BULLETIN OF ECUMENICAL THEOLOGY

CHRISTIAN MISSION IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

Globalisation and Reconciliation

PUBLISHED BY
The Ecumenical Association of Nigerian Theologians
CHRISTIAN MISSION IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

Globalisation and Reconciliation

PUBLISHED BY
The Ecumenical Association of Nigerian Theologians
ISSN 0794-8670

Editor
Elochukwu E. Uzukwu, c.s.sp. - Spiritan International School of Theology
Attakwu, Enugu.

Editorial Board

J.P.C. Nzomiwu, - Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.
Chris I. Ejizu, - University of Portharcourt
Chris U. Manus, - Obafemi Awolowo University, Ife
Ibrahim Musa Ahmadu, - University of Jos.
Obiora Ike - Director, Catholic Institute for Development Justice
           and Peace, Enugu.
Nleanya Onwu - University of Nigeria Nsukka

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Nigeria - N150.00 per issue
- N250.00 per annum
Foreign - 20 US dollars per annum
          10 US dollars per issue
          (air mail postage included)
Payments overseas: % Congregazione dello Spirito Santo
                   Casa Generalizia
                   Clivo di Cinna, 195,
                   00136, Roma, Italia.


All Correspondence should be addressed to the Editor, B.E.Th. Spiritan International School of Theology (SIST), P.O. Box 9696, Enugu, Nigeria.


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial 1

Paulinus Ikechukwu Odozor Globalisation and Mission in Africa in the Third Millennium. 3

Robert J. Schreiter Identity and Communication between Locality/Contextuality and Globality/Universality – A Semiotic Linguistic Model 23

Felix Wilfred Globalisation and Cultures – The Other Voice 41

Obiora Ike and Emeka Ngwoke “Nigeria Prospects for Development” – A Response to the World Bank 58

Elochukwu E. Uzukwu Healing Memories: The Church as Agent of Reconciliation – In the Service of the Kingdom. 89

Books Received 115
CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

1. Ike, Obiora is Director, Catholic Institute for Development, Justice and Peace.

2. Ngwoke, Emeka is a Priest of the Diocese of Nsukka and is associated with the Catholic Institute for Development Justice and Peace.

3. Odozor, Paulinus Ikechukwu, is Professor of Moral Theology at the Spiritan International School of Theology (SIST), Attakwu Enugu.

4. Schreiter, Robert J. is Professor at the Catholic Theological Union Chicago.

5. Uzukwu, Elochukwu E., is Professor of Liturgy at SIST.

Wilfred, Felix; is Professor from Madras India. He resides in St John Vianney Home, 21 Santhome High Road, Madras
Christian Mission in the Third Millennium
*Globalisation and Reconciliation.*

This end of the 20th century reveals in a startling manner the incredible possibilities of making the world a single place. The great advances in information technology and the influence of the mass media bring peoples and cultures together in a way that would have been impossible fifty years ago. The fact is real that we are becoming more and more neighbours – Chinese, Westerners, Africans, Latin Americans, Japanese, Indians can be brought together through the Internet, the CNN and other wonders of modern communication to share the sights and sounds, the joys and sorrows one of another. Paradoxically, the more we are brought to a common place, the more we face the challenge of making the world a “place for all”. The more modern patterns of communication bring us together as neighbours, the more we face the challenge of “neighbourliness”. Christian mission in the third millennium must face this challenge.

The hard reality today is that global capitalism aided by modernisation, and dominated by the Western civilisation, has the project of realising the world as a single place in order to have full control over it. The fact emerges that the majority of Africans and Latin Americans (about 80%) freeze outside of this new single place, while watching the minority bask in the warmth and opulence this global village provides. For the latter there can be no place as good as this global village, for the former the recolonisation of lands and peoples portends no good.

Contributors to this issue of our *Bulletin* address the question of globalisation and mission in the third millennium. Coming from different worlds or civilisations they take these worlds on board in expressing their views. Odozor carefully notes that our world is gradually becoming a single place as testified by the growing interdependence and shared vulnerability experienced today. He equally notes that Africa is clearly marginalised in this globalised world. Ike and Ngwoke spell out the reasons for this marginalization: Western capitalism, which spreads out its tentacles to control all economies of the world, does not have mercy on the weak. Focusing
on the World Bank Report on Nigeria, Ike and Ngwoke show the World Bank prescriptions as characteristic of how not to develop Nigeria. The Bretton Woods institution fails to take the human into consideration. Instead of SAP and other death-dealing prescriptions like privatisation, liberalisation, deregulation, and so on, our contributors prescribe a deliberate undertaking of a massive human capital enhancement programme. Christian mission in Africa and the world has the task of challenging this economic programme of globalisation, which has stolen from the masses their subjecthood and purchasing power.

Schreiter and Wilfred examine the question of identity and tradition which globalisation challenges. Globalisation intrudes into local communities, destabilising cultural values. Schreiter uses the semiotic-linguistic model to analyse the reaction of cultures to this phenomenon. Wilfred who considers globalisation as the pinnacle of imperialism draws attention to the limitation of the semiotic-linguistic model, but utilises the same model to analyse globalisation. According to Wilfred the future of mission in the third millennium will focus on inter-cultural encounters respectful of the other as in dialogue between the religions. Unity in the world is not achieved through creating an “administered world”. Unity can begin only where people become subjects in this process. The subjecthood of peoples is the foundation for the emergence of unity.

As the world becomes more and more a single place, the conflicts we experience in Bosnia, Algeria, Rwanda, the Central and West African regions show the world is not yet a “common place for all”. Neighbourliness in the global village may be created through healing of memories, reconciliation and conflict resolution. This is the substance of Uzukwu’s reflection on the Church as agent of reconciliation. The SIST mission congress, held between November 11-17, 1996, underline reconciliation as a key priority of the Church’s mission in the third millennium. The image of the Church as Family of God challenges all Christians to work relentlessly in making the world a place for all.

Obiora Ike, Elochukwu Uzukwu.
Globalisation and Mission in Africa in the Third Millennium

By

Paulinus Ikechukwu Odozor

Introduction

Last year we organised a well received and well attended international symposium on mission. Our aim in that exercise was to “reflect on the ordeal which Africans are going through today and to develop contextual orientations in mission for the Church in Africa as it prepares to enter the third millennium.” The symposium this year, though on much smaller scale, takes up the theme of Africa and mission in the third millennium. This paper is meant to widen the discussion a little to examine the impact of global forces on African mission as well as to determine what possible responses we can make to these global trends and factors in view of the Christian mission in the Africa of the next century.

Defining Globalisation

I want to introduce our topic by means of some anecdotes. The first is that I bought three new T-shirts this summer. Two of them I bought at a GAP store on Bloor Street in Downtown Toronto. I bought the other one from St Pierre et Miquelon, an Overseas French territory which is located off Newfoundland. These shirts bear Canadian and French trade labels but are either made in China or Malaysia or Thailand. I now wear those clothes in Nigeria. A few weeks ago, towards the end of October, we all woke to the news of tremendous turmoil in world money markets. What began as a consequence of the near collapse in the real estate market of the tiny Island of Hong Kong soon spread to other Asian markets. Soon, the European and North American markets were in chaos and the very foundations of world monetary and financial systems
and institutions were in danger of collapse or at least of serious debility.

As I write this paper, Iraq is in the news once again, this time over its refusal to allow the American members of UNCOM (the UN commission charged with seeking out and destroying all of Iraq’s stockpiles of biological, chemical and other weapons of mass destruction). The world’s media has been there bringing us the pertinent developments as they happen. All parties to the dispute are conscious of the massive audiences who are tuned in at any one time and have been vying for public sympathy through well-orchestrated news conferences and photo opportunities.

My next anecdote concerns the Salman Rushdie affair. Rushdie, you may recall, published a novel that was considered blasphemous by much of the Islamic world. As a consequence, Ayatollah Khomeni of Iran placed a fatwa on his head. Anyone who kills Rushdie has done a good deed for Islam and would be rewarded by God for such a pious act. Many non-Muslims wonder why and how an obscure book of fiction like Satanic Verses could attract so much attention and ire from Muslims all over the world.

One commentator notes that what bothers Muslims the most about this whole episode “is the notion that they are being asked to surrender the core of the [Islamic] faith - the immutable sacredness of the Qur’an - as the price for full inclusion in the global system currently dominated by non-Muslims... Khomeni’s condemnation of Rushdie is therefore part of a much larger Muslim effort to counter inequalities within the global system through the revitalisation of Islamic particularity”.

Finally, the deaths of Diana, Princess of Wales, and Mother Theresa of Calcutta this summer sent ripples all over the world. The whole world stood still for both women - two lives that had global ramifications in various ways. These anecdotes share some important characteristics: they are illustrative of our growing interdependence and shared vulnerability, the globalisation of the local as well as the localisation of globality, the role of economics, politics, culture
Globalisation and Mission in Africa in the Third Millennium

Globalisation (including religion) in this phenomenon and a myriad of other issues.

Globalisation has been defined as "the intensification of world-wide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice-versa." As Anthony Giddens further says, "whoever studies cities today, in any part of the world, is aware that what happens in a local neighbourhood is likely to be influenced by factors - such as world money or commodity markets - operating at an indefinite distance away from the neighbourhood itself." Malcom Waters also speaks of globalisation as a social process "in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and in which people become aware that they are receding." In the words of Roland Robertson, one of the leading authorities on globalisation, the world is more and more becoming "a single place."

There is no unanimous agreement among scholars on the factors, which are causing the shrinkage of the globe: is it the mass media and mass communication (including faster and easier means of commuting from one part of the globe to another)? Is globalisation a result of the increasing hegemony of transnational corporations? Is it a combination of factors, and in what ratio and order? Whatever is fuelling it, it is clear that the world is becoming more and more a single place than it was fifty year ago.

My aim in this paper is to discuss what it means to say that our world is increasingly becoming a single place; to inquire to what extent Africa has become or is becoming part of this globalised world; and finally to discuss what opportunities and challenges there are in this globalising world for Christian missionary efforts in the Africa of the third millennium.

A Historical Sketch of Globalisation

Globalisation is not an entirely new phenomenon nor is it the creation of entirely new forces. From an African perspective, the process by which the world is turning into one place dates to pre-
colonial times, to those times when groups started to interact with each other either for slaving, warring or trading. These interactions sometimes had significant “civilising” effects as this testimony provided by the Kano Chronicles concerning the influence of the Fulani on the development of Islam in Hausaland in the 15th century shows.

In Yakubu’s time [1452-1463] the Fulani came to Hausaland from Mali bringing with them books on Divinity and Etymology. Formerly our doctors had, in addition to the Koran, only the books of the Law and the Traditions.⁶

The wave of European invasion of Africa which followed the earlier Portuguese incursion was a decisive step in making Africa part of what one can today call the “world system” - a world system built up by Europeans and for European self interest to the utter detriment of Africa and the needs of her peoples. This second wave of European invasion, in the words of Chinweizu, “spread a new dust of familiar disasters upon Africa: social dislocation, depopulation, uprooting of peoples, and enslavement of Africans...”.⁷ It would be another three and a half-century - in the twentieth century precisely - before some measure of peace would return to Africa. Even so, this pax Africana, was in fact imposed for European interests: to build colonial polities which would serve as tributaries to the various European masters; to establish colonised economies in Africa; to foist European colonial culture on Africans and to afford themselves the opportunity to demonstrate their supremacy in every way to Africans.⁸ Now that the colonisers have gone, the peace they patched up is crumbling all over the continent.

Thus in the incorporation (absorption) of Africa into the so-called global system, then and now, Africa’s interest has never been considered. Globalisation, then and now seems to be of questionable benefit to Africa especially because Africa has never been part of the process of establishing a global system as an equal
partner with the rest of the world. Our adversaries, then and now, are not the only ones to blame for this state of affairs. Our leaders, the men and women charged with steering our common destiny, have consistently let us down when it came to negotiating our destiny vis-a-vis the rest of humanity. Chinweizu’s ringing indictment of our leaders who were supposed to ease the pains of our first contact with the Western world is still sadly true of our leaders today.

The rulers traded and sat on the crumbling carcasses of their states as they stagnated and decayed. The rulers took little thought for the future that was encroaching on them from across the waterfront. And when that future burst upon their heads, it toppled their rusted power, pitched them off their stools and thrones, and blinded them with the dust of ruin. And because they had not adequately prepared for the showdown with the west, their desperate heroism under attack was thoroughly wasted. Four centuries, four long centuries wasted on particularist greed, four exhausting centuries bloodily exporting their kind, four centuries of political disorientation and social disorganisation. May their souls sleep without rest in our memories to warn us away from any repetition of their ruinous neglect.9

Other important examples of the early historical process of evolution of a ‘global society’ must include the global unfolding of an Islamic civilisation in the 7th and 8th centuries and the subsequent pan-Arabist colonisation that followed the founding of Islam. The founding of Islam quickly drew North and West Africa into the New World order, which was being established by the new faith in two ways. Africa became linked to the Arab world by faith and by slave trade. Peter Clarke points out that not long after the Arab conquerors had overrun North Africa in the first half of the 8th century, “the Umayyad rulers there began organising military
expedition and slave raids into the southern regions of Morocco and as far south as the boundaries of Ancient Ghana. Like its Islamic counterpart, the Christian missionary movement that began soon after the death of Christ and continues till today has been a major force for globalisation. Among other notable historical forces of globalisation one must include the European expansion in the Americas in the 15th and 16th centuries, the immense technological innovation and European colonial expansion which took place from the second half of the 19th century up until the start of the first world war in 1914.

However, globalisation as it is understood today is a relatively new phenomenon - albeit with long historical roots. The term is widely used today in fields as divers as politics, economics, geography, marketing, sociology, religion, etc. Globalisation today is also marked by new sets of players, new rules and a new game altogether. For economists, globalisation is now associated with the dismantling of national barriers to the operation of capital markets that began in the early 1980s. This resulted in simultaneous dealing in the main markets of New York, London, Tokyo and Frankfurt such that the movements of the markets are clearly outside the scope for control by any one national agency. The future of the capitalist system is no longer to be seen as linked to the fate of a particular modernising nation, the United States. This suggests a qualitative change from a process seen variously as modernisation or imperialism towards an encompassing transformation in which new agents for global change are potentially active in any part of the world. The Far East countries, Islam or Europe may take the centre of the stage at any one time, producing repercussions for lives in areas of the world far remote from them.

As an economic reality, globalisation in recent times is therefore the combination of three factors: the widening of the ambience of
exchange by integration of new countries notably in Latin America, the former Communist block countries and East Asia; the globalisation of firms, big businesses which can now organise their activities, research, produce and sell on a world-wide scale; and third by deepening of exchange made possible by deregulation and liberalisation.

Certain events since 1970 have accelerated the recent phase of globalisation and indeed marked its evolution. The first is the combination of the end of the monetary system, which had been in place since the Bretton-Woods arrangement after the Second World War and the Middle East oil crises between 1971 and 1973. The latter event showed how dependent the Western economies were on Middle East and OPEC oil supplies. The second phase consists in what has come to be known as “the great decade of the markets”. I am referring here to the 1980s marked by the election of Margaret Thatcher in 1979 and Ronald Regan in 1980 and the collapse of the Berlin Wall and fall of communism in 1989-1990. This was a period of great liberalisation of the World money markets and the economies of the West.

The third phase of economic globalisation is marked by profound changes in technology with regard to the money and commodity markets. The great money markets of the world are now linked up by computers such that people in one part of the world can know about and react instantly to the moods of the market in other parts of the world. The recent turmoil in the markets in East Asia is a case in point. What this shows up too is the vulnerability of modern states even the wealthy ones vis-à-vis the markets of the world. For example, all it takes these days for the flight of capital to occur from any one country is for any highly placed government official to suggest the possibility of a government policy which would curb the powers of these markets in any way. We are indeed in the era of the civilisation of the markets, what Vatican II referred to as the “international imperialism of money.” The markets have become the veritable emblems of the acceleration of time and of the volatility of the times we live in. As in all forms
of imperialism, the victims of the new international imperialism of money are people. In the United States for example, the gains of the New Deal of Eisenhower are all but gone. In Canada, the great welfare state with a human face has given way to a society where what seems to matter most are the percentage gains of the Dow Industrial Average or of the Toronto Stock Exchange. What seems to matter in this new dispensation is the number of people who have joined the list of Forbes 50 richest men and women and not the plight of the great millions of people who have little to eat as a result of the sometimes heartless economic packages the IMF seems only too ready to dish out as a panacea for the cure of all ailing economies.

The moral assessment of the impact of globalisation can hardly be done from a neutral standpoint. If you are an erstwhile unemployed factory worker in the suburbs of Mexico who suddenly finds himself/herself with a new and relatively well-paying job in a factory which has relocated from Markham, Ontario, Canada, in search of a cheaper production base - a relocation made possible by NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement) - you would probably thank God for the enlargement of economic space brought about by globalisation. The Markham worker who lost his job would probably curse the "scoundrel" who thought up such an agreement. The same is true of the unemployed French youth who knows he cannot find employment in France because the competition in South Korea has flooded the market with goods at a price which is twice cheaper than the ones made in France thus making it impossible for the manufacturers of the same goods in France to stay in business.

Globalisation thus redistributes growth. But it creates inequalities as well. Those countries with underdeveloped financial, communication and political infrastructure necessary to compete in a globalised world find themselves more and more outsiders, poor cousins in a world of affluent relatives and neighbours. Many of these countries, among which Nigeria is numbered, are in Africa. On the other hand, there is a new nomadic race, which has been
created by globalisation. Members of this race have either money or high skills and competencies to sell. This race is without boundaries. They have homes in Abuja, London, New York or wherever. They move in and out unhampered by much visa restrictions. The high academics too enjoy this status. Once you have anything to sell buyers will seek you out from Papua New Guinea to Greenland, from SIST to Syracuse University. Those who lose out are thus the poor and the poorly educated.

Globalisation is not just an economic reality. It has other facets too. Consider this. Were it not for the prompt intervention of the rest of the world to provide humanitarian aid to us in this part of the world during the Biafra/Nigeria war (1967-1970) many of us who are alive today would have been long dead. Biafra was indeed an important step in the globalisation of humanitarian aid to countries in need as a result of armed conflict. Since then, other countries and conflict situations such as Rwanda, Somalia, Afghanistan, and many others have benefited from international humanitarian assistance.

Some Issues Arising From Globalisation

As Globalisation continues, that is, as the world becomes more and more a single place, several issues are beginning to emerge. First is the increasing tension between the particular and the universal. In a global society local problems are often no longer just local problems. Decisions taken in one obscure corner of the globe often reverberate with unforeseen consequences in major metropolitan centres of the world. Nigerians became painfully aware of this reality with the execution of Ken Saro-wiwa and his friends in 1995. A few years ago, it would have been unthinkable that what some people considered intra-kindred quarrels happening in Ogoni could have attracted national attention not to talk of the considerable international attention which this event attracted. All it took for Gowon to keep Africa and much of the world from coming to the aid of Biafra was for him to insist that the Biafra war was an internal affair of Nigeria. Any attempt to aid Biafrans was
said to be meddling, and a violation of the territorial integrity of Nigeria. This in the face of a massive genocide and carnage! Today such arguments may no longer hold.

The point is that globalisation is also eroding the notion of national sovereignty which had been the bedrock of international diplomacy since the Peace of Westphalia in the 17th century. Today, states can longer hide under the guise of national security, territorial integrity, or any such term to avoid being asked to account for violations of human rights. China is learning this fact. Even Germany has to account to the world for its treatment of the members of the Church of Scientology. The military in Nigeria are learning this lesson painfully, slowly but surely.

Put another way, globalisation involves, in the most general terms, the universalization of particularism and the particularisation of universalism. Civilizational, societal, ethnic, communal and individual life-style differences are exacerbated, indeed produced in the globalisation process, while on the other hand, globalisation involves the crystallisation and concretization of the world as a whole - sociologically and geographically.15

A second point raised by globalisation, one, which is related to the issue of particularism, and universalism is that of the form of participation in a global society, what Robertson refers to as the problem of "societal and individual location in a broader context of humankind".16 After the Gulf War, US President, George Bush, began to talk of "a New World order." To all intents and purposes this was a Pax Americana in which the wish of America was the command of the UNO. The grades of participation in this American hegemony depended on how much economic clout a country had. After Europe came the so-called emerging markets of South East Asia, the former communist block countries of Eastern Europe, Australia, and Latin America. Africa has literally no place in this New World order. She seems simply an irrelevant appendix.
remarkable only for the number of its "tribal" wars, her innumerable incurably corrupt despots and her many debilitating diseases and epidemics - malaria, AIDS, Ebola fever, etc.

The level of Afro- pessimism that is becoming apparent as the world becomes more and more a single place is alarming. Even religious communities that once sent missionaries in droves to Africa from Europe and elsewhere are now alarmed at the prospect of African missionaries coming to Europe and North America to evangelise their peoples. They fear being "swamped" by missionaries from Africa and sometimes reject some of these people outright because they fear they may not fit in. In fact these Africans are often vastly more equipped intellectually, physically, and emotionally than many of the people who evangelised us were. Even while there, little problems with or from any of these African missionaries are blown out of proportion. As if the European and American missionaries did not do worse sometimes.

The problem of structuration is thus of paramount importance in any discussion of globalisation whether in the religious or secular circles. Who am I in relation to the rest of the world? Is globalisation hastening that day when, to paraphrase Martin Luther King Jr, I will not be judged merely on the basis of the colour of my skin but on more objective criteria such as character, aptitudes and capabilities, or is it merely postponing it?

A third issue to note is that globalisation can corrode inherited or constructed personal and cultural identities even though on the other hand, it encourages the revitalisation of particular identities "as a way of gaining control over systemic power"17. The resurgence of Islam or the spread of fundamentalist Christianity can be partly explained by this fact. In these and similar instances, religion is used both as "a mode of collective identity" and as "a relatively independent resource for the legitimation of collective action"18. Thus, the so-called politicisation of religion 19 can sometimes be no more than attempts by groups of people who feel the ground shifting from under their feet through the corrosion of identity consequent upon globalisation to re-assert themselves and
make their voices heard again. The paradox in globalisation, from this point, is that the more societal, ethnic, regional and other forms of self-consciousness are highlighted, the more there appear constraints in people's attempts to locate themselves within world history and the global future. When this happens, religion, especially the more established and universal ones, becomes, it seems to me, the means for the diffusion of what Robertson refers to as "identity declarations".  

A fourth point: Globalisation involves the marginalization of authority in all its forms - state, ecclesial, communal, academic, etc. A global society is truly "a global village" in the best sense of that word popularised by Marshal McLuhan in his 1960 publication entitled *Explorations in Communication*. This global village is all linked up via the telephone, fax, cyberspace, CNN, BBC, Voice of Nigeria, and other forms of high technological communications system. Authority in this world has no more the last say in everything. There are three important negative fall-outs from the marginalization of authority attendant upon globalisation. The first is the triumph of individualism to the detriment of solidarity. What matters is me and my individual goals. The notion of a common good is anachronistic and public authority is derided when it insists on certain things for the sake of the common good. The second fall-out is closely related with the first. The individual becomes the measure of all things including truth. Liberty in its extreme and unbridled form wins out over moral objectivity, human equality and fraternity. It is to this issue that Pope John Paul II was referring in his 1993 encyclical on moral theology. There he stated that certain currents of modern thought have gone so far as to "exalt freedom to such an extent that it becomes an absolute, which would then be the source of values.... The individual conscience is accorded the status of a supreme tribunal of moral judgement which hands down categorical and infallible decisions about good and evil". The result of such absolutization of freedom is that there is a crisis of truth resulting from so many conflicting claims of "conscience" and local cultural practices. A
third negative outcome from the marginalization of authority in a globalised world involves what De Galiha refers to as "the deficit of finality". The short-term wins out over the long term. Long-term interests tend to be sacrificed for short-term gains occasioned by people's desire to be part of the latest fads.

Finally, globalisation brings to prominence the issue of pluralism. Civilizational, societal, regional and other dimensions of the global human condition which were hitherto little known are showing up and demanding to be respected and to be given a place. The trick is to know how to navigate between these often-incompatible new bedfellows without losing one's way in the maze.

Globalisation and Christian Mission

The history of Christian mission in Africa is a long one. We are not concerned with that history in this paper. Instead we will reflect on the meaning of mission in an Africa that is increasingly drawn into the global system in the third millennium, what the emphasis will be and what specific challenges mission in Africa is likely to face during this period.

The decree of the Second Vatican Council on mission *Ad Gentes*, notes that "the Church on earth is by its nature missionary" (no.2). The mission of the Church has its basis in the mission of Christ who was sent by God in human form so that through him he might snatch men from the power of darkness and of Satan (cf. Col. 1:13; Acts 10:38) and in him reconcile the world to himself (no.3). The Church has an obligation "to proclaim the faith and salvation which comes from Christ" (5)

In *Redemptoris Missio* Pope John Paul II noted that the mission impulse of the Church is fuelled by her understanding that "salvation comes from Jesus alone" who is the centre of God's plan of salvation. Quoting from *Gaudium et Spes* the Pope added that just as "by the incarnation the Son of God united himself in some sense with every human being, so we too are obliged to hold that the Holy Spirit offers everyone the possibility of sharing the paschal mystery in a manner known only to God" (GS, no. 22).
Mission today, the Pope continues, is carried out within three contexts - situations of first evangelisation, purely pastoral situations as well as situations of re-evangelisation. Situations of first evangelisation refer to those contexts and places "in which Christ and his Gospel are not known or which lack Christian communities sufficiently mature to be able to incarnate the faith in their own environment and proclaim it to other groups. This is mission *ad gentes* in the proper sense of the term". Purely pastoral situations refer to contexts where there are Christian communities with solid ecclesial structures. The third situation of re- or new evangelisation refers to situations wherein a lot of baptised persons "have lost a living sense of the faith or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church or live a life far removed from Christ and his gospel".

The strong sense of the geographical concept of mission which is apparent in this text is somewhat tempered by an admission that mission goes "beyond the frontiers of race and religion" (no.22) and needs to be developed in urban areas "where human problems are often aggravated by the feelings of anonymity experienced by masses of people". Among the neediest of our day are the young, migrants and refugees, non-Christians in traditionally Christian lands as well as in "the modern equivalencies of the Areopagus." Some of the modern Areopaguses or intellectual and cultural situations, which the Pope points out as needing evangelisation, include the world of communication, which is unifying humanity into a global village. He notes that to some extent "this Areopagus has been neglected." Involvement in this area is not only necessary for strengthening the preaching of the Gospel, it is also necessary to integrate the Christian message and the Church’s authentic teaching into "the new culture" created by modern communications." Other Areopaguses at which the Church’s missionary activity ought to be directed are the so-called social questions. These include commitment to peace, liberation and development of peoples, human rights, especially of minorities and less privileged individuals, the advancement of women and
children, protection of the environment, culture, scientific research and international relations (no. 37). Inter-religious dialogue is also "part of the Church’s evangelising mission" (no. 55).

The Challenge of the Global Order to Mission In Africa

The contemporary scene in Africa is realistically captured by the following quotation from the post-synodal exhortation Ecclesia in Africa.

One common situation, without any doubt, is that Africa is full of problems. In almost all our nations, there is abject poverty, tragic mismanagement of available scarce resources, political instability and social disorientation. The results stare us in the face: misery, wars, despair. In a world controlled by rich and powerful nations, Africa has practically become an irrelevant appendix, often forgotten and neglected.

One sad reality about the situation so described is that there is little reason to hope that it will change anytime soon. One challenge which stems from this for any social actor, missionary or otherwise in 21st century Africa is that of making the African feel like and indeed become a citizen of the world like other people from various other parts of the world. As the Spiritan Chapter of 1992 at Itaici, Brazil, affirmed, it is part of mission to help the voiceless find a voice. Says the chapter: "In some instances, we [missionaries] have to become the voice of those unable to speak for themselves, although it should only be a temporary solution until they find their own voice and with it discover their dignity". Africa needs all the help it can get to have its voice heard loud and clear in the circles where it matters most. Africa’s voice must be heard for a relief of her debt burden, for compensation for the brutalising slavery it endured for centuries, for unfair economic and financial arrangements that do not let her rise up. And who may help Africa find her voice better than the missionary societies which dot the continent and who are themselves transnational
actors. The resolve of the Spiritan family at Itaici must be that of all missionary groups in Africa, for Africa: "Our mission cannot be reduced to the transmission of a doctrine, of a law, a ritual, of structures. It is above all a commitment, in the name of Jesus Christ, to the full liberation of all people from those things that enslave them. The gospel is not just a message; it is a project of love aimed at transforming the world, to struggle for justice and peace".

The wars and miseries so aptly described above in the quotation from Ecclesia in Africa have left deep social and psychological scares on the African consciousness, individual and collective. Tied to this is the continuing after effects of European colonisation of Africa. Rwanda, Burundi, the two Congos, Nigeria, Sudan, etc all have ethnic problems which are either exploding or waiting to be ignited. Peoples in these countries live with brutalised memories from a past when they were made to suffer as a result of unfavourable colonial arrangement of power and wealth between them and their neighbours. These old wounds are exacerbated by new tensions arising from being drawn into the emerging global system. The more the world becomes one place the more some of these people run into identity problems which often manifest themselves in violent irruptions against their neighbours. The challenge for the missionary in the next millennium in Africa is to learn to heal memories. Mission effort must be expended in bringing peoples together in open discussion of past grievances and perceived wrongs. I am thinking of something along the lines of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission set up by the Mandela government in South Africa to discuss the evils committed during the Apartheid era.

The other challenge, which readily comes to mind, has to do with the various competitors that await the missionary. In the past, Christian missionaries to Africa enjoyed a near divine status. The increasingly easy access to information in a globalised world makes people open to points of view other than those, which the missionary represents. Several ideologies and cults are in the air
canvassing for adherents. Some of these are packaged in such attractive garbs that can make the Christian missionary look like an anachronism. The missionary can therefore no longer take the validity or acceptance of his message for granted. The Gospel could do with some sophisticated packaging as well.

In the next century, missionary work in Africa will be concerned more with pastoral work and with re-evangelisation. There will be fewer and fewer contexts of primary evangelisation. In this new era of evangelisation, the missionary will have to rethink the concept of Church. In the pre-Vatican II mission scene in Africa Church was the pope, the bishops and the priests. All that changed at Vatican II. Sadly, however, the picture in much of Africa today is still that of extreme hierarchization of the Church. An important missionary commitment in a globalised African Church would be to give voice to our laity. We must read again all that the council says about the laity as equal members of the Church of Christ. That means that the missionary must learn to be accountable to the people of God just as he/she demands accountability from them. The democratic spirit will catch on in Africa. People will demand more openness from their leaders. They will insist on being consulted in matters that touch their lives. They will seek greater participation in the running of any group to which they belong. The same demands will be made of the Church as well.

Africa will continue to be a focus of mission in much of the coming century - with two important characteristics - the focus of mission will change, the agents of mission will also be different. Much of the history of mission in Africa up till today is concerned with conversion and with planting the Church. These two will continue to be relevant and integral parts of mission theology and strategy. It is becoming increasingly clear that increase in numbers alone does not mean that people are christianised. The focus of mission in the next century has to shift from Church growth to the reign of God. In other words, while not neglecting the opportunities to call men and women to initial faith in Jesus Christ, we will be involved as a matter of urgency in addressing the
various Areopaguses, which challenge us. I have mentioned some already. Let me name a few more. These are not necessarily the result of globalisation. However, they can also be effected by trends from other parts of the world. First there is the highest symbol of our faith - God. The missionary effort in Africa, as indeed was the case with Paul in the Athenian Areopagus, made many assumptions about God in the various African contexts where the Gospel was preached. There was an easy equation of the God of our ancestral religions with the God of Christianity. History is proving us wrong here. While I do not wish here to do a theology of God, I must point out some salient characteristics of God in Christian theology, which are pertinent to our discussion here.

God in Christianity made everything there is. God made humans in his own image and likeness and gave them power over all of creation. As the fourth Eucharistic Prayer says, even when we sinned and lost God’s friendship he did not abandon us but sent his only son as our redeemer. Some of the implications of this sketchy theology of God are obvious. Christianity proclaims a God who is benevolent, and merciful, a God who continues to care even when we do not know it. God-talk always leads to anthropology that is to talk about human beings. The anthropological implications of the Christian view of God have been revolutionary even though the Church itself has not always faced up to it. Christian anthropology begins with the understanding of the human person as a created reality. God creates everyone in God’s own image and likeness; everyone is therefore essentially equal. God has no favourites. There are no special people before God and there are no expendable persons no matter their status, achievements or lack thereof. In Church organisation and structure as well as in the Areopagus of politics in Africa this single idea has potent implications for the way we organise life and for what Uzukwu so often refers to as “humane living”. We have not spoken this truth with as much force and clarity as it deserves. I believe that if the God question is addressed as it should be, a lot of other areas of
mission will come into focus: mission as liberation of the poor, inter-religious dialogue, etc.

**Concluding Remarks**

We have so far tried to explore the meaning of globalisation and the challenges, which this phenomenon poses to missionary work in Africa. It is easy to overlook the fact that there are gains to be made in a global society. The fact is that at the moment Africa is the least prepared and least positioned among all the continents to reap any benefits from a world, which has become a single place. It has been my contention in this paper that the missionary can contribute a great deal in helping Africa face up to the challenges of globalisation in the next millennium and reap the gains therefrom. Since Africans have started to be missionaries unto themselves as Paul VI charged in Kampala in 1969 it means that the task of leading Africa into the shrinking world of the 21st century will be that of Africa’s sons and daughters themselves.

---

1 A paper presented at a symposium to mark the 10th anniversary of Spiritan International School of Theology, Attakwu, Enugu
8 Chinweizu, p.213
9 Chinweizu, p.54.
The Spanish writer, Francisco Gomez, wrote that the two greatest events since creation, apart from the birth and death of the Redeemer, were the discovery of the routes to the Americas and of the routes to India by Vasco Dagama. (Cf. François Villeroy De Galihau, "La Mondialisation, une Révolution Pour Tous," in Entre Mondialisation et Nations: Quelle Europe? (Editions Bayard/Centurion, 1997), p.17.


De Galihau, p.24

Robertson, p.283-284.

Robertson, p.288

Beyer, p.3

Robertson, p.289


John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor, Catholic Truth Society, London 1993, no. 32

De Galihau, p.34

Pope John Paul II, Redemptoris Missio, Vatican Polyglot Press, Vatican City, 1990, no.5

John Paul II, 1990, no.33

ibid.

The term Areopagus originally referred to the Athenian Forum mentioned in the story in Acts 17: 16-34 where Paul had the difficult task of preaching Christ to the sceptical and snobbish intellectual and cultural elite of the city. The Pope uses the term here to refer to those difficult, intellectual and cultural situations and persons of our own day that are difficult to convince of the validity of the Gospel and who or which in fact tend to actively mould opinions that are counter to the gospel.

Pope John Paul II. Ecclesia In Africa, Vatican Polyglot Press, Vatican City John Paul II, 1995, no.40


Itaici, p.20
Identity and Communication between Locality/Contextuality and Globality/Universality - A Semiotic-Linguistic Model

By

Robert J. Schreiter

Introduction

At the conclusion of his work on the colonisation of the indigenous mind in Mexico by the Spaniards from the 15th to the 18th centuries, French historian Serge Gruzinski has this to say:

The history of the indigenous and mestizo cultures of New Spain in many ways prefigures the exchanges and shocks towards which our 'syncretic' European cultures are rushing without in any way being prepared for them. We experience the same crossing of races and codes, overlapping of realities, abrupt setting in contact or harmony of the most exotic elements, profound fusion or superficial bringing together, in the disorientation of a process of becoming uniform or massive deculturation. This state of unstable equilibrium, of uninterrupted change, demands not only challenging the notion of tradition, but also, the coherence that we generally attribute to societies and the cultural structures we intend to construct.

What Gruzinski is pointing to is the experience of living between the local and the global in the world today, the interpenetration of which Roland Robertson has called the "global". This has made for a disorienting and destabilising life for many people on the planet today as these forces of change move at an ever quicker pace.

What role might tradition play in all of this? Gruzinski suggests that it must be challenged, along with other notions of coherence that we attribute to or imagine of our societies. Implied here is that
tradition is itself, or is a source of, coherence in our cultures and lives. Can tradition be spoken of apart from coherence? Gruzinski also implies that our European cultures are rushing into a confusion that belies the more universalistic outlook that is the heritage of the Enlightenment. At best, a kind of "Baroque reason" , at worst an utter chaos, this seems the polar opposite of the rationality of modernity.

Exaggerated, as Gruzinski's portrayal might seem, it carries not a little truth. The migration and intermingling of peoples around the world continues at a breathtaking pace. Post-modern and post-colonial writing are both emblematic of the larger social and cultural situation they set out to describe. The concept of tradition, barely surviving the onslaughts of Enlightenment reason and historical criticism, must not face these destabilising and centripetal forces of living between the local and the global, the particular and the universal.

This presentation examines one model of conceptualising tradition that I proposed in Constructing Local Theologies in 1985, called a semiotic-linguistic model. It draws upon a series of theses for the semiotics of culture published by a group of Russian semioticians in 1973, and combined with sociological work being done on the concept of tradition in the 1970s and early 1980s in the United States. The specific theological understanding of tradition is framed by the generative linguistics of Noam Chomsky, with his concepts of competence and performance. The basic assumption bringing these diverse strands together was that, whereas the basic challenge to the concept of tradition during the Enlightenment and subsequent modernity was regarding rationality and history, in late- or post-modernity, the challenge was regarding culture and identity. A challenge tradition faces in both periods is communicability, both as its credibility and its intelligibility.

This presentation, then, will examine the appropriateness and the effectiveness of a semiotic-linguistic model of tradition for lives lived between the global and the local, the universal and the contextual. It will begin by describing two understandings of
context; the first growing up in reaction to the universalisms of the European Enlightenment, the second resulting from the forces of globalisation. Then the semiotic-linguistic model will be outlined in light of the matrix of the global and the local just described. And finally, the issues of identity and communication in tradition will be examined with this model to see what value it might have for Christian theology today.

**A Tale of Two Contexts**

When contextual theologies began to appear in the early 1970s, they hoped to articulate a different way of doing theology than was largely practised in the academy. The academic form of theology, mirroring the universal message of the Gospel, which was the object of its investigation, strove to present reflections that were universal in scope. To the minds of those proposing contextual theologies, the universal scope did not reach far enough. It left untouched and unanswered questions that were pressing in many local situations outside Europe and North America: the burden of poverty and oppression, the struggle to create a new identity after a colonial past, the challenge of modernisation to traditional culture and village life, and the failure of Western theology to make sense in local cultures. Moreover, this theology was concerned with questions that were peripheral for much of the non-western world, such as atheism or secularisation.

What made the experience of faith among these non-western peoples different from the experience expressed in these universalising theologies? The answer seemed to be the different contexts in which Christian communities found themselves. It became clear that theology must engage the contexts of people's lives if theology was to touch them. This was contrasted with a universal theology, which tried to abstract from, or rise above context. As contextual theologies progressed, two parallel directions became apparent. Communities that were struggling principally with questions of identity (especially after colonialism) looked at their contexts as culture. Those communities trying to
bring about transformation of their societies because of poverty, oppression and racism looked at their contexts as social structures. Those seeing context as culture have produced theologies of many local places, many of the type that have been presented annually in the program “Theologie Interkulturell”. Those seeing context as social structures have produced a variety of theologies of liberation.

But what became clear in this understanding of context was that the universally-minded theologies were in fact universalising ones; that is to say, universalising the particularity of their own experiences in their own contexts and extending them beyond those contexts, with little or no awareness of their particularity. Despite claims to objectivity, the universalising reach could not grasp all it set out to comprehend.

Context, therefore, in this first sense, was opposed to the universal. But in the meantime, larger social forces were at work that would usher in a second understanding of context. These social forces, combined with political events and technological developments would change what “context” meant. This combination and process is known as globalisation.

Globalisation might be defined as a simultaneous expansion of reflexive modernisation and compression of time and space. It has an expansive dimension, through which it makes of the world a single place or a “global village”. This is done through the modernisation process, carried by global capitalism. The impulse for both the modernisation and the capitalism comes out of the West, but both take on distinctive forms as they interact with local cultures. Modernisation and capitalism look different in Japan or Singapore, for instance, than they do in Germany. The collapse of the Eastern European socialist bloc in 1989 and thereafter has extended this process even further. With that expansion comes an increasing commonality in business, science, medicine, and education. It also carries with it a consumer culture, largely originated in the United States, referred to as the McDonaldization or Cocoa-Colonisation of the world. Developments of
communication technologies have connected people in a new, networked multipolar world.

Even as globalisation means expansion, it is at the same time a compression of the world, a compression of the experience of time and space. Telecommunications technology makes communication around the planet virtually instantaneous. Computers move information around the world effortlessly. Air travel does the same for people and cargo, thereby shrinking space. The movement of peoples that this technology has both prompted and expedited erases territorial boundaries as ethnic groups rub shoulders in a metropolis like Frankfurt or London, but increasingly also in rural areas. The combination of expansion and compression creates a high level of reflexivity in societies, an awareness of intensity that is experienced as risk, as disorientation, and lack of clear telos, other than unrelenting change, hyper-differentiation, and lack of any alternative to the global system.¹⁰

Those who reap its benefits may find globalisation exhilarating if at times overwhelming. But for those who do not – and these still constitute the majority of the world’s population – globalisation can be a further intrusion into local communities, destabilising values, pulling local economies into the maelstrom of global capitalism, and uprooting of families as migrants and refugees. The multipolar reality that is globalisation means too that many local, intense conflicts break out that would not have been tolerated in the bipolar world of the Cold War.

Globalisation, with all its apparent homogenisation of the world or its outright exclusion of the poor, has had the paradoxical effect of intensifying the local rather than obliterating it. It has created a series of what Swedish sociologist Jonathan Friedman has called “cultural logics”,¹¹ that grow up in response to the homogenising forces of globalisation. These include anti-global movements, those most widespread of which are fundamentalisms (which, ironically, use advanced communications technology to further their cause); ethnification, where people struggle in the face of globalisms to reconfigure or reconstitute a distinctive local
identity; and primitivisms, where people try to reconstruct an imagined past to live in, or escape into "nature". All of these - anti-globalism, ethnification and primitivism - have their theological counterparts. Alongside the cultural logics, there are movements that are usually rooted in the local but link up to resist the intentionality of global systems and to protest the failures of globality to bring genuine progress, equality and inclusion. Anticapitalist movements point to the further impoverishment and immiseration of the poor; feminist movements protest the lack of equality and inclusion; ecology movements protest the destruction of the earth in the name of progress. These, too, have their theological counterparts.

What has this meant for how context is understood? If the first meaning of context was derived from its opposition to the universalising intentionality of theology, the second meaning of context, viewed from the concept of globalisation, can be said to have at least three distinctive characteristics. First of all, context as a concept has become increasingly de-territorialized. With the compression of space and the movement of peoples, boundaries that mark identity are increasingly not boundaries of territory, but boundaries of difference. These boundaries interact and cross each other in often bewildering fashion. The global and the local so interpenetrate that one can speak of a globalisation of the local and a localisation of the global.¹²

Second, contexts are becoming hyper-differentiated. The compression of time, the world of cyberspace, and the movement of peoples result in people now participating simultaneously in what were once distinct cultures. There is a sense of belonging in multiple places at once. Each of those places offers an identity.

Third, contexts are hybridised as a result of the de-territorialization and the hyper-differentiation. Cultural "purity" or "integrity" is replaced with hybridity. To be sure, cultural purity was probably always more of an aspiration than an achievement, but the multiple identities, the shifting boundaries of self and group definition, and the constant confrontation with difference seems to
provide no room for lives and communities to be directed by tradition.

When seen from this perspective, Gruzinski’s picture of what is overtaking European societies may be more accurate than first supposed. Culture becomes less of a patterned, bounded identity informed by tradition and more of an “uneven incomplete production of meaning and value, composed of incommensurable demands and practices, produced in the act of social survival”. On this view, identity “should not be seen as a bounded Aristotelian concept but as an assortment of paradoxes that interact dynamically without ever being reconciled”. These are the words of a postcolonial critic and a post-modern anthropologist.

**The Semiotic-Linguistic Model of Culture and Tradition**

As noted above, if rationality and history constituted the earlier challenges to tradition, today it is culture and identity. Both culture and identity, in the post-modern, post-colonial world of globalisation, are attenuated by the de-territorialization, hyper-differentiation and hybridisation just described. It is now time to turn to the semiotic-linguist model of culture and tradition to see what it might yield for understanding culture and tradition in a globalised world.

A two-fold defining process is needed at the outset here. The first is a working definition of culture; the second is a description of the semiotic processes of culture. Culture is known to be notoriously difficult to define, and what one hopes to discover has a way of working itself into the definition itself. The definition used here, based on one developed by Jens Leohoff, views culture as having three important dimensions. The first is an ideational dimension, through which culture systems are frameworks of meaning which serve both to interpret the world and give guidance for living within that world. Culture as ideational provides a worldview, with beliefs, attitudes and values. The second is a performantial dimension that provides a participative way for members of the culture to embody and enact their histories and values. In doing
this together, they strengthen group solidarity. Performantial aspects of culture include rituals that are collectively performed, and roles that are enacted. Rules for behaviour, based both on the world-view and on performantial requisites, are part of performance. If the ideational dimension sees culture as ideas, the performantial dimension sees culture as ethos. The third is the material dimension, the artefacts and objects that take on symbolic value in the culture: language, food, clothing, music, art, aspects of the physical environment and the organisation of space.

A semiotic understanding of culture envisages culture as a system of communication, comprised of messages, codes and signs. Messages are those items of information or ideas of the culture. There is a hierarchy of messages in culture, ranging from the most valued and enduring to messages that are peripheral and ephemeral in nature. Messages are circulated through the culture by means of codes and signs. The codes are sets of rules that govern the transmission and circulation of the messages. Codes have a regularity that permits a culture’s members to recognise the transmittal. Codes are at once the most visibly distinctive aspects of a culture (codes of hospitality, social interaction, what is thinkable or blasphemous), but also some of the most difficult to discern (codes that are not communicated to strangers). Signs carry messages through the encoded pathways. They are often physical (sounds, gestures, objects in the environment, persons), and take on meaning from their interaction with the codes while carrying messages. Signs may carry only one meaning (a numeral), or many meanings (water, fire). Signs may interact with other signs, creating sign system. Clusters of codes may create semiotic spheres (economic sphere, family sphere). The circulation of signs bearing messages via codes creates its own world, what Lotman call the “semiosphere”. The process of meaning making that takes place is called semiosis.

The circulation of messages in the semiosphere help constitute the identity of a culture, and it is the investigation of identity for which the semiotic study of culture is particularly suited. In
semiotic terms, identity is constituted by memory, world-view and group boundary formation. Memory might be understood as the stored and retrievable information that guides and selects the new information to be incorporated into the cultural system. In as much as the etymological root of the word "identity" is "sameness", it is memory, constantly being retrieved but also reconstituted, that provides the continuity in memory. Both world-view and group boundary formation work with the concept of boundary, defining our world/other world, and our group/other group. Boundaries are, therefore, boundaries of difference. Semiotic activity is usually the most intense along these boundaries, since encounters with difference raise questions about our sense of sameness. Semiotic activity, circulating messages via signs along the codes of a culture, is constantly negotiating identity: evoking memory, both asserting and adjusting world-view, and simultaneously consolidating the group solidarity.

If we turn now to tradition, we will see that tradition is understood principally in cultural terms rather than its rationality and authority. The rationality and authority of a tradition are important, but are secondary to the function of tradition in culture itself. Tradition contributes three things to the development of a culture: (1) through memory, it provides resources for identity; (2) as a communication system, it provides cohesion and continuity; (3) it offers means for incorporation of new information through codes that deal with innovation.18

Through memory, tradition offers resources for identity. These resources, however, are not simply a collection of unrelated items. They are woven together into stories that carry and present the basic messages of a culture. Narrative is especially important as a form of memory. But memory is also embodied in the performances of a culture, in rituals re-enacted and in roles carried out. Understood semiotically, tradition as memory is the selection of resources of the past through which a culture understands itself in the present and reconstitutes itself toward the future. Through
the constant negotiation of world-view and group boundary, tradition provides a resource of continuity and connectedness.

Secondly, tradition provides a communication system through the preservation and elaboration of the codes of a culture. Codes are the pathways chosen to guide how a culture thinks and how a culture acts. They are in many ways the most distinctive aspect of cultures, since cultures frequently circulate similar messages (e.g., about the preservation and prosperity of the group) and share the same signs (although encoded differently and thus bearing different meanings).

Third, tradition cannot be inert or dead weight within a culture. It must offer codes for dealing with new information, particularly when activity along the boundaries of world-view and group is intense. Modern cultures, for example, have a code that innovation is a good thing and to be promoted. In consumerist cultures, change comes to be valued above any kind of sameness or stasis. In so-called "traditional" cultures, novelty is handled by codes that show what appears to be new really is an affirmation of what is already known and being done. Innovation is an opportunity to reaffirm group solidarity. If innovation appears to provide a benefit, then it reaffirms the message of furthering group prosperity.

Tradition’s relationship to a culture is governed by four qualities. The first is credibility. If the constitution of memory is not able to negotiate the semiosis at the boundaries of a culture, if it cannot provide identity in dealing with difference, it loses its value for a culture. Secondly, it must have intelligibility. Its signs and codes must link closely with other sign systems in the semiosphere. Thus, if tradition’s signs and codes get too distant from the semiosis around economic and family domains, the tradition loses its credibility. This is seen frequently when local economic systems based on exchange are invaded by market systems of economy that commodify local products. The gap between older ways of thinking of relating to the earth and supply-and-demand models of market capitalism cause confusion and intense semiotic activity in
trying to reconcile the two. Similarly migration puts severe strains on family sign systems traditionally understood. The third quality is authority, an exercise of power whereby a community cedes its power to the tradition in decision-making and interpretation of the world. This ceding of power is built on trust that tradition will save the culture from arbitrariness in its encounter with innovation. Authority rests largely on credibility and intelligibility. Finally, tradition has to have ways of innovating itself, even as it helps culture with innovation. Whether called affirmation or renewal, without this ability to alter its own codes, it will not be able to negotiate difference over the long run.

Much contemporary Western reflection on tradition focuses on the breakdown of the relationship between tradition and culture as tradition’s credibility, intelligibility and therefore its authority are called into question. Reading different settings through a communicative pragmatics helps diagnose the breakdown of the relationships. Whether a transcendental reconstitution of tradition can restore its authority (at least in the Weberian sense of traditional authority) remains to be seen.

The gap between so-called modern cultures and so-called traditional cultures has been influenced strongly by the rise of market capitalism. Innovation is necessary to create new demands. Hence novelty takes on intrinsic value, not be enhancing what we already have but by replacing it. And it is this notion of replacement that undercuts codes for negotiating innovation in tradition. Rather than being the voice of memory, tradition comes to be seen as the cacophony of past events that only impede progress toward the ever more new. Interestingly, post-modern anthropology has called into question the modernist consignment of tradition to the dustbins of the past. Studies are showing how societies have been able to meet the modern by intense semiotic innovation of their traditions.¹⁹

The “linguistic” part of the appellation “semiotic-linguistic” refers to another perspective that may be brought to bear on how tradition mediates between its resources and its communication.²⁰
Following Noam Chomsky’s model for language acquisition, the resources of memory of a tradition might be called “competence”, that is, the indeterminate source out of which tradition draws to deal with innovation on the boundary. Like the knowledge of our native language, it is possible, even for a small child, to utter new combinations. Those new combinations Chomsky calls “performance”. Competence and performance are mediated by what he calls “grammar”. Grammar is not an ideal blueprint of language, for it cannot account for certain deviances from its rules (“exceptions”) or idiomatic constructions. Similarly, tradition as grammar (the codes), cannot articulate every possible performance arising from competence but it can serve to show what cannot be said, i.e., does not constitute a well-formed phrase. The creeds and confessions and other ecclesiastical pronouncements of the Christian churches function largely in this way: not saying everything that can be said about revelation, but being able to show what cannot be said.

Identity and Communication in Tradition between the Global and the Local

Having sketched the situation created by the forces of globalisation and having reprised the semiotic-linguistic model of culture and tradition, we can now turn to examining how that model might illumine the themes of identity and communication in a globalising world. The first examination will be of identity. It was noted above that globalisation changes our sense of context, the environment in which we live, by changing our sense of boundary from boundaries of territory to boundaries of difference; by hyper-differentiating the context; and by creating hybridisations. Because semiotics is particularly concerned with boundaries, a semiotic reconstruction of a situation permits concentration on boundaries. Semiotic boundaries are first and foremost boundaries of difference rather than territory. They are territorialized by associating material signs (land, region, and distinctive features of the immediate physical surroundings) with
boundary (our nation, our neighbourhood). But because they are
boundaries of difference they are especially suited to dealing with
de-territorialized boundaries and the multiplication of boundaries
that create hyper-differentiated and fragmented identities.

Regarding hybridity, this concept can be theorised in different
ways. Following the cultural logics outlined above, of anti-
globalism, ethnification and primitivism, one can see semiotics as
a heuristic tool in acts of *resistance* against globalising incursions.
In this situation, certain signs become boundary markers of
difference, determining in-group/out-group status. Take for
example, American Protestant fundamentalism, which is derived
from an assertion of five fundamentals: the inerrancy of Scripture,
the virginal conception of Jesus, his bodily resurrection, the
doctrine of vicarious satisfaction, the bodily resurrection of the
dead with Christ’s bodily return. The five fundamentals constituted
a semiotic act of resistance: selection of certain doctrines that are
patently anti-modern and elevating them to signs of difference. To
be a member of the in-group one must subscribe to and struggle to
uphold these five signs.

Ethnifications are reconstitutions of group and cultural identity in
light of globalising forces. The semiotics of identity, with its
interest in memory, worldview and group boundary formation, is
particularly suited for the reconstitution of identity. Traditions can
be imagined semiotically, as we have seen. A semiotic approach
would keep an overemphasis on tradition as propositions from
occurring, by emphasising that traditions are more than codes; they
are memory and enactment as well, and are embedded in cultures
not just in their ideas but also in their performances and material
signs. This aspect of the logic of ethnification is especially
important because I believe it is at the basis of the new interest in
contextual theologies for Europe.

Primitivisms are attempts to reconstruct a selected and imagined
past (cultural primitivism) or an attempt to escape back into
“nature” (natural primitivism). A semiotic reading of culture and
tradition can be utilised in this cultural logic as well. It is similar to
the anti-global acts of resistance described above, except that it tries to create an entire environment from the past, rather than use selected items from the past to create a new environment. Primitivisms are admittedly reconstructions that are really reconfigurations. Their ability to stand, as a system, depends on how well they can articulate difference and create a feeling of group solidarity.

An objection might be raised against semiotic readings of tradition as a way of living between the global and the local, particularly a semiotics derived from what was known as the Moscow-Tartu school of cultural semiotics, as this one is. Does not this semiotics of culture presume an integrated concept of culture, given the Russians’ emphasis on describing cultures as systems? Does that not disqualify such a notion from being applied to globalised concepts of culture? I do not think that this is necessarily the case. The Russian semioticians, despite their efforts to describe and classify types of cultures semiotically, knew full well that the messages could be signified in ways beyond classification, and could not be exhausted by classification. Thus system-building was and remained an asymptotic intentionality. Thus commitment to integrated system is not a requirement, or even a necessity. Because of the constant need to innovate, tradition and culture are constantly being “invented”.21 Secondly, while globalised concepts reject integrated systems, they do not reject relations. Indeed, seeing culture as a ground of contestation is especially amenable to this form of semiotic reading. For, as Yuri Lotman, the foremost interpreter of this kind of semiotics said: “Binarism and asymmetry are the laws binding on any real semiotic system.”22 Boundaries create binarisms, beginning with sameness and difference. Asymmetry is the creative force that moves signs into semeiosis. And binarisms and symmetry figure largely in post-modern and postcolonial thinking. In sum, then, the semiotics of identity has a good deal of analytic resources to offer tradition understood between the global and the local.
Turning finally to communication and tradition between the global and the local, three things can be said. The first has to do with the intercultural communication of tradition. If the analytic understanding of tradition has been so closely tied to an analytic understanding of culture, can any tradition within a culture hope to be credible and intelligible in a different culture? Can cultural translation take place?

If we begin with the methodological view that such translation involves the message remaining the same in both cultural settings, but the codes will be different, and signs will vary (i.e., signs from both cultures will be used, and those signs may oscillate in their meanings), I think it is possible to develop an intercultural theory of tradition. Too often cultural translation is merely the exchange of signs. The codes have to be involved. A fruitful place to explore this would be to examine the different understandings of tradition within the ecumene of the Christian Church as to how they read codes of innovation in tradition. Similarly one could look at different cultural formations of the Christian church and, using a semiotics of culture, explore the transformation and elaboration of codes. Here is an area where, I think, much fruitful research might be done.

A second thing to be said about the linguistic aspect of the model in communication and tradition is that tradition as competence preserves the ultimate indeterminacy of the Christian message. By that is meant there can be no complete elaboration of what God has revealed to us in Christ. The message continues to unfold in each new cultural encounter. To be sure, tradition as grammar guards against ill-formed performances. But an awareness of an ultimate indeterminacy frees us to enter the discussion of the meaning of tradition across cultural boundaries.

A third and final thing can be said about asymmetries in the communication of tradition. The presence of asymmetry can signal relationships of domination, but it can also indicate novelty, the creation of something new. Two central Christian doctrines exhibit asymmetry in their structure. As such they are sources of great
creativity (and also contention and misunderstanding). The first is the doctrine of the Trinity, the triune being of God. As a source of both wonder and puzzlement for Christians throughout history, it takes on a new relevance in a pluralised and asymmetrical world, and it is not coincidental that so much attention is being given to it today. Threeness and oneness, the missions of the Second and Third Persons into the world, and the ultimate reconciliation all brim with asymmetry.

The other is the Paschal Mystery itself – the suffering, death and resurrection of the Lord. This doctrine has special relevance because it speaks of suffering, death, descent into the abyss of death, and being brought by the power of the resurrection to an utterly new state of being, not the *status quo ante* (which would have been symmetry). The narrative itself is filled with asymmetry: betrayal, denial, mistaken identifications, and surprise.

With this I would suggest that the doctrines of the Christian faith be studied especially for their asymmetries (we usually tend to stress the symmetries) in order to uncover points of creativity. Using a hermeneutics of suspicion, many asymmetries have been uncovered as sites of domination. The most powerful asymmetries often create significations of domination and creativity at the same time. Thus, Anselm’s reading of the Paschal Mystery as vicarious atonement has in turn been read as an act of patriarchal child abuse, and as a way of humankind’s being freed from unbearable burden in a Germanic military code intelligible to eleventh century Europe.

It seems to me that the exploration of such asymmetries will contribute to the communicability of tradition across cultural boundaries today.

1 R. Schreiter presented this paper at the Symposium of “Theologie Interkulturelle” Frankfurt a. M., November 9 - 11, 1995.


Friedman, op. Cit., 91-101.

Robertson, Globalisation.


Schreiter, op.cit., 165-170.

Wilson, op.cit.; details the transformation of the Maya tzuultaq'as or mountain spirits from early colonisation through the coming of the German plantation owners in the 1870's through the civil war of the 1980's to the present Maya resurgence. How the tzuutalq'as are represented interacts with
experience of power and domination in each period, showing remarkable agency on the part of an oppressed people.

20 Schreiter, *op.cit.*, 177-182.

21 Lotman, *op.cit.*, 124.

22
Globalisation and Cultures - *The Other Voice.*

By

Felix Wilfred

During an informal conversation at table during the Second Congress of the European Society for Catholic Theology, Edmund Arens, when he heard that I was to respond to the paper of Robert Schreiter at this symposium in Frankfurt, remarked to me: “It is not easy to critique Schreiter”. I nodded in approval. I do not know what made Arens to make that remark. My reasons for endorsing his view were two: First of all, Schreiter generally casts his net wide, to include in his treatment the various aspects and dimensions of the question he handles. Secondly, he expresses his views with moderation and circumscription. The result is that the critic is generally left with no handle of omission or exaggeration to steer his arguments!

With great interest and much attention, therefore, I read the present paper of Schreiter, so dense and coherent. At the first reading, everything seemed quite clear, and I started jotting down some points of criticism. At the second reading, I must say that I was thoroughly confused. Third and fourth reading convinced me that his views of things and assumptions are so different from my vision of things that it may not serve any useful purpose to enter into the exercise of responding point by point to Schreiter’s thoughts and arguments. I have, instead, chosen to write a brief presentation, which as a whole, will be a critique of the vision behind Schreiter’s paper and its many assumptions, as well as his application of semiotic-linguistic model.

In the first place, I want to make clear an important point of methodology in my presentation. My reflections are made from a Third World perspective of the local, the contextual, the cultural. It is from this standpoint that I try to look at the cluster of issues associated with the concepts of globalisation, contextuality,
Globalisation and Cultures

The Other Voice

culture, tradition, intercultural communication and so on. I say this because, the paper of Schreiter appears to speak of these issues from an assumed position of neutrality and equidistant from polarities, but which, in effect, turns out to be a standpoint from the perspective of the global and the phenomenon of globalisation.

The first part in this essay will take up the issue of globalisation, and conclude with some basic statements. That will take us to the treatment of the second part on the dynamics of cultures and tradition, and in the third and final part, I intend to reflect, in the light of the first two parts, on the conditions and prospects of intercultural communication in our present world-situation.

Globalisation as the Pinnacle of Imperialism

One may argue in the following manner: Something unprecedented is taking place today. The process of globalisation sweeps the whole world; it is being turned into a "global village". In the face of this wave of globalisation, the cultures and traditions of peoples cannot resist. Hence, the questions could be how can these cultures and traditions be integrated within the "mainstream" constituted by the process of globalisation; how can there be integration of local and global; how within the framework provided by globalisation could inter-cultural communication take place today? If any local culture or people fail to get integrated to this all-embracing process, it will be left behind, suffer isolation and stay in its "primitivism".

This way of thinking - which is becoming common today - to say the least, appears to me to be too simplistic. Such a picture of the current state of affairs in our world takes for granted many things. It does not care to investigate the content, process and dynamics of globalisation and what lurks behind it.

In the first place, we need to ask whether globalisation is that "new" as is made out and whether it represents almost a rupture from the past history. My answer is a definite no. Present-day globalisation is but a continuation of a long tradition of over five hundred years,\(^3\) the tradition of imperialism. Globalisation is only
the latest phase and expression of this uninterrupted history of domination and subjugation of peoples, nations and cultures through the conquistadors and colonisers. It is a tradition of political, economic and cultural domination of some nations over others.

Imperialism has in it this attraction that it purports to unite everything, which are scattered, disparate and chaotic. Colonialism presented itself as a movement of unity and integration - political, cultural and economic. But we know the exploitation to which the peoples and nations were subjected, and the devastation it left behind. In this “imperium sine fine” (Virgil), globalisation represents the pinnacle. It is a respectful self-designation of imperialism in our times, which is poised to outdo the devastations of its own earlier incarnations.

One thing we need to realise is that the mill of globalisation is operated by the wind of trans-national capitalism. This wind “blows where it wills”, and operates above and across all national borders. It is transcending even the phase of productive capitalism and is becoming more and more truly finance capitalism. Commodities and services are exchanged to create same patterns of consumption and way of life. The main players in this globalisation, without doubt, are the multinational corporations (MNCs) which have created transnationalization of production and a global market. It has become difficult, for example, to assign today many products to any one single country. That makes meaningful a question like whether Honda is a Japanese car?

Some models of the Honda automobiles are designed in Japan and assembled in the United States with American labour and with parts manufactured in Europe, the U.S. and Japan. Is this Honda a Japanese car? In truth, it’s a global car coming from a Japanese company, which has become a global company. The rise of global marketing has come from the global expansion of multinational companies like Honda.
We will not understand the dynamics of globalisation without another very important component - the role of the fast expanding electronic media. It is very essential for the global market to get across countries and nations to create a network of communication and exciting advertisement to sell the various commodities. The media itself is a huge business enterprise involved in an industry of culture invading every nook and corner of the globe.

Globalisation is then a technocratic process, which revolves around finance, market and technology working in collaboration. It would be an insult to the noble ideal of the unity of the human family, if market-based globalisation were made out to replace it. Unity of our world is a much more serious and arduous goal to achieve. And yet, we could be deluded to believe that through this *may* of globalisation we have arrived at this goal. It is important to realise that the fact that we can communicate instantaneously with different parts of the world does not make our world one. In fact, when we are exposed to scenes of affluence in one part of the world and simultaneously see the misery and squalor in another part, the euphoria of *one* world fades into insignificance to give rise to the disturbing question: Are we all really in the *same* world? This “holy cow” of globalisation yields its milk to some, and denies it to millions, creating a world of division than unity.

Similarly, the fact that the same commodities are accessible across national borders is no proof for the unity of the world. If Parisian perfume can be bought in Bombay airport, and Brazilian coffee can be enjoyed in a Roman cafeteria, or Tanzanian cashews can be relished on a Lufthansa flight, this does not mean that the world has become one. It only means that commodities are globalised, and there are invisible hands, which reap a rich harvest from it.

I observed earlier how globalisation is part of a long tradition - the tradition of imperialism and the culture of domination. As a tradition and as a peculiar culture, I think the semiotic-linguistic model can be applied as well to globalisation. This will help us to
see in a better light and perspective, the relationship between globalisation and cultures.

According to the well-known distinction of De Saussure, *langue* refers to the aspect of language in so far as it is and it functions as a system, whereas *parole* is that by which an individual or a group expresses availing itself of the potentialities of the *langue*. Globalisation has, as in language, a systematic aspect, which makes its different parts - the economic, political, cultural, etc. - interdependent. Employing the Saussurean distinction, I think we can say, that the transnational capitalism is the *langue* of globalisation, and it has its concrete expression and variation in the *parole* in different parts of the world. What is happening in the name of new economic policies in different countries of the Third World like India is difficult to interpret without the *langue* of transnational capitalism as a system. This “language speaks” (Heidegger) through the *parole* of the local elites. Or, to employ Chomskian categories, the transnational capitalism with all its interdependent forces of market, technology, etc. would constitute the “competence” which is put to use in different parts of the world through the “performance” of individuals and groups.

A culture or tradition has its own liminal questions: when it meets with something new or different, it tries to retrieve through memory the stored data, and tries to integrate the new within its semiotic-linguistic system. This is very true of globalisation. In its general sweep, if globalisation meets with other cultures, it makes them part of its own system, which in effect means it commodifies the cultures of the people, pulling them out of their origin and context. It is aided in this process by the imperial history of domination, from which through memory it retrieves what is necessary now for control. Not surprisingly, instrumentalization of culture for sale of commodities, or as exotic pieces for entertainment is something, which we are sadly assisting today. By such processes, globalisation reinforces its own tradition and identity.
Globalisation undergirded by the prevailing form of capitalism is not amenable to change. Instead, it tries to convert everything in its image and likeness, and serves them for consolidating the system. Anything that does not mirror itself and its concerns are stoutly resisted. Conformism to the system becomes the supreme norm, and no voice of dissent is tolerated. It thus benumbs all critical sense. Globalisation has ingrained in it dogmatic and ideological characteristics. The most insidious aspect of it is the fact that it presents itself as the only way, and appears to claim that outside its pale there is no salvation for the world, but only hell-fire of destruction, or the limbo of "primitivism". One cannot but be struck by a certain parallelism it bears with the Judeo-Christian religious tradition and its dogmas.

Within this system, there is hardly any room for plurality. In this respect, I think it is important to differentiate between the process of globalisation and modernisation. This latter concept does not necessarily imply absence of pluralism; there is a little more openness in this regard. In fact, if we understand by modernity science, technology, fast means of communication, new modes of governance, system of education, etc., it is possible for the different peoples and cultures to appropriate in their own culture-specific ways the benefits and advantages these offer, and enhance through their experiences the nature and quality of modernisation. In fact, this has been happening in many societies in the Third World. In this sense, a plurality of being modern has been emerging. In its universal sweep, globalisation, on the other hand, seems to leave little room for any such thing. This is so because, at the heart of it, contrary to all appearances, a process of centralisation is at work. In earlier forms of imperialism these centres of control could be geopolitically located. In globalisation, there has taken place a development in terms of de-territorialization, in such a way that this highly centralised system is operative everywhere without being bound to national or geographical confines.
In the face of threats - real and imagined - the aspect of intolerance, resistance and the lack of any real sense of pluralism inherent in globalisation comes out most vehemently. The enemy is then painted in the vilest forms and in darkest colours. The threat to the consortium of advanced capitalist countries could be, for example, the “illegal immigrants” storming at the portals of “fortress Europe”, it could be Islam - with haunting memories of Crusades - or it could be the challenges posed by the cultures and traditions of Third World peoples.

To sum up, globalisation does not represent a break with the past, but rather a continuation of the history of imperialism. The linchpin of globalisation is transnational capital and market. As a system with interdependent elements, the semiotic-linguistic model could be applied to explain its nature and operation. As intolerant and not amenable to pluralism, this system demands conformism, and resists challenges by projecting in bad light the enemies of the system.

Globalisation and the Dynamics of Cultures

The reflections made so far, enables us to view in a better light the relationship between globalisation and cultures or contextuality. What has been said makes it clear why we cannot do this exercise with unexamined assumptions about globalisation. Specially, the unmasking of its nature as part of a tradition - the tradition of domination and imperialism - is important since, in this way, we are faced, ultimately, not so much with the question of relating something totally new with old traditions and cultures, but of relating one particular tradition, albeit in its new garb of globalisation, with other cultures and traditions.14

In this second part, I shall take up for our reflection the dynamics of cultures. Obviously, I do not have the intention of presenting an exhaustive account of the question. Nor is it necessary here. I shall limit myself, then, to highlighting certain aspects and dimensions, which, I consider, are very important to relate the tradition of globalisation with the cultures of peoples and nations.
Schreiter has quite appropriately and ably applied the semiotic-linguistic model to the analysis of traditions and cultures. They are, by and large, valid. But I think there are certain other aspects from semiotics and linguistics which we can avail ourselves to gain new perspectives on cultures.

The distinction between *synchronic* and *diachronic* in the study of linguistics offers a good lead. A language can be studied in its synchronic aspect, namely in its present state, by concentrating on the inner and interdependent relationship of its various units and parts, be it in its surface structure or deep structure. As De Saussure put it, “being simple expression of an existing arrangement, the synchronic law reports a state of affairs; it is like a law that states that trees in a certain orchard are arranged in the shape of quincunx”. The diachronic relates to the continuous evolution of a language through many stages and states in its morphological, semantic and other dimensions. Without the diachronic we do not have a proper understanding of a language in its depth.

What I want to particularly highlight here is the relevance of the diachronic dimension of language in its application to culture. Like language, culture too has a story of its making before it came to acquire a particular state in a definite point of time. There is a historical evolution of a culture. There are forces and factors that contributed to the diachronic evolution of a culture. In its present shape, a culture can hardly be traced back to a single origin. Most cultures in their present form have been the result of confluence of many peoples and races. The various cultures of the Indic civilisation, for example, resulted through the mixture and mingling of so diverse races as proto-Australoids, the Paleo-Mediterranean and the various groups of people having “Aryan” as their linguistic commonality.

We should not forget the fact that there was a great mobility of population and waves of migrations from one region to another, and this includes even the history of Island cultures. This meeting of peoples sometimes in peace and understanding, and other times
in conflict and war with one another; large scale migrations and flourishing trades - these are very important ingredients to identify the shape of a culture in its present form. Only a diachronic study of culture can lay bare the various historical and ethnic layers a culture embodies.

There is yet another important linguistic insight, which can enlighten our question, specially, the relationship among cultures. A distinction is made between the *syntagmatic* and *paradigmatic* aspects. Syntagmatic refers to the relationship, for example, within a sentence among the various parts of speech - noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb, etc., each unit of which present in the sentence receives its meaning in relationship to other words in the same sentence. Paradigmatic is that through which the various parts of speech are in relationship with its other associates, which are not present in the sentence, and yet the semantics of it will depend on this association. Let us take, for example, a simple sentence like “He runs fast to his home”, the meaning of each part of speech as well as the whole sentence acquires meaning by contradistinction with other words of the same nature. In this example, “he” acquires its meaning in that it is contradistinguished from its co-relates which are other pronouns such as “she”, “it”, “they”. The same thing can be said of other words in the above sentence.

Now, every culture stands in a paradigmatic relationship to other cultures. A culture has its difference, its identity which singles it out from others, and yet this specific identity to be as such calls for *relationship* with other cultures, and this association with other cultures is a necessary part of the very intelligibility of the identity of that particular culture. I think a detailed diachronic study of any culture will reveal that historically the construction of cultural identity has not been a matter of isolation - in which case that culture would not have survived - but a constant changing and shifting of self-description in relation to other cultures.

What we have reflected above indicates that the relationship between globalisation and cultures is not to be projected as a
matter of a dynamic force storming the self-enclosed and stagnant cultures out there and enveloping them in a homogeneous world. The dynamics of cultures as revealed in their diachronic and syntagmatic dimension will continue, and it will be the case even in its relationship with the forces of globalisation. We shall say more about it in the third part.

Now, these cultures and traditions in their dynamics have great generative potential for new forms, and energy for fresh historical interventions. Understandably, things may appear very different for those viewing cultures from an imperialist perspective - be it in its colonial version, or in its current global version. But the fact is that these cultures and traditions have been in many cases an irresistible force challenging colonial and hegemonic powers. If colonialism is ultimately the illegal and forced occupation of alien lands for economic exploitation via cultural and political domination, the force to change this state of affairs came from the cultures, as was evidenced in the national struggles for independence. For the colonial and global mind-set all this may appear as “ethnification” or as resurgence of obscurantist forces. That kind of labelling is understandable in a situation of being seriously challenged. The present-day transitional capitalism in its garb of globalisation may not succeed to wipe out the inexhaustible sources of energy and vibrancy of cultures, which offer much for renewal and transformation of our world.

It is illusory to believe that the globalised transnational capitalism and market will replace time-tested civilisation like those of India and China with their variety of cultures, which continue to interact with new forces as they did in the past. Through this process, they continue to redefine themselves and grow by transforming the new elements as part of themselves.20

Since there is, as I observed earlier, a parallel between language and culture, I may refer here that over two hundred years of uninterrupted British rule did not succeed to replace the Indian languages. What happened was that many people learned an additional language - English - coming from another part of the
world and civilisation. To suggest that the globalised transnational capitalism and its sub-cultural manifestations will run over the cultures will be as realistic as to believe that Flemish and French, or Tamil and Mandarin will disappear from our earth once and for all.

Evidently, there is the phenomenon of immigrants moving from one part of the world to another, and entering into interaction with peoples from other racial, linguistic and cultural backgrounds. In some countries, this could be a very important present-day concern. This multicultural situation and the mutual cultural interaction need to be studied; also with the help of the history of the movement and immigration of peoples and the ways they communicated and mutually influenced. This phenomenon, however, would not call for defining cultures themselves as de-territorial entities and dissociated from the geographical and historical matrix from which they grew. There are and there will continue to be immigrants from Asia, for example, into other parts of the world. This need not be exaggerated. In any case, it can be only a simple figment of imagination to think that over one billion Chinese and over eight hundred and fifty million Indians will be on their feet, moving elsewhere!

The proposal of a de-territorialized concept of culture explains itself seen from the perspective of globalisation. For these cultures uprooted from their context could be turned into museum places and exotic elements within the mono-cultural world, transnational capitalism projects to create. But, roots and contexts are very essential in the flourishing of cultures. The physical and geographical peculiarities very much determine the configuration of a culture and its expressions, and go to become part of its spiritual fabric. Trying to undo the linkage of cultures with the territory and context is to suck the vital sap out of them, and to disable their creative forces.
The Future of Inter-cultural Encounter

In this last and concluding part, let me make some brief reflections, in the light of the forgoing discussions, on the shape of future inter-cultural encounter.

The future unity of the human family cannot be achieved through mere economic project, or through the creation of a culturally homogenous world, however impressive these may be. This kind of world is the creation of vested interests for whom one world of this kind means better prospect for market and money. Globalisation can create only an "administered world" (Adorno), with its own exigencies. The movement towards unity can begin only where people become subjects in this process, and not engineered by economic and cultural mechanisms as in globalisation. The subjecthood of peoples is the foundation for the emergence of unity, and the unity built upon this foundation will necessarily be also a communion in plurality and diversity. Not long ago, we still spoke meaningfully about inter-national, inter-regional, inter-continental, etc. Implicit in "inter" was the consciousness of the subjecthood of peoples, nations and cultures and the relationships among them. But that discourse is today being, unfortunately, replaced by the talk of globalisation which sounds like a mechanistic process, as if it were something just happening out there. And this process has as its ineluctable logic the homogenisation of the globe.

If the unity of the world has to emerge from the subjecthood of peoples, then in this process, encounter and dialogue become very important. Unlike globalisation, which is pre-planned and calculated, dialogue has always new discoveries and surprises which spring from the richness of mutual encounter of peoples, communities and cultures. There needs to be a certain climate and certain conditions for this inter-cultural encounter to take place. Much has been done in this line as regards inter-religious dialogue. Many of the insights, which have evolved from actual practice of inter-religious dialogue, are applicable as well to inter-cultural encounters. I need not to go into them in detail here.
However, in the context of our discussion, I limit to two observations.

First of all, one may wonder whether globalisation can contribute anything towards this movement of unity through dialogue and inter-cultural encounters. Unfortunately, it can do very little. One of the basic reasons is the fact that, unlike in dialogue, where recognition of the equality of partners is required, globalisation operates on the basis of inequality. There is basically an asymmetry in power relationship, in as much as this project is controlled by the consortium of advanced industrialised nations, and the weaker ones are, so to say, carried on its shoulders, only then to be forced to draw water and hew wood for the maintenance of the global system. It is a globalisation among unequal partners, which as history and experience demonstrate, go ultimately to create the one world in the image of the powerful.

A second observation concerns the semiotic-linguistic model. This model, as we saw, has the potential to enlighten many aspects of the nature of a culture and its dynamics. But it has also its limitations in terms of enlightening the human, inter-communitarian and inter-cultural encounters. As a human reality, inter-cultural communication is more than decoding a message from one cultural system and encoding it in another system of symbols, and all the tools and expertise required for such an operation. However, within the larger framework and spirit of dialogue, the semiotic-linguistic model could become a very helpful element.

The unity we envisage, undoubtedly, requires dialogic encounter of cultures. But then this process of unity through dialogue is not without struggles and conflicts. There is the danger that one understands too quickly other cultures. This is true in the erstwhile imperial period of colonialism as much as in the latest phase of globalisation. Any amount of scholarship and collection of information do not make up for an intercommunication among peoples of different cultures, interacting with one another as subjects. The enterprise of Orientalism, as Edward Said has so well
demonstrated, in spite of its encyclopaedic knowledge about cultures was not a meeting with the soul of a people but a knowledge about them. Encountering and dialoguing require that one has to struggle through and confront the worldview, dominant values and fundamental symbols of one's own culture to be able to understand those of another culture.

The inter-cultural dialogue takes place in a very meaningful and effective way when people facing some common human issues in different parts of the world meet and exchange their experiences. In this sense, happily, today we assist at stirrings at the grassroots level in different parts of the world. Be it the question of justice and human rights, women's issues, or ecological sanity, creative and original perspectives are emerging from peoples of different backgrounds who are supported from the resources of their rich cultural traditions. I think in terms of magnitude, these stirrings at the grassroots and emerging *networking* among them is no less impressive than the globalisation the transnational capitalism is trying to impose. This growing dialogic communication among peoples of different cultural roots and heritage with all their richness augurs well for a different world and alternative type of humane unity. Its strength lies in its faith in the subjecthood of peoples and in its respectfulness for pluralism.

From what has been said, follows also, finally, the necessity of an appropriate methodology and theory for enlightening the inter-cultural encounter. These, as can be inferred from our reflections thus far, cannot be simply a formalistic and technical one, or a clearly chalked out ready-made path. Any theorising in this regard has to start from micro-studies on the experience of concrete encounters of cultures - both in present times and in history. These micro field-studies will open up new avenues and unsuspected insights for a meaningful theoretical study of inter-cultural dialogue.
2 For example, his work, Constructing Local Theologies, SCM Press, London 1985.
6 The tendency to expand and get globalised is inherent in market capitalism. True, it tries to integrate within its ambit ever more people and institutions. But, it is equally true that, by its very nature, it also excludes more and more people. This inherent contradiction has the result that, while it makes many rich, it also sends many millions to bed empty stomach. On this aspect of contradiction cf. C. T. Kurien, op. cit. Pp. 22f.
7 Schreiter seems to apply this model only to traditions and cultures.
10 This has been well elaborated by Schreiter in regard to cultures and traditions, cf. pp. 11ff (reference to pages as found in the manuscript supplied).
13 Here I am not entering into the appropriateness of the paradigm, which operates and interprets our present world in terms of a polarity between modernisation and tradition. That will require a paper all by itself.
Publishers 1994. (This is an Indian edition of the work originally published by

16 Ferdinand De Saussure, op.cit. p. 92.
17 Martin Bernal, Black Athena. The Afroasistic Roots of classical Civilisation,
underwent a wide variety of influences - Egyptian, Semitic and other Eastern
cultures. The Europe of today, like the Indic civilisation, is an example of a
mosaic of different races, peoples, nations and cultures mixing with one another
to gave shape to their present identities in which the streams of the past can still
be identified.
18 Romila Thapar, A History of India, vol. 1, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books,
A. L. Basham, A Cultural History of India, Delhi: Oxford University Press,
1975.
19 Cf. F. De Saussure, op. cit. Pp. 122ff; David Crystal, op. cit. Pp. 165ff; D. A.
cit. pp. 139a172.
20 Here I am reminded of an interesting concept of Claude Levi-Strauss, which
he proposed in explaining the process of myth making. Bricolage is the process
by which elements from old myths are taken to form new and fresh ones. The
expression is connected with a sense from the country-side: bricoleur is one who
goes round collecting from the farm house old junk and scrapped irons etc. and
he turns them into new instruments like plough, which the farmer needs for his
and Nicolson, 1966, pp. 16-36.
21 “Money, as Global Mantra” is the significant title that Johannes Hoffmann has
given to one of his contributions. Cf. Jeevadhara vol. 25 (1995), entitled
“Globalisation or Peripheralization?” Felix Wilfred (ed.), pp. 32-51.
22 Cf. Felix Wilfred, From the Dusty Soil. Contextual Reinterpretation of
Christianity, Madras: University of Madras, 1995; ID., “Interkulturelle
Begegungstatt Inkulturation”, in Fundamentalismus (Jahrbuch Mission 1995)
23 For a survey of the experience in inter-religious encounters in India, Cf., for
example, Jose Kutthanimattathil, Practice and Theology of Interreligious
25 The expression “inter-cultural communication” sounds as something formal
and technical. One may study, for example, how a German businessman and a
Japanese businessman from different cultural backgrounds may communicate
and transact business, without falling into misunderstanding. Some of these techniques may be of help. (Writings like those of Edward T. Hall may be recalled here: *The Silent Language*, New York: Doubleday & Co, 1966; *Beyond Culture*, New York: Doubleday & Co, 1976; *The Dance of Life: The other Dimension of Time*, New York 1983). I think such technical aspects of inter-cultural communication and its anatomy will have their value to the extent they are attuned to the more vital and fundamental question of inter-cultural dialogue which recognises the subjecthood of the partners involved, and believes that their being different is not a hindrance but an enrichment.
"Nigeria: Prospects for Development"
A Response to the World Bank

By

Obiora Ike & Emeka Ngwoke

Introduction

"The joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ." (Gaudium et Spes No. 1)

The above words in the opening paragraph of Vatican II Council's document, "The Church in the Modern World" (Gaudium et Spes) has been the underlying principle of the Church's intervention in the temporal order - political, social and economic. They form the basis of her preferential option for the poor. They are also the basis of this response to the World Bank’s Report on Nigeria. For "the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties" of suffering Nigerians, especially the poor and those who are in any way afflicted, are "the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties" of the Church in Nigeria and indeed of all who truly bear the name Christian.

In going through the Report one is almost overawed by its sheer size and depth of research: 165 pages in print including 24 pages of statistical data and three pages of bibliography. Twenty-seven pages of executive summary and a page of precis precede this. It is therefore quite a challenge to read through the entire Report without getting lost in a maze of information and often-ponderous economic analysis.

Reading through the first few pages of the Report, it is obvious that one is not being presented with an unbiased or objective
assessment of Nigeria’s socio-economic situation with a view to laying open policy options for the country’s leaders. Rather, one notices a determined defence of an entrenched position and a thinly veiled attempt to sell or rather force down our throat a particular model of fiscal policies and macro-economic management.¹

For instance, while recognising three policy positions in what is an on-going debate on Nigeria’s way forward in socio-economic management, unfair comments appear to be used in dismissing the other two options. The Statist/Nationalist approach is condemned as being “strongly supported by interest groups hungry for power, and who benefit from rent-seeking activities that can be undertaken because of excessive regulatory role of the state”. (P. 5) Its failure is a forgone conclusion, and therefore “it is not analysed as its outcomes have been documented in Nigeria’s economic history: such a vision has led Nigeria along the road of reductions in real incomes and increases in poverty”. (p. 6) The third option, which the Report terms the “muddling-through” approach, is similarly rejected because its advocates wish to “maintain the exiting status quo in terms of existing economic and political power structure between the North, South and middle-belt regions”. Besides, we are told, it allows interest groups both within the military and the civilians to profit for personal gain”. (P.6)

By contrast, the so-called market-friendly/internationalist approach, which the Report advocates, is glamorised for being supported by “interest groups that want to see the country move forward at a fast pace by liberalising the economic system and strengthening the country’s links with the International community”. (p. 5)

Suffice it to say that this manner of reasoning is rather unfortunate and only capable of generating much heat without light while obscuring the real issues at stake. Beside the obvious lie involved in the claim that the Statist/Nationalist approach has led Nigeria “along the road of reductions in real incomes and increases in poverty” (p.6), one must point up the fact that a policy option is neither good nor bad because of who supports or opposes it. Any
policy option can only be legitimately rejected for superior reasons - economic or pragmatic - and not simply for flimsy political reasons.

In the paragraphs that follow, we shall, in the spirit of what should remain an on-going debate, proffer our own suggestions about Nigeria’s multiple problems of socio-economic management, and our own assessment of the Bank’s major policy prescriptions as contained in the said draft Report, to wit: - privatisation, liberalisation, divestment, exchange rate deregulation and removal of subsides. In the course of our discussion, it would become obvious that as a recipe for economic development, the Report is a disaster since it ignores human capital enhancement that is indispensable for the development of a good economy. Rather one finds a carefully orchestrated plan of fiscal and macro-economic management aimed at ensuring continued repayment of Nigeria’s huge external debts and paving the way, for an eventual take-over of Nigeria’s economy by Western international and monopolistic finance capital.

**Nigeria’s External Debt Burden**

Although the Report is quite on target in identifying the many ills of Nigeria’s macro-economic management, it failed to highlight and give prominence to the greatest obstacle to Nigeria’s continued economic development, namely, her insupportable debt burden which is at the root of the present crisis. Otherwise, why does the Bank assume the business of prescribing how Nigeria manages her economy?

Nigeria’s fortunes took a plunge in the early 1980s when oil revenues began to decline and, rather than curtail her expenditure, Nigeria allowed herself to be goaded into contracting international debts. The situation grew progressively worse as the country remained profligate while her income continued to decline; and so her debts kept mounting. With the virtual collapse of oil prices in 1985, Nigeria lay prostrate and by 1986 she was forced to submit to the IMF/World Bank’s harsh therapy of economic Structural
Adjustment Programme (SAP). What Nigeria has seen since 1986 has been an eternal lesson on how not to run a national economy. Put simply, Nigerians have been paying in tears and blood huge and crushing reparations for the nation’s past profligacy.

The Bank’s Report alongside earlier policy prescriptions in the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) easily calls to mind the ruse of the Second World War, which was laid at the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919. When the First World War ended, the victor nations - America, Britain, France and Italy - met in Versailles, France, and imposed a humiliating and punitive peace on defeated Germany. She was asked to pay a whopping $40 billion as war damages. Lord John Maynard Keynes, the world famous Cambridge economist, saw the imposition as a reckless settlement of political scores and denounced the peace as “outrageous and impossible” and warned that it “can bring nothing but misfortune behind it”. In protest, Keynes resigned his cabinet position at the London exchequer and went on to publish The Economic Consequences of the Peace in which he took further swipes at the peace pact. “It is an extraordinary fact that the fundamental problems of a Europe starving and disintegrating before their eyes, was the one question in which it was impossible to arouse the interest of the four.” He then went on to warn, rather prophetically:

The danger confronting us, therefore, is the rapid depression of the standard of life of European populations to a point which will mean actual starvation for some... men will not always die quietly. For starvation which brings to some lethargy and a helpless despair, drives other temperaments to the nervous instability of hysteria and to a mad despair. And these in their distress may overturn the remnants of organisation, and submerge civilisation itself in their attempts to satisfy desperately the overwhelming needs of the individual. This is the danger against which all
our resources and courage and idealism must now cooperate.²

Lord Keynes’ appeals and warnings went unheeded by a world already deafened and blinded by the rattling sabres of war and the lure of enriching plunder. Germany was forced to pay the “pound of flesh” and predictably widespread resentment followed. It was only a matter of course when, with time, Adolph Hitler arrived on the political scene and with a rare combination of oratory, organisational skill and sheer demagoguery, fanned the collective rage of the German people into a fierce blaze that almost consumed the entire word in World War II.

Nigeria has not been engaged in warfare nor is she suffering as a vanquished nation. Nevertheless, the collective experience of African nations emerging from colonial rule and trying to organise their national economies in a world dominated by greed and fierce competition has not been less daunting than the prosecution of war. Their failures in a game dominated by stronger nations where it is ‘the weak to the walls’ has been as humiliating as the loss of a war. The very sub-human existence and social disintegration, which greatly alarmed Lord Keynes about Germany, have become the standard fare in Nigeria and in most African nations (especially Rwanda, Zambia, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Burundi, Zaire, and Sudan). They groan under the yoke of the IMF/World Bank regime. Lamenting Nigeria’s fate the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) recently stated,

Nigerians are faced with starvation and destitution of incredible magnitude. Workers do not earn enough to live above starvation level; one can only imagine the deplorable conditions of the teeming populations of the unemployed. The nightmarish condition of life and property experienced in the upsurge of armed robbery and hired assassinations make life extremely difficult and precarious for the people of this country.³
Also writing on Nigeria, Osamaro Ibie, links his graphic portraiture of the situation with an analysis of the country’s prolonged economic crisis and social distress. In his own words,

Unemployment has become a routine dread to live with, while the incidence of the public sector’s inability to pay salaries and wages regularly to its employees has become a regular feature. Public sector employees and some strata of the private sector are compelled to pay distressed wages and salaries to their employees. The result is that a large proportion of the society now lacks the purchasing power to buy their basic necessities. The reading of the external barons of the World Bank and IMF who are overseeing our economy - but who are no more than ivory tower theoreticians - is that, there is inflation in the economy, which is the explanation for taking several counter-productive measures to keep real and money wages at forlorn levels....

My reading of the present condition of our economy is that, it is suffering from the anorexia nervosa of stagflation, that is, an economy beset by high cost inflation, a high rate of unemployment of all production actors and lack of purchasing power.\(^4\)

In order to understand the Nigerian situation and to be able to proffer genuine solutions, it is necessary to locate it within a general economic theoretical framework. The prosperity of nations is not measured by the volume of their mineral deposits nor by the vastness of their infra-structural development but by their present incomes. When the individual and collective incomes of a nation are high, a nation is said to be in prosperity; when otherwise, it is said to be in a depression.

Incomes themselves move from hand to hand as goods and services are demanded and provided. This reciprocal exchange of incomes through the provision of goods and services keeps the
wheels of the economy turning. This process will remain unchanged even when people save up their earnings with banks or buy up stocks since the money remains available for business. A problem will arise, however when people, instead of banking their savings or using them to buy up stocks, simply hide them away in their homes. If this practice becomes widespread, there will be a shortfall in the supply of funds into the economy. This, however, does not usually happen.

Depression arises principally because of the inability of business to expand endlessly to invest savings. Business, of course, does not need savings for its day-to-day activities. They become necessary only when business is expanding. A thrifty community will always be saving but business cannot be expanding all the time. This disjunction between continuous saving and sporadic investment creates a depression, which is economic contraction. "If our savings do not become invested by expanding business, our incomes must decline". When however, investments pick up again, wages will in turn begin to rise. This is called the see-saw theory of savings and investment. This theory, however, fails to explain how an economy could remain in a prolonged state of depression. John Maynard Keynes provides the necessary explanation.

The savings and investments see-saw are not unrelated business activities. They meet at the capital market where savings are traded at a price or interest rate. If savings were low, interest rates would be high; but if savings accumulated, lending rates would fall. This fall in lending rates was expected to entice back reluctant investors into business expansion. In this way, the see-saw theory sought to explain the boom and burst swings of the economy. But not quite satisfactorily!

The Great Depression of 1929 and the early 1930s happened and failed to respond to this neat theory of rebound after a collapse. John Keynes in his book, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* resolved the puzzle by observing a simple and
obvious fact of economic life that instead of a flood, there would be a trickle of savings in the vaults during a depression.

For what happened when an economy went into an economic tailspin was that incomes contracted, and what happened as incomes contracted was that savings were squeezed out. How could a community be expected to save as much when everyone was hard up as when everyone was prosperous? Quite obviously, it could not be a glut of savings; not a flood of savings but a trickle.  

Since 1986 when Nigeria’s economy came under the regime of the World Bank and IMF, her economy has been plagued by the twin ills of spiral inflation and stagnation. These were occasioned by massive currency devaluation that has virtually wiped out the purchasing power of the vast majority of Nigerians. Savings have dried up and investment is almost non-existent. Notwithstanding, Nigeria has a Frankenstein hanging around her neck, namely, an external debt burden of over $32 billion which attracted a service obligation of a whopping $4.7 billion (13% of her export earnings) last year. Nigeria is therefore caught in the web of the paradox of “want in the midst of plenty, the anomaly of idle men and idle machines”.

The reason for this paradox is that the economy does not produce to satisfy wants, which are limitless - rather, it produces to meet demands which are as small as one’s wages. Nigeria’s growing army of the non-employed, the under-employed and the middle class whose purchasing power has been wiped out are therefore virtual economic zeros since they are incapable of making any real impact on the economy. With such a prostrate economy, Nigeria is unfit to meet her external debt service obligations (only $2 billion was paid out of $4.7 billion which was due last year) or engage in any meaningful development effort.
Nigeria’s problem is not without historical precedents. Britain and the then Soviet Union suffered a similar fate in the past. According to Richard Akinjide,

By the first two years of the second World War, Britain was practically bankrupt. Germany had overrun the rest of Europe. The British Channel Islands were occupied. Defeat was starring Britain in the face. In January 1941, the concept of Lend-Lease was enunciated. Britain and the Soviet Union badly needed to be rescued. The notion was that military equipment could be transferred by the USA to Britain and the Soviet Union for war efforts and could later be returned or paid for in kind. The truth was that neither Britain nor the Soviet Union had the money to pay for them. In reality, it was a free grant of funds replacing international lending. The unacceptable consequences of post-war debts were thereby cleverly avoided. Rather than ask for repayments, in June 1947, the USA initiated the Marshall Plan in a Harvard address by secretary of state Marshall in order to rescue war devastated and debt-socked Europe and Japan.

If the World Bank’s draft Report were proposing a “Marshall Plan” or rather an “Albright Plan” or perhaps a “Clinton-Major-Kohl-Chirac Plan” for Nigeria and Africa, we should be popping champagne! Rather, the Report says quite bleakly and matter-of-factly, “The preferred option is to use the positive windfall to repay Nigeria’s external debts”. Revenue shortfalls should be compensated for by lower spending levels in order to avoid increasing the stocks of external or domestic debts. The FGN should not consider another approach until the debt stock has been reduced to a comfortable level. (9.11). We may hasten to ask, comfortable for whom?

Nigeria should as matter of honour and national policy stop all external borrowings. And in the absence of a “Marshall Plan” and
outright debts cancellation, the World Bank and Nigeria should be working towards a moratorium on debt servicing for a minimum of ten years plus a fully cushioned and spread out system of repayments requiring not more than five percent of the country’s export earnings and spanning through a period of up to one hundred years. The present arrangement in which Nigeria spends 16% of her export earnings on debt servicing is unhealthy and can only hamper her chances of self-sustaining development. If, however, Nigeria cannot count on the Bank and her creditors’ co-operation to ensure a less painful method of repayments, she must find her own solution aimed at making her completely free of debts within a decade at most.

_Nigeria’s Path to Economic Recovery_

The historic task before Nigeria today is to find ways of breaking through the vicious circle of unemployment, stagnation and spiral inflation in which her economy is trapped. She must find ways of reactivating her economy by engaging all her productive resources. She must be able to get business to start investing again in order to generate further wealth.

The Nigerian economy, which has been in tailspin since 1986, may well remain there far beyond the turn of the century. There is _nothing_ inherent in the situation to pull it out of the woods. To jerk the economy back into action, Nigeria needs the moral equivalent of Roosevelt’s New Deal in America which broke-up the noose of depression that held up America’s potential for development in the early 1930s.

Roosevelt was able to jump start the American economy into recovery and sustained growth and development through relief packages and public sector investments. “Relief began under Hoover; then under Roosevelt relief turned into leaf-raking, and leaf-raking turned into constructive enterprise. The government was suddenly a major economic investor itself: roads, dams, auditoriums, airfields, harbours and housing projects blossomed forth.” It was this deliberate undertaking of government
investment which saved America at the time. In an open letter published in the December 31, 1933 edition of the *New York Times*, Lord Keynes urged Roosevelt to place "overwhelming emphasis on the increase of the national purchasing power resulting from government expenditure".9

Unfortunately, the direction of Nigeria’s economic policies has been deliberately anti-people and quite contrary to Roosevelt’s New Deal and to Lord Keynes’ advice. Instead of increasing the national purchasing power through government investments, government has rather been “forced” into the path of continued decrease in the national purchasing power through currency devaluation, wage freeze and removal of subsidies. A Nigerian Keynesian scholar and retired bureaucrat, Osamaro Ibie, has taken an informed look at Nigeria’s prevailing economic condition and has come up with an answer that is worth serious attention. His views are incisive and lucid.

In spite of the impact of the World Bank and IMF on global economic management in the last two decades, no one has been able to fault Lord Maynard Keynes’ employment theory. After the second World War, when the economies of Western Europe were down and out, he advised the post-war labour government in Britain, and the rest of Europe took the cue from there, that even if the public sector had to employ workers to dig up pits and refill them, provided it produced basis for paying them wages, it would be beneficial to the economy. What Keynes meant is that if an economy is in a recession as ours has been since 1986, it cannot in a capitalist system, rely on market forces to jolt it back into recovery. This is where the public sector has to seize the initiative, because investors in the private sector are fair weather friends of convenience.

Therefore, inferred Keynes, even if the public sector has to print more currency notes to pay wages to its employees, it will in real terms provide purchasing power to
impoverished consumers. When the suppliers and producers of necessary goods and services suddenly discover an upsurge in demand for their wares, it is then that they will have the confidence to expand production. The production of additional goods and services will necessitate the employment of more workers in a chain reaction, which overtime, will stimulate the entire economy from stagnation through reflation to recovery. This is what Keynes described as the “multiplier” which has to be ignited by additional public sector investment.

On the other hand, to pump more money into a somnolent economy promises to activate reflation and recovery via the multiplier and the accelerator. It is therefore ludicrous to hear of a national government which is not only forcing its work force to underwrite national economic misfortunes, but also to starve in the midst of plenty. Wages and salaries in the public sector are paid in local currency and not in hard currency. It means in effect that even if government prints more naira to fund additional employment and increase in wages and salaries in the public sector, it is only fueling economic growth, that is the summation of the justification for social welfare economies in which the public sector subvents the unemployed, the sick, the aged and pensioners, to ensure that they remain viable consumers of unavoidable goods and services. As long as they retain some purchasing power, the economy will remain hale and hearty.10

Osamaro Ibie is quite on target. If his recommendations are accepted and implemented by government that would be the beginning of socio-economic regeneration for Nigeria’s battered economy. The impact would be to unleash a wave of economic growth and development, which would be internally coherent and self-sustaining. The culture of graft and corruption which has been growing by geometric progression since government was forced
into several counter-productive measures of economic management, will begin to abate. The low morale of public sector workers and the rent-seeking activities against which the World Bank Report rails insistently (p. xiii) and which less optimistic commentators refer to as “the Nigerian Factor” will begin to decline for greater transparency and productivity.

**Nigeria and Economic Globalisation**

The policy measures which the World Bank’s draft Report advocates for Nigeria namely: privatisation, divestment, liberalisation, unification of the exchange rate regime and the removal of subsidies, can all be properly located within the wider context of what is called “globalisation”. This is a vast and complex process - cultural, political, religious and economic - which seeks to transform the entire world into the so-called “global neighbourhood” without first achieving “global neighbourliness”.

In a small pamphlet titled *The Global War Against the Poor*, Richard Barnet of the Washington DC-based institute for policy studies, identifies four webs created by this process through which the destinies of unsuspecting billions of people the world over are shaped. These webs are (1) the global cultural bazaar; (2) the global shopping mall; (3) the global financial network; (4) the global work place. Barnet notes that “two-thirds of the world (including the bottom 20% of people in rich countries and 80% of people in poor countries) are effectively left out, marginalised or hurt by these webs! For most people they provide a window on what is not a global market place, but no door.” At the root of the negative effects of globalisation says Carole J. L. Collins, is its failure to address the issue of distributive justice. “The unprecedented rise in global trade, the buying and selling of goods and services among countries, has created a planetary supermarket. But of the world’s 5.6bn people, 3.8bn are only window shoppers. Only 1.8bn have the actual money or credit to actually buy anything in the mall”. Further, she notes that “Trade is also ever more highly concentrated in fewer firms: 200 of the world’s largest
corporations control a quarter of world production of all commodities.”

Truly, the global war against the poor is already here with us in Nigeria as we shall seek to show while trying to unravel some of the implications of the policy prescriptions contained in the World Bank Report for Nigeria and her citizens.

Privatisation:
Privatisation may be a means of spurring growth and higher performance in a vibrant economy through free competition. It however, collapses as an option for the recovery of an underdeveloped economy in a depression. This is because privatisation is predicated upon the profit motive of private investors. People invest where there is an upsurge in demands and the mood is optimistic. With the tight fiscal policies imposed in Nigeria by the IMF and World Bank, and the consequent freeze in public sector wages since 1992 privatisation in the context of Nigeria now is either a case of putting the horse before the cart or a veiled attempt to sell Nigeria’s patrimony to international capitalist interests for a mess of pottage. Only people who have the purchasing power can engage in buying up government stocks. The vast majority of Nigerians completely lack this power and so cannot be expected to participate in what should be primarily their own business. Privatisation is like competitive sports. Only trained strong and healthy athletes can reasonably go into such competitions; sickness or weakness is a good reason for opting out of such competitions. The Nigerian economy is weak and unhealthy. Therefore, to go along with privatisation now will simply be tantamount to organising a cheap bazaar for foreign capitalist interests at the expense of Nigerians.

This is precisely what the Report advocates. On p. xxii we read: “Private Nigerian and foreign firms should be invited to purchase and refurbish the existing refineries, pipelines and depots”. One could immediately ask: What chance do Nigerian firms stand in bidding against their bigger, richer and more experienced foreign
competitors? For the purchase of Nigeria’s National Electric Power Authority (NEPA), one understands that two foreign firms, Mobil Power Inc. and Asea Brown Boveri (ABB) are bidding, according to a recent newspaper publication. Which Nigerian firm can compete with these two? What we have in the Report, therefore, is simply a euphemism for calling on Nigeria to invite foreign firms to purchase, refurbish and run her existing refineries. One must also ask: With what implications for Nigeria’s status as an independent and self-governing nation?

There are worrisome indications that the Nigerian government is already giving in to pressures being mounted by her creditors through the IMF and World Bank to privatise. In a recent government advertorial published in Time magazine one reads that “Final confirmation of the liberalising trend will come when the government gives the go-ahead for its promised privatisation of the biggest national companies, after further considerations on the manner of its divestment. The list is widely expected to include Nigeria Airways, the National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) Nigerian Telecommunications (NITEL) and parts of the all-important oil sector probably starting with the four large oil refineries. Meanwhile, the Head of State, General Sanni Abacha, announced last month that all laws inhibiting competition in all sectors of the economy will be repealed this year.”

Here Nigeria must thread very slowly for it is impossible to be too careful and circumspect in a matter of such great moment. The experience of other nations should instruct us. Take the case of Ghana.

At the instigation of the World Bank and IMF, the Ashanti gold mines were recently privatised. Ghana received $350 million from it. During a single year after “privatisation” one billion and two hundred million dollars worth of gold were sold from the mines. A multinational company who (sic) holds a slice of the privatised shares earned fifty percent of its total world-wide profits from the Ashanti gold
mines alone. Of course, the home base government of that corporation would take about a third of that profit for ‘taxation’. Meanwhile, the Bretton Woods institutions had “advised” Ghana to introduce Value Added Tax (VAT) to improve its revenue base. It was done with disastrous consequences. The cost of living and inflation skyrocketed. Riot broke out. There was mayhem. Corpses littered the streets. The Ghana government was forced to cancel VAT. Who says the IMF policies are not working? Farce has been raised to a new height!15

If Nigeria is to avoid this Ghanaian-style tragedy and disaster, she must stoutly resist every push to privatise immediately and move rather very cautiously. First of all, she must provide an enabling environment, which will make the process people-driven and therefore ultimately beneficial to the vast majority of Nigerians. The process will become beneficial in this sense if government takes measures to ensure human capital enhancement to enable more Nigerians participate in the acquisition of shares - especially the public sector employees. In accordance with our earlier suggestion about increased wages in the public sector, about 40% of the envisaged wage increase of at least 1000% could be converted into shares for the public sector workers. This will not only boost their low morale and productivity but will also reduce rent-seeking activities (corruption) and help cushion the effect of any staff-shedding measures which might be undertaken when the enterprise becomes fully privatised. The government must also insist on a ratio participation of say 30 to 40 percent for foreigners and 70 to 60 percent for Nigerians. Of the Nigerian share participation about 50 to 60 percent should be earmarked for public sector workers and pensioners.

In the absence of these necessary measures of human capital enhancement which, even if adopted today, will take quite a while to yield necessary results, Nigeria is therefore safer adopting the option of commercialisation as advocated by Prof. Sam Aluko.
Aluko is an Economics Professor of international repute and chairman of Nigeria’s National Economic Intelligence Committee (NEIC) whose contributions to national economic policies have been characterised by forthrightness, patriotism and a passionate concern for the welfare of the generality of Nigerians who are poor and marginalised. Reacting to Nigeria’s 1997 federal budget which continued the tilt toward the prescription of the IMF and World Bank, the learned professor made the following policy recommendations:

- a uniform exchange rate of N22 to the dollar, as opposed to the current dual rates and their proposed harmonisation at the N80 autonomous tally;
- commercialisation of public agencies rather than their proposed privatisation;
- adoption of one-digit interest rate;
- marginalization of the international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Nigeria’s economic policies;
- the establishment of NEIC at state and council levels to effectively monitor expenditure; and
- sanitation by the Federal Government, of State and Council agencies.

Commercialisation as envisaged by Prof. Aluko has the merit of making public agencies profitable and efficient while avoiding the hiccups associated with privatisation especially the grave danger of hurting the poor further and the wholesale take-over of otherwise Nigerian enterprises by foreign financial interests. “Privatisation” writes Aluko, “is unpatriotic. It is just calling foreigners to come and take over the corporations for chicken fee. Let us commercialise, motivate the people, punish and discipline them. After all, are those who run the private sector not Nigerian?”

Experience elsewhere confirms our foreboding and Prof. Aluko’s charge that privatisation in unpatriotic. For as Carole Collins notes:
Privatisation too often has been little more than a means of ducking social responsibilities and protecting private wealth (as in the push by White businessmen to privatise public sector entities in South Africa and Namibia prior to elections). In countries like Zaire, it has become one means of rewarding thieves (the ‘dinosaurs’ or ‘les gros legumes’ of the regime) who have bankrupted the public sector to begin with.17

In Nigeria today, privatisation will be pretty much an issue of sharing the loot of conquest between Nigeria’s military elite, their civilian collaborators and foreign investors. Ironically, the only Nigerians who can profit from this economic bazaar are principally those responsible for looting the nation’s treasury.

**Divestment:**

The *Report* recommends “Divestment from crude oil joint ventures from 1997 onwards in an amount roughly corresponding to the expected cash call requirements to minimise demands on gross fiscal revenues and for ‘burden sharing’ with the creditors for the resolution of the external debt problem”. (p. xxvii & p. 136) In fact, the Report provides a schedule for a gradual divestment from these joint ventures:- “The equity sales would need to be front loaded, at the rate of 10 percent annually in 1997-99, 5 percent in 2000 and 2.5 percent in 2001-02, to contribute to the external financing requirement”. (P.136)

This is rather a curious piece of advice and quite surprising because of its far-reaching implications. It appears pretty much like cutting off the head in order to cure a headache. The joint ventures constitute the backbone of Nigeria’s economic life. The debt burden is a suffocating affliction of which Nigeria would be most happy to be rid of. But then, at what price?

In simple language, the *Report* is asking Nigeria to trade her debts for her shares in the joint ventures through which she earns about 80% of her national income. Of course, this would bring her
some temporal relief only to plunge her into perpetual poverty. At face value, the Report seems to be sympathising with Nigeria over her huge debt burden and the cash call requirements of her joint ventures. To help, the Report wants the cash call requirements transferred to Nigeria’s creditors in return for equivalent debt relief. Let us examine the facts briefly.

“Cash calls” are Nigeria’s contributions to the operations of the joint venture companies which are engaged in crude oil production. Last year, a total of $2.05bn was earmarked in the budget to meet these demands. The same year Nigeria earned oil revenues of $10.981bn. Who does not see that it is good business to invest $2.05bn to earn over $10bn? When Nigeria divests to gain some debt relief, she will simultaneously lose proportionate revenue annually. For instance, if, as advised, Nigeria divests by 10% this year, she will get a debt reduction of about $200m (which is about 10% of $2.05bn) but she will also be losing annually revenue equivalent to $1bn (which is 10% of $10bn).

There are positive indications that the government is not about divesting from these ventures which would be tantamount to shooting ourselves on the foot. Even while complaining loudly about heavy losses in these ventures because of lack of transparency in the operations of the joint venture partners, the Finance minister, Chief Anthony Ani, is rather proposing a new arrangement namely, production sharing agreements. According to The Guardian’s report: “Ani said in Abuja that most members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), including Saudi Arabia and Kuwait are currently using production sharing in preference to join venture agreements. He considered unacceptable a situation in which the nation was making huge financial contributions in cash calls without a commensurate say in how these were invested.”

Even while the difference between the joint ventures and production sharing agreements eludes ordinary folks like us in their minute details, we are comforted to know that production sharing
agreements will help to preserve the perimeter fence of our national autonomy from further assaults.

Liberalisation:
The Report is critical of import restrictions and the high tariff structure of the Nigerian economy for restricting competition. “Protection”, it says, “whether through customs duties on imports or exports or through import and export prohibitions, not only fosters an inefficient and uncompetitive structure of domestic production, but also discourages exports”. (p. 40) It then goes on to recommend a solution: “In order to remove the anti-export bias, the government needs to lower tariffs and lift bans. In go (sic) further, the government should seriously consider the option of completely eliminating customs duties on imports. The Philippines and El Salvador, even without oil revenues, have already scheduled the elimination of their import tariffs by the year 2000”. (p. 41) The Report also regrets Nigeria’s tagging of her tariff level at 150% which is much higher than actual tariff level during 1995 Uruguay trade negotiations of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

The point to note here is that liberalisation is a double-edged sword: it can ignite growth in an economy through competition and foreign investment, but it can also destroy an economy using the same weapons. Weak, underdeveloped economies like Nigeria’s are particularly vulnerable to the latter possibility, which makes various protectionist measures categorically imperative for weaker economies like Nigeria competing with stronger economies of the industrialised world. It was sensible management that Nigeria refrained from anchoring her tariff level to external anchors or monitors at the WTO negotiations to enable her retain the weapon with which to protect her citizens when free trade begins to hurt and destroy them. On this issue, Bakary Kamara, Managing Director of African Reinsurance Corporation (Africa Re) provides some exhilarating insights:
It may be necessary at this juncture to clarify a point of view or an ideological attitude: the acceptance of the principle of trade liberalisation and opening of our borders should not be synonymous with giving up of the protection of our national interests.

State subsidy of coal mining in Germany, the zealous readiness of American congressmen to defend the sovereignty of the United States against certain provisions of GATT, and the strong response of the French Agricultural lobby during Uruguay Round of trade talks all demonstrate that, if necessary, even the advocates of this ideology do not hesitate to contradict their adopted principle when it conflicts with their own interests.

It is even an imperative of sensible economic management for weak economies like Nigeria with limited foreign exchange earnings, for example, to prioritise by allocating the available foreign exchange to key sectors of the economy rather than allow the reign of unrestrained competition. The manifest welfare of the people must remain the final appeal and not some doctrinaire principles of arm-chair ideologues.

Here again, Nigeria must not wait to have her fingers burnt first. She must learn from the experience of other nations. In a recent publication, South, the global business magazine, reported on the experience of liberalisation of the insurance industry in parts of Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe. The report summarises the tragic outcome thus:

Not only were the local companies in those regions totally unable to compete with the vast resources of the foreign multinationals, but the cutting-rate among the local companies themselves as a result of the scrapping of the official tariff structures forced many of them into liquidation. In Chile, the retention of reinsurance premium was reduced by nearly half within two years after the
market has been opened up to foreign reinsurers and the legal cession had been abolished. In Africa, countries such as Zambia; Ethiopia, Mauritania, Benin, the Seychelles, Rwanda, Gabon and Burundi have thrown open their insurance markets to foreign insurers, often with disastrous results for the local industry. ²⁰

In contrast to the unrestrained access of foreigners to their local markets which has brought local companies in these countries to ruins, China adopts a more deliberate, graduated and circumspect approach which should be instructive to Nigeria and to other Third World Nations. Despite having potentially the world’s biggest insurance market, the Chinese have refused to allow unrestrained market entry to foreign firms. Since 1992 for example, only four foreign companies have been licensed to operate in the Chinese insurance industry. Explaining this restrictive policy of his home government Dean T. Chiang, a joint venture lawyer with the firm of Lee and Li in Taipei, China, states:

Despite the overwhelming interest by foreign insurers to enter the PRC insurance market, the government, through the People’s Bank of China (PBOC), has been taking a course to encourage the growth of the domestic industry first and leave foreigners entry into the market as a second priority...

When foreigners are allowed to enter the life insurance market, they are generally required to form a joint venture with local interests....
The percentage of share holding by foreign insurers is also a matter of policy, which fluctuates from time to time. Sometimes a 51% foreign share-holding allowance is permitted whereas at other times only a 49% minority share-holding is allowed. ²¹
This makes all the sense in the world. No nation can depend on foreign investors who are fair weather friends of convenience to prop up her economic life. Neither should they be allowed, under the guise of free trade, to control a nation’s economic life by running her chances of self-sustained and integral economic growth and development.

**Unification of the Exchange Rate Regime:**

The *Report* also advocates the unification of Nigeria’s dual exchange rate regime “for proper valuation and credibility”. This obviously refers to Nigeria’s exchange rates of N22 to the dollar for government transactions and N80 to the dollar for private transactions as determined by so-called market forces. Such unification is obviously desirable but the question remains, Unification at what level? The *Report*, in consonance with its other policy prescriptions, wants the unification at the market-determined level of N80 to the dollar. Theoretically, this is correct and certainly valid but what will be the practical consequences of such a move? Can Nigerians bear the tidal wave of hardships that it is certain to unleash? Can we contain the spiral of further inflation, which will accompany such a move?

Nigeria’s 1997 federal budget retains the dual exchange rate regime. Defending the dual exchange rates, Prof. Aluko says that it created stability. Which is certainly true. Uniting the rates at the market levels of N80 is capable of taking the bottom off the nation’s fragile political stability and consequently leading to a major humanitarian disaster of far greater magnitude than Rwanda and Bosnia put together.

In contrast to unification of the market rate of N80, we support unification at the government rate of N22 as suggested by Prof. Sam Aluko. This will have the effect of saving the naira from further battering at the foreign exchange market and restore some purchasing power to the vast majority of Nigerians who have been undergoing progressive pauperisation through currency devaluation. And what do we have to show for it? Poverty,
destitution and misery! Which confirms Lord Keynes’ warning about currency devaluation.

Lenin is said to have declared that the best way to destroy the Capitalist system was to debauch the currency. By a continuing process of inflation, governments can confiscate, secretly and unobserved an important part of the wealth of their citizens. By this method, they not only confiscate, but confiscate *arbitrarily* ... Lenin was certainly right. There is no subtler, no surer means of overcoming the existing basis of society than to debauch the currency. The process engages all the hidden forces of economic law on the side of destruction, and does it in a manner which not one man in a million is able to diagnose.\(^{22}\)

Nigerians can tell in its painful details what it means to be the victim of this fearsome mobilisation of economic forces. They need no more of the experience. They have suffered and learnt enough!

For Nigeria to accept exchange rate deregulation - that is, a market regulated naira - would be to expose her national currency to further debauchery and her citizens to increased misery. In the past ten years that is since 1986 Nigeria has meekly tried to abide by this death-dealing prescription with rather disastrous consequences. Honestly, one cannot point out any benefit, however minimal, which has accrued to Nigeria through the devaluation of her currency. Rather, while her creditors have been gloating, Nigerians have been groaning. Even the much-vaunted increase in export earnings has not materialised in any real terms because whatever increases there might have been, have already been wiped out by the wave of spiral inflation which has followed in the wake of devaluation. No nation, even the creditors who prescribe devaluation, can afford to allow a free fall of her national currency in the manner Nigeria has been made to do since 1986.
**Removal of Subsidies:**

Part of the battle-cry of the *Report* is the call for removal of subsidies on fuel and fertiliser and their appropriate pricing. The recently announced budget of the federal government seems to have silently removed whatever subsidies which existed for fertiliser and so forecloses any further debate on the issue. The same cannot be said of fuel subsidies.

The point of the *Report* is that Nigerians should pay “international prices” for fuel and other services hence the call for appropriate pricing. Here again, the Report is quite correct on logic but fails because it ignores the social context. For the record, in the past decade, fuel prices in Nigeria have been increased by over 1500% from 70k per litre to the present pump price of N11 per litre. Nigerian workers are among the least paid in the world even when compared with sister African States as shown in the Box 6.3 on p. 107 of the *Report*. In fact, the Nigerian worker is already distressed and cannot absorb further stress: no public sector worker here can survive on his/her wages! Many a time these meagre wages are not even forthcoming at the end of the month. One cannot therefore reasonably call for any upward adjustments in fuel prices without a prior review of wages in the public sector without sparking off a vortex of distress-induced rioting and looting.

Nevertheless, it is all part of the recovery package of the IMF and World Bank, which does not discriminate between patients. In the words of Bakary Kamara:

Liberalisation and privatisation programmes normally go hand in hand with deregulation. Thus, the international institutions that support these programmes make “appropriate pricing” their battle-axe, by proposing that market forces replace the fixed tariff system that was inherited from the era of state monopoly.

However, although this argument is correct in principle, it is dangerous in practice. Therefore, it should be approached with care and pragmatism. Experience in Ethiopia and Zambia has
shown that such an approach can badly affect entire markets. A tariff war begins, only to end most often in the liquidation, or at least the financial distress, of the local companies. Most often in fact, liberalisation, when accompanied with deregulation, is profitable only for the large foreign groups which, armed with a solid financial base, choose to conquer the local market by implementing a policy of dumping, which make it very difficult for national companies to stay in business.\(^\text{23}\)

Kamara’s remarks are not just true of the insurance industry; they are also true of other industries and businesses as well. Such is the challenge and danger of free trade and liberalisation: it can make or mar. Nigeria has better listen to the warnings of Kamara.

**Conclusion**

The crisis of the Nigerian economy is not a crisis of ownership of the means of production and so cannot be resolved simply through a transfer of ownership from the public to the private sector through privatisation, divestment, liberalisation, exchange rates deregulation and “appropriate pricing” of services as recommended in the World Bank Report. Nigeria’s economy did not come to grief as a result of excessive government regulatory role in macro-economic management. Rather, the economy came to grief because of the failure to diversify into non-oil sectors like agriculture, mining and industrial production, which greatly limited its ability to absorb price-change shocks affecting the oil sector. For this reason, therefore, when oil prices collapsed in 1985, the nation’s wages also collapsed and, in consequence, the economy went into contraction or depression. Demands fell as incomes collapsed and investments dried up. This awful situation was further exacerbated by the IMF/World Bank policy of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) which forced upon Nigeria over 8000% devaluation of the national currency and a virtual stagnation of public sector wages at distress levels since 1992. This led to further
economic contraction as more and more investors have been forced to close shop because of the near zero level of demands.

The answer to this situation cannot be found in trading Nigeria’s assets at a planetary bazaar (privatisation and divestment) and throwing Nigeria’s borders open as a ready dumping ground for whatever industrial contraption there is (liberalisation). Rather, the answer must be sought in re-establishing an internal link between investment and demand. This can only be achieved through the deliberate undertaking of a massive human capital enhancement programme, which will return to the people their stolen purchasing power. Here, one must commend the vision behind the Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP) announced in the nation’s 1997 budget. Government must however go further to address the urgent issues of low public sector wages and deliberate creation of jobs to arrest the wave of unemployment and rise in violent crimes.

As the economy begins to recover, the nation should be working towards the creation of regional economic linkages (like ECOWAS becoming a common market) and even continental economic integration (an African Common Market). It is only as a united force that Nigeria and her African sister nations can hope to compete in the global market. Any integration into the global market now can only spell present doom and future disaster. This is because the global market place is a Darwinian world where only the fittest survive. Should the World Bank and IMF insist on integrating weak economies like ours into the global economy without appropriate protectionist measures, it would be underwriting the worst form of human misery and humiliation namely, the re-colonisation of a continent. For as Prof. I. Potekhim wrote, “The economic essence of colonialism, whatever form it takes, consists in exporting a part of a colony’s national income to the metropolitan country without imports of an equivalent value.”

This linkage with colonialism must be stressed. In the colonial era, foreign companies under the supervision of colonial administrators were allowed to exploit the resources of the colonies
for shipment to their metropolitan industries and for the overall economic benefits of the colonising powers. Brute force was used in suppressing any movement in the colonies, which threatened this exploitative relationship. The impact of this relationship on the colonies and on the metropolitan nations that colonised them has been richly documented by scholars. See for example, Walter Rodney’s *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Today, it appears that the erstwhile colonial powers and their industrial sister nations under the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) or the “Paris Club” use the international debts and the regulating institutions of the World Bank and the IMF to re-enact the old colonial order of blatant exploitation. This they achieve by *forcing* poor nations to sell their economic patrimony to so-called investors (usually companies owned by their own nationals) for supposed reasons of efficiency and profitability - all in the name of free trade and competition. The poor are, as a rule, being crushed under the weight of these harmful economic policies.

The Church, on her part, has never wavered in her commitment to defend the poor and to preserve human dignity. She has always spoken out against all policies and measures which compromise the rights and dignity of men and women created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:27). In 1994, as the harsh economic policies of government were taking their toll on the people, especially the poor, the Catholic Bishop Conference of Nigeria read the riot act patriotically.

It is the responsibility of government to organise the public affairs in such a way that citizens can live with a minimum of human dignity. This responsibility also includes catering for the welfare of the family as the nucleus of the nation. Government policies must be concerned, not just with the general indices of economic performance, but also above all, with the impact of such policies on people, and especially on the family. Recent and prevailing economic
policies of government, especially those connected with the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), have shown a tragic insensitivity and almost criminal lack of concern for the people and their families. It is the responsibility of government to defend the people against pressures from oppressive and unjust foreign interests, be these international monetary agencies, or presumed foreign creditors. These foreign interests should be reminded that the nation cannot survive if the people are destroyed and families dissolved.25

If, as recommended in the World Bank Report, international investors, armed with superior managerial skills and vast financial resources, are allowed to penetrate, invest and repatriate all their profits from Nigeria (with appropriate international legal guarantees ( pp.119 & xxvi) the hapless majority of Nigerians would have been crushed under the boot of free trade and competition. An immense weight of misery would follow such a development. And, for aiding and abetting such a disaster, both the IMF and the World Bank have a very important question to answer before God and humanity: “What are you doing to your sisters and brothers?” For as the editors of South wrote in recent editorial,

Economies can be structurally adjusted. Growth can be stimulated, investment promoted, prices stabilised, waste and inefficiencies minimised and government expenditure controlled.
But economic problems cannot be solved without taking into account the effects of policies on ordinary people. The pain of adjustment must be minimised; otherwise reforms will be seen as punitive as opposed to rehabilitative. Economic management, in other words, needs an ethical, caring dimension.26


5 Heilbroner, op.cit., p. 259.

6 Ibid., p. 263.


8 Heilbroner, ibid., pp. 266-267.


12 Collins. Loc. Cit.

13 See Business Concord (Lagos, Jan 6, 1997) p. 1


22 Quoted by Heilbroner, op., cit.. p. 274.

23 Kamara, Loc. Cit.

CBCN “Save the Family and Save the Nation”, *Communiqué of the Plenary Meeting of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria* (Ikeja, February 21-25, 1994), no. 8.

Healing Memories: The church as agent of Reconciliation
In the Service of the Kingdom.

By

Elochukwu E. Uzukwu

Introduction – On Conflict Resolution:
Conflict resolution is a popular agenda in the world of today. This is expected in a violent and strife-riddled world. It has become more so today in spite of the belief that the collapse of the Soviet block might return us to the pristine dreaming innocence or the Garden of Eden prophesied by Isaiah as the wolf dwelling with the lamb (Isa. 11:6f). But tension has become so rife that colleges have been set up to study conflict resolution as a science on its own right. Duquesne University to which SIST is affiliated for a Masters Degree in Theology has created a department of conflict resolution. The concern for settling conflicts has become more preoccupying today than ever before. The role Nigeria has been playing in the West African sub-region is defended as a way of maintaining peace in a region of conflict. The United Nations Organisation which reserves a special place for resolution of conflicts supports Nigeria in this project, despite the pariah status of the present military junta.

The Church, in her own little way, has also been involved in this delicate issue of conflict resolution. But the Church tries to inculcate the religious principle of reconciliation as her special evangelical stamp on world politics. The successful national conference in Benin Republic in 1990 and the not so successful attempts in the two Congos benefited from the mediation of ecclesiastics. These ecclesiastics went into politics not because they have much experience in it but because they believed that the Church has this ministry of reconciling communities and peoples. This is the way the Church on earth, as sacrament of unity, in the world but not of the world, may be at the service of the Kingdom.
In South Africa, the chairman of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is another ecclesiastic, the intrepid Desmond Tutu.

Central Africa and Eastern Europe have in recent times shown how barbaric conflicts may become. The barbarism experienced at this end of the 20th century constitutes a real threat to the definition of the human person. For a missionary institute conflict resolution becomes a priority of mission. In the SIST research congress, organised by the Brottier centre for mission research documentation and animation, and held between November 11-17 1996, the ministry of reconciliation was one of the top priorities of mission.

In this paper I try to come to terms with the ethnic cleavages which are problematic for reconciliation as proposed by the SIST congress. The world torn by strife may be on the way to reconciliation when the memory of what causes the division is replaced by or counterbalanced with more peace-generating pattern of remembrance. The example for this exercise will be drawn from the well-known Rwandan crisis, and complemented from the crisis of relationship in Nigeria.

**The Rwandan Holocaust and the focus of the SIST congress:**

Rwanda may be far away but it is indeed very near to us. The Rwandan holocaust influenced in a striking way the determination of the subject matter of the SIST mission congress. Rwanda is a clear case of the abandonment of Africa by Africans or rather the impotence of Africa before self-defining problems. It is a case of the traumatic consequences of ethnicism, racism and tribalism that Africa may no longer cover up. The Ethiopian Episcopal conference told the recently concluded SECAM meeting in South Africa [September 1997] that tribalism is the greatest problem facing Africa; and that the church does well to address herself seriously to this evil. This problem becomes compounded with the decree of the present Rwandan government to outlaw all ethnic appurtenances. Bahutu, BaTutsi, BaTwa, no longer exist but all are simply Rwandans. When the hardening of the racial/ethnic divide produces genocide, the bland denial of this ethnic reality by a
minority ethnic group in power may simply lead to internalised repression.

Rwanda is also the case of the abandonment of Africa by the international community – a community dominated by the West. The West leads the world community to commit itself principally to places where western interest is clearly at stake. Rwanda is the obscene dramatisation by the world community that some are worthy while others are unworthy human beings.

As we saw during the SIST congress, the Rwandan tragedy is the African tragedy writ large. It calls for interrogation on the part of all Christians and all Africans. In Rwanda humanity is questioned to the core, the future of humanity is certainly in doubt. For if humans reproduce such barbarism as recorded in Rwanda, thereby imitating wild animals, they have failed to imitate God, and consequently they have lost the image of God that they are supposed to be. As the conflict engulfs the whole of the central African region, it becomes more urgent to keep on harping on the need to redress the tragedy. The resolution of this conflict might carry the seed for the emergence of the new humanity.

During the SIST congress, two speakers – Antoinette Balihe and John Skinnader – intervened on the Rwandan tragedy. They showed us the dramatic culture of violence that the Rwandans/Burundians are passing through. The violence has cultural-historical roots. There are centuries of internalised oppression, which like a time bomb seeks avenues of explosion. The hardening of the racial/ethnic divide during the missionary-colonial era resulted in assigning rulership to Tutsi and client-ship to Hutu who serve the Tutsi. The memory that the Bahutu, BaTutsi, BaTwa carry and manifest is negative. There is need for deep conversion and reconciliation, a need for a re-education of memory. There is also a need for a different type of Church in the present circumstances. We need a church that bears witness to a different kind of world. The 1994 Synod for Africa calls this Church – the family of God.

The intervention of Balihe and Skinnader during the SIST congress helped the discussion groups to identify "reconciliation
and the healing of memories” as an urgent priority of mission. The Congress proposed: “That we become agents of reconciliation, identifying those in need of it, promoting it in a fundamental and continuous way; that the sacrament of reconciliation be developed as a process of healing of memories, with a strong social dimension.”

**Halting Attempts at Reconciliation:**

Since our mission congress the situation has even got worse. The Church leaders in the sister countries, Burundi and Rwanda, are challenged to make an effort to bear witness in the very difficult context of the endless spiral of violence and unabated genocide. Their role is unenviable because the missionary-anthropologists propagated the ethnic farce that hardened into the class system of the oppressed and oppressor, which in turn yielded the harvest of conflict and genocide. The Rwandan Episcopal conference, which does not claim innocence of the many acts of inhumanity within Rwanda, reported this trying situation of inhumanity to the SECAM meeting in Johannesburg, (South Africa September 1997). According to the bishops, the genocide triggered an unprecedented increase in the number of widows, orphans, and street children. It generated uncontrollable congestion in prisons, created incredible poverty, and revealed a thirst for vengeance and settling of scores unequalled in the history of Rwanda.

The Church as a mediator of reconciliation has an enormous task facing her. The task becomes more difficult when the church is part of the problem. Healing of memories based on developing new stories in order to make the Church a clear agent of reconciliation may have to begin with the church herself.

Recently, the Church leadership in Burundi tried its hand at generating the climate that might lead to peace among the warring ethnic groups. The bishops called upon all Burundian politicians to embrace political dialogue and negotiation, as the way to reconciliation and healing of memories. Making the call as a church, which has the mission to announce the good news and to educate human conscience and promote human dignity, the
bishops stressed that "political dialogue or sincere negotiation ... is the unavoidable way towards peace and reconciliation". No one should be afraid of dialogue or negotiation, say the bishops. For, it is the opportunity to mutually listen to one another and appreciate one another in order to resolve in a peaceful and durable manner, and for the greater interest of the nation, the problems that generate conflicts.\(^3\)

Unfortunately, the UPRONA [i.e. the government party] rejected this initiative by the bishops as it rejected all efforts by President Nyerere to negotiate in the conflict. In a hostile letter, UPRONA queried how one might talk about negotiation with the 'genocidaires' [the perpetrators of the genocide]. Does one negotiate with genocide, which is a crime against humanity? Are the bishops not becoming accomplices? Instead of condemning and naming the genocide, they ignore this crime and turn around to call for dialogue and reconciliation. Genocide is a crime against humanity. The perpetrators of the genocide are to be tried; one does not dialogue with them. To water down genocide or to convert it into simple ethnic cleavages is to commit double genocide, says UPRONA. One sees the drama of the unhappy memory bedevilling life in the central African region.

Though UPRONA's position may be defensible yet it fails to take fully into account the whole dramatic history of Rwanda. It is correct to stress that the Church must condemn genocide, so also must it condemn the superior advantage assumed and given to the Tutsi before and since the colonial experience. Both the missionary and the coloniser share the guilt of hardening the Hutu-Tutsi racial/ethnic problem [a socio-economic reality] into an ideology of domination. UPRONA needs to be told with the realism of Saint Augustine that perfect peace is reserved to the redeemed in heaven and is unattainable on earth insofar as we live in a state of corruption. Working for peace and reconciliation may have to start from somewhere or else it may never be achieved. The pride, the ambitions, and the hatreds of people may have to be taken along with peacemaking. As Nixon said in 1983,
“Confusing real peace with perfect peace is a dangerous but common fallacy. Perfect peace is achieved in two places only, in the grave and at the typewriter... perfect peace has no historical antecedents and therefore no practical meaning in a world in which conflict among men is persistent and pervasive. If real peace is to exist, it must exist along with men’s ambitions, their pride, and their hatreds.”

The response of UPRONA raises for Rwanda and the rest of African states the whole issue of the arrogance of a dominant minority/majority and the dangerous threat to peace posed by internalised oppression. There is a need for healing memories so that citizens may become artisans of a new humanity.

**On healing memories.**

Across the board, all over Africa, repression has been the experience of men and women, and especially of the minority ethnic groups. The repression and injustice we live in Nigeria, for example, are oftentimes blamed on ethnic/cultural and religious differences. These differences are bound to be there in a country with more than 250 ethnic nationalities. The tension that is experienced is the normal tension that results from the encounter of groups with different histories and different narratives. In the enterprise of nation building, the differences may be successfully harmonised through formal and informal acculturation. But in recent times, as Steve Nkom rightly pointed out during the SIST congress, these differences become increasingly politicised. The result is that "Individuals and groups, depending on their access to economic and political power, started using the machinery of the state to alter existing power arrangements at the local and regional levels, and to increase their leverage not only to control but also to deal with those who seemed to stand on their way." Religious and ethnic appurtenances become the ladders to achieving political objective. The Hausa-Fulani [Moslems] dominates the North of Nigeria and the rest of the country. They become sacred cows. The
ruling class of this dominant group in effect turns into a self-serving oligarchy. Fairness, truthfulness, honesty in governance becomes the exception instead of the rule. The repressed or dominated groups are predictably bitter. Mis-governance and the absence of democratic rule add to the discontent caused by the unmerited privilege of one ethnic group. The situation may be tolerated only for a limited period. Discontent and repressed anger become apparent in certain manifestations of religious or ethnic bigotry. Socio-political uprisings easily turn into religious uprising because religion is perceived as a means of socio-political mobility. There is a recurrent harvest of violence leading to loss of lives and property. Some, like Ibrahim Musa Ahmadu, wonder whether vengeance or reprisal may not be a more adequate political-theological option than simply turning the other cheek. The title of one of his characteristic papers is “Vengeance: The Legitimacy of Reprisal in the Struggle for Justice in Nigeria”.

This is neither a purely Nigerian nor a Rwandan problem. All over Africa ethnic and religious problems dominate the societies. These strangulate the economy and progressively turn Africa into a continent of misery. Politicians/Rulers who are unsure of their constituency play one ethnic group against another [Ewe against the Akan in Rawling’s Ghana, Yoruba against Igbo in Nigeria]. Zangon-Kataf, Ogoni, Warri, Modakeke, Biafra -- each of these crises in Nigeria is deeply rooted in ethnic bigotry. This is avoidable if there is a rule of law, and a respect of the humanity of the other. Insofar as it continues people are hurt; people are killed. Groups hurt deeply at the injustice. Both the oppressor and the oppressed groups need to go through the healing of memories to experience true reconciliation. This process is a journeying together towards the self-realisation of each and all; it is a process towards a new self-definition. The journey together becomes the beginning of a new story, the creation of a new myth. While holding on to one’s cultural matrix, one courageously defines oneself with and because of others. Memories are healed; reconciliation is effected. But reconciliation has to be in
truthfulness – one may benefit from the activities of the truth and reconciliation commission in South Africa.

_Africa must face the Ethnic Question in a World of Conflicting Civilisations_

It is important to underline the need to face the truth of the inter-ethnic relations in Africa and elsewhere in the world. The prejudices of one group against another are learned; the emotions we feel are also learned. The harvest we reap from these learned prejudices and emotions is disaster. One needs to unlearn these emotions and prejudices. One needs a different kind of script, a different kind of narrative or story with characters of a certain type in it, if our own sense of life and value is to be called forth in the way most appropriate and most generative of humane living.⁸

It is vital at this end of the 20th century that Africa confronts in boldness and truthfulness the uncomfortable question of ethnicity. The evidence from the Central, Western and Southern African regions shows that the ethnic question may remain with us for the foreseeable future. And while ethnic nationalities war against one another in Africa, the world community is regrouping rapidly around clusters of interrelated cultures or civilisations. Only those issues that touch a culture-area, especially the West, may provoke sufficient interest for adequate intervention. Samuel P. Huntington warns that the most pervasive and important world conflicts in the post-cold-war era will not be ideological; they will rather be conflicts between peoples belonging to different cultural entities or civilisations. Civilisations regroup cultures that are interrelated or have major common traits; they are the new emerging tribes. Huntington interprets the common action that may be adopted by one cultural grouping or civilisation against another as arising from defence of one’s kith and kin, or the defence of major economic or political interest. He lists 6 world civilisations as Western, Sinic, Hindu, Islamic, Latin American, and African. It is easy for Western powers to rally round the United States in its bid to punish Iraq, but they may not take that kind of action against Israel. It will be easy to mobilise UN and NATO forces for the Balkans because,
in that region, Western or Orthodox Christian interest clashes with Islamic interest. But it will not be so easy to mobilise such a force to stop the massacres in the central African region because the kith and kin of Westerners have been withdrawn and are saved from this intra-civilizational conflict. And also because the region is economically and militarily impoverished.\(^9\)

Africa, despite the multiplicity of cultures and ethnic nationalities, is a cultural entity. We must learn to harness the potentiality of each cultural or ethnic group, and emphasise the unifying factors while not minimising the specificity of each group. The alternative is the risk of being consigned more and more to the remotest suburbs of the emerging world. Unless Africa faces this issue in all honesty and addresses the fears of each group in order to maximise what unites us we may continue to be the underdogs in a world that may simply ignore us or intervene among us for its own interests. The Church’s witness to a Kingdom of peace and reconciliation must include provoking dialogue between African cultures.

**Conversion/Concern for the other as the Route to Reconciliation.**

Our prejudices are a stumbling block. They are hidden behind centuries of socialisation. They are hidden in stories and myths that define us in relationship to the other. The myth of the origin of the Hutu, Tutsi and Twa validates a reality of socio-economic inequality. When it comes from the dominant group, and becomes the basis for the ongoing relationship between the groups, it provokes arrogance in the one and subservience and inadequacy in the other. Anger and fear are predictable emotions. A powerful life-renewing story arising from the experience of the groups, which respects their dignity is vital for the experience of conversion. Both the one who expresses arrogance and reaps advantage from the social inequality and the other who represses anger and internalises oppression need the conversion. While it is easier to call the arrogant to conversion, it is more difficult to understand how the oppressed need conversion. But we shall see
that the type of conversion I am talking about may be needed by the oppressed as much as by the oppressor.

From the abundant literature of the Afro-American slaves we learn the importance of conversion for the oppressed and most marginalised. We learn to see the great events of life from the underside of history. We learn, as Bonhoeffer says, that personal suffering is a more effective key, a more rewarding principle for exploring the world in thought and action than personal good fortune. In other words, from the suffering of the one in the garbage heap, from the questions posed from the garbage heap, a new humanity may emerge. Rwanda, Ogoni, Biafra, and so on may not remain only sad or negative narratives. They may become the way of redemption for the Central and West African regions. The discovery of this is conversion, the only way to reconciliation.

I find paradigms of creative courage in the slave literature of the African American life experience. This may appear unusual. But it is striking that on the altar of slavery, the Spirituals were able to challenge the cross-bearers [the slaves] to make a fundamental option for Jesus, to reclaim their humanity, and to stand by any other sufferer in order to entrench freedom and responsibility in the slave community. One of the striking lyrics drawn from the experience of converts is the famous, *Were you there when they crucified my Lord?*

As Lovell comments on the possible guilt by omission or commission,

> If you were there, what were you doing? How in the world could you have let it happen? Were you there when the blood came twinkling down? Surely, you could not have stood there watching and done nothing. To think of your neglect, ‘O ooooo oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, were you there when they crucified my Lord?*

The warning is that the converted may never be allowed to be indifferent when the other is suffering. J.B. Metz was somewhere making a commentary on the sayings of Jesus on the mountain in
Matthew chapter 5. He was struggling with the passage where the evangelist writes,

“You have heard that it was said, ‘an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; and if anyone wants to sue and take your coat, give your cloak as well;” (Mt. 5:38-40).

Metz makes the interesting remark that while we may not resist when we are struck on the right cheek, we do not have the liberty of doing nothing when we see another being struck. In other words, we may endure evil, and that is the command, but we may not allow evil to befall another and do nothing. This is what the lyricist in the Spirituals tries to say by singing, *Were you there when they crucified my Lord?*

Lovell makes this interesting commentary on the lyric:

> Every great wrong ...is committed under the eyes of frightful or uncaring people. For the wrongs of humankind the finger points at us all. We are all guilty. We are not so much because of what we do as what we allow to happen.\(^{11}\)

This shows that the move towards conversion is the step towards being saturated with humanity. Thus being saturated one has the courage to dare to change the world, to reinvent humanity, to be at the service of the Kingdom.

To be able to claim that we are part of this mission we must be converted. As the Black American slave literature calls it, we must be “struck dead” by God. There is of course no better way of learning the new story that effects the conversion and listening in order to be converted than by *being there*. Only when we are there with the suffering other may we learn the story that will revolt us to the extent that we feel the urgency of a new humanity. Then we may declare through action that inhuman conditions are intolerable.
By getting involved, by having one's hands dirtied in the pit, in the trenches, by having the actual experience of oppression, exploitation, and injustice or misfortune caused by others - this is the true path of conversion. As the Filipino theologian and Benedictine nun, John Mary Mananzan says, "Unless one gets a skin-to-skin contact with these realities, there is no sense of urgency to involve oneself."

As Christians and missionaries we do not have any other road to follow except the road of conversion. This conversion is not conceived as a simple renewal, it is a fundamental change of direction, to see the world from the point of view of the one in distress. The privileged Tutsi sees the world from the underside of history, the point of view of the subservient Hutu. The frustrated Hutu in hot pursuit of the hated Tutsi sees the world from the underside of history, the fugitive Tutsi, and so on.

Lovell rightly pointed out that the great evils of the age are allowed to happen because of fear. That is why conversion is the experience of that perfect love which casts away fear. Conversion effects a true healing of memory. The great narratives of the new self of the slave who was struck dead by God or slain in the Spirit of God dramatise conversion and healing of the self enjoyed by the converted.

These narratives speak of the racist and cruel world of slavery where the slave is negatively described as non-being: dark of body and darker of soul. They describe their conversion in form of feeling one's "body suspended over a burning pit by a web like a spider web". The slave is miraculously rescued from this dangerous pit to move into a new world, where the voice of the Lord Jesus is heard, "Fear not my little one for behold! I come to you a message of truth".

The slave recuperated as embodied spirit, now belongs to Jesus and not to the slave master. The experience of conversion is the discovery that the slave is a self with dignity.

The fundamental message of truth, which led to the emergence of the new self-understanding of the slave, the true message of conversion for the slave, is, according to Earl, the revelation of the
existential and ontological notion of sin. The God of their visionary experience brought them to see that sin in the slave is the “fear of being itself”. The experience of this revelation is the peak of being slain by God. Overcoming this fear is conversion.

Slaves’ fear of being-in-general required that they, in the face of their masters, repress the original creative self with which God had endowed them. This fear demanded that slaves act according to the dehumanising specifications of slave masters’ image of the ideal slave. Slaves overcame this fear only when they had passed through what they termed being “struck dead” or “slain in the Spirit by God.” Before going through this salvific experience the slave undoubtedly would not have been able to define the root source of his or her fear. This experience gave slaves the critical means of seeing why they had been fearful of being-in-general. It, also, gave them a new root definition of sin, that is, the lack of the courage to be in the face of being itself. In the conversion sources, sin must be defined as the converted’s state of being rather than such unacceptable social conduct as drinking, dancing, and gambling. The genuine conversion experience brought slaves to an awareness of the true source and nature of their alienation from God and one another. Vertical alienation from God created horizontal alienation from one another. Fear of being-in-general deluded many into believing that they could placate their earthly masters.\(^\text{13}\)

The converted became empowered to be engaged in the missionary struggle to move beyond the frontiers of lived humanity; the courage to be part of the future of humanity. Among the slaves it is the power to live liberation through bringing this news to other slaves and fearlessly to the slave masters. In Rwanda/Burundi, in Nigeria or South Africa, it is the power to face the story of our crimes and divisions. It is also the power to draw energy from the resilient elements of our traditions, to draw
strength from the witness of those who laid down their lives in the struggle. The grains of this type of struggle for a new humanity lie within our history or our traditions, and are borne by prophetic others. In Rwanda at this end of the 20th century, as was the case in Auschwitz, the future of humanity is in question. But the new humanity started emerging even as the savage butchers were striking the unfortunates. As soon as the Rwandan holocaust started the Rwandan martyrs emerged as artisans and symbols of a new humanity.

People of the Future - the Rwandan Martyrs as the Seed of Reconciliation.

The shocking narrative of genocide, racism or ethnocentrism is not the only pattern of the display of humans in the central African region. There were some who heard the cry of anguish and torment of their neighbours and came to their rescue. These are the brave and courageous humans; the brave and courageous Hutu or Tutsi; the men and women of the future, men and women of hope. These are the unsung martyrs who gave sanctuary to hunted Tutsi friends and neighbours or fellow Christians. They paid the supreme price with their own lives. Their blood is the seed. They were simple Christians, catechists, religious women and men, seminarians who refused to be separated by the butchers into Tutsi and Hutu, members of the clergy. They are basically human beings who heard the cry of other human beings and rescued them. They knew the great risk they were running in supporting other lives. They lost their lives in that effort to save or affirm life.

They heard the cry for life and responded. They may be unsung martyrs. They may be buried in the mass graves of hate. Their voice and testimony may be drowned in the din of killers, in the confusion of refugee camps, in the hurried and popularised activities of charitable organisations. Their voice may be drowned in the tales of horror at those tribunals that sit within and outside Rwanda. But their response is the beacon of hope for a converted and transformed Rwanda, Africa and the world.
They are people of the new mission of reconciliation in Africa and the world. The brave men and women who conquered their emotions of hate, their emotions of fear of the other in order to embrace fellow humans, to embrace life, to embrace the other and give him or her security.

It is important to eulogise this few, this brave few. They constitute the seeds of a new humanity; they are the future of humanity. Their action is selfless and in favour of human life. They shed their blood to testify to this. They confirm the message of hope that the 1994 Synod for Africa addressed to the People of God.

At this time when so much fratricidal hate inspired by political interest is tearing our people apart, when the burden of the international debt and currency devaluation is crushing them, we the Bishops of Africa. ... want to say a word of hope and encouragement to you, the family of God in Africa; to you the family of God all over the world: Christ our hope is alive; we shall live! [Message of the Synod, No. 2].

These martyrs of Rwanda signed this message of hope with their own blood. They mark the beginning of a new story. Many have wondered whether in the 3rd world one may speak coherently of spirituality, of living a Christian life without going into the trenches of suffering and struggle, without tasting the violence or misery that is the day to day experience of an increasing percentage of 3rd world men and women. In Rwanda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we see the tiny light of the courage that will create the third world of tomorrow. These martyrs may be forgotten today. But their mark remains for all eternity.

As missionaries we should never allow their story to be forgotten. Their action comes from lived conviction. The choice was clear. They may be part of the tragic situation of hate, which reproduces violence. They belong to antagonistic ethnic groups. But they took
the fatal prophetic high ground of the garbage heap to challenge the inhumanity of ethnic cleavages and inter-ethnic hate. It is a clear conversion experience. It is the experience of being slain by the Spirit of God. Forced by circumstances to decide, they chose to stand by and protect the neighbour. This action gives meaning to individual lives and to the life of the community.

As a matter of fact they do not need to be Christian to decide in favour of the life of the neighbour. But being Christian became an added support to their action. Their faith developed and increased meaning in their life and in the witness of the local church. Their blood flowed into and from the cleansing blood of the lamb. They qualify to move around with the lamb singing his praises for the emergence of a new humanity under construction. A humanity that emerges only in excruciating trial because of the evil which surrounds the world of experience. They are the prophets who carry the placard of salvation. The SIST congress called them the prophetic strangers bearing testimony in the most difficult of circumstances:

Now have come the salvation and the power/ and the kingdom of our God/ and the authority of his Messiah, / for the accuser of our comrades has been thrown down, / who accuses them day and night before our God.
But they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb/ and by the word of their testimony, / for they did not cling to life even in the face of death. (Rev. 12: 10-12).

These Christians, these individual courageous men and women, driven by powerful conviction about the value of the life of the other, perform this act of heroism when the local Church in Rwanda and Burundi has lost its prophetic voice. Demonic forces of hate, mistrust, ethnic and cultural loyalty have dispersed the local Church. These martyrs have become strangers within the flow of ethnic solidarity. They firmly rejected the sundering of the bond of Christian witness to unity or oneness by a creeping ethnicism - a oneness rooted in the baptismal faith.
As many of you as were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. (Gal. 3: 27-28)

To live the imperatives of this baptismal confession one has to become a stranger within one’s ethnic persuasions, within one’s culture, within one’s civilizational bias. For the majority of the Christians in Rwanda and Burundi the baptismal water has congealed into ineffectiveness before the genocidal mania of ethnic loyalty, ethnic madness has triumphed. But these few whom we must honour as martyrs have become the basis of a new Christian story. The story of their heroism becomes the basis of the new doctrine of salvation in the Christ, a new spirituality of the triumph of love over hate in the Church of the central African region. They bear witness to the emergence of a new humanity.

As missionaries we are obliged to begin anew our contact with this new emerging world surrounded by despair and violence by telling the story of our brave martyrs of Rwanda. This story of the triumph of love over hate, when narrated in the Christian context solidifies the power of the love of Christ in a given community. We discover in the midst of this incredible ordeal a narrative that supports and clarifies the fundamental Christian story and confession; Jesus died for us to set us free and to change the world. Their blood pouring from a source deeply entrenched in the cultural matrix testifies to the resilient aspects of these cultures, but then mingles with the redeeming blood of Christ for the expiation of the collective crime of their brothers and sisters. Their story becomes a new metaphor for the retrieval of forgotten bravery and hospitality for which traditional Africa is known. In Nigeria, for example, it becomes the basis for the retrieval of stories of the generosity of Northern Nigerian local chairmen, local chiefs, who collected house rents of fellow citizens who fled the 1966 pogrom, banked them, and handed them to the owners after the civil war.
In so far as their faith in Christ strengthened them to hide the threatened Hutu or Tutsi unfortunates, their neighbours, so much are they bearing witness to Christ to give birth to the new community in Africa and the world. They are witnesses, living in a world of hate, but strangers to the evil that has clobbered the local Church and society.

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them./

They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; for the lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." (Rev. 7: 13-17).

Widening the Field of Reconciliation and Healing of Memories
- the Detmold Confession.

Rwanda is certainly bad news. But Rwandans inside and outside their country try to do something about rescuing their future from the demon of hate and genocide. Those in power, the soldiers, may be intolerant of dialogue. But ordinary Rwandans want dialogue. In a recent conversation with Marthe Antoinette Balihe, I was made to understand that Tutsi give protection to the returning Hutu refugees. Things break down when the military are on the scene. The military do not appear to welcome dialogue and reconciliation. Those who protect their neighbours continue to lose their lives and are counted among the martyrs. Other efforts are being made to salvage humane living in the central African region.
In a recent and dramatic confession of guilt by Rwandans at Detmold in Germany, Hutus and Tutsis admitted guilt for the genocide committed in Rwanda and for the repression or oppression of one group by the other. European Christians also confessed their involvement in creating the situation that led to the genocide along with their inadequate response to the problems in Rwanda. But as Overdulve noted the confession appears unbalanced. While Hutu admitted with shame the guilt for the genocide against the Tutsi population, Tutsi did not quite admit their historical contribution to the problem, nor did they take fully into consideration the fact that the injustice of the present Rwandan regime is a matter to be clearly repudiated. Reconciliation will be difficult without a clear admission of guilt followed by a prayer for forgiveness, and a process of making amends for the crime committed. As the introduction of the Detmold confession asserted,

The Rwandan people will only be able to be reconciled with itself when everybody who is part of it is prepared to kneel down before the other’s suffering, to confess before the other one’s own crime and humbly to ask forgiveness from one’s victims.

This is exactly what the confession of the Hutu participants at the Detmold meeting tried to express.

“We, Hutu Christians present in Detmold, acknowledge that our people have oppressed the Tutsi in all kinds of ways since 1959. We confess the crime of the genocide, perpetrated by the Hutu group towards the Tutsi group during the various periods of the history of Rwanda and especially in 1994. We are ashamed of the atrocities and the brutalities which the Tutsi were made to suffer at the hands of the Hutu: tortures, rape, ripping open pregnant women, cutting human bodies to pieces, burying people alive, chasing people with dogs as one chases an animal,
wholesale massacres in Roman Catholic and Protestant churches which used to be recognized places of asylum, killing off old men and women, children and sick persons in the hospitals, forcing relatives to kill their next of kin, burning people alive, refusing people to be buried and a thousand other shameless acts with a view to humiliating and killing and with mockery.

"We carry on our shoulders the terrible weight of this crime which is beyond speaking, and we accept to bear the consequences of it without resentment. We beg our Hutu brothers and sisters not to forget this terrible past, when they judge the present reality of Rwanda. We ask God and our Tutsi brothers and sisters humbly for forgiveness for all the wrong we have done to them. We commit ourselves to do everything in our capacity to restore to them their honour and dignity and to find again in their eyes our lost humanity."

Those who made the confession are not within Rwanda. As Hutu they may even be hunted and persecuted by their Tutsi compatriots and opponents. But they had the courage to identify with their own ethnic group and assume the crime committed by this group. Though their confession may be limited in effectiveness, one should not minimise the impact it might have in the overall healing of memories. For their confession is part of the emerging story, which should counter the culture of violence, that has been the lot of this part of the central African region. This confession may tend towards the direction of the heroism of the men and women, Tutsi and Hutu, who took the fatal step of prophetically protecting their neighbours from the opposite ethnic group.

The confession of the Tutsi may not be as self-critical as that of the Hutu, but it is an additional opening of the flanks to dialogue and reconciliation:
"We, Tutsi Christians present in Detmold, are happy and feel relieved because of the appeal for forgiveness of our Hutu brothers. We, in our turn, ask God and our Hutu brothers likewise forgiveness for the blind oppression and revenge exercised by our people against the Hutu populations beyond any legitimate defence. ‘Inkoni ikubise mukeba uyirenza urugo’ (The fact of legitimizing wrong under the pretext that it affects an opponent, ends with the fact that it turns against the one who legitimizes). We ask God and our Hutu brothers likewise forgiveness for certain arrogant and disdainful attitudes clearly demonstrated towards them in the course of our history in the name of a ridiculous ethnic superiority complex.”

We have in these confessions the grains of the healing of memories and of reconciliation. That these confessions were made in the context of the church shows what the church may contribute as agent of reconciliation. Despite its weakness, the Church in Africa has made the bold option to search for ways of mediating reconciliation through its proposal of the ecclesiology of the Church as Family.

**African Image of Church as Agent of Reconciliation — the Church as family of God.**

The bishops gathered in the special assembly of the Synod for Africa in 1994, heads bowed but not overcome, made the daring option for an ecclesiology of Church-as-Family-of-God. This option is certainly as momentous as the option made in 1974 for a theology of incarnation as opposed to that of adaptation. It is remarkable that this bold declaration of ecclesiology of family was being pronounced at a time Africa is torn by fratricidal hate, genocide, racism, ethnocentrism and dictatorships unparalleled in the history of the continent.
"But Christ has come to restore the world to unity, a single human Family in the image of the Trinitarian family. We are the family of God: this is the Good News! The same blood flows in our veins, and it is the blood of Jesus Christ". "It is for the church-as-Family that the Father has taken the initiative in the creation of Adam. It is the Church-as-Family which Christ, the New Adam and Heir to the nations, founded by the gift of his body and blood. It is the Church-as-Family which manifests to the world the Spirit, which the Son sent from the Father so that there should be communion among all. Jesus Christ, the only-begotten and beloved Son, has come to save every people and every individual human being. He has come to meet each person in the cultural path inherited from the ancestors. He travels with each person to throw light on his traditions and customs and to reveal to him that these are a prefiguration, distant but certain, of Him, the New Adam, the Elder of a multitude of brothers which we are."\(^16\)

The attraction of this ecclesiology, which is yet to be worked out by African theologians, is the emphasis on relationship.\(^17\) The relational notion of person appears to be the contribution African civilisation makes to the world. Humans are defined as being essentially in relationship or simply as "subsistent relationship". As I argued in *A Listening Church*, Africans perceive the person in terms of "being-with", "living-with", "belonging-to".\(^18\) The Western philosophical tendency is to emphasise the absolute originality and concreteness of the human person – "being-for-itself". Western philosophy recognises the fundamental need of relationship for the realisation of person. However, the "I" is constituted before it chooses to be related. But the African tendency is to insist on relationship as essential to the constitution of the "I". It will be difficult to understand an individual without the essential linkages to divinities, family, kindred and ethnic group. The human person is in dynamic tension towards realising the self; thus the self becomes an unfinished sentence. The
successful person, an ancestor, is one who has successfully lived through this relationship.

It is interesting that the Synod Fathers anchored the basis of the proposed Family ecclesiology on Trinitarian theology. The relationship that marks the trinity, that which constitutes the internal life of the creator, is imprinted in the life of humans. Aquinas defines the Trinity in terms of subsistent relationship. African bishops tend to suggest that the social definition of person as subsistent relationship, the basis of African family linkages, when animated by the Trinity becomes the way of witnessing as Church. To be architects of a renewed humanity, the People of God live essentially in relational terms. As the Sotho (South African) proverb says it, 

\[ \text{motho ke motho ka batho ka bang} \] – one is human with and because of others. The relational ecclesiology that is developed from this cultural experience is supposed to transform relationships across the board in the church and the world. This cultural experience of African civilisation, which challenges the Western experience of modern individualism, has not been fully tapped because Africa has not the military or economic might to make its views and experiences carry clear weight in the world and the church.

Despite the weakness of Africa in the world and the church, the African synod made a clear option for this Family-of-God ecclesiology. Relational ecclesiology is Spirit-ecclesiology. In other words relational ecclesiology is realisable where the church is clearly the sphere of the operation of the Spirit of God. It is guided by fully listening to the Spirit of God and to all the members of the church. Solidarity in the Church, mutual help, the respect of the somebodyness of each and all is the result of this ecclesiology. The recent SECAM plenary assembly in South Africa, held on the same theme of Church-Family reiterates the declarations of the Synod and insists,

\[ \text{It is to be expected that in the Church as Family of God we are to love and serve one another as brothers and sisters and avoid all forms of hatred, division, discrimination,} \]
domination and pridé. Bishops, priests and Church leaders should be seen as the servants of the people of God. In such a family, we expect greater sense of solidarity, sharing and caring most especially for the poor and needy. At this assembly we also emphasize the need for sharing of resources, human and material amongst the local churches both in Africa and in the universal church. We call on the local churches of Africa to send priests and Religious, their own sons and daughters to work in other parts of the universal church”.

These declarations by SECAM and the Synod for Africa indicate the ideal of church being proposed and being constructed. The declarations are a self-judgement by the local churches in Africa. This ideal of Church as family is being proposed at a time when Christians are massacring their kind in genocide unheard of in the history of the continent. This ideal is being proposed at a time when leadership in the African State and church is bedevilled with ethnocentrism. These ideals are being proposed when African local churches watched the events in Rwanda and failed to act adequately as the prophetic other, sister churches or as mother church. But how will the local churches in Africa challenge Rwanda/Burundi for failing in the prophetic action to live beyond their ethnic limits when these local churches may be accused of similar lack of courage?

"Who are my mother and my brothers?"

Fraternity, solidarity, warmth and intimacy are the virtues of the family. Relatedness is constitutive of the definition of the human person and the human family in Africa. Consequently, the metaphor, Family, may not be claimed by any institution, especially the Church, unless the prophetic struggle to live in fraternity and solidarity beyond the ethnic group is fully embraced. “Who are my mother and my brothers?” Jesus asked, “Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother”. (Mk. 3:33-34). As Jesus challenges
the limited natural family circle in order to create the large Family of God, so may the Church in Africa challenge the limited family-kindred-ethnic circle. Consequently a prophetic Church as family will emerge; there Hutu and Tutsi, Yoruba and Igbo, Roman and Greek, slave and free, male and female, may find a warm home because they have one God for Father and one church for Mother.

The family metaphor is a powerful metaphor in a world where attachment to one's kith and kin is on the increase. The Churches in Africa may confidently dare to propose this to the world church, when enjoying their autonomy they ensure the collapse of all discrimination based on race and ethnic loyalties. They ensure warmth and koinonia within their church and carry this into the communion of churches. This is the African contribution to healing of memories and reconciling peoples.

1 Presented at the SIST 10th Anniversary Missiological Conference, December 6, 1997.
13 Earl, pp. 55, 169.
14 The meeting took place, according to Overdulve from 7 to 12 December 1996. Text of the confession is taken from Overdulve’s article cited above.
15 Overdulve, p. 258.
BOOKS RECEIVED:

Russell, William P.  

Muyembe, Bernard Munono.  

Aginah, Cyprian Igwemadu.  

Ike, Obiora.  

----------. (ed),  

Uzukwu, Elochukwu E.  

----------.  
# PREVIOUS EDITIONS

**Vol. 2 No. 1** April 1989  
**ISSN 0794-8670**  
Church And Polities In Nigeria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foreword</th>
<th>The Ecumenical Association of Nigerian Theologians (EANT) ......................................................... 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fr. E.E. Uzukwu</td>
<td>Church-State Relations in the Early Church and the Crisis facing the Christian Church in Nigeria ............... 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. C.I. Ejizu</td>
<td>Ethics of Politics in Nigeria: the Christian perspective ........................................................................ 46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Canon S.I. Omoera</td>
<td>A Theology of Nigerian Politics ........................................................................................................ 59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop J. Onaiyekan</td>
<td>State Secularity and the Nigerian Christian .......................................................................................... 75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. A.O. Erhueh</td>
<td>The Contribution of Christianity to Politics in Nigeria: A Historico-Theological overview ....................... 84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vol 2 No. 2 - Vol. 3 No. 1** Nov. '89 - Apr. '90  
**ISSN 0794-8670**  
The Power Game: 'Kaduna Mafia' And The Church In Nigeria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Editorial:</th>
<th>........................................................................................................................................ 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Bala J. Takaya</td>
<td>The Kaduna Mafia and the Church in Nigeria ............................................................................................ 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop J. Onaiyekan</td>
<td>Strategies for Islamic Expansion in Nigeria - A Christian Response: Notes and Reflections ..................... 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Bala J. Takaya</td>
<td>The foundations of Religious Intolerance in Nigeria: Backgrounds for understanding the Maitatsine phenomenon ......................................................................................... 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibrahim Musa Ahmadu</td>
<td>Peace and Stability in Nigeria. The Role of the Church ............................................................................. 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Dr. Obiora Ike</td>
<td>Church and Contemporary Nigerian Society (Social Teachings of the Church): ........................................ 46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Past and Present - Enunciation of Relevant Theological Principles

Rev. Dr. Anthony O. Erhueh
The Dignity of the Human Person in Contemporary Nigerian Society

Rev. Dr. Simon O. Anyanwu
Response to the Book: "The Kaduna Mafia" from the Viewpoint of Political Theology

Rev. Dr. Breifne Walker c.s.Sp
Bonhoeffer and Christian Social Ethics: Private Virtue or Responsible Action?

Vol. 4, 1-2, 1991
ISSN 0794-8670
Human Rights - The African Perspective

Foreword
O.C. Eze
L. Hurbon
C.I. Ejízu
I.M. Ahmadu
B. Muoneke
O.U. Kalu
M.Nkinda
E.E. Uzukwu
I.R.A. Ozigboh

Book Review

Reviewer: Peter Ik. Okonkwo, CMF

Reviewer: Francis Njoku, CMF
Reviewer: Jojo Obu-Mends, C.S.Sp..........................146

Reviewer: Breifne Walker, C.S.Sp..........................149

Reviewer: E.E. Uzukwu, C.S.Sp..........................152

**Vol. 5/1 : 1993**  
**ISSN 0794-8670**

**Structural Adjustment Programmes: An African Christian Response**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Editorial</th>
<th>The Role of Culture and Religion in Authentic Development of Africa</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J.M. Walioggo</td>
<td>Should We Develop? And In What Direction?</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. Simson</td>
<td>Development in Africa: Cultural, Ethical Religious Considerations</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obiora Ike</td>
<td>The Theology of Structural Adjustment</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Mihevc</td>
<td>Self-Reliance of Spiritan Young Provinces and Foundations in Developing Countries</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Ikeygwuonu</td>
<td>The Price of Faith: Money in the Economy of Salvation</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Book Review**

Reviewer: Editor..............................................83

Reviewer: Editor..............................................84
Democratization Process In Africa (Multietnicity And African Nation-States)

Nicoué K. Broohm Political Power, Multiethnic Territories and Democratic Renewal in Africa.................................6
B. Abanuka African Traditional Communities and Multiethnic States..............................16
J. Okoro Ijoma Nigeria’s Path to Western Democracy 1900-1960: A Historical Perspective.............30
C.U. Ilegbune The Legitimation of Government in Africa.................................................46

Reviews and Review Articles

1. For Sovereign National Conferences in Post-Colonial Africa.

Reviewer: Elochukwu E. Uzukwu ........................................... 64

Reviewer: Iwuchukwu Oliver .................................................. 71

Vol 6 No 1 : 1994

Editorial.................................................................1

Elochukwu Uzukwu A Servant Church in a New African Nation: Leadership as a Service of Listening.................................4
Cora Twohig-Moengangongo Paradigms of Power..............................................33
Meinrad P. Hebga Universality in Theology and Inculturation....................................52
Emefie I. Metuh Two Decades of Religious Conflict in Nigeria: A Recipe for Peace.....................69
Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Nigeria: Communique............................................94
The African Synod - Initial Results and Reflections

John Onaiyekan
What We Saw and Heard At the African Synod

Tharcisse Tshibangu
The Special Synod For Africa and the Tasks of African Theology

Chukwuma J. Okoye
The Synod Challenges the Church in Africa

Amuluche Gregory Nnamani
The African Synod and the Model of Church-as-Family

Paulinus I. Odozor
Thoughts on an African Christian Theology of Marriage

Vol 7 No. 1-2: 1995 ISSN 0794 - 8670
Violence and State Security

Ebuley Afful
Violence and State Security in Africa: A Sociological Analysis

Francis Duniya
The Zangon Kataf Crisis in Respect of Minority Culture in Northern Nigeria

I.W. Orakwe
The Prison and You: A Study in Diminishing Social Responsibility in Nigeria

Political Stability and the Leadership and the Inevitability of Instability

Matthew Hassan Kukah
Managing Stress Among Rural Poor in a Distressed Economy: DEC's Experience

George Ehusani
Theology at the Service of the People

Book Review
Reviewer: Elochukwu Uzukwu, c.s.sp.
### Grassroots Women Arise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.A. Akpala</th>
<th>Editorial ................................. 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human Rights Education, Customary Laws and the Position of Women in the Contemporary Nigerian Society ............................. 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.A. Olagoke</td>
<td>Rural Poverty and Women's Response to Economic Policies in Africa ........................................... 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protus Kemdirim</td>
<td>The Role of Muslim Women in Moorish Empire: Implications for Women in Islam Today ......................... 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olajubi Oyronke</td>
<td>Christ, Women and Culture: Model for the Nigerian Society .................................................. 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinedu A. Amadi-Azuogu</td>
<td>The Place of Women in the NT House Codes ........................................... 39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Inculturation - Continuity and Change in the African Church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Francis O.C. Njoku, CMF</th>
<th>Some Indigenous Models in African Theology and an Ethic of Inculturation .................................................. 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin Abotchie Ntrch</td>
<td>&quot;Dust to Dust, Earth to Earth, Ashes to Ashes&quot; - Origins of a Christian Practice ........................................... 33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**BULLETIN OF ECUMENICAL THEOLOGY 9:1-2:1997**

Christian Mission in the Third Millennium
- Globalisation and Reconciliation.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Editorial</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paulinus Ikechukwu Odozor  Globalisation and Mission in Africa in the Third Millennium.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert J. Schreiter  Identity and Communication between Locality/Contextuality and Globality/ Universality-A Semiotic Linguistic Model</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felix Wilfred  Globalisation and Cultures - The Other Voice</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obiora Ike and Emeka Ngwoke  &quot;Nigeria Prospects for Development&quot; - A Response to the World Bank</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elochukwu E. Uzukwu  Healing Memories: The Church as Agent of Reconciliation - In the Service of the Kingdom.</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books Received</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>