

~~Doctrine, Ideology and Confession~~

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The Creeds are the formulas of the confession of faith, that have been in the life and mission of the Church. That is, the efforts to ~~faithfully~~ be loyal to the Gospel in a given historical moment.

The Confession of Faith is ~~the~~ tool of testimony, it is the answer to the requirement of the mission and, at the same time, ~~its~~ support. So, the theology contained in it is necessarily a missionary theology. It is the result of the encounter between ~~the~~ faith experience, and Gospel, ~~the~~ questioning the human situation and being questioned by it.

The Church Confession of Faith is apostolic (or evangelical) in a double sense: because it ~~is~~ has the origin in the apostolic testimony and because it has a missionary purpose, according to which the church has been called.

The loyalty expressed by words in the Creed is legitimated by the loyalty expressed by actions. The confession (homologeo) implies ~~commitment~~ ^{commitment}, which leads to testimony in the very sense of martyrdom (marturia).

The Confession of faith is legitimated, in the last resort, by the missionary praxis ("the apostolic praxis").

So, the orthodoxy is ruled ~~is~~ not by its relation to pretend ~~elements~~ the eternal truths, but by its fidelity to God's action in history and personal human existence.

The Orthodoxy - fidelity to the Gospel - is defined by the fidelity of the actions, that supported it, to the Gospel. For this reason, orthodoxy is necessarily tied to orthopraxis.

Orthopraxis is the ~~struggle of the~~ ^{struggle of the} faith community ~~fight~~ (agonia) to be loyal, in life and mission, to his Lord. This faithfulness is the proof of theology (a theology which ~~is~~ brings new life, is not orthodoxy).

This ~~fight~~ ^{struggle} to be loyal, is the way of sanctification. Orthodoxy is the continuous searching for the holiness of

In fact, the confessions of faith (creeds) come to us through many reinterpretations. The evangelical faith we inherit is through the reinterpretations of the Reformers, as was revitalized by the Methodist movement, as was understood by the particular vision of the missionaries who brought it to us, with the particular resonance of our own experience. These reinterpretations and many others, which mediate the message of ~~the~~ the Gospel, were done with the purpose ^{being} ~~to~~ ~~be~~ kept to it in changed situations; Each one with their own material conditions: economic, political and cultural/ideological.

We are not interested ⁱⁿ ~~to~~ discuss ~~the~~ ^{ing} about the orthodoxy of a given traditional creed (to which we ~~only~~ have access only through reinterpretations, already ^{markedly} ~~defined~~ by a different social and historical situation). Any reinterpretation and actualization adds new ~~sense~~ significations to the original sense, and even modifies it.

We are interested in tradition as it ~~is~~ ^{operative} operative in the present situation. Especially, ~~in the~~ when a movement is going through a crisis (and this is the situation ~~of~~ of the Methodist movement in CA), one goes back to the ^{its} very fountain, ~~of it~~ to recover the original sense and spirit. But, this cannot be done by mere ~~etc~~ ^{caused} conservation, but through the reappropriation of ^{that spirit} it under new forms. Orthodoxy only can be recovered through a different praxis.

We do not discuss orthodoxy ~~in~~ in the air, but in relation with its actualization and re-actualizations.

This reactualization requires re-interpretation. This task implies an exegetical task (i.e. to discover the sense structure which ruled the original (situation) and on a

hermeneutical task (i.e. to actualize it in a changed present ~~structure~~ structure of meaning)

Any text (as that of the creeds) is inserted in a ~~new~~ structure with their own particular material conditions; economic, political and cultural/ideological. We cannot understand it apart ~~of~~ ^{from} those conditions. We must try to reconstruct the original structure to discover the real sense and decontextualize it. ~~to then~~ ^{in order to} recontextualize ^{it} in the present changed situation. This process (decontext. and re-context.) does not mean that the ~~truth~~ truth is in any moment independent of those material conditions. In the very exegetical task we are already imposing the presuppositions of our own present structure.

The encounter of ~~the~~ both structures implies the encounter of two different languages; The language of the Gospel which is the foundation of our faith, and the ~~language~~ ideological language which ~~we try~~ ^{we} to understand and to explain the present reality.

Ideology is the ^a ~~rational~~ ^{a reasoned} ~~totalizing~~ position ~~in relation to reality~~ ^{in relation to reality} to serve as point of departure of its understanding and projection in the future.

The ideological content of the confessions of faith ~~is~~ is nothing new, but in situations of crisis and conflict, ~~in the~~ ^{of great} ~~politicization~~ ^{politicization}, ~~it~~ it become more evident. Always, from ~~the~~ prophets times - the confession of faith ~~implied~~ meant more than religious questions in fact, the prophets were not religious in the sense we give the term today; sometimes more, sometimes less, consciously to deny ~~the~~ these ideological implications is, ~~at the~~ ^{at the} best, ~~divinity~~ ^{divinity} and, ~~in the~~ ^{at the} worst, ~~ideological~~ ^{ideological} ~~cover~~ ^{cover}. Usually,

doctrinal, and even liturgical, questions implies ideological differences.

So, in any interpretation (exegetical and hermeneutical) we apply the so-called ideological suspicion. This is, the assumption that any ~~interpre~~ previous interpretation and reinterpretation is already ~~signed~~ ^{marked} by the dominant ideology in the moment of its formulation; and that ~~the~~ ~~ideological~~ the presuppositions of that ideology are ~~imposed~~ ^{even} on the fundamental texts of our faith.

This leads us to search for a new hermeneutical key (in ~~the beginning~~ ~~to~~ just methodological) to reinterpret these texts from a ~~different~~ ^{location} different social ~~situation~~.

That is, the re-reading of the text from the point of view of those who usually are only objects, not ~~subjects~~ ^{subjects}, of theological reflection; with a renewed understanding ~~and~~ of reality and hope.

A new hermeneutical key, ~~only~~ ^{different} ~~can~~ be forged in a different social praxis, which ~~searches~~ ^{seeks} for fidelity to the Gospel in a ~~situ~~ situation of dependency, poverty, exploitation and persecution (as most people are experiencing)

On this way, orthopraxis, like orthodoxy, is not only a doctrinal question, but an ideological question too.

Doctrine is the language with which we interpret the message of the Gospel. Ideology is the language with which we interpret the present situation. The first is part of our distinctive character. The second is part of ~~our~~ ~~our~~ the realm of our common human experience (the realm of prevenient grace?). ~~That~~ ~~formation~~ requires fidelity, ~~that~~ ^{rather} requires ^{commitment} ~~commitment~~ (we believe this twofold engagement is fundamental in our Methodist heritage)

This ~~commitment~~ ^{commitment} overcoming ~~with~~, the confessional ~~orderlines~~ (as national and partisan)

Our experience in the last years (living under repression) ~~led~~ us to understand that differences do not go along denominational or confessional lines; but of trends which go along ^{are trends that run} across the different denominations.

These trends have ~~in~~ its equivalents in the global society (the realm of ~~the~~ common human experience).

The discussions were not ~~at~~ firstly on doctrinal questions, but on optics which had to do ~~with~~ with the fidelity to the Gospel in the given social situation, in most cases with clear class connotation (when we say class, we say also sexual, ~~and~~ racial ~~prejudices~~ and other social prejudices).

We participate in these discussions, with the proper specificity of our faith, with other people who do not share the same faith, but with whom we share the same struggle for social transformation.

This integrates us in the realm of the common human experience, ^{enriching} ~~widening~~ our ~~understanding~~ understanding of ecumenism. (The realm of prevenient grace makes dialogue possible). We found the use Christians make of the term "ecumenism" is likely ~~not~~ non-ecumenical. We ~~usually~~ ~~is~~ used to include ~~it~~ only the dialogue and relationship between Christians. But the sense of "oikoumene" ~~is~~ means to share our house with ~~it~~ all people around us.

In this sense, our reinterpretation of the Gospel must be ecumenical. We cannot ~~make~~ do theology as ^{if} non-Christians were nonexistent or a second class people. This will mean to repeat the error of those - may be well intentioned - who, under the two colonial conquests, wanted to impose the Gospel over the rest of the world, without any consideration of their own inadequacy.

We must answer a question: what is the meaning of faith for ⁽⁷⁾ our people. Not only for believers, but even for unbelievers, in the searching for a common historical project.

How the Gospel can have meaning for indigenous people, without destroy his own culture, as the conquist did. Today, when many indians want revive their own ancient religion (as a protest against the Christianity associated with oppression).

An ecumenical theology must be able to reinterpret its confession of faith, ~~from the encounter~~ in dialogue with a different understanding of the world (in many ~~senses~~ senses more evangelical than many of that we inherit)

To build up this theology is not only to respect the other, ut try to see a the other see. Is not concretism or mere superposition of ~~his~~ and rites. Is to build up a theology which permits us to be loyal to the lord in the situation we share with ~~other~~ another people; to be engaged with them in the anticipation of the Kingdom of God.

We can not build up this theology without conflict. ~~To see~~ The struggle for fidelity in this world always was and will be conflictive.

A group of members of the church are doing ~~an investigation~~ a research on the reason of the actual crisis of the Methodist Church in our country (Argentina).

One of the preliminary hipotesis is that one cause of that is the liberal pluralism in the mentality of our people.

There is a basic disagreement which is consider the fundament virtue. Each one thinks what he wants and makes what he will." The main ~~is~~ sin is not to deny a doctrinal question, but to deny the ~~right of~~ freedom to think and do according to his individual will. All worth, all is all right, even the most contradictory affirmations. ~~we believe this is a misunderstanding and corruption of methodism.~~

~~This B~~ This is not ^{to our class situation.} Methodism grow up with the climbing ^{immigrants} middle class.

Crisis was not evident meanwhile we were engaged in renewal,

without critic ~~of~~ to the system. It appears when new models
question the established model (in society, in general, as in the
church in particular). This situation ^{with the}
growing politicization & the development of 2d revolutionary
movements.

The answer of the ~~church~~ institutional church was to deny the
conflict, which already cover an ideological option.
This leads the church to renounce to take decisions on ~~the~~ ^{its} main
problems. The fear of disintegration by conflict, covered the
fact that the real disintegration results of ~~the~~ lack of common
action.

The immediate consequence of this situation is the inability
to have a shared church project. Phenomenon parallel to
the failure of the leading ^{liberal} middle class to propose a
shared national project.

We consider this is a malinterpretation and corruption of
~~our~~ our methodist heritage. Methodism was ~~and~~ an open
movement, but with a clear shared project, with an active
militancy of each member and with an effective discipline.
Methodism, more the orthodoxy, emphasize orthopraxis,
the searching for fidelity to God, in testimony and service,
with the common ~~objective~~ target of "consecrate the World
to Christ".

This ~~lead the community~~ makes impossible to the church to
assume a shared discipline, because there is not a shared militancy

The great contradiction of liberal pluralism is that it
become, ~~evening~~ usually uncommensurable, at ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~level~~ ^{level} of ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~individual~~ ^{individual}. Because
the freedom of each to act according to his will favors those
who has power of decision.

This situation has a clear class connotation: the church
is unable of to assume the popular movement. The middle
class in the church experience as a ~~menace~~ danger the advance
of popular groups.

This has incidence in our conception of ~~evangelization~~
evangelism. We are ready to call others, but not change ourselves
to give space to them.

This hindrance the possibility to give an organic and strategic answer to secularization, politicization and the appearance of new religious movements; and, overall, to understand the meaning of popular religiosity.

The Methodist Church in Argentina, have born (as the movement itself) in the marginal areas of the cities. To recover ~~the~~ the spirit of this origin it must recover ~~to~~ its mission in a popular project. This means a liberating historical project, with a consequent ~~mission~~ and discipline. Of course, is not time for imposed discipline, but a new project requires a discipline defined by the ~~com~~ community committed in the same project.

This is, the searching for fidelity to the Lord in a new historical project. Only can be a shared confession of faith, in the midst of a shared missionary praxis, and the struggle to anticipate the love, justice and peace of the Kingdom of God.
