renew the pre-understanding of the person, and to raise their consciousness on to the new higher level required to cope with contact with a new "higher" reality. The new level of consciousness will be the level of the "Spirit", the level of the free, gracious operation of God's love, which calls for a free and loving response. This level of the "Spirit" will not exist in abstraction from all that has gone before, because it is given in the incarnation, the bodily life of Jesus Christ, and so it integrates all levels of human consciousness. It has been anticipated, and human consciousness has been prepared to receive it, by the prophetic work of the Holy Spirit in all creation, giving hints and glimpses of the powerful love of God.

At the level of responsibility, the human response to the revelation of God's love in action is "love in action". At the level of reason, the revelation of God is interpreted as meaningful history, or conceptual system, based on the expression of God's love in the cross and resurrection of Jesus. On the level of

understanding, revelation is experienced as moments of awe and wonder at the holiness of God's powerful love shown on the cross. At the level of the senses, revelation is experienced as the pain and joy associated with the trembling fear, and fascinated love, excited by the cross and resurrection. Thus, central to the knowledge of the revelation of God, is the response, the concept, the feeling, and direct contact with the "Holy".[4] All other experience of wonder at the "holy" prepare for, and is fulfilled, in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ.

The people are, therefore, invited to bring all their experience, especially their experience of the "holy", as the pre-understanding for constructing a theology, based on the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. They should not reject their own consciousness in favour of a supposedly more "evolved" consciousness provided by those, whose lives have already been transformed by the revelation. In other words, Melanesians do not have to become Europeans before they become Christians. They already have, within their own culture, skills and categories that are capable of being raised to a higher level and transformed to receive the gospel. That does not prevent them, of course, coming to know for themselves, through their own ways of knowing, experiences and persons form European culture. Thus, there will be dialogue between European and Melanesian cultures, but it can be on equal terms as partners. The way of "evolution", for Melanesian culture, will not be into a pre-set European culture, but into an authentic development of their own culture, cleansed and raised by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and enabled and stimulated by European witness.

Human beings are moved to awesome fear and wondering love by what goes beyond their previous experience, especially when the new experience points beyond itself, in a way that seems totally open, without limits. Great light, great dark, great quiet, great noise, great dangers, great security, are all moments of holiness, evoking moods of reverence. The moments will be rich in their power to generate a whole cluster of thoughts, feelings, and associations with other events. Such clusters of implicit meaning will need to be made explicit, interpreted as story and concept. The person will feel either swamped or accepted by what is greater by himself; diminished or exalted, he will feel his own skills enhanced, or belittled; he will feel fed by the richness of what exceeds himself, or drained by a vast emptiness. The presence of the holy will be a summons to conversion, to turn totally towards the holy, and away from lesser experience. In as much as he responds, he will perceive the

goodness of the holy, and be aroused to love, faith, and hope. In as much as he clings to lesser experiences, he will not properly see the holy, and will only sense darkness and threat. In this way, knowledge of the holy both results from, and leads to, a moral and spiritual response. It will lead to the maturing, the "self-actualisation", of the whole person, to the capacity to accept and convey peace, and to accept both oneself and all other persons. In this way, it is the "holy" that is the fundamental force for justice, development, and peace, and it is conversion to Christ that is the summing up of all human experiences of holiness. Christ, the light of the world, shines in the total darkness of the cross, His voice of calm speaks in the unrestrained raging of natural storm, or human madness. Moments of holiness have been described by the psychologist, Abraham Maslow, as "peak experiences", and he claims that it is through them that human beings find their deepest needs for acceptance and significance met, and that they emerge on to ever-higher levels of consciousness, and so achieve full maturity of character. We may see the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the fulfilment of all "peak experiences", and the word and sacraments, which express that experience, as the means whereby the deepest human needs are met.[5]

Traditional culture in Papua New Guinea contains many opportunities for experiencing and expressing wonder at moments of holiness in life. Dreams and visions not only recall great persons and experiences of the past, opening the way to the world of the ancestors, but also anticipate the future, alerting to the threat of attack, or promise of blessing. Rituals and dances are performed in a mood of dignity and reverence, exaltation, and joy. Feasts excite expectations of unlimited plenty, calling for unstinted giving, but hinting at even greater return. Sacred times, sacred places, sacred social roles, all provide occasions for contact with what is unknown, and "other". Many such experiences remain pre-conceptual, implicit rather than explicit. They are made known by gesture and hint, rather than articulated act, and coherent speech. Nevertheless, their intrinsic holiness is great, and they can provide rich resources for reflection and response, as those who have experienced them emerge on to higher levels of consciousness. Thus, the cultures of Papua New Guinea have, within them, a store of skills, and ways of knowing, which can prepare the people to know for themselves the revelation of Jesus Christ. In turn, the revelation of Christ will "convert" those cultures, not distorting or diminishing them, but affirming them at every existing level of consciousness, from the most basic gut-level, upwards. It will not belittle, or make captive,

the culture, but will bring free growth to that which has been stunted by being directed to an inadequate object of attention. By attending to the union of God and man in Christ, it will find unlimited scope for all its capacity for growth.

If the Melanesian capacity for wonder at the holiness of life is to be made available as a preparation for the gospel, and as a means to spiritual growth, then it needs to be described as fully, and as truly, as possible. A possible way in which this could be done is through the methods of the Alister Hardy Research Centre, Oxford, which conducts research into religious experience. The statistical methods used by the centre, and their use of "wordy" written questionnaires, addressed to individual people, may be more appropriate to an individualistic, literate, and materialistic European culture, than to communal, oral, and holistic cultures, like those of Papua New Guinea. Similarly, some of the questions may be too specific to a European culture to be appropriate to Papua New Guinea, or they may seem to be prying into areas that are too private. Nevertheless, the questionnaire may provide a framework for people to answer, in their own way, the basic question: "Have you ever been aware of, or influenced by, a presence, or a power, whether you call it God or not, which is different from your everyday self?" If sufficient answers are obtained, they can be used for reflection in the construction of a theology of the people in Melanesia. They may also be analysed and sent to the Alister Hardy Research Centre for comparison with the results obtained in the culture of Britain.

Sir Alister Hardy was a distinguished biologist, who contributed theories about evolution, which are accepted by most biologists today. Yet, Alister Hardy did not think that the "living stream" that carried human evolution forward was caused just by an inner hunger to satisfy material needs. He pointed out that the prolonged dependence of human children on their parents resulted in a capacity to be open to the consciousness of a superior, and to learn from them. This capacity to be open to what is above evolved into a readiness to worship, to respond to "the divine flame.[6] Since evolution "worked" in this way, worship of God must be an intrinsic part of the evolutionary process, and could only be there if God had put it there. So, on the basis of biological researches, Alister Hardy argued for the "spiritual nature of man", and for communication between God and men. In this way, he not only found a place in "natural theology" for religious experiences, but also showed how a readiness to learn led to receptivity to revelation, to be sensitive to communication with what is other than man. Alister Hardy's work may be

criticised as too "biological", and insufficiently historical in itself, to be used as a complete basis for a Christian theology, but it offers an essential element in the exchange between revelation, experience, and reason, which will make up a full theology.[7] Bernard Lonergan has called for just such studies as the Alister Hardy Research Centre provides: "The functional speciality, foundations, will derive its first set of categories from religious experience. That experience is something exceedingly simple, and, in time, also exceedingly simplifying, but it also is something exceedingly rich and enriching. There are needed studies of religious interiority: historical, phenomenological, psychological, and sociological. There is needed, in the theologian, the spiritual development that will enable him, both to enter in to the experience of others, and to frame the terms and relations that will express that experience."[8] Also, a recent report on the Doctrine of God, commissioned by the bishops of the Church of England, quotes Alister Hardy, himself, in order to state that theology must take the data of religious experience into account: "the encounter with the holy is not to be found only in places, which can have a "religious" label put upon them. Indeed, as Alister Hardy points out, "Contrary to the premise on which most Christian evangelism is planned, the awareness of God's presence has little to do with preaching or teaching. It is most often found in solitude, and is triggered by natural beauty, music, or literature, or by illness, depression, or despair." Some people, who have this kind of experience, carry on in much the same way as they did before the experience, but a significant number of people feel driven to church, because, in the church, they expect to have these experiences validated and given a context within which their life can take on a new meaning and purpose. For them, the meaning of the experience is that they have been addressed by God and it is self-authenticating. . . .

"These experiences are difficult to systematise, but there are enough similarities in them to form a cluster of meaning, which is part of the data to be considered."[9]

Writers from every Christian background, from the Roman Catholic to the Evangelical, and the Charismatic, or Pentecostal, have emphasised the place of personal religious experience in constructing a Christian theology.[10] This does not mean that all knowledge of God is reduced to one or two vivid moments, or conversion experiences, nor that the reality of God is confined within the limits of what human being are conscious. However, human experience of the holiness of God is that it is all-loving, as well as all-

powerful. Therefore, He can be trusted to be faithful, and not to reveal Himself in ways that are against human experience and reason. God makes Himself totally open to man, that man may, in Christ, be totally open to God. Grace perfects nature.[11] In terms of Melanesian theology, this means that Melanesian religious experience is a necessary, but not exclusive, element of Melanesian theology. European Christian tradition has handed on to Papua New Guinea the word and sacrament of the revelation of God in Christ, and has shared the rational skills developed to interpret that revelation. So what Melanesians inherit is not a completed theology, but a way of doing theology, according to the intrinsic capacities of the human mind to engage in, and reflect upon, experience, in terms of the self-authenticating truth of God Himself. Since God reveals Himself, and is experienced, as holy, Christian theology must meet the test of holiness in word and deed. God is of unlimited power, therefore, no theology should serve merely the interest of any worldly power, or local interest. God is all-loving, therefore, theology should reflect God's faithful love, by being, at once, consistent and unified, yet respecting the distinctiveness of all God's creatures. These tests do not belong within any one culture, Melanesian or European, but reflect the transcendent, and, therefore, universal holiness of God Himself.

All readers of this article are, therefore, asked to complete, or, at least, respond to this questionnaire, and to encourage as many other people to do so as possible.

Please send questionnaires (cut from the journal or duplicated) to:

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NOTES

1. Lonergan, Bernard, *Method in Theology*, London UK: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1972, pp. 35ff.
2. Dorr, Donald, *Spirituality and Justice*, Dublin Ire: Gill & Macmillan, 1984, p. 21.
3. Berger, Peter, *The Social Construction of Reality*, Harmondsworth UK: Penguin Books, 1967.
4. Otto, Rudolf, *The Idea of the Holy*, London UK: Pelican, 1959.

5. Maslow, Abraham, *Towards a Psychology of Being*, New York NY: Oxford University Press, pp. 79ff.
6. Hardy, Alister, *The Divine Flame*, London UK: Collins, 1966, p. 27.
7. Dulles, Avery, *Models of Revelation*, Dublin Ire: Gill & Macmillan, 1983, for the need for theology to be based on historical revelation mediated through human consciousness.
8. Lonergan, Bernard, *Method in Theology*, p. 290.
9. The Doctrine Commission of the Church of England, *We Believe in God*, London UK: Church House Publishing, 1987, p. 139.
10. See, for example, Edwards, Dennis, *Human Experience of God*, Dublin Ire: Gill & Macmillan, 1984; Hughes, Gerard, *God of Surprises*, London UK: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1985; Tozer, A. W., *The Knowledge of the Holy*, New York NY: Harper & Row, 1961; Proudfoot, W., *Religious Experience*, Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1985.
11. Avis, Paul, *Methods of Modern Theology*, Basingstoke UK: Marshall Pickering, 1986, quotes St Thomas Aquinas, "the way up and the way down are the same", p. 38.

QUESTIONAIRE
PERSONAL RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

Name: .....
Address: .....
.....

The first section asks about the general pattern of your religious experience. For some people, such experience occurs in particular moments of insight. For others, religious awareness develops more gradually, so that it may not be easy to pick out particular occasions as being of outstanding significance. "Have you ever been aware of, or influenced by, a presence or a power, whether you call it God or not, which is different from your everyday self?"

1. Which pattern of experience is most like yours?
   a. One particular moment or period of insight .....
   b. A number of different separate insights .....
   c. A steady growth of awareness .....
   d. A steady growth of awareness, with special moment of insight .....
   e. Something else (PLEASE DESCRIBE BELOW) .....

2. Many people who have had such experience say that there are "triggers", or specific events, or circumstances, that set them off. Below is a list of triggers that people described. Please read through the list before putting a tick opposite those that are right for your experience(s).

a.	Natural beauty	.....	o.	Child birth	.....
b.	Sacred places	.....	p.	The prospect of death	.....
c.	Taking part in a religious service	.....	q.	The death of others	.....
d.	Prayer	.....	r.	Crises in personal relations	.....
e.	Meditation	.....	s.	Silence, solitude	.....
f.	Visual art	.....	t.	At a feast	.....
g.	Literature, drama, film, dance	.....	u.	Chewing betelnut	.....
h.	Creative work	.....	v.	In a dream or vision	.....
i.	Physical activity	.....	w.	Sitting in the village "house" with others	.....
j.	Relaxation	.....	x.	Because of garden or hunting, magic or sorcery	.....
k.	Sexual love-making	.....	y.	Something else (PLEASE DESCRIBE)	.....
l.	Happiness	.....			
m.	Depression or despair	.....			
n.	Illness	.....			

3. (1) People give many different kinds of descriptions of what their experience was like. Here is a list of some of the things they say happened. Please read the list before ticking all those descriptions that apply to your experience(s).

a.	A sense of security, protection, or peace	.....
b.	A sense of joy, happiness, or well-being	.....
c.	A sense of new strength in myself	.....
d.	A sense of guidance, vocation, or inspiration	.....
e.	A sense of awe, reverence, or wonder	.....
f.	A sense of certainty, clarity, or enlightenment	.....
g.	I felt exaltation, excitement, or ecstasy	.....
h.	I was lost for words	.....
i.	A sense of harmony, order, or unity	.....
j.	A sense of timelessness	.....
k.	I had a feeling of love, or affection, within me	.....
l.	There was a yearning, desire, or nostalgia	.....
m.	A sense that I was forgiven, restored, or renewed	.....
n.	A sense of integration, wholeness, or fulfilment	.....
o.	A sense of hope or optimism	.....
p.	I was released from the fear of death	.....
q.	I felt fear or horror	.....
r.	A sense of remorse or guilt	.....
s.	A sense of indifference or detachment	.....
t.	A sense of purpose behind events	.....
u.	A sense that my prayers were answered in events	.....
v.	A sense of non-human presence	.....
w.	Something else (PLEASE DESCRIBE)	.....

(2) Which, if any, of the above descriptions is the most appropriate to your experience? (Just give the letter) .....

4. People quite often speak of specific sensations in connection with their experience. The list below describes several of these. Did your experience(s) have any of them? Please read through the list before putting a tick opposite the appropriate ones.

a.	I had a vision	.....
b.	I had an "illumination"	.....
c.	I had the sense of being bathed in light	
d.	I had a feeling of unity with my surroundings or with other people	.....
e.	I felt I was lifted out of my body	.....
f.	I felt that in a strange way this had happened to me before (déjà vu)	.....

g.	My surroundings were transformed in a remarkable way	.....
h.	I heard a voice, which called me	.....
i.	I was given guidance by a voice	.....
j.	I "spoke in tongues" (glossolalia)	.....
k.	I heard an inner music or other sounds	.....
l.	I experienced physical healing	.....
m.	I felt warmth, or a fire	.....
n.	I felt physical comforted	.....
o.	I felt I was being hit or shocked	.....
p.	I felt physically guided	.....
r.	I was aware of a perfume or smell at the time	.....
s.	I knew what was going on somewhere else (telepathy)	.....
t.	I knew what was going to happen before it happened (precognition)	.....
u.	I saw in my mind something going on elsewhere (clairvoyance)	.....
v.	I got in touch with someone who had died	.....
w.	I saw an apparition or ghost	.....
x.	Something else (PLEASE SPECIFY)	.....

Many people describe specific experiences that happened at a particular time in their lives. If you have had an experience of this type, please answer questions 5-8 below. (If you have had more than one such experience, choose the one that has been most important to you.)

(If your experience has not included these special moments, go to question 9.)

5. If you had to choose one word, or maybe a few words, to describe your feelings immediately before you had the experience, what would you say?

6. Did the experience come: When you were wide awake? ..... Between waking and sleeping? ..... While you were asleep, in a dream? .....

7. Approximately how long did the experience itself, apart from its after-effects, last? ..... A fraction of a second ..... Between one and 10 seconds ..... Between 10 seconds and a minute ..... Between a minute and an hour ..... Between an hour and a day ..... Several days ..... Several weeks ..... Other (PLEASE SPECIFY) .....

8. a. How would you describe your state of mind after the experience left you? .....
   b. How long did this state of mind last? .....

The next section is about the way your experience has affected your life, and how you interpret it to yourself.

9. Has the experience affected your life in any way? Tick the appropriate statement.

   Not at all ..... Slightly ..... Quite a lot .....
   A great deal ..... More than anything else .....

10. If your answer to question 9 was "Yes", can you describe the way in which your experience has altered your outlook on life?
    .....

11. a.What did you think was the cause of your experience at the time it first happened? .....
    b.What do you now think was the cause of it? The same, or different? If different, in what way?.....

12. Have you told anyone else about your experience (apart from the Alister Hardy Research Centre)?
    Yes ..... No .....

13. a.If you have told other people about your experience, what was their relationship to you? .....
    b. What was their reaction when you told them?
    .....
    c.If you have never told anyone else about your experience, why not? .....

14. Do you view your experience as being in some way religious?
    Yes ..... No .....

15. If your answer to question 14 is "Yes", can you say why you think of your experience as religious? .....

16. How old were you when you first had experience of this kind?

Under 5 years	.....	35-44 years	.....
05-15 years	.....	45-54 years	.....
15-24 years	.....	55-64 years	.....
25-34 years	.....	65 or over	.....

17. How recently have you had an experience like this?
    Now ……
    Within the last week ……
    Between a week and a year ago ……
    Between a year and ten years ago ……
    More than ten years ago ……

18. How often have you have an experience like this?

    Once ……. Twice ……. Several times …….
    Often ……. All of the time …….

19. If you think of "people in general", how many of them would say they'd had an experience like this?

    None ……. Very few ……. About half …….
    Most of them ……. All of them …….

The next section is about the environment in which you grew up.

20. How important was/is the spiritual side of life for your mother (mother substitute)?

    Of no importance ……. Slightly important ……. Fairly important ……. Very important ……. I can't answer …….

21. How important was/is the spiritual side of life of your father (father substitute)?

    Of no importance ……. Slightly important ……. Fairly important ……. Very important ……. I can't answer …….

22. If you belonged to a religious faith, or denomination, as a child, which one was that? (If none, say "none") …….

23. Are you involved in any religious faith or denomination now? If "yes", which one? …….

24. How often, on average, do you attend a religious service or ritual?

    More that once a week ……. Once a week ……. About once a month ……. A few times a year ……. Only weddings, funerals, baptisms, etc. ……. Never …….

25. Whether you attend religious services or not, do you have some religious belief?

    Yes ……. No …….

NOTES TOWARDS THE CHRISTIANISING OF CULTURES IN MELANESIA

FR A. MALONE

I came to Papua New Guinea 18 years ago. This year is my tenth teaching here at Holy Spirit Seminary. Looking back now, I am struck by two dominating features. The first is the rapid pace of change in both the secular and religious aspects of life in Papua New Guinea. One consequence of these changes has been social instability, as outside forces have altered or manipulated the customs and traditions of Papua New Guineans. Another major insight has been formulated already by Dr Reiner Jaspers, MSC, in a paper entitled: "A Brief History of the Catholic church in PNG". Dr Jaspers concluded with these words:

> The Catholic church contributes, in a spirit of cooperation and ecumenism, in an essential manner to the development of the material, intellectual, and spiritual life of the people. However, the Catholic church has still to find her Melanesian identity.

The title of this lecture, "Notes Towards the Christianising of Cultures within Melanesia", ought to alert everyone to the provisional nature of what is offered, and yet allows me to incorporate the two previously-mentioned observations, viz., changes in Melanesian cultures, and the Christian dimension of Melanesian cultures.

I begin by explaining two terms: "Culture" and "Secularisation". Then I will signpost where I believe future priests can direct the extensions, commitment, and vitality of the many disciples of Christ in Melanesia. Finally, I conclude this lecture by offering some general principles, which need to be understood, appreciated, and lived, if ever a life-style, or ethos, which is both thoroughly Christian, and thoroughly Melanesian, is to develop in Papua New Guinea.

The word "culture" has been, and still is, the subject of much debate among specialists, and there exists a bewildering variety of definitions. I don't

wish to get bogged down in this issue, and hence will use the word "culture" in a wide sense to mean *all socially-learned aspects of human life*. Such a manufactured definition of culture is so broad that it makes it easier to say what is not cultural. Thus, certain physical functions, such as digestion and breathing are not cultural, because they are not learned. Also, certain learned things are not cultural, because the learning is not social. Thus, one can learn, just from personal experience, without any social context, that hot objects, when touched, cause pain. Even so, my definition of culture, i.e., all social-learned aspects of human life, covers a vast area. Thus, culture, in this wide sense, included the family, the tribe, the state, the school, as also our stores, our banks, our hospitals – in fact, all of the institutions, which structure our behaviour. Such a definition of culture includes technology, sciences, philosophy, and intellectual pursuits generally, emotional reactions, physical skills, habits of work and recreation, behaviour towards strangers, towards elders, towards children. Such a definition includes language itself, which not only provides a means of communication, but shapes the concepts by which we think. Thus, according to our definition, culture does not only influence external behaviour. Culture also shapes thoughts, emotions, and attitudes.

I believe that it is impossible to make moral judgments, apart from one's social milieu. It's true that a person may think of himself as a rebel, making moral judgments in the face of opposition by a hostile society, but the knowledge and attitudes underlying those judgments have already been profoundly shaped by some society. Therefore, it is not a question of whether we should be influenced by society in our moral judgments – the fact is, we are so influenced. On that point, we have no choice. The real question is how may we, as Christians, use the resources of society to enable us to make correct moral judgments as committed Christians?

To further complicate matters, there is the growing phenomenon of secularisation within Papua New Guinea, which is definitely influencing Melanesian cultures, and perplexing many Christians. Secularised people have learnt to live various parts of their lives, more or less, without reference to religion. Economic life, medicine, science, drama, sport, and other activities are carried on, according to their own rules and mooring, with little or no reference to Christianity. Secularised society does not forbid a person to be religious. However, it tends to push religion into a, more or less, private area of life, so that the public milieu has little religious reference. When the Christian churches attempt to make any religiously-based position a factor in politics,

most people see it as an illegitimate mixing of politics and religion, an improper breaking down of the compartments which isolate religion from the public milieu.

In theory, secularisation is religiously neutral. Secularisation allows people to have their own religious beliefs, and it imposes none. In fact, however, the effect of secularisation is not religiously neutral. Religion held only as a private matter begins to seem strange and irrelevant to the public world, the market place, the government, and to the schools. Eventually, such a privatised religion comes to seem strange, even to Christians, if they have been formed predominantly by a public milieu, which has no place for religion.

Now, this presents a problem. A Christian may attend a service on Sunday, pray for a few minutes each day, and, perhaps, do a few minutes of scripture reading each week. However, if for most of his walking hours, a Christian is subjected to ideas about success, about happiness, about the good life – as presented merely by advertising, and fostered by business practice, or the entertainment industry, and which are far from Christian – what will be the result? Sadly, a Christian formed by such a public milieu will experience many Christian moral norms, as opposing some of his own perceptions and attitudes. Such a Christian ends up resenting these Christian norms, and becomes impatient with a church, which fails to update its moral teaching, so as to be in tune with the modern world.

Can one live in, and be continuously subject to, a non-Christian milieu, while maintaining a lively appreciation for all Christian moral norms? Some exceptional people may be able to do so. For the rest of us, it would be extremely difficult.

Faced with this problem, what is to be done? Well, first we need direction, and so, I offer for your assessment, a series of *signposts*.

The first signpost is labelled *The Common Good*. I have argued, elsewhere, that the major principle, operative in most PNG societies, is a group ethic: what is good for the group (line, village, or tribe) is right. The situation, where one group of people can threaten to destroy a Post and Telegraph repeater station, can threaten to burn down a teachers' training college, or can set up road-blocks on national highways, and charge motorists – because compensation has not been paid for the ground – illustrates this mode of

thinking and acting. It matters not that the nation needs efficient means of communication or institutions to train teachers. It matters not that the ground in question was originally a swamp, or is an inaccessible mountain top; if the group, who traditionally owned the ground, does not immediately benefit, then, they believe, they are entitled to obstruct, to pillage, or to destroy. The common good consists in those goods and values, by means of which, a society is to help its members in the realisation of tasks which, they alone, cannot sufficiently achieve. The functions of the common good are basically two. Firstly, the common good promotes, and makes possible, an integral human existence for its members. The second function of the common good is to preclude anti-social impulses in human nature from interfering with the rights of others, and with a just social order.

This is not the place for a lecture on the common good. However, in Catholic moral theology, we have a long and rich tradition, explaining and developing this concept of the common good.

It is our task, as Christian leaders, to teach people that the group ethic has to be both deepened and widened. The ethical basis for Christian living is both personal and universal love. Thus, the goods and values that go to make up the common good, need to be actualised in each person, and extended to all persons, irrespective of race, colour, or creed. When people of a culture are convinced, and live according to the norms of the common good, then a truly Christian value system emerges.

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The second signpost is labelled *The Dignity of Women*. In August, 1977, Mrs Nahau Rooney became the first woman in PNG to hold cabinet rank in a national government. In 1978, the Prime Minister of PNG, responding to pressure, exerted by a number of educated women, created a section for women's affairs within his own department. One of the avowed aims of this section (which is now a full division within the office of Home Affairs and Youth) was to monitor all laws in the country, so as to ensure equal rights for all women under the law. These developments, and there are many others, while important, are not a realistic indication of prevailing attitudes and practices throughout the country. The horrific number of reported rapes, the frightful regularity of cases of wife bashing, the growing need for assistance to deserted wives, the difficulties which educated national women must overcome

in order to be able to win acceptance/recognition (at times even within the institutional structure of the church), these, and many other instances of discrimination and disrespect of women, militate against a truly Christian flavour to life here in Papua New Guinea.

We, as Catholics, have been able, in the past, and now must continue our efforts, to awaken, in all people, an awareness and appreciation of the role of women, and their inherent dignity. Men and women, together, form one humanity. The role we accord Mary, the Mother of Jesus, in our prayer and acts of formal worship, plus the inspiriting encyclicals on Mariology, penned by Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II: these treasures from our Catholic heritage can, when preached and practised, imbue in all a deep respect for all women. True Christian discipleship implies recognition of the reciprocal, and complementary role, of our sisters in Christ.

* * * * * *

The third signpost is labelled *Family Life*. Very few priests have studied or evaluated the theological changes concerning marriages, as contained in the Second Vatican Council's document *Gaudium et Spes*. It is relatively easy to stress what is incompatible with Christian teaching, e.g., divorce, abortion, adultery, and other forms of unfaithfulness. It is more difficult to speak about the hopes and aspirations of men and women, who are trying to live their lives in a fully human way, and yet are confused and frightened. There is, in Papua New Guinea a common link between Catholics and everyone of good will. It is the hope that, within marriage and family life, men and women will develop a community, which will help them produce authentic love in their lives.

All too often, the ecclesiastical ceremony has been the beginning and end of the church's involvement with the married. But the church, and her ministers, cannot remain apart from the unfolding of a couple's inner married life. The family is a domestic church, where the ground is prepared for the movement from human love to divine love. The theological virtues are first discovered within the life of a family: Faith, which is based on the trust which elders give to their children; Hope, which is gradually built on the confidence that neither rejection nor criticism will remove the security of being recognised, wanted, and loved for one's own sake; Love, this most Christian of virtues, which children come to know by being unconditionally loved, and thereby acquire the ability to love others unconditionally.

St John tells us that love is the nature of God. In our on-going task of Christian evangelisation, there is an urgent need to examine the possibility that the family is one of the powerful means by which the presence of God will be discovered, and the sacred lived in our communities.

* * * * * *

The fourth signpost is labelled *Theological Studies*. Scripture exegetes are not mere translators of words, theologians are not glorified catechists, and ethicians are not purveyors of recipe-book type answers to moral dilemmas. In 1986, Professor Ron Crocombe, addressing the Waigani Seminar, called for less work on the Ethics of Development (the topic of the seminar), and more on the development of Ethics! It is a sad fact that, to date, apart from the study done in seminaries by students for the priesthood or ministry, little is offered for the future leaders and administrators of the nations by way of tertiary studies in theology and scripture. The result is an appalling, and, at times, ridiculous naivete on theological issues. It is not that young PNG men and women are not interested – they are. A survey I conducted in 1987 at the UPNG, on behalf of the Melanesian Council of Churches, found that, of all students who participated, 98 percent wanted opportunities to do some study of theology and scripture.

What is needed, and as soon as possible, are opportunities for all tertiary students to study theology and scripture at the same depth as they now currently study secular subjects. The very real cleavage, just beginning here in PNG between religious belief and morality, will accelerate unless church leaders are prepared to contribute time and effort to ensuring that these opportunities are available. There is light on the horizon. Divine Word Institute in Madang, and Goroka Teachers' College (to name two institutions I know of), now provide some assistance. However, in all the work done so far, PNG church leaders have been conspicuous by their absence. It has been the hard work of a few perceptive expatriate Christians that has enabled what few opportunities, that now exist, to be set up.

We can talk glibly about a Melanesian theology, and very learned articles can be written in obscure journals. This just means that an elite (and mainly clerical) coterie can indulge in mutual God-talk, while the vast bulk of the people of God remain ignorant. Knowledge is power. A powerful Melanesian

witness of Christian discipleship needs to be based on sound scientific theological and spiritual study.

* * * * * *

My fifth signpost is *Outreach*. We read in the Acts of the Apostles, 11:27-30, where the Christian community at Antioch sent help to the brethren in Judea by the hand of Barnabas and Saul. Jerusalem, the mother church, was supported, in time of need, by the daughter church of Antioch.

One sign, that a truly Christian ethos exists in Papua New Guinea, still lies in the future. It is that of sending – the Christian mission of outreach. The church here has been slow to achieve self-reliance. Yet, a sign of vitality, of self-confidence, and of generosity, is surely the ability of Christian communities to send forth their own missionaries.

Perceptive observers have noted that my own country of New Zealand has become thoroughly secularised. The lack of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, the numbing of religious sensibilities, the callous treatment accorded the unborn, the aged, and the unskilled, the loss to the church of the young and the well educated – these are painful things to observe when I occasionally return to the faith community within which I grew to maturity. Yet, the same perceptive observers have also claimed that the regeneration of a Christian ethos in New Zealand society and cultures will come through the life, work, and Christian convictions of the Pacific Islanders. New Zealanders call them "overstayers", they are increasingly the focus for racial prejudice and discrimination. Yet they are the true Christian missionaries, eliciting from both Maori and Pakeha races a re-dedication to Christ, whose teachings have become obscured as my fellow countrymen and women sank into a morass of affluence and covetousness.

Who knows what the Lord has in store for His disciples in Papua New Guinea? I make no claim to be a prophet – but to the people of this country will also come the command: "Go forth and teach in My name."

* * * * * *

The sixth, and final, signpost is labelled *The Environment*. A Papua New Guinean friend once told me how he stood at a wharf and watched the most

beautiful trees that grew in his province being loaded onto a Japanese ship. His reaction . . . he wept! One eminent Papua New Guinean politician said recently: "It's not a sin to make a profit." Well it can be. Polluted rivers; soil erosion, following on clear felling, and no reafforestation; indiscriminate use of pesticides; over-fishing of coastal waters; shoddy buildings, and lack of town planning; unrestricted use of scarce fossil fuels; slash-and-burn agricultural methods: we are no strangers to this sorrowful litany of environmental sins as we gallop after more and more kina. Papua New Guinea has been blessed with a rich bounty of natural resources. But we hold the riches of this country as trustees for future generations.

To murder the earth is a heinous crime. No matter how detestable and horrifying a prospect this may be, it is, in fact, within our power. We can murder the earth by misusing our increasing technological potency. Alternatively, we can redeem the earth by overcoming the suicidal, aggressive greed that man can succumb to.

Economic injustice, and the ecological crisis, are interrelated. They are symptoms of a spiritual malaise. The remedy is a love for one's environment, which inspires the sacrifices involved in not having all we want, but working hard for what we need. This is the poverty, which St Francis of Assisi called Lady Poverty. Lady Poverty endows those who espouse her with the gifts of freedom, wonder, and increasing awareness of the brotherhood of creation. Through evangelical poverty, St Francis acquired his sense of unity, and solidarity, with the rest of creation. We must learn to love, and teach others to love, the environment, because it is God's creative handiwork. Only such a love will prevent us despoiling the environment, because we will then sense that this world is not merely a possession, but our great, ancient, and holy mother.

History tells us that the creation of a Christian ethos is an extremely complex and slow process. Besides following the signposts I have mentioned, we need to base our efforts on some general principles.

A truly Christian ethos will involve giving a Christian quality to many areas of life: to aesthetic activities of painting, music, poetry, fiction, and drama, to the acquiring of a wisdom, which both sees the limits, and relishes the truth and the mystery in all discoveries of the human mind, to patterns of behaviour – the rhythm of work and recreation, ways of ownership, our attitudes towards the aged, the weak, and the stranger.

The creation of a Christian culture requires an active creativity, as distinct from a passive manner of life. Secularised people live their lives in compartments: business, politics, medicine, recreation, etc. Each compartment tends to be self-governing. The rules and customs, which govern economics, for example, are not, in a secularised world, integrated with religion, or any other overall system of meaning. This leaves the individual in a passive attitude. One just acts, or reacts, in any particular compartment by following, or by disobeying, the rules and customs of that compartment. In a Christian culture, the essential integration of human life is rediscovered, so that each area of living can, and does, express the primary meaning of life – to know, love, and serve God. Not all people can be equally creative, in the sense of fashioning radically new ways of acting – but all people can be creative, in the sense of personally seeing their actions as offerings to God, and when most people in a society are creative in this sense, then more and more people discover new ways of acting, which provide new, and deeper, ways of self-expression.

A Christian culture will involve deliberate choices about "input" into one's mind and sensitivities. One cannot indiscriminately expose oneself to all the TV, videos, literature, advertising, and other influences of secular culture, without being formed by them. Again, this choice does not involve only a rejection.

It involves deliberate cultivation of a better sort of input. It requires access to the rich, but often-neglected, Christian cultures and creations of past ages. It requires fostering new artistic creations, imbued with the spirit of the gospel. Such creations will not flourish in a protected "hot-house" atmosphere, in which shallow works are praised simply because they are pious. Men and women, who aspire to be true Christian artists, must be honest and bold in addressing the questions and social problems of the ordinary people of Papua New Guinea today. The numbing monotony of Kung Fu and Rambo exploits, and the second-rate imitations of European music, to which we are now subjected, are far cries from this ideal.

A Christian requires a critical attitude. To be critical does not necessarily mean to complain. One must refuse to accept passively whatever is offered by the surrounding milieu. One must learn to subject everything to scrutiny, according to the standards of faith. This has implications for how we should

educate; implications not always brought out in the curriculum and pedagogy of our schools.

A Christian culture can exist only within a Christian community. A community is not simply an organisation of people, brought together to produce something. The very life of the community itself, the inter-personal relationships of its members, is the very sacrament of union with God. Among the most powerful forces, by which a culture forms its members, is the action of relating personally to another human being. The kind of persons we become depends, to a great extent, on the kind of interpersonal relationships we live. When Christian congregations are real communities, in which people relate to each other in a way inspired by the gospel, then the basis for a Christian culture has already been provided.

Finally, a Christian culture must have its basis in prayer and meditation. This is not a pious ornament, added on to give a religious look to the process. Prayer and meditation are the basic acts of creating a Christian culture. Prayer and meditation are the most-radical acts, by which we refuse to be formed passively by prevailing secular values, and by which we open ourselves to the one central meaning (with a capital M), in which we wish to form our lives.

Now, is all this talk of creating a Christian ethos in Melanesian cultures naive and unrealistic? Well, it's not as though we have to start from scratch on such a project. Most of the peoples of Papua New Guinea have a confident and dignified cultural identity. We have, in many parts of the country, vibrant Christian communities, whose members are second- or third-generation Christians. We also have, in this country, Christian missionaries, whose sending churches, congregation, or orders, have functioned in the past as Christian counter-cultures. And we have small prayer and action groups emerging. When all this is combined with the still-strong linkage of family ties in most Melanesian cultures – then I don't believe my ideas are naive or unrealistic.

However, let me end with a note of urgency. Our church leaders need to focus on this task of forging a Christian and Melanesian identity now, otherwise the forces of secularisation, already at work in our major institutions and urban centres, will blunt the specifically-Christian dimension of life in Papua New Guinea, and render the constitutional statement that we are a Christian nation empty of meaning.

Melanesian Journal of Theology 4-2 (1988)

THE AFTER-LIFE IN ST MATTHEW AND AN ASPECT OF MATTHEAN ETHIC

REVD DR G. E. OKEKE

I

This study is only a part of a wider investigation into "New Testament teaching on the future life", which presently occupies the author's research thought.

Some images in Jewish apocalyptic, characterise notions about the after-life, which we find in Matthew's gospel. These images are to be examined, from their contexts, to detect the influence of Palestinian background on the Matthean records, as well as inter-cultural influences between Israel, and her Eastern neighbours, on the formulation of notions, which lie behind the tradition of St Matthew. Thorough exegetical examination of key texts of Matthew may reveal later developments in church tradition, as well as notions, which go back to Jesus.

We shall examine passages, which deal with qualifications for entry into life, or otherwise. The goal of ethics extends beyond interpersonal relationships, and establishment of good society. It assumes an eternal dimension. The pattern of life lived now must be oriented to a recognition of judgment and reward, that is associated with the after-life.

II

There is the picture of a downward movement for the dead. κατάβασις (*katabasis*) – a going down, a descent, and, figuratively, a degradation, as opposed to a heightening or exaltation (ὕψος (*hupsos*)) – describes the direction of the dead to the abode of the dead (ᾅδης (*hadēs*)).[1]

As Jesus pronounces woes upon unrepentant cities, He says of Capernaum: "And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You shall be brought down to hades." The underlying idea that heaven is above the hades down below is found in many religions. In Is 14, the King of Babylon, whose aspirations are as lofty as those of the Day Star, son of the dawn, is

humiliated by being consigned to the place of the dead. "Your pomp is brought down to Sheol . . . maggots are the bed beneath you, and worms are your covering" (v. 11). Instead of ascending above the heights of the clouds, and making himself like the Most High, the Lord declares: "You are brought down to Sheol, to the depths of the pit" (vv. 14-15). In the Babylonian epic of Gilgamesh, and the Osiris myths,[2]

Sheol is the kingdom of the god of evil and death. Before the Christian era, under the influence of the prophets and the apocalyptists, the dualism in the concept of two opposing gods (the god of death and hades, and God of life) no longer existed. God's sovereignty extends to hades.[3] Jesus could say to Peter that the gates of hades will not prevail against his church (Matt 16:18). Sheol, or hades, becomes simply the place of the dead. Those who belong to Jesus die (1 Pet 3:19-20; 4:6), but they will not be shut up there for ever (cf. Acts 2:31). Capernaum did not accept Jesus, despite all the teachings and miracles of Jesus, there. The judgmental sentence on her is consignment to hades.

A possible interpretation of the statement about the gate of hades, with reference to the church, could be that death, which stands for the destroyer, cannot wipe out Christianity. Exegetes, like McNeile, accept the later formulation of this peculiar Matthean addition to Mark's presentation of Peter's confession.[4] The community of St Matthew, in this story, underlies his idea of the indestructibility and eternity of the church. Paul links the idea with the resurrection of Jesus. As death no longer has dominion over Christ, likewise it has not over those who are in Christ (Rom 6:5-11). In Matthew, the going down to Sheol of the dead in Christ does not mean eternal confinement to the dominion of death. The gates of Sheol cannot prevail over the church.

Matthew gives a further illustration of the conquest of death by the death of Jesus Christ, through his grotesque story of the resurrection of the saints (Matt 27:52-53). He is careful not to give the impression that the saints rose immediately their tombs were opened, along with the splitting of the rocks, and the rending of the temple curtain, when Jesus breathed His last. Awkwardly, Matthew had to suspend the mention of the resurrection of the saints, even though their tombs had been opened. The resurrection of Jesus must precede theirs. They showed themselves, after Jesus had become the first fruits of them that died, to resurrect.[5]

Some biblical scholars, like J. N. Geldenhuys, take this story literally, and infer that, after the resurrection of Jesus and the saints, when a Christian dies, he no longer goes down to hades.[6] The only follower of Jesus, who probably died before Him, was Judas Iscariot (Matt 27:5; the Lucan version would suggest that Jesus died before Judas: Acts 1:18). A much later legend, which shows that the body of Jesus, let down into the grave, quickened the bodies of the dead, has been used by Matthew in his story of the death and resurrection of Jesus. If we agree with Geldenhuys, the saints referred to here would be non-Christians. As we have already mentioned, Jesus' going down to hades shows that no disciple or saint will be spared that universal human experience, except those whose bodies must be changed to spiritual bodies, because they are still alive at the parousia (1 Cor 15:51ff.). The corruption of hades is the experience which every mortal is subjected to at death. When the eschatological resurrection takes place, the corruptible and perishable will become incorruptible and imperishable (1 Cor 15:42f.).

What is very noticeable in Matthew, is that the evangelist does not dwell on what happens before the eschatological allotment. There is less on hades, and more on gehenna, the burning fire, the lot of those that grind their teeth in a place of darkness, and the contrasting depiction of those that enjoy a heavenly banquet with the patriarchs, the saints who shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. The direction given in Matthew is from the present to the ultimate destiny. That ultimate destiny is dependent on one's relationship with Him, who alone has conquered death – Jesus Christ.

III

Besides a few references to "fire" in the preaching of John the Baptist (Matt 3:10, 11, 12; cf. Matt 7:19, Jesus' version of John's ethical teaching), fire is connected with the furnace, and γεέννα (*gehenna*) of the eschatological judgment. Even in these few references, the implication is clear that the ultimate fire has its beginnings in the present, in which the distinction (διάκρισις (*diakrisis*)) is being made between those of the evil one and those of God. "You will know them by their fruits. . . . Those that do not bear good fruit are cut down and thrown into the fire." One's final destiny is already determined by one's way of life in Christ or against Christ. The determining factor for the ultimate judgment is clearly known. What happens after death is a consummation of one's lot, which is inaugurated in the present.

Those who are the children of the kingdom of God are characterised in Matt 5-7. Their way of life is set out in contrast to the way of life of those outside, whose principle of life is regulated by the laws and customs of the fathers:

> You have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not kill, and whoever kills, shall be liable to judgment . . . and whoever says, 'You fool', shall be liable to the hell (γεέννα (*gehenna*)) of fire. (Matt 5:21-22).

In Matthew, γεέννα (*gehenna*) is not confused with hades (שְׁאוֹל (*sh^{e}ōl*)), as is common in apocalyptic and apocryphal writings. In 2 Esdras 7:78, for example, there is the view that only the wicked man goes down to Sheol, where he is rewarded with punishment, while the righteous immediately returns to God at death. Here we notice a clear influence of Hellenistic ideas. It is agreeable to our natural sentiment about what we expect of ourselves, immediately one dies. The soul idea creeps in. The soul of the righteous is in the hand of God, and no harm shall touch him (Wisdom 5:15f).

This is further developed by Philo. In Philo, we have the chief exponent of Alexandrian Judaism. He neither believes in bodily resurrection (since what matters is the immortality of the soul), nor in a general judgment (since requital is individualistic, and immediately after death). The punishment for the wicked is everlasting. Our present life in the body is death, for the body is death, for the body is the "utterly-polluted prison" of the soul, "nay more, it is sepulchral; our σῶμα (*soma*) (body) is our **μνημεῖον** (*mnēmeion*) (grave)."[7]

In Matthew, γεέννα (*gehenna*) is connected with the eschatological judgment, and not the lot of a person immediately after death. The historical origin of γεέννα (*gehenna*) is common knowledge. The full writing is גֵּי בֶן־הִנֹּם (*gē ben-Hinnōm*): the valley of the sons of Hinnom, a ravine south of Jerusalem (Josh 15:8; 18:16). During the reign of Ahaz, in his adoption of Baal worship, he offered his children in burnt sacrifice in that valley (2 Chr 28:3). During Josiah's religious reform, he desecrated the shrine of Topheth in the valley of the sons of Hinnom, and turned that valley to a place for burning refuse instead of human sacrifice (2 Kings 23:10). Later Jewish popular belief turned this place of incessantly burning-fire into the imagery of the punishment of the wicked and ungodly at the last judgment.

In the New Testament, it has become definitively the internal fire, where Satan, his angels, minions, and hades (personifying death) will be burnt at the end (Rev 20:11-15; Matt 15:41). There are two important passages, which demonstrate the Matthean eschatological stress in the understanding of γεέννα (*gehenna*): Matt 13:36-43 (the allegorical interpretation of the parable of the tares among the wheat) and Matt 25:31-46 (the parable of the sheep and the goats).

IV

INTERPRETATION OF THE TARES (MATT 13:36-43)

Jeremias's thorough study of the parable has convincingly demonstrated that the allegorising interpretation is the work of Matthew himself. Here are outlines of some of the grounds for this conclusion.[8] The passage contains linguistic peculiarities, which belong to later Christian usage: οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας (*hoi huioi tēs basileias*) (sons of the kingdom) (13:38) is an unusual designation of the true citizens of the kingdom of God. In Matt 8:12, where there is the only NT example, the term designates the Jews by the Christians in the adoption of the "remnant" idea in the NT traditions.[9] The election narrows down from the OT, culminating in Christ, who becomes the means for election into the new Israel of God.[10]

Another peculiarity, is the expression: "the kingdom of the Son of Man". It replaces the expression "the kingdom of God", and designates the church. At the parousia (Matt 13:40), the kingdom of the Son of Man is replaced by the kingdom of God. Paul does not specifically say how many years Christ would rule before the hand-over to the Father ". . . after abolishing every kind of dominion, authority, and power. For He is destined to reign until God has put all enemies under His feet; and the last enemy to be abolished is death" (1 Cor 15:24-26). Chiliasm is a later Christian conception, fully blown in Revelation. It is absent in the earliest synoptic tradition. Thus, the notion of the displacement of the kingdom of the Son of Man by the kingdom of God belongs to the environment, which conceives of Christ's temporary rule and eventual hand-over to the Father.

Another later Christian expression in the passage, is the use of ὁ πονηρός (*ho ponēros*) as the name of the devil. διάβολος (*diabolos*) and Σατανᾶς (*Satanas*) are the earlier traditional names for the devil. In this parable, Matthew mixes both the old and new traditional expressions διάβολος

(*diabolos*) (Matt 12:39) and ὁ πονηρός (*ho ponēros*) (Matt 13:38). These are some of the indications that the interpretation of the "tares" is the work of Matthew.

Later Christian church's language and adaptation apart, the central point of the parable, which is likely to originate from Jesus, is the likening of the end-time judgment of harvest. That, which is found also in earlier Jewish apocalyptic, has been fused with the Matthean preoccupation with church discipline. The wheat and tares are to be left to grow together. It is premature to separate them now, for in attempting to remove the tares, the wheat might be affected. As Bornkamm has aptly put it, the church is not only a collection of the elect and the righteous, but a *corpus mixtum*, which will not face separation until the final judgment.[11] McNeile argues that Matthew's horizon is the entire cosmos, and not confined to the church. The field (ὁ ἀγρός (*ho agros*)) is the world (12:38), and the mixture of the evil and the good is in the world. Matthew is not advocating toleration and avoidance of precipitate disciplinary action in the church.[12] The argument of McNeile may stand if the kingdom of the Son of Man, from which his angels will gather all causes of sin and all evil doers, is conceived as the entire world (the field), and not the Christian church (Matt 12:40).

The fact that Matthew's mind centres on the end-time is conceivable because the eschatological judgment is not going to happen in a distant time; it is at the close of "this" age, the present of Matthew. ἐν τῇ συντελίᾳ τοῦ αἰῶνος (*en tē suntelia tou aiōnos*) (at the close of the age) is supported by Codex Sinaiticus (A), Vaticanus (B), Bezae (D), and a good number of Church Fathers, and Eastern and Western translations and versions. On the other hand, ἐν τῇ συντελίᾳ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου (*en tē suntelia tou aiōnos toutou*) (at the close of this age) is supported by a host of miniscules, which may be as old, or even older, than some of the uncials supporting the first reading. The variety of families of texts supporting the latter reading gives credence to its originality. The later date of the uncial manuscript supporting the latter reading (C K L P W X Δ, with Tatian's Diatessaron, and Chrysostom) do not weaken the evidence in its favour. It is more conceivable that later Christian sensibility about the delay of the parousia would cause a change from "this age" to "the age", thus removing the embarrassment, which the particularity of the time of the end causes, due to its non-fulfilment.[13]

Matthew, therefore, sees the period in which he was writing as existing under the shadows of the end of the age. In fact, Conzelmann's view that Luke sees his age as the period of proleptic fulfilment of the promise, in which the church has to live worthily of Christ's coming, can be said to have already been introduced in Matthew. An expectation of a long intervening period between Easter and the parousia is no longer a preoccupation of the church. Thus, Easter is an assurance that the parousia will happen, sooner or later, with less emphasis on the duration of the intermediate period. An intermediate state, in which the dead were conceived as living a lifeless existence has been transformed to an existence that is quickened by the descent of Jesus into hades. That special Matthean episode of the bodies of the saints' departure from their graves, and walking the streets of Jerusalem, is symbolic of the effect of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection on the dead (Matt 28:51-53). They are in a state of fellowship with Christ, for the church of Christ is too powerful for the gates of hades (Matt 16:19).[14]

Matt 13:42-43; 49-50, speaks of the end-time judgment, which is universal, and not a particular judgment of the individual at his or her death. The evil-doers are gathered and burnt. The fact that they gnash their teeth in the furnace of fire, that burns unquenchably, allows no room for the theory of annihilation. A consideration of the nature of God, which is love, runs counter to the prospect of endless suffering, and pain, or punishment, from such a loving God.

The notion of a new heaven and new earth (Rev 21), after all evildoers, death, and hades had been burnt in the lake of fire (Rev 20:11-15), underscores the idea of a new creation. As in the beginning, when God's almightiness was undisputed, so will it be in the end. The end of history of salvation is a restoration of the state of the beginning, in a greater splendour at the end.[15] The present time looks forward to the glorious end, which has been inaugurated by the mission of Jesus.

Matthew, as well as the rest of the synoptic writers, do not depart from the horrid picture of hell-fire, which we find in the Old Testament and apocalyptic writings, following Iranian models. πύρωσις (*purōsis*) (destruction by fire) would, in itself, suggest annihilation (1 Enoch 18:16; 53ff), but the conflicting pictures, we get in this area of biblical thought, allows that the worms do not die. Worms live forever in a fiery furnace! Worms suggest that putrefaction takes place, and yet decay contradicts the state of a

thing under fire. It is a place of deep darkness, and yet darkness and fire cannot be conceived together.[16] We must allow that the grimmest pictures of the punishment of the wicked and evildoers are painted, without a consideration of their inherent contradictions.

The opposite picture of joy, in a life eternal, for all gathered righteous is also portrayed. The gathering of good seeds into the barn in the parable, standing for the aggregation of all the elect, runs through the entire New Testament, and continues, even into the liturgy of the Didache:

> As this broken bread was scattered upon the hills, and was gathered together, and make one, so let Thy church be gathered together into Thy kingdom, from the ends of the earth.[17]

The view that the Eucharist was a foretaste of the Messianic banquet was strong in the early church. Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna (c150 AD), called it a meal of immortality. A heavenly table fellowship is conceived as one of the blessings of eternal life in the kingdom of God. "I tell you, many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." (Matt 7:11). It is not only that the Christians will have the bliss of fellowship in God's kingdom, they will sit with Jesus on judgment thrones, as judges at the end-time judgment (Matt. 19:29). The relationship between man and Jesus, represented by followership of Him will be the basis of the final judgment. The benefit of followership, or discipleship, with Jesus is so surpassing that anything else, no matter how greatly valued, should be dispensed with in order to inherit eternal life in the kingdom of God (Matt 5:29; 17:7-9).

V

Existence, with an eye on inheriting eternal life, has some ethical imperatives. The desire to receive Jesus Christ gives shape to the Christian pattern of life. Every reasoned action of man is motivated, and every situation in life demands a defence of the principle behind actions. We are all the time called upon to declare our principles, whenever we grapple with situations and issues arising out of our professional, business, and social actions, in fact, every range of human affairs. The primary purpose of all human affairs is the business of "living". Whether one accepts it or not, the fact remains, that our principles of living are oriented and motivated by our expectations in the after-life. There are some people, who regard themselves as mere animals, and so,

like every other living creature, death marks the end of their authentic existence (Eccl 6). To them, every idea about the after-life, is mere speculation. For such people, their ethical principles support their ultimate end.

Matthew's teaching on the pattern of life for the Christian is in view of the after-life.[18] Because of the eternal value of becoming a child of the kingdom through the acceptance of Jesus Christ, one's paradigm for every action is Jesus Christ. Christ lived a life of full communion with God, so the eternal life, which we seek in Jesus, is a quality of life in full communion with God. It begins now (Jn 5:24), in this present existence.[19] Anything that would distract one from this path of life must be abjured. Matthew's collection of Jesus' teaching put it this way.

> If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members, than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away, it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell (Matt 5:29-30).

The thought of this passage is repeated in the twin parables of the treasure in the field (Matt 13:44) and the pearl (Matt 13:45f). The great joy of the kingdom demands that all else should be surrendered in its preference. The hope of a life in the kingdom of God makes its demands. It demands complete submission to the will of God. It demands bearing worthy fruit. The Christian must be seen doing the deeds that are Christlike, for it is in these actions that his submission to, and the discipleship of, Christ is given concrete expression.[20] This is why, in the final judgment, it is one's Christlike actions, or otherwise, that will be used to determine his acceptance or rejection of Christ (Matt 25:31ff), and the person's ultimate acceptance into the kingdom of God, or rejection and entry into eternal punishment.

NOTES

1. In the OT, the standard term of going down to sheol is יָרַד (*yērēd*)) Gen 37:35; 42:38, 1 Kings 2:6, while, to ascend into heaven, like Enoch did after 365 years of life, is עָלָה (*'ālāh*)).
2. John A. Wilson, "Egyptian Life after Death", in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 2nd edn, James B. Pritchard, ed., Princeton NJ: Princeton University

Press, 1955, pp. 32-36; S. N. Kramer, "The Sumerian Adaptation of the Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh", in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 2nd edn, James B. Pritchard, ed., Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1955, 1 pp. 50-52; "Inauna's Descent to the Nether World", in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 2nd edn, James B. Pritchard, ed., Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1955, pp. 52-56; E. A. Speiser, "The Akkadian Version", in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 2nd edn, James B. Pritchard, ed., Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1955, pp. 60-109.

3. God is conceived as being in sovereign control of the visible and invisible worlds, eg. Ps 139:8; Amos 9:2.
4. A. H. McNeile, *The Gospel According to St Matthew*, London UK: Macmillan, 1965, pp. 242f.
5. The bodies of the saints were corruptible bodies – not the spiritual body of Christ's resurrection. Christ alone is the first fruits of them that died. Others are to have the spiritual body only at the end, cf. Oscar Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, Philadelphia PA: Westminster Press, 1949, p. 237.
6. J. N. Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke*, London UK: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1950, p. 246; cf. C. L. Mitton, "Life After Death in the New Testament", in *Expository Times* 76 (1964/1965), pp. 429ff.
7. See R. H. Charles, *A Capital History of the Doctrine of the Future Life*, revd edn, London UK: A. & C. Black, 1913, pp. 247-300, for the varied views of existence after death in the apocalyptic literature in the intertestamental period.
8. J. Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, revd edn, London UK: SCM Press, 1972, pp. 81-86. For a similar view of Matthean origination of the explanation of the parable, see McNeile, *The Gospel According to St Matthew*, pp. 202-203.
9. E. W. Heaton, "Remnant Concept in the Old Testament", in *Journal of Theological Studies* (1952), pp. 27-39; J. Paterson, "Remnant", in *Dictionary of the Bible*, J. Hastings, ed., New York NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952, pp. 841-842
10. Oscar Cullman, *Salvation in History*, London UK: SCM Press, 1967, pp. 154-162.
11. Gunther Bornkamm, "End-Expectation and Church in Matthew", in Joachim Rohde, ed., *Rediscovering the Teaching of the Evangelists*, London UK: SCM Press, 1968, p. 47.
12. McNeile, *The Gospel According to St Matthew*, p. 202-203.
13. Manfred Punge, "Eschatology and Salvation History in Matthew", in Joachim Rohde, ed., *Rediscovering the Teaching of the Evangelists*, London UK: SCM Press, 1968, pp. 107-112.
14. Patristic speculations abound as to whether the faithful departed ever go to hades, since the descent of Christ into hades. The Matthean passage does not say whether the (OT) saints went back hades after appearing to many in the streets of the city. But since the NT generally speaks of the resurrection as an event of the End, these saints would have returned to hades again until the final resurrection, at the parousia of Christ, cf. J. W. C. Wand, ed., *The General Epistle of St Peter and St Jude*, London UK: Methuen & Co., 1934, pp. 105-112.
15. The superiority of the End over the Beginning forms part of the thesis of J. A. Ziester, "Anthropology of Hope", in *Expository Times* 90 (4/1979), pp. 104-109. He opines that "Endzeit does not correspond to Urzeit."

16. Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, vol 1, London UK: SCM Press, 1964, p. 201; D. S. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic*, London UK: SCM Press, 1964, pp. 379ff.
17. Cf. Henry Bettenson, ed., *Documents of the Christian Church*, 2nd edn, London UK: Oxford University Press, 1967, p. 64.
18. It is the centrality of Christ in the remaking of man that creates Christian ethics, distinguishing it from general ethical principles, universally recognised in other faiths, cf. E. Carpenter, *Common Sense About Christian Ethics*, London UK: Victor Gollancz, 1961, pp. 11-16.
19. Leslie D. Weatherhead, *Life Begins at Death*, Redhill UK: Denholm House Press, 1969, p. 22.
20. Jack T. Sanders, *Ethics in the New Testament*, London UK: SCM Press, 1975, is of the view that the imminence of the parousia with the eschatological judgment gives character to Matthew's ethics; see pp. 40-46.

THE ADEQUACY OF THE CONCEPTS OF ANIMISM, PRELOGICAL AND UNSCIENTIFIC, AS DESCRIPTIONS OF THE AFRICAN WORLDVIEW

EMEKA ONWURAH

Sociologists and social anthropologists have treated African religion as if it were a bizarre museum item, entirely different from other religions or religious phenomena found in Western culture. They have given it a conceptual interpretation, that betrays their prejudices about African cultures, which, in many ways, are not valid, and lack rational justification. There has been too much confused thinking about the religious practices and beliefs of Africans. The people have been described by some writers as pagans, heathens, or men, whose lives are dominated and trammelled by superstitions. It has been said that they lack theological ideas, and that all the elements, which make other religious sublime, are lacking in African religion. Even missionaries were misguided about African religion, and, by their muddled thinking, propagated erroneous ideas about African religious beliefs and practices.

Evans-Pritchard, in his book *Theories of Primitive Religion*, described "the great myth makers", like Darwin, Marx, Engels, Freud, etc., men who not only dismissed, in a perfunctory manner, primitive religion as mere "epiphenomenal essences", but were, indeed, using what they called "primitive religion" as a paradigm to justify their attack on religion as religion.[1] Their methodology was essentially evolutionary. All of them, including, in a way, Evans-Pritchard himself, treated society as something gradually moving towards a scientific consciousness. However, the main contention of most writers on religion was that primitive religion lacked theological awareness. Writing about this attitude towards primitive religion, Evans-Pritchard reappraised the words of Samuel Baker, who, speaking on the religion of the Northern Nilotes, said: "Without any exception, they are without a belief in a Supreme Being. Neither have they any form of worship, nor idolatry, nor is the darkness of their souls enlightened by even a ray of superstition. The mind is as stagnant as the morass which forms its puny world."[2] This view of Baker

is obviously wrong, and is not tenable, in the light of present evidence of religion in African cultures. And it is consoling to realise that, as early as 1971, Sir Edward Tylor was able to show, from evidence available, even at that time, that this could not be true.[3] Later he (Tylor) propounded the "Theory of Souls", or "animism", as the fundamental concept of religion.

ANIMISM AS A THEORY OF RELIGION

Tylor defined animism as "the doctrine of souls, and other spiritual beings in general", and regarded this as "the great element of the philosophy of religion". According to Tylor, the theory of animism divides into two great dogmas, forming part of one consistent doctrine. The one, concerning souls of individual creatures, capable of continued existence after death; and the other, concerning other spirits, ascending upwards to the rank of powerful deities. Thus, animism, in its full development, includes the beliefs in souls and in a future state . . . resulting in some kind of active worship.[4]

In illustrating this theory, Tylor looks at the fact of dreams and visions, and asserts that it was in consequence of dreams, in which man's body apparently engaged in normal or abnormal activities elsewhere, that man conceived the idea of a separate soul or spirit, and came to believe that other souls visited his own. He also looks at the experience of death, and discovers that the absence of an element in man makes all the difference between the living and the dead, and that it is this doctrine of the souls that gave birth to the wider doctrine of spirits, which later transformed itself to a complete philosophy of natural religion. This animism is believed to occur at the threshold of conceptual thinking, and, in the absence of rigid distinctions between the natural and the supernatural, the animate and the inanimate, and the phenomenal order, is identified with that of human existence, and the behaviour of the one equated with that of the other.[5]

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE THEORY

Looking more closely at this theory, it is discovered that Tylor first stresses the idea of the soul, or ghost, and then extends it to animate creatures, and inanimate things. Therefore, his theory can be broken into two main ideas – the first, dealing with origin, and the second, with development. With these as his models, he maintains that primitive man's reflections on such experiences as death, trances, and dreams, substantiated the postulate of the duality of human nature and personality. The temporary detachment of the

soul from the body, and the experiences outside the body, led Tylor to develop the "ghost-theory", from which he concluded that the immaterial entity called soul wanders about at night, and leaves the body permanently at death. This spirit, which, from time to time, animated objects, ultimately became the focal point of worship, e.g., the ancestor-cult. This, furthermore, led to the supposition that animate and inanimate objects – sun, stars, rocks, livers, etc., may have both life and personality ascribed to them. Thus, the worship of natural objects was born, too. In all this, it seems that Tylor's desire was to make animism embrace both, what could rightly be described as animism, and what his predecessors, like James Frazer, called magic or fetishism.

Nevertheless, it is helpful to distinguish what Tylor said from what he did not say. According to him, "animism" is an attendant factor in every religion, in every culture, and at any level of development. So he speaks of "animism of the savage" and "animism of the civilised men" – a pattern of doctrine and belief, which began from rudimentary stages, and maintains itself, through processes of development, into a systematic and progressively-narrow and high-level definition. In other words, that "animism characterises tribes very low in the scale of humanity, and thence ascends, deeply modified in its transmission, but, from first to last, preserving an unbroken continuity into the midst of high modern culture."[6]

Thus, it is clear that those who use the term exclusively for African religion, quoting Tylor as their authority, did not understand, or were misquoting, Tylor. Commenting on Tylor's view, Idowu contends that animism is at a lower level in certain cultures, in the sense that it embodies both animate and inanimate things. This, however, does not "limit it to one culture, nor is it, even in any one culture, limited to the general, contemptible, religious featurelessness, and indefiniteness, which is the popularly-accepted meaning of the word. Rather, in every culture, it reaches the conception of gods, and invariably to the concept of the Supreme Being."[7]

With particular reference to Africa, there is a sense in which "animism" forms a vital element in the make-up of religion; that is, if it is defined merely as a recognition of the existence of spirit, or spirits, as separate from the material – an idea that would indicate that, in no part of the world, do people offer worship to "wood and stone". It is, also accepted that the African worldview is full of spirits, known to be distinct from material objects, even though they reside in, or give expressions through, material objects. Such

sacred objects are mere symbols to aid worship. It is also true that recognition of the existence of spirits is more pronounced in Africa than elsewhere, but that is merely in degrees, since, even in the West, most people are taking to spiritism and occultism. And, in the words of Atkins: "All the beings of the world have, in them, some particles of the heaven-soul and the earth-soul. . . . The universe is crowded with them, they animate even the inanimate objects."[8] And, speaking of the religion of the Chinese, De Groot said, "The primeval form of this religion, and its very core, is animism. It is based on an implicit belief in the animation of the universe, and of every being or thing, which exists in it."[9] Indeed, even the very nature of Christianity is grounded on the fact that God is Spirit.

Thus, we see that animism, properly defined, cannot be predicated as a monopoly of Africa, or any other race, however "low in the scale of humanity".[10] It applies as part definition of every religion. It could apply to the indigenous religion of Africa, if the term was restricted strictly to its basic definition as a belief in, and as a recognition, and acceptance of, the fact of, the existence of spirits, who may use material objects as temporary residences, while manifesting their presence and actions through natural objects and phenomena. Beyond this, it is most inappropriate, and should not be applied as the name for the religion of Africa.

PRELOGICAL: A DESCRIPTION OF AFRICAN RELIGION

Levy Bruhl held that one might legitimately begin a study of social life by analysis of ways of thought and ways of behaviour. So he approached his own evaluation from a logical point of view. First, he condemned the psychological approach taken by Tylor in trying to explain social facts by processes of his own personal thought, which were the product of different conditions from those, which had moulded the minds of the people he sought to understand. He felt that Tylor's advanced mentality coloured whatever he said about the primitive peoples, whose minds were still in a dormant, undeveloped stage. He concluded that the mentality of an individual derives from the collective representations of his society, which are obligatory for him.[11] Thus, Levy Bruhl stresses that every type of society has its distinctive mentality, since each has its distinctive customs and institutions.

Levy Bruhl's idea can be valid, in as far as he maintains that religious beliefs were the product of social milieu of a people. But this argument breaks

down when it concludes that people of simple technology have "primitive" or "pre-logical" mentality, making it look as if he merely wanted to emphasise the difference between civilised and primitive peoples. Howbeit, this is the only thing that gives his theory some hints of originality, and so popularised it. To Levy Bruhl, no doubt, the primitive thought differs in quality, not just in degrees, from the thought of civilised peoples. But, if this were so, it would be impossible to communicate with primitive people, or even to learn their language. The fact that this is possible shows that this contrast between civilised and primitive peoples was rather strong. Furthermore, his idea that primitive man did not make distinctions between his personality and his shadow, or name, and so believes that what affects the one affects the other, did not take into consideration the many primitive peoples who are not bothered by what happens to their name or shadow, but whom he bundled into the same group as those who do, because of his generalisation.[12] It is also wrong to suppose that, to the primitive man, there is a contradiction between objective, causal explanation and a mystical one. To the primitive man, the fact that death is attributed to witchcraft does not exclude the notion that the man was killed by a buffalo.[13]

In all, therefore, Levy Bruhl made primitive peoples far more superstitious than they really are. He was definitely wrong in distinguishing degrees of religious experience by the paradigms of social development. Religious beliefs are a matter of the intermediary deities, and the spirit of the ancestors, the people have a feeling of awe and veneration for the Supreme Being, who is high above all deities, and who animates them all.[14] Religion in Africa, therefore, is like any other religion, and deals with the same spiritual matters. The content is the same, but the procedures may vary according to the social development of the people. It is, therefore, very derogatory and illogical to describe the religion of Africa, alone, as prelogical.

UNSCIENTIFIC: A DESCRIPTION OF AFRICAN RELIGIONS

Evans-Pritchard, in his own effort, not so much to criticise Levy Bruhl, as to explain and, indeed, reinterpret what the latter meant by his key expressions and concepts (which evoked much hostility), ended up describing African religion in another term – unscientific[15] – which, like the other terminologies, was not an adequate name for the religion of the Africans.

Interpreting Levy Bruhl's idea, Evans-Pritchard said that the term "prelogical" does not imply that the primitive people are unintelligent or incapable of coherent thought, but that most of their beliefs are incompatible with a critical and scientific view of the universe, and contain evident contradictions. Furthermore, that the word does not mean alogical or anti-logical, but, rather, means "uncritical" or "unscientific", when applied to primitive mentality. This primitive mentality refers not to an individual ability, or otherwise to reason, but to the categories in which he reasons – his patterns of thought, namely, axioms, values, and sentiments, which, among primitive people, are mystical, beyond verification, impervious to experience, and indifferent to contradiction.

A CRITIQUE OF EVANS-PRITCHARD

However, these explanations are not without flaws. Firstly, it should be understood that belief, an outcome of experience, is subjective and should not be understood fully by one who has not experienced it. Secondly, there is no universally-accepted standard for measuring spirituality. Yet Evans-Pritchard seems to be saying that the civilised world provides the standard of evaluation.[16] But, I submit, that the mental forms of a race should not be the norm for another race. Rather, each human race has its mode of life, its own peculiar way of handling its environment, and which should be respected by all. Finally, the meaning of the word should not be changed at will. "Prelogical" should not mean one thing generally, and another, when applied specifically to primitive peoples. Therefore, rather than accuse Levy Bruhl, Evans-Pritchard, himself, is guilty of the interpretation he gave Levy Bruhl's ideas.[17]

CONCLUSION

It is noteworthy that none of the anthropologists who wrote about primitive religion had been near a primitive people. They relied on what European explorers, traders, and missionaries told them. But such ideas were not only fabricated, and unreliable, they were casual, superficial, and grossly inadequate, since what the observers noted was what struck them as curious, crude, and sensational. All these theories, therefore, miss the mark, since the proponents "were seeking for explanations in terms of origins and essences, instead of relations".[18] This reflects their state of mind at the time they wrote, having assumed that the souls, spirits, and gods of religion have no reality. They merely tried to justify their loss of faith in religions, hence everything

they said on primitive religion was coloured by their early religious experiences. They were more concerned with religious practices rather than the spiritual content of these beliefs, and, therefore, saw in primitive religion, a weapon, which could be used with deadly effect upon Christianity.[19]

Schmidt, in his confutation of Renan, said: "If religion is essentially of the inner life, it follows that it can be truly grasped from within. . . . This can be better done by one in whose inward consciousness an experience of religion plays a part. There is but too much danger that the other (a non-believer) will talk of religion, as a blind man might of colours, or one totally devoid of ear, of a beautiful musical composition."[20] In religion, therefore, there are psychological, sociological, and emotional elements, but none of these can fully explain it. It is not sound scientific method to seek for origins where they cannot be found. Religion belongs to the realm of spirit, in which faith is the key word, while science deals primarily with relations, not origins and essences. But, if primitive religion could be explained "as an intellectual aberration, a mirage induced by emotional stress, or by its social functions", it implies that even the higher religions could be discredited, and disposed of in the same way.[21]

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POWER AND SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE AMONG PHILIPPINE FOLK HEALERS

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This article was submitted at the Assembly of the World's Religions, which was held on November 15-21, 1985, at MacAfee, New Jersey, USA.

In recent years, the Philippines has attracted the worldwide attention of scientists, and an increasing number of non-Filipino patients, who come to be treated for various diseases. The object of their visits is Filipino faith-healers, who do psychic surgery with their bare hands, and close the wounds without scars. The international bibliography on the topic has been growing, not to mention films and other documentations.[1] Although the number of such healers, frequented by foreigners, seems to be limited, there are others, who also do the same. In fact, these healers seem to follow the ancient tradition of the Filipino shamans.[2]

This paper will study two related topics, namely, the concept of power and spiritual discipline among Filipino folk-healers. How do the Filipino healers think of power? Is it acquired, inherited, or God-given? Is the power of healing lost through commercialisation and vice? What are the spiritual disciplines connected with acquiring the power of healing and conserving it? What is the Filipino healer's concept of asceticism? Since the therapeutic aspect of Philippine faith healing has sufficient literature, we shall not deal with it in detail.

Filipino folk-healers are usually folk-Christians. Folk-Christianity is a kind of folk religion, which may be defined as a habit religion with the elements of customs, festive characters, symbols, and a moral dimension.[3] Folk-Christianity, in the Philippines, pertains more to folk-Catholicism, than to folk-Protestantism, for two reasons. Firstly, Catholicism, especially the form introduced by the Spanish missionaries, appealed to the psyche of the early Filipinos more than Protestantism.[4] Secondly, since Catholicism came earlier than Protestantism, the former has taken root, and adapted more to Philippine culture.

Filipino folk-healers, today, are of many kinds: herbalists (*arbularyo*), masseurs, midwives, diviners, sorcerers, and general practitioners.[5] A common denominator among them is that they combine prayer and ritual in their respective specialisations. We shall deal more with the *arbularyo*, or the general practitioner of folk medicine, who cures ailments caused by the natural and the supernatural. In some instances, he also deals in sorcery, in order to be a supra-legal instrument of justice.[6] Sorcerers also have their antidotes for their evil means. This paper will deal with the *arbularyo*, and his modem counterpart among the Filipino psychic healers.

The paper will be divided into the following parts: (1) a comparison of the traditional *arbularyo*, and the modern psychic healers; (2) the concept of power, and its related practices; (3) the spiritual discipline, or ascetical practices, of the folk healers; and (4) some philosophical and theological reflections on power and spiritual discipline.

COMPARING THE OLD AND NEW HEALERS

We shall, chiefly, base our comparison on the study of Eliade.[7] Eliade's authoritative work points out that shamanism has features common in Asia, Oceania, and the Americas. Demeterio has pointed out the features common between Philippine shamanism and some Southeast Asian countries.[8]

Folk healing in the present situation of the Philippines was quite similar to what the early Filipinos did. The descriptions of the early Spanish chroniclers (such as Aduarter, Chirino, Colin, Loarca, Placencia) on the early healers are similar to present-day situations.[9] The Spanish chroniclers called them *baylan*, *babaylan*, *catalonan*, etc., and associated their practices with the devil. Their pre-colonial animistic forms are similar to, or identical with, those of the Philippine ethnic minorities today (that is, those not touched by Christian influence).

One study claims that the modern Filipino faith healers are the continuation, and development, of a Filipino "pre-Hispanic medico-religious system of beliefs and practices".[10] Furthermore, these folk healers were also leaders of the anti-Spanish revolt, and of messianic movements.[11] While it is true that the majority of the millennialist movements, and local sects, were healers,[12] we shall not pursue this point here, but, rather, focus on folk healing.

The first area of similarity is the process of the call to shamanism. One becomes a shaman, either by hereditary transmission, or by spontaneous vocation. One can be called to shamanism by relatives, who practise it, or by other shamans. The call by the spirits is characterised by mysterious illnesses, insanity, trances, and visions. After the initiation to the world of healing, the candidate becomes an apprentice to senior shamans until he graduates, and becomes accepted by the community.[13] But, for the modern Filipino healers, the spirits, calling the shamans, have Christian names. Thus, Eleuterio Terte, the first notable Filipino psychic surgeon, got his call in 1925, when two angelic children appeared to him, when he was seriously ill. He was promised a cure if he would accept the mission to heal others.[14] Jun Labo, another famous healer, based in Baguio, claims he received his calling when Jesus Christ appeared to him.[15] Mari Daylo, a healer from Leyte, was promised a cure from her ailment by the apparition, in a dream, of St Michael, the Archangel, and she, in turn, promised to heal other people.[16]

The apprenticeship stage of modern faith healers is under the Union Espiritista Cristian de Filipinas.[17] Jun Labo was an apprentice healer to Tony Agpaoa. He later hand picked Labo as his successor.

The second area of similarity is the trance. According to Eliade, the shaman, who is called, learns his trade through the ecstatic and the didactic. In the ecstatic element, he goes into a trance, or is taught by dreams. In the didactic, he learns the techniques through other shamans, such as the functions of the spirit, the secret language of shamans (foulae), etc. In the ecstatic element, he is affected by sickness, and is sometimes thought of as insane. And, because he has undergone suffering and death (which can be a ceremonial initiation), he is resurrected, and becomes a new person, who can heal others.

We find the same analogy among Filipino faith healers. In the more-primitive Filipino animist culture, this dream occurs at the initial stage. It can also occur during his ministry proper, when the shaman goes into a trance, in order to diagnose diseases, or gets revelation from the saints/spirits. Bulatao describes the new shamanism, in Christian dress.[18] The person in the trance becomes a different being. His voice changes, and is said to belong to the spirit possessing him. The medium has the power of reading minds, and has an extraordinary strength. He can even walk on fire. But, after the trance, he has no memory of what happened.

The third area of similarity is the spirit guide. In celestial form, the shaman has a spirit guide, whose function is to teach, and to give power, and to advise the shaman in his ministry. Eliade calls this the tutelary spirit, who may either be a celestial wife, for male shamans, or a celestial husband for female shamans. The language they use in their conversation/dreams is like that between spouses and lovers.

In the Philippine setting, this is also realised in the folk-Christianity context. In the traditional context, such as the shamans of Pangasinan, what Eliade describes is true. Because they have to prove their power of healing, they have to kill somebody dearest to them in order to foster their gift of healing. Deza interviewed three such shamans, who have become widows.[19] Their spirit guides have become their celestial husbands. In the folk-Christianity context, however, the spouse concept is not so clear. Some of the well-known healers have male or female guides in the name of the saints, and of Jesus Christ. This change to Christian forms is part of religious acculturation.[20]

Genuine mystics, like St Teresa and St John of the Cross, describe the growth of the soul as a wedding with Christ. Likewise, their vocabulary is also that of lovers.

Related to the spirit guide are the souls of the dead.

> The souls of dead . . . serve the candidate as a means of entering into contact with divine, or semi-divine, beings (through ecstatic journeys to the sky and the underworld, etc.), or enable the future shaman to share in the mode of being of the dead.[21]

Furthermore, the "shaman is a man who has immediate, concrete experiences with gods and spirits; he sees them face to face, he talks to them, prays to them, implores them – but he does not control more than a limited number of them".[22]

In Philippine traditional religion, the generation of the departed ancestors was the core.[23] With the coming of Christianity in the Philippines, this was transformed into the devotion of the saints and the poor souls of purgatory. The poor souls are considered greatly to help the petition of their devotees.

The fourth area is esoteric language. In the shaman's training, is the learning of "secret language" and "animal language".[24] The Filipino folk-healers have to memorise plenty of pig Latin prayers and formulae, which they think will affect the cure. Jocano has documented the pig Latin prayers used by the healers around the Laguna de Bay area.[25] The popular healer, Alex Orbito, has a mantra, which he prays in healing.[26]

The fifth area of similarity between the old and new healers is their classification of diseases into two kinds: those that are naturally-caused, and those that are supernaturally-caused.[27] Naturally-caused diseases need medicine, like herbs, and the like. In the modern context, they need the help of the doctor. But, supernaturally-caused diseases, such as those caused by witchcraft, cannot be cured by doctors, but by *arbularyos*, or shamans. Whereas the Filipino shamans, long ago, were mostly female, the present healers are mostly male, and do their healing in a clinical setting.

Sixth, both the old and the new healers have similar healing procedures. This procedure presupposes the belief that man has two dimensions in his soul.[28] The first is the "soul" (*kaluluwa* in Tagalog, or *kalag* in Cebuano Visayan). The soul is identified with man, and is the essence of intellectual and moral power. After death, the soul becomes a separate entity, called the *anito*. But, during life, the *kaluluwa* may temporarily depart from the body. The separation causes bodily disturbance. The Spanish missionaries identified the *kaluluwa* as the guardian angel of each person. The second dimension is the *ginhawa*, which can mean stomach, breath, vital spirit, and character. Whereas the *kaluluwa*, is localised in the head, *ginhawa* is seated in the intestinal region. The *ginhawa* is the special preference of witchcraft. Whereas ancient Filipino shamans extricated disease, caused through sorcery, by means of ritual massage, dance, or exorcisms, the present-day healers reintegrate the body and the soul through "magnetic healing" and psychic surgery. In psychic surgery, the healers extract clots of blood, and other tissues, through operations done by bare hands and leaving no scars or infection.[29] The modern healers, according to Salazar, "invented" the modern process, in order to appear scientific and acceptable.

POWER

Power may be translated as *bisa*, *gahum*, or *pigsa*, respectively, in Cebuano Visayan, Tagalog, and Ilocano – the three most-widely-used Philippine languages.

The healers describe the healing power differently. It may be a hard, ball-like substance inside the body of the healer, or a kind of force coming from the blood, or like an electric current, with paralysing strength, or a cold feeling, then becoming warm, coming from God.[30]

Is the power of healing acquired, or a gift? From the foregoing comparison of healing, it is both acquired, and a gift. To a certain degree, the powers of healing may be acquired through human effort. One example is magnetic healing. Orbito is of the same opinion. The efforts made in the initiation stage of the shaman are directed towards the acquisition of power. Arens reports that the shamans are directed towards the acquisition of power. Arens reports that the shamans in Biliran, an island near Leyte, have to spend nine Fridays in the sea, nine Fridays in the church, and nine days in the cemetery.[31] But, concerning the higher forms of healing, this seems to be a God-given power. Thus, not all the members, who join the Union Espiritista Cristiana de Filipinas, get the power of healing, as performed by the psychic surgeons. The healers also claim that their gift of healing comes from the spirits/saints, or from God.

Connected with the acquisition of the power of healing is the cultivation of amulets (*anting-anting*). It is claimed that amulets play a role in the power of healing.[32] They are also connected with the phenomena of locally-founded sects, in their penchant for power.[33]

Is the power of healing dependent on the faith of the patient? The testimonies of the healers are unanimous in saying that the positive disposition of the patient plays an important role in the healing process. Those who lack faith will make the cure harder and slower on the part of the healer. This means that no faith on the side of the patient will result in no cure. The healer's power can work, but often to a limited degree.

Is the power of healing weakened if the healer receives money or indulges in vice? In the first place, the majority of healers feel that their ministry is a gift, which must also be given freely. Thus, Terte, the first well-

known psychic surgeon, died a poor man. They also receive money, or reward, for their sustenance, and the support of their families. But they also give away plenty of what they receive to charity. If the healer can detach himself from material success, he will not lose his power. Since the Philippine healers are also human, they may be subject to human frailty, like gambling, liquor, and extra-marital sex. But, as long as they do not allow these vices to dominate their personality, and as long as they keep healing as their main ministry, they will not lose their power. Otherwise, they cannot effect lasting cures.[34] This point will be discussed more in the following section, under spiritual discipline.

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE

Spiritual discipline is not to be understood here as the nuances of asceticism, which has stereotyped meanings in traditional Christian piety. Analogies can be drawn. The rigorous training, which an athlete undergoes in order to develop his skill and power, may be considered a kind of discipline. The same is true of the hours of practice and discipline, which a concert pianist undergoes, in order to have the skill of playing the piano.

Is the spiritual discipline of healers and shamans related to the acquisition and retention of power? The explanation can be varied. One explanation is that the asceticism of the Filipino healer seems to be connected with the accumulation of power. All sacrifices – such as flagellation, or the use of amulets – are not for the forgiveness of sins, but to make the body acquire more power.[35] The old shamans used to go to the caves for this purpose; the modern healers go to cemeteries. Their most-important season is Holy Week. Lent is said to be the season when the spirits give their power. Orbito goes to a privately-owned cave during Holy Week to meditate. The most-important day for this is Good Friday. Why Good Friday? Arens thinks that, like the grace of redemption, which was won for mankind on Good Friday, redemption from evil should also be connected to this great day. The *tambalan*, who drives away evil spirits, and heals men, might, therefore, in folk belief be related to this day of "redemption".[36]

This reason for sacrifice (i.e., to acquire power) may also be the explanation for prayers used. As mentioned, above, the shamans prefer esoteric, formulas such as pig Latin. The shamans have to memorise plenty of

such prayers for particular purposes, which, again, may be connected with acquiring power.

> Prayers are the most carefully-guarded part of the healing technique, because they control the power of the healers. They serve as the link between the practitioner and the supernatural power, which, in the local concept, is actually responsible for the cure of an illness; the healer is merely a tool, through which the supernatural gift is given to man. Prayers are, thus, regarded as sacred symbols, that hold the key to an unseen source of power of bisa to overcome diseases. As such, extreme caution is taken that they are not exposed to the uninitiated, or read by anyone who is not a practitioner. If written down, the booklet, or paper, must not be touched by any person, other than the healer. Any pollution destroys their healing potential.[37]

On the other hand, the healers may be motivated by the Christian way for doing good. One healer from Leyte feels that, unless he heals other people, he gets sick.[38] He, therefore, does not carry out his mission for his own sake. Most healers seem to be moved by this call, that since they have freely received the gift of healing, they must also freely give it away to others. Even Orbito, with his international fame, and people coming from various countries to him for healing, has free consultation for his patients three days a week.

Likewise, they are noted for their charity work. Daylo, the healer from Leyte, supports 38 needy persons in her house. Also the well-known Filipino healers generously give to charity.

Another healer, Alfredo Dotado, has become a sort of lay minister.[39] Besides his healing, he has given up marriage, in order to be of full service to his ministry. His exhortations to those, with whom he comes into contact, lead the patients to a better Christian life. The report of Bulatao about healers in Manila seems to point in the same direction.[40]

Obedience to superiors is the test for spiritual discipline. Daylo, who was known for her spectacular hearings, used to drink ditch water, and make similar sacrifices, in the presence of others, before performing her healing. This was in line with her victim-hood, that is, to take the sins of others herself, before she did the healing. But, when she was forbidden by the parish priest,

because of her "showing off", and her healing, she stopped her cures, except for her prayers that God will do the rest.

COMMENTS

Before making our comments on the foregoing phenomena, let us first state our assumptions.

Assumptions

The interpretation of the foregoing phenomena must be grounded on the right mode. The dualistic model puts a dichotomy between the natural and the supernatural, between nature and grace, between body and soul. If this model is adopted, it has the built-in bias of classifying whether or not some healings are miraculous. A miracle is not just any extraordinary event, but must be a sign of divine revelation in a religious context. Since many of the reported healings are in a religious context, are they miracles? Some of the reported cures done by Filipino faith-healers may pass the criteria used for the screening of miracles attributed to the intervention of a holy person before canonisation, or the criteria for miracles in Lourdes. The incarnational model is better than the dualistic model, because it can explain better the phenomena, as well as avoid the problem of miracles.

Secondly, we assume that man can meet God outside official Christianity. Vatican II concedes this point in its declaration on non-Christian religions. What counts is not the label but good works, especially love of one's fellowmen (Luke 10:29-37, Matt 25:25-31). Although Peter thought that salvation was only for the Jewish Christians, he was surprised that the Holy Spirit was also given to the gentiles (Acts 10:44-47). The criterion of good fruits (Matt 7:16, Gal 5:22) shows that the animistic shamans, and their modern counterparts, do encounter God.

The third assumption is that whatever is received is received according to the nature of the receiver. This is because grace is built on nature. When God spoke to the prophets and writers of the Old Testament, they understood, and expressed the revelation in their Jewish (Near East) categories. Likewise, the inspired writers of the New Testament also expressed revelation according to their style and limitations.

The fourth assumption is on the nature of healing. Like health, healing is psychosomatic. The mind can influence the body, and vice-versa. Furthermore, all healing is under the umbrella of self-healing. The body has the mechanism of coping, and adjusting itself to changes. The intervention of medicine, and of physicians, is a prop to let nature eventually take care of itself.

Comments

How the Filipino healers perceive health and sickness, hinges, perhaps, on their worldview. What may be assigned to the realm of the spirits, may have its non-spiritual counterpart. Father Jaime Bulatao, an experienced clinical psychologist, has tried to duplicate some psychic phenomena of the Filipino faith-healers in his laboratory. Whereas the shamans become mediums, through a trance, and become possessed by the spirits of saints, and of the departed, Bulatao has replicated such phenomena. He lets his subjects go into an altered state of consciousness by murmuring Latin declensions of some words. Then the subjects get possessed by "saints" called at will, or by national heroes, or even by living national figures. The latter shows that the dead have no "monopoly", and, perhaps, disproves "possession", as claimed by the shamans. In such an altered state of consciousness, Bulatao has succeeded in suggesting to people that they get rid of their sickness.[41]

The same approach may be said of "possession", which shamans may claim. Whereas Eastern psychotherapy may work, Bulatao's kind of "exorcism" is better than Western psychotherapy, in the Philippines.[42] He has "exorcised" possessed people, by letting them go into an altered state of consciousness, and telling the "spirit" to go away. He says that the Filipino therapist must accept the client's belief that he is possessed by a spirit, and treat him accordingly. In this way, better healing is achieved.

But his explanation ends there. He cannot explain the feats of Filipino healers, like detaching eyeballs, removing the diseased part, and replacing the eyeball back in its proper place without infection. He cannot explain how the healers can "operate" with bare hands, and have no scars after the operation. Perhaps the answer goes back to faith, and God's grace.

The foregoing phenomena of folk healing in the Philippines have parallels in the Bible. Just as the shamans could be put in a trance to the sound of some instruments, the prophet Elisha was put in the state of ecstasy, or

trance by his expressed wish that a lyre be played (2 Kings 3:5). So were the group of prophets, entranced by the sound of the harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre (1 Sam 14:6). In such a state, one can do foolish things. For example, Saul, who was also a psychic, stripped himself naked (1 Sam 19:23-24). Likewise, the trance was not necessarily revelatory, because God used a lying spirit to deceive the evil king Jehoshaphat (1 Kings 22:19-23).

Whenever Christ cured the sick, He felt the healing power going out of Him (Luke 6:19; 8:46). He demanded faith from the sick (Matt 9:28-29; 8:10), and, where there was little faith, He performed fewer cures (Mark 6:5-6). He gave His powers, including that of healing, to His apostles, and promised that they would "perform even greater works" (John 14:21) than Christ did. He did not prohibit others from using His name in casting out demons, because – as He told His disciples – "anyone who is not against you is for you" (Luke 9:49-50). The power of healing, which the disciples, and early Christians, received was a gift from the Holy Spirit (Rom 12:9; 1 Cor 12:9; 28.30), and could not be bought (Acts 7:18-21).

Could the foregoing biblical data apply to Filipino folk healers? If the tree is to be known by its fruits, do the good works of Filipino faith-healers show their essence? Why give the gift of healing to such a group of Filipinos? Are there no worthier ones? Such is the mystery of God's generosity. One cannot question the Creator, just as the pot cannot question the potter's design (Rom 9:19-21). The Filipino healers claim the healing power is not theirs, but coming from God.

If the *sensus fidelium*, or the sense of the faithful, is a basic sound doctrine,[43] perhaps the way Filipinos look on power may be interpreted as the theology of grace in the Philippine context.[44]

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35. Covar, "Potensiya, Bisa at Anting-anting", p. 38.
36. Arens, *Folk Practices and Beliefs*, p. 120.
37. Jacano, *Folk Medicine*, pp. 194-195.
38. Francisco Barcial, personal communication, February 27, 1985.
39. Alfredo Dotado, personal communication, Feruary 3, 1985.
40. Bulatao, "When Roman Theology Meets an Animistic Culture".
41. Jaime Bulatao, personal communication, February 27, 1985.
42. Jaime Bulatao, "Local Cases of Possessions and their Cure", in *Philippines Studies* 30 (1982) pp. 415-425.
43. Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium*, no. 12.
44. Mercado, *Christ in the Philippines*, pp. 86-89.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Mustard Seed: From a French Mission to a Papuan Church 1885-1985, by Georges Delbos, MSC. With an introductory letter from the Right Honourable M. T. Somare, and a foreword by M. Jean Guitton, of the French Academy. Port Moresby: Institute of PNG Studies, 1985, pp. XVII and 448. Price K15.95, $A29.50.

The present Catholic Bishop's Conference of Papua New Guinea (PNG) and the Solomon Islands, comprises 22 dioceses in five metropolitan areas (three dioceses, including one archdiocese, belong to the Solomon Islands). These dioceses, the Catholic church in PNG, have their origins in four centres of missionary activities. The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC) started their activities in Rabaul in 1882, and extended these activities to the Papuan region in 1885. The Missionaries of the Divine Word (SVD) began their activities on the north coast of the mainland, starting from the small island of Tumelo in 1896, and the Missionaries of the Society of Mary (SM) took up their missionary activity in the Solomons in 1898.

A history of the Roman Catholic church in PNG, as a whole, presented in one book, is not yet available. This makes the book of Fr Delbos very valuable, since it presents the history of the church in one of the four areas, in the Papua region. This study can help towards a more detailed presentation, showing the relationship between the four areas, comparing the similarities and differences in the missionary approach, and tracing the development towards the present Catholic Bishops' Conference. The author does not make any attempt to cover the other three regions, or to show the similarities, etc. It is not part of his purpose. Therefore, only the early years of the Rabaul mission are presented, in so far as they are relevant for the beginning of the mission in Papua.

The book is translated from the French original: *Cent ans chez les Papous*. The English subtitle, "From a French Mission to a Papuan church", which expresses the intention of the author more explicitly, has, however, the less fortunate choice of words, "to a Papuan church", because the goal of the missionary activity is the "church in Papua", not a "Papuan church". The minor correction could still summarise the author's intention, which is again expressed at the outset: He is asked to write a book to answer the question whether the church's mandate to the Society (MSC) to evangelise the Vicariate of Melanesia is fulfilled: "We

accepted the mandate, did we fulfil it?" (p. 6). The answer, at the end of the book, is clear and explicit: "YES, MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!" (p. 422). Every reader, and every body, who took part in the centenary celebration in 1985, will agree with the author: The mission is accomplished, the church is alive in the Papuan region.

The author's presentation of the development in the course of history can be summarised with the words of Paul Claudel: "Never was a land so loved as this one!" (pp. 25 and 40). The repeated reference to the "mustard seed", and especially the presentation of the main characters, – the bishops, priests, and religious – reveal the intention. The dedication and the commitment of the missionaries, and their coworkers, is impressive; the expansion from the island to the coast, and the mountains; the planning of the evangelisation of Milne Bay to the east and Daru to the west, as well as Mendi to the north-west, with the readiness to hand over certain areas to other missionaries, as well as the hardships, difficulties, and sacrifices of the people involved, illustrate the statement of Paul Claudel.

This love can also be discovered in the internal development of missionary activity in this region: the bishops and missionaries believed that the Papuans could continue the mission, which they started. In 1937, the first priest, and future bishop, Louis Vangeke, was ordained. He was the son of a sorcerer, but he was so well trusted that he was sent to Madagascar to prepare for ordination. Much earlier, the Handmaids of the Lord (AD) already shared in the responsibility of missionary work, as religious sisters. A similar attempt was made with the "Little Brothers of the Lord" for young men, a group to which also Louis Vangeke belonged before he decided to go to Madagascar. Then there are the many catechists and coworkers who, too, were called to share in the missionary endeavours.

All this seems to indicate that the development of missionary activity in the Papuan region went ahead in such a way that there was no need for the Second Vatican Council. There is little doubt that the Council belongs to the most important events of the Catholic church, as a whole, and, therefore, also of the church in the Papuan region. However, to what extent did the missionaries feel the need for a renewal of the liturgy, and was Vatican II an opening for the desires and concerns on this level? The opening of liturgical renewal at the Council was deeply influenced by the bishops of the Third-World churches. Does this include also those from Papua? The liturgical aspect of missionary activity could have been developed in more detail. Was the missionary activity merely a question of "saving souls:?

The council brought also a real opening for the laity, with a new awareness of their responsibility in the mission of the church. The author shows how lay missionaries were brought into the activities (p. 253f) some time before the beginning of the Council. Was the Council's teaching on the laity also an answer to the questions that were discussed by the missionaries, e.g., regarding catechumenate, early baptism, etc.? (cf. pp 152; 195). The Decree on Missionary Activity (Nr 21) would certainly bring light to the worries and reflections of the missionaries.

One more example: the author shows the great love of the missionaries for the country. Is this also true for the culture and tradition? Vatican II explicitly expresses in the Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to non-Christian Religions (Nr 2): "The Catholic church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions. She has high regard for the manner of life and conduct, the precepts and doctrines, which . . . often reflect a ray of that truth, which enlightens all men . . ." Does the love, trust, and confidence of the missionaries already express this attitude? Was this emphasis of Vatican II a relief or a new burden for missionary activity? Can we still say: "Mission accomplished", or have we to rethink, and rewrite, history once again, through the eyes of the people of Papua New Guinea, e.g., through the eyes of Louis Vangeke? That would mean: One mission is accomplished, but THE MISSION of the church has just begun.

The author was asked to present a "balance sheet", "no laurels, no panegyric" (p. 5). It is difficult to write a book "for a special purpose – the Centenary of our mission" (ibid), and yet, also to present a balance sheet. Who would not like to make it an occasion to pay homage to all those who have contributed to the development of the church during the 100 years? The author certainly paid homage to the missionaries, but, at the same time, he is also aware of the need for a balance sheet.

The French Original, and its English Translation

Towards the end of 1984,there appeared, with the Fratemite N.-Damedu S-Coeur at Issoudun, France, a book entitled: *Cent ans chez les Papous: Mission accomplie?*,written by G. Delbos MSC (541 pp., ISBN 2902242026). Just one year, later the Institute of PNG Studies made the English translation available, and called it: *The Mustard Seed: From a French Mission to a Papuan Church* (xvii + 448 pp., ISBN 9980680024). The book is said, in general, to include "some

editorial changes" (p. xiv), and it might be useful to specify more closely which changes have been made.

One of the first differences, regards the front and back covers, which now feature "Papuans" and not "New Guineans", as on the French book. Another is that the note of the editor has been partly rewritten, and illustrated with a map, summarising the colonial histories of West Irian, New Guinea, Papua, and the Solomon Islands. There is, also, at the beginning of the book, a synchronistic diagram, listing some 80 civil, ecclesiastical, and religious dignitaries, who, in one way or another, were involved in the life of the Catholic church in Papua. As to the rest of the book, we will list the differences, both in the illustrations, and in the text.

About one-third (i.e., 37 out of 122) of the original photographs have been omitted, and replaced by 60 new illustrations. Unfortunately, a few of them came out too dark. All the maps have been redrawn, and some new ones added (277, 383, 393, 397, 402), and two more diagrams have been included (38, 230). The rationale behind these changes is to emphasise the involvement of nationals, and also that of the Australian mission personnel.

To the first category, one may reckon some interesting historical pictures, as the one of the first mission set up on Yule Island (96, being a substitute for the less-authentic print of the time, given on p. 137 of the French edition), and the one of a village scene (6), which might have inspired the ancient print given next to it (7). There are also the group of Mekeo ladies (120), a most unusual seaplane (239), and a few old maps (103, 144). The local people will recognise themselves among the various groups of sisters, catechists, deacons, and seminarians (337, 323, 339, 386, 422), and also in the photographs of the Tolai martyr, Peter ToRot (226), and of the two first Papuan priests, Louis Vangeke and Julian Efi (213, 300). Two individuals, however, lost their pictures, viz., the son of chief Aia Rauma, who welcomed the first missionaries on Yule Island (French, p. 136), and the big man Baiva, who later challenged Bishop de Boismenu (French, p. 200); the occasion has not been used, though, to identify, in the English version, catechist Kleto Ivolo, who died in the mid-30s at Waitape, when appeasing fighting tribes (204). From the local scene, are also included the churches of Port Moresby, Veifa, Bakoiudu, Fane, and Nazareth (10, 315-316, 250), together with such civil buildings as the National Parliament and the Headquarters of the Bank of Papua New Guinea (4, 377). Native Christian art, too, has got a bigger share (263, 250, 315.)

The Australian contribution to the Papuan mission history is exemplified in the photographs of the legendary Brother George Tweedy (162), and of the long-time parish priest of Port Moresby, F. M. McEncroe (197), of the Bishops J. Doyle, who first headed the mission of Samarai (302), and of V. Copas, who, at one time, was administrator of the diocese of Bereina (340), and of such groups as the De La Salle brothers (257), and the lay missionaries (259). One should add here, too, such non-mission figures as the famous police magistrate of Thursday Island, H. Chester (79), and that crusty American settler of York Island, "Yankee Ned" (84); the distinguished Sir Peter Scratchley, with staff and party on a luxury boat (93) form an eloquent contrast with the wretched missionaries of 100 years ago (96). The end of World War II is fittingly illustrated with some Australian soldiers liberating the mission personnel from their imprisonment at the Ramale camp, near Rabaul (224). Lest incorrect conclusions be drawn, it may be noted that the two Italian missionaries (88) do not belong to the first group of their countrymen, who came to Papua, but to a later generation, and that the amphibian plane of the Archbold expedition (239) was used during the second New Guinea expedition (1936/1937), and not during the visit of 1939, referred to in the text of the book (238).

The main text of the publication runs to 15 chapters, against only 14 in the French. The reason is that a new division was made in the original chapter XI (1946-1960), thus separating the prodigious expansion of the years 1946-1954 (which remains chapter XI), from what is termed the "retarded growth" in the period 1954-1960, and which was caused, among others, by the post-war priorities in Europe (now dealt with in chapter XII). This means that the three remaining chapters in the English version are one out of step with those in the French original.

In general, the translation shows a tendency to abandon the flowery style of the French, usually by reducing the length of the sentences. But there are some additions, too. They concern, for instance, the post-war developments in such an "old" district as that of the Mekeos (passim between p. 317 and 327), the mission involvement in education, and in the training of catechists (325, 338), and the fresh beginnings in the Gulf area, which later became the diocese of Kerema (329). Elsewhere, too, a few new paragraphs have been inserted (e.g., 212, 395); some try to situate better, such Australian MSC's as Brother George Tweedy (164f) and Archbishop V. P. Copas (434). The opportunity of the translation has been taken also to restore one page, which, inadvertently, was missing in the French original (404-406, cf. French, p. 508).

Although the book retraces the history of the Catholic commitment to Melanesia, ending in the retrenchment of the French-Swiss Sacred Heart fathers to the one diocese of Bereina (new map: 383), a greater attention to other historical centres has been given, at least up to World War I, and this is shown in newly-added photographs of the Catholic mission societies based in Mendi, Daru, and Wewak (284, 291, 396-399), and in the maps of the early foundations in New Britain, Northeast New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands (393, 397, 402). The synopsis of the hierarchical divisions in Melanesia between 1844 and 1985 has been corrected in several places (404, cf. French, p. 509).

Following the French example, the bibliography distinguishes between "English language sources" and "books in other languages". However, the number of references has been substantially increased, and covers now almost 11 pages. A 1,000-entries index concludes the work (14 pages), a feature not found in the French text. The latter list reveals, for example, that over 50 nationals find a place in this history of the Papuan church, but there are over 50 columns on expatriate fathers, brothers, and sisters, even though no attempt was made to provide a comprehensive list of foreign mission personnel, and most living missionaries were omitted altogether. Having accomplished the task of planting a church in a foreign garden (cf. French, p. 531), "the mustard seed" now faces the future.

Theo Aerts.

[The above review is reprinted from the *Australian Catholic Record* 63-3 (1986), pp. 344-346. Other comments were made by A. Strathern, *The Times of Papua New Guinea*, June 9, 1985, p. 24 (also *German Pacific Society* G 132 (1986), pp. 21-23); R. Lacey, *Catalyst* 16-1 (1986), pp. 74-79 (also *Post-Courier*, January 3, 1986, p.23); R. Wiltgen, *Verbum SVD* 28-2 (1987), pp. 213-216; J. Garrett, *Pacific Perspective* 13-1 (1984), pp. 90-92; D. Langmore, *Pacific History*, Bibliography (1986), pp. 69-70; Hermann Jansenn, *Zeithschrift fur Missions und Religionswissenschaft* 71-1 (1987), p. 96; J. Baumgartner, *Neue Zeitschrift fur Missionswissenschaft* (1/1988), pp. 76-77). Further, on the French original, by H. Maurier, *Cultures et Development* 16-1 (1984), pp. 240-243.]

GORRINGE, Timothy, ***Redeeming Time: Atonement Through Education***, London UK: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1986.

This book is a theological reflection upon a practice of involvement by students of Tamil Nadu Theological Students of South India, in the life of "the poor" (see pp. 16-18). The students helped Indian villagers to think about their situation. The villagers saw that things did not have to be the way they were, and that there was something they could do to change them. Once their consciousness was changed in this way, they found the confidence and energy to act. The effective force behind their change in consciousness was a sense of the elusive presence of God, who had entered into solidarity with their situation, through the incarnation of Jesus Christ, and was continuing to educate them in the midst of the events of history, by the power of the Spirit. As they committed themselves to respond to the educating activity of the Spirit, so they were liberated from their consciousness of oppression, in order to attain justice and become fully human. All religious talk and action was to be judged by whether it witnessed to God's love for the poor, and so to the human project.

The emphasis in this book is on doing, rather than having, on political involvement, rather than on making use of "spiritual" aids to self-improvement. Quasi-material views of "created grace", of the "Spirit" as private feeling, of the sacraments as substances with power, or of the church as a self-serving institution are challenged. Christianity is described not as one more religion in competition with other rival religious. Instead it is the way of Jesus, the crucified, who laid aside all claims to position and power, in order to be with the powerless, and show them their true humanity. So the question of, "What was God doing in my history before we received the gospel?" could be answered by saying that the story of the gospel does not destroy the story of each culture to which it is given, but adds another chapter, which sets all that had gone before in a new, more-fully-human, light.

So, the gospel provides a valuable corrective to all attempts to turn Christianity into a means of escape from the world, or a device for gaining an absolute version of human power. Instead, it affirms progress in what is truly human, through solidarity in God's redeeming work; such an affirmation "entails trust in the promise that love is stronger than hate, and life than death, which we receive in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. It recognises the terror of history, but refuses to assess history solely in terms of its negative

products. It discerns, for instance, in the women's movement, or in the programme to combat racism, small signs, at least, of the possibility of a more-human future, and, in these signs, it discerns the pedagogy of God's Spirit, realising a solidarity in redemption to break the hold of, and set people free from, solidarity in sin" (p. 56).

As with all books that offer a corrective, there is a question of whether the author has gone too far the other way. The message of the book could be mistaken for one of salvation by "doing", that is, by "works". We do need the salvation of what we are, the healing of our fallen human natures, if we are to perform right action. What we do is an expression of what we are. As a result, our actions show up the limits and divisions of our limited, and divided, human nature. Yet, in God, being and doing are one, for His being is infinite love, and His acts are infinitely loving, as we see in Jesus' unlimited self-giving, His sacrifice "for many". Our contact with Him is a reception of, and incorporation in, His loving sacrifice, not merely as a physical act, but as a spiritual communion, a personal relationship that unites being and doing. As Timothy Gorringe rightly says, this relationship, this growth in "solidarity", is not an instant total change, but a historical process that needs to be worked out in action. At the same time, that action leads to the healing of our natures, their "divinisation", whereby love becomes "second nature" to us. Salvation, then, involves historical liberation, and personal conversion, as two aspects of the same process. We do not need to assume that the poor are already perfect by nature, and only have to be set free from the chains of historical oppression. We can call on them to repent, and receive the gospel that heals.

Timothy Gorringe uses the term, "the poor", as a label, and hardly describes them as particular people, who may have particular weaknesses. He does admit the need of the oppressed to avoid becoming oppressors (p. 220), but his book does not have the sharpness of focus of Gustavo Gutierrez's: *We Drink from Our Own Wells*, which deals candidly with the temptations of apathy, or bitterness, faced by the "poor", and their need for a spirituality, that will enable them to "love", as well as to forgive, their oppressor. It would be good if Timothy Gorringe could provide a description of the practical experience of "solidarity with the poor" in India, on which his book is based. If the book is an appeal for the voice of the poor to be heard, it should be followed by a book that contains that voice.

Meanwhile, *Redeeming Time* is a passionate and urgent appeal for justice for the poor, in solidarity with Jesus Christ, the poor one. It sets an example for all theological colleges, of the use of practical pastoral work among the oppressed, exploited, needy, weak, or defenceless, as an exercise in local theology, and an integral part of a theological programme of critical reflection upon practical experience of liberation.

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