

BOOK REVIEW

1. Alfred T. Hennelly (editor), **Liberation Theology. A Documentary History**. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1990, xxvi + 547 pages.

When Gustavo Gutiérrez delivered his lecture, "Toward a Theology of Liberation", in July 1968, little did he suspect that in less than two decades this local theological effort will dominate the centre stage of the concerns of the Roman church, and indeed of the universal church. How could he have known that he himself, his colleagues, and their theological style will today be on trial? Gutiérrez seminal lecture is one among the fifty-nine texts assembled by Hennelly in this historical documentary of Liberation Theology. Many of these texts, like the one of Gutiérrez, may be appearing in English for the first time.

The selected texts cover the periods before Vatican Council II (1950-1962) and between Vatican II and Medellín (1962-1968). The texts expose the struggle towards a new way of doing theology (1968-1973); a way which roots theological reflection on praxis and takes seriously the social reality of the Latin American world. This pattern of theology which makes a preferential option for the poor had the uphill task of persuading the Latin American church to accept its choice. But, despite the conflicts, a measure of agreement was reached, during the meeting of the Latin American Bishops' Conference at Puebla, to preserve its fundamental inspiration (1973-1979). The claims of Liberation Theology and the conflicts over its theological method pitched theologians against bishops, theologians against theologians, and the Vatican against the pastoral life and theology of Latin America (1979-1986). But the conflicts were shown to be healthy. They led to the maturing of the official Vatican theology on liberation; and also to the maturing of liberation theology itself - action shaping thought and thought informing action. This is seen by Hennelly as a sign of hope in the church (after 1986).

In this historical documentary Hennelly brings to the reader known theologians like Gutiérrez, Segundo, Boff, and Sobrino, and courageous bishops like Oscar Romero. Impor-

tant documents from the Latin American Bishops' Conference like Medellin and Puebla, the numerous addresses of Pope John Paul II, selections from papal encyclicals, and the two key documents of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on this theology (1984 and 1986), are all available in this collection. Liberation theology has become part of the patrimony of the universal church. It bears witness to the pluralism of contexts and theologies in the one church of Christ. Hennelly provides for us the means of sharing in its treasures from its origins. (Editor).

2. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation. A Popular Version. Addis Ababa: UNECA, 1991.

The chief argument of this booklet is that Africa does indeed need a structural adjustment in its economy because the crisis in the African economy is structural. It criticises the prevailing World Bank and IMF "Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs)" which are mainly a programme of financial reforms. The aim of these bodies is to "discipline" African countries through the imposition of fiscal reforms; after which they reorient African economies to the market economy model. According to the booklet, this brand of SAPs addresses the "symptoms rather than the fundamental factors responsible for Africa's persistent socio-economic crisis" (par. 41). The burden of the "shock effects" of SAPs has been borne principally by the poor. It is an economic programme formulated and implemented "as if people do not matter" (Introduction).

The African Alternative Framework to SAPs is based on the Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa, 1980-2000. It proposes a development "measured by the well-being of the people". It hopes to achieve this objective through "increased production" and self-reliance" (par. 16). Therefore African economies require "structural transformation, diversification and increased productivity in order to better the life of African people"