

NORTH AMERICAN CONTEXTUAL THEOLOGY

- Topic: Love That Produces Hope: The Thought of Ignacio Ellacuría
 Convener: William R. O'Neill, Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley
 Moderator: Kevin F. Burke, Weston Jesuit School of Theology
 Presenters: Maria Pilar Aquino, University of San Diego
 Gustavo Gutiérrez, Bartolomé de las Casas Institute
 Roger D. Haight, Weston Jesuit School of Theology
 Robert A. Lassalle-Klein, Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley

Between 180 and 200 people attended this special session in honor of the tenth anniversary of the deaths of the University of Central America martyrs. Aquino highlighted Ellacuría's understanding of the radical demands of Christian faith in a world of sin. For Ellacuría, the true People of God fulfill the work begun by Jesus Christ. In a world imprisoned by injustice, their struggle embodies the true Church. This historicizes hope for a new humanity and a new earth, liberated from egotism and the sin of injustice. Aquino asks: But why are the People of God persecuted and killed? Ellacuría responds: Jesus' way of living both led to the cross, and showed the possibilities of a resurrected existence. For followers of Jesus Christ, giving one's life for justice in anticipation of new life is not futile. It exposes the oppressor's malice and historicizes Jesus' vision of a new earth and humanity.

Aquino seeks "to put an end to the myth created by some theological groups that Latin American liberation theology 'glorifies suffering' by not allowing the voices of martyrs to be silenced." She recommends Ellacuría, who develops the theological meaning of the church's persecution and martyrdom as an expression of its liberating Christian faith, and the eschatological hope that animates real communities of faith in their daily struggles for justice.

Gustavo Gutiérrez was unable to be present for the convention. Gutiérrez's paper was read in his absence by James Nickoloff. Gutiérrez maintains that "the decision to take up the sufferings of a people . . . brought about the death of Ignacio and his friends." Both were "consequences of an option for life." Like John's Jesus (John 10:18), Ellacuría believed justice embodies the gospel message. "His option for the poor shows that one cannot follow the steps of Jesus except by walking with the people in their hope for dignity, life, and liberation from all that marginalizes and oppresses."

Gutiérrez notes that Ellacuría must have felt "fear before the exigencies of solidarity." Yet he did not yield to the temptation of an intellectual life that, "though it might occasionally echo what was happening to the marginalized, would in truth be far from them and their sufferings." Neither did he "abandon his intellectual gifts" for more pragmatic concerns. Rather, "he put his intelligence, his analytical acumen, and his education at the service of . . . discerning the right

path through the confused mass of events being lived in El Salvador and Latin America."

Despite what Gutiérrez imagines were "tensions and confused moments, vacillations and incoherencies, depressions and painful impasses," Ellacuría "consecrated his life and his thought" to "taking this crucified people down from their cross." For Gutiérrez, Ellacuría's "radical rejection of unjust suffering" and affirmation of humanity as "the sacrament of God in history," finally "deepens our faith and hope in the death and the resurrection of Jesus."

Roger Haight distilled five principles from Ellacuría's ecclesiology "for understanding the church 'from below.'" First, ecclesiology begins and moves forward from a reflection on the historical reality of the church and its people. Second, ecclesiology demands an historically credible relation between Jesus and the church, because the church is defined as a community that keeps Jesus' salvific words, deeds, and mission alive in history. Third, the historical work of Jesus is complemented by the immanent presence of God as Spirit in the life of the community. Fourth, ecclesial organization, office, and "hierarchy" emerge from and for service of the community and its mission. Fifth, the purpose and task of the church are to mediate salvation and life in history, understood as entailing eschatological finality and eternal life. Theology should now "take stock" of the "enormous" contribution of Latin American Liberation Theology to ecclesiology, which is embodied in Ellacuría's work.

Robert Lassalle-Klein examined specific changes in theological anthropology, "historical soteriology," and theological method produced by Ellacuría's "Christian historical realism," his key principle for contextualization.

First, Ellacuría (Rahner's student from 1958 to 1962) historicizes Rahner's supernatural existential and the problem of nature and grace. Just as the human spirit is open to the gratuitous revelation of God, so the sinful history of Latin America is already transcendently in the presence of, and open to, the gratuitous revelation of God. Second, Ellacuría historicizes soteriology with the following claims: (1) There are not two histories (sacred and profane), but one in which both God and human beings intervene; God's intervention does not occur without some form of human participation, and human intervention (solidarity) does not occur without God's presence in some form (grace). (2) Philosophically, transcendence is not separateness. It is something that transcends in (utopia and prophecy) and not something that transcends away from (Marx's religion); something that physically impels to more. (3) The unity of the human and the divine in history means that God can be separated from history (as creator), but history cannot be separated from God. Thus, sin does not make God disappear, but rather crucifies God (the cross). (4) We each have a crucial role to play in historicizing the kingdom of God. Indeed, the immanence of the divine in history places a claim on Christians to take crucified peoples down from their cross.

Third, "the formal structure of intelligence . . . is not [only] the understanding of being or the grasp of meaning, but . . . apprehending reality and

confronting oneself with it." Theology apprehends and confronts itself with the historical reality of its context: (i) noetically "realizing the weight of historical reality" (Medellín, option for poor); (ii) ethically "shouldering the weight of historical reality" (e.g., the University of Central America's 1970-1989 efforts); and (iii) in the unitive moment of freedom and praxis: "taking charge of the weight of historical reality" (taking the poor down from the cross).

ROBERT A. LASSALLE-KLEIN

*Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley
Berkeley, California*

RENAISSANCE/MODERN THEOLOGY

- Topic: Doctrinal Development and the Tübingen School
 Convener: Robert A. Krieg, University of Notre Dame
 Moderator: John E. Thiel, Fairfield University
 Presenters: Michael J. Himes, Boston College
 Grant Kaplan, Boston College
 William E. McConville, Siena College
 Respondent: Donald J. Dietrich, Boston College

John Thiel set the stage for the discussion by recalling that the Catholic theologians at the University of Tübingen were among the first scholars to address the issue of the development of church teachings. Then he introduced the four speakers.

Michael Himes explained in his essay, "Johann Sebastian Drey and Johann Adam Möhler on Doctrinal Development," that Drey (1777-1853) and Möhler (1796-1838) shared both an opposition to Deism and also a reliance on an organic notion of history in their reflections on the dynamic character of doctrine. They tried to show that God had not chosen to step aside after the act of creation but remained active in history. In this effort, they worked with a notion of history that they had derived from the work of J. G. Herder (1744-1803) and G. W. F. Hegel (1770-1831). Yet they differed with each other in that while Drey stressed the Holy Spirit's guidance in the unfolding of the church's teachings, Möhler emphasized the influence of human freedom. Hence, Drey held that heresy can aid in the unfolding of the truth. Möhler added, however, that heresy is a sin, since it is an abuse of freedom.

Grant Kaplan discussed the notions of history and revelation in his paper, "Historical Revelation and Living Tradition in Johann Evangelist Kuhn." Insisting on the Holy Spirit's ability to act in time and space, Kuhn (1806-1887) recognized the role of specific events in God's self-communication to the human family. He opposed, therefore, D. F. Strauss's view of history as well as Deism. Moreover, Kuhn acknowledged the role of the human subject in the reception of