

Faith Seeking Effectiveness:
The Missionary Theology of
José Míguez Bonino

Faith Seeking Effectiveness:
The Missionary Theology of
José Míguez Bonino

Geloof op zoek naar doorwerking: De missionaire theologie
van José Míguez Bonino
(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

Proefschrift

Ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor aan de Universiteit Utrecht
op het gezag van de Rector Magnificus, Prof. Dr. W.H. Gispen
ingevolge het besluit van het College voor Promoties
in het openbaar te verdedigen
op donderdag 23 november 2006
des voormiddags om 10.30

door

Paul John Davies

geboren op 29 oktober 1962
te Darlington, United Kingdom

Uitgeverij Boekencentrum, Zoetermeer

Promotoren: Prof.Dr. Jan A.B. Jongeneel
Faculty of Theology, Utrecht University

Prof.Dr. Nancy Bedford
Garret-Evangelical Theology Seminary, Evanston

Prof.Dr. Charles E. van Engen
Fuller Theological Seminary, School of Inter-Cultural
Studies, Pasadena

To Wilma

With Love and Gratitude

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE

ABREVIATIONS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Statement of the Problem	1
1.2	Rationale for the study	2
1.2.1	Context	2
1.2.2	Míguez Bonino as Liberation Theologian	2
1.2.3	Míguez Bonino as Ecumenical Theologian	3
1.2.4	Míguez Bonino as Missionary Theologian	4
1.3	Terminology	5
1.4	Methodology	7
1.5	Structure of the Study	7
1.6	Sources	8
1.6.1	Primary Sources	8
1.6.2	Secondary Sources	10
1.6.3	General Literature	11
2	MÍGUEZ- BONINO IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT: A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH	13
2.1	Introduction	13
2.2	Early Life: Santa Fe and Rosario (1924-1943)	13
2.3	Theological Education: Buenos Aires (1943-1948)	16
2.4	Pastoral Ministry: San Rafael (1948-1952)	18
2.5	Further Studies and Youth Secretary: Atlanta and Buenos Aires (1952-1958)	19
2.6	Doctoral Studies: New York (1958-1960)	20
2.7	Rector of the Facultad Evangélica de Teología: Buenos Aires (1960-70)	20
2.8	Director of the Asociación de Seminarios e Institutos Teológicos: Buenos Aires (1970-1976)	24
2.9	Director Post-Graduate Studies of the Instituto Superior de Educación Teológica: Buenos Aires (1976-1985)	27
2.10	Retirement: Buenos Aires (1985ff)	30
2.11	Excursus: The Influence of Karl Barth	32
2.12	Final Observations	35
3	FAITH SEEKING EFFECTIVENESS: THE THEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY OF MÍGUEZ BONINO	39
3.1	Introduction	39
3.2	Developments in the Twentieth Century	40
3.3	Main Publications	44

3.4	Doing Theology	45
3.4.1	Basic Characteristics	45
3.4.2	Theology as Task: Service to the Church in Mission	47
3.4.3	Theology as Gift: Dependence on Revelation and Tradition	49
3.5	Epistemology	50
3.5.1	Nature	50
3.5.2	Implications	53
3.6	Theological Methodology	55
3.6.1	Moments in Theology	55
3.6.2	Socio-Analytical Mediation	56
	Analysis of Social Context	56
	Two Examples of Socio-analytical mediation	60
	The Analysis of Church in Society	61
	Two Analytical examples of Church in Society	62
3.6.3	Hermeneutical Mediation	64
	Revelation and Reception	64
	Revelation's Relation to the Human Witness: Scripture and Tradition	65
	Revelation, the Church and History	69
	Preservation and Evaluation of Tradition	72
3.6.4	Practical Mediation	73
	Back to Obedience	73
	The Necessity of an Option	74
	The Choice of an Option	75
3.7	Final Observations	77
4	GOD'S ACTION AND HUMAN ACTION: THE ESCHATOLOGY OF MÍGUEZ BONINO	80
4.1	Introduction	80
4.2	Developments in the Twentieth Century	80
4.3	Main Publications	85
4.4	The Kingdom of God and Human Response	87
4.4.1	The Kingdom of God and Theological Responsibility	87
4.4.2	God's Action in History	88
4.4.3	Between Two Views of History	91
4.4.4	The Relationship Between Present History and the Future Glory	96
4.4.5	The Kingdom of God and Utopias	100
4.5	Human Action: Discernment of the Kingdom of God in Obedience	101
4.6	Final Observations	105
5	THE CONFLICT FOR THE TRUE CHURCH IN THE WORLD: THE ECCLESIOLOGY OF MÍGUEZ BONINO	109
5.1	Introduction	109
5.2	Developments in the Twentieth Century	110
5.2.1	Ecclesiastical Developments	110

5.2.2	Ecclesiological Developments	112
5.3	Main Publications	114
5.4	Ecclesiology and Mission	115
5.4.1	The Point of Departure	115
5.4.2	“Ecclesiogenesis”	116
5.4.3	Early Ecclesiological Definitions	117
5.4.4	Theological Articulation of the New Ecclesiology	119
5.4.5	Problems of the New Ecclesiology	121
5.4.6	Towards a Solution	122
	Creation and Salvation	122
	Christ as the New Human Being and the Creation of the New Humanity	124
	Oikoumene and Ecumenism	128
	Intensive and Extensive Forms of Fellowship	131
5.4.7	From the Theology of Unity to the Sociology of Unity	134
5.4.8	Pastoral and Missionary Consequences	135
5.5	Final Observations	138
6	THE <i>MISSIO DEI</i> AND THE <i>OPERA DEI PERSONALIA</i> : THE TRINITY IN THE THEOLOGY OF MÍGUEZ BONINO	141
6.1	Introduction	141
6.2	Developments in the Twentieth Century	142
6.3	Main Publications	146
6.4	<i>Missio Dei</i> and <i>Opera Dei Personalia</i> in Trinitarian Missionary Theology	147
6.4.1	Presence and Absence of the Trinity in Theological Reflection	147
6.4.2	Theological Reductionism: The stated context of Trinitarian Missionary Theology	148
6.4.3	The Trinity as Hermeneutical Criterion	149
	Dangers in Trinitarian Doctrine	149
	Trinitarian Affirmations	149
	Some Contextual Issues in Trinitarian Perspective	153
	Religious Pluralism	153
	Social Involvement	157
	Pneumatology	158
6.4.4	A Trinitarian Missiology for Latin American Protestantism	160
	Mission as Material Principle	160
	A New Trinitarian Missionary Theology	162
	Mission and Evangelisation in Trinitarian Perspective	165
6.5	Final Observations	167
7	CONCLUSION: A LATIN AMERICAN MISSIONARY THEOLOGY	171
7.1	Introduction	171
7.2	The Global Church-in-Mission	171
7.2.1	The Context of the Global Church-in-Missio	171
7.2.2	The Socio-Political Context	173

7.2.3	The Religious and Spiritual Context	176
7.2.4	Theological Education	177
7.3	The Latin American Mission Movement	178
7.3.1	The Bible and Theology	178
7.3.2	The World, the Church and the Kingdom of God	180
7.3.3	Wholistic and contextual Mission	181
7.3.4	Missionary Training	182
APPENDICES		184
List of International Missionary and Ecumenical Conferences		184
List of Latin American Missionary and Ecumenical Meetings		185
Chronology of the Life of Míguez Bonino		185
BIBLIOGRAPHY		187
Primary Sources: Works of Míguez Bonino (arranged chronologically)		187
Secondary Sources		207
General Literature		208
SAMENVATTING (SUMMARY IN DUTCH)		218
INDEX OF PERSONAL NAMES		220
CURRICULUM VITAE		225

PREFACE

This dissertation is the product of nine years of research, reflection and writing, most of which took place in Latin America. My wife and I arrived in Buenos Aires in July, 1995 in order to be involved in teaching candidates in the burgeoning Latin American inter-cultural mission movement. We very quickly became aware that the missionary candidates and leaders were full of enthusiasm but were not keen on theological and missiological reflection. The theology being taught in most seminaries was undigested European and especially North American systematic theology. And the missionary theory being absorbed by the leaders of the mission movement was the translated missiology of Dr. Ralph Winter and the U.S. Center for World Mission. It seemed that the mission movement had completely passed by the richness of Latin American theology and mission thinking that had been going on for at least the previous thirty-five years. This led me to consider how Latin American theology could both inform and inspire the inter-cultural mission movement.

I was first attracted to the theology of Míguez Bonino because of the breadth of his writing, the widely differing contexts into which he wrote, and the radical contextual nature of his reflections. As I read more of his theology and investigated his life, I came to realise that he had not simply written Liberation Theology or ecumenical theology but had been developing a missionary theology from ‘the underside of history.’ This seemed applicable, not only to a missionary movement from the geographical south, but also to missionary theology in general. A thesis was being born.

A doctoral dissertation is never the work of a single person; it is the product of a community of people. I would like to thank some of those people who were more intimately involved in this project. Firstly, thanks must go to Míguez Bonino, who was willing for me to take up this project, who travelled several times across Buenos Aires on the bus to be interviewed—his car was stolen the day of our first meeting—and who graciously answered all my questions. I have learned a great deal from him about missionary theology, the primacy of obedience in theology; the need for sociological analysis; the centrality of the Bible and the need for a concrete option. However, I also learned about commitment to Christ. His example of Christian commitment and willingness to listen was inspiring.

Thanks also go to my supervisors. My supervisor in Utrecht, Professor Jan A.B. Jongeneel, with his encyclopaedic knowledge of missionary theology and practical theory has been an invaluable resource. His clear thinking, wise council and knowledge of research were essential in giving light to a dark path. His attention to detail, editing work and corrections turned my ‘Spanglish’ back into academic English and helped me to express Míguez Bonino’s theology more clearly. I would also like to thank Dr. Nancy Bedford, whose friendship, which began in Argentina at conferences sponsored by the Kairos Community, has continued since her move to the United States and my move back to the United Kingdom. Her insight into, and sympathy with, Latin American theology sharpened the critique of Míguez Bonino’s theology and helped me avoid some obvious errors. Also her constant prompting for me not to neglect the feminist and family perspective in theological production broadened the horizon of missionary theology. Additionally I would like to thank

Dr. Charles Van Engen, whose personal encouragement and his insights into both Latin America and missionary theology enriched the dissertation greatly.

I would also like to thank my family. My parents, Anne and Ron Davies, were a constant encouragement and support. They introduced me to Jesus Christ, nurtured me in the faith and let me go in order to serve God in Latin America. Additionally, my father was always willing to discuss the details of this project whether through e-mail or over the internet. He was a sympathetic critique of both Míguez Bonino's theology and my interpretation of it. I would also like to thank my wife, Wilma, whose encouragement first led me to pursue an academic career. Her loyalty and unstinting belief in me kept me working through the most difficult points of this study. Without her, this project would never have been begun, never mind completed.

Finally, thanks go to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; Míguez Bonino's God and mine. Glory be to God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit!

Paul Davies
Easneye, Ware, Herts. U.K.
July 2006

ABBREVIATIONS

AG	<i>Ad Gentes</i> (The Declaration on the Church's Mission)
ASIT	<i>Asociación de Seminarios e Institutos Teológicos</i> (Association of Seminaries and Theological Institutes)
BEM	Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry: Confessing the One Faith (FO text)
CCLA	Committee of Cooperation for Latin America
CD	Karl Barth's <i>Church Dogmatics</i>
CEB	<i>Comunidades Eclesiales de Base</i> (Base Ecclesial Communities)
CELA	<i>Conferencia Evangélica Latinoamericana</i> (Latin American Evangelical Conference)
CELADEC	<i>Conferencia Evangélica Latinoamericana de Educación Cristiana</i> (Latin American Evangelical Conference of Christian Education)
CELAM	<i>Concilio Episcopal de Latinoamérica</i> (Latin American Episcopal Council)
CLADE	<i>Congreso Latinoamericano de Evangelización</i> (Latin American Congreso on Evangelization)
CLAI	<i>Consejo Latinoamericano de Iglesias</i> (Latin American Council of Churches)
COMIBAM	<i>Cooperación Iberoamericana de Misiones</i> (Iberoamerican Cooperation of Missions)
CONELA	<i>Confraternidad Evangélica Latinoamericana</i> (Latin American Evangelical Confraterinity)
CONIERP	<i>Confraternidad de Iglesias Evangélicas del Río de la Plata Latinoamericana</i> (Confraterinity of Evangelical Churches of the River Plate)
CWME	Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (of the WCC)
DV	<i>Dei Verbum</i> (The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation)
EN	<i>Evangelii Nuntiandi</i>
FAIE	<i>Federación Argentina de Iglesias Evangélicas</i> (Argentine Federation of Evangelical Churches)
FALJE	<i>Federación Argentina de Ligas Juveniles Evangélicas</i> (Argentine Federation of Evangelical Youth Leagues)
FET	<i>Facultad Evangélica de Teología</i> (Evangelical Faculty of Theology)
FO	Commission on Faith & Order (of the WCC)
FTL	<i>Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana</i> (Latin American Theological Fraternity)
FUMEC	<i>Federación Universal de Movimiento de Estudiantes Cristianos</i> (World Federation of Christian Students).
GOCN	Gospel and Our Culture Network.

GS	<i>Guadium et Spes</i> (The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the World)
IMC	International Missionary Council
IRM	International Review of Mission (s)
ISAL	<i>Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina</i> (Church and Society in Latin America)
ISEDET	<i>Instituto Superior Evangélico de Teología</i> (Higher Institute of Theology)
LG	<i>Lumen Gentium</i> (The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church)
PP	<i>Populorum Progressio</i>
RM	<i>Redemptoris Missio</i>
SCM	Student Christian Movement
ULAJE	<i>Unión Latinoamericana de Juventudes Evangélicas</i> (Latin American Union of Evangelical Youth)
UNELAM	<i>Movimiento Pro-Unidad Evangélica en América Latina</i> (Latin American Unión towards Evangelical Unity)
Vatican II	Second Vatican Council (1962-1965)
WCC	World Council of Churches
WEF	World Evangelical Fellowship
WFCS	World Federation of Christian Students
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study considers the theology of the Argentinean Methodist José Míguez Bonino¹ as a missionary theology. The key to his missionary theology is ‘Faith Seeking Effectiveness’. Obviously an adaptation of Anselm’s famous axiom, this phrase is the title of the Spanish translation of one of Míguez Bonino’s most famous books: *Doing Theology in an Revolutionary Situation* (1975b). This book is an early description, defence, and critique of the Latin American theologies of liberation. When it was originally published in English, Míguez Bonino disliked the title given to it by the publisher (interview with author 1997). When he translated the book back into Spanish he gave it the title *Fe en busca de eficacia* (1977a)². This phrase expresses Míguez Bonino’s comprehension of Liberation Theology’s self-understanding. It is also the way this study intends to survey and analyse his theology.

Míguez Bonino’s theology is missionary, not because mission is the focus of his theology but rather because it is its locus. That is, his theology takes as its point of departure the ethical and missionary question: ‘what should I as a Christian or we as a Church do?’ or more specifically: ‘what should I as a Christian or we as a Church do in this context?’ He does not aim to achieve intellectual understanding of reality, but rather effectiveness in changing reality. This provides the framework for the whole of Míguez Bonino’s theology.

Effectiveness in faith’s search, however, must not be equated with pragmatism. Míguez Bonino’s theology does not simply search for the most expedient way of carrying forward an already decided project. In the light of the concrete reality in which the Church finds itself, it reflects theologically in order to project forward into new pathways of praxis. His theological reflection has revolved around three central theological issues: the Kingdom of God, the church, and the Trinity. The Kingdom of God and the Church have been the two major issues which he utilised throughout his ministry, but in later years, he attempted to deepen and strengthen these items by a reflection upon the Trinity. A Trinitarian perspective on mission widens his earlier views on mission as primarily connected to the Kingdom of God and the church.

This study will investigate Míguez Bonino’s theological method; his understanding of the Kingdom of God; his ecclesiology; and his trinitarian theology. It will seek to answer several questions: What is the nature and development of Míguez Bonino’s missionary theology? How does he relate his theology to the

¹ In the English speaking world it has been common to refer to José Míguez Bonino as Bonino. However, when in Latin America two surnames are used, the second is normally the mother’s surname, in this case, Bonino; and the first surname is the father’s and the official one. In Latin America using both surnames is more acceptable. A person would never use only his or her mother’s surname. Therefore throughout this study “Míguez Bonino” will be used in order to maintain Latin convention.

² Faith Seeking Effectiveness.

context? Where are the areas of continuity and discontinuity? And in the final chapter, what is the relevance of his theology for mission theology today?

1.2 THE RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

1.2.1 Context

Míguez Bonino's ministry has spanned the ca. fifty turbulent years of missionary, ecclesiastical, and theological ferment that formed the second half of the Twentieth Century. He wrote his first major theological work in the year of the formation World Council of Churches (1948) and continued to publish up to 2004.

Up to the end of the Second World War, mission and missiology, done by European and North American Christians, was carried out confidently within the ethos of Western colonialism and Christendom. The changing face of Western Colonialism and the collapse of Western Christendom in and after 1945 meant that the ambiance and ethos in which the modern missionary movement had developed no longer existed. Consequently mission entered into what Ronald K. Orchard called 'a time of testing' (Bosch 1991:2; cf. Orchard 1964). This crisis, along with the formation of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1948 and theological developments within the International Missionary Council (IMC) such as the *Missio Dei* concept, meant that by the time of the integration of the IMC and WCC (New Delhi, 1961) 'the foundations of Christian Mission were crumbling' (Scherer 1993:195-197) and Gerald H. Anderson could say: 'the underlying principles and theological presuppositions for the Christian mission have been called into question and Christians are challenged to rethink the motives, message, methods and goals of their mission' (Anderson 1961:3).

After 1961, the missionary and theological crisis has continued. The Dutch missiologist Johannes Verkuyl said: 'the term "missiology" is today internationally recognized although its meaning, and its relation to theology, and the other academic disciplines is not so universally acknowledged' (Verkuyl 1978:2; cf. Bavinck 1960 and Bosch 1991:489-498). The Dutch editors of *Missiology: An Ecumenical Introduction* (1995) stated the following: 'now that many of the presuppositions of Western missions are no longer valid, missiology is looking for a new working self-definition' (Verstraelen et. al. 1995:2). Míguez Bonino has worked out his theology during this time of testing, rethinking and searching for a new identity.

1.2.2 Míguez Bonino as Liberation Theologian

A further reason to study Míguez Bonino is that he has been associated with the Latin American Liberation Theology movement, which has had great influence on missionary theory and practice in both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. Indeed, it is a missiology that takes the context seriously (Costas 1976:241).

In Latin American Roman Catholicism, the birth and growth of the theologies of liberation signalled the 'coming of age' of Latin American Catholic theology. It sent shock waves through the hierarchy and led to the statement of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith: *Instruction on Certain Aspects of the Theology of Liberation* (1986). Despite the Vatican's attempts to suppress

Liberation Theology, its effects can be seen all over the world in Catholic and other Christian life and missionary work. Subsequent to the publication of Gustavo Gutiérrez' seminal work on Liberation Theology (Gutiérrez 1971), there was a veritable explosion of new 'liberative' theologies written. Feminist theologies (Ruether 1983, 1986; Russell 1974, 1987); African theologies of liberation (Dickson 1984; Muzorewa 1985), Asian theologies of liberation such as Minjung Theology from Korea (cf. Commission on Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia (eds.) 1983), Black theologies from the United States of America (Cone 1969,³ 1975, 1984; cf. Wilmore and Cone 1979), and Black Theologies from South Africa (Boesak 1978, 1984), Rastafarian and Caribbean theologies (Erskine 1998 2nd ed.) even Jewish (Ellis 1987) and Palestinian Liberation Theologies (Ateek 1989) have been influenced by Latin American Liberation Theologies.⁴

Míguez Bonino is one of the leading protestant theologians associated with the liberation theology movement. If one looks at the main publications on Liberation Theology, Míguez Bonino's name will appear time and again. Along with other Latin American Protestant theologians such as Rubem Alves, Mortimer Arias, and Julio de Santa Ana, Míguez Bonino reflected critically upon the Christian faith in the light of the Latin American reality. His theology, as those of his Protestant colleagues, emerged from radically different roots than those of the Roman Catholic theologians; only later they became intertwined with Roman Catholic developments, entering into a deep and fruitful dialogue.

Míguez Bonino is a critic of Liberation Theology as well. William H. Lazareth has called him one of the 'foremost participant-critics in Latin America' of Liberation Theology (1975h:vii). Míguez Bonino has not only contributed to the debate by participating and supporting, but also by raising difficult questions for Liberation Theology. His voice has been heard inside and outside Latin America. For example, he was more willing than most liberation theologians to deepen the dialogue with Marxism (1976c). Consequently, although Míguez Bonino has long been associated with the Liberation Theology movement and has shared many of its concerns, he cannot be univocally labelled a liberation theologian.

1.2.2 Míguez Bonino as Ecumenical Theologian

Míguez Bonino's theology is not only associated with what are commonly considered liberationist interests but also includes themes related to other aspects of church life. He has published many theological works reflecting on issues such as Church history in Latin America; philosophy; ethics; inter-church relations; and mission. All these items are included in Míguez Bonino's theological vision.

Míguez Bonino was the only Latin American Protestant observer at the Second Vatican Council. His subsequent writings on the relationship between Protestants and Roman Catholics in Latin American have been significant. The book *Concilio Abierto*⁵ (1967c) was an early interpretation of the Second Vatican Council. He also contributed to the ecumenical movement in Latin America where

³ There are Black Theologies from the United States. Although Cone (1969) was written before Gutiérrez, one can see the influence at a later date.

⁴ For a detailed analysis of the various different liberation theologies, except the Feminist theologies see Witvliet (1985) and for a general introduction see Grenz and Olson, (1992).

⁵ Open Council.

he was involved in organizations such as *Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina* (ISAL)⁶ and the *Consejo Latinoamericano de Iglesias* (CLAI).⁷ Orlando Costas calls Míguez Bonino ‘the dean of Latin American Protestant Theologians’ (Costas 1976:91). Furthermore he has been a spokesman of Latin American theology, in organisations of world Christianity.

A further reason for this study is that Míguez Bonino’s influence has been felt far beyond the borders of Argentina and Latin America. He has been deeply involved in, and has held influential positions in the World Council of Churches. He was a member of both the Commission on Faith and Order (1961-1977) and on the Central Committee of the WCC (1968-1975); moreover, from the Nairobi Assembly (1975) to the Vancouver Assembly (1983), he was on the presidium of that body. These appointments enabled him to speak at many different conferences crossing confessional and denominational barriers. For instance, he gave the keynote lectures at the London Institute of Contemporary Christianity (1974) led by the Evangelical Anglican John R.W. Stott; he also addressed events such as the ‘Christians in Socialism Conference’ in Chile (1972). In addition, he held ‘visiting professorships in England, Costa Rica, France and the United States’ (Ferm 1988:131).⁸

Finally, the theology of Míguez Bonino needs to be studied because of his personal journey in theology. For most of his career he has primarily been involved in the ecumenical movement. Since the mid nineteen-eighties, however, there has been a shift in his thinking, which has brought him closer to the more conservative Evangelical churches. An example of this shift is the participation of Míguez Bonino in the 25th anniversary conference in Santiago, Chile (1996) which was organised by the *Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana* (FTL),⁹ an Evangelical, movement initiated by René Padilla, Andrew Kirk, Peter Savage and other leading Evangelicals, and which today embraces a range of theological viewpoints wider than that of classical evangelicalism. Twenty-five years ago it would have been unthinkable that a theologian associated with Latin American Liberation Theology would join such a group.

1.2.5 *Míguez Bonino as Missionary Theologian*

Míguez Bonino has also shown interest in the rise of the Latin American missionary movement. During the nineteen eighties, many of the Latin American Protestant churches grew rapidly. Some Latin American church leaders gained the understanding that the responsibility of World Mission is also been laid on the shoulders of their churches; the European and North American Churches have no exclusive rights and duties in this regard. The first continent wide, mission congress held in Sao Paulo, Brazil (1987) was the event that gave the Latin American cross-cultural mission movement its first big thrust (Deiros 1997:89). It resulted in the formation of *Cooperación Misionera Iberoamericano* (COMIBAM)¹⁰ as the network of cooperation between the different national missionary movements existent in Latin America (Deiros 1997:89). Since then the numbers of Latin

⁶ Church and Society in Latin America.

⁷ Latin American Council of Churches.

⁸ He also is *Doctor Honoris Causa* of the Free University of Amsterdam (1980).

⁹ Latin American Theological Fraternity.

¹⁰ Iberoamerican Missionary Cooperation.

American foreign missionaries has grown enormously. The latest figures (from 2002) show that there are about 6500 cross-cultural missionaries from Ibero-America (Limpic 2002).

Many of the Evangelical¹¹ Protestant Churches in Latin America have achieved the goals of what Henry Venn (1725-1797), and Rufus Anderson (1796-1880) developed as the ‘3-self Formula,’¹² but have not been able to take a step forward towards the ‘fourth self’ proposed by Paul Hiebert, that of Self-Theologizing (Hiebert 1985:193-224). This fact is especially true of the Latin American missionary movement. However, Míguez belongs to the category of Latin American scholars who have been committed to develop a Latin American missionary theology, which originates from and responds to the Latin American needs locally and continentally and, at the same time, to contribute to a universal vision.¹³

1.3 TERMINOLOGY

This study treats the theology of Míguez Bonino as a missionary theology. It is recognized that the term ‘missionary’ carries a great deal of historical baggage. The modern missionary movement with its base in Europe and North America was historically and theologically ambiguous; its links with colonialism are well documented. To refer to a Latin American theologian’s work as ‘missionary’ could cause some consternation given its attempt to articulate coherently and theologically the mission of the church from a non-colonial and even anti-colonial position. The use of a new term, however, such as ‘missional’ tends to create the impression that Míguez Bonino makes a complete break, or at least operates in radical discontinuity with the modern missionary movement. This is clearly not so given his involvement with the WCC. This study intends to emphasise Míguez Bonino’s continuity with the historical mission movement and, at the same time to recognise how he questions many of its fundamental principles. The word ‘missionary’ therefore will continue to be utilised.

Most missionary thinkers do not distinguish between the terms ‘missionary theology’, and ‘theology of mission.’ But in the context of this study this distinction is fundamental. Johannes C. Hoekendijk, at Utrecht University, asserted that whereas ‘theology of mission’ functions as a division of systematic and practical theology, ‘missionary theology’ is systematic and practical theology ‘permeated by the spirit of the apostolate’ (Hoekendijk 1967:339; cf. Jongeneel and van Engelen

¹¹ The term “evangelical” will be explained later.

¹² ‘Self-governing’, ‘self-supporting’, and ‘self-propagating’. See Peter Beyerhaus’ critique (Beyerhaus 1979:15-30).

¹³ This study is needed—especially for the English-speaking world—because the vast majority of Míguez Bonino’s writings are not well known outside Latin America. Those books, articles and chapters that have been translated into English are usually the more “exotic” themes such as the use of Marxist critical tools in hermeneutics; the collaboration between Marxists and Christians in the process of liberation in Latin America; the development of a political ethics; and the like. Other writings—dealing with less controversial issues—have not been published in English. The English-speaking theological world, therefore, is given a distorted impression of Míguez Bonino’s theology. It is hoped that this study will rectify this lack.

1995:442-443). Jan A.B. Jongeneel, successor to Hoekendijk, offers a tentative definition. Missionary theology is:

that form or type of Christian theology which both theoretically and practically reflects upon the relations of Christians and churches with, and their responsibilities toward, adherents and communities of other religions, world-views, and ideologies in all spheres of private and public life (Jongeneel 1997:10).

He asserts that theology must not only be missionary, but also “communal” and “adoring” (Jongeneel 1995:68). That is, theology must reflect upon fellowship and worship, in addition to mission. Furthermore, he asserts that the term ‘missionary theology’ is, on the one hand, too narrow because it does not include philosophical analysis and empirical research, and, on the other hand, too broad because it deals with many issues that do not strictly belong to mission theology properly (Jongeneel 1995:68). It is imperative, therefore, as Lesslie Newbigin pointed out, to understand worship and fellowship as the *missionary dimension* of the church and preaching and service as the *missionary intention* of the church (Newbigin 1958:21, 43). Fellowship and worship as well as preaching and service are included in the purview of Míguez Bonino’s missionary theology.

When studying Latin American Protestantism it is important to note semantic differences in the meaningful translation of certain terms. The word *Evangélico* does not have the same meaning as ‘Evangelical’ in the Anglo-Saxon world. *Evangélico* in Spanish refers to anybody or any tradition influenced directly or indirectly by the Reformation and more or less equivalent to Protestant. This does not mean that the Western ecclesiastical and theological divisions do not exist in Latin America but it does mean that everybody from Pedro Arana Quiróz (b. 1938), who in Anglo-Saxon terms is considered ‘Evangelical’ to Rubém Alves Azevedo (b. 1933), who most certainly would not be thought of in that framework, is referred to as *Evangélico* (cf. 1997a and Escobar 1991:9-10). This is not often recognized in translations from the Spanish when *Evangélico* is simply translated *Evangelical*. However, it is interesting that Míguez Bonino in one of his most recent writings quotes the classic definition given by evangelical George M. Marsden with approval, saying that probably any Latin American *Evangélico* could subscribe to this definition (1997b:7-8; cf. Marsden 1980:3).

There is also a certain ambiguity in the Spanish term *Ecuménico*. In Latin America, all Ecumenical Protestants are *Evangélicos*, whereas in the Anglo-Saxon world only a few Evangelicals can be categorized as Ecumenical. In this study the word *Evangelical* will be used with the Anglo-Saxon meaning,¹⁴ except when translating Spanish texts; then the Spanish word *Evangélico* will be maintained. If texts already translated into English use the word *Evangelical* instead of *Evangélico*, the original will be noted in parenthesis.

A third term that needs to be clarified is the use of ‘American.’ In Latin America (Central and South) the people consider themselves to be ‘Americans.’ To use the term ‘American’ simply as a reference to people originating from the United States is considered offensive. Therefore, this study will specify the term ‘American’

¹⁴ Noting the difference between the North American use of the term and the European use.

as ‘North American,’ to signify the United States and Canada and ‘Latin American’ to signify South of the Río Bravo.¹⁵

1.4 METHODOLOGY

Míguez Bonino’s theological production has spanned over fifty years and is a conscious response to the ecumenical and missionary challenges. It was planted and has been nourished within the rich soil of Latin American culture and history, and has developed in both local and international arenas. It can be approached in various ways.

The historical method will be employed as the main method. It is needed to place Míguez Bonino’s life and work in context. It will also be used to trace the development of Míguez Bonino’s theology throughout his life and in the contexts in which he has reflected, ministered and written. Documents, archive materials, and oral history are used to sketch the life and work of Míguez Bonino in chapter two. This method will also be used in chapters three to six, which intend to sketch the developments in his theology.

The systematic method will be additionally employed, in order to describe and analyse the major themes in Míguez Bonino’s missionary theology. In the analysis of the central theological themes (Kingdom of God, Church and Trinity), Míguez Bonino’s own priorities are investigated. It is essential that no external theological framework should be imposed on them; they must speak for themselves.

Finally, the comparative method will be employed. This method will be used to trace the similarities and differences within Míguez Bonino’s own missionary theology over the decades. Additionally, it helps to show how Míguez Bonino’s theological and missiological themes agree with and differ from the context described in chapter two. A missionary theology cannot be fully understood without reference to context. Finally, this method will be used to reveal how Míguez has interacted with, and borrowed from, missionary theology in Latin America and worldwide.

1.5 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

After this introductory chapter, attention will be paid to the context in which Míguez has lived and worked. This provides a background to understand the development of his thought. Chapter two will be a biographical sketch of his life from his beginnings in Rosario and Santa Fe, Argentina; followed by his seminary training and early pastoral and missionary work as well as his academic and writing career in both Argentina and around the world. In addition to his involvement in teaching and denominational activities, it pays attention to his participation in the ecumenical movement in Latin America and the wider world. Other antecedent factors will also be studied, such as his spiritual development and his theological formation. This includes the impact which Liberal Protestant theologians made upon his theological

¹⁵This is further complicated by the fact that the indigenous peoples quite rightly reject the term ‘Latin American’ because they are not of Hispanic descent.

professors and how the theology of Karl Barth, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Jürgen Moltmann influenced his thinking.

Chapters three to six will form the central analysis of Míguez Bonino's theology. A chapter on his theological methodology will investigate how he has developed a praxis orientated hermeneutic. Chapter four and five—on the Kingdom of God and the church respectively—explore two of the most significant themes for his theology. Chapter six will then explore his trinitarian theology, examining how he deepened and strengthened his reflections on the Kingdom and the church. This will allow the theological and contextual flow of his theology to emerge.

After an introduction, chapters three to six will include a brief section on theological developments within the area of study. This will be followed by a listing and explanation of the significance of the most relevant writings by Míguez Bonino on that subject. It will also include a brief description of the context of those writings. The main section of these chapters will be a description and analysis of Míguez Bonino's theological reflections. The chapters involved will conclude with some final observations. These will summarise the argument of the chapter; highlight some major influences on the theme under exploration; and will finish with some analytical comments.

Chapter seven will be a concluding chapter. It will analyse the challenge of Míguez Bonino's theology in the context of the mission of the global church and for the development of the Latin American missionary movement.

1.6 SOURCES

1.6.1 *Primary sources*

The primary sources for this study are published and unpublished studies, archive materials and oral history (especially interviews and tapes of talks given by Míguez Bonino). The majority of these sources are in Spanish, some being translated into English and others written in English which have been translated back into Spanish.

The unpublished materials are mainly made up of ad hoc leaflets written for various organisations. Examples of these are: 'La Unidad de la Iglesia' (1965g), written for the commission for Church Unity of the River Plate Churches; and 'Buscad a Dios con la alegría de la esperanza' (1998a), written for the Latin American Council of Churches. These studies can be consulted in archives found in Buenos Aires and Quito. Additionally, the unpublished materials include Míguez Bonino's Licenciate and ThD dissertations. They can be consulted in the archives of the *Instituto Superior Evangélico de Estudios Teológicos*¹⁶ (ISEDET,) Buenos Aires. Finally, unpublished materials are also available on the internet: for instance, 'Building Community, Transforming the World' (2002b) given as an address at the 15th World Council of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA).

The vast majority of Míguez Bonino's writings are articles published in a wide range of periodicals; chapters in books; papers given at conferences; and reports of interviews in various periodicals and publications. A few significant

¹⁶ The Superior Evangelical Institute of Theological Studies. Often known as Union Seminary, Buenos Aires.

articles should be mentioned here. ‘Nuestro Mensaje’ (1962c) is a paper delivered at a conference in 1961 that gives a clear expression of Míguez Bonino’s early understanding of Christian mission. ‘Fundamentos bíblicos y teológicos de la responsabilidad cristiana’ (1961c) is a paper given in the same month with more focus on the social responsibility of the Christian mission. ‘How does God Act in History’ (1972c; cf. 1966b) originally published in 1966, demonstrates Míguez Bonino’s understanding of hermeneutics and the relationship between the Kingdom of God and human history. ‘Praxis histórica e identidad cristiana’ (1977g) is a later example of Míguez Bonino’s understanding of Christian mission in history; cf. ‘Mission as Conflict and Challenge’ (1978l), which is a paper given to the Ecumenical Forum of Canada. Finally ‘The Concern for a Vital and Coherent Theology’ (1989d) is a much more recent example of Míguez Bonino’s understanding of the theological task in the framework of the World Council of Churches.

Several monographs were published in the course of the decades. Although Míguez Bonino wrote very little systematically in the earliest period of his career, he drafted *Concilio abierto: Una interpretación protestante del Concilio Vaticano II*¹⁷ (1967c), which demonstrates his concern for the ecumenical movement. Most of his significant books originate from the nineteen seventies. *Ama y Haz lo que quieras: Hacia una ética para el hombre Nuevo*¹⁸ (1972a), relates ethics to the creation of the new humanity in Christ. *Space to be people* (1979i), originally published as *Espacio para ser hombres: Una interpretación del mensaje de la Biblia para nuestro mundo*¹⁹ (1975c), is a series of evangelistic talks that can be viewed as a contextualization of the Biblical message to a Christian and non-Christian audience in the Argentina of the time. *Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation* (1975b), published in Britain as *Revolutionary Theology comes of Age* (1975h), and translated into Spanish as *La Fe en busca de la eficacia* (1977a) is an analysis of Latin American liberation theology. *Christians and Marxists: The Mutual Challenge to Revolution* (1976c) analyses a major ideological and missiological challenge to Christianity in Latin America. It represents a significant dialogue with a secular ideology.

A few monographs originate from the nineteen eighties and nineties. *Toward a Christian Political Ethics* (1983m) treats in a systematic way the relationship of Christianity to politics, i.e. Christian responsibility in the political realm. Whereas, *Faces of Latin American Protestantism* (1997a), originally published in Spanish as *Rostros del Protestantismo Latinoamericano*²⁰ (1995c), represents a ‘more or less systematic attempt at writing missiology’ (interview with author 1997), proposing the Trinity as hermeneutical criterion in the search for theological coherence and mission as material principle of a Latin American Protestant theology in its search for unity. This book will be used extensively in chapter six.

¹⁷ Open Council: A Protestant Interpretation of the Second Vatican Council.

¹⁸ Love and do as you will: Towards and Ethic for the New Humanity.

¹⁹ Space to be People: An Interpretation of the Message of the bible for our World.

²⁰ Faces of Latin American Protestantism.

1.6.2 Secondary Sources

Publications which deal in a more or less systematic way with the work of Míguez Bonino include books, articles and unpublished dissertations. *Fe, Compromiso y Teología: Homenaje a José Míguez Bonino*²¹ (ISEDET 1985), which was written as a *Festschrift* on the occasion of his retirement from full-time teaching. It contains biographical information as well as reflections upon various theological themes by his colleagues at ISEDET. There are articles dealing with Latin American theologies of liberation which pay attention to aspects of Míguez Bonino's theology. Three books are worth mentioning: 1. Rebecca Chopp, *Praxis of Suffering* (1986), which analyses Míguez Bonino's theology among others and interprets it as a theology of "conversion to the world." This book focuses almost exclusively on Míguez Bonino's hermeneutics; 2. Thomas L. Schubeck S.J., *Liberation Ethics: Sources, Models and Norms* (1993), which sees Míguez Bonino's ethics as the work of a scholar who addresses the issue of power; and 3. Alistair Kee, *Marx and the Failure of Liberation Theology* (1990), which analyzes his use of Marx and is highly critical because he views Míguez Bonino as a theologian who does not engage with Marx's second criticism of religion: that of the inversion of reality.

Various unpublished dissertations have been written, either on an aspect of Míguez Bonino's theology or comparing him with the theological concepts of other scholars. Javier Elizondo, 'The Use of the Bible in the Moral Deliberation of Liberation Theologians: An Examination of the Works of Leonardo Boff, Jose Míguez Bonino and Porfirio Miranda' (1988), demonstrates that there is convergence and divergence in the theologians' use of the Bible and in their views regarding the way in which the biblical witness provides specific themes and directions for Christian life. Its weakness, however, is that the author, although he examines the Latin American mindset and culture in relation to theology, does not explore profoundly enough the socio-political context (Liberation Theologians insist upon this context). Ransom Eugene Casey-Rutland, 'An Examination of the Issue of Violence in the Writings of Selected Latin American Liberation Theologians' (1991), focuses on the ethics and justification of violence in the theologies of Dom Hélder Câmara, Jose Míguez Bonino, and Juan Luis Segundo; it contains little or no exploration of the context of violence in which these theologians were working and writing. Roy Bissell Cooper, 'A Critical Analysis of Liberation Theology in the Works of Jose Míguez Bonino and Ronald J. Sider' (1986), written from an evangelical perspective, examines the different approaches to theology of Míguez Bonino and Sider. Its real value is in the emphasis upon the different historical contexts and different Church traditions of the two authors. But the developments within Míguez Bonino's theology are not fully examined nor analysed; it is a photo rather than a film. John Borman, 'A Study in Christianity, Marxist Ideology and Historical Engagement with Special Reference to the Liberation Theology of Jose Míguez Bonino' (1983), is an examination of Míguez Bonino's theological thought seeing the concept of the Kingdom of God as the hermeneutical key. Although Míguez Bonino's indebtedness to Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Oscar Cullmann and Jürgen Moltmann are acknowledged, Míguez Bonino's Barthianism is not fully explored and his socio-political context is not given sufficient prominence. A further

²¹ Faith, Commitment and Theology: In Honour of José Míguez Bonino.

problem with this work is that Borman only had access to Míguez Bonino's work in English. This has seriously limited the study. Sergio Antonio Estrada, 'A critique of liberationist exegesis of the Gospel of Luke as reflected in the writings of Jose Míguez Bonino, Leonardo Boff, and Gustavo Gutiérrez (1992), develops a historical-critical-cultural model of interpretation in order to discern whether the liberationist approaches to the Gospel of Luke can be considered exegetically sound. It includes an attempt at a Latin American perspective on biblical interpretation and at a history of the Latin peoples that gives a good basis for the understanding of the exegesis of these theologians.

In the category of secondary sources, reviews of Míguez Bonino's books and articles can also be placed. They can be found in theological journals of various confessional traditions. Finally, published correspondence needs to be mentioned. Famous is the letter of Jürgen Moltmann, 'An Open Letter to José Míguez Bonino' (Moltmann 1979:57-63), which is a highly critical response to Míguez Bonino's *Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Theology Comes of Age* and forms a critical backdrop for further reflection for liberation theologians in the continuous rethinking of their theologies.

1.6.3 General Literature

This study mainly uses general literature to investigate the background to both Míguez Bonino's personal context and thought and the context of world, church and mission at large. These include literature to describe and analyze the works of such diverse thinkers as Karl Barth, Jürgen Moltmann, Oscar Cullmann, Hendrik Berkhof, and Ernst Bloch. In this regard, both primary and secondary sources of their thought will be used as well as various dictionaries (Lossky, Míguez Bonino, Pobee, Stransky, Wainwright and Webb 1991; McGrath 1993; Fabella and Sugirtharajah 2000; Anderson 1998, Müller, Sundermeier, Bevans, and Blise 1997; and Moreau 2000).

For the history of Argentina, the following studies are significant: David Rock, *Argentina 1516-1983: From Spanish Colonialism to the Falklands War* (1985)²² and Edwin Williamson, *The Penguin History of Argentina* (1992). They are used to trace major events in the history of Argentina that impinge upon Míguez Bonino's life story.

From the many histories of Christianity in Latin America, a few books are selected. Pablo Deiros, *Historia del Cristianismo en América Latina* (1992), provides the study with a recent panorama of the history of the church in Latin America written by an Argentinean Baptist. Hans Jürgen Prien, *Historia del Cristianismo en América Latina* (1987)²³ is another panorama of Latin American church history. Prien is a member of the *Comisión de Estudios de la Historia de la Iglesia en América Latina* (CEHILA),²⁴ a Latin American commission founded in 1973 to study church history in Latin America and the Caribbean. This work is used alongside Deiros because of its detailed analysis and strong methodology. Jean-Pierre Bastian, *Historia del Protestantismo en América Latina* (1990), gives specific historical detail in regard to the Protestant church in Latin America. Arno Enns,

²² This book was translated into Spanish by Nestor Míguez, Míguez Bonino's eldest son.

²³ Hans-Jürgen Prien, *Die Geschichte des Christentums in Lateinamerika* (1978) is the original.

²⁴ Commission for the Study of Church History in Latin America.

Man, Milieu and Mission in Argentina (1971) provides data for Argentine church history. These sources are used widely in chapter two.

Reference books on mission theology will also be used. David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (1991), especially chapter twelve, helps to compare Míguez Bonino's missionary theology with the wide range of contemporary traditions. Roger C. Bassham, *Mission Theology: 1948-1975 Years of Worldwide Creative Tension Ecumenical, Evangelical and Roman Catholic* (1979) precedes the study of Bosch serving a similar purpose but treating a more limited period. Johannes Verkuyl, *Missiology: An introduction* (1978) gives an historical survey of missiology from the sixteenth century onwards and introduces at the same time, systematically and contemporary missionary thinking on the basis, goals, means, and motives of mission. Jan A.B. Jongeneel, *Philosophy, Science, and Theology of Mission in the 19th and 20th Centuries: A Missiological Encyclopedia. Part I: Philosophy and Science of Mission* (1995) and *Part II: Missionary Theology* (1997) categorizes and analyses missionary thinking over the past two centuries. Each of these monographs has extensive bibliographies enabling further missiological research.

2 MÍGUEZ BONINO IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT: A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

I have been variously tagged a conservative, a revolutionary, a Barthian, a liberal, a catholic, a “moderate,” and a liberationist. Probably there is truth in all of these. It is not for me to decide. However, when I do attempt to define myself in my inmost being, what “comes from within” is that I am an *Evangélico* (1997a:vii-viii).

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Theology is never done in a vacuum. It is intimately related to the cultural, social, political and religious context in which it emerges. It is, therefore, also true that theology is related to biography (Klootwijk 1992:19). As a result, it is vitally important, to understand Míguez Bonino’s journey as a man as well as a theologian in order to comprehend his theological thought.

This chapter will not only recount the major events and activities of Míguez Bonino’s life¹, but also the important social, political and religious changes at the three levels of context, in which his theology has been worked out: Argentina, Latin America and the wider world. The meaning of these events will not be analysed in detail, rather they will be noted as the background of Míguez Bonino’s life and ministry.

The life of Míguez Bonino is divided into 9 periods. Each will receive its own section. A section is added on the impact of Barth on Míguez Bonino.

2.2 EARLY LIFE: SANTA FE AND ROSARIO (1924-1943)

Míguez Bonino was born on 5th March, 1924 in Santa Fe, Argentina, a town situated about 400 kilometres north of the capital city of Buenos Aires. He was the only child of a working class, Protestant family of first-generation European immigrants. His father, also José Míguez, was born in Galicia, Spain in 1884 and arrived in Argentina in 1900 at the age of sixteen. Míguez Bonino’s mother, Aurelia Agustina Bonino was from an Italian family from Piamonte, Northern Italy that arrived in Uruguay in the same year, 1884. She was born about two months after the family’s arrival and before they moved on to Argentina.

The country to which they had arrived was one that was beginning to experience considerable demographic and economic growth. This led to social and political instability. The majority of the poor immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe could not find work on the land and were forced to find employment in the developing light industry, services and growing bureaucracy in cities such as Buenos

¹ For much of this information I am indebted to Míguez Bonino himself, for spending time talking about his life and experience, being honest and open and for clarifying and correcting the text.

Aires, Rosario and Santa Fe.² This new working class had no ties of loyalty to the ‘powerful lords of the Pampas’ (Williamson 1992:460), and created a restless urban proletariat, with socialist and anarchist ideas brought from Europe (Luna 1997:137-138). Electoral reform in 1912 led it to gain political power. The economic power, however, remained among the rural elites.

In 1931, due to Míguez Bonino’s father’s work, the family moved to Rosario; a city 160 kilometres south of Santa Fe. They lived in a lower-middle class area where most of the families were of the administrative workers at the docks. ‘Although his family did not suffer from poverty, Míguez Bonino saw and experienced at first-hand the life of the poor dock workers, went to school with the workers’ children and drank “mate”³ with them in their tenement houses’ (Ferm 1988:130).

Míguez Bonino’s parents, both converts to Protestantism from Roman Catholicism, were members of the Methodist Church in Rosario. His father was the church treasurer and his mother was involved in the Women’s Society. The church was mainly made up of working class dockworkers’ families, although there were some middle class immigrant families; mainly Dutch and German. He describes this church as “mildly charismatic”. It was not unusual to hear a “hallelujah” or an “amen” in the services, nor to hear several people praying aloud at the same time (Interview 1997). Preaching and evangelism was important to the church. The appeal to conversion was not a stereotyped formula to salvation but rather a call to discipleship that contained an element of social concern. The Pietist heritage of the Second Great Awakening in the United States, therefore, was clear in the preaching (Interview 1997). The church was also active in education (Monti 1976:201).

Unusually for a Methodist, Míguez Bonino was not baptised as an infant. He assumes that his parents wanted him to make a decision for himself. A hymn written by his lifelong friend and colleague, Federico Pagura expresses concisely his feelings about his early spiritual experience:

Mi entire life vibrates with joy
My cup overflows with gratitude
Towards Him who put in my existence
Meaning and company from my youth.⁴

When Míguez Bonino was about fourteen years of age, he came to a point where he wanted to be more integrated into the church. He believed that to be a Christian one had to take communion and to do that one had to be baptised as a public declaration of one’s faith. In 1938 he took this step. Thereafter, he was active in the Methodist

² There were exceptions to this with some British investment, especially in the south of Argentina where a type of ‘modern hacienda’ operated. Also some of the Italian immigrants established small nurseries (Spanish: chacras) in parts of Buenos Aires and Santa Fe provinces. A number of these immigrants later became the backbone of many Methodist and Baptist churches in this area.

³ “Mate” is a herbal infusion common in Paraguay, Uruguay, Southern Brazil and Argentina. In Argentina “taking Mate” is a communal activity where everybody drinks from the same cup and the same straw.

⁴Original: Mi vida entra vibra de alegría
mi copa rebosa gratitud
hacia el que puso en mi existencia
sentido y compañía
desde mi juventud.

F.J. Pagura (*Cancionero Abierto*) Vol 5, No. 2.

church up to the time he went to seminary (cf. 1952c:5). His main activities were teaching in the Sunday school and leading the youth work.

Míguez Bonino's secondary education took place in a pedagogically orientated school (*escuela normal*). These schools had been instituted by Argentinean President Domingo F. Sarmiento (1811-1888)⁵ to produce primary school teachers and thereby develop literacy throughout the country. Prior to this period, James Diego Thompson, the British Baptist had brought the Lancastrian System of education to Latin America with great success. Joseph Lancaster (1778-1838) led a movement to establish schools that used what he called the Monitorial System, sometimes called the "Lancasterian" or "Lancastrian" System, in which more advanced students taught less advanced ones, enabling a small number of adult masters to educate large numbers of students at low cost in basic and often advanced skills. The motto of this movement was *Qui docet, discit*. (The one who teaches, learns). Although Sarmiento had brought several Methodist women missionaries from the United States to initiate the project, by the time Míguez Bonino was studying, 'the teachers of this strictly "secular" school were mostly of a socialist and "positivist" orientation' (1991d:198). He graduated from secondary school in December 1940 and in the March of 1941, largely under the influence of his father, entered the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Rosario.

The Methodist Church was always socially minded, having discussions on social and even political issues in the church, both in the young people's group and also at church level. This awoke Míguez Bonino's social interest. It was during his time studying medicine that he came into contact with the *Movimiento Socialista de Juventud* (MSJ)⁶ and became a member. In those days the MSJ had no thought of violent revolution. Militant activity took the form of supporting workers' strikes; writing articles and graffiti; and holding discussions in the 'peoples libraries' (*bibliotecas populares*).

The realization of Míguez Bonino's call to Christian work came slowly. Writing later in his ministry (1952), he recalls the following:

Through the process of studying the first classes in medicine, I felt more intensely that there was a different type of work that God was calling me to. With pleasure I stole a couple of hours from study in order to dedicate to the church. This feeling became dominant, especially when in the middle of that year [1942] I read the letters to the Philippians and Ephesians and especially the first chapters of that second letter (1952c:5).

After two-and a half years of studying medicine he left Rosario to study theology in Buenos Aires.

Summing up this period of his life, Míguez Bonino comments: 'I think this strange mixture of working class conditions, strong piety and social awareness have remained with me—mixed and organized or disorganized in different ways at different moments—throughout all my life' (Ferm 1998:130).

⁵ The major influences upon Sarmiento were Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827), the Swiss educational reformer, Auguste Comte (1798-1857), the French philosopher; and John Dewey (1859-1952), the American educationalist.

⁶ Socialist Youth Movement.

2.3 THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION: BUENOS AIRES (1943-1948)

The only way to become an ordained minister in the Argentinean Methodist church in the nineteen forties, was to study at *Facultad Evangélica de Teología* (FET).⁷ Míguez Bonino arrived in Buenos Aires in late June 1943 to begin his theological studies for a licentiate (*Licenciatura*) in theology.

This was a time of social and political instability caused by a *coup d'état* earlier that month. This coup brought the military junta that led to Juan Domingo Perón coming to power. Perón's presidency (1946-1955) was characterised by a strange mixture of social justice and political repression that defies simple characterisation. Programmes to introduce social justice included pension schemes; protection against layoffs; a working day of statutory defined length; paid vacations and a new rigorously enforced Sunday rest law; improved working conditions for factory workers; accident compensation; regulated apprenticeships; control on female and child labour; compulsory conciliation and arbitration procedures; subsidized housing; legal services; and annual bonuses (*aguinaldos*). The price of these policies, however, was the ruthless suppression of any opposition to Perón and his government; dismissal of any political opponents; impeachment of opposition Supreme Court judges; limitation of the freedom of the press; the closure or assumption of any union not under Perón's control; and favouritism towards of any pro-Perón publication. Perón's government was deposed by the military in 1955.

The FET was an ecumenical institute from its establishment. By the time Míguez Bonino began his studies, it was a collaborative venture that included the Waldensian Church, the Division of World Missions of the Methodist Church, the Disciples of Christ, and the Presbyterian Church of America (Division of World Missions of the Methodist Church 1956:56). The Lutheran Church joined the FET when it became ISEDET (1969). The aim of the FET was to provide university level education for the Churches and to provide reflection upon theological questions relevant to the churches (WCC 1962:97-98).

The faculty was mainly made up of foreign missionaries drawn from the participating denominations and other Historic Churches present in Argentina.⁸ Carlos Gattinoni was the only Argentinean professor at the time. Most of the professors were influenced by the liberal theology of scholars such as William Newton Clarke (1841-1912) (Clarke 1898; cf. Douglas 1995:102-103) and Walter Rauschenbusch (1861-1918) (Rauschenbusch 1917). Others were Reformed theologians such as Rudolph Obermüller who joined the faculty in 1948. He had studied under Karl Barth (1886-1968) but his main theological influence was the Swiss Reformed theologian Adolf Schlatter (1852-1939). Schlatter was a biblical theologian who stressed 'faith rather than speculative thought, and he maintained a life-long concern of Christian social action' (cf. Douglas 1995:336-337).

The licentiate degree (*Licenciatura*) in theology at the FET was a five-year course. This included three years of academic study, a year's practical experience, a final year of classes, and the preparation of a thesis. The first two years' study

⁷ Evangelical Faculty of Theology.

⁸ In Latin America 'Historical' or 'Historic' Churches (*iglesias históricas*) refers to denominations such as the Anglican, Presbyterian and Methodist Churches. They are some of the first Protestant denominations to be planted in Latin America and today are generally those associated with the Latin American Council of Churches.

included Old Testament and New Testament, Systematic Theology, History of the Church, Christian Education, Psychology and Pastoral Theology.

Míguez Bonino enjoyed the studies, finding them easier than medicine. He also benefited from the small community of about fifteen to twenty students who lived on campus. Among the other students was Mortimer Arias, who served on the Commission of World Mission and Evangelism of the WCC; Julio de Santa Ana, later a member of the WCC group with responsibility of relations with the Roman Catholic Church; and Emilio Castro, a member of many ecumenical bodies including the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) and later General Secretary of the WCC.

Míguez Bonino's party political activity came to an end at this point. Apart from the fact that he was concentrating on his studies, it was believed that a 'minister's political activities were not carried out through the membership in a specific political party' (1991d:201).

For Míguez Bonino, the practical year took place after his second year. The Bolivian Methodist Church was in need of a pastor, two missionaries having returned to the United States on furlough. Therefore, he spent just under a year (1945-46) in Cochabamba, Bolivia. He divided his time between teaching religion and ethics at the 'American Institute,' which was the largest school in Bolivia at the time and ministering in the young Methodist congregation, which was in only its third year of existence. Preaching, teaching Sunday school and visiting were his major responsibilities at the church.

This ecclesiastical work in Bolivia was his first experience outside Argentina. It had a significant effect on him in two ways. Firstly, the enthusiasm and commitment of the Bolivian Evangelicals (*Evangélicos*) made an impact on him. He encountered mainly Methodist and Baptist churches, and was able to visit twenty-three different churches and preaching points. He describes various situations where the Bolivian church was working hard in preaching and serving others in spite of being persecuted themselves. This led him to question, 'has this not got something to say to our comfortable Christianity?' (1946c:22). Secondly, living in Santa Fe, Rosario and Buenos Aires, Míguez Bonino had encountered many different languages, cultures and nationalities but this was his first encounter with indigenous Latin American culture. One just had to go out of the city a short way and to meet Quechua speakers who did not understand Spanish. Although most of the students at the American School were from the middle classes in Bolivian society, all the workers—gardeners, cleaners and cooks—were Quechua speaking. He described it as 'A whole other world, totally different' (Weishein 2001:281). His assessment of the indigenous culture, however, was not positive as he refers to the 'chaos of superstition, ignorance and vice of the indigenous race' as well as, the youth who are 'prisoners to extremist tendencies'; additionally he called attention to 'apathy of the official church before these burning questions' (1946c:21). This statement reveals a conservative assessment of both popular and official religion as well as the political tendencies of the young people (cf. 1961k:98).

In 1946, Míguez Bonino returned from Bolivia to continue his studies in Buenos Aires. In this post-Bolivian period, the main subjects of study included History of Religion, Philosophy, History of Protestantism, Systematic Theology and Music. Moreover, he continued studying Pastoral Theology as well beginning work on his thesis.

It was during this period that Míguez Bonino became involved with the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF)⁹. Various other theologians, including Richard Shaull, Julio de Santa Ana, Híber Conteris and Rubém Alves were also involved (Weishein 2001:296). These, along with Míguez Bonino, were instrumental in the formation of *Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina* (ISAL),¹⁰ an important body in the development of liberation theology in Protestantism. The WSCF was led at that time by Valdo Galland, who had studied under the French theologian Pierre Maury. Maury had introduced Galland to the theology of Barth and consequently Míguez Bonino and other young Protestant theologians began to study Barth's theology.

On 8th February, 1947 Míguez Bonino was married to Noemí Francisca Angela Nieuwenhuize. Her family attended the Plymouth Brethren church and they met when she attended the Methodist Church Sunday School (Pagura 1985:32). The next year, their first son, Nestor, was born. Also in 1947, he became pastor to a small local church in Ramos Mejia, a working class suburb just outside the city limits of Buenos Aires (Pagura 1985:32). He worked under the supervision of Dr. Sante U. Barbieri, former Executive Secretary of the Methodist Church in Argentina, whose social concern, evangelistic zeal and powerful preaching had an impact upon him.

At the same time Míguez Bonino was working on his licentiate thesis, which was entitled 'Hombre y Dios en el siglo XVI, Estudio e interpretación de las relaciones entre Renacimiento y Reforma en la persona, obra y pensamiento de Lutero y Erasmo de Rotterdam; su influencia y su actualidad' (1948b).¹¹ This thesis demonstrates clearly his developing Barthianism which has been maintained throughout his life. He was reading Luther in the light of the theology of Barth, and the theology of Desiderius Erasmus in the light of the Liberal Theologians who were the teachers of his professors. He asserts that Barth was more faithful to the Reformation tradition than the liberal theologians. The thesis also shows how he was struggling with the tension between classical pietism and the liberal social gospel. In Luther he attempted to uncover a solution. He says of Luther's relationship between doctrine and ethics: 'it is the religious factor not the legal that wakens ethical life' (1948b:130). The basis for ethical life is the gospel and not law. Finally, the thesis reveals a contextual reading of Luther's theology. He did not attempt a simple historical investigation but a dialogue between the present context and the historical one. Having completed his thesis he received his licentiate in Theology and was ordained as presbyter in the Methodist Church of Argentina.

2.4 PASTORAL MINISTRY: SAN RAFAEL (1948-1952)

After graduation from seminary, Míguez Bonino was sent as pastor to a small church in San Rafael, in the prosperous wine producing area near Mendoza, Argentina. As in Cochabamba and Ramos Mejía, this was a small church at its very beginning of its life. It was made up of mainly French and Swiss Protestants who

⁹ In Latin America this is known as La Federación de Movimiento Estudiantil Cristiano (FUMEC or sometimes it is simply called MEC).

¹⁰ Church and Society in Latin America.

¹¹ Humanity and God in the 16th century: Study and Interpretation of the relationship between the Renaissance and Reformation in the person, work and thought of Luther and Erasmus of Rotterdam.

had settled in San Rafael. His job was to help this small group grow both spiritually and numerically. He saw his role as teaching and training the congregation in their life and work as Christians. He organized two or three concentrated study weeks each year. These mainly consisted of biblical and ethical teaching. In addition, evangelistic youth events would also take place in cooperation with the Baptist church.

The Methodist church was able to erect its own building during those years (cf. The Division of World Missions of the Methodist Church 1951:57). It almost doubled its membership from twenty-five to forty-five. However, Míguez Bonino is remembered in San Rafael 'above all for the building up of his congregation. They were affirmed solidly in the Word and trained for their integral service to the community' (Pagura 1985:32). It was during this period that his second son, Eduardo was born.

2.5 FURTHER STUDIES AND YOUTH SECRETARY: ATLANTA AND BUENOS AIRES (1952-1958)

1952 was a turbulent time in Argentina. Eva Perón died causing almost fanatical grief among Peronist supporters. Her husband, Juan Domingo Peron was re-elected president after a violent campaign. In this context, a new stage began in Míguez Bonino's life. He left the church in San Rafael, and after giving an intensive course on Wesleyan theology at the FET, he went to Europe and the USA for a period of one and a half years of travel and study (cf. 1954a:7-9).

Among other activities in Europe, Míguez Bonino attended the meetings of the International Missionary Council (IMC) in Willingen, Germany (1952) and those of the Faith and Order Movement in Lund, Sweden (cf. Tomkins 1953). He then, travelled to the United States to study for a Master of Arts in teaching at Candler School, Emory University, Georgia, where he was joined by his wife, Noemí and his two sons. His studies mainly took place in the area of historical theology. He took several courses in the history of American and Wesleyan theology and also studied widely in the area of contemporary theology. He was able to read a great deal of the theology of Oscar Cullmann and Rudolf Bultmann. This gave him an enhanced foundation in contemporary European theology.

The family returned to Argentina early in 1954 and Míguez Bonino took the role of youth secretary for the Argentine Methodist Church. The Methodist church was working very hard on the biblical and theological formation of its young people at the time. He organised youth camps in the summer (January—March) and regular Bible study weeks, held in various cities around the country. In this role, he maintained close relationships with the regional representation of the WFCS and Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)¹².

Míguez Bonino's involvement in theological education arose from his work among young people. In 1955 he commenced teaching part time at the FET, with an evening lay-course for youth. This course was popular and so in the following year

¹² In Latin America the YMCA is called the *Unión Latinoamericana de Juventudes Evangélicas* (ULAJE).

he was asked to teach the history of modern theology to the main student body. A year later, he was asked to work full-time, mainly teaching Historical Theology.

2.6 DOCTORAL STUDIES: NEW YORK (1958-1960)

In 1958, Míguez Bonino received a scholarship to study for a ThD at Union Seminary, New York. Through a series of lectures given at the FET, he became interested in modern Roman Catholic theology. He travelled with his young family to the United States, where they spent almost three years. His thesis was entitled: 'A Study of Some Recent Roman Catholic and Protestant Thought on the Relation of Scripture and Tradition' (1960). This thesis treats developments by mainly French and German Theologians in the Catholic tradition in this area. He traces how these theologians have abandoned the post-Tridentine comprehension of Scripture and tradition for a more dynamic understanding; seeing Scripture and tradition as 'two channels' through which the truth of the Gospel is known. 'Tradition is, therefore, primarily the exercise by which the Church, through the proper channels given in its God-appointed structure of the commission given by Christ, to proclaim and explain authoritatively the apostolic doctrine' (1960e:406). However, he is still critical of the Roman Catholic Church:

Protestant Theology still feels that the RC understanding of the relation of Scripture and tradition, and behind it, of Christ and the Church, is theologically unacceptable. It dissolves the objectivity of the original apostolic witness by equating the authority of Scripture and interpretation and it thereby tends to destroy the confrontation of Christ and the Church, failing to recognise the full meaning of Christ's Lordship over the church in grace and judgement (1960e:406).

Having completed his ThD thesis in February 1960, Míguez Bonino returned with the family to Argentina, where he took up the role of Rector of the FET.

2.7 RECTOR OF THE *FACULTAD EVANGÉLICA DE TEOLOGÍA*: BUENOS AIRES (1960-70)

The decade of the nineteen sixties was a period of political and social upheaval, not only for Latin America but also for the whole world. In Argentina, two civilian governments (1958-1962 and 1963-1966) were hampered by a policy of strikes and civil strife by the Peronist party. This twice led to military takeovers (1962 and 1966). In 1966, inspired by the economic establishment, the military suspended democracy and instituted a new dictatorship under General Onganía. Modelling itself on Franco's regime in Spain and the military *coup* in Brazil (1964), the regime relied upon the armed forces to maintain social order while economic technocrats dealt with the massive social and economic problems. The social order was as short-lived as it was superficial. 1968 and 1969 brought violent protests from students, intellectuals and car-workers, especially in the city of Cordoba. These protests costs many lives and has come to be known as the 'Cordobazo.' A student was killed by the police in Rosario, Míguez Bonino's home town. In 1970, in the light of the

constant strikes, civil strife, and growth of activity by insurgent groups such as the Montoneros, the military itself deposed Onganía.

Continentially, Latin America was in ferment. The Cuban Revolution (1959); the Alliance for Progress (1961); and the Bay of Pigs fiasco (1961) inaugurated a volatile decade for Latin America. The Cuban Missile Crisis (1962) exacerbated an already volatile situation and put Latin America at the centre of world politics. The activity of insurgent groups and the fear of communism led to military coups in various countries in Latin America: Honduras, Ecuador and Peru (1963), Bolivia and Brazil (1964), and Argentina (1966). These coups led to a subsequent increase in guerrilla violence. The *Montoneros* and the *Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo* (ERP)¹³ were active in Argentina at this time.

Towards the end of the decade, the civil rights movement, and the student strikes; the Paris riots (1968); and the Prague Spring (1968) were seen in Latin America as an eruption of the people, a popular uprising against the 'politics of power' of the United States and the European powers (cf. 1968g:10-12). These social and political events in Latin America and in the North were seen by many as the dawning of a new day for the 'Third World.' Events during this period had a profound effect upon the theological thought of Míguez Bonino and his contemporaries.

B. Foster Stockwell, the long term rector of the FET, retired in December 1959. The six participating churches of the FET proposed that Míguez Bonino should replace him: Stockwell probably influenced this decision. Míguez Bonino made it clear to the authorities at the FET that he would do this job for only ten years. He continued to teach historical theology but also was involved in administration. Part of his responsibilities was also to travel to North America and Europe to raise funds for the FET. During these years, this role took him to the United States, Canada, Britain, France and Germany.

Míguez Bonino's plans for the FET were not specific. He did, however, want to strengthen the relationship between the local churches and the FET. He organised visits and student placements in local churches. He also wanted to make the FET more accessible to church members via short courses for laity. These things had already been started before he became rector but now they were given priority. On the other hand, he also wanted to develop serious theological reflection rather than the simple reproduction of foreign theology. In order to do this he employed recognised scholars in their field who were committed to serious study. Among the more daring appointments was Severino Croatto, the first Roman Catholic to teach at the FET.

One of the most important of Míguez Bonino's other activities during the nineteen sixties was his attendance at the Second Vatican Council. When Pope John XXIII announced in January 1959 that the council would take place, there was much excitement and rejoicing in Latin America. Coming soon after the final success of the Cuban Revolution, a sense of expectation was forming in intellectual circles. Míguez Bonino was part of the delegation of the World Methodist Council and the United Methodist Church of America and thereby became the only Latin American Protestant observer at the council. Between 1962 and 1965, he attended three of the four sessions, missing only the third session. This required him to be absent from his

¹³ Revolutionary Army of the People.

family (his third son, Daniel was born in 1963) and from the FET in the second half of the second semester during these years. His most thorough treatment of the Council is to be found in *Concilio Abierto*¹⁴ (1967c). The bibliography reveals the extent of his publication on this subject between the years 1963-1967.

The theme of Míguez Bonino's doctoral studies, along with his attendance of the Council, presented him with many opportunities for dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church. It also led to many requests for articles, reflecting on ecumenical relationships between Protestants and Catholics; especially in Latin America.

Míguez Bonino also continued his involvement in the ecumenical movement attending various important international conferences. Among the more important of these was the Joint Assembly of the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches in New Delhi, India (1961); and the Second Assembly of the WCC in Uppsala, Sweden (1968). Both these brought him new responsibilities.

At the New Delhi Assembly, Míguez Bonino became a member of the Commission on Faith and Order Commission (FO). His official involvement ended in 1977. His work with this commission was mainly confined that of reading and commenting on papers and memoranda produced by the executive committee as well as some correspondence and preparation of materials for meetings. He was therefore involved in studies that led to the BEM document and various other important studies related to hermeneutics, ecclesiology and relations to the Roman Catholic Church. The importance of his work in FO will become clear in subsequent chapters. He comments, however: 'Faith and Order never really took root in Latin America...unity as a predominantly doctrinal or ecclesiastical project does not evoke interest or response' (1997a:131).

At the Uppsala Assembly (1968), Míguez Bonino was voted onto the Central Committee of the WCC. This was, again as representative of the United Methodist Church of America. His involvement added a great deal of work to his already busy schedule. He understood his role as follows: 'to represent in your area the concerns and the programmes of the World Council of Churches and on the other hand to take back to the Central Committee the concerns of the Churches' (Interview 14.8.2001). This involved a lot of travelling and meeting with local church leaders to listen to their concerns and to report to the Central Committee. In this way Míguez Bonino obtained a wide knowledge and experience of Latin American church life.

In the academic year 1967-1968, Míguez Bonino was visiting professor at Union Seminary, New York. Although he was there for the whole year, he only officially taught the first semester because the spring semester (1968) was the time of the student strikes in the United States. The student body of Union Seminary came out in support of the Columbia University students. The faculty of the Seminary, which was generally in sympathy with the students, also supported the strike. Míguez Bonino continued giving classes informally in his apartment. He taught a course on *Dei Verbum*: 'The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation,' 'Christianity in Latin America,' and 'Missionary concepts in Latin America.' It is interesting to note that some of the students felt that he was too conservative because

¹⁴ Open Council.

they were interested in spontaneous political uprisings, whereas he was far more concerned with “organized political and social life” (Interview 14.8.2001).

The decade of the nineteen sixties saw various important developments in ecumenical life in Latin America. Míguez Bonino was one of the important leaders during this period. The *Conferencias Evangélicas de Latinoamérica* (CELAs)¹⁵ had begun in Buenos Aires (1949) and were designed to help the Latin American Protestant Churches to advance in their mission in Latin America. The second conference in Lima, Peru (1961), entitled ‘Christ the Hope of Latin America’ (CELA 1962) was a catalyst for various important projects. The conference recognised the need for continuity in the search for the unity within Latin American Protestantism. This led to the formation of the *Movimiento Pro-Unidad Evangélica de Latinoamérica* (UNELAM) (1963).¹⁶ Another organisation that proceeded from this conference was *Asociación de Institutos Teológicos* (ASIT),¹⁷ a body set up to accredit seminaries and Bible institutes in Latin America. A final CELA was held in Buenos Aires (1969). Míguez Bonino was involved in the Conferences and also in the bodies that emerged from them.

Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina (ISAL)¹⁸ was another influential body, in Latin American Protestantism during the nineteen sixties; and one in which Míguez Bonino was influential. He had been involved in the discussions in the late nineteen fifties (1957) that had led to the first consultation, which took place at the same time as the Second CELA (July, 1961). This consultation was entitled ‘Encounter and Challenge: Evangelical Latin American Christian Action in the Changing Social, Political and Economic Situation’ (ISAL 1961). The prevailing feeling that emerged from this consultation was one of perplexity. The participants felt the need for a more thorough investigation of the social dynamics between church and society. The periodical that emerged from this consultation, *Cristianismo y Sociedad*¹⁹, was a forum for creative and radical theology in the Latin American Protestant church for decades afterwards. This body organised other consultations through the nineteen sixties until the early seventies (El Tabo, Chile (1966); Piriápolis, Uruguay (1967); Ñaña, Peru (1971)). During this period, ISAL moved, inexorably from the concept of development, towards participation in revolution, as the answer to the church’s responsibility towards social change. This was given expression in the fact that it was one of the leading organising bodies of the Christians for Socialism Conference (1972). After the Chilean coup that brought Augusto Pinochet to power, however, it ceased to organise centrally; although *Cristianismo y Sociedad* continued to be published. Míguez Bonino participated in all of ISAL’s consultations; gave papers at most of these; contributed widely to its periodical; and promoted many of its theological insights. The theology of ISAL was a significant contributing factor in the rise of the Theology of Liberation.

At national level, Míguez Bonino continued to be occupied with church life. Most notably, he was closely involved in the process which led to the *Iglesia Evangélica Metodista Argentina* (IEMA)²⁰ becoming autonomous. At the 74th

¹⁵ Latin American Evangelical Conferences.

¹⁶ Movement Towards Evangelical Unity in Latin America.

¹⁷ The Association of Theological Institutes.

¹⁸ Church and Society in Latin America.

¹⁹ Christianity and Society.

²⁰ Argentine Evangelical Methodist Church.

Annual Conference of the Methodist Church in Argentina (1966), he gave a series of talks entitled: ‘What does it mean to be the Church of Christ here and now?’ (1966k). In those talks, he posed some serious questions about the institutions and structures of the Methodist Church and its identification of the church with the people of Argentina:

Have we been content (in terms of the structure of our Church, distances, human groups, the way of life of our countries) with reproducing those elements which have emerged in other contexts which are very different from our own? Are we organized institutionally, financially, in our buildings, and in our ministry in terms of our numbers and of the human and economic possibilities of our membership. Or are we bleeding dry the enthusiasm and money of our members and countries in our attempt to spread the resources, personnel, and institutions in order to set up and maintain programmes created for memberships of millions in an opulent society? (1966k)

Míguez Bonino was president of the committee, which during the period 1965-1969 negotiated with the United Methodist Church of America and wrote the constitution of the newly formed independent denomination. He insists: ‘There was a need to simplify very seriously the structure of the church... We spent most of our time in useless discussions of purely institutional things instead of dealing with the issues of work and mission. Autonomy allowed the churches to have a kind of organization that would really deal with the issues’ (Interview 2001). He preached at the inaugural service, which took place on 5th October, 1969.

2.8 DIRECTOR OF THE *ASOCIACIÓN DE SEMINARIOS E INSTITUTOS TEOLÓGICOS*: BUENOS AIRES (1970-1976)

Historically for Argentina, the first half of the nineteen seventies was one of growing economic crisis, social unrest and political turmoil. From 1970-1973, two successive military governments attempted and failed to bring economic and social stability to the country. Political violence was increasing. In this context, the Peronists called for Perón’s return. But by the time he returned to Argentina (June, 1973), Perón, was seventy-seven, frail, and lacked the charismatic presence of Evita at his side. The Peronist movement was pulling itself apart. It contained fascist, Cuban style Communist, and social democratic factions. In spite of the return of Perón, left wing insurgents continued to bomb, kidnap and assassinate. Right-wing death squads, such as the notorious Argentinean Anticomunista Alliance (Triple A)²¹ were used by both Perón and subsequent military governments to deal with any left wing opposition.

On 1st July 1974, Perón died of a heart attack and the country was plunged into chaos. Peron’s third wife, Isabel took over as president but proved powerless to unite the country. In the face of a collapsing economy and a growing militant insurgency, the military, led by General Jorge Videla took over the government. This trend of military intervention was mirrored in the rest of Latin America. The list is as striking as it is sad: Guatemala (1970-1982), Bolivia (1971), Ecuador

²¹ Alianza Anticomunista Argentina.

(1972), Chile and Uruguay (1973), Bolivia (1974), Honduras and Peru (1975), and of course, Argentina (1976).

Keeping his promise of 10 years earlier, Míguez Bonino left the post of Rector of the FET. In January 1971, the FET established a partnership with the Lutheran Faculty of Theology and changed its name to ISEDET. A year earlier, he had replaced Emilio Castro as Executive Secretary of 'the Association of Seminaries and Theological Institutes' (ASIT)²², and now took up the task full time. ASIT was formed in November 1963; Míguez Bonino had been a part of a committee formed after a consultation in 1962 to lead to the formation of this body. ASIT was partially sponsored by the Theological Education Fund (TEF), and was one of the Associations of Seminaries that were formed at the beginning of the 1960s. According to Pablo A. Deiros, it was 'one of the cooperative experiments that had most success' (Deiros 1992:813-814). It promoted 'accreditation projects, interchange of students and professors, the promotion of libraries and above all, consultation on diverse subjects, especially those that have are specifically to do with theological education' (Deiros 1992:813-814).

Although, ostensibly this was a full-time job for Míguez Bonino, he continued to teach at ISEDET and other institutes. He also continued to publish extensively. The job with ASIT mainly consisted of visiting the member institutions in the various countries, checking their academic levels and advising on diverse matters of theological education. He travelled chiefly to the interior of Argentina and to Chile and Uruguay as well as to a lesser extent, Bolivia. It also meant arranging consultations on various issues related to theological education.²³ He handed this job over to Pablo A. Deiros in 1976.

This time was one of the most intense periods of publication for Míguez Bonino. Between 1970 and 1985 almost half of his total literary production took place. The theological and historical articles he wrote during this time cover a multitude of issues. They deal, for instance with Christian education, history of Latin American Protestantism, explanations of the Theology of Liberation, papers for Faith and Order, mission strategy and theology, evangelisation, Christology, interpretations of Catholicism and Protestantism, ecumenism, Methodism and its theology, democracy, and history.

Four of his thirteen books were written and published during these six years. Two were written for the Latin American church and two for the English Speaking theological world. These four books represent his most important thought of this period. *Ama y haz lo que quieras: Hacia una ética para el hombre nuevo* (1972a) was written as part of a series of short books on ethical issues for the Latin American church. The series was sponsored by the Theological Education Fund, but all the writers were Latin Americans. In this book he poses the question: 'what is the Christian's responsibility in regard to the burning ethical questions of the day?' And he moves towards the question: 'how can this be carried out effectively?' He rejects

²² Asociación de Seminarios e Institutos Teológicos.

²³ The consultations that took place during Míguez Bonino's time as Executive Secretary of ASIT were as follows: A consultation on Theological Education by Extension (Buenos Aires 1970) participation in the First Latin American Consultation of Theological Educators (Sao Paulo, Brazil 1970), and consultation on What does it mean to educate theologically? (Argentina 1971), another treating the subject of Secularization and Theological Education (Asuncion, Paraguay 1972), also Images of the Pastor and a Consultation of Professors of History (both in Montevideo, Uruguay 1973) and finally another consultation on Theological Education by Extension (Santiago, Chile 1975).

‘law’ as a valid basis for Christian ethics, preferring the concepts of the ‘New Creation’ and the Kingdom of God. He argues that Christians are made new in Christ and introduced into the Kingdom. This new humanity is given a new maturity and a freedom in faith, hope and love. They do not follow a series of rules and laws; legalism and pride tend to result. They live out their lives, however, in a context of combat and action. Augustine’s axiom ‘Love and do what you will’ is a précis of this understanding.

The context of the next two books to be mentioned is the dialogue between European and North American, and Latin American theology. Both these books were written in English. In January 1974, Míguez Bonino travelled to the United Kingdom and spent six months in teaching “Latin American History and Theology” at Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham. It was during this time that John R.W. Stott, under the influence of Andrew Kirk, a former professor at ISEDET, invited him to give the “London lectures in contemporary Christianity”, sponsored by the Langham Trust and hosted by the Centre for Extra-Mural Studies of the Polytechnic of Central London. The subject was ‘Christians and Marxists: A Mutual Challenge to Revolution’ (published as 1976c) He was unsure whether to accept the invitation because of the way Latin America theologians felt they were becoming part of the northern world’s theological marketplace (1974e). However, he decided to go ahead after he met personally with John Stott (Stott 1974a).

Míguez Bonino wanted to take a pragmatic approach rather than a speculative one. He only wanted to touch upon theoretical issues where they impinged upon the reality of the cooperation between Christians and Marxists (1974e). The promotion, consequently introduced the lectures as:

concerned not only with a theoretical discussion of the Christian and Marxist world-views, but also and particularly with our active response to concrete situations. In Latin America (‘our dependent and oppressed continent’ [cf. 1974e] he calls it) concerned Christians often find themselves with Marxists in a common struggle (Stott 1974b).

According to Míguez Bonino, this reflects the way Latin Americans have approached the issue of cooperation with other in general and with the Marxists in particular (1974e). Although well received, the lectures caused much controversy. John Stott said that a lot of the vocabulary and concepts that Míguez Bonino used in these talks were quite alien to him and that a lot of the people who attended “could not believe their ears” that Míguez Bonino was advocating Christian cooperation with Marxists. In a letter to Míguez Bonino after the talks Stott signs, “Your concrete brother!” (Stott 1974a) revealing how Míguez Bonino had used the term and how it expressed a significant difference in the use of terminology.

The second book—*Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation* (1975b)—was written upon his return from England and can be considered one of Míguez Bonino’s most influential books. It is an explanation, defence and critique of liberation theology. He begins by describing the historical reality of Latin American Christianity and its relations to colonialism. He then explains the socio-political situation in the continent in terms of dependence and dominance. This led to a description of the way certain Christians have begun to respond to the concrete reality in which they live and subsequently how various theologians have begun to reflect upon the actions of those Christians in the light of the socio-political

problems described. In the second half of the book he treats four theological loci—hermeneutics, Kingdom of God, love and reconciliation, and ecclesiology—that were important for the theology of liberation and then evaluates and critiques these reflections in the light of his own understanding.

The final book to mention is *Espacio para ser hombres: Un interpretación del mensaje de la Biblia par nuestro mundo* (1975c, cf. 1979i). When Míguez Bonino returned from England, he was asked to take up the role of Pastor in a small Methodist Church near his home. This was the church he had begun in 1947. The book emerged from a series of evangelistic talks held in the church, and the ensuing dialogue with the audience. Using various provocative titles, he shows how the Christian doctrines of God, humanity, salvation and mission should be liberating rather than oppressive within society. He explains the meaning of humanity in the world, the meaning of life in this world today, and the freedom and assurance that comes from life in Christ.

2.9 DIRECTOR POST-GRADUATE STUDIES OF THE *INSTITUTO SUPERIOR DE EDUCACIÓN TEOLÓGICA*: BUENOS AIRES (1976-1985)

The overwhelming social and political fact for Argentina during this period was, what has come to be known as the ‘Military Process’ and in the wider world as the ‘Dirty War’. The military government that ruled from 1976-1983 was one of the most vicious Argentina has seen. When it took over, it immediately re-imposed Orgaía’s policy of the technocratic dictatorship (1966-1969). This time, however, the model of the Pinochet regime in Chile was followed: military officers were appointed to run government ministries in order to conquer inflation and to balance the budget. The practical application of this was the ruthless suppression of any opposition to the new military dictatorship. Trade unionists, left-wing political groups, and even church officials were imprisoned, tortured and murdered. It is calculated that during the period 1976-1983 over 30,000 people disappeared and were murdered. After their defeat in the *Malvinas* or Falklands’ War, the myth of the military as the defender of the national interest was shown to be false. Leopoldo Galtieri, the leader of the *junta* and *de facto* President resigned and his successors promised a return to democratic government.

In December 1983, Raúl Alfonsín of the *Unión Cívica Radical*²⁴ was elected to power. The economy was in a dreadful state: the interest on the forty-five billion dollar foreign debt was consuming fifty percent of export earnings, and inflation was on the point of reaching 1000% per annum. The survival of democracy rested upon the revival of the economy and the reconciliation of political interests. The first years of democracy were ones of uncertainty and hope.

In 1976, Míguez Bonino took on the role of dean of post-graduate studies at ISEDET. He and his team designed and shaped the curriculum, set accreditation criteria, and promoted the new department. The ongoing work of the department mainly consisted of the supervision and assessment of post-graduate students and all the administrative work involved in their supervision. This is noted in order to emphasise Míguez Bonino’s continuing commitment to the task of theological

²⁴ Civic Union Radical Party.

education and also the emphasis he placed upon higher level theological reflection in the context of Latin American theology.

Other activities, apart from Míguez Bonino's main work were diverse. At the Nairobi Assembly of the WCC, he was voted onto the Presidium of that body. He did not attend the Assembly because it took place in the unstable period between the death of Juan Domingo Perón and the military coup (1976). He feared that if he left the country he would not be able to return. The new role in the WCC generated a lot of extra work such as managing the programmes of the World Council of Churches, projecting for the future, and dealing with institutional matters such as budget. An interesting fact to note is that because Míguez Bonino held such a prominent position in the WCC his life was probably spared during the 'Military Process' (1976-1983). It also gave him freedom to travel, to report on local issues; and to continue his publishing activities.

An important activity that lies outside his theological activities was that Míguez Bonino was a founder member and vice-President of *Asamblea Permanente de Derechos Humanos* (APDH)²⁵. In December 1975 representatives of various political parties, social and religious groups (including representatives from the Jewish, Catholic and Protestant communities) met to constitute the APDH. He attended the meeting but it was Carlos Gattinoni who was the official Evangelical (Evangélico) representative. The formation of the APDH was a reaction to the activity of Peron's death squads—the infamous *Alianza Argentina Anti-Comunista* or *Triple A*.²⁶ When the military coup took place three months later (March 1976), the APDH began to receive reports of disappearances, abuses of human rights, and torture. Míguez Bonino, as one of the vice-presidents spent many hours (almost half his available time) interviewing people who had lost family members or friends, and meeting various other human rights groups.

This period was one of deep personal experience in Míguez Bonino's Christian life. He explains how in one interview, a Jewish woman, who was a member of the Communist party recounted to him how her son had disappeared. She said to him, 'Pastor, help me because I realise that I am starting to hate' (1991c:205). He felt impotent. 'What can one do there? I think I said, "Look here, I can't help you much but what I would do if this happened to me is pray, because I know of no other way not to hate. I know you don't share this belief but do you want me to pray for you?" And we had a prayer together for a few minutes' (1991c:205). This story illustrates his deep piety and desire to integrate faith and praxis.

The APDH's work did not finish with the end of the military government (1983) because it took on the even more complicated task of eradicating the ghosts of the past, eliminating all threats to democracy and so achieve justice. Míguez Bonino continued his association with this organisation up to the end of the nineteen nineties.

Míguez Bonino continued to travel extensively during this period and to give conference papers at various meetings. Since 1971, there had been dialogue between Latin American theologians and European and North American ones. However, after the publishing of *Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation* (1975b), a storm blew up. Jürgen Moltmann, one of the most respected European theologians who had influenced Liberation Theology, wrote an *Open Letter to José*

²⁵ The Permanent Assembly of Human Rights.

²⁶ Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance.

Míguez Bonino (Moltmann 1976), criticising him over various points. These include the accusation that Latin American Liberation Theologians drew heavily from modern European theology and that; in fact, European theologians had been saying the same things as the Liberationists. In 1976, in a meeting of a small group of Liberation Theologians, it was decided not to respond to its author directly and so cause further controversy but rather to write a series of articles, explaining their viewpoint and dialoguing with Moltmann.

Furthermore, in 1977 Moltmann was invited to give the annual Carnahan Lectures at ISEDET on the subject of “the Theology of Hope.” Míguez Bonino, as professor of Systematic Theology and Director of Post-Graduate studies, was invited, along with Dr. Armando Jorge Levoratti, professor of Holy Scripture at the Higher Seminary, La Plata, to respond to each of Moltmann’s lectures. Both Míguez Bonino and Levoratti gave their reactions, with Moltmann having the opportunity of concluding the time with a response to the reactions (Moltmann 1978).

Two other opportunities for dialogue with Northern theologians are worth mentioning. Firstly, a conference in Detroit (1976) discussed of liberation issues, and Míguez Bonino was one of the respondents. The book *Theology in the Americas* (Torres and Eagleson 1976; cf. Torres and Eagleson 1980) came out of these meetings. Secondly, in 1978 Míguez Bonino presented the final Lovell Murray lectures to the Ecumenical Forum of Canada with the title “Mission as Conflict and Challenge” (1978). He appeals to the northern missionary societies and missionaries to get involved in the project of liberation and to stop imposing their own agendas.

His continental ecumenism should also be mentioned. In September 1978, UNELAM held very important meetings in Oaxtepec, Mexico. These meetings led to the creation of a continent-wide ecumenical body, called *Consejo Latinoamericano de Iglesias en proceso de formación*²⁷. The creation of an ecumenical body for the whole of Latin America had been rejected in CELA I (1961). It was Míguez Bonino, in Oaxtepec who suggested that this should be a process towards the formation of a Latin American Council of Churches. ‘It just came to me during the meetings in Mexico’ (Interview 28.2.2002). The process towards this national Council of Churches culminated in the inaugural assembly of CLAI which was held in Huampaní, Peru (November 1982). As one of the major movers of CLAI, he gave a paper entitled, “Jesus Christ: committed vocation with the Kingdom (in search of an interpretation of CLAI)” (cf. 1982f:311-314). In this paper he sees the formation of CLAI as a covenant with Jesus Christ, who gives meaning to this covenant; it is a covenant with all brethren in the Lord as well as with the Latin American people (1982f:311-314).

Part of his responsibilities, as a member of the Presidium of the WCC, was to prepare for the forthcoming General Assembly in Vancouver (1983). The Presidium perceived the need to bring ecumenical theology down to the level of the congregation. Various meetings were organized at national and regional levels in order to produce materials for the churches. Part of the regional preparations in Latin America was the production of a book on the subject of politics and the Christian Faith. This was the context of his book *Toward a Christian Political Ethics* (1983m).

²⁷ Latin American Council of Churches in Formation.

2.10 RETIREMENT: BUENOS AIRES (1985FF)

From the late nineteen eighties, Argentina has experienced relative calm in the political realm. There have been no military governments and democratic handovers are becoming the norm rather than the exception. On the other hand, the governments have strictly implemented neo-liberal economic policies. Carlos Saul Menem, was the major instigator of these reforms, selling off most of the profit-making national industries such as electricity and telephone.

The most important world event of the nineteen eighties and early nineties that has bearing upon this study was the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of Soviet Communism. This, according to Míguez Bonino, had two major effects. Firstly, Latin Americans realized that, as a result of this, they were destined to live under a Capitalist system for the next twenty or thirty years. He especially mentions that the older people realized that they would be condemned to spend their last years under a capitalist system dominated by one superpower. The theological question, according to Míguez Bonino was: how does one give an Evangelical testimony in such a context? (Interview 28.2.2002).

Secondly, these events liberated Latin American theologians from the fear of being accused of working as an agent of Communism! The end of Soviet communism allowed for a greater discussion of social and political issues within the Evangelical church. During this time, many conservative Evangelicals started social programmes within their church such as feeding centres and adult literacy courses. This is also true of the Pentecostal Churches who are poor themselves. There was even a realisation within some Pentecostal churches that political action was part of its mission. Míguez Bonino sees this as a very positive development. A worrying aspect, however, is the lack of a theology to reflect upon this work. He is convinced that this presents theological teachers with a great challenge; biblical teaching is the only answer (Interview 28.2.2002).

After the Vancouver Assembly (1983) and Argentina's return to democracy (1983), Míguez Bonino continued in fulltime teaching until 1985 when, at the age of sixty-one, he retired. In reality, his retirement was only a release from regular duties. He continued to teach at ISEDET; to speak at conferences; to write books and articles; and to travel widely. Up to 2003, when he suffered a stroke, he was still in great demand as a speaker on Latin American history and theology, on the Protestant churches in Latin America, Pentecostalism, Liberation Theology and a multiplicity of other subjects. He also had more time to think and to reflect upon the journey that his theology has taken.

Only a few important events will be mentioned here. The late eighties and early nineties also saw Míguez Bonino involved in three large publication projects. Firstly, he, along with other scholars such as Julio R. Sabanes and Justo González, was involved in the translation into Spanish of the work of John Wesley. This was a mammoth task, leading to the publication of ten volumes. The translation was part of the process which led Míguez Bonino to begin to return to his pietistic roots. Secondly, he wrote several articles in the *Diccionario de la historia de la Iglesia* (1988g), including articles on the life and thought of various theologians, as well as on the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America, and on Uppsala. And finally, he was one of the general editors of the 1000 page *Dictionary of the Ecumenical*

Movement (1991k) edited by Nicholas Lossky and others. He also wrote fourteen articles, including those on Conflict, Ethics, Medellín 1968, Natural Law and Theology of Liberation.

In 1990, Míguez Bonino started to relate to the more Evangelical wing (in the Anglo-Saxon sense) of the Latin American churches. C. René Padilla, at that time the General Secretary of the *Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana* (FTL)²⁸, invited him to a consultation on “Theology and Life” in Quito, Ecuador, organised in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the formation of the FTL. He was invited as respondent to papers given by the Mennonite John H. Yoder, C. René Padilla and Samuel Escobar (1991b). This conference marks an important turning point in the latter part of his life. After the end of the military dictatorship, Conservative and Ecumenical Evangelicals (*Evangélicos*) started to talk and work more closely.

This led Míguez Bonino to be invited to the third *Congreso Latinoamericano de Evangelización* (CLADE III) in Quito, Ecuador (1992)²⁹ which was also organized by the FTL. As one of the main plenary speakers, he gave one of the two theological papers on, “The Gospel of Reconciliation” (1993b:100-114). He also gave a paper in one of the seminars on “The Roman Catholic Church and evangelisation.” This was part of a group of studies commemorating the 500 years of Christianity in Latin America (1993d:421-428). In a later reflection, Míguez Bonino comments that, ‘probably CLADE III will remain marked in the history of the Latin American Evangelical (*Evangélico*) Churches as the beginning of a new stage.’ He refers to CLADE III as an “Ecumenical Encounter” (1993a:161).

In 1993, Míguez Bonino was invited to give the annual Carnahan Lectures at ISEDET. He was given a free hand as to the subject. The invitation letter stated, ‘some theological topic of your interest, on which you are working’ (1995a:vvi). Míguez Bonino chose to deal with the subject of Latin American Protestantism, an issue which has fascinated him over many years. The book that came out of this series of lectures, entitled *Faces of Latin American Protestantism* (1995a) will be analysed in detail later in this study.

In 1994, Míguez Bonino formed part of the committee in the reform of the National Constitution of Argentina (cf. 1994c:17). This was a reformation of the 1853 constitution. According to an article he wrote explaining his participation in the process, it gave an opportunity for ‘a transformation of society’ (1994b:7) but needed all sectors of society to contribute to the political process. He had been invited by FREPASO (*Frente País Solidario* or *Frente Grande*), a coalition of centre-left Argentinean political parties, to put his name forward as ‘an independent candidate’ (1994b:6). He mainly took part in two Commissions: the “Commission on International Agreements,” which dealt with human rights agreements and the “Commission on New Rights.” This commission dealt with the rights of the indigenous peoples, the environment, women and the marginalized of society—rights ignored by the 1853 Constitution. He also had a small part in the “Nucleus Commission” when religious issues were discussed. Although this constitution did not give take away the privileged position of the Roman Catholic Church, according to Míguez Bonino, its greatest achievements were that it did give Protestants greater equality, especially allowing a non-Catholic to take the position of President and vice-President and to put the issues of the rights of indigenous peoples in Argentina

²⁸ Latin American Theological Fraternity.

²⁹ Latin American Congress on Evangelisation.

and their inclusion in the agenda (1994b:7). Míguez Bonino also notes another positive outcome of this reform process: ‘that in the Evangelical (evangélico) Churches in general there is a greater consciousness of the importance of this whole social-political dimension than there was a few years ago’ (1994b:7).

Responding to the Pentecostal growth in Latin America, Míguez Bonino took part, as a respondent, in a 1996 conference on Pentecostal studies in San José, Costa Rica, sponsored by Vanguard University of Southern California (1999b:116-123). Twenty-two scholars from all parts of the world and from every part of the ecclesiological spectrum gathered together, including a number of Roman Catholic experts. Other participants were Harvey G. Cox, Viney Samuel, Edward L. Cleary O.P. and Douglas Peterson. In his response, he commented on the quality of the studies presented by the Pentecostal scholars and, rather ironically, notes that ‘studies on Pentecostalism, which are usually quite bold in their own interpretations of what Pentecostalism is and does, seldom stop to listen to how Pentecostal scholars themselves interpret their own faith and experience’ (1999b:116).

He also took part in CLADE IV (2000), again held in Quito, Ecuador in a Pentecostal Seminary. His involvement was even deeper this time. He led one of the eighteen work groups, gave a plenary paper and also two papers in other work groups. The importance of his involvement in the CLADE assemblies is most significant in the fact that these conferences originated with a conference organized by Peter Wagner and the Billy Graham Organization (Costas 1976:199). CLADE I seemed to be an attempt by certain North American Evangelical movements to limit the growth of interest in the Theologies of Liberation. With the formation of the FTL, the CLADE assemblies³⁰ became increasingly driven by Latin American concerns such as the integrity of the church’s mission, systemic injustice, poverty and the unity of the church.

2.11 EXCURSUS: THE INFLUENCE OF KARL BARTH

Míguez Bonino has been influenced by a wide variety of theologians during his career but one theologian’s influence towers above all others—that of Karl Barth. A full investigation into the influence of Barth upon him and other Latin American theologians would require exclusive treatment. This is partly due to the variety of ways in which Barth’s inspiration was felt and also due to the fact that by his eightieth birthday, Barth had written 553 books, papers, sermons and articles (Brown 1967:24). What is proposed here is to explain which parts of Barth’s theology were important in Míguez Bonino’s development as a theologian. In order to achieve this, three sources will be used. Firstly, personal interviews with Míguez Bonino himself conducted by the author during the study give this section its basic structure. Secondly, an article on Barth’s influence in Latin America written by Emilio Castro (Castro 1956:5-16) will be utilized to demonstrate how Barth’s influence was felt early on in Latin America. And thirdly the ‘Introducción’, by Míguez Bonino, to the Spanish translation of Barth’s *Evangelical Theology* (1986e:11-25), will give an insight into what Míguez Bonino felt important to emphasise in Barth’s theology much later in his career.

³⁰ CLADE II (1979), CLADE III (1993) and CLADE IV (2000).

There are a number of important ways in which Barth influenced Míguez Bonino. The way Barth was able to use higher critical tools without losing the message of the Bible was important (Interview 28.8.2001). At the FET, Míguez Bonino described how it seemed to many students that higher biblical criticism and liberal theology were shaking their faith. He comments, however, that: 'Barthianism gave the Bible back to us, and not only as a simple, exegetical, historical critical study, but with a message' (Weisheit 2001:281). On another occasion Míguez Bonino says of Barth that 'without rejecting exegetical and critical studies (texts, historical location, etc.) he advanced the theological question (what is God saying to me, about Jesus Christ, about faith) and the practical (what is the message for the church, for me, for the world as God's Word for today)' (Interview 7.3.2001). In the wider context, Emilio Castro says that this helped Latin American Protestants in the wider Fundamentalist -- Modernist dilemma. Castro shows how Barth's doctrine of the Word of God allowed Latin American theologians to maintain both the nature of the Bible as Word of God and intellectual integrity. 'Recognizing the rights of Biblical science to study the Biblical books as a human document, totally human, does not deny the rights of God. This very human instrument can serve as the mediator of God's Word to humanity (Castro 1956:14). There was no need to give up intellectual honesty and deny the use of the higher critical tools, taught by the professors at the FET in order to read the Bible as the Word of God. This will be observed in chapter three.

Related to this was that Barth gave the Bible back to the preacher as an instrument to declare God's Word. Míguez Bonino was at the beginning of his pastoral career at the Central Methodist Church in Ramos Mejía when he first discovered Barth's theology and needed to communicate God's Word each Sunday. Barth gave him the tools. In this, his experience was something like Barth's when he rediscovered, 'the strange world of the Bible.' Míguez Bonino comments: 'You could really preach Barth's theology!' (Interview 1997).

Barth's political writings and activities were also influential on Míguez Bonino. He said in an interview: 'I learned something of his militancy and social vision, this bringing together of a very strong theology and Christology and a social engagement with the poor and persecuted' (Interview 7.3.2001). He quotes *Church Dogmatics* where Barth states that, 'God always takes his stand unconditionally and passionately on this side and on this side alone: against the lofty and on behalf of the lowly, against those who already enjoy right and privilege and in favour of those who are denied it and deprived of it' (Barth 1955:434). He learned from Barth that theology did not have to be Liberal to be socially relevant.

Barth was also, however, able to link his theology with the concrete socio-political climate at the time. He was involved in the drafting of the famous *Barmen Declaration* (1933), which was a 'self-conscious challenge to the Hitler regime, insisting on autonomy of the church from political coercion' (Miller and Grenz 1998:10).

Apart from his Socialist activities, Barth's theology had a fundamental political objective. Barth states,

that we cannot reach clarifications, especially in the broad field of politics, which are necessary today, and to which theology today might have a word to say (as indeed it ought to have a word to say to them!), without having previously reached those

comprehensive clarifications in theology and about theology itself with which we should be concerned here (CD I/I, xiii).

And,

that a better church dogmatics (even apart from all ethical utility) might actually make a more important and weightier contribution, even to questions and tasks such as German liberation, than most of the well-intended material which so many, even among theologians, think they can and should produce when they dilettantishly take up such questions and tasks (CD I/I, xiii rev.)

It is obvious that Barth's political clarifications were dependant upon theological reflection. Politics, for Barth, needed theological reflection. Míguez Bonino, along with many other Latin American theologians were fully in agreement with this conviction.

Barth's ecclesiology was significant much later in Míguez Bonino's career (Interview August 1997). David J. Bosch states that Barth developed a 'magnificently and consistent missionary ecclesiology' (Bosch 1991:373). He does not have a section in *Church Dogmatics* on ecclesiology but rather weaves it into volume IV on 'The doctrine of Reconciliation.' Characteristically Barth's doctrine of reconciliation and therefore his ecclesiology are founded on Christology. 'All ecclesiology is grounded, critically limited, but also positively determined by Christology' (CD IV/3:786). In justification, the Church is gathered by her Lord, through the obedience of the Son of God, as the earthly-historical form of His body. In sanctification the Son of Man builds up the community so that it knows that it is not an end in itself but rather serves her Lord by being a provisional representation *de facto* of the *de jure* sanctification of humanity in Jesus Christ. And finally the God-Man destroys the falsehood and condemnation of humanity thereby giving a vocation, which is summed up in the sending of the community. The church for Barth is the community called to God's vocation in the midst of world history. It will become clear in chapter five how much Míguez Bonino has been influenced by this approach.

Additionally, Míguez Bonino highlights that the coherence and continuity in Barth's theology are to be found in his emphases upon grace, and the centrality of Jesus Christ. Barth's Christocentrism had an impact on Míguez Bonino. In talking about grace, he shows how Barth rejects cheap grace and the liberal understanding of grace so articulately rejected by H.R. Niebuhr (A God without wrath offers to humanity without sin, a Kingdom without judgment through the ministry of a Christ without a Cross) (Niebuhr 1957:16) describing it as 'the arrogance of that time that believed that it could easily construct utopia, that believes that, with its science it can manage all the material and spiritual problems of humanity, and bring a 'worldly paradise' of our own making' (1986e:16). For Barth 'grace is mercy, light and hope, it is confidence and for that reason action and commitment' (1986e:17). This grace is good news that God has destined humanity to 'go beyond itself' not to become superhuman but 'real humanity.' God's grace in Christ creates this new humanity. This 'real human being' that God has predestined is no other than Jesus Christ. Míguez Bonino states that in the *Epistle to the Romans*,

Barth has to destroy the liberal ‘anthropocentrism’ or the easy pietistic illusion that believes it can make an equation between Jesus Christ and our ideals or human values, our speculations or our experience. For this reason, Jesus Christ is God’s ‘no’, the insurmountable ‘frontier’ before the arrogance that leads us to deify ourselves, the ‘stranger’ that does not allow us to ‘possess’ in our experience, objectivise in our theological formulas or serve our programmes (1986e:17).

In this way, Jesus Christ is very much the ‘no’ of God, the wholly other; in Kierkegaard’s famous words, ‘God is in heaven and thou art on earth’ (Barth 1933a). Míguez Bonino is very much aware of the dangers of this anthropocentrism within his own, and others’, theologies. He has always been at pains to show the qualitative difference between God’s project and humanity’s effort.

This concept of Jesus Christ as the wholly other was highly influential upon Míguez Bonino and other Latin American Protestant theologians until the mid sixties. The ‘infinite qualitative distinction’ is somewhat modified later in Barth’s career where he views Christ as the ‘humanity of God’. Míguez Bonino expresses this change in the following way: ‘In Jesus Christ, the freedom of humanity is completely included in the freedom of God. Without the condescendence of God, there would be no raising up of humanity’ (1986e:19). Christ is the wholly other but is the wholly other, for humanity. Précising some comments from *Evangelical Theology: An introduction* the following can be said: God exists neither *next* to humanity nor merely *above* it, but rather *with* humanity and, most importantly, *for* humanity (1963:16). God is as lowly as exalted. God is exalted precisely in God’s lowliness (cf. 1963:17).

2.12 FINAL OBSERVATIONS

There have been various elements in Míguez Bonino’s life that have remained constant. Firstly, it is important to mention the importance of Míguez Bonino’s family. This is seen in two ways. During his career Míguez Bonino travelled a large number of times, sometimes with his family and other times without. His wife, Noemí has had to facilitate these journeys. During the early nineteen sixties, this was especially complicated for her. During the second session of the Second Vatican Council (1963) Míguez Bonino was absent from home for nearly a month, leaving his wife with Nestor (fifteen), Eduardo (four) and Daniel (a few months old). He was also absent two years later for the same period of time. Other times the whole family travelled. Noemí, Nestor (ten) and Eduardo (two) accompanied him to New York (1958-1960); Noemí, Eduardo (twelve) and Daniel (five) were with him in 1968 at Union Seminary (1968); and he took Noemí and Daniel (eleven), to England for several months (1973/74). Míguez Bonino was active in travelling up until 2003. Both when he was absent and when she was travelling with him were especially demanding for Noemí.

In an interview (1986f) Míguez Bonino recognises that as a married theologian he may have been an agent of oppression. Noemí was a very creative person and ‘repressed her own creativity’ (1986f:62) in order to facilitate his ministry. He even admits that he did not think in those terms back then; nor did his wife. Given that Míguez Bonino’s theology is rooted in the life and mission praxis of the church and that he recognises that his wife was instrumental in his ministry,

this leads to the conclusion that his marital relationship was vital to his theological development.

Also important is the role of his sons in regard to Míguez Bonino's knowledge of sociology and anthropology. Not only did he read many sociological books and articles but he also gained from interaction with his sons. Nestor is a theologian and Eduardo and Daniel both are social scientists. Evidence of how Míguez Bonino appreciated the interaction is to be found in the dedication of the book *Christians and Marxists* (1976c). 'To my sons Nestor and Eduardo, 'in the long conversations with whom I have learned more than in many books' (1976c:6). This was especially true of his relationship to Marxism and social analysis. As of the time of writing, Míguez Bonino lives most of the time at ISEDET, while his wife Noemi lives in an old people's home in the city of Tandil, where Eduardo and Daniel live.

Another important area of continuity is his commitment to the church. This is expressed by fact that the local church has always been central to his life and ministry. From his early ministry up to today, he has always kept close relationships with local churches. He was essentially a pastor from 1948 until 1958 and from that time on he has been called to stand in as pastor of the Methodist church in Ramos Mejía. He has also, from very early on been a regular visiting preacher all over the country in many different churches, not only in Methodist churches, but in other denominations as well. His work as youth secretary and later as supervisor of the Methodist Church around Buenos Aires has kept him active in many different local churches.

His commitment to the church is also seen in how Míguez Bonino's ecumenical involvement has been constant. Even as far back as his work in the Methodist Church in Rosario, Míguez Bonino experienced ecumenical fellowship and cooperation with other churches. In the FET, he met people from other denominations. Thereafter, he encouraged ecumenism in his pastoral work in Mendoza, in his activities as youth secretary for the Methodist Church and in his involvement in the student movements (ULAJE and the MECs). His experience of worldwide ecumenism at Willingen and Lund was a further impulse to this involvement. Later on he held interdenominational conversations at Union Theological Seminary in New York and at the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) his ecumenical experience was enriched by contacts with people in the Roman Catholic Church. Within Protestantism, his involvement in the CELAs, ISAL, UNELAM and CLAI are further evidence of his commitment to ecumenism. This involvement is also clear in the dialogue with the theologians of liberation internationally. He held posts from 1961 through until 1983: he participated in Faith and Order (1961-1977); in the Central Committee of the WCC (1968-1975); and in the Presidium (1975-1983). The numbers of articles and works by Míguez Bonino on the subject of ecumenism are witness to his concern and commitment.

Additionally, Míguez Bonino has also been involved in mission and evangelism. Early in his ministry he was involved in youth work, which involved organising evangelistic and youth training camps. As a pastor in San Rafael visited homes and built up the church. He also attended the IMC meetings in Willingen (1952) and reported on the theme of the 'Missionary Obligation of the Church'. As a theological teacher and international speaker, his contacts with non-Christians were

naturally more limited but it was noted above even in his human rights work he was involved in witnessing to the gospel in a low key way.

He also wrote consistently on mission theology and strategy. Two of his earliest published writings treat the subject of evangelism through small home groups (1949a and 1949b). He reported and reflected upon ecumenical mission theology and strategy in the early nineteen fifties (1952f, 1952h and 1953b) and his writing upon Christian mission has continued throughout his career (1961k, 1968d, 1974i, 1977d, 1978l, 1981h, 1982n, 1983g, 1992c, 1994d, 2000d).

A final area of continuity in Míguez Bonino's life is his constant commitment to theological education. While at seminary he was part of a group formed by Valdo Galland to help in the theological and biblical training of university students; this continued when he was pastor in Mendoza. After the completing his doctorate in the USA, Míguez Bonino has constantly been teaching at FET/ISEDET: taking the role of Rector (1960-1970), and being initiator and director of the post-graduate department at ISEDET (1975-1983). He taught here up until 2003. His work in ASIT (1970-1975) in developing theological education and accreditation was essential for theological education in the Southern Cone³¹ of South America is also witness to this. He has also written widely on the subject and his influence as teacher and theologian has been vital to the development of many pastors and theologians throughout Latin America.

It is important to mention some areas of development. It is significant to note that Míguez Bonino's contacts with the Roman Catholic Church have ebbed and flowed. Early in his life and ministry there was more contact with other Protestant denominations than with Roman Catholics but during the late 1950s and early 1960s he started to be involved in informal and then in formal contacts with the Roman Catholic Church. The formal contacts reached their height at the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). Informal contacts grew rapidly when ISAL began to include Roman Catholics in its discussions on the social involvement of the Church in the world. The Christians for Socialism Conference (1972) was one of the highlights of informal discussion and cooperation between Roman Catholics and Protestants in Latin America. The informal meetings with other, mainly Roman Catholic liberation theologians continued during the nineteen seventies and eighties. Contacts on a formal level, however, waned from the mid nineteen eighties onwards. This reached a crisis when no Protestant was invited as an observer to the Santo Domingo Meetings of CELAM (1992). This fact, along with Pope John Paul II's attitude towards the 'Protestant Sects,' eloquently expressed in his "rapacious wolves" comment, articulated the position of the Roman Curia towards Protestants in Latin America. Informal contact and cooperation with Roman Catholics has continued up to the present.

Moreover, his political and social involvement have also ebbed and flowed. As was noted earlier, Míguez Bonino was involved in the Argentinean Socialist Movement in Rosario. This was reduced drastically from the time he went to seminary up until the mid nineteen seventies. His collaboration with the APDH was a reactivation of his political and social activities. This is also true of his work in the redrafting of the Argentinean Constitution (1994). Thereafter, time restraints were

³¹ The Southern Cone of South America is comprised of Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay.

limiting. This is not to say that he was not involved in political activities anymore and certainly not that he was not interested in politics.

The geographical and denominational extent of Míguez Bonino's theological dialogue represents another area of development. In the nineteen fifties his theological dialogue was more or less limited to Argentina and its Protestant churches. In the nineteen sixties this extended not only to the Roman Catholic Church—as was mentioned above—but also to both the protestant churches of the whole continent, as well as the world-wide ecumenical movement. This was due to his involvement in ISAL and the CELAs and also to his participation in Faith and Order (1961-1978) and the Central Committee of the WCC (1968-1975). There was a further extension to his theological dialogue in the nineteen seventies. With the publication of Gustavo Gutiérrez' *A Theology of Liberation*³², an intense and sometimes polemical dialogue began with European theologians. A final dialogical partner was added in the mid nineteen eighties. The growth of the Pentecostal churches had been an important factor since the late sixties in Latin America; in Argentina it became important with the ministry of Carlos Annacondia. Since then, Míguez Bonino has reflected more profoundly on these churches: their growth; their influence and contribution to Latin American Protestantism. These four levels of theological dialogue have continued, in one way or another in Míguez Bonino's theological thought up to the present day.

³² 1971 in Spanish and 1973 in English

3 FAITH SEEKING EFFECTIVENESS: THE THEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY OF MÍGUEZ BONINO

Theology is a service to the church—(understood correctly in function of her mission.) Míguez Bonino (1969a:66)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study examines Míguez Bonino's theology as a missionary theology. It is possible to conceive of a missionary theology that begins from first principles, working through a systematic process, establishing universal rules, norms and criteria along the way, in order to finally arrive at a proposal for the outworking of the mission of the Church in all contexts. Ralph Winter's *Perspectives* (Winter 1999) and Church Growth missiology are examples of this method. But Míguez Bonino's missionary theology is different: it is a theological and critical reflection upon the church's missionary responsibility at a given time and in a given place. It starts with present praxis, questions the validity of that praxis in the light of biblical and theological thought, and then projects forward to examine how this should be carried out effectively.

For Míguez Bonino, theology is not an intellectual process carried out at a desk, but rather one which is carried forward from within missionary obedience by the church as theological subject, accompanied by professional theologians. Theology should not, and indeed cannot, be done as a non-committed act—active commitment is an essential prerequisite. Theology, thus conceived, is a synthetic act comprising both action and reflection. Míguez Bonino's theology is not so much following Anselm of Canterbury's *fides quaerens intellectum*—faith seeking understanding—but rather *fides quaerens efficacitatem*—faith seeking effectiveness. One could précis Marx's eleventh thesis on Feuerbach, saying: 'it is not the responsibility of theology to understand the world but rather to change it' (Marx 1886:64). Or more precisely it is the task of theology to accompany the Church in its task of changing the world. This, of course, means that Míguez Bonino's theology must be understood, not necessarily as a product, but rather as a process.

This chapter traces the development of theological methodology and hermeneutics during the twentieth century in broad terms (3.2). It then categorises Míguez Bonino's main publications relating to this subject (3.3). The major sections of the chapter deal with doing theology (3.4), epistemology (3.5) and theological methodology (3.6). It then makes some final observations (3.5).

In speaking of mission and theology the focus tends to be on biblical interpretation and the philosophical and linguistic issues surrounding that interpretation (Jongeneel 1995:216-217). In this regard, Jongeneel prefers the term missionary hermeneutics (Jongeneel 1995:216), whereas C. Timothy Carriker alternates between missiological and missional hermeneutics (Carriker 1993:50). A missionary hermeneutics, however, must take into account the whole interpretive process not only the biblical hermeneutic. Treatments of hermeneutics, on the other hand do not take into account the missionary nature of the church in its reading of reality and the Bible.

For much of the twentieth century, the essence of theology has been a central theme of discussion. Karl Barth's break with the Liberal theology of his teachers and his development of dialectical theology in various forms was simply the first step in a process that has questioned some of the most fundamental presuppositions in theology. This section does not presume to make an exhaustive survey of these developments but simply to highlight some of the more significant advances that have had direct impact upon Míguez Bonino.

Within Conciliar Protestantism's understanding of theology and hermeneutics, Míguez Bonino has been a significant protagonist. It will become clear in the course of this chapter to what extent he has influenced its direction, especially that of Faith and Order (FO) in the WCC. The Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order at Montreal (1963) is a historical landmark in the process (FO 1963) Montreal differentiated between the one *Tradition* (capital "T") and the many *traditions* (small "t"). It defined *Tradition* as the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That *Tradition* is transmitted through the generations in and by the Church; it is Christ Himself present in the life of the Church.

It defined *traditions* as the *traditionary process*, through which the *Tradition* is transmitted. The *traditions* are the multiplicity of forms and confessional traditions within historical Christianity. Montreal saw clearly that all Christians live within a tradition whose starting point is Jesus Christ as witnessed to in the New Testament; they receive *Tradition* through the transmission of the truth within *traditions*. Montreal asserts: 'Thus we can say that we exist as Christians by the Tradition of the Gospel (the *paradosis* of the *kerygma*) testified in Scripture, transmitted in and by the Church, through the power of the Holy Spirit.' (Section II, para. 45.) Human traditions throughout Christian history are both related to, but different from, the one *Tradition*. They are, therefore, viewed as expressions and manifestations in varied cultural and historical terms of the one reality: Christ Jesus. In this way Montreal sought to overcome the old dichotomy of *sola scriptura* and "Scripture and tradition." It did not, however, provide criteria for the evaluation of those human *traditions* and only pointed out the three main features of the process of transmission: the events and testimonies preceding and leading to Scripture, Scripture itself, and subsequent ecclesial preaching and teaching. This was an issue left untreated for many years.

Subsequent to Montreal, several FO studies took place on the subject of hermeneutics. Several reports on the Authority of the Bible were assembled as a contribution to the hermeneutical discussions of that period (cf. Flesseman-van Leer 1983:42-57). The Odessa consultation (1977) addressed the problem of permanence

and change in the doctrinal tradition of the Church. The process of putting together, “A Common Account of Hope” (1978), made FO aware of ‘the contextual aspects of confessions of faith, both in the sense of the original contexts in which they were made and of the effect on their use produced by the changing contexts of Christian discipleship’ (FO 1998). Finally, ‘Treasure in Earthen Vessels’ (1998) was published. This brings together many of the hermeneutical developments in one ecumenical document.

In regard to the Roman Catholic Church, the Tridentine formula of the word of God divided into two vessels: Scripture and Tradition, was generally unquestioned up to the Second Vatican Council. Early in the twentieth century, “Modernist Roman Catholic Theologians” attempted to respond to the challenges of the enlightenment especially in regard to the doctrine of the immutable character of dogma and tradition but were unable to articulate it in a way acceptable to the hierarchy.

Dei Verbum (DV), the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, is the definitive document for the Second Vatican Council’s reflections upon this subject. DV sees this issue from a radically new perspective. It deals with the nature of divine revelation in Christological terms and speaks of the importance that divine revelation is passed on. The emphasis of this document is the Gospel (*paradosis*) and its communication. This seems to point towards the possibility of a more dynamic re-reading of Scripture and Tradition. It does, however, in spite of everything affirm official interpretation of both Scripture and Tradition:

the task of authentically interpreting the word of God, whether written or handed on, has been entrusted *exclusively* to the living teaching office of the Church, whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ. This teaching office is not above the word of God, but serves it, teaching only what has been handed on, listening to it devoutly, guarding it scrupulously and explaining it faithfully in accord with a divine commission and with the help of the Holy Spirit, it draws from this one deposit of faith everything which it presents for belief as divinely revealed.

It is clear, therefore, that sacred tradition, Sacred Scripture and the teaching authority of the Church, in accord with God's most wise design, are so linked and joined together that one cannot stand without the others, and that all together and each in its own way under the action of the one Holy Spirit contribute effectively to the salvation of souls (DV, 10 authors italics).

Although the tenor of the document as a whole gives the impression of being more open to a more dynamic biblical reading. Míguez Bonino comments: ‘How can the Church be uprooted from herself and placed at the feet of Jesus Christ if she only sees Jesus Christ in terms of herself, if there is no way in which He confronts her and corrects her from above her own definitions’ (1967c:109). The real break for Roman Catholicism came from Latin America.

For much of the 500 years of Christianity’s presence in Latin America, theology done in the Continent was a static repetition of imported theological categories. The motives for the static nature of theology are different in Protestantism and Catholicism. Samuel Escobar, the Peruvian Evangelical Theologian says:

In Latin America, the *evangélicos* always have done theology from the starting point of a sharp sense of mission: to win the continent for Christ, advance with the gospel, and hope that this produces a radical change in the world. The Catholics, in doing theology, have begun from a more apologetic position: how to defend the faith from the attack of hostile ideologies, or from the proselytizing advance of the *evangélicos* (Escobar 1987:67).

Míguez Bonino comments, that for the Latin American Protestantism, theology in its apologetic function became more a deposit of answers, than a search for truth. ‘The ideal of the theologian is to be able to dominate the arsenal of answers in order to utilize them effectively to quite doubts or silence adversaries’ (1969a:66). Whereas, in Roman Catholicism, theology tended to be defensive, assuming that the continent is already Christian and needs preserving in that state.

From the second half of the twentieth century, this situation changed. In the Conciliar Protestant world, the work of the Ecumenical Youth Movements during the nineteen fifties and the work of ISAL during the nineteen sixties were instrumental. Also, exposure to neo-orthodoxy—especially the theology of Karl Barth and Dietrich Bonhoeffer—along with the radically worsening social and political conditions of Latin America led ecumenical Protestant theology to become radical and contextualised. Subsequent to the first consultation of ISAL (1961), the use of sociological tools became vital for theological reflection on the central social issues of the day. Theology was seen to become a more dynamic process than a dead repetition of foreign theological categories.

The fundamental paradigm shift in theological thinking in general came with the dawn of the liberation theologies of Latin America. Influenced by the philosophies of Frenchman Paul Ricoeur (b. 1913-2005) and German Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002), theology started to question the meaning and nature of truth. This led to what Jon Sobrino, the Salvadorian priest has called ‘the epistemological break’ (cf. Bosch 1991:423-425). This break questioned whether the perspective of the theologian—normally male, rich and white--was the only, valid viewpoint. He proposes that the poor’s perspective gives new insights into ‘the ultimate truth of things’:

From the poor we receive in a way hardly expected new eyes for seeing the ultimate truth of things and new energies for exploring unknown and dangerous paths...it is clear that in aiding the poor one receives back from them meaning for one’s life (Sobrino and Pico 1985:11; cf. Sobrino 1984).

The poor read reality from a significantly different perspective and serve the theologian by reflecting the meaning of life in service to others. So Gustavo Gutiérrez (b. 1928) can say that his understanding was not so much ‘a new theme for reflection as a new way of doing theology’ (Gutiérrez 1988:12). Other Roman Catholic theologians of liberation such as Juan Luis Segundo (1925-1996) (Segundo 1976), José Severino Croatto (1930-2003) (Croatto 1981; cf. Croatto 1987), and Clodovis Boff (b. 1944) (Boff 1987) also began to attempt to do theology from the standpoint of a different reality; the reality of the poor in their struggle for liberation. Míguez Bonino says that the new theology, which came about in the late sixties and early seventies in Latin America, had ‘not gotten past its prolegomena, nor should it be in any hurry to do so’ (1979d:260).

In this regard, the contribution of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT) was crucial. The inaugural meetings in Dar-es-Salaam (1976) sought to decolonise theology through Copernican revolution in the method, concept, content and goal of theology (Rayan 2000:65-66). Dar-es-Salaam emphasised the primacy of praxis, social analysis and involvement. Article 2 of the constitution declares that EATWOT is committed to 'new models of theology which would interpret the gospel in a more meaningful way to the people of the third world' (Fabella 2000:70). John S. Pobee says that EATWOT defined theology as wholesome, 'not only by academic criteria but also in terms of obedience to the will of God or spirituality' (Pobee 2002:358). It sought to do this through a 'dialogue between socio-political and religious-cultural structures on the one side and the Word of God on the other' (Pobee 2002:358).

3.3 MAIN PUBLICATIONS

The main publications of Míguez Bonino that concern this chapter of the study can be divided into two sections; generally, the nature and function of theology; and more specifically, epistemology, theological methodology and biblical hermeneutics. Míguez Bonino has written many articles on theology and its methodology during his life and so only the more significant ones will be mentioned here.

Míguez Bonino's writings on the nature and function of theology can be subdivided into those publications that responded to the emergence of Liberation Theology and those that deal in a more general way on theology. In a chapter in a book edited by Rubem Alves, Míguez Bonino published an early attempt at explaining some of the hermeneutical and methodological principles of 'the new way of doing theology' that were emerging after the publication of Gustavo Gutiérrez' ground breaking book. He dealt with the importance of discovering a hermeneutical key, of analysing the new social context, of accurately describing, and making a constructive critique of this new theology (1972f). In 1979, he dealt with the nature of theology in a paper given at a regional consultation of the *Asociación de Seminarios e Institutos Teológicos* (ASIT) (1980a). Liberation Theology had influenced the way theological education was carried out during the nineteen sixties and seventies. Míguez Bonino explained why there have been so many changes in seminary curricula during this period; attempted to establish certain criteria for theological education in the dynamic context of Latin America and; finally made some suggestions for the context of a curriculum adequate for the new context.

A third publication was an article in the periodical *The Christian Century* (1980d). In the light of the theological revolution in Latin America during the nineteen sixties and seventies, Míguez Bonino wrote a personal account of his theological journey and his understanding of the meaning of theology. It deals with some of the theological insights during that period and reflects upon theological methodology, some basic motifs and how theology should sharpen the tools of contextual theological reflection.

Míguez Bonino also wrote several articles on theology in general. At his inauguration as rector of the FET (1960), he set out his vision for theological education in that institution. He describes how Christian theology lives in dialectical

relationship between obedience and freedom (1961e). Theology facilitates obedience in mission by reflecting upon the church's preaching and life; and it lives in the freedom created by Jesus Christ. The influence of Karl Barth's theology is clear in this paper. He also wrote a report for the Central Committee of the WCC (1989d). He spent two months at the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva studying the structures and departments of the World Council attempting to find a way forward in the development of a Vital and Coherent Theology. This concern was expressed at the Sixth Assembly of the WCC in Vancouver (1983). It specifically tried to identify barriers to such a theology and pathways forward. Finally, he wrote an extension and revision of an article written for theological consultation held in Norway (1993) on the universality and contextuality of theology (1997c). Míguez Bonino wrestles with this dialectic showing the inevitable nature of contextuality but suggesting the way forward for a universal ecumenical theology is through a process of dialogue in the context of mutual accountability.

Míguez Bonino's publications on hermeneutics can be subdivided into those that deal with theological methodology and those that deal specifically with biblical hermeneutics. His writings specifically focussing on theological methodology are contained in chapters in *Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation* (1975b); *Christians and Marxists: The Mutual Challenge to Revolution* (1976b); and *Toward a Christian Political Ethics* (1983m). Each of these chapters, in some way were written in a response to the rise of Liberation Theology. They describe how theology is both affected by the context in which it arises and must respond to that context.

In regard to biblical hermeneutics, three writings should be mentioned. His first and most detailed treatment of biblical hermeneutics comes in his ThD thesis (1960e). He describes developments within the thought of some representative Roman Catholic biblical scholars and how they have moved beyond Tridentine formulae in regard to the relationship between Scripture and Tradition. He subsequently describes his own understanding, revealing a desire for a dynamic reading of the Gospel Tradition in the light of human tradition. This writing will be used extensively in this chapter. He takes up some of those same themes in a short, post-Vatican II article for a *Festschrift* for Oscar Cullman (1902-1999) (1967a). He examines the issue of Scripture and Tradition from the perspective of the concept of *Heilsgeschichte*. He asserts that although the church's interpretation of Scripture must be located within the context of Salvation History and therefore, with assurance of the presence of the Holy Spirit, the church cannot claim 'indefectibility' in its interpretation of that Scripture. Consequently, human interpretation, including the interpretation by the church, must be viewed in the light of the contradictions of human life.

Finally, Míguez Bonino wrote an article as a response to criticism of the use of Marxist categories in Latin America Liberation Theology (1974e, cf. 1993:e). He shows how Marxist critical tools can expose the ideological frameworks that are inserted into biblical interpretation by scholars; reveal the socio-economic matrices behind certain biblical texts; and release the 'truth of the Bible' by showing the relationship between praxis and interpretation. He concludes by showing how Marxist tools are limited in their usefulness because of their reductionism.

3.4 DOING THEOLOGY

3.4.1 *Basic Characteristics*

There are certain basic characteristics of Míguez Bonino's theology that must be clarified before moving on. His theology is not only contextual but also consciously contextualized. It is generally accepted today that all theology is contextual, i.e. written from within a given context and, consciously or unconsciously, influenced by the concerns of that context. His theology, however, takes a further step: it is not only aware of the influence of the context but is consciously responding to it. His starting point, therefore, is not what the church should do but rather what it is currently doing.

This leads to a related characteristic. Míguez Bonino's theology is occasional rather than systematic. He says in an article written in 1980:

‘Like most theologians from the so-called Third World, I have never set out to develop a theological program or to articulate an all-encompassing system. Rather I have spoken or written as questions came up, as issues were pressed upon me by circumstances or requests. Consistency or logical development has never been a conscious objective. (1980:1154).

In an interview with the author in 1997 he says:

I felt that I was challenged, or invited, or called by things that were happening which I had to respond to. If there is any coherence it has to do with the things that happened. Maybe I have tried to respond with a certain approach to life, faith and the Bible but not with a sort of fixed purpose (Interview 1997).

Finally in an autobiographical chapter in a book written in honour of his eightieth birthday he explains how he felt like Martin Luther (1483-1546). ‘God took me wherever he wanted like a donkey with blinkers’ (2004b:429). He didn't know exactly where he was going but felt accompanied on the journey by God.

A brief examination of the bibliography at the end of this dissertation will demonstrate the truth of these comments. Although he has written several books, the major part of the bibliography is made up of articles dealing with concrete issues from a theological perspective. Orlando E. Costas could have been thinking of Míguez Bonino's theology when he commented that missiology in Latin America is a reflection “‘done on the road”, as it were, promoted by a significant event or specific issue’ (Costas 1977:91).

The fact that Míguez Bonino's theology is occasional and not systematic, leads to a further observation. Some theological issues appear regularly in his writings but others hardly appear at all. The central theological concepts that have been emphasised throughout his career are the Church, the Kingdom of God, and the Trinity. Subjects such as the future state of believers and unbelievers and baptism, however, have been peripheral. Furthermore, some subjects were significant in the early part of his career but have become less important later. An example of this is the issue of Scripture and tradition. It was central in the nineteen sixties in his discussions with the Roman Catholic Church but, thereafter it has not been treated explicitly, or has been dealt with in different terms. Other theological questions,

however, which were not significant in the early part of his career, have become more so in the last few years—for example the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The growth of Pentecostalism in Argentina, along with his work in translating some of John Wesley's sermons, has meant that the Holy Spirit in the context of the Trinity has become more prominent. Consequently, this study does not cover the whole range of theological and doctrinal elements but rather concentrates on his hermeneutic along with various theological motifs and their attendant issues.

In addition, Míguez Bonino's theological method is also ecumenical. This is not only due to his deep involvement in the ecumenical movement but also caused by his dialogue with a wide ecclesiastical context. His theology dialogues with other Christian traditions: his knowledge of these traditions is wide and deep, and has profoundly influenced his theology. He has had contacts with Christians from most traditions—the Roman Catholic Church, the World Council of Churches, Orthodox churches, Conservative Evangelicals and Pentecostals. Míguez Bonino is not 'a lonely bird on the roof tops' (Barth 1933b: 40, quoted in Bosch 1991:424) but rather has done his theology from within the widest possible ecclesiological context. He has made many contributions to the study of the phenomenon of Latin American Protestantism and has written several articles on how this phenomenon should be interpreted. For Míguez Bonino it is impossible to do theology without reference to how the Church relates to society and how it is already a part of that society.

Míguez Bonino's theology is also historically rooted. It has been as essential for him to discuss theological issues with "the fathers and mothers" as well as with "the brothers and sisters". Ever since he studied historical theology at Emory University, he has considered it vital to reflect on all issues from an historical perspective. Church history and especially the history of theology is very much part of the context in which he has done theology.

A final significant characteristic to note about the nature of Míguez Bonino's missionary theology is that it is provisional and should never be considered to be a completed product. He comments on his own theology as follows:

An American doctoral student announced that he identified three distinct stages in my theological development, moving from a church-centred to a world-centred theology. Perhaps he is right! An erstwhile colleague used to tell me that the decisive break in my thought occurred in 1968, at the time of the popular uprisings in Argentina against the military dictatorship of Onganía. Even more precisely, he timed it with the death in Rosario of a student killed by the police. He contended that my theology had since become more militant and political, that it had broken away from the captivity of a self-contained theological universe and had accepted the challenge of historicity. I had never intended to live in a purely theological universe—but, again, perhaps he is right! My wife—who is usually right—tells me that what I have consistently tried to do is simply to reread and explain the Bible: "Questions, issues and challenges have changed," she says, "but at bottom you remain what you have always been: a preacher bound to his text." I hope she is right this time! (1980d:1154).

As Bosch notes, there is never anything except 'missiology in draft' (Bosch 1991:489). It should be said that Míguez Bonino's missionary theology is always and purposely theology in draft. He is loath to give definitive answers to missionary or ethical questions, even after a thorough theological treatment. His reflections are always in the way of "soundings" or "musings", or what he once called "ruminations" (1995c:112). He sees these soundings or musings as the beginning of

a theological dialogue rather than the end of a theological argument. In his theology, one encounters more tentative questions than authoritative answers. Even the answers that are given are more as suggestions presented for discussion than as dictates. Samuel Escobar once commented to the author that Míguez Bonino was a teacher who ‘opens pathways.’

3.4.2 *Theology as Task: Service to the Church in Mission*

For Míguez Bonino, theology as a task is primary. Theology is a service rendered to the church in its mission. The church is constantly presented with new challenges and responsibilities in mission; theology accompanies it by reflecting upon and clarifying certain aspects of mission in the light of God’s word. This is true throughout his career

At his inauguration as Rector of the Evangelical Faculty of Theology (1960), Míguez Bonino described theology as living in the tension between obedience and freedom (1961e:90-93). Obedience in theology is for him nothing but ‘missionary obedience’ (1961e:90, cf. Barth 1955 CD I/1: 14-15). Theology reflects upon the church’s ‘fidelity in preaching’ (1961e:90). Theology, ‘must continually confront our daily preaching with the norm we have received from Jesus Christ in the biblical testimony’ (1961e:90). By preaching, he is referring to any announcement of the gospel whether it takes place in the pulpit, the Sunday-school, or open air meetings. Theology comes as a second act, accompanying the preaching of the Church: it confronts preaching with the gospel of Jesus Christ as recorded in the Bible. It asks the question as to what gospel is being preached. Is the gospel that the Church is preaching influenced by ideologies, human philosophies or personal opinions foreign to the gospel? Theology is a humble and devout reflection.

Theology also facilitates and enables the proclamation, ‘of the eternal gospel of what God has done in Jesus Christ in terms men will understand’. In this task it is vital to ‘know the world in which we live—our Latin American world as well as our world community’ (1961e:91). Theology must relate the gospel to the world. It is the task of theology to accompany the Church’s preaching in its task of making the gospel understood. So Míguez Bonino can assert that theology ‘is effective only as an act of obedience to the missionary mandate of the Church and as it serves the Church in fulfilment of that mission’ (1961e:93).

Reflecting upon the work of ISAL, Míguez Bonino returns to this issue. He says: ‘theology is a service to the church—(understood correctly in function of its mission)’ (1969a:66). This service cannot function as a theoretical isolated discipline but in dialogue. There are two interlocutors for Protestant theology’s dialogue in Latin America that he mentions at this time: the Roman Catholic Church and its theology, and Latin American thought and society in general (1969a:66). The ISAL movement during the 1960s achieved this type of dialogue. It included Roman Catholics in its consultations and also entered into deep dialogue with the world. According to Míguez Bonino, the results were significant. These comments, at the same time, respond to the tendency in most of Latin American Protestant theology in the sixties to operate, on one hand, as if Roman Catholic theology did not exist and, on the other, as if the world had nothing to do with the theological task (1969a:66-67).

The nineteen seventies were the time of both theological and militant ferment in Latin America. This is reflected in *For Life and Against Death* (1980), which clearly states that ‘theology is not the main subject of the struggle. It is the struggle of the people (particularly the struggle of the poor) for their life’ (1980d:1154). He goes on to say: ‘theology comes at the rearguard, as a reflection, as a help to rethink and deepen (and thus perhaps, also, if we are faithful, to correct and enrich) a commitment already taken as an act of obedience’ (1980d:1155). Whereas before the main focus had been the Church in its mission, Míguez Bonino now extends the role of theology to incorporate the task of accompanying the poor in their struggle for life. Theology, serves this struggle by rethinking, deepening, correcting and enriching it—that is by participating and reflecting. The praxis upon which theology is reflecting is the praxis of the poor and the church’s contribution to that struggle not only upon its own praxis. This reflects a movement in Míguez Bonino’s theology that focuses more upon the world than the church. In many of his writings during the nineteen seventies and eighties it is notable that Míguez Bonino is in dialogue with the context in Latin America. He has, in his own words, ‘had to sit at the feet of the sociologists’ (1980d:1155) in order to learn how to interpret the world in which the church accompanies the world in its struggle for life.

In his analysis of the ‘Concern for and Vital and Coherent Theology’ (1986), a WCC report, Míguez Bonino’s emphasis once again in theology’s task towards the church and its praxis. Theology renders a necessary service to the churches which are ‘frequently at a loss to see coherently the many tasks which are constantly pressed on them by the world and which they need to understand in the light of and as integral dimensions of their faith and mission’ (1989d:160). Here, there seems to be a different relationship between the Church and the world. Whereas in *For Life Against Death* the church accompanies the poor by reflecting on their struggle, here theology accompanies the church in its responsibility to fulfil the tasks presented by the world and to understand them in the light of their faith and mission. This is emphasised because this report was given to the World Council of Churches.

In *Faces of Latin American Protestantism* (1995a), Míguez Bonino continues in this vein. In its mission, the church must be a faithful witness to the gospel in its mission. The Church, in its theology, must be ‘constantly asking itself, in the light of the Scriptures, about the faithfulness of its witness, about the coherence of its message, its life and its worship.’ Once again theology follows praxis by reflecting upon the faithful witness of the Church in its presence in the world (1995a:111). The focus, however, is on the Church’s witness rather than on the struggle of the world.

It is clear that from the earliest years of Míguez Bonino’s career, he understands theology to be a task given to the church in the service of mission. The mission of the church comes first; theological reflection is a second act. This is, of course, in harmony with the theologies of liberation: praxis is primary. In his seminal work, Gustavo Gutiérrez makes this point from the beginning (cf. Gutiérrez 1988:xxxiii; Segundo 1976:75-90). The epistemological questions are discussed below.

3.4.3 *Theology as Gift: Dependence on Revelation and Tradition*

Early in his career, Míguez Bonino emphasizes that theology is also gift. Theology is something that is received. For, 'if God had not spoken, theology would be impossible.' God has spoken about Godself to humanity, and humanity and theology must make a thankful and modest response. God has spoken to humanity in God's revelation in Jesus Christ. This is the absolute gift for theology (1961e:92). Once again it is easy to perceive the influence of Karl Barth. God, by speaking to humanity in Christ, not only makes theology's task possible but also opens up a space in which humanity can be free to talk about God. Jesus Christ, therefore, constitutes: 'an expression of our freedom.' Theology is a place where God has asked humanity to be on its own. Nevertheless, God's revelation in Christ also becomes the only limit on theology. These two things are not in conflict with one another but rather emphasize that there is always a limit to freedom. Theology cannot say more than God has already said. It is significant to note that Míguez Bonino posits that God's revelation in Christ is the *sole* limit to theology; theology should not be held captive to any ideology or ecclesiastical programme. However, he sounds a warning, 'More than once theology has forgotten that true freedom is to be found only in obedience to the truth as it is in Christ, and at times has confused freedom with attempts to replace the Word of God with every kind of human speculation or ideology' (1961e:93). This early comment about ideology and human speculation show how in the nineteen sixties and seventies ideology critique and awareness had become constitutive of the theological task for Míguez Bonino.

Elsewhere, Míguez Bonino speaks of theology as 'a gift that is handed over to the church to be handled with respect, with admiration and with gratitude. And this does not only mean a gift handed over by the fathers of the church as a theological production: it means to receive it as a gift of grace' (1989d:170). Theology must have an historical perspective in the sense that God's revelation in Jesus Christ is an historical event, but also because the church always receives its faith handed down from those whom have gone before. This issue will be expanded later in this chapter. To sum up: 'only if it [theology] uses its freedom, given in Christ, to search for the truth in Christ, and only if it examines respectfully, humbly, critically, every doctrine creed, confession or system, in the light of the Word of God' (1961e:93) can theology really serve the church in its mission.

According to Míguez Bonino, there must be a balance between inductive and deductive methodologies. He emphasizes that the deductive method, starting from general foundational statements such as 'God was incarnate in Jesus Christ', and 'God has redeemed us through the cross' is valid. There are basic affirmations of the faith (1980a:72), especially, what which function as theology's fundamental principle: 'a knowledge of faith rooted in God's self-expression, centred and fulfilled in Jesus Christ' (1980d:1154). This principle is given to the church in order that it might work out its faith in the present situation. He also warns that this must be balanced by an approach that begins with praxis. These fundamentals do not give the theologian the excuse to pretend that his or her theology is universal. As will be shown later, in the nineteen seventies praxis has become primary for Míguez Bonino.

Although theology as task is primary for Míguez Bonino, he does not deny the significance of what theology receives: from Scripture, from tradition and from

the Holy Spirit. Theology must receive what is given and interpret it in the light of the task of mission.

3.5 EPISTEMOLOGY

3.5.1 *Nature*

The starting point of Míguez Bonino's theological method is epistemological. Without this basis, his theology does not make sense. According to Míguez Bonino, western theology is incorrect in its understanding of the location of truth and knowledge. They are not to be found in the area of ideas but rather in the area of action and practice. Correct knowledge is not primarily to be found at 'the cognitive level of understanding and interpretation but the historical level of praxis and obedience; or to put it more precisely, the mutual relation and unity of the two' (1975h:87). Theological statements about God may be received as a gift, but theologians always interpret those statements from the perspective of praxis. As far back as the last training conference of the WFCS in Strasbourg (July 1960), he first perceived the importance of obedience in relation to both knowledge and mission (cf. Bassham 1979:47). In a reflection on the conference he states: '*the discernment of the will of God is given only in the concrete act of obedience. Only in the measure in that we do the will of God humbly and silently—that will that we understand, confidently, even in the darkness of our own uncertainty—will we discern our mission more clearly and widely*' (1960d:54-55, author's italics). This is also clearly reflected in his report on the first ISAL meetings later that month. He remembers how he proposed that 'the precedence of obedience over reflection is the theologically correct order' (1972f:208). Praxis, or what he describes as a 'concrete act of obedience,' is primary because knowledge is only possible in obedience; praxis is a prerequisite for knowledge. Or in other terms, faith's search for effectiveness can only be successful when carried out in obedience. This is the 'very basis of the method and interpretation and the structure of theological reflection' (1975h:87) in a proper missionary theology.

Truth, as traditionally understood, has been conceived as belonging 'to a world of truth, a universe in itself, which is copied or reproduced in "correct" propositions, in a theory (namely a contemplation of this universe) which corresponds to this truth. Then, in a second moment, as a later step comes the application in a particular historical situation' (1975h:88). Truth, therefore, is held in the world of ideas; the role of theory is to reproduce that truth in propositions and action. Subsequently, then, correct action is the accurate interpretation and application of pre-existing truth. 'The realm of action corresponds to a second level: that of "consequences" or "inferences" of these truths (1976c:30). In order to act properly, the Christian is required to interpret the realm of truth correctly and apply it to the world of action. Therefore, the truth of the theory (or theology), is judged, not by its correspondence to historical conditions but rather by its correspondence to the world of truth. Theory is never judged on its effectiveness in the fire of historical conditions but only on its philosophical integrity.

Traditionally, theology was not evaluated on how it corresponded to concrete historical conditions, but as to whether it was correct in its relation to the

heavenly world of truth. Theology done in the Western world therefore was thought to be the norm for all other theology. It was believed to correspond to the world of truth and was therefore correct. This attitude is still reflected in many seminary and university curricula in courses on ‘theology’—meaning Western theology—are offered over against other courses on ‘contextualized theology’—meaning Third World or Two-Third’s World theologies; feminist theology; etc. The attitude commonly held was that theology done in the Non-Western world, had to repeat what was understood to be the truth in the West and to apply it to their different situations. If theology done in context was to question Western theology, it could do so, but only on the basis that Western theology had misunderstood the world of truth. For Míguez Bonino and other Latin American theologians, this understanding of truth legitimizes the status quo and does nothing to transform reality. For Latin America, this meant (and means) accepting the contemporary conditions of poverty, injustice, dependence and inequality.

In a programmatic statement, Míguez Bonino rejects the traditional understanding of truth: ‘there is no truth outside or beyond the concrete historical events in which men [sic] are involved as agents. There is, therefore, no knowledge except in action itself’ (1975h:88). For Míguez Bonino, the world of truth, as described above, does not exist. Theory and theology are to be judged as true or false in the way they correspond to the concrete situation in which human beings find themselves.

Míguez Bonino believes that the classical view of truth is unfaithful to how the Bible conceives of truth. He states: ‘God’s Word is not understood in the Old Testament as a conceptual communication but as a creative event, a history making pronouncement. Its truth does not consist in some correspondence to an idea but in its efficacy in carrying out God’s promise or fulfilling his judgment’ (1975h:89). Karl Barth argues the same thing in his section ‘The Nature of the Word of God’, (CD I/1: 143). Consequently, this creative event is not presented for consideration but as a call for a response from Israel. Response to truth is ‘not an ethical inference but an obedient participation’ and ‘always a concrete obedience’ (1975h:89).

In *Christians and Marxists* he examines this idea more fully. Quoting G. Johannes Botterweck’s comment on Jeremiah 22.15-16, Míguez Bonino observes that justice is, for the king, the totality or the essence, [*Inbegriff*] of knowledge of God. He also examines briefly Jeremiah 9.23 and describes this verse as: ‘a brief summary of Jeremiah’s understanding of the true relation to the Lord...to know the Lord is to pattern one’s life after God’s own action’ (1976c:33). After briefly mentioning passages in Hosea, Isaiah and Habakkuk, he concludes with two bold statements: ‘to do justice is to know Yahweh,’ (1976c:35), echoing Gutiérrez’ words ‘To know God is to do justice (Gutiérrez 1988:110-112), and: ‘the practice of justice is not a mere interpersonal relationship or social virtue; it is the very nature of the covenant with the Lord who practices justice, with him in whom “the orphan finds refuge”’ (1976c:35). According to the Hebrew prophets, knowledge of God is not found in the religious realm but rather in obedience to the God of the covenant of justice. It is not intellectual knowledge that leads to ethical action, but ethical action that constitutes the basis of knowledge of the truth and is the prerequisite for knowledge. This is obedience; it is a ‘way’; or as the Apostle Paul puts it, a “walking” (1975h:89).

Turning to the New Testament, Míguez Bonino examines various passages in the Johannine literature, emphasizing their Old Testament background. He cites John 3.14 and John 5.24—both speaking of passing from death to life. The former sees this as a result of love and the latter as a result of faith. Following José P. Miranda, Míguez Bonino states that John calls all to respond to the coming of the messianic Kingdom in Jesus Christ that has created a wholly new situation where there is the possibility of new life through being ‘born of God’, ‘remaining in God’ and ‘having fellowship with him’ (Miranda 1974:127-128). This new life is possible through God’s eternal Word in Christ. This eternal word, however, is not the philosophical word of the Platonists but the creative Word of God. So to respond to the new situation is to commit oneself to this situation in love—that is in action—and in faith of this creative Word.

In *Revolutionary Theology*, Míguez Bonino argues the same point in a slightly different way. He quotes John 8.43: ‘Why do you not understand what I say (*lalia*)? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word (*logos*)’ and concludes: ‘only he that *does* the word will know the doctrine’ (1975h:90, italics in original). Only those committed to the project of God in Christ, that is to receive the logos of Christ, will truly understand the truth of God in Christ. This doing of the word can be summed up in John’s concept of love. Míguez Bonino puts this in the following way: ‘To be in Christ and to love are not two things but one thing, which can be described either by looking at the total and the possibility of such new life—the fact that God has sent his own Son—or by looking at the operation and reality of this new life—that we love one another.’ (1976c:37). Love in the Johannine literature is not, as was once thought, ‘the spirit’s aspiration towards the divine’ (1976c:37), a view close to that of Liberal Theology, but rather ‘a historical course of action, which has to do with our relationship with actual human beings’ (1976c:37). Therefore, ‘knowing God is the equivalent to coming actively to grips with God’s concrete demands and actions’ (1976c:38). He concludes that ‘It seems clear enough that the classical conception can claim no biblical basis for its conception understanding of truth or for its distinction between a theoretical knowledge of truth and a practical application of it’ (1975h:90). Knowledge of truth in the Bible is only revealed in action.

For Míguez Bonino it is not only vital that the conception of truth is true in relation to the Bible but also whether it is tenable in relation to social sciences. Relying upon the sociology of knowledge, mainly of Paul Ricoeur, Míguez Bonino argues: ‘we think always out of a definite context of relations and action, out of a given praxis’ (1975h:90, cf. Ricoeur 1976). Praxis is not a result of theory but also a defining element in the formation of theory. Rudolf Bultmann argued in relation to the biblical text that every person brings a preunderstanding to that text. Whereas Bultmann identified this preunderstanding as ‘abstract philosophical analysis of existence’ (1975h:90). Míguez Bonino wants to widen it, including ‘the concrete conditions of men [sic] who belong to a certain time, people and class who are engaged in certain courses of action, even of Christian action and who reflect and read the texts within and out of these conditions’ (1975h:90-91). Every interpretation of both social reality and text are dependant, to a great extent upon the praxis that is brought to that interpretation. Rebecca Chopp summarises well when she says that ‘Míguez Bonino’s hermeneutics...depends on a dialectical relationship

between knowledge and praxis: knowledge grows out of praxis, but is never reduced to mere action' (Chopp 1992:87).

3.5.2 *Implications*

Míguez Bonino's epistemology, most polemically, leads to the fact that the theological process must include an interpretation of the interpreter, or, what has sometimes been called, 'ideology critique.' He proposes an analysis of the 'location' of the interpreter. To put it in its bluntest form: 'we cannot receive the theological interpretation coming from the rich world without suspecting it and, therefore, asking what kind of praxis it supports, reflects or legitimises' (1975h:91). Because 'every interpretation of the texts which is offered to us (whether as exegesis or as systematic or as ethic interpretation) must be investigated in relation to the praxis out of which it comes' (1975h:91). Therefore, he proposes that "'ideological suspicion" is a fundamental critical tool for interpretation' (1974e:108). It is 'crucial to ask about the ideological presupposition and functions which such interpretations may have' (1974e:108).

Míguez Bonino illustrates the use of ideology critique by utilizing Marxist critical tools to illustrate the classical interpretation of Protestantism regarding Jesus' teaching on riches and the rich. Marx said that Protestant ethics reflected a Capitalist ideology that replaced 'being' with 'having'. This is clear in the interpretation of riches. When treating the issue of wealth, exegetes slip an ideological presupposition into the interpretation. The argument is as follows: 'riches (in themselves) are good—therefore Jesus could not have condemned them as such, nor rich people as such—consequently the text must mean something else' (1974e:109). This "something else" is located in the area of intention or attitudes. If somebody has riches but has the right attitude towards them, they cannot be condemned. Once this framework of interpretation is in place, all texts are then interpreted in the same way. One can be rich and have the right attitudes and therefore please God. Moreover religion blesses your efforts. Joachim Jeremias' interpretation of Luke 16.19-31 is an illustration of this ideological presupposition that subsequently governs the interpretation (1974e:109). Jeremias affirms that God is revealed as God of the poor and destitute (Jeremias 1972:184) but concludes with incredible statement that 'Jesus does not intend to take a position on the question of the rich and poor' (1974e:109; cf. Jeremias 1972:186). For Míguez Bonino this is a classical example of how Western theologians unconsciously *ideologize* the biblical text.

In the early nineteen eighties, Míguez Bonino develops further the application of, and the implications for, his epistemology. He continues to argue that the sociology of knowledge has revealed the importance of social location: 'On the one hand there is the theologian's location within a theological discipline with its particular epistemological conditions and demands; on the other hand the theologian is also a social agent within a particular social formation' (1983m:42). He insists that this should not lead to social determinism where theology simply becomes a reflection of social location. The theologian is not simply a victim of his or her own social condition but is free to make an option to locate him or herself differently. He refers to it as the "double location" of the theologian. 'We are *situated* in reality, to be sure—historically, geographically, culturally, and most of all, groupwise and

classwise—but we can also position ourselves differently in relation to that situation’ (1983m:44 *Italics in original*). There is no doubt that class and group background affect interpretation but one can choose to interpret both the text and the context from the position or location of the other. This is summarised in a paper Míguez Bonino gave to the 15th Council of the YMCA, in Oaxtepec, Mexico.

We all are already, whether we want it or not, in a certain 'location' and therefore not in another. But also we can adopt a voluntary 'position'. This is, in very simple terms, what being human means. Every human being and every association of human beings is born or created in certain terms, and conditions- this is their location, determined by history, place, social, cultural, religious background, environment, traditions. Being human is always being 'located' somewhere in time and place. Even theologians should understand that! But being human means also the possibility of being dissatisfied, of rebelling, of moving to another place, of examining other conditions, of 'placing' themselves differently. Thus, the dialectics of 'location' and 'position' is the dynamics of human life (2002b).

For the Christian, Míguez Bonino believes this is kind of ‘conversion.’ Moses had to choose to leave the luxury of the Egyptian palace to ‘rediscover’ his people. Saul of Tarsus had to become a follower of the one whom he saw as the fulfilment of his faith (2002b). In the case of Latin America, this conversion means conversion to the location of the poor. Analysis of the concrete context, the written word and the activity of the living Word are presented to the theologian in the framework of how to approach the alternatives and challenges. He concludes: ‘Theological and social location for the Christian are one, united in the specific commitment to the poor’ (1983m:44). Consequently, hermeneutical interpretation is not only a mental exercise but also an ethical choice.

A second consequence of Míguez Bonino’s epistemology, proceeding from the first, is that if concrete action precedes knowledge, it follows that praxis must be prior to theory. This is completely different from the way in which theological hermeneutics has been traditionally conceived. In Western theology, the tendency has been to establish the relationship between theory and praxis in a non-dialectical way. As was mentioned earlier, the traditional way of doing theology has been to apply theory (Biblical Studies, Church History and Systematic Theology) to all the relevant contexts in practical theology. For Míguez Bonino, this is unacceptable because it denies the fact that all theories, including Christian theology, emerge from an already established praxis. Theory, therefore, to a certain extent, is the result of existing praxis. Biblical studies, systematic theology, church history and practical theology written in a certain context cannot be taken to be true for all other contexts because they have emerged from a particular context reflecting particular concerns.

Praxis is not the outcome of the analytical process but rather the primary condition for the possibility of theory. In Míguez Bonino’s understanding, there is no way of thinking about any object or process—that is forming a theory—without a previously existing praxis already informing that theory. To this extent, theory becomes a function of existing praxis. Theory takes the data gathered under the influence of the praxis and subsequently informs a new praxis. He puts it in the following way: ‘Action overflows and challenges the theory that has informed it; and thought, projecting the shape and future of reality, pushes action to new ventures’ (1983m:39). Furthermore: ‘reality is transformed through human action,

and action is corrected and reoriented by reality' (1983m:39). In conclusion: 'facts constitute the framework and support for decision. Theory is a human construction abstracted from past and present praxis that in turn opens the way for new praxis. Praxis incorporates a theory and challenges it by changing the reality from which it has been abstracted' (1983m:42). These sentences could almost be seen as a summary of Míguez Bonino's theological methodology.

Míguez Bonino's epistemology is not ground-breaking and follows closely the criteria developed by Liberation Theology. He is keen to show, as is José P. Miranda, that his epistemology is biblical; it maybe in harmony with the Marxist understanding but it is not, by definition wrong. This 'hermeneutics of the world' (Chopp 1992:83-87) liberates Míguez Bonino from the straitjacket of having to find approval and correspondence with Western theology. Western theology cannot serve as the measure for his theology because its perspective as is limited as any other theology. This epistemology is not uncommon among Liberation Theologians but, there can be little doubt that Míguez Bonino developed this understanding much earlier than other theologians. Even in the early nineteen sixties he was beginning to see how theology, in order to fulfil its task in mission (that is, in order to understand the gospel correctly) must be involved in that mission. Míguez Bonino's epistemology also stimulates people to develop a truly contextualized missionary theology. Knowledge of the context of mission, knowledge of the text, and knowledge of correct action in that mission can only be achieved from within the commitment to that mission.

3.6 THEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.6.1 *Moments in theology*

Clodovis Boff wrote a book outlining his understanding of theological methodology (Boff 1993:1-21) in which he proposed to view the basic schema of the methodology as developed in three 'moments' or 'times' which correspond to the classic pastoral methods of the Roman Catholic Church—seeing, judging, and acting. He calls each stage 'a mediation' because, apart from being moments in the theological process, they serve as instruments of theological construction. Boff calls them the *socioanalytic* mediation, the *hermeneutic* mediation, and the *practical* mediation.

The *socioanalytic* mediation contemplates the world of the oppressed. It seeks to understand why the oppressed are oppressed. The *hermeneutic* mediation contemplates the word of God. It attempts to see what the divine plan is with regard to the poor. Finally, the *practical* mediation contemplates the aspect of activity and seeks to discover the appropriate lines of operation for overcoming oppression in conformity with God's plan (Boff 1993:11).

Míguez Bonino's method corresponds generally to this schema but with significant differences. Míguez Bonino expands *socioanalytic mediation* beyond the world of the poor and oppressed. The context of the poor and oppressed is not forgotten by any means in his theology, but the contexts in which Míguez Bonino has worked out his theology are wider. The context of his life and theological career has led him to

reflect not only upon issues related to Latin America and its context but also issues such as ecumenism and power. Also related to the socioanalytic mediation, Míguez Bonino includes, and indeed starts from, an analysis of the church. He starts from the Christian community and its expression of faith and then moves onto the church's expression of faith as part of the concrete historical situation in which the church finds itself. To analyze the social and political context without relating it to the church or to analyze the church as without relating it to the context is to ignore the fact that the Church is part of the society in which it ministers. The first ISAL consultation (1961) was concerned with this issue. Míguez Bonino attended and gave a paper at this conference. In the development of his theology, he always emphasized the importance of the church in the context of its mission.

In regard to the *hermeneutic mediation*, Míguez Bonino emphasizes the re-reading of the revelation of God in his salvific actions. In the light of an analysis of the Church in the context of its mission, Míguez Bonino reflects upon how the church reads and re-reads God's action in saving humanity and establishing the Kingdom. The Bible is less of a source of inspiration for further action as God's present word to the Church in its mission. This item will be developed later in the chapter. Whereas Clodovis Boff notes that most liberation theologians prefer Exodus, the Hebrew Prophets, the Gospels, the book of Acts and Revelation (Boff 1993:17), but Míguez Bonino prefers the Pauline and Johannine writings which point to the Church, the Kingdom of God, and the Trinity.

In regard to the *practical mediation*, Míguez Bonino considers practical ways in which the role of the church in God's plan for the world. His theological proposals are more or less restricted to general lines of action; however, his theology is not properly understood the aspect of practical mediation is included. In certain books he emphasises the more pastoral role, in suggesting concrete ways of carrying out the mission of the Church (cf. 1972a; 1975c and 1979i).

Míguez Bonino's theological methodology using this model of 'three moments' needs to be related to the theme of this study by posing three questions. The *socioanalytical* mediation poses the question: How can the context of faith's search for effectiveness be understood here and now; and what is the church's place in that context? The *hermeneutical* mediation puts forward the question: how does God's revelation, both in the Bible and in current history, relate to, direct, and inform faith's search for effectiveness? The *practical* mediation asks: in the light of the context, the church's place in that context, and the reflection on God's action how, in concrete terms, does faith find and work out its mission effectively? The next three sections will deal with these three questions one by one.

3.6.2 *Socioanalytic mediation*

Analysis of the social context

As has been stated, Míguez Bonino's theology starts with the concrete context of the mission of the church. If faith is to be authentic in its search for effectiveness, then the analysis and interpretation of that context are vital. This is especially true of the socio-political context. Any context, however, is bewilderingly complex and therefore Míguez Bonino's hermeneutics seeks for 'a scientific analysis of reality'. He explicitly points out: 'An engaged faith and obedience cannot stand outside or

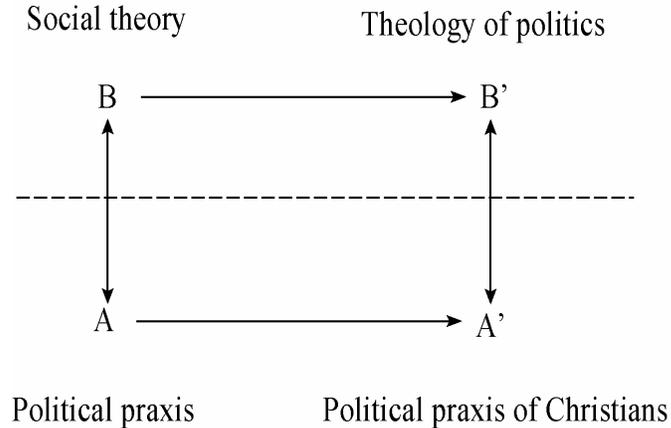
above the world in which they are engaged. This is the reason why, in the effort to enter into this theology, we are forced to dwell on the understanding and analysis of the world in which it finds its locus' (1975h:21).

In *Towards a Christian Political Ethics*, Míguez Bonino deals with the issue of how to interpret the socio-political context of Christian mission directly. In a section called, 'sociologies: which and how' (1983m:44-53). Míguez Bonino asks the question what kind of social analysis is needed in order to achieve real effectiveness in mission. He rejects three theological approaches to social issues. Firstly, he rejects the position that one can, in an unmediated way, understand and analyse social problems by simple observation. This "Samaritan-Like" approach is seen in many social action projects which, in reality, are often based on functionalist sociology and lead to reformist answers to social problems. Secondly, he rejects the purist idea of developing specifically Christian answers to secular problems. To some extent this is seen within the Roman Catholic "social doctrine of the Church," where theology uses certain philosophical and sociological categories without examining them critically. A third way, mixing theological and sociological categories is also rejected. There is no way of finding direct correspondence or analogy between biblical categories and contemporary situations as analysed through sociological categories. These analogies can end up being arbitrary, He cites the case of the use of Jesus' attitude towards the zealots, as a support for revolution or a rejection of it.

Míguez Bonino proposes 'the recognition of social analysis as a constitutive moment in theological reflection on politics' (1983m:45). He stipulates that there is no other way of "knowing" social reality; some sort of social analysis is needed. He is consistent in recognising that there is no value-free science and no value-free theology. In general terms, and risking oversimplification, he sees the functionalist and the dialectic visions of society as the most significant:

Functionalist sociologies conceive of society as an organism, with social groups, classes, and functions being constitutive parts of that organism which should function in harmoniously; conflicts are therefore understood as maladjustment and, directly or indirectly, social analysis serves the end of conflict solving. Dialectic sociologies, on the other hand, have a conflictual understanding of society; viewing society as a complex phenomenon full of contradictions and conflicts, they undertake to understand the structural basis and dynamics of such conflicts (1983m:46).

Míguez Bonino posits that, in general terms, functionalist sociologies represent a vision "from the top" and serve those sectors of society for whom the status quo benefits their position and the dialectic sociologies represent a vision "from below" and serve those for whom 'society appears as inadequate, badly structured, full of conflict, and in need of transformation' (1983m:47). In spite of certain philosophical and ideological presuppositions, which Míguez Bonino feels need to be questioned, he believes that the Christian should make an option for the critical and serious use of the analytical instruments of dialectical sociologies without absolutizing or theologically legitimizing them (Segundo 1976:39-68).



The next question posed by Míguez Bonino is how theology should incorporate the “socioanalytic moment” into the theological process. Using a model developed by Clodovis Boff, Míguez Bonino seeks to understand the complex interaction and relationships between political praxis and social theory, and between Christian praxis and a theology of politics (figure 1). He questions how to move from political praxis to a theology of politics ($A \rightarrow B'$). There are two approaches: $A \rightarrow A' \rightarrow B'$ and $A \rightarrow B \rightarrow B'$. In the first case, a Christian reflection on political practice is mediated by the indispensable hermeneutical key of Christian experience of political engagement; in the second case, it is mediated by secular social theory.

Christians are able to develop a Christian understanding of politics in two ways. Firstly by reflecting on the political praxis of Christians, which Míguez Bonino calls: ‘the discernment of Christian faith and love, which acts out of its obedience by assuming historical praxis that is then subjected to critical reflection on the basis of Scripture and tradition’ (1983m:48). In the second case ‘the theoretical elaboration of a political praxis is again assumed and then subjected to critical reflection from the standpoint of specifically Christian Faith’ (1983m:48). He does not think that it is necessary to make a definitive choice between these options but simply emphasises that some sort of practical mediation is essential.

Although Míguez Bonino in this case is focussing upon politics, all Christian mission falls within the realms of human activity, and so can be analysed sociologically. To analyse any context, theology can use the mediation of the already existing practice of Christians, or even non-Christians as the point of departure. Whether the activity is communication, social action, or political involvement, the mediation of praxis is essential.

Míguez Bonino chooses dialectical sociologies in order to understand the context in which Christians search for obedience in their mission in the world. These sociologies, lead him to opt for a Marxist analysis of society. Sociologists used by Míguez Bonino include Italian Communist political theorist and activist A. Gramsci (1891-1937) who wrote on the state and ideology and Greek Marxist and sociologist N. Poulantzas (1936-1979) who wrote on power in the capitalist state. This is obviously a complex, difficult and dangerous programme. On the one hand, some

who have wanted to take up the cause of the oppressed have rejected this process and so ‘lacking a rigorous historical mediation, not infrequently end up in frustration,...or different forms of reformism’. On the other hand, people who embraced Marxist theory uncritically have tended to lose their faith or give up the historical nature of the gospel. Míguez Bonino proposes a third way. This approach recognises that Christian obedience requires a solid method of analysing reality—not only in general terms but also in specific political, social, and economic terms. At this level of committed analysis, Marxism can be assumed not because it is ‘an abstract or eternal theory or dogmatic formulae’ but rather it represents

‘a scientific analysis and a number of verifiable hypotheses in relation to conditions obtaining in certain historical moments and places and which, properly modified, corrected and supplemented, provide an adequate means to grasp our own historical situation (insofar, moreover, as it is closely related and significantly shaped by the model originally analysed)’ (1975h:95-96).

Although Marxism can be described as socio-economic-political tool developed at a certain point in European history, Míguez Bonino sees it as ‘the best instrument available for an effective and rational realization of human possibilities in historical life. A Marxist praxis is both the verification and the source of possible correction of the hypothesis (1975h:97). He points out that if Marxist tools of analysis are compatible with the realities of human life and history, then ‘they become *the unavoidable historical mediation* of Christian obedience’ (1975h:98; italics in the original).

It is imperative that the use of Marxist tools in Míguez Bonino’s theological method should be deepened. This should take place, not only in the realm of theology (and its ideological assumptions) but also in the realm of the tools of that ideological critique (and their theological assumptions). Put another way, there is not only a need for a sociological critique of theological tools but also a theological critique of sociological tools. Míguez Bonino asserted the need to critique theology and biblical interpretation in the light of the sociological tools of suspicion. This does not mean to criticise God or the Scriptures but rather to reveal the ideological presuppositions behind much of theology. Míguez Bonino does this in several writings, such as his critique of the ideological presupposition of the division of the supernatural and the secular or of most theological reflection upon Jesus’ attitude to money that grossly distorts the radical biblical call. It is necessary, however, to critique the sociological tools themselves. Some of these have been blunted as tools for the search for effectiveness in mission by being inadequate in some way or by being reductionist. Míguez Bonino quite rightly notes this in a couple of places (cf. 1975h:97 and 1976c:114). A glaring example of this is Marx’s view of religion as only a reaction to economic conditions. In general terms, Marx assumed that all of religion was the same as the form of Christianity in nineteenth century Germany (the quasi-religious nature of the German state at the time) and generalised it for all religions at all times in all places. This is reductionist and needs adjustment if it is to be of use to a missionary theology.

It is essential to note, in order not to be misinterpreted here, that the theological critique of the sociological tools of analysis takes place within commitment to liberation of the poor. This theological critique has the same aim as the sociological critique, which is to sharpen the tools in order to achieve greater

effectiveness. It is not a theological mind game to prove the superiority of theology over sociology or Christianity over secularism. Therefore, theological critique of sociological tools takes place in the commitment to the use some sort of sociological tool of analysis.

Míguez Bonino proposes the critical use of Marxist tools of social analysis. He points out that these tools need to be 'properly modified, corrected and supplemented'. They need to be *modified* because they do not exactly fit into the Latin American context due to the fact that they originate from nineteenth century Europe. Furthermore, they need to be *corrected* because they contain both errors and reductionisms. Finally they need to be *supplemented* by other sociological tools because they do not embrace all elements within the Latin American social and political context. Míguez Bonino's argument is weakened by the fact he does not elaborate on how Marxist tools need to be modified, corrected and supplemented.

Two examples of socioanalytic mediation

Although Míguez Bonino constantly offers sections of social analysis in various articles and chapters, it is worth referring to two more complete examples of his socio-political analysis. They can illustrate how he approaches this moment or mediation. In *Revolutionary Theology Comes of Age*, Míguez Bonino dedicates a whole chapter to 'understanding our world' (1975h:21-37). His socio-historical analysis revolves around how the liberal Capitalist model has dominated Latin America and has created economic, social and political dependency. He makes a stinging critique of the developmentalist model so popular in the nineteen fifties and sixties, which formed the basis of John F. Kennedy's *Alliance for Progress* (1961).

'In the final analysis, the capitalist form of production as it functions in today's world creates in the dependant countries (perhaps not only in them) a form of human existence characterized by artificiality, selfishness, the inhuman and dehumanizing pursuit of success measured in terms of prestige and money, and the resignation of responsibility for the world and for one's neighbour' (1975h:31).

Míguez Bonino then moves on to describe how these conditions have been the point of departure for a new social consciousness in Latin America. This has especially to do with the success of the Cuban Revolution (1959). This revolution showed Latin America that change was possible; 'that the capitalist and imperialist system can be overcome' (1975h:33). It was not a textbook copy of Dogmatic Marxist revolution but one that had Latin American characteristics. It was able to achieve some of the modifications and corrections needed for making the revolution a success and to supplement it with other forms of analysis. Míguez Bonino concludes: 'Just as the socialist system which will finally emerge in Latin America will not be a copy of the existing one, but a creation related to our own reality, so the analysis has to be adequate to this reality and develop its own categories and methods' (1975h:35).

Another example of social analysis is found in *Toward a Christian Politic Ethics* (1983m). In this study Míguez Bonino's approach to the analysis is historical. He traces the Latin American socio-political situation from dependence upon the Spanish to a dependence upon the British, subsequently upon the United States, and finally upon transnational corporations. He shows how at each stage the continent has lived in dependency and how imperialist systems have used both military and

religious forces to maintain order among the people. Moving from the past to the present, he concludes that ‘the Capitalist transnational project with its technocratic ideology presents itself as the “natural” extension of and successor to the liberal democratic society’ and that

‘the two characteristic features of their project seem to be controlled development within the framework of the world capitalist system, and limited democracy under the management of technocratic elites. In the countries that dominate this world capitalist system, even though the conditions and mechanisms differ, it is possible to corresponding lines of a similar model’ (1983m:76).

In this regard Míguez Bonino’s analysis reflects the changing context that was experienced in the early nineteen-eighties: a slow return to ‘democracy’ after the ‘national security state’ project of the sixties and seventies.

Analysis of the Church in society

The second element in Míguez Bonino’s understanding of the socioanalytic mediation is the interpretation of the church’s place in society. This issue is vital to a clear understanding of Míguez Bonino’s theological methodology. Faith, in its search for effectiveness, starts from the Church’s missionary obedience, i.e. the obedience of the church in its mission in the world. The introduction of sociological tools into the hermeneutical process has enabled this analysis.

Historically, this issue became vital at the first consultation of ISAL (1961) in the early nineteen sixties. The major outcome of this consultation, apart from the formation and structuring of ISAL at continental and local levels and the planning of a second consultation, was the feeling of perplexity. The participants of the consultation became aware that the Church, in its response to the social situation in Latin America, far from being separated from society and thereby able to objectively study its role in society, was involved in and conditioned by society and the revolutionary situation which defined Latin America at that time (ISAL 1961:15). Consequently, there was a note included in the ‘Plan of Action’ to promote ‘the identification of Latin American Evangelical sociologists, encouraging a greater interest among Christian youth in the social sciences as a profession with great opportunities for Christian service’ (ISAL 1961:64). From this time on these issues came to be the premises on which ISAL studies were based (Padilla 1974:120).

Míguez Bonino’s *Revolutionary Theology* (1975h) approached this issue directly when examining how ‘Christianity as it operates historically’ (1975h:92). Any expression of Christianity does not present itself in the world as a set of beliefs or philosophies but as an historical agent. Every expression of Christianity, whether it is a State Church in Russia, an African Initiated Church in Nigeria, or a small group of Christians in the *Altiplano* of Bolivia, operates within history either as an agent of change or a sustainer of the status quo. Míguez Bonino’s hermeneutics proposes that these should be studied in order to make explicit ‘the ideological frameworks of interpretation implicit in a given praxis’ (1975h:94). Christians do not have to start from zero, this kind of analysis has already been done by social analysts such as in Karl Marx in his criticism of Protestant ethics as a reflection of capitalist bourgeois ideology; Max Weber in his sociological studies on Protestantism and capitalism and, specifically relevant to Latin America, Christian

Lalive d'Epinau in his study of Chilean Pentecostalism (cf. D'Epiney 1969). In recent years Míguez Bonino has modified his analysis of the Pentecostal movement. As Pentecostals themselves have begun to analyse their own traditions, he has become more circumspect (cf. 2004a:36-37).

All Churches and Christians possess ideological frameworks of interpretation but they are often held unconsciously. These frameworks support a certain political or economic position, but are not expressed. Even those who believe it is the Christian's responsibility to remain politically neutral possess these ideological frameworks. Míguez Bonino does not view them, however, in a wholly negative way—they are, in fact, inevitable. Every person has an ideological framework through which the world is perceived and thereby coheres their being and action. In this way they can become 'the instrument through which our Christian obedience gains coherence and unity. It is so, though, provided that is be always brought to consciousness and critically examined both in terms of the gospel and of the scientific analysis of reality' (1975h:95).

It is likely that this positive view of ideology has been drawn from the philosophy of the Italian Communist Antonio Gramsci, who states that one must

distinguish between historically organic ideologies, those, that is, which are necessary to a given structure, and ideologies that are arbitrary, rationalistic, "willed". To the extent that ideologies are historically necessary they have a validity which is "psychological"; they "organize" human masses, they form the terrain on which men move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle, etc (Gramsci 1971:367).

It is essential for Christian obedience that these ideological frameworks are examined to differentiate between 'arbitrary, rationalistic, "willed"' ideologies and those that are necessary to organize the masses, i.e. the faithful (cf. Segundo 1976:97-123 and Segundo 1984). J.L. Segundo clarifies the relationship between faith and ideologies by saying,

Faith, then, is not a universal, atemporal, pithy body of content summing up divine revelation once the latter has been divested of ideologies. On the contrary it is maturity by the way of ideologies, the possibility of fully and conscientiously carrying out the ideological task on which the real-life liberation of human beings depends (Segundo 1976:123).

Faith, to be effective, must have an ideological framework which enables it to think through its own positioning within society; its reading of the Bible; and the consequences of its actions. This framework must be made explicit in order to serve faith's struggle.

Two Analytical Examples of Church in Society

A multiplicity of examples could be given of how Míguez Bonino analyzes the church's place in society. Two writings will serve as examples or illustrations of this type of analysis of the Church in society. Probably the most comprehensive example of this is his analysis of Latin American Protestantism's understanding of social change and its own responsibilities towards that change (1973h:179-202). This extended essay uses a combined historical, social and ecclesiastical approach which

broadly is based upon Lalive d'Épinay's typology. He begins by recounting the entrance and integration of Protestantism into Latin America. Using the missionary congresses of Panama (1916), Montevideo (1925), Buenos Aires (1949) and Lima (1961), he shows how a situation has been created where some Protestants believe that social change will happen through converted individuals, others believe that social change should be fomented through democratic developmentalist means and still others who reject totally any association between the gospel and society. Finally Míguez Bonino shows how a small sector has committed itself to a revolutionary option in which 'the Church is present and committed to the Latin American humanizing processes, taking the gospel to its ultimate implications' (1973h:188). He then examines this process from an historical/social perspective, noting how Protestantism became associated with the challenge to traditional religion and society in Latin America; from an ideological perspective, showing how the missions and churches who planted Latin American churches held a liberal bourgeois ideology; and from a theological perspective, demonstrating how the theologies of the missionary churches held to a Liberal or Evangelical theology that emphasized the importance of the individual's relationship with God. This, he asserts, has come to a head in a crisis of liberal economics and theology. The neo-liberal developmentalist project of the post-war years and liberal theology entered into deep crisis in the mid sixties (1973h:188-193). The developmentalist project collapsed with the failure of the two decades of development and disintegration of the Alliance for Progress. Liberal theology entered a crisis following the entrance of Neo-Orthodox theologies from Europe (Barth and Brunner) and North America (Niebuhr) to Latin America in the mid nineteen forties. Finally Míguez Bonino draws out three general lines of approach in the Protestant churches to the social aspect of the church's mission: people who take a militantly developmentalist, anti-communist line represented by a magazine called *Primicia Evangélica*; people who hold to a "social strike" withdrawing from the world and denouncing involvement in the world; and people who get involved in society and societal change, despite all the problems encountered. The final approach is normally taken by the historical churches and those involved in ISAL (1973h:193-202). In this way Míguez Bonino attempts to understand the historical, ideological and theological background of Latin American Protestantism and to better accompany it in its search for missionary effectiveness.

The second example of Míguez Bonino's analysis of Protestantism's place in Latin American society will be dealt with far more briefly. It comes to the fore in the book *Faces of Latin American Protestantism* (1997). In separate chapters he makes a brief analysis of four faces of Latin American Protestantism: Liberal, Evangelical,¹ Pentecostal and Ethnic² (cf. 1995c:ix.). In each case he gives the historical, social and theological background of the ecclesial tradition involved, showing how each entered and took root in Latin America, and highlights its current position within Latin American society. In the final two chapters he reflects upon the issues of theological coherence and missionary unity in the light of his analysis.

¹ Evangelical here is used in the Anglo-Saxon sense.

² This book came out of the Carnahan Lectures (1993) and only included the first three faces, but because of many complaints and comments he received, Míguez Bonino added the Ethnic Face. This especially reflects the Argentinean reality of Latin American Protestantism.

In conclusion, these descriptions are given as examples of Míguez Bonino's analysis of how the church operates as an actor in society and of his understanding how it could operate in the light of the gospel. He is in harmony with liberation theologians in this area and is consistent in his writings to include this analysis.

3.6.3 *Hermeneutical mediation*

Revelation and reception

This study has insisted that Míguez Bonino's theology can be understood as faith seeking effectiveness. In order to achieve this effectiveness it has shown how Míguez Bonino sees the need to begin with obedience to God's call to mission: obedience is a prerequisite to understanding the road toward effectiveness in mission. He also has seen the need to analyse scientifically the context of the Church's mission as well as the Church's place within that context. There is a danger, however, that this type of process can lose its theological nature and become a glorified sociology. To achieve that this process remains theological, faith must be confronted with God's Word so that the effectiveness that faith seeks conforms to God's purposes in the world.

Míguez Bonino's understanding of how the Church, accompanied by theologians, reads and interprets God's Word needs to be analysed. He does not simply question how the Church reads the Bible but how it receives God's revelation and how it interprets that revelation. This leads to the question how the Church hands on God's revelation to subsequent generations in forms, doctrines and self-expressions and also how it hands over that revelation to those who do not believe in its preaching and mission.

The significant questions of Revelation, Scripture and Tradition are interlinked. Míguez Bonino understands revelation to be God's action in history, especially in Jesus Christ; he understands the Bible as the Apostolic Witness to that revelation; and tradition as the Christian interpretation and communication of that revelation in Jesus Christ as read through the apostolic witness. This means that tradition includes all Christian doctrine, dogma and theology, as well as the creeds, and up to and including the full life of the Church and its presence in the world.

This issue is especially significant in Latin America. It is still one that divides Protestants and Roman Catholics. In his ThD thesis (1960e), Míguez Bonino describes this conflict in doctrinal terms. On the one hand 'Roman Catholics find that Protestant theology has falsely objectified the Word of God in the Bible, severing it arbitrarily from its connection with a living community' (1960e:358), and also that Protestantism 'has falsely subjectivized the Word of God by turning the Bible over to individual interpretation' (1960e:358). On the other hand, Protestants feel that Roman Catholics have 'dissolved the objectivity of the Word of God in the witness of Scripture by placing the *Magisterium* on a level with it and thus robbing Scripture of the possibility of confronting the Church as a voice coming from outside her' (1960e:358). Míguez Bonino does, however, feel that this must be qualified: 'Neither does Protestantism identify the Word of God simply with the Bible nor does Catholicism place the doctrinal tradition simply on a level with Scripture. Protestantism does not deny the role of the living community in spite of all its emphasis on its imperfection and fallibility, nor does Roman Catholicism

refuse to acknowledge a mutability and relativity in dogmatic formulations' (1960e:359). This has opened up a space for dialogue.

Míguez Bonino tries to step outside of the traditional approaches to Scripture and Tradition by stepping back and starting from the basic problem of revelation and reception, or in other words, God's word and the human reception of that word. In this sense tradition is understood, not as the creation of human additions to God's revelation but 'as the act of handing over and receiving, as the moment in which something is given and received' (1960e:363). Therefore it can be said that the basic issue is that of the relationship between divine revelation and the human receiving of that revelation.

Míguez Bonino's ThD thesis forms the basis for his later reflections on Biblical interpretation. It will become clear that even as far back as 1960, he was developing an interpretational method that would be used later by other theologians and in due time become, what is contemporarily recognized as a liberationist reading.

Revelation's relationship to human witness: Scripture and Tradition

Míguez Bonino regards God's revelation as the starting point in the process of Biblical interpretation. Revelation is to be understood 'not as a communication of eternal truths, but as God's action in history' (1960e:270). He cuts across the arguments of whether scripture, reason, ecclesiastical tradition or experience are sources of revelation and plainly states that revelation is seen in God's acts of salvation. These acts are what Míguez Bonino has called "the germinal events" of the faith: 'God's dealings with Israel, the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the hope of the Kingdom' (1975h:98) are included. Revelation, therefore, is conceived of as taking place in history (cf. Gutiérrez 1988:106-110). Although, the acts of God in history as recorded in, and interpreted by the Bible, are many and varied (Hebrews 1:1), Jesus Christ is God's ultimate, decisive and definitive action and revelation to humanity. Míguez Bonino stated 'The final saving revelation of God has been uniquely given in Jesus Christ' (1960e:363). This is a programmatic statement for understanding his biblical hermeneutic. Consequently, 'revelation meets us in a person. In the concrete, human existence of Jesus of Nazareth we meet God's Word. He is the truth' (1960e:364). God's revelation in Christ is unique. Later on in his career Míguez Bonino states the same thing but in a different way.

There certainly exists a time and place that has for us a unique and unchangeable, normative nature: the Biblical history. The New Testament is not a testimony of a time and a place among others but rather the time and the place where God made known and put into operation his mission in a exemplary and determinant form for all times and all places. But it is fundamental to caution that God didn't do this through an abstract and extemporal definition of this mission but rather 'incarnating himself' in a particular history (1981h:7).

This does not mean that the New Testament is itself God's revelation but rather that the New Testament records, for humanity and especially for the Church, God's definitive revelation of his own nature in those specific events at a specific moment in history. God is revealed at a specific time and place in history by becoming a

human being. This “Christ event” comprises the frame of reference and the starting point for the understanding of his biblical hermeneutic.

The uniqueness of Christ as God’s revelation implies the following: ‘Jesus Christ stands alone as God’s Word, a designation which nothing else can share at the same level or univocally’ (1960e:364). This leads to the fact that both the Bible and human traditions are relativised. Neither scripture nor tradition can claim to be revelation in the same way as Christ is. Scripture and tradition are placed on the same level because they are both human and both a response to God’s Word; they share the same human characteristics—relativity, contingency and fallibility. This does not empty them of their significance because, as Míguez Bonino says, they ‘fulfil their witnessing function precisely in all the limitation and fallibility of their humanity’ (1960e:365). By saying this, Míguez Bonino rejects both the doctrine of the infallibility of tradition within the Roman Catholic Church and the tendency—in both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism—of the identification of Scripture with revelation. He also opens up the way for a contemporary re-reading of God’s revelation. Once again the influence of Karl Barth is unmistakable. The key to Míguez Bonino’s hermeneutic is the same as Barth’s: the Word of God in Jesus Christ.

The Scriptures (or the Apostolic witness) have a special place in Míguez Bonino’s theology not, because it is the Word of God itself but because it is the primary witness to God’s revelation in Christ. Consequently, he makes a distinction between the scriptures and any other words about Christ. ‘If the Word of God dwelt fully in the humanity of Jesus Christ, the witness to that humanity has a unique, permanent and irreplaceable character which no other instance can share...as temporally and materially original witness to the concrete and definite humanity of Jesus Christ in whom God meets us uniquely and decisively, the Scripture must be distinguished from all later witness as the only normative instance for the knowledge of revelation’ (1960e:365). Later on, when commenting on the relationship between Marxism and Christianity, he says that it is vital to base all reflections on this subject on the Bible because ‘we have no other final source of knowledge of God than his own self-identification in Jesus Christ. And this knowledge is not available for us except in the knowledge of the Old and New Testament’ (1976c:31). For Míguez Bonino scripture has ‘a unique, permanent and irreplaceable character’; it is the ‘final source of knowledge of God’ and the ‘only normative instance of the knowledge of revelation.’ Just as the Christ event is unique and normative as God’s revelation, so the Bible is also unique, final and normative in its witness to that revelation. Scripture has a special relationship with revelation that tradition does not.

The fact that Christ is God’s unique saving revelation to humanity does not mean that revelation is not related to the human reception of that revelation. Although the Church’s interpretation in its preaching, dogma and doctrine are relativised and cannot be considered even to be on the same level as the Bible, it is, however, intimately related to Christ. In other terms, revelation is related to tradition. The relationship between the Church’s tradition and God’s revelation is not only to be conceived indirectly—through the Bible—but also directly—through the presence of the living Christ in the Church. Protestantism has traditionally rejected such a close association between Christ and the Church, fearing the danger of falling into a Roman Catholic understanding which elevates the Church to an authoritative level. Míguez Bonino is insistent, however, that it is imperative to take

seriously how God's revelation is related to the Church. He does this Christologically. God became human in a real sense, not docetically. God's revelation is made fully concrete in history. Theology must give full weight to the fact of the incarnation. God is therefore related to the Church in its reading of the apostolic witness in Christ. He explains this more fully in the following statement:

Christians are incorporated into the body of Christ, they are ingrafted in the living vine: the reality in which they participate is the very life of Christ, the Head, flowing in the members. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit witnesses to the fact that the revelation in Jesus Christ really enters man and takes him into personal, actual communion with Him, as man is, within the limits of his humanity, without divinizing him, but not in a merely external way, to the point that Calvin does not even recoil from speaking of *mystica communicatio* (1960e:367).

This statement has certain consequences. 'The emphasis on the present work of the Holy Spirit in the Church gives meaning and importance to the witness and proclamation of the Church' (1960e:367). This should not be understood in terms, of only the verbal communication of the gospel or the confessional expression but in the whole life of the Church in 'worship, preaching, suffering, acting of the Church' (1960e:367). Míguez Bonino calls this 'active tradition'. In the very life and preaching of the Church, in communion with the Holy Spirit, the Church not only interprets God's revelation but lives it out. In terms of the thesis of this study: the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church enables the Church to achieve effectiveness in its life and mission.

Furthermore, Míguez Bonino proposes, what he calls, a *passive tradition*. Not only does the Church listen to the Holy Spirit, it also listens 'to the voice of the Church of the past, not merely as a voice of the past, but as the voice of the Church in obedience to the Holy Spirit' (1960e:368). He asserts that often Protestantism is so interested in getting to the truth of scripture that forgets the command to love and unity. He poses the question at two levels. The first level is that of space: the ecumenical question. The Church is called to speak the truth in love and to dialogue with other Christian traditions in order to understand the presence of the Holy Spirit in those other traditions. The second level is that of time: the question of dogma and confession. The contemporary church cannot forget how the Church has listened to the Holy Spirit in the past. The Church has attempted to listen to the Holy Spirit throughout the ages and has tried to seek God's will; the Church of today, recognizing the Spirit's presence, listens to the voices of both the Church of the past and that of the Holy Spirit and must respond.

Additionally, 'the previous statements must be understood in the light of the fact that the Holy Spirit is sent from God and Christ to bear witness to Christ' (1960e:369-370). God continues to be present in the Church and in the world through the presence of the Holy Spirit. This presence cannot be understood as a type of continuing incarnation. The incarnation was a once for all, unrepeatable event but, analogically understood, the Holy Spirit dwells in the Church to inspire the Church in its mission. 'The Spirit of God has not been absent in the shaping of the particular location in which we read Holy Scripture today' (1960e:265-266). Furthermore, 'If the promise of Christ is true, we may expect to hear in the voice of the tradition of the Church which hands to us the Scripture, and echo, however dimmed or mixed, of the voice of the Spirit disclosing to us the meaning of the

Scriptures which witness to Christ' (1960e:266). It is possible to discern here the influence of Oscar Cullman's understanding of *Heilsgeschichte*. Due to the fact that salvation history extends through to the Parousia, the presence of the Holy Spirit is fully guaranteed to the Church in its interpretation of Scripture (cf. 1960b:94-107 and 1967a:295-301). Or, as he puts later (1982), when referring to the contemporizing of the message of revelation: 'Jesus Christ himself has promised that His Spirit (John 14-16) would lead His community in that "actualizing"' (1981h:7). In the 1990s, he treats this issue again, stating that our historical, conditioned understanding is a supernatural process: 'it takes place in the surroundings of the operation of the Holy Spirit; it is the work of the Triune God (1997c:90). It is discernment. 'The understanding and expression by the Church and therefore by theology, as an act of the church, of revelation and redemption has its place in the Holy Spirit (1997c:90). Therefore, Míguez Bonino states:

on the basis of these facts we must draw the consequence that tradition in the Church, if it is to be real proclamation of the revelation in Christ, if it will listen to what the Holy Spirit teaches, must be a constant return to the concrete humanity of the Word made flesh. The presence of the Word in the Church cannot be conceived as a seed planted once in the bosom of the Church and developing in it but an as ever renewed contact with the original, full Incarnation in Jesus Christ (1960e:371).

He adds: 'hearing the Word of God in the power of the Spirit means being placed in the presence of Jesus Christ' (1960e:372). In this sense, the critical function of Scripture becomes clear. The Church is a mixture of the divine and the dusty; 'nothing in the life of the Church can once and for all be placed above confrontation and crisis and transferred to the category of final norm' (1960e:372). The Church is, in Luther's words, *simul justus et peccator* (at the same time justified and sinner). The Church must always examine its proclamation, witness and life before the light of God's revelation in Christ which is witnessed to in the scriptures.

Finally, 'for our preaching, doctrine, dogma to become that which it intends to be, namely the effective witness to Jesus Christ, He Himself must act' (1960e:373-374). Jesus Christ is active in the life of the Church. Míguez Bonino would agree with Segundo when he says: 'dogma is not an encapsulated version of the absolute' (cf. Segundo 1976:175. How ever much the Church prays and trusts, it can never claim to be God's revelation. Only when Christ is active in the handing over of the gospel, the Church's activity can be effective. In Míguez Bonino's own words 'In the life of the Church the revelation is always given in the tradition. But the relation is irreversible: tradition is never in itself revelation' (1960e:374). Because Christ is active in the handing over of God's revelation in the life the Church, revelation is always handed over in tradition.

This handing over does not render the Church immune from the creation of human traditions. Human traditions are created when human understanding of the *paradosis* (gospel tradition) is elevated to a divine reality in itself or when authority is claimed for human understanding of that *paradosis*. This, Míguez Bonino says, makes our traditions not only meaningless but also contrary to God's revelation. Moreover, when traditions really communicate God's revelation in Christ, they will lose their effectiveness when they claim authority. The only authority is that of the *paradosis* itself as recorded in the Apostolic Witness.

Revelation, the Church and History

Míguez Bonino affirms that the Church is accompanied by the living Christ in the process of handing down and handing on God's revelation. However, it is still deeply affected by its involvement in history and this has deep implications for Christian witness and effectiveness in mission.

As was argued in the section on Míguez Bonino's epistemology and its implications for theological methodology, humanity is socially and culturally conditioned. Whenever cultural change takes place or a new tradition is received, it always takes place within the framework of already existing cultural traditions. Míguez Bonino puts it in the following way:

The language structures of community, mores, science, religion of our community are the categories within which we determine the meaning of our own existence. They do not destroy our freedom but they condition it and give the concrete conditions which make possible the exercise of that freedom. In other words, creativity, freedom can only take place in the framework of tradition (1960e:377).

That is to say: 'we do not read the Bible as people of the first or second century, but as people of our own time and place' (1960e:263). Much later in his career he says:

'revelation and faith are always absolutes: they are the revelation of the only true God, nothing more and nothing less...At the same time, all understanding and expression of this revelation, all experience of this faith is necessarily relative: conditioned by time, place, culture, sex, temperament, social status, language, and modes of expression' (1997c:89).

The Church's reading of the Bible, therefore, is always a contextual reading.

Generally, this process takes place unconsciously. A group of people unconsciously assumes the existence and validity of the culture: 'we receive the tradition and pass it on without understanding or evaluating it in particular' (1960e:377). The consequence of this, of course, is that groups of people are children of cultural traditions. Therefore they 'give birth to a tradition which at the same time is and is not what we have received' (1960e:378). The tradition that is created upon the reception of a new cultural element or tradition contains qualities of that tradition that has been handed down; at the same time it is different because of the "traditioning process". The Church cannot place itself outside the framework of this process:

The core of the tradition—in the passive sense—are the facts, symbols, ideas, meanings which cluster around the historical person Jesus of Nazareth and the early Christian community's understanding of him. But we do not escape here the general law of transmission. Christian tradition is not a mechanical handing down of the original traditions, but a constant reconception and reinterpretation in the changing conditions of human history and the history of the community (1960e:378-379).

Each epoch and each culture has its basic approaches. Consequently, 'the Church receives and transmits the *traditions* in the context of its own internal development but also in that of its relations with this surrounding world' (1960e:379). Therefore, 'Conservation and creation, reception, understanding and reconception are also a

part of the process of tradition in the Church' (1960e:379). This process does not annul the validity of its tradition but gives it a new meaning in a new situation.

Christianity is presented in the world. It must be presented as an interpretation of the historical act of God in Jesus Christ. Míguez Bonino puts it in the following way:

For the Christian faith, the event of Jesus Christ is not merely history, but it is the disclosure in history—And fully under the conditions of history—of that which transcends history, namely God's own Word, the creative and redeeming word. This Word, in the power of the Spirit is present and active in the Church and leads her into all truth. Therefore, in the human historical fact *traditioned* in history, we come in contact with Truth itself which transcends tradition (1960e:379-380).

This makes possible the conception of new meanings, values, symbols in the historical Christian faith. These are not errors but new meanings for new circumstances, illuminated by the Holy Spirit. This means that the proclamation of the gospel is not merely the repetition of a formula; it is also, in a limited sense, the creation of new meanings. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Cor. 3:17).

Míguez Bonino argues that this process was already taking place in the Bible. Critical studies have shown how Scripture is the product of the communication of an oral tradition. 'Oral tradition is not only due to the fact that the biblical communities were not "bookish communities", but to the very character of the biblical faith' (1960e:260). The biblical faith is one of constant reinterpretation. God's actions in the Old Testament are:

not left as isolated facts of the past, but taken up in each generation, told and retold, and re-lived as they are told again. The community goes through the experience of the Exodus, the crossing of the Red Sea or the Covenant at Sinai as these events are repeated in the tradition—whether oral or written. Thus the living tradition of these "traditions" re-enacts, contemporizes the past event,³ whether in the great religious festivals or in the modest setting of the life of the family. The revelatory event constitutes a community and this community transmits the event (1960e:260-261).

In the New Testament, Jesus 'proclaims himself as the true interpretation of God's past acts of redemption, as the present fulfilment of these events and, therefore, in a real sense, as the true tradition' (1960e:261). Although he is the goal of Israel's traditions which find fulfilment in him, he is also the foundation of a new tradition—the Apostolic tradition.

The historical character of God's revelation in Christ makes necessary that the knowledge of him be transmitted, handed over and handed down. This process takes place in the community, so that again the revelatory event constitutes a community and this community transmits the event (1960e:261).

In this passage from his ThD thesis, it is clear that Míguez Bonino is engaged in developing a dynamic hermeneutic that allows the re-reading and recapturing of Scripture for the believing and witnessing community. The hermeneutical

³ This concept will be revisited later in this chapter in the section on J. Severino Croatto (1930-2004).

community of the biblical world listened to the tradition of the acts of God—in the Exodus and in other events of their history and especially in Jesus Christ—and recounted and relived these events before they were written down.

In *Revolutionary Theology* (1975e), Míguez Bonino illustrates his viewpoint further by using Pierre Bonnard's understanding that the Apostle Paul interprets the resurrection not as a simple historical fact (which it is) but as an event which has meaning as "bearer of a present word" (1975h:101, cf. Bonnard 1970). Therefore, the text is open to a contemporary reading 'not in spite of its concrete local and dated historicity but because of it' (1975h:102). Consequently, it is possible to propose a 'hermeneutical circulation', a dynamic interpretation that takes place between the history within the text and the historical contemporary reading of the text. An engaged reading of the Bible is not only inevitable but the Bible itself requires that this will be done.

Míguez Bonino notes that this hermeneutical process is worked out systematically by the Argentinean Roman Catholic theologian, Severino Croatto (1930-2004). Croatto uses the concept of the "reservoir", "reserve" or "surplus" of meaning, adapted from the work of the French sociologist and theologian Paul Ricoeur (Ricoeur 1976). An explanation of Croatto's argument is needed to understand Míguez Bonino's hermeneutics (cf. Croatto 1987).

Croatto says: 'A human event does not exhaust itself simply occurring, nor in the chronicle that describes it. It has the capacity to generate other happenings—what H. G. Gadamer calls the "historical effect"' (Croatto 1981:1; cf. Gadamer 1960 and 1975). He adds that 'The meaning of the more recent event is found to be already included within the prior event. As the chain of events lengthens, its significance retrospectively accumulates in that remote starting point' (Croatto 1981:1). This means that an event accumulates meaning as it becomes chronologically removed from the original event. There are certain events that become foundational events and are formed as a 'reservoir-of-meaning' for subsequent readings. Consequently as the reading becomes chronologically remote from the foundational event the significance of those original events become more important. This means that more meaning is assigned to a foundational event when it gets further away in time.

This explanation clarifies that, 'the event precedes the word and the word interprets the event and unfolds its reservoir-of-meaning' (Croatto 1981:2). In terms of revelation and reception, God's revelation in Jesus Christ is the event that precedes the word of the apostolic witness, which interprets and begins the process of the accumulation of meaning for the event. Consequently, interpretation adds meaning to a foundational event. The interpretation of an event, or even the interpretation of an interpretation of an event, adds meaning rather than simply drawing out meaning. Exegesis cannot, and does not want, to avoid *eisegesis*.

The dynamics of what Croatto calls the "hermeneutic circularity" (Croatto 1981:2; cf. Lapointe 1968) is conditioned by an interaction between the original or foundational event and the word spoken about that event. Christ, the foundational event, is interpreted (the word) by the first Christians through the Old Testament. They also interpreted the Old Testament in the light of Christ. Therefore, the New Testament became a re-reading of the Old Testament. In conversation, with the speaker and listener present, the meaning of the words is determined by the speaker and listener together. The words could be ambiguous but there is the possibility of

clarification. When speech becomes writing, what Paul Ricoeur has called, a “distanciation” or a distancing appears. Consequently this process ‘opens the text to an understanding from the vantage point of its new horizon’ (Croatto 1981:2-3)—the horizon of the reader.

Because the practices of any group take place between the foundational event and the historical praxis, a ‘conflict of interpretation’ occurs. In all human groups, self identity and praxis becomes concentrated in certain foundational historical events. This is no less true of Christianity. It was founded in the conflict of interpretation around the person of Jesus Christ. One interpretation saw Jesus’ message as a recovery of the original life of Israel whereas the Pharisees saw it as an innovation. Both interpretations were generated within common worldview and symbolic vision. Therefore

a hermeneutic reading of the biblical message occurs only when the reading supersedes the first contextual meaning (not only that of the author but also that of his first readers). This happens through the unfolding of a surplus-of-meaning disclosed by a new question addressed to the text (Croatto 1981:3).

Croatto expressed explicitly the process of the receiving and the passing on of Scripture and tradition that Míguez Bonino had been developing even in the early nineteen-sixties. Míguez Bonino sums up his understanding in *Faces of Jesus*.

A hermeneutics that respects not only the original historicity of the text but also the singularity of the reader’s locus—hence a hermeneutics incorporating careful exegesis and historico-social analysis as well—is the only one that will permit access to the ‘reserve’ (1978j:6).

Although Míguez Bonino does not explicitly mention it, it is clear that his early reflections on Scripture and tradition in the early nineteen sixties were seminal, and led to a more explicit liberationist hermeneutic later expressed by Croatto.

Preservation and Evaluation of Tradition

In the light of the preceding argument it is clear that theology must find ways of both preserving and evaluating tradition—the search for effectiveness in mission. Míguez Bonino suggests three principles to supervise this process. What he calls ‘the principle of limited authority’ (1960e:381) does not allow received tradition to possess universal nor eternal authority. The Church, accompanied by theologians, has the task of receiving the tradition handed down to it by past generations of Christians in the confidence that the living Christ, through the Holy Spirit, has been working in the Church. That having been said, the Church never renounces the right to question that tradition in the light of the apostolic witness to Jesus Christ. Tradition can only have partial influence. Theological tradition can only be theology on the road.

Consequently, there must be a permanent evaluation of received tradition. Tradition must always be confronted with its norm—the apostolic witness to Jesus Christ: at the level of biblical exegesis in which ‘we endeavour to identify and articulate the original meaning of scriptural texts’ (1960e:382) and at the level of theology where the questions are asked as to whether a particular doctrine points to

Christ or not. ‘This radical Christological evaluation of dogma—which cannot be pursued apart from the previous exegetical one—is the basic task of theology’ (1960e:382).

Finally, ‘the principle of permanent reconception’ (1960e:383) proceeds from the previous point where the relationship of tradition to revelation has been evaluated. Here the relationship of tradition to the context is evaluated. Míguez Bonino puts it in the following way: ‘One consists in testing the proclamation of the Church against the apostolic witness to Christ; the other in rethinking this proclamation in terms of our own situation’ (1960e:383). The gospel, therefore, must be rethought in the light of the new situation. Míguez Bonino’s emphasis is on the use of philosophical categories. Each new proclamation of the gospel assumes a worldview with its attending philosophical presuppositions: ‘In view of this fact, the theologian is called to the double task of the identification and criticism of the philosophical categories used in Church dogma in the past and the evaluation and criticism—but also the faithful use—of the philosophical categories of the present which make communication possible’ (1960e:384).

Decades later, Míguez Bonino proposes that mutual accountability should be applied at both international and ecumenical levels in the context of a ‘disciplined, continuous and committed conversation at each level of life and thought in the worldwide Christian community’ (1997c:90). There should be accountability in three areas; ‘our hermeneutical approach and our understanding of the authority of scripture’ (1989d:169-170; cf. 1997c:90), the way theology is related to the ‘manifold tradition of the church,’ and in interpretation of reality ‘as an economically, socially and politically structured system’ (1989d:169).

In *Universalidad y Contextualidad*, he goes on to discuss the issues of syncretism. For Míguez Bonino this preservation and evaluation of tradition must not become an ideological inquisition, rooting out syncretism but theology must always recognise the relative nature of *all* understandings of the absolute. Mutual accountability must be carried, recognising that syncretism is not only inevitable but, as Leonardo Boff says ‘is positively the historical and concrete way in which God comes to people and save them’ (Boff 1985:99). It is ‘the incarnation, expression and objectification of a religious faith or expression’ (Boff 1985:93). Míguez Bonino suggests that historical projects, new lines of Christian praxis, new traditions produced through the reflection process will all be syncretistic by nature. In this way Míguez Bonino hopes to establish a dynamic but monitored reading of the Bible.

3.6.5 *Practical mediation*

Back to Obedience

Míguez Bonino’s theological process moves from Christian obedience, through analysis and reflection, and to obedience; it starts with action and leads to action; it is the journey from praxis to praxis. This practical mediation is the final stage in faith’s search for effectiveness but also the stage in which action, resulting from this stage in the process, becomes the concrete obedience to the gospel that forms the basis for beginning of the continuation of the hermeneutical circulation.

The practical mediation, although its focus is upon strategies, options, possibilities, dangers, and consequences, remains for Míguez Bonino a wholly theological task. The main theological work done at this point is to define how theology's reflection upon the revelation of God in Jesus Christ and the salvation God has wrought relates to concrete action. Or as Míguez Bonino poses it: 'how do the original events (or the "germinal" events as it would be more accurate to call them), namely, God's dealings with Israel, the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the hope of the Kingdom—how are they determinative in this single, synthetical fact that we call historical praxis of a Christian?' (1975h:98).

The Necessity of an Option

Míguez Bonino believes that in order to ensure that theological reflection leads to effective praxis, the Christian must opt for some type of already existing praxis. It has been argued throughout this chapter that Christian obedience, worked out in a concrete practice, is a prerequisite for knowledge of the truth and therefore a requirement to do theology in any context. In order for faith to find true effectiveness in mission it is essential to include a concrete political option. For the Christian, these options are what Míguez Bonino calls 'historical projects'. An historical project is a limited, measurable attempt at a model of political and economic organization in obedience to God.

The danger is that the choice of historical projects and options will "sacralize" those options. The choice of political and social options must not be considered or treated as if they were given by God, or drawn directly from the Bible, but rather that they are decisions taken in obedience to God's command by fallible and sinful human beings. It is vital, for Míguez Bonino, to avoid this 'sacralization'. He seeks to solve the problem in terms of attitude towards alternatives. The first solution is connected to people's attitude towards historical projects. In the case of historical projects people make their choices 'in obedience to the dictates of our faith, will not be anything but a human project, fallible, destined to fulfil a relative and transitory role in history' (1981h:9). Any Christian action, including the Christian action taken as a result of social analysis and theological reflection, is described as human and fallible. Although there is no guarantee that the action is either right or will be successful, action must be taken. The historical project is only destined to fulfil a relative and transitory role. It is not the fulfilment of the Kingdom of God; it is nothing more than a considered but humble attempt at Christian obedience done in faith.

The second solution to the danger of sacralization is that the election of a historical project is part of an on-going process of action and reflection. The relationship that exists between the direction perceived in Scripture and tradition, the ideology that mobilises and gives coherence to praxis and the analysis which defines and directs action is 'neither one-directional nor static' (1975h:151). As Christians engage in the process of "action—analysis—reflection—action," they experience that new challenges drive them back to a new analysis. In Míguez Bonino's own words:

New human possibilities lead us to enlarge our understanding of the biblical witness—indeed, in evangelical terms—the Spirit discloses Jesus Christ to us as we engage in the concrete witness to his redeeming love. But also the love which belongs

to God's Kingdom suggests further horizons for human life which act as magnetic poles or horizons of hope for kindling man's [sic] analytical and ideological imagination (1975h:151).

Historical projects cannot be sacralized because the very employment of this historical project opens up new possibilities and drives Christians back to the analysis and theological reflection. As new situations are created by Christians in their search for effectiveness, they are driven to reflect upon these new situations in the light of social analysis and biblical reflection.

The Choice of an Option

In order to make Christian action concrete and effective theology must move from the 'general and indeterminate to the particular and determinate' (1983m:100). Míguez Bonino's methodology began with the particular and determinate in the socio analytical moment; moved to the general and indeterminate in the hermeneutical moment and now returns, via a second moment of analysis, to the particular and determinate in historical projects and concrete action. The question that must be answered here is: how is this done?

The effectiveness that faith seeks is not the cheapest, quickest, and easiest way to achieve a previously decided goal, but rather it is a genuine search for the best means and methods, in order to achieve the goals of God's Kingdom in the concrete situation in which the Christian church finds itself. It is 'a prophetic word of discernment received in faith' (1975h:103). Therefore, it is not a planning meeting that could be carried out by executives but rather a deeply spiritual and theological exercise carried out by committed Christians.

Míguez Bonino warns that 'an intelligent and responsible action demands that we distinguish between levels of action for the Christian' (1972a:99). Not all action takes place on the same social level. He identifies three levels of action. The level of *personal action* relates to work, neighbourhood, family, recreation, education, etc. Here, each Christian must make personal decisions about concrete situations. Then there is the level of *organized action*. This takes place in institutional frameworks such as clubs, unions, school organizations, political and cultural organizations. These institutions are not established simply "to be a good witness" but rather to truly work for justice and peace from within those organizations. The final level of action is that of *the Christian community*. This level is one which has been very polemical in Latin America, especially in the area of politics and social involvement. The church has been loath to make social and political statements or decision and has certainly been more comfortable staying at the level of "critical function" or to ignore totally its social and political responsibility.

Míguez Bonino suggests two mediations to achieve an engaged reading of the text and thereby to move from the biblical to the practical, or from the abstract to the concrete—the reading of the biblical text, and the determination of historical conditions. These are what he calls: 'conditions for all Christian action' (1972a:101). Firstly, speaking of the biblical text, he warns that in this act there cannot be 'a direct historical consequence' between the reading of the scriptures and 'a form of law' (1975h:103) in the formation of a plan of action or project. By this he means that there is not a direct route between the biblical text and historical praxis. The

failure of the Calvinist project at Geneva and the tendency, even in Liberation Theology, to draw direct political conclusions from Jesus' relationship to the Zealots, suffer from this misconception.

The solution to this problem Míguez Bonino proposes in a section called 'Getting close to the action' in *Ama y haz lo que quieras* (1972a; cf. Boff, C. 1993:8-9). There should be a 'deepening of the biblical testimony' (1972a:102) in relation to the context or of the issue or problem under consideration. This requires an identification of biblical paradigms of action. In *Revolutionary Theology* and other writings, however, he describes this as the reading of the direction of the biblical text. He identifies that the germinal events of the faith point to such notions as 'liberation, righteousness, shalom, the poor, love' as concepts that guide Christian obedience. These should be considered only as dimensions of action or paradigms not abstract principles. 'They serve as an orientation in the elaboration of a social ethic that guides the action of the Christian and the Church in society' (1964b:31).

Then there is what Míguez Bonino calls 'the determination of the historical conditions and possibilities of our present situation, as discovered through rational analysis' (1975h:103). In *Ama y Haz lo que quieras*, he suggests 'the consideration of the Christian community—the Church—past and present' (1972a:102) is vital. It is essential to consider how the church has treated certain issues and their contexts; how it has been successful, failed, and resolved ethical issues in the past. This obviously relates to the consideration of the passive tradition explained above.

For Míguez Bonino, it is obvious that, the practical moment in theology must be done in community. Consequently his ecumenism is not only theologically based; it is also shaped practically and, in a positive sense, pragmatically. Furthermore, there must be an analysis of the contemporary social problems surrounding a given context. There is a difference between the analysis of the socioanalytic moment and the analysis done in the practical moment. Whereas in the socioanalytic moment the issue is dealt with on a macro scale, at this point it is much more detailed. The macro context must still be taken into account but, at this point, a single issue is in focus and it is the surrounding elements that are vital to the investigation. In this moment of analysis, the problems that are dealt with are local unemployment, drug use, local government corruption, and other social questions. Míguez Bonino reiterates that the Christian's search is for an effective course of action. Finally, theology must consider various options. Various questions should be asked at this point: 'What alternatives exist? What are the consequences of each of these options? What level of cooperation do I need to best work out these alternatives? What are the possibilities of success?' (1972a:104).

In his address to the 15th World Council of the YMCA he mentions four important questions that all those committed to involvement in the world must consider:

what are the most important needs?--the critical points which demand immediate action and the further development to advance the process of change; (ii) what are the resources that at individual and institutional level are available to us to respond to these needs-and I mean resources at the level of people, abilities, spaces that are possibly open to our work, economic and infrastructure to respond to the needs in the immediate situations that we face and in the continuation of these initial actions; (iii) where can we be more useful and efficient-if we spread our work too much we will probably have only a 'token' presence: is this an area which we know? is it likely to

open to our work? Do we have enough leadership and can we enlist our memberships in the task? And iv) what kind of concrete programs can we define and organize? (2002b).

All these questions and their careful and analytical consideration are not ‘a foolproof key to Christian obedience but a significant framework for it’ (1975h:105).

3.7 FINAL OBSERVATIONS

This final section will summarise Míguez Bonino’s theological methodology described above; it will note various influences upon his methodology; and analyse it in terms of a practical, contextual and biblical methodology. For, Míguez Bonino theology is both gift and task. Theology is gift because it is based upon God’s revelation to humanity in Jesus Christ as recorded in the New Testament and it is task because it serves the church in its missionary obedience. Míguez Bonino’s understanding of epistemology means that this task set before the church must begin with concrete missionary obedience, not abstract theory.

Míguez Bonino’s methodology has three moments: social analysis (socio-analytic moment); biblical and theological reflection (hermeneutical moment); and practical analysis and application (practical moment). Social analysis is essential in order to clarify the context of the church’s mission. It is also important in order to clarify church’s role in society. The church is very much part of society and part of the context. Míguez Bonino uses dialectical tools of analysis as he believes that these better describe the dynamics of oppression and social change.

The issues raised by this social analysis are assumed by biblical-theological moment. Míguez Bonino’s biblical hermeneutic is dynamic. It is very close to Barth’s ‘threefold word of God’. God has revealed the divine nature to humanity in Jesus Christ. The Bible records that revelation, but is not God’s revelation in the same way Christ is. The original witnesses wrote from their own context re-reading God’s revelation from their own context, according to their own tradition. Theology’s role is to reread that original divine revelation, through the eyes of the original witnesses but from its contemporary perspective. In a very real sense it creates a new tradition which is, both the same as, and different from that which is received.

These contemporary theological readings are partial and incomplete and so there must be a constant critical contemporary reevaluation of both received and new re-readings of God’s revelation in Christ. World Christianity must take an active role in this. There must be mutual accountability between traditions across confessional and national boundaries; it must be ecumenical and international.

Míguez Bonino insists that the theological process is not complete until it returns to praxis. The journey from the abstract (hermeneutical moment) to the concrete (practical moment) must be mediated by a concrete option. It is not possible to be objective at this stage. Options of action must be mediated by the context (its possibilities or lack of them) and an engaged reading of the gospel. At this point social analysis of micro contexts is important. The practical projects that emerge from the practical moment then form the basis for the analysis that begins the hermeneutical process once again.

Míguez Bonino draws upon a wide range of theologies and theologians in order to develop his theological method. Early in his ministry, Barth's three-fold word of God allowed Míguez Bonino to develop a dynamic reading of the Bible. Cullmann's concept of *Heilsgeschichte* helped him to understand the Holy Spirit's role in theology and biblical interpretation. Interaction with Roman Catholic theologians during the early to mid-nineteen sixties was a foil to both these developments. At the same time, ISAL was challenging Míguez Bonino's Barthian interpretation with a theology of God's action in history. Interaction with EATWOT and Roman Catholic liberation theologians was important during the nineteen seventies in helping Míguez Bonino refine and systematise his methodology. Their use of the theories of Paul Ricoeur and Hans Georg Gadamer helped him clarify various epistemological and hermeneutical issues. The work of J. Severino Croatto, a colleague of Míguez Bonino at ISEDET, was especially important in this regard. Finally, later contact with more conservative evangelicals and with Pentecostals mollified some of the more radical elements of his biblical hermeneutic.

Given Míguez Bonino's involvement and dialogue with EATWOT, it is significant to note that neither critical race theory nor feminist ideology critique have been very prominent in his theology; themes important to EATWOT (cf. Fabella 2000:70). In regard to race, Míguez Bonino has commented on Minjung Theology (1988d) and wrote on 'Land' (1991a)—a theme that embraces critical racial issues in Latin America, especially in regard to the oppression of indigenous peoples. He also uses the term 'Abya Yala'—the indigenous phrase for Latin America (2004a) but this seems to be more a recognition of a neologism than theological reflection. Class seems to be more important than race to Míguez Bonino.⁴

The same can be said of feminist ideology critique. Chapter two mentioned how he was prompted to comment on feminist issues in an interview with Elsa Támez (1986f). He recognised how women have played an important role in both the ecumenical movement and in his own local church. He was also aware that they often had to create social space for their service in the church. This led him to say: 'the limitation of women is objectively incorporated into the mechanisms of the functioning of society' (1986f:62). It is clear that Míguez Bonino was aware of, and was using feminist ideology critique here; something he may have learned from his contacts with EATWOT. Having said this, the issue is almost completely absent from his work subsequent to that time. There can be no doubt that Míguez Bonino was committed to women rights and place in society and the church but the issue seems to be peripheral rather than central to his social analysis.

Míguez Bonino's theological methodology is practical, contextual and biblical. For Míguez Bonino, theology is 'faith seeking effectiveness'. His methodology begins and ends with praxis. Theology is not done for interest or curiosity, much less is it done to guard against heterodoxy. Theology is the process by which the church obeys its missionary mandate. This is healthy pragmatism. Effectiveness is not conceived of in terms of efficiency—the cheapest and quickest way to carry out a task—but rather in terms of an interaction between faithfulness to

⁴ It should also be noted that Míguez Bonino wrote a chapter on 'Ethnic Churches' in Latin America (1997a). However, this section was not in the original talks given at ISEDET (1993)—the conferences from which the book is taken. He admits a lack of knowledge about these churches and that his omission in the original talks was taken as a position that they were not as important to his analysis (1997a:ix).

the gospel and faithfulness to the context. Faith's search is the dynamic interaction between gospel and context. It is driven by praxis and it is aimed at a more effective praxis.

Stephen B. Bevans 'praxis model' (2002:70-87) is helpful in understanding Míguez Bonino's theology. Bevans says that there are theologies that employ the praxis model without assuming the liberationist emphasis on socio-political issues. As has already been stated, Míguez Bonino's interest is not only in social and political issues but also in cultural, ecclesial, and religious ones. Bevans asserts that, 'the praxis model gives ample room for cultural expressions of faith, while providing exciting new understandings of the scriptural and older theological witness' (Bevans 2002:78). Bevans calls the praxis model 'faith seeking intelligent action,' (Bevans 2002:73) which broadly corresponds with 'faith seeking effectiveness.' A good term for Míguez Bonino's theology is 'a praxis driven missionary theology.'

Emerging from this fact, it is clear that Míguez Bonino's methodology is also contextual. This approach assumes some kind of social analysis. Míguez Bonino's contextual analysis happens at every stage of the theological process. The social location and positioning of the theologian and the hermeneutical community are analysed in order to make explicit their ideological presuppositions about reality and the Bible. The context of mission is analysed in two stages: before the hermeneutical moment in order to clarify the important issues for reflection and after the hermeneutical moment in order to clarify how the results of theological reflection are to be worked out in the context of mission. The hermeneutical moment is analysed to reveal the social issues behind the text and to expose the ideological presuppositions which commentators bring to the text.

Finally, Míguez Bonino's methodology is biblical. Following Barthian hermeneutics it charts a line between a liberal and fundamentalist biblical interpretation. Unlike classical liberal theology, religion is not humanity's aspiration for the divine but something that God has revealed in Jesus Christ. Theology must reflect upon that revelation recorded in the Bible in order to achieve effectiveness in its missionary task. Míguez Bonino is not interested in a descriptive analysis of biblical religion or a social understanding of the text he is interested in the prescriptive ethical and missionary challenge of the text.

Míguez Bonino also avoids a fundamentalist biblical interpretation. This is done in two ways. As in the case of Barth and Bonhoeffer, Míguez Bonino is not afraid to use the tools of higher biblical criticism. However, he only employs them as a means to access that revelation of God in Christ behind the text. By doing this, he is saved from simplistic interpretations and applications of Scripture. He also uses sociological tools. Through his epistemology and sociological studies, he is aware that his interpretation of God's revelation in Christ is not all embracing and final. He is not dogmatic about his interpretations but presents them as 'soundings' or 'ruminations'.

4 THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HUMAN ACTION: THE ESCHATOLOGY OF MÍGUEZ BONINO

The Kingdom is not a riddle to be solved but a mission to be fulfilled. (1975h:143)

4.1 INTRODUCTION

If mission is the locus of Míguez Bonino's theology, then the Kingdom of God can rightly be considered to be one of the important axes around which much of his thought has revolved. It has always been—even from the earliest days—a central theme for obedient faith in its search for effectiveness. For Míguez Bonino, the church, although a vital element in his theology, is considered to be a penultimate step towards the Kingdom of God. For most of his career, the Kingdom of God was the ultimate horizon in his theology.

This chapter will describe the role of the Kingdom of God in Míguez Bonino's missionary theology. It will begin by sketching various developments in theological reflection on the Kingdom of God in the twentieth century (4.2). Thereafter, it will detail his important writings on the Kingdom of God, mentioning the context in which they arose (4.3). The main section will describe and analyse his understanding of the Kingdom of God (4.4) and the chapter will end with some concluding remarks (4.5).

4.2 DEVELOPMENTS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Although eschatology was very important in the New Testament, it was neglected from the end of the apostolic era up to the nineteenth century, tending to be a 'short harmless chapter' (Barth 1933a:500) at the end of systematic theologies. This situation changed when J. Weiss (1863-1914) and, more importantly, Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965) claimed that eschatology was central to the New Testament message. For Schweitzer, Jesus' message was wholly eschatological. Jesus mistakenly thought himself to be the promised Messiah, entered Jerusalem in order to force the coming of the eschatological Kingdom, but was arrested and killed. David J. Bosch calls this the reopening of the 'eschatological office' (Bosch 1991:501).

In the Twentieth Century, eschatological interest became focussed on the issue of the Kingdom of God and flourished in almost every Christian Tradition. Before the Second Vatican Council, Roman Catholic clergy and theologians understood the Kingdom and the Church to be more or less identical. At and after that council, Edward Schillebeeckx (b. 1914), Karl Rahner (1904-1984), and Hans Küng (b. 1928), changed the understanding of eschatology. Schillebeeckx, a Belgian Dominican, emphasized that the Church journeys towards the Kingdom and that its

message is not the announcement of the solutions to the world's problems, but rather the declaration that a solution exists. For this reason, the German Jesuit Rahner said that the Church's mission should not be confined to combating individual sin; institutional injustice should also be a concern. Swiss theologian Küng describes the Church as the "herald" of the Kingdom. He strongly emphasized that while the Church announces the Kingdom, only God can actually bring it about.

Vatican II produced the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium* (LG), which relates the Kingdom of God to the church and occasionally still equates the Church with the Kingdom. This can be illustrated from the following quote: 'The Church, or, in other words, the Kingdom of Christ now present in mystery, grows visibly through the power of God in the world' (LG 3). In other parts of the document, however, a strong distinction is made:

From this source, the Church, equipped with the gifts of its Founder...receives the mission to proclaim and to spread among all peoples the Kingdom of Christ and of God and to be, on earth, the initial budding forth of that Kingdom. While it slowly grows, the Church strains toward the completed Kingdom and, with all its strength, hopes and desires to be united in glory with its King (LG5).

The church proclaims and spreads the Kingdom of God and is its initial budding forth but does not embody it.

The document *Gaudium et Spes* (GS), also produced by Vatican II, although not putting a great deal of emphasis on the Kingdom of God, relates it rather to the world and not to the church. It is, however, careful to distinguish it from human progress. 'While earthly progress must be carefully distinguished from the growth of Christ's Kingdom, to the extent that the former can contribute to the better ordering of human society, it is of vital concern to the Kingdom of God' (GS 39).

Later encyclicals tend to make mention of the Kingdom of God in terms of the Council, but sometimes highlight one of these two emphasis. In *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (EN), for instance, Pope Paul VI reflects widely on the Kingdom of God. He makes a sharp distinction between the Kingdom and the church. He says that Christ first and foremost proclaimed the Kingdom and: 'Only the Kingdom therefore is absolute and it makes everything else relative' (EN 8). This of course includes the church. Then, reflecting the words of LG, he states that the Church must proclaim and establish the Kingdom and thereby find its true identity in being 'the sign and instrument of this Kingdom' (EN 59). Pope John Paul II dedicates a whole section to the Kingdom of God in *Redemptoris Missio*. While he does call the church the 'seed, sign and instrument' (RM 18), of the Kingdom his emphasis is more on the unity of the visible church and the Kingdom of God rather on than their distinction.

Turning to Latin American Catholicism it can be observed that eschatological thought was practically non-existent before the Second Vatican Council. The final documents of the Río de Janeiro conference (1955) mention the Kingdom of God only once, relating it to the Apostleship of the laity. In its 'continuous effort to conserve and defend holistically the Catholic faith, [the laity] must be a conquering missionary apostolate for the extension of the Kingdom of Christ in all sectors and environments' (Title Four, Chapter One. Apostolate of the Laity in General). The focus is on the protection of the interests of the Church and the extension of the Kingdom is directly associated with these interests.

The Medellín documents (1968) reflect Vatican II's interests in the Kingdom of God. The section on Human Promotion speaks of the way in which the eschatological hope stimulates 'the concern for the perfection of this world.' It quotes almost verbatim from *Gaudium et Spes*, and warns that 'temporal progress should not be confused with Christ's Kingdom although the better arrangement of human society is a concern of the Kingdom of God (*Promoción humana, 1.III*). Other references to the Kingdom of God are liberally distributed in the Medellín documents on the Church. Christ is referred to as the mediator of the Kingdom as High Priest; priests in general are presented as dedicated to bearing witness to the Kingdom; all believers are encouraged to seek the Kingdom of God and its righteousness; whereas the life of the religious is spoken about as a 'pre-announcement of the Kingdom;' and living the values of the Kingdom are said to be related to solidarity with the poor. These reflect and deepen the concerns of *Lumen Gentium*.

The final documents of the Puebla Conference (1979) reveal a rich theology of the Kingdom of God, reflecting many of the concerns of Vatican II and Medellín, with various references to the Kingdom in the documents. The Kingdom is shaped Christologically (197) and has its centre in the proclamation about Jesus Christ (226). It is realized in history (787) at the same time it is more than historical realizations and should not be identified with them (193). Furthermore human progress should not be confused with the growth of the Kingdom (475). The relationship between the Kingdom and the Church is dealt with in a separate section (226-231). The Kingdom transcends the Church (226) but cannot be separated from the Church (226, 228). The Church proclaims and establishes the Kingdom (227), is the seed of the Kingdom (228); the Kingdom is in the Church (229); the Church is the mystery of the Kingdom (230); but has not become what it should be (231). The Conclusions state that the Latin American people 'should continue to be evangelized as the heir of the past, protagonist in the present and generator of a future, as a pilgrim to the definitive Kingdom' (Conclusions II). The work of Ignacio Ellacuría and Jon Sobrino is clear at this point. They were two of the most radical theologians involved in the background preparations for the meetings at Puebla (cf. Ellacuría 1984).

The Santo Domingo Conference (1992) mentions the Kingdom of God many times but adds little to Vatican II, Medellín or Puebla. The most significant phrase in the document in regard to the Kingdom of God declares the Church to be the 'seed, sign and instrument' (RM 18) of the Kingdom, therefore, the church preaches and baptises (SD 7). These documents seem to reflect Pope John Paul II's association of the church with the Kingdom of God.

Conciliar Protestantism regarded the church, and not the Kingdom of God, as the important factor in missionary thinking until the mid-point of the twentieth century (cf. Castro 1985:18-37; Philip 1999:55ff). It would be wrong to suggest that there was no theological reflection on the Kingdom of God in ecumenical circles but there was tension between a North American Social Gospel understanding of the Kingdom of God—the Kingdom as task—and the European eschatological understanding—the Kingdom as a gift that was not resolved (cf. the Life and Work Congresses at Stockholm [1925] and at Oxford [1937]; the IMC meetings at Jerusalem [1928] and the Second Assembly of the WCC at Evanston [1954]). Although Evanston met under the title, 'Jesus Christ: The Hope of the World', it was

unable to develop a unified position regarding Eschatology or the Kingdom of God (cf. Potter 1980:6-21).

The Dutch Theology of the Apostolate (especially the writings of Johannes C. Hoekendijk); New Testament Studies on Eschatology (especially the work of Wolfhart Pannenberg and Oscar Cullmann); along with the Willingen meetings of the IMC (1952) that fleshed out the idea of the *missio Dei*, led to a process of change in this emphasis. The Kingdom of God and the world replaced the church as the focus in ecumenical and missionary theology. T.V. Philip says: ‘After 1960, the world became the focus of attention in ecumenical missionary theology and, by 1980; the Kingdom of God became its central concern. It was not a theological interest in the Kingdom as such, but in the Kingdom of God as it is related to the world’ (Philip 1999:132-133).

Responding to the CWME meetings in Bangkok (1973), the two subsequent conferences of the CWME and a document from that same body attempted to develop a clear theology of the Kingdom of God. The Melbourne conference (1980) was entitled “Thy Kingdom Come” and was held whilst Míguez Bonino was a member of the Presidium of the WCC and was strongly influenced by the work of the theologians of liberation during the nineteen seventies. It discussed four aspects of the Kingdom of God: (1) “Good News to the Poor”; (2) “The Kingdom of God and Human Struggles”; (3) “The Church Witnesses to the Kingdom”, and (4). “Christ - Crucified and Risen - Challenges Human Power” (WCC 1980).

Melbourne’s focus was chiefly on the relation of the church to the Kingdom of God in *this* world. Section one begins with the statement:

The Kingdom of God...brings justice, love, peace and joy, and freedom from the grasp of those demonic forces which place human lives and institutions in bondage and infiltrate their very textures. God’s judgment is revealed as an overturning of the values and structures of this world. In the perspective of the Kingdom of God, God has a preference for the poor (1.1).

The Kingdom of God is mainly seen as a new social order; it is primarily of this world, not of the next. The task of Christians is to witness to, and work towards, the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, at the same time waiting for its consummation. Witnessing to the Kingdom means proclaiming that the Kingdom is near. Christians are witnesses to the Kingdom in two ways. They are called to ‘say what they have seen and heard and experienced. But they are also, in themselves, by the lives they lead’ witnesses to the reality of that Kingdom now (WCC 1980:143). This means working for justice for the poor. Melbourne reflects the critical social and political situation in Latin America and beyond during the nineteen seventies. It was criticized for being “horizontalist.” However, it tried to maintain the balance between the Kingdom of God as a gift and as a task. ‘The whole church of God, in every place and time, is a sacrament of the Kingdom which came in the person of Jesus Christ and will come in its fullness when he returns in glory’ (WCC 1980:192).

The document “Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation” (1982), although the product of lengthy discussions with churches all over the world, makes wide use of the reflections on the Kingdom of God made by Melbourne. It tries to stress both commitment to Jesus Christ in the world and incorporation into

the church. 'To receive the message of the Kingdom of God is to be incorporated into the body of Christ, the Church, the author and sustainer of which is the Holy Spirit' (ME 20). The document also points to the essence of the church's task:

At the very heart of the Church's vocation in the world is the proclamation of the Kingdom of God inaugurated in Jesus the Lord, crucified and risen. Through its internal life of eucharistic worship, thanksgiving, intercessory prayer, through planning for mission and evangelism, through a daily lifestyle of solidarity with the poor, through advocacy even to confrontation with the powers that oppress human beings, the churches are trying to fulfil this evangelistic vocation (ME 6).

This document is developing an integral missionary theology.

The San Antonio Conference (1989), gathered together under the title "Your Will be Done: Mission in Christ's way." It had four sub-themes: (1) Turning to the Living God; (2) Participating in Suffering and Struggle; (3) The Earth is the Lord's; and (4) Towards Renewed Communities in Mission (Androussa 1989:320). It was a more circumspect meeting than Melbourne. San Antonio emphasised God's will and God's ability to work out that will, i.e. to bring about God's Kingdom. The focus was on the church as a witness to the Kingdom and God as the protagonist. The conference was far more aware of the danger of declaring that the church knows the will of God and so can work out that will. The church's work for the Kingdom of God is seen as penultimate and provisional; it is always a work "in draft". The church must turn to God, participate in suffering in God's world and renew its own life in order to carry out its mission.

The ecumenical movement's emphasis in mission was upon the Kingdom of God and not upon the church. The church has a role in witnessing to the Kingdom, in working to establish the Kingdom, it must be very careful in not acting as the "owner" of God's Kingdom.

The evangelical missionary movement has reflected very little upon the Kingdom of God. Declarations such as Wheaton (1966), Berlin (1966), Lausanne (1974), and Manila (1989) make little or no reference to that concept. One evangelical document that does make wide use of the Kingdom motif is "Transformation: The Church in Response to Human Need" (1983). Its final section, 'The Coming of the Kingdom and the Church's Mission', tries to strike a balance between the present and future; the individual and societal; and the physical and spiritual natures of the Kingdom. God's activity in the Kingdom is mainly in the church, but also in the world:

A repentant, revived, and vigorous church will call people to true repentance and faith and at the same time equip them to challenge the forces of evil and injustice (2 Tim. 3:17). We thus move forward, without either relegating salvation merely to an eternal future or making it synonymous with a political or social dispensation to be achieved in the here and now. The Holy Spirit empowers us to serve and proclaim Him who has been raised from the dead, seated at the right hand of the Father, and given to the church as Head over all things in heaven and on earth (Eph. 1:10, 20-22) (LCWE 1983: note 52).

There have been various evangelical writers who have been instrumental in making the Kingdom of God an important theme in evangelical missiology. George Eldon Ladd (1911-1982), Hermann Nicolaas Ridderbos (b. 1909) and Arthur Glasser

(b.1914) deserve special mention. Glasser especially has influenced many young missiologists who graduated from Fuller Seminary, School of Inter-Cultural Studies.

Those Latin American Protestant Churches that were planted by missionaries from the United States, have tended to hold a Pre-millennial Dispensationalist position; this is especially true of the Pentecostal churches. Churches planted by British missionaries from the Free and Plymouth Brethren would also fall into this category. Other more historic churches would have had a greater emphasis on an A-millennial tradition. Those churches from a more liberal tradition, and influenced by the Social Gospel Movement emphasized the ethical aspects of the Kingdom of God, but did not develop a doctrine. This being the case, there was little, or no serious creative eschatological thought in Latin American Protestant theology until the early 1960s. The vast majority of subsequent theological reflection on the Kingdom of God in the historic churches was done in the context of the consultations and publications of ISAL and within the CELAs. Míguez Bonino was deeply involved in this process and did much of his reflection from within this context. How he reacted to some of these developments will emerge in the course of this chapter.

From 1970 onwards, under the leadership of C. René Padilla, the FTL began to reflect seriously upon the theme of the Kingdom of God. This began with the conference held in Peru, which Míguez Bonino attended and where he gave a paper. The book *Reino de Dios y América Latina* (1975) resulted from this conference. Padilla was deeply involved with the writing of the “Transformation: The Church in Response to Human Need” and has continued to reflection upon the Kingdom of God as a significant missionary motif.

4.3 MAIN PUBLICATIONS

Míguez Bonino has written widely and deeply on the Kingdom of God throughout his career. The main publications on this issue can be divided into two sections: those that deal directly with the Kingdom of God or with a certain aspect of that theme and those that avail themselves of the theme in the context of a different issue, such as the social responsibility of the church.

Four publications are mentioned that deal with the Kingdom of God directly. Míguez Bonino conducted a series of Bible studies on the theme of the Sermon on the Mount for the WFCS (1955c). He interprets Matthew 5-7 as part of Jesus’ ethic in the context of God’s new world. He rejects the idea, however, that this is simple moral teaching isolated from the rest of the New Testament’s teaching on God’s Kingdom—as in some expressions of the Social Gospel—but rather it is central to the biblical message of what God has done in Jesus Christ. He relies heavily upon Bonhoeffer’s interpretation in *Cost of Discipleship* for a modern interpretation of the sermon.

Míguez Bonino’s first systematic treatment of the Kingdom of God reveals his overriding interest in the theme: God’s action in history (1966b and 1972c). This article is an academic and theoretical treatment of how theology should understand that action and how humanity should to respond to it. This article was written in the light of developments in the Roman Catholic understanding of the interpretation of history. This was especially seen in the theology of Teilhard de

Chardin and in the Vatican II document *Gaudium et Spes*. It was also reacting to developments within Protestant theology; both in ISAL and the WCC department Church and Society. The main aim of this article, however, is to develop new lines of thought.

An important treatment of the Kingdom of God is found in a paper that Míguez Bonino gave for the second consultation of the FTL (Lima, Peru 1972, subsequently published as 1974k, 1975g and 1976j). This was a small consultation with only twenty-seven theologians attending. The theme was the Kingdom of God and Latin America; Míguez Bonino's contribution was an article of the Kingdom of God and history.

This article is important because it forms the basis of other later treatments of the subject. Chapter seven of Míguez Bonino's *Revolutionary Theology Comes of Age* (1975h) includes a significant section of the 1972 article but also contains a lengthy dialogue with European Political Theology, especially with Jürgen Moltmann. 'Historical Praxis and Christian Identity' (1979d:260-283), written for a compendium of articles by theologians associated with Liberation Theology, also uses a great deal of the article but is designed around the presentation of the theology of liberation to a European audience. A short section of the original article can even be found in an article published much later (1999i).

El Reino de Dios y la historia is also important because of its historical context. It was written a year after the Spanish publication of Gustavo Gutiérrez' seminal work (1971) and represents one of Míguez Bonino's first responses to that book. Furthermore, the consultation took place eight months after the Christians for Socialism Conference (Aroyo 1973), which was so influential in Míguez Bonino's option for socialism. The article mentions the importance of making a political option. Historically, for Argentina 1972 was a very turbulent time, filled with government and insurgent violence during the last anti-Peronist government of General Alejandro Lanusse, preceding the return of Juan Domingo Perón (July 1973).

Towards a Christian Political Ethics (1983m), a book prepared for the Vancouver Assembly of the WCC (1983) deals with relationship between the Kingdom of God and the important issue of political utopias. The issue is vital because of the philosophical and political ethos of the development of Latin American Theology during the nineteen seventies; some sort of theological response was necessary.

In regard to those publications which avail themselves of the concept of the Kingdom of God three will be highlighted. Míguez Bonino wrote a paper for the first consultation of ISAL (Peru, 1961; cf. 1961c and 1961b; see also 1962a). The aim of the paper was to discover the biblical and theological roots for Christian involvement in society. The historical context of this conference is significant in that it was two years after the final success of the Cuban Revolution (1959), which was greeted with such great excitement in socialist circles within Latin America. Also it was at the time of the announcement by John F. Kennedy of the Alliance for Progress (April 1961). It was clear to many within the Ecumenical student movement that Christians should be involved in society but needed a biblical and theological basis.

In 1964 Míguez Bonino wrote a second article treating the same issue of Christian involvement in society in a study guide published by ISAL. This booklet

was designed to help the Latin American churches and individual Christians think through their social responsibilities (1964b:22-31). This type of study guide was one of the outcomes of the previously mentioned ISAL consultation.

Míguez Bonino also avails himself of the concept of the Kingdom of God in chapter four of *Ama y haz lo que quieras* (1972a). His concern is to establish a Christian ethic for involvement in society. There are important elements in this chapter that complement other articles and papers. This is especially true of the biblical understanding of the nature of the Kingdom and the ethical outworking of the Kingdom.

4.4 THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HUMAN RESPONSE

4.4.1 *The Kingdom of God and Theological Responsibility*

Two sentences from *El reino de Dios y la historia*, are essential to comprehend Míguez Bonino's understanding of the Kingdom of God and its ethical and missionary significance. The first sentence states that the Kingdom of God is: 'the sovereign action of God over the world (natural and historical in its unity and totality), especially and representatively exercised and attested to in Israel, perfected in Jesus Christ and promised in full manifestation in the parousia of Jesus Christ' (1975h:75). It highlights that in the strictest sense the Kingdom of God is God's sovereign action. Although Míguez Bonino later deals with human responsibility towards the building of God's Kingdom, the primary protagonist in the establishment of the Kingdom is God in the whole world, taking into account all humanity not just the church. It regards the biblical record (of God's action in the life of Israel and Jesus Christ) as the prime witness to God's action in establishing the Kingdom. Although the primary witness to God's action is found in the biblical witness and this action is primarily seen in the life of Israel and Jesus Christ, God's action is universal, from its beginning until its full consummation connected with the second coming of Jesus Christ. There is, for Míguez Bonino an 'eschatological reserve'.

The second important sentence points to the task of missionary theology in regard to the Kingdom of God. The task of missionary theology is to discover 'how can we understand the active and dynamic presence of God's Kingdom in our history so that we can adapt our witness and activity to it, particularly at this concrete moment in Latin America when we must profess our faith and serve the Lord' (1975h:75; cf. 1979d:266). Here Míguez Bonino makes clear that theology seeks to 'understand the active presence of the Kingdom' in history. This task, of course, is clearly related to the task of hermeneutics. Furthermore, 'understanding' is directly related to practical obedience—that is towards an already existing praxis. The word 'adapt' emphasizes this further. It presumes a process that is already in progress—a process in which previous action leads to or facilitates understanding, and subsequently understanding leads to further modified or adapted action. Moreover, the reason that this understanding of God's action is sought is in order to adapt, improve, or adjust Christian activity and to aim at a better praxis. Or putting it in other terms, the reason for theological reflection on the Kingdom of God is to improve missionary effectiveness. Active obedience is always related to witness and

activity. This phrase along with ‘profess and serve’ reveal Míguez Bonino’s wholistic approach to mission. Christian mission, as conceived in, and related to the Kingdom of God, is activity that embraces verbal witness and active service. And active obedience that proceeds from understanding is absolutely contextual. It must lead to obedience in a particular place—Latin America—and in a particular time—this concrete moment.

In summary, there are two intersecting circles to Míguez Bonino’s understanding of the Kingdom of God—God’s activity and the human response to that activity. This has resonance with Míguez Bonino’s approach to hermeneutics as revelation and reception described in chapter three of this study.

4.4.2 *God’s action in history*

Míguez Bonino deals with this question of how God’s action relates to history in detail in *How does God Act in history* (1972c)? This article, originally written in 1966, reflects the growing awareness of Latin America’s special place in history; the claims by various ideologies to interpret history; and the awareness that ‘the faith carries within it an imperative which impels toward the quest for an ethic which will both be true to the Gospel and relevant to the present situation’ (1972c:22). In this context, various Christian attempts were being made at interpreting God’s activity in history. This was one of the most important theological issues being discussed at the time and this article is a response.

Míguez Bonino begins by stating that ‘neither the reality nor the manner of God’s action in history can be established other than on the basis of the self-revelation of its purpose, compass, and meaning, evidenced in biblical history, as proclaimed to us in that same prophetic and apostolic testimony, with its pivotal centre in Jesus Christ’ (1972c:23). God’s revelation to humanity is given in the concrete acts of God in history, attested to in the Bible. Therefore, it is not possible to develop a general, or Christian philosophy of history because the Bible presents God as acting through specific events, at specific times, and in specific places. Strictly speaking, what can be known about God is only how God acts in those specific events. The contribution of both Barth and Cullmann can be perceived here.

During the nineteen sixties and early seventies, both secular ideologies and Christian theologies were claiming the ability to discern the meaning of human history and, in the case of Christian theology, to discern the meaning of God’s activity in history as well. Vatican II (especially *Gaudium et Spes*) and various theological statements within ISAL were claiming to have found the key to understand God’s activity in history. Míguez Bonino opposes what he sees as a facile and over confident interpretation of history. He is aware that the danger for such theologies is that history will become a second source of revelation (cf. Bassham 1979:68). Richard Shaull’s ‘A God who acts in and transforms history’ (ISAL 1961:57-70) does not seem to be aware of the dangers. Míguez Bonino demonstrates divergence with those Liberation Theologians who tried to see God’s activity in present history as analogous to God’s involvement in biblical history.

Míguez Bonino also emphasises that the Bible witnesses to how ‘the boundaries of God’s action are those of history in its entirety in time and space, within which God works according to a divine plan to establish his universal reign’ (1972c:24). God’s action is action in all of human history. It is not limited to some

people or to a specific timeframe in history—it is truly universal. The totality of God's action is directed towards the establishment of God's reign over all of humanity and the world as a whole. At this time Míguez Bonino emphasises the corporate nature of life and later he writes that 'the Biblical horizon is centred in a total human programme, the Kingdom of God, more than in individual ethical life' (1972a:6). God's action is not in some divine realm of spiritual activity but is rather focussed upon the establishment of God's Kingdom upon the earth. This Kingdom is not centred upon, individuals but upon collective life and creation itself. In later writings, Míguez Bonino makes this point very strongly because of the tendency within the Latin American Protestant churches to assign sovereignty over the church to God and sovereignty over the world to the devil. This dichotomy has, on the one hand, led to a withdrawal from involvement in the world by Latin American Protestants (1972c:24 and 1962c:74-75) and, on the other hand, to a spiritualization, internalization and individualization of the Kingdom of God and its ethics and mission (1972a:83-84). In 1961, he asserts that, 'this world, with its powers and structures is already under the sovereignty of Christ, even though this sovereignty is not manifested (Heb 2.5-9)' (1961c:21). In 1964, he writes that 'the extent of the interest and action of Jesus Christ is the totality of human society and even the totality of creation' (1964b:26). In the same article he says that 'the totality of human existence individual and collective is under his rule' (1964b:27). He clarifies and emphasizes this assertion as follows: 'He is Lord; the totality of human existence individual and collective is under his sovereignty. He is the Lord of human history, not only of the Church but also of society' (1964b:27). The whole of creation and the whole of human society are under God's sovereignty.

In 'How does God Act in History', Míguez Bonino deals with the thorny issue of *how* God's action in history relates to human history. He posits the thesis that 'God works through the dynamic of historical events, without either suspending or eliminating its categories, but assimilating them into his creating and redeeming purpose' (1972c:25). God does not suspend the categories of human history or create an ultra-history over against human history but rather works through that history, establishing God's Kingdom upon the earth. Míguez Bonino extends this understanding later, emphasising that according to the Bible, God's action and human history are inseparable. There is no divine action that is not worked out in human history. Moreover, there is no story in the Bible that is not related to God's action. God's relationship with creation is always narrated in the context of history. However, God's action is not equated with human history as if that history is able to fulfil God's will entirely; God's will is worked out polemically in history (1975g:76). God's purposes were worked out in the life of Israel in its political, social, cultural and religious life, which, of course, is intimately related to the life of the nations around. God confirms God's sovereignty by 'calling, rejecting, forgiving and punishing, and so erects signs and the way of his own sovereignty by the consummation of God's coming victory' (1975g:77). Míguez Bonino concludes that for the Old Testament 'History, is precisely, this conflict between God and his people in the midst of and in relation to all peoples' (1975h:134).

Although God's action is placed firmly in the context of human history, events are recounted in the context of prophetic interpretation. The tendency to separate events from the prophetic interpretation is more the result of Greek thought than biblical theology. According to Míguez Bonino, 'Scriptural evidence of God's

action is found in the interlocking of historical fact and prophetic witness to form a whole so closely knit that it becomes impossible to present the historical fact as a mere “brute fact” or the prophetic interpretation as a general principle to the situation from which it arose’ (1972c:26). Or: ‘the sovereignty of God is the effective Word that makes and is made history, drawing together and rejecting humanity and the peoples in relation to the divine purpose’ (1975g:76). God’s Word is a creative word because it not only comments on history it also creates it. Míguez Bonino concludes: ‘This prophetic interpretation itself constitutes an integral part of that event—so much so that the Bible does not hesitate to say that the “word of God” delivered by the prophet “brought about” this or that event’ (1972c:26-27). In the same way, worship in the Bible is

not a mere commemoration nor a human act of presentation and homage, but rather, as has been demonstrated by numerous studies, the active and effective presence of the liberating Word of Yahweh (God’s Word in the Exodus or of creation) in the liturgy and sacrifice, operating today’s liberation in the congregation (and including the cosmos) (1975g:76).

Events in the Bible, therefore, have meaning because God’s action has declared it to be; they function teleologically.

He adds two important caveats to the previous assertions. The concept of historical fact and divine interpretation cannot be applied to all historical events or to the whole of Church history; this denies the special quality of ‘salvation history.’ Also the prophetic role of the Church must be clarified. The prophetic vocation is sometime thought to indicate ‘the theological significance of historical events, particularly in the political and social field, and is based on that of the prophets, whose mission is was to “discern” what God was doing in historical events’ (1972c:27). Míguez Bonino calls this a facile use of the prophetic paradigm because it does not recognize the difference between the true prophet who speaks the message from God and the false prophet who “discerns” God’s action and speaks his own words. This statement was particularly directed towards some tendencies within Roman Catholic theology at the time, particularly the theology of Teilhard de Chardin. It also takes into account certain trends within the ISAL movement, especially the “theology of revolution” as posited by Richard Shaull. Shaull spoke at the Geneva meetings of Church and Society (1966) on that topic.

The fact that in the Old Testament, God’s action is firmly rooted in world history means that God’s action is eminently political in the widest sense of the word—from the broadest sense—the totality of the life of peoples as collective political entities—to the narrowest sense—as related to the use of power. God’s polemical, conflictive and political sovereignty comes to fulfilment in the covenant. The covenant was given to Israel as a whole and it is on this basis that God deals with Israel—as a social group. Therefore, in the Old Testament, ‘every attempt to separate the religious element from the political element in the Old Testament proves to be artificial’ (1979d:267).

Even though the New Testament focuses upon the activity of God in Christ God’s action remains rooted in world history and, is therefore, political. Míguez Bonino does not deny that there is an obvious change in the relationship between God’s action and human history. Míguez Bonino is happy to state: ‘The action of Jesus Christ in our world—including in the church—is by nature “a conflict” and “a

fight” (1961c:28). This does not imply that God is merely dealing with the nation of Israel as a political entity; God rather deals with peoples from all nations, which are not so much political entities, as in the Old Testament, but a new society—the Church. There is a difference which cannot be reduced—as has been done in many Protestant Churches in Latin America—to a personal and spiritual Lordship of Christ (New Testament) over against a political and collective sovereignty of Yahweh (Old Testament). According to Míguez Bonino, the difference is to be located in the fact that, in the New Testament, the history of salvation acquires a certain “consistency” or “density” of its own; a certain “distance” in relation to the totality of human history. This does not mean that God’s action becomes disconnected from human history; it is still related to

the story of Herod, of Pilate, or of the merchants of Ephesus. But as a new mission emerges, which is indissolubly tied to a particular historical nucleus (that of Israel and Jesus Christ), which becomes dated in time, the faith of the converted “heathen” becomes related to a two-fold historical reference: their own history and this other, which now comes to be constitutive of their faith (1975h:135-136; cf. 1975g:78).

Much later Míguez Bonino says ‘While for a Jew, conversion meant the *reinterpretation* of his people’s history, for the Gentile it was the *assuming* of another history, the history of Israel and of Jesus’ (1999i:77). He concludes:

to confess the Kingdom is not for us, Gentile Christians, only to enter into the inheritance of our own history, but at the same time to take distance from it and to become grafted to this other one. It is to confess the Exodus, the exile, Bethel and Nazareth, Golgotha and the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea as our own—and this not merely in their significance or in their exemplariness in their particular and unrepeatable historicity (1975g:78).

This gives the faith of the Gentiles a double historical reference—the reference of the historical actions of God in the history of Israel and Jesus Christ, and the reference of humanity’s history, i.e. general history.

4.4.3 *Between Two Views of History*

The double historical reference of God’s history and human history cannot avoid the old question of the duality of histories—what Míguez Bonino calls the ‘eternal theological problem’ (1975h:136). He asks whether God’s action, salvation history or the history of faith constitutes a separate history or is part and parcel of human history. This subject is explored in detail in *Reino de Dios y la historia*: Míguez Bonino examines the answers given along two general lines—the dualist and the monist. The dualist solution seems to propose that two histories exist: human history and God’s history. Therefore, God’s activity, the history of the gospel and the Church are assigned to a special ‘salvation history’, whereas human history was relegated to secondary importance (cf. 1975g). The Kingdom of God, therefore, is related to the history of faith, ‘which thus becomes a univocal, sacred, and distinct line’ and reduces secular history ‘to a general episodic framework devoid of eschatological significance: a mere stage’ (1975h:136). Up to the nineteen sixties a

dualistic understanding of history was common in Latin American Protestant theology and Church life.

Míguez Bonino rejects this dualism firstly because it seems to leave an area of human life outside the realm of God's authority. He believes that if Christ is Lord over creation and history then secular history must be included. Moreover, the dualist approach is questionable because of the 'evident failures of the Church' (1975h:136). The so-called sacred history of the Church bears too many of the frailties of secular history to make such a separation. A sectarian solution, where a true, hidden church and the visible church opposed to one another cannot resolve the problem. Finally, whoever reads the Bible carefully will become aware of the importance it places upon history. Míguez Bonino says:

In my opinion, its conception of redemption is borrowed from that of Gnostic and mystery religions. The God of the prophets and of Jesus can hardly be equated with the *soter* ("savior") of such sects, for the latter is busy trying to populate his Olympus with a few select souls who have been rescued from the tumultuous sea of matter and human history (1979d:271).

Luke's description of the mission of Jesus and the Church in Luke-Acts, John's vision of all nations bringing their offerings to the heavenly city, and Paul's vision of the old creation sighing in expectation of a new humanity and all things united under Christ does not seem compatible with narrow-minded religious views of many Protestants.

Míguez Bonino also notes that 'the dilemma might seem to be solvable by celebrating some transforming activity of God in the history *mediated through the Church*' (1975g:81-82; cf. 1979d:282).¹ He engages with C. René Padilla's understanding of the relationship between the Church and the Kingdom. Padilla says 'Christ has been enthroned as King, and his sovereignty extends to the whole universe'. The Church is the messianic community, in Padilla's words 'the sphere in which we find operative the life of the new age unleashed by Jesus Christ.' He asks: 'in what sense, then, are the church and the world historical correlates of the Kingdom?' and records Padilla's answer:

'The Church has cosmic significance because it is the affirmation of Christ's universal authority. In and *through* the church, the powers of the new era unleashed by the Messiah are present in the midst of human beings. The correlate of God's Kingdom is the world, but the world which is redeemed *in and through* the church' (1979d:282).

Míguez Bonino makes some observations about Padilla's statement. 'In the New Testament there is undoubtedly a close unity between the Lord and his church, by virtue of which the church shares in his prophetic and sacerdotal ministry' (1979d:282). However, together with the Reformers of the sixteenth century, Míguez Bonino affirms that: 'that the Lord is not limited to or by the mediation of the church' (1979d:282). The Reformers expressed this viewpoint in terms of Common Grace or General Revelation. Míguez Bonino, however, looks at the theme biblically saying that, in the Old Testament, God sovereignty in the world is manifest over the whole world and even people who do not profess his name are

¹ Originally from 1975g. This section passage also appears in the footnotes of 1979d but does not appear in 1975h.

used to carry out God's work. In the New Testament, the work of the Holy Spirit goes beyond the walls of the Church. In this way, he contradicts Padilla's wish to see the world as only a correlate of the Kingdom through the mediation of the Church. For Padilla, God's Kingdom is only related to the world through the mediation of the Church, whereas Míguez Bonino would see that God's Kingdom as more directly related to the world. In this way the fight for justice carried out by non-Christians can be identified as work in the Kingdom of God. Moreover, he attempts to counter the dualistic tendency, especially strong in Latin American Protestantism and some conservative Catholic circles to limit the mediation of salvation to the Church: the church as the only channel of spiritual blessings.

Míguez Bonino sees the need to relate the two manifestations of the Kingdom—Church and World—intrinsically and not only formally. Very early on, Christian theology tended to focus on the priestly role of Christ (especially as it is understood in the Church), while ignoring his prophetic ministry in the world. However, the theologies of liberation, especially in their Roman Catholic expression, have corrected a tendency in Catholicism to understand the Church in exclusively sacerdotal terms. According to Míguez Bonino, the theologians of liberation had done this, either through an appeal to natural theology—that injustice is against natural law—or through an evolutionary conception influenced by Teilhard de Chardin, or through a popularist or Marxist approach. Míguez Bonino asserts, however, that: 'it is precisely the message of the Kingdom, embodied in its prophetic content and in the concrete humanity of Jesus, that makes it possible for us to recognize and tie together that action of the Spirit (i.e., the risen Lord) in the world and its priestly-prophetic mediation in the church' (1979d:282). In *El reino de Dios y la historia* (1975g), he puts it in a different way: 'it is the action of the risen one in the world, which provides the call to interpretation and prophetic proclamation of the Church' (1979g:82). The Church, as it identifies the action of the risen Christ in the world, is called to interpret and proclaim God's Kingdom of justice. Míguez Bonino rejects, therefore, the dualist solution and its tendency to identify the Kingdom with the Church or even to see the Church as the only mediator of the Kingdom.

The second solution offered to resolve the issue of the duality of histories is sometimes called monism. For Míguez Bonino, the monist solution given by some theologians of liberation is more coherent. Gustavo Gutiérrez' book *A Theology of Liberation* rejects the "two planes" model of reality and opts for "a single history" where God is the actor. 'There are not two histories, one profane and one sacred, "juxtaposed" or "closely linked". Rather there is only one human destiny, irreversibly assumed by Christ, the Lord of history' (cf. Gutiérrez 1996:79). In Míguez Bonino's words, 'the faith does not constitute a distinct history but rather a dynamic and a motivation and in its eschatological horizon, and transforming invitation' (1975g:80). This transforming invitation takes place in history 'with its economic, political and ideological options' (1979d:270). God's action is in human history, through human history and within historical human structures. Míguez Bonino's third thesis from *How Does God Work in History?* is once again pertinent here: 'God works through the dynamic of historical events, without either suspending or eliminating its categories, but assimilating them into his creating and redeeming purpose' (1972:c:25).

However, the monist solution also has its theological problems. Particularly, it fails to find a way to speak of the gospel message in the context of human or secular history. He emphasises: ‘If we are to give significance to this one history, we must find a way to transcribe the gospel message so that it can be seen to operate meaningfully on the level of human history’ (1979d:271). This is expressed in terms of ‘naming the Kingdom’, and identifying God’s sovereign action in history and the presence of Christ, which leads to the call for obedient faith. The question is: if God is active in and through human history, how can that activity be identified as divine? Although this problem has been approached in many ways over the centuries, Liberation theologians and European political theologians have proposed to speak of ‘love’, ‘liberation’, and ‘transformation’ when identifying God’s action in history.

Love has been especially important in describing both God’s action in salvation and human response to that action. Juan Luis Segundo has been the Latin American theologian who has most consistently used love as the central theme to describe God’s action in human history. In the first volume of *A Theology for the Artisans of a New Humanity* (1973) he made the phrase, “no action of love is lost in God’s world” to be the key to his interpretation of Matthew 25 (Segundo 1973: 43ff). Gustavo Gutiérrez has made love a central theme in spirituality (Gutiérrez 1984 and 1987).

Míguez Bonino also finds the theme of love central to God’s action in history. In *Ama y haz lo que quieras* (1972), he states: ‘Jesus sees love, therefore, as the quality of the life of the Kingdom, whose completion has been indicated in his own coming and whose fullness must overcome according to that which correspond to the plans of God’ (1972a:68). And in a section on the power and efficacy of love done in solidarity in *Christians and Marxists* (1976c), love is the central theme of the Kingdom of God because ‘Biblical love is defined in its intension by God’s active purpose: the establishment of his Kingdom, the sovereignty of his covenantal, humanizing love’ (1976b:110).

Míguez Bonino is convinced that the love, liberation and transformation need to be clearly identified as Christian love, Christian liberation and Christian transformation. He describes the danger of losing identity in the following way:

Once we historicize these terms in the general history of humankind, there is a danger that they will be uprooted from the particular history of the faith and hence dehistoricized with respect to it. We may soon be talking about some “love” or “new person” or “liberation” in which reference to the history of divine revelation is secondary, merely exemplary, and even dispensable. If that happens, then we must say that the reference to God has ceased to be meaningful insofar as we are trying to speak in Christian terms. Of what God are we speaking, and of what Kingdom? If we carry that tendency to its ultimate conclusion, we will wittingly or unwittingly deify history or humanity itself. In that case we would be better to call things by their right name and profess to total immanentism (1979d:272).

It is significant to note that Míguez Bonino is not only warning of the danger in G. Gutiérrez’ monist approach but also in R. Alves’ understanding that God is dependent upon the history in which God is involved and thereby become a symbol of liberation within history itself (Alves 1969:144).

Míguez Bonino points out, that the loss of Christian identity is far from the intention of Gutiérrez and Segundo who certainly overcame the problem in their piety and practice but did not solve the theological problem.

Later Míguez Bonino widened and deepened his critique of the monist view (1998f:181-182) and 1999i:78-79). This view tends to interpret ‘the history and person of Christ as prototypical, illustrative, figurative or exemplary’ (1999i:78) and, therefore, tends to make Christology a hermeneutical tool rather than an objective reality. This point is particularly serious in connection to Segundo’s use of love as a critical category to identify God’s action in history (as the aforementioned quotation clarifies). There is a blurring of both the specificity of the incarnation, the unrepeatable nature (*ephapax*) of God’s action in salvation. This leads to a further criticism. Míguez Bonino asks whether the use of love as an anthropological category does not lose sight of how Christ is the definitive measure of all love; moreover ‘if this emphasis on one single history, is not critically confronted with the Christ event, do not the story of Jesus, the Cross and the Resurrection become mere models of service, suffering, to be reproduced, rather than a once for all event into which we can enter eschatologically through the power of the Spirit? (1998f:181 and 1999i:78). Therefore, the seriousness of sin is underestimated—a common criticism made of Liberation Theology by European and North American theologians. Further, Míguez Bonino makes the points that the loss of the eschatological nature of God’s action in Liberation Theology reduces the overcoming of evil to a process; it is not anymore a conflictive and decisive action witnessed to throughout the Bible and especially in the apocalyptic literature. Finally, these theological weaknesses lead to a missionary and evangelistic weakness. It tends to reduce the radical nature of the call for repentance, conversion, and encounter with Christ. What is called a turning or a new birth in the Bible is reduced to conscientisation, or to growth. ‘This “personal encounter with Christ”—to use typically evangelical language²—is liable to be totally equated with a commitment to the poor and the struggle for justice, with serious loss both for the life of faith, and service of the individual Christian and for the community’ (1998f:182).

Míguez Bonino accepts that there is only one history through which God is establishing the Kingdom. The Church is not the only mediator of that Kingdom; God also works directly in the world. To name the Kingdom, that is to identify God’s activity in history, is an ambiguous task. When the duality of histories is rejected, there is the danger of sacralising human history and reducing the radical effect of Christ’s life, death and resurrection to human improvement. Míguez Bonino overcomes these dangers are, however, not so much in theological investigation but in action and piety. He is closer to ‘monism’ than ‘dualism’. In fact he would qualify as a ‘dialectical monist.’ God’s activity in history can only be identified by faithfully participating in God’s project to establish God’s reign. There is no guarantee of infallibility but, because this participation takes place between action and reflection, the praxis is neither sacralised nor fossilised.

It is important to make a few comments at this point. Míguez Bonino’s strongly criticises the traditional Liberationist understanding of God’s relationship to humanity and human history. He shares many of the Liberationist viewpoints; at the same time, he feels the need to deepen the theological reflection in order to sharpen

² In the Anglo-Saxon sense of the word.

the theological tools in the search for effective praxis. Míguez Bonino's unique contribution to the reflection on this theology demonstrates a clear contrast to the understanding of conversion prevalent in Latin American Roman Catholic theology. In general terms, the Catholic concept can be expressed as: everybody in Latin America is baptized and is therefore a Christian; conversion, therefore, is conscientisation, deeper commitment, or greater involvement. Míguez Bonino, as a Protestant, calls for a more radical understanding of change: conversion is both qualitative and quantitative. Further, it is instructive to note that this critique was developed in dialogue with Methodist theology. One of his writings on the issue at stake is conceived in dialogue with John Wesley's concept of salvation, sanctification and how Christ defines the nature of love (1999i:69ff; cf. 1998f:181). Finally, these considerations lead Míguez Bonino to reflect upon a theme that became vital to his theological reflection in the last few years—the role of the Trinity in history (cf. 1998f:182 and 1999i:79-83). This theme will be developed more fully in chapter six.

4.4.4 *The Relationship Between Present History and the Future Glory*

Míguez Bonino declared that the Kingdom of God is promised in full manifestation in the Parousia of Jesus Christ (1975g:75); the Kingdom of God has a future aspect, an eschatological reserve. He wants to avoid what he has already termed total immanentism. The view that there is only one history and that God works in and through that history leads to another crucial issue: the relationship between the resurrection of Jesus Christ and his coming in glory at the end of history and the fulfilment; i.e. 'when God will definitely establish his Kingdom' (1961c:27). He makes this point in the following way:

Do historical events and human activity in history in all its various dimensions have any meaningfulness with respect to the Kingdom that God is fashioning now and will establish in glory at the second coming of the Lord? Or is the latter the complete and total negation of the former? If there is some positive relationship between the two, how are we to understand it and how does it cut into our own activity? (1979d:272; cf. 1975h:139).

Before moving on with a detailed description and analysis of Míguez Bonino's argument, it is important to refer to some statements concerning the meaning of human history made earlier in his career.

In *Nuestro Mensaje*, written for CELA II (1961), Míguez Bonino considers dualism. He approaches this issue from the knowledge that many Latin American Christians believe that the world is in the hands of the devil and, therefore fear the world and withdraw from it. He asserts that the Christian message believes that Jesus Christ is universal Lord at present. He asks whether 'we as Evangelicals have not begun from the basis that Christ only has sovereign rights in the Church but the world does not belong to him' (1962:c:74-75). Míguez Bonino claims that 'as Christians we can rightly claim and breathe easily in a world that Christ has already put under his sovereignty, even though we do not see it yet' (1962c:75). Although he does not directly deal with the theological issues regarding the relationship between Jesus Christ's sovereignty and human history, he lays the ground for later developments.

In the first ISAL consultation, running at the same time as CELA II, Míguez Bonino gave a paper on the biblical and theological bases of involvement in society (1961b and 1961c). He admits that the biblical evidence seems to suggest that the coming age is more important than this one. He argues that the New Testament views Jesus Christ as the 'end of the world'. This world is judged and is passing away. Christians are rescued from this world and have their citizenship in heaven. The Christian message, therefore, is essentially eschatological. This reflects a common understanding at the time. Having said this, he submits that this world is important in two ways. Firstly, human history between the resurrection and the Parousia is the time of God's patience (I Pet 3.20; II Pet 3.9, 15; Act 17.30-31), the time in which Christians must preach the gospel and work for peace and justice in order that all may hear and accept the gospel (cf. Bosch 1991:503; Jongeneel 1997:204). In *Ama y haz lo que quieras*, Míguez Bonino makes the same comment (1972a:116). This is significant because that book was written in the same period as *Revolutionary Theology* (1975) and *Christians and Marxists* (1976), the books which are viewed as his most radical works.

Míguez Bonino adds, that the church has not only the freedom to preach the gospel; it also:

includes the conditions of "decent human life", of opportunity of access to all human possibilities, of "human dignity" that God has created for the person in this world in which we live. The psychological barriers that create misery, oppression, injustice, disorder, insecurity for the reception of the gospel are as real as those of suppression of the freedom of proclamation. Somebody³ has said that the function of the church is "in such a way to cure the temporal scars of humanity so that it is exposed to the eternal ones" (1961c:22-23).

Present human history, in this context, does not have importance in itself but only in so far as the conditions for the preaching of the gospel are maintained. Human conditions must be improved to make people more willing to receive the gospel. The importance of 'this present era' is spiritual.

The present time is the time of the church. Míguez Bonino makes the following observation:

This is the time in human existence whose essential content is the proclamation of the Kingdom, and therefore, whose central agent is the proclaiming community, the missionary people of God: the Church. The logic of world history, the goal of the transformation of the world, the disappearance of the world as *terminus a quo* rather than *ad quem*, is to be found in the community of the church (1961b:240).

Human history, in this perspective, gains its importance because it enables the Kingdom of God to be proclaimed. Míguez Bonino is careful in his phrasing: the church is allowed to be the 'central agent' not the only agent. The Church is central in history because it is the bearer of the logic, transformation and meaning of the world.

Although Míguez Bonino is using ontological terms in this section, he still develops the relationship between the Kingdom of God, Jesus Christ, the Church and the World in terms of the church's mission. The Church continues the work of

³ Karl Barth

the suffering servant. Jesus triumphed over the “powers of this world” on the Cross and his coming reign is an extension of that service. In the same way the Church’s suffering service is to be conceived as ‘its testimony to “God’s new world”. As such, it, at the same time, signals the true character of human community’ (1961b:240; c.f 1955c). The life and work of the Church, as the community of the Kingdom, testifies to the reality of the coming Kingdom. In its ‘conduct that “conforms to the new age”’ (1961b:240). Jesus Christ reigns now; his reign reflects the coming reality. The Church’s mission is to testify to the relationship between human history, the Kingdom of God as a coming future reality and the church as the witness and mediator of that coming reality.

Míguez Bonino develops the above mentioned reflections three years later (1964) in a study book which was drafted to help churches to reflect upon the issues in the area of social responsibility (cf. 1964b:22-31). The churches need a basis for their involvement in social issues. He rejects the Pietist approach of individual piety leading to a better society as individualist and unrealistic. He also discards the Social Gospel approach that draws ethical principles for the Kingdom of God based upon the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount and the action of Jesus in the Gospels. He believes that it is a hermeneutically impossible task to apply first century social principles to a twentieth century social context. The Roman Catholic Social Doctrine of the Church with its basis in natural law is also rejected. He believes that Natural Law is not inherent in all human social interaction but the slow influence of the Gospel on society. More importantly it is not based upon ‘the redeeming revelation of God in Jesus Christ’ (1964b:25). Finally, he rejects Classical Protestantism’s understanding of the doctrine of the Two Kingdoms of Martin Luther or the sovereignty of God over all society of John Calvin. Neither of these teachings achieves ‘an adequate articulation of a specifically Christian doctrine of society’ (1964b:26).

Having rejected these theological articulations for a Christian participation in society, Míguez Bonino posits the reign of Jesus Christ as the centre of Christian mission. Human history is important because ‘Jesus Christ is present and active in creation’: he has demonstrated his commitment to humanity and its history through his incarnation; thereafter his ‘sovereignty is universally present’ in the church and in the world.

Míguez Bonino wishes to define more precisely the relationship between present history and the future of the Kingdom of God. Earlier in his ministry, Míguez Bonino was convinced that:

the Church interprets and creates history by the preaching of the Gospel, through which Christ himself is present in the world, requiring and making the mystery of his present and future sovereignty, and at the same time disclosing the source in which the Christian community has its being and by which human history is sustained until its final consummation (1972c:31).

In the church’s preaching of the gospel, Christ is present in the world. There is a causal link between Christ’s presence and human action. This was a major discussion between the theologians of liberation and European theologians such as Jürgen Moltmann and Johannes Baptist Metz.⁴ The Liberation Theologians

⁴ This argument does not occur in 1975g or 1979d..

understood that European theologians attempted to avoid terms that imply causality; they were reticent to admit that human action has a causal effect in the Kingdom of God. 'In other words, historical action is not really significant for the Kingdom; at most, it may succeed to project provisory images which remind us of it' (1975h:140). That is, they refer to the Kingdom of God but are not the Kingdom of God in reality. Segundo is a little more measured than Míguez Bonino, saying that 'except in rare exceptions, the historical reality produced by human effort is described at "anticipation" (Moltmann), "analogy" (Weth), "rough draft" (Metz), and so forth (cf. Segundo 1976:144). The Latin American assertion is clear; in European theology the future action of God swallows up the present action of human beings. The future is emphasized to the detriment of the present.

Míguez Bonino wants to define the relationship between the Kingdom of God and present history in sharper terms. He believes that the New Testament makes a strong causal link and believes that European understanding does not take note of the biblical evidence. Míguez Bonino opts for eschatological analogies. He proposes that one can 'consider this question in the analogy of the eschatological concepts of the "body" and "resurrection"' (1975h:140-142). These concepts are obviously not commensurate with the Kingdom and history but they can serve to clarify the relationship.

Míguez Bonino regards the resurrected body as for 'a continuity that affirms the recognizable identity of both, and a transformation that inaugurates the resurrected life' (1979d:272). He refers to the Apostle Paul who speaks of the transformation of the physical, earthly body into the resurrection body, not as a "disfiguration" or "denaturalization" of the life of the body but rather as its fulfilment, its perfection, the elimination of its corruptibility and weakness. In the resurrection body the earthly body finds its true nature and significance—fellowship, love and praise. Rather than being a rescue of the spirit, the resurrection is the 'bodily life cleansed from self-deception and self-seeking (flesh) and made perfect in transparent (glorious) singleness of purpose and experience (spiritual) and full community with God' (1975h:141).

The Pauline concept of "works" complements the aforementioned analogy. Míguez Bonino asks whether human works, done in this life, have eschatological significance? He answers with an emphatic 'yes' (cf. Boff, C. 1987:203). The works done in the body 'belong to the new order, to the order of the resurrected world, to the order of love' (1975g:83-84). These works are not done in an ideal or spiritual world; but done by concrete human beings in concrete human contexts. It is not a matter of differentiating between sacred and profane, religious and secular, or Christian and human works, but rather—in Pauline terms—between 'works done in the flesh' and 'works done in faith'. Works done in faith have eschatological significance. Seen in this light, the Kingdom of God does not deny and destroy history but rather eradicates its corruption, frustration, limitations and ambiguity. It destroys sin so that the full meaning of communal life is fulfilled (cf. Chopp 1992:89). Christians must use terms that imply growth, development, construction and establishment: these is the language used by the Bible. Christian mission is not simply a set of unrelated actions but 'a new reality; a new life which is communicated in Christ, in the power of the Spirit' (1975h:143). The Kingdom of God is not an object for study but a call to action. 'The Kingdom is not a riddle to be solved but a mission to be fulfilled' (1975h:143).

4.4.5 *The Kingdom of God and Utopias*

Christians are called to announce, to live out, and thereby, bring about the Kingdom of God. Many people on the political left in the nineteen seventies viewed that statement as something purely utopian. In *Toward a Christian Political Ethics*, Míguez Bonino questions whether the Kingdom of God is a utopia (1983m:90-94). The latter is of special interest for people involved in Liberation Theology and in the Marxist-Christian dialogue. Marx rejected utopian socialism in favour of scientific socialism. In the Soviet Union, his disciples denied the “objective facts” of the historical process. Marx himself criticized the Christian concept of love: Christians have the vision of a new world but they do not have the tools to realise that vision. According to these Marxists, utopias and the Christian hope hold back revolution and change by offering the possibility of an impossible future.

Marxists such as Ernst Bloch have tried to reinterpret Marx in order to find an impulse to change the utopian concept. According to Bloch, the concept of utopia has three social functions—it is a protest against the present situation; it explores the possibility of a still unattained, different reality; and it demands the immediate realization of that new reality (Bloch 1986:1195). Míguez Bonino, following Bloch, declares that ‘Utopia is not an illusion, it is knowledge—an anticipation of the possible future of reality’ (1983m:91). This knowledge-based utopian thinking has two philosophical presuppositions—nature is a process that carries within it the possibilities of its own transformation; and humanity acts as a ‘midwife’ of that transformation. Although Míguez Bonino accepts that utopia has its limits, he considers it a useful concept, ‘a resolute invitation to anticipatory, realistic struggle spurred by hope’ (1983m:91; cf. 2000c:138).

With these general considerations in mind, Míguez Bonino opts for a more indirect relationship between the Christian hope—as represented by the theological motif of the Kingdom of God—and the concept of utopia. The Christian hope of the Kingdom of God contains certain elements common to utopias—both positive advantages and negative dangers—but is both more and less than these utopias. He takes this route because ‘in eschatology we are not speaking of “human anticipations” but of God’s time of consummation which, while it assumes history, does not simply crown history’s achievements but also judges and transforms it’ (1983m:92). God’s action in history is decisive and new; it transforms and judges and it cannot and should not be confused with any human action. Moreover, Míguez Bonino emphasises that relating human utopias directly to the Christian hope not only ignores the ‘qualitative newness’ of God’s transformation of history but also opens the dangerous possibility of ‘sacralising’ and ‘clericising’ human projects. Human action should not be “taken over” by the Church as proof of God’s action. Human action is justified and given value not by being made into God’s working but in itself a human effort to build a better society. In its worst case, human action is literally “taken over” by the Church in some sort of effort to “Christianize” or “baptize” human action. It is important, for Míguez Bonino, to relate God’s action to human effort to build a better society (utopia) but at the same time to distinguish between both concepts.

Míguez Bonino’s attitude to utopias is necessarily ambiguous. For him, utopias are human creations; they have an important social function by ‘negating the negative’ and projecting the possibility of a new future. In the cooperation between

Christians and Marxists in Latin America this has been an important factor. Moreover, utopian thinking has been an important part of Western thinking and Christian theology. Many aspects of the biblical faith stimulate utopian thinking. Especially concepts such as the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the regeneration of humanity have demonstrated, using Moltmann's term, the 'negation of determinations' and have avoided subjective cynicism. Furthermore, these biblical events and concepts 'indicate a direction' in God's purposes. Words such as justice, peace and life both protest current conditions and indicate the direction for change. Finally, utopias call for action. In this sense the concept is at its most ambiguous. Without a doubt the Bible does recount stories of God's action towards a different future and 'engages and commits human beings to action' (1983m:93). The history of Christianity has shown, however, that eschatology has often been spiritualized and individualized and so the ethico-political aspect has been amputated. At the same time, Christians, especially in Latin America, have uncritically committed themselves to certain dubious historical projects. 'We are faced at this point, therefore, with a double task: critical assessment in the light of the direction pointed by the biblical prophetic-messianic tradition, and recovery of the praxis-provoking character of Christian eschatology, the dimension of call' (1983m:94).

4.5 HUMAN ACTION: DISCERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN OBEDIENCE

This double task, discussed at the end of the previous section, brings Míguez Bonino back to the question that he posed at the beginning: 'how can we understand the active presence of the Kingdom in our history in such a way that we will be able to adapt our testimony and action, particularly at this particular time in Latin America in which has been given to us to profess our faith and serve the Lord' (1975g:75). It is important to note that Míguez Bonino's question is not, the where of the Kingdom of God present or visible, but the how: how do I participate—not only individually but as a community of faith in history—in the world that is coming, in the promised Kingdom? (cf. 1975h:143). 'How can we participate, act out, produce the quality of personal and corporate existence which has a future, which possesses eschatological reality, which concentrates the true future?' (1975h:143). Míguez Bonino resists the temptation to sacralise his own interpretation of God's action in history.

According to Míguez Bonino, the participation of humanity in the creation and establishment of God's Kingdom in history that has eternal consequences is the type of 'action that *names* this future and that *corresponds to its quality*' (1975h:143; italics in original). This is announcement and action—word and deed. Míguez Bonino insists that both are important because 'both action and announcement are eschatologically significant' (1975h:143). There can be no separation of proclamation and social and political action in relation to the Kingdom. The Church announces the coming of God's eternal Kingdom in which corruptibility and sin will be destroyed and history will be made perfect; at the same time, it works towards that incorruptibility and sinlessness.

The topic of the Church's participation in the Kingdom is connected to the issue of discernment. How does the Church know when and where to participate in the coming Kingdom? The answer given by Míguez Bonino is through *discernment of the Kingdom in obedient faith*. Although God's action in history is universal and

pervades history with its energy, 'its meaning is discernible only by faith, within the limits of perception prevailing in the "age of the Church" in which we live' (1972c:28). In the terms of this study, this is faith seeking effectiveness.

There is no guarantee of inerrancy in Christian action because the church cannot project God's action in the Bible into a seamless philosophy of history. God's activity presupposes 'distinct "times" and distinct "methods" of action' (1972c:24) which means that God does not always act in the same way at the same time. The Bible is the concrete recounting of how God acted at a certain place and at a certain time. Nevertheless, there exists 'constancy in God's "ways of acting"—not "standards" but "types" or "structures" of action,' signs 'i.e. glimpses of the meaning of God's actions in the world based upon what we know of God's action in the history of salvation' (1972c:25,28). In *Fundamentos bíblicos*, Míguez Bonino states that 'God has worked in history; the Bible is the register of that action. And this action has left us certain "paradigms", "parables" that orientate and govern our action. God uses these paradigms today to guide us to a contemporary decision' (1964b:30). This is manifest in how God acts through the creation of a responsible community, manifest in the congregation of the Church—'that is the sign and prefiguration of the Kingdom' (1964b:30). In this way, the Church is able to provide a prophetic witness to what occurs in the world. In this rather limited and tentative way, 'we can discern a direction in the action of God apparent in the Scriptures, namely the redemption of human life in its totality (individual and community, spiritual and physical, present and future)' (1972c:29). This 'direction' is manifest in phenomena such as reconciliation, justice, peace and liberation.

In *Ama y haz lo que quieras*, Míguez Bonino fills out his understanding. Both the Old and New Testaments witness to the fact that God is the God of all peoples, establishing the divine rule in various ways. God has always had to combat the tendency of people—in Israel and the Church—who think that God's government is limited only to them. In the Old Testament, Ruth and Jonah are prime examples of how God breaks out from Israel's ethnocentrism, racism and reductionism. God is the God of all and for all. The three principal characterizations of God in the Old Testament demonstrate this point: God is seen as the legislator who guarantees justice for all; the creator who has always and will always govern and order all things; and the king who guides and protects his people, 'who secures its unity and harmony and who establishes right and justice' (1972a:85). God's government is foremost a government of justice. God is active in establishing justice by giving a law. The Law of Moses governed Israel's life in order to maintain correct relationships between races and classes of people, especially the most vulnerable within society. God also establishes justice in the inspiration of the prophets who denounced injustice. Through the establishment of justice God seeks to create peace—*shalom*, which 'embraces the well-being of the whole person and the whole community' (1972a:87). *Shalom* is only possible 'when the conditions that God has established and which ensure justice and well-being of the community are kept' (1972a:88).

The New Testament declares that the incarnated Christ, who is present and active in creation, is the demonstration of God's attitude towards all human beings. He has revealed God's universal purpose to redeem all of humanity and to establish God's Kingdom (cf. 1964b:27). The New Testament also declares Jesus Christ to be the promised king. Jesus Christ taught and preached the presence of the Kingdom in

his own person. He was—as Origen states—the *autobasileia*. Jesus Christ will bring in God’s reign of peace and justice. The fact of his life, death and resurrection is the ‘decisive fulfilment’ of the promise of God’s just reign (cf. 1972a:90).

Míguez Bonino is convinced that Christians have nothing more than guides to orientate them regarding their role in what Augustine called the *civitas terrena*. He says: ‘the action of the Church and the Christian is always an encounter between the reading and meditation upon the action of God in the past—the Scriptures—and prayer, asking for direction of God in the midst of the circumstance’ (1964b:30). In other words:

this then is the task—the very limited and penultimate task—of theological ethics: to perfect the instruments of theological analysis of biblical testimony, and to define the conditions, which make possible its “parabolic” projection, indirectly and in an intermediary role, into the contemporary situation (1972c:29).

Some have approached the issue by first asking the question: ‘what is God doing in contemporary history,’ and later have attempted to link Christian action to God’s action (cf. Lehmann 1963). Míguez Bonino agrees that this can be a fruitful method but warns that it runs the risk of sacralising human action and moreover, can lead to the belief that our actions correspond to God’s action. There is no direct route from the Bible to Christian obedience. There are merely mediations: the reading of the Bible, the use of the gospel and hermeneutics, and the understanding of the context in which action takes place.

At this point in *el Reino de Dios y la historia*, Míguez Bonino speaks of the need of the mediations which guide the Church’s actions in this discernment in obedience. He says: ‘these mediations are of two orders. On one hand, there is our understanding of Scripture, of the gospel and the “rationality” or instruments of theological hermeneutics that we use. On the other hand there is our understanding of the context’ (1975g:86). As was argued in the previous chapter, neither of these mediations is adequate without concrete commitment to the political process.

In *Revolutionary Theology*, Míguez Bonino makes a stinging criticism of European Political Theology for its refusal to make this concrete commitment and its desire to remain neutral in its options. In his view, European and North American theologians believe that the gospel or “Christ-reference” relativizes the “present” historical reference of our faith and action’ (1975h:144). He takes Jürgen Moltmann as an example of a theologian who wishes theology to maintain a “critical function” and therefore not to make a choice between concrete historical alternatives. Without a doubt, Moltmann ‘is the theologian to whom the theology of liberation is most indebted and with whom it shows the clearest affinity’ (1975h:144) and subsequently was one of the European theologians to engage in dialogue with the Latin Americans but Míguez Bonino believes that he does not go far enough.

Moltmann attempts to become concrete in his search for obedience. He points to, what he calls, the ‘demonic circles of death’ under which humanity suffers ‘poverty, violence, racial and cultural deprivation, industrial destruction of nature, meaninglessness or Godforsakenness. Consequently, justice, democracy, cultural identity, peace with nature, and meaningful life are the concrete contents of historical hope’ (1975h:146; cf. Moltmann 1974:304). These “demonic circles of death” and their corresponding “contents of historical hope” take the theologian into the area of politics. It is not enough, however, to identify these elements. It is also

vital ‘to understand them in their unity, their roots, their dynamics, i.e. without giving a coherent socio-analytical account of this manifold oppression?’ (1975h:147). Moltmann has made a good start in the process to make the historical obedience of Christians concrete, but fails, according to Míguez Bonino, to take the final step. He asserts: ‘It seems that a point has been reached at which theologians cannot continue to make theological assertions concerning the political and social significance of the gospel without facing the facts of the actual empirical significance of the Christian churches and relating the two things in order that their statements may become *historically* significant and not simply idealistic assertions’ (1975h:148). Moltmann wants to proclaim that God is without country and without class but on the other hand that God is not a-political; that God is the God of the poor and oppressed. Míguez Bonino insists, however, that the poor do have a country and that they are a class. In this Moltmann, as representative of European and North American theologians, is in danger of not perceiving the situation as it is. Míguez Bonino asks: ‘Are we really for the poor and oppressed if we fail to see them as a class, of members of oppressed societies?’ (1975h:148). Therefore, he insists that theology (done at any level) must move from the abstract to the concrete. Reflecting on the Kingdom of God, he puts it in the following way: ‘The Bible gives us a motivation, an orientation, certain coordinates, but not an economic nor a political order’ (1981h:9). He views Moltmann as a Western theologian who, after all, still prefers to stay at the level of abstraction. When the theologian moves from the abstract to concrete options, it is not a case of drawing a political order from the Bible but a case of finding a human political order in which to work. Míguez Bonino goes on to say that ‘it is for this reason that Christians must choose between the possible diverse historical projects, in terms of the justice and solidarity that correspond to the Kingdom, in obedience to the liberating God of the poor’ (1981h:9).

It should be pointed out that, although Moltmann may have theologially wished to remain at the level of abstraction, he always made a political option himself. He has always been a social democrat and was deeply involved in the anti-nuclear movement.

In his famous ‘Open Letter to José Míguez Bonino’ (Moltmann 1979), Moltmann admits that Míguez Bonino’s desire to “materialise” the kingdom of God from an historical perspective’ is new: a perspective that he had not seen clearly enough (Moltmann 1979:197-198). However, he goes on to say that European theologians have said very similar things.

You present the positive relationship between the kingdom of God and human undertaking in history as calling, invitation, and impulse to engagement. Our concrete historical options should “correspond” to the kingdom (true to Barth). You describe the critical connection of the judgment of God to the whole of our human efforts (true to Luther). Finally, you speak of the “utopian function” of Christian eschatology, of Christian faith as stimulus and challenge for revolutionary action, and of the eschatological faith that makes meaningful the investment of life for the building of a temporal, imperfect order, and of the resurrection of the dead as the triumph of God’s love and of God’s solidarity with all human beings in which the imperfect is perfected (true to Moltmann). One can also read all of this in Bonhoeffer, Barth, Gollwitzer, Metz, and other Europeans. One is, therefore, inclined to agree fervently with you, but then ask what sense your criticism has after all (Moltmann 1979:198).

This is not the place to enter into a prolonged discussion on how Míguez Bonino's theology is more or less European but it is important to clarify a couple of points. Míguez Bonino is not embarrassed about the link between his theology and European theology, however, he shows how he, and other Latin American theologians 'are increasingly claiming their right to "mis-read" their teachers, to find their own insertion in the theological tradition, to offer their own interpretation of the theological task' (1975h:62). There is no doubt that Míguez Bonino and others incorporate the concepts of European theologians but they often use those concepts in a way the authors would not have originally expected. They use reader orientated hermeneutics even on their theological teachers.

Also, it is important to point out that although Míguez Bonino did not directly respond Moltmann's criticisms, in the development of his theology, it is possible to see how he has incorporated this interchange into his thinking. A clear example of this is how later Míguez Bonino relates the concrete option that the Christian makes to Dietrich Bonhoeffer's concept of the penultimate (Bonhoeffer 2005:125-133). In *Ethics* (2005), Bonhoeffer insists on the significance of both 'ultimate ethics' (connected with the final fulfilment of God's reign), and 'penultimate ethics', (connected with the concrete context of this world). Penultimate ethics continue to exist and have consequences until the consummation of the Kingdom. Penultimate ethics find their meaning in relation to the ultimate event—the Kingdom of God (Bonhoeffer 2005:243). Míguez Bonino relates the concept of "historic projects" to Bonhoeffer's concept of Penultimate Ethics. Historic projects are 'concrete visions of the future and strategies to realize them in different groups within society commit their efforts in the realization of justice and participation' (1981h:9). This is obviously not the church's own project or a new Christendom but a way forward in making concrete God's Kingdom. Míguez Bonino insists that Christians must make a choice between various available historical projects. These choices are made on the basis of the justice and solidarity of the Kingdom, in obedience to the God of the poor. These projects are not, by any means, the fullness of the Kingdom of God but are always fallible and human. They can only have a relative and transitory role in relation to the Kingdom. They are 'penultimate' and must constantly be revised and improved. However successful a project may be: 'it is not the Kingdom in its fullness' (1981h:10). It does express God's Kingdom in its reality but in a relative and transitory way. Précising Míguez Bonino, it is possible to say with that this eschatological faith enables the Christian to invest her or his life historically in the construction of a true expression of the Kingdom of God, however temporary and imperfect that expression may be. But the Christian can do this with the confidence that neither life nor work has been wasted but has eschatological significance (cf. 1975h:152). The Christian's 'penultimate' contribution has effect in the 'ultimate' fulfilment of the Kingdom of God.

4.6 FINAL OBSERVATIONS

This final section summarises Míguez Bonino's doctrine of the Kingdom of God, highlights some of his more important influences in regard to this topic and finally makes some analytical comments regarding continuity and discontinuity. Míguez Bonino defines the Kingdom of God as 'the sovereign action of God over the world

(natural and historical in its unity and totality), especially and representatively exercised and attested to in Israel, perfected in Jesus Christ and promised in full manifestation in the parousia of Jesus Christ' and declares that the role of Christian theology is to discover 'how can we understand the active and dynamic presence of God's Kingdom in our history so that we can adapt our witness and activity to it, particularly at this concrete moment in Latin America when we must profess our faith and serve the Lord.' His emphasis is that the Kingdom of God is God's action in history. How that action is understood and how human action relates to it is the main thrust of his reflections.

God's action in history is witnessed to in the Bible in the history of Israel and Jesus Christ. God's purposes are worked out in the context of world history. This does not mean that everything that happens is God's will nor does it mean that there are two histories: one that corresponds to the world—a secular and political history—and one that corresponds to God's will—a spiritual or ecclesial history.

In the context of the New Testament, God's purposes are still worked out in the context of world history but God's purposes acquire a certain 'density'. Theology's task is to identify that 'divine density' in world history. Míguez Bonino accepts that the concept of 'love' could serve as a reference point for God's purposes in world history but warns of the danger of immanentism. 'If we carry that tendency to its ultimate conclusion, we will wittingly or unwittingly deify history or humanity itself. In that case we would be better to call things by their right name and profess to total immanentism.' He proposes a 'dialectic monist' position where God's activity in history can only be identified by faithfully participating in God's project to establish God's reign. There is no guarantee of infallibility but, because this participation takes place between action and reflection, the praxis is neither sacralised nor fossilised.

The relationship between history and the Parousia should be viewed as an elimination of corruption, sin and weakness, not the negation of the existence of matter. Human action, therefore, that fulfils this criteria is, in a very real sense, bringing about the coming Kingdom. To distinguish between human action prior to the Parousia and God's action in the fullness of the Parousia, Míguez Bonino resorts to Dietrich Bonhoeffer's concept of 'penultimate' and 'ultimate' ethics. Human historical projects actually bring about the Kingdom of God but are only 'penultimate' to the Kingdom of God that will come in the Parousia. The Christian's 'penultimate' contribution has effect in the 'ultimate' fulfilment of the Kingdom of God.

Influences upon Míguez Bonino's doctrine of the Kingdom of God are many and various. He was taught a liberal understanding of the Kingdom of God at the *FET* but in the nineteen fifties, his reading of Dietrich Bonhoeffer was instrumental in drawing him away from this and giving his understanding a Christological emphasis. Oscar Cullmann's *Christ and Time* (Cullmann 1951) led Míguez Bonino to understand the eschatological nature of the New Testament but also to continue to affirm the importance of the Church's role in the intermediate time between the resurrection and Parousia. Other traditions were a foil in this regard. Developments within ISAL and the theology of Vatican II led Míguez Bonino to oppose a facile view of God's action in history; some of his articles at this time are a response to this. In the nineteen seventies, he was in dialogue with a vast array of theologians and theological positions which were influential in challenging

his existing theology of the Kingdom. Among these were, of course, the liberation theologians, Jürgen Moltmann, the Latin American Theological Fraternity, and the CWME.

Míguez Bonino's reflections on the Kingdom of God are consistently in harmony with his theological method described in chapter three. The questions posed to the Kingdom of God motif emerge from missionary obedience and point towards missionary obedience. In the context of the Kingdom of God the question is posed as how the Christian, in the context of the church, can adjust his or her Christian action in order to bring it in line with God's action in history? Míguez Bonino's reflections, although they do become abstract, emerge from concrete experience and are posed in order to achieve greater effectiveness in mission. After reflecting on the nature of God's action he then reflects on how to become concrete once again. These reflections are not left in idealistic formulations but, through social analysis attempt to make praxiological projections. This has meant that Míguez Bonino has developed a dynamic missionary theology of the Kingdom of God. By emphasising both God's action and human action in a synthetic and creative way, he develops a dynamic theological reflection on the Kingdom. God's action does not negate human action but nor does human action towards the Kingdom of God eclipse God's initiative in the Kingdom. Within this framework, reflection upon the Kingdom of God is a constant task, not only of theological reflection but also missionary obedience. His concept of discernment of the Kingdom of God in obedience makes this explicit.

Míguez Bonino has been consistent in asserting that God's action brings about the coming of the Kingdom. Neither church nor world is definitive in the establishment of the Kingdom. Míguez Bonino has always resisted the temptations of the late nineteen sixties and early nineteen seventies to claim facile identification of the Kingdom of God with human action. He has always attempted to be both concrete and circumspect. This has led to a certain ambiguity in his assertions. It could be claimed that Míguez Bonino's theology of the Kingdom of God is precarious. He recognises both the theological and praxiological dangers of the one history but insists on leaving them in dialectical tension. There will always be the danger of sacralising human action and subsuming God's action into human action, thereby losing the radical call of God to repentance and conversion. Míguez Bonino's conceptualisation of the Kingdom of God and the process through which he works from praxis to praxis via analysis and reflection is useful in lessening the danger of the gospel becoming an ideology but it can still be distorted towards human action or divine intervention depending on the theological tradition of the theologian.

Míguez Bonino's reflections on the Kingdom of God have always taken God's action in Jesus Christ seriously. God's action in bringing about justice in God's Kingdom is centred on the life, death, resurrection and return of Jesus Christ in the Parousia. In order to do this, he does not only refer to the gospels and Old Testament prophets but also to Paul's letters and the Pauline interpretation of the work of Christ. This means, of course, that Míguez Bonino relates the Kingdom of God, so prominent in the synoptic gospels, to the Pauline concept of the New Creation and the Johannine concept of Life. What is implicit in the synoptic gospels, that the event of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ inaugurates the Kingdom of God, is made explicit in the New Creation.

Up to the mid-nineteen sixties Míguez Bonino focussed upon the Church and the Kingdom of God, whereas later in the nineteen sixties, he focussed on the world and the Kingdom of God. The search for a firm biblical and theological basis for the Church's involvement in society naturally focussed upon the church as the main protagonist but during the late nineteen sixties, he began to see a greater role for the world. Theological discussions within ISAL certainly contributed to this change as did the unwillingness of many Protestant Churches in Latin America to accept a role within society. This also reflects the trend in WCC theology that was strongly influenced by the theologies of liberation and in turn stimulated further reflection by those involved in Latin America. The role of the Church in later writings on the Kingdom of God seems to be having a more positive function.

An additional development is Míguez Bonino's concept of the 'historical project,' which he assumed into his theology in the nineteen seventies and eighties. In order to both associate and distinguish God's action and human action towards the Kingdom of God, Míguez Bonino proposes that limited efforts be established. The historical projects are true expressions of the Kingdom of God but are limited; God will bring about the full expression of the Kingdom in the Parousia. These historical projects are both the basis upon which theology's reflection upon the Kingdom starts and also a response to the call to obedience.

The Kingdom of God has been a vital and fruitful motif in Míguez Bonino's search for effectiveness in missionary obedience. It maintains the focus of his theology of God's action but calls for human action in the form of historic projects in order to make God's action in concrete history. Reflection on the Kingdom of God is dynamic for Míguez Bonino. A once for all study on the Kingdom of God, and a subsequent application of the principles drawn out from that study is inadequate. That method sacralises the theologian's interpretation and fossilises the Christian's action. A constant search for effectiveness is the answer. This search, however, must be carried out from within commitment to God's Kingdom; it must reflect upon God's action in biblical history; it must discern God's action in present history; and then must constantly adjust its own praxis to bring it in line with God's action. This process must be critical and continuous.

5 CONFLICT FOR THE TRUE CHURCH IN THE WORLD: THE ECCLESIOLOGY OF MÍGUEZ BONINO

If there is no faith except as embodied in a concrete historical praxis, we must see ecclesiology *as a conflict for the true Church*, as the confrontation of concrete historical options embraced as the obedience that faith is (1975h:170 *Italics in original*).

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter emphasised that the Kingdom of God was God's action in establishing God's rule over nature and history. In search of effectiveness the task of theologians is to reflect theologically on how best to adjust Christian action and witness to God's action in the concrete context in which it is placed. This clearly raises some important ecclesiological issues. What is the relationship of God's action in Jesus Christ to the church in its life and mission? What is the relationship of the church to the world? What effect does the mission of the church have in God's Kingdom? How should God's action in Christ be understood in relation to the church in the world? This chapter describes how Míguez Bonino has understood the church in relation to God and the world and seeks to answer some of these questions.

The most important question in Míguez Bonino's ecclesiology is not so much: where is the church or what are the marks or signs of the true church, but: what is the goal of the Church? This final question may be implicit in the previous questions but his point of departure is the mission of the church, not the nature of the church. The experience and insights of Christians involved in obedient mission is, therefore, the starting point for the way Míguez Bonino has developed his ecclesiology. He examined the new understanding of the church proposed by those Christians involved in obedient mission and assessed the theological articulation of the ecclesiological insights developed. He then attempts to express a new ecclesiological understanding in the light of the theological issues raised and finally proposes ways forward for the church in its self-understanding and mission.

This chapter examines the context of Míguez Bonino's ecclesiological reflection (both ecclesiastical developments in Latin America and the ecclesiological developments in theology) (5.2). It then notes the most important writings by Míguez Bonino on ecclesiology and ecumenism, briefly mentioning the context in which each was written (5.3). From there it will move to a detailed examination of Míguez Bonino's ecclesiological argument (5.4). Finally, it will make some concluding observations (5.5).

5.2 DEVELOPMENTS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

5.2.1 *Ecclesiastical Developments*

The most important ecclesiastical development in Latin America for Míguez Bonino's ecclesiological thought was Christian involvement in social and political work and the subsequent reflection upon that involvement. Both Roman Catholics and Protestants in Latin America have been involved in social, and to some degree, political action throughout their history but it was in the nineteen fifties and sixties that this became an important theological issue. In the mid-nineteen fifties, militant members of Catholic Action started to reflect upon their social activity and the reasons behind the poverty they were discovering. This led them to become critical of the Roman Catholic hierarchy (cf. Coleman 1958:33). Subsequent to the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) and especially Medellín (1968), they began to reflect in a more theologically consistent way on their action in the light of their faith as well as on the Base Ecclesial Community (BEC) as a movement (cf. Boff, L 1985:131-137; Cook 1985 and Dawson 1998). This new understanding of the church was not generated by theologians but rather by ordinary members of the BECs involved in the process of liberation. Leonardo Boff puts it in the following way: 'A theologian trying to explain this phenomenon must be one who first listens and learns' (Boff, L. 1985:131). It is only then that the theologian begins his or her reflections. Míguez Bonino, in his ecclesiological reflections, has attempted to do just that.

In this regard, the *Movimiento de Sacerdotes para el Tercer Mundo* (MSTM) is also significant. This group was originally formed in Argentina in 1965, by a group of priests, mainly working in Argentina's *Villa Miserias* or shantytowns. After Vatican II they were asking questions such as 'What is the Church for?' (1975h:50). Inspired by Paul VI's *Populorum Progressio* (1967), the movement became radicalised and subsequently made a conscious decision to support Peronism. It was not an option to aid only the Peronist Party but rather to espouse a movement that was supported, in particular, by the most marginalized of the people. The MSTM also consciously espoused a type of socialism that it described as 'national (responding to "the uniqueness of our people"), popular (enabling the people to participate and decide), Latin American, humanist (giving a place to spiritual, cultural and ethical fulfilment of humanity) and critical (allowing for constant renewal)' (1975h:51). It was for much of its history intimately related to the *Montoneros*; a revolutionary group on the far left of the Peronist party (cf. 1975h:157-158). Although Míguez Bonino did not agree with the specific option for Peronism, he did respect and later espouse the need for some sort of political option.

Social action had always been part of Protestant missionary work in this part of the world, but it began to be radicalised in the late nineteen fifties with the formation of ISAL, (1957). ISAL was formed to think through the church's social responsibility in the context of rapid social change. During the nineteen sixties, in both its consultations and its periodical *Cristianismo y Sociedad*, ISAL's approach oscillated between a developmentalist approach and a revolutionary one. It achieved greater consistency when it took up the "sociology of dependence" and opted for a clear socialist and revolutionary programme (1967). The churches rejected this option: 'for groups like ISAL the only way out was to become auxiliaries of the

revolutionary forces and to work principally towards the development of a revolutionary consciousness among popular core groups' (Nuñez 1985:70). From 1970 onwards, however, ISAL redefined its role: to mobilise the church for involvement in socio-political action and thereby achieve more acceptance of this involvement within the church.

ISAL was also instrumental in organising what could be described as the high point of Christian reflection upon political involvement in Latin America: the First Conference of Christians for Socialism (1972) (Aroyo 1973). This was a truly ecumenical gathering of Catholics and Protestants, with both ordained and lay people taking part. This movement defined itself as follows:

Christians who, starting from the process of liberation which our Latin American countries are undergoing and from our concrete and active in engagement in the building of a socialist society, think out our faith and re-examine our attitude of love for the oppressed (1975h:vii). Míguez Bonino was deeply moved by this conference.

A second ecclesiastical development is what Míguez Bonino calls 'the New Oikoumene'. He says that Christianity, and especially Protestantism, is becoming 'increasingly atomized'. The religious field is defined more through social, cultural, psychological and other factors than by nation, family, and traditional relationships (1993d:113-116). The decades of the nineteen sixties to the nineteen nineties saw a dramatic realignment of denominational allegiances. Before the sixties, denominational lines were clearly drawn and often theological battle lines were drawn along them. Those decades changed these traditional understandings. In various writings during these decades Míguez Bonino speaks of the revolution within the ecclesial landscape. Latin America was witnessing what he calls 'a re-grouping of the Christian community' (1974d:103). Although the denominations by no means disappeared, the lines were drawn not between Methodists, Presbyterians and Baptists, but between, in Míguez Bonino's terminology, 'charismatic, revolutionary and conservative' Christians. Each of these 'ecclesial families' has a different conception of the church.

The 'charismatic family' is eager to experience a 'common immediacy of the Spirit'. This experience liberates and transforms, and opens up a new sphere of existence. It is marked by joy, freedom and love. The members of this family expect miracles, including speaking in tongues, healing and prophecy. There are the normal signs of solidarity, such as mutual help and care of the needy, but these are not considered as signs of the expected Kingdom, even less are they seen as something to be extended to the whole of society; they are the external radiance of internal spiritual life.¹ Therefore, the Church, 'is the realm where this life becomes available

¹ A later development that took place, related to this ecclesial family that has been important to Míguez Bonino's ecclesiology is the rise of the Pentecostal movement. Míguez Bonino's commitment to a sociological analysis of the church meant that he would inevitably have to take into account the Pentecostal churches. The fact that the vast majority of these churches arose among the poor and marginal sections of society; and the fact of the massive growth of these churches—beginning in the late nineteen fifties and receiving a real spurt of growth during the nineteen-eighties—meant that they had become an important part of the context. From the late nineteen-sixties onwards, there was a growing bibliography analysing the Pentecostal phenomenon in Latin America. This bibliography exploded during the mid to late nineteen-eighties with Latin American sociologists and even some Pentecostals themselves making a contribution. Míguez Bonino uses these sociological analyses in various writings. The insights of the sociologists and the fact of Míguez Bonino's sympathetic outlook on the Pentecostals give a different colour to his ecclesiology during the later years of his ministry.

and consequently the invitation to participate in the fellowship is the most significant form of service. This is what the church is for!' (1974:103-104). For, the 'revolutionary family', on the other hand, the gospel is heard as a call for justice, opposing neo-colonialism and capitalist oppression as well as the dependence in which most of humanity lives. In the concrete situations, faith must answer to the struggle for liberation. The Church is not neutral but needs to be committed to God's liberating purpose. 'To make the right commitment, the option which corresponds to God's liberating purpose at a given time is the call and function of the church' (1974:104). The 'conservative family', as the third ecclesial family, simply claims to be the 'continuing embodiment and depository of the "normative" Christian faith, the "real" church over against sect, group and movement' (1974d:104). The individualism of this family has led to a weak understanding of the church; it is more or less an external help to individual faith, to which Christians commit themselves according to their needs.

This realignment is exacerbated by another problem. The divisions within Latin American society have entered the Protestant churches and have caused deep divisions. There are middle, lower and upper class churches that fight for their own ideologies and not for the good of all (cf. 1981h:12). This 'complex unity' (1984d:257) has had an impact on how the whole area of ecumenical relationships should be conceived. In this context, Míguez Bonino says: 'we are looking for a new conception of unity that attempts to articulate effectively the biblical understanding of unity and the present existence of the church in the context of the total Latin American situation' (1969d:80).

5.2.2 *Ecclesiological developments*

In Latin America, ecclesiological definitions have tended to emerge from Reformation and Counter-Reformation definitions. These are inclined to revolve around the definition of the true and false church. Polemics are common and often vitriolic. Roman Catholic definitions tended to emphasise history, institution and continuity with the past, seeing no validity in ecclesial expressions outside the hierarchical Roman Catholic Church, whereas Protestant definitions based upon preaching, sacraments and discipline, tended to become 'frozen into a static and controllable doctrinal orthodoxy and puritanical moralism' (1975h:155). The twentieth century, however, witnessed great changes in ecclesiological thought. This is as true of the Roman Catholic Church as it is of the Protestant churches.

One of the most important twentieth century events to understand the Roman Catholic view on the nature and mission of the church was the Second Vatican Council. Before the council, its self-understanding was confused and fixed in the static definitions of the First Vatican Council (1869-1870), with its emphasis on the hierarchy, focussed on Papal authority. This does not imply that there were no radical thinkers within the Roman Catholic Church who were questioning those old definitions. French theologians such as Yves Congar, Henri. Godin and Yves Daniel were already challenging previous concepts.

The Second Vatican Council caused a breakthrough in ecclesiological thought. Some of the documents contained new insights. *Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, does not describe the church as 'a societal entity on a par with other societal structures like the state' (Bosch 1991:371-372),

but as a sign, sacrament and instrument (LG 1, 9, and 48) of unity with God and with all humanity—a saving unity. Subsequent to the Council, this phrase became widely used. The Encyclical of Pope Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975), is another important document calling the church a sign and a sacrament of the Kingdom of God in its task of preaching (EN 59). It became important in Latin American Catholicism as well. Although, the phrase is not used in the final documents of Medellín (1968), it appears widely in the documents of Puebla (1979). In a section on the truth of the Church, Christ is said to continue the work of evangelising through the church as ‘sacrament of fellowship of humanity in the unique people of God, pilgrim in history’ (2:220). The church is a servant is the: ‘universal sacrament of salvation’ (2:270). It is clear that this phrase changed the idea of Vatican I. The church is not anymore viewed as being gathered around the papacy and the distributor of the means of grace. Nor is the teaching Church considered to be a community of elevated souls, it is transformed into a simple servant pointing the way to salvation. This phrase relativised the church as institution and placed the emphasis upon God’s work in unity and salvation; the church is called to serve that purpose.

The Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, also opens up new perspectives. It gives a Christological and Trinitarian dimension to ecumenical relationships. God, in Christ, gives life and unity to the “entire human race”; God creates, within that framework, a community which is made one in Christ; and God provides a focus for ecclesial unity in the hierarchy with its papal head (UR 2). Two reference points for ecumenical relations emerge in this decree: the restoration of the unity of all humanity and unity in the hierarchy. The first reference point was inspirational for Míguez Bonino in his understanding on ecumenism and mission. The second reference point arises in his dialogues with Roman Catholic theologians especially in relation to the existence and theological importance of the Base Ecclesial Communities. Both of these will be expanded later in the chapter.

In Conciliar Protestantism, post-War conferences of the International Missionary Council were important in ecclesiological developments (cf. Bosch 1991:370-371). The formation of the World Council of Churches (1948) and the shift from the church-centred-mission (Tambaram) to a mission-centred-church revealed the incongruence of missionary and church councils existing alongside one another. The IMC at Willingen (1952) gathered together under the title of ‘The Missionary Obligation of the Church;’ it took the argument even further, recognising that: ‘God’s salvific work precedes both church and mission’ (Bosch 1991:370). Neither church nor mission is more important as such; both are subsumed into the *missio Dei*. This later became an all inclusive missiological concept. It is clear that it had drawn upon the Dutch “theology of the Apostolate” (Kraemer, Hoekendijk, et al.) which had emphasised that the church cannot be thought of without mentioning the world into which it is sent (cf. Hoekendijk 1967).

Subsequently, the emphasis on the church was eclipsed in the ecumenical movement by a focus on the Kingdom of God. Various factors were instrumental in this development. These include, the integration of the IMC and WCC (New Delhi: 1961) that structurally united the missionary and ecclesiastical elements in the ecumenical movement; the Mexico meetings of the newly formed Commission for World Mission and Evangelism (CWME; 1963) with its emphasis on the world as the director of the agenda of mission; and the Church and Society meeting in

Geneva (1966), with its harsh criticisms of the church and its emphasis on “humanisation” as the main missionary category. The conclusions of these meetings were taken up by the Second WCC Assembly in Uppsala (1968), shifting the missiological focus from the church to the Kingdom of God and its relationship to the world. This does not mean that ecclesiology ceased to be a central concern in the WCC; it merely implies that the church and its mission were relative in the light of the coming of the Kingdom of God. It is clear that Míguez Bonino’s ecclesiology was influenced by these developments.

Míguez Bonino was a member of the Commission on Faith and Order (FO) for sixteen years (1961-1977). Consequently, he was involved in the many discussions related to the church and its witness in the world, especially the discussions on the issue of the relationship between the unity of the church and the integration of all humanity. At Lund (1952), Faith and Order (FO) recognised the importance of the Christological nature of ecclesiology; ‘As we seek to draw closer to Christ, we come closer to one another’ (Tompkins 1953:15). This subject arose from the third assembly of the WCC in Uppsala and thereafter it was taken up by FO, specifically at the Louvain meeting (1971). Míguez Bonino gave a paper responding to John Meyendorff, the then Chairperson of the Commission on Faith and Order and Professor at St. Vladimir’s Orthodox Theological Seminary, N.Y. (*Ecumenical Review*, Spring 1972). Between 1967 and 1971, Míguez Bonino had already dealt with this matter several times.

FO’s most notable document on the church in the second half of the twentieth century was *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (BEM) (1982). Míguez Bonino was involved in the document as it was proposed, discussed and drafted. This was a massive comparative project that goes back as far as the FO meeting at Lausanne (1927), and was discussed at the meetings in Accra (1974) and Bangalore (1978). Finally it was published in Lima. Although Míguez Bonino presented papers to FO over the years and left in 1977 (cf. 1972b; 1974d), he presented a paper at the Lima meeting (1982q).

David Bosch summarises convergence in Catholic and Protestant understandings of the church in five ways: (1) that the church is missionary by its very nature; (2) that it is a pilgrim people; (3) that it is a sacrament, sign, and instrument; (4) that the world, not the church is the focus of God’s activity; and (5) that the local church is the primary element in the church-in-mission, not the universal church (Bosch 1991:372-378). It will become clear in the course of this chapter, that all these issues are present in the ecclesiology of Míguez Bonino.

5.3 MAIN PUBLICATIONS

During his career, Míguez Bonino has written many articles and chapters and books on the church. The most important of these are divided into those publications treating the issue of ecclesiology in a more or less general way and those writings relating specifically to ecumenism.

Míguez Bonino deals with ecclesiology in the final chapter of *Revolutionary Theology Comes of Age* (1975e). He describes and critiques the ecclesiological understanding of Liberation Theology that emerged from the experience of Latin American Christians. This chapter gives a framework for his

understanding of ecclesiology generally and his concerns raised by Liberation Theology specifically. A further publication that deals with the same subject was a paper written for a Roman Catholic conference called to reflect upon the life and ecclesiology of the Base Ecclesial Communities (1983d). Míguez Bonino raises some important ecclesiological issues from a Protestant perspective, challenging Roman Catholic theologians to accept the Base Communities as a valid expression of the Church. These two publications will be extensively used during this chapter along with various other incidental publications (See 1954e; 1960c and 1966i).

Míguez Bonino has written extensively on ecumenism and mission during his career. In 'Christian Unity in Search of Locality' (1969b), he deals with the importance of the locus of visible unity (see also 1974d and 1984d). He explores how the church can concretely understand its unity in the world; where is this unity to be located? This article clearly demonstrates Míguez Bonino's desire to maintain a concrete base to all ecclesiological reflection. The book *Integración humana y unidad cristiana* (1969d), was a result of the Ecumenical Lectures on the Church and its Universal Mission at the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico, dedicated to Thomas Liggett. It is an examination of the relationship between the search for Christian unity and human integration (cf. 1975j). This publication is a vital document in order to grasp Míguez Bonino's understanding of the link between mission and ecumenism. Other peripheral articles on ecumenism will also be used (cf. 1993d, 2000b and 2000c).

5.4 ECCLESIOLOGY AND MISSION

5.4.1 *Point of Departure*

Míguez Bonino says that the church is: 'a basic fact which underlies all possible action and reflection: the life of the Church is the presupposition for the very existence of a Christian consciousness' (1975h:154). This reflection on the church, however, can only emerge from Christian commitment and specifically: out of Christians' participation in the fight for liberation. All theology is done in the light of the reality of the church and reflection on the church is to be done in the light of commitment to liberation.

Consequently, Míguez Bonino begins his reflections on the church with the experience of those Christians who, involved in social and political activity as Christians, came to reflect upon their work. They considered their involvement to be Christian work not simply work as a good citizen conceived of in secular terms. This brought into sharp focus, what Míguez Bonino calls the 'split of consciousness' (1975h:154; cf. 1977a:184).² This, he says is intrinsic to the situation of the Christian. The Christian's memory, identity and hope have a twofold reference: the human reference and the Christian reference. The Christian's faith confesses the unity of these two references but empirically they are experienced 'as an irreducible duality and tension' (1975h:154-155). More specifically, he says: 'The experience of the popular Christian Communities (BECs) has allowed us to draw attention to the indissoluble unity in this tension' (1983d:169).

² In *Fe en busca de la eficacia*, he uses the word 'fractura', equivalent to the English word 'fracture'. This emphasises the often violent nature of the experience of Christians involved in liberation.

5.4.2 “Ecclesiogenesis”

During the nineteen-sixties, many Christians were searching for a new way of being the church. What they discovered, Leonardo Boff has called an ‘ecclesiogenesis’ (the birth of the church.) He said ‘the true ecclesiogenesis, that is, the genesis of the Church, is born of the faith of the people’ (Boff 1985:131). Some Latin American theologians and foreign missionaries took part in this experiment and through their involvement with the poor, became aware of a different understanding of the “location” of the church.

Common to the new Christian awareness in the continent is the discovery of “the people,” “the poor,” “the oppressed,” the vast masses of marginal population as a fundamental call to the Christian. This experience is not only a sociological discovery. It takes on theological dimensions when seen in the light of Christ’s special and foremost concern for the poor. The people become “a theological *locus*,” the meeting place where Christ himself has promised to be present, the privileged sanctuary and sacrament of his presence (1975h:157-158).

In this context, Míguez Bonino feels forced to ask ‘If the Church is where Christ is, do not the poor become constitutive of the mystery of the Church?’ (1975h:158). This is not Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s ‘the church-for-others’, or even Puebla’s ‘the preferential option for the poor’ but rather the fact of the poor as constituting the locus of the true church. Míguez Bonino says the same thing when reflecting on the Base Ecclesial Communities. He calls Jesus Christ the ‘founder, norm and power of the church’ (1983d:170). The church finds its identity in him. ‘The people of God are ‘the “assembly”, the “church” that Jesus Christ founds and unites and in which he is present through the Holy Spirit’ (1983d:168). When the question is posed; what is Jesus Christ’s way of being? The New Testament answers unanimously: his identification with humanity, and especially with the poor.

The consequence is clear: the greater the identification of the church with Jesus Christ, it will be pushed towards identification with the people; the more it is identified with them, the more it is in conditions to reflect the identity of its Lord. The identity drives the church towards identification and identification is the matrix of a true identity (1983d:170).

To take part in Christ’s mission among the poor is to be part of the church. Míguez Bonino argues that a church which does not accept Christ’s identification with the poor seems to have misunderstood its own Christology. The church has made two errors: it has conferred on Christ an identity that is separated and separable from his identification with the poor; and it has also misunderstood the quality and implications of that identification. Christ was not a champion of the people; not a warrior messiah who came to save the people; rather ‘he made himself poor; to bring to birth within humanity the seed of the Kingdom that must grow until its consummation’ (1983d:170). The true church, that is the church that knows its identity in Christ, does not try to get everybody to come to it or absorb the people into its own identity, nor does it try to become the leader of the people, but rather: it incarnates, it structures itself as the community of faith within the people and it pushes forward the search for the Kingdom from that position (cf. 1983d:170). This

is what Míguez Bonino, calls the measure of the ecclesial density of the Base Ecclesial Communities.

Míguez Bonino's reflections upon ecumenism and liberation (1984) focus on Jesus Christ as the centre of church unity, asking: 'Which Jesus Christ, however, are we talking about?' (1984d:258). It is only the Jesus Christ of the Gospel who can gather and unify his Church. This Jesus Christ is presented in the New Testament; his ministry, death and resurrection reveal its aim. Therefore, Míguez Bonino asserts: 'The Church can only understand itself by reference to Jesus Christ, to his message, mission and person' (1984d:259). Unity of faith which does not take into account the fact that faith is indissolubly connected to commitment does not establish true unity. To clarify this he says:

Translated into ecclesiological language, therefore, the issue is that of the "mission" of the Church. Our differences—now specifically the questions of dependence and domination, of racial oppression, of poverty and economic justice, of human and social rights—are not *adiaphora*, issues peripheral to the life of the Church. They touch the very essence of the Church: the God we worship, the Christ we confess, the nature and task of the community of faith (1984d:258).

Mission is at the very centre of Míguez Bonino's definition of the church. Issues such as economic and social dependence and domination, racial oppression, poverty and justice are central to the church's identity and therefore are crucial if the church is to move forward in ecclesiological discussions and ecumenical dialogue.

5.4.3 *Early ecclesiological definitions*

For Míguez Bonino, Christ is always central to the church but he has expressed it in different ways over the years. A brief look at two early definitions will clarify certain aspects of continuity and discontinuity in his thinking.

In 1960, Míguez Bonino wrote an article responding to the use by the Roman Catholic Church of the term 'sect' for the Protestant churches. This was especially acute after the Rio de Janeiro meeting of CELAM (1955). He states:

Christ and his church form an indissoluble unity; it is He who constitutes the Church. It is the presence of the Lord in proclamation by preaching and the sacrament that makes the church what it is. Apart from this relationship we have a religious society, a cultural community, a fraternal fellowship, but not the church (1960c:8).

He then works out various marks of the church in the light of Christ's presence: Ecclesial government is in this way, the organization of the church through which the authority of Jesus Christ is made manifest and expressed in the church; evangelism is the self-proclamation of Jesus Christ through his church; the catholicity is the recognition and the realization in the life of the church of the fullness of Christ. We could continue to analyse the "signs" of the church in Christological perspective (1960c:8; cf. Bonhoeffer 1961:117ff).

For Míguez Bonino, at that time, Christ was the one who brings the church together, whose presence is central to the church. *How* Christ's presence is expressed is fundamentally different from Míguez Bonino's later work. Earlier, his understanding was that the church expresses the presence of Christ in its activities of

preaching and administering the sacraments (cf. Luther and Calvin); later the poor and oppressed emerge as the central elements in ecclesiology.

Later Míguez Bonino uses the incarnation as a model for the church to explain his understanding of the permanent and changeable nature of the church. The Church, like Christ, has a divine and human nature. In Jesus Christ God became human: 'this is not a mere formal fact: God is not present in Jesus Christ in spite of the humanity of Jesus Christ, but rather in that same humanity, in that weakness and because of it. The glory, the power of God, God's divinity, resides precisely in the form of a servant, in its condescension' (1966i:6). This is the same analogically with the church.

God does not work in spite of the humanity of the church, as God does not work in spite of the humanity of Jesus Christ, but rather God works in the humanity of the church and through its humanity. And that humanity does not only embrace those higher aspects, solidarity, sense of community, etc, but all: history, social conditioning, institutional structures, etc. (1966i:6).

The divine nature of the church was the emphasis in Latin American Catholicism and, to some extent, in Protestantism of the time. So Míguez Bonino's emphasis is a corrective to accentuate the humanity of Christ. The Church is part of history, as Christ was part of history. Christ was not unaffected by history, he was a first century Jew and so part of the history of his time. God worked through that historicity in Christ's life, and so it is with the church. The church is divine in the same way as Christ was divine, and in that way is part of history as well (cf. Barth 1967:62-63). Míguez Bonino reflects on the battle for the true church:

The constant combat between the presence of Jesus Christ and the presence of sin in the church, God's fight is to hold back the degeneration so that the nature of the church is not denied. In this sense, there is no other final guarantee than the promise by Jesus to Peter that he will ask that his faith should not fail; only a promise that Christ will ask the Father that his faith should not fail (1966i:10).

The more radical emphasis of later writings is emerging here. The presence of Christ in the church is related to the fact that Christ himself identified with the world. However, at this time, the poor and oppressed have not yet emerged as constitutive of the identity of the church in Christ.

It is clear that early in Míguez Bonino's career his definitions of the church are influenced by Reformation articulations. His emphasis upon preaching and the sacraments as the marks of the true church reveal a traditional 'Reformed' conception on the church. As will become clear, he modified this emphasis during a later period. He also emphasises the Christological centre of the church. It is likely that this Christological Reformation emphasis has been mediated by Barth. Míguez Bonino does not weave his ecclesiology into salvation history in quite the same way as Barth, but rather describes the church as the self-expression of Jesus Christ in the world. Christ's relationship to the church and his activity within the church are examples of the continuity within Míguez Bonino's ecclesiology. However, the form in which Christ's self-expression is articulated is different.

5.4.4 *Theological Articulation of the New Ecclesiology*

Míguez Bonino's insistence that the very nature of the church is to be found in its attitude and action towards the issues of poverty, injustice and oppression and its identification with the poor, leads immediately to some problems related to the struggle for liberation. A member of the base community or any Christian involved in the struggle for liberation is confronted with the problem that there are many people who do not accept Christ, and even are hostile to the church, but are committed to Christ's 'special and foremost concern'. Míguez Bonino therefore states that a Christian can experience 'the reality of love, fellowship, sacrificial commitment, solidarity, and hope within this community in which the name of Jesus Christ is not invoked' (1975h:158) and can raise the question whether this revolutionary fellowship assumes 'a certain "missionary," ecclesial character?' (1975h:158). This suggests that the revolutionary is unconsciously and even unwillingly part of the church.

At the same time, committed Christians are also confronted with the 'ambiguous nature of their community of religious faith' (1975h:158). The struggle for the life of the poor throws into sharp relief the bourgeois and reactionary nature of the hierarchy and certain lay groups in the church. The question is: if the church is gathered around Christ and Christ is committed to the poor, how does the committed Christian understand those people who claim to be committed to Christ but are hostile or indifferent to the poor and their struggle? In other words: are there people who claim to be in the church but are actually not part of it because they are, in this sense, opposing Christ?

The dilemma described by Míguez Bonino here is similar to that of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. In *Ethics*, Bonhoeffer reflects consciously on the experience of the Confessing Church and how they felt close to non-Christians committed to the opposition to Hitler, and distant from the German Christians who supported Hitler. Reflecting on Mark 9:40 (whoever is not against us is for us) and Matthew 12:30, (whoever is not with me is against me) Bonhoeffer says that these claims belong together. When separated, the exclusive claim of Matthew can lead to 'sectarianism and fanaticism,' and the all-encompassing claim of Mark can lead to 'secularisation and the capitulation of the church' (Bonhoeffer 2005:344). Earlier, in the section, 'Ultimate and Penultimate Things' and basing his remarks on his statement that 'whatever in the fallen world is found to be human and good belongs to the side of Jesus Christ,' he concludes: 'it would be more Christian to claim as Christians precisely such persons who no longer claim to be Christians' (Bonhoeffer 2005:169-170).

As with Bonhoeffer's experience, these two questions open up a new front: the struggle against the Church, which is revealed as part of the system of oppression, maintaining people in dependence and getting them to adopt capitalist individualism as the norm for their lives. This struggle is aimed at the reformation of the church or, more radically, 'the reconstitution of a Christianity in which all forms of organization and expression will be humanized and liberating' (1975h:159). Míguez Bonino says in a different context that 'the ecumenical question is for us the struggle for a reconstitution of the Church' (1974d:105). He experienced this during the nineteen sixties and seventies in the frustration of ISAL with the Protestant

churches. This was even more the case for radicals in both Catholic and Protestant communities who were involved in the 'Christians for Socialism' movement.

Míguez Bonino was beginning to suffer from this tension in the early nineteen sixties:

That which separates the Christian from the world, that which makes the church, church and not the world, and the believer, believer and not unbeliever, is that they have recognised the meaning of that love which does not claim its rights but takes the form of the servant. Paradoxically, that which separates us from the world is what constantly compels us to give ourselves anew, without fears or reservations, to the world, in a total solidarity of love (1961k:110).

The church is that group of people which lives in solidarity with the world and tries to serve the world in solidarity of love. Later the tension becomes acute when Míguez Bonino finds himself together with non-believers, who are committed to the world in 'total solidarity of love' and consequently in conflict with Christians who are apathetic or hostile to the world and to those who commit themselves to the world. These facts, however, cannot be reduced or ignored, but must be integrated into a correct understanding of the church and, more importantly into a correct praxis for the church for the sake of the world.

Since 1955, Míguez Bonino was involved in a small middle class church in Buenos Aires, sometimes as pastor, sometimes as ordinary church member. He does not seem to have been able to resolve this problem at the practical level of his ecclesial involvement.

Míguez Bonino asserts that the doctrine of the church needs to be developed as relating to two poles: faith in Christ and commitment to the poor.

"the poor"—understood in the total socio-political meaning of the concept, and applying a rigorous socio-political analysis—are not merely objects of Christian concern or an external entity to which the Church relates in one way or another, but an integral and structuring part of the mystery of the Church, as much as faith in Jesus Christ. Christ is present in the believer through faith and in the poor according to his promise (1975h:159-160).

The Christological Centre must not be lost, and the marks of the true church must be rethought in terms of the presence of Christ among the poor, not in the preaching of the gospel and the sacraments. Therefore,

the Church is not entirely within the Church—as long as the poor who await their liberation do not know the name of Jesus Christ and do not recognize him in his visible Body committed together with them; as long as those who hope in Christ and know his name do not know how to meet him, to name him, and to wait for him in the liberation of the poor. (1975h:160).

For the church it is essential to be a true church. That is only the case when the poor recognise Christ as being on their side in the church. The church must also recognise Christ in the poor. Gustavo Gutiérrez understands this in terms of 'creating a new ecclesial presence' (Gutiérrez 1983:30; cf. pp. 30-35) among the poor. The basic task of the theologians of liberation was to make clear how this fundamental premise is articulated theologically.

The Second Vatican Council was significant in liberation theologians' attempts at this articulation. By speaking of the church as 'the sacrament of the salvation of humanity' (LG 48; AG 1), the Council sought to express the role of the church in relation to the world as one of service rather than as the deposit of salvation. Míguez Bonino explains the understanding of the Council in the following way: 'The Church is the visible manifestation of the history of salvation, the anticipatory presence of that which God intends to consummate for the whole of humankind'. He also says: 'it is the witness of God's saving action in the world, the place in which this universal activity of God—which takes place in all realms of human existence and activity—is manifested and interpreted. In this sense, the Church holds the meaning of human history' (1975h:160). All these statements relativise the role of the church in regard to the world; God's activity is primary. The church is the means through which God's activity is mediated to the world; terms such as 'visible manifestation', 'anticipatory presence', and 'witness' make this clear. God's action is primary and the church is the channel or agency through which God reaches the world.

Míguez Bonino shows that while Latin American theologians make use of this concept, they revise it drastically (Gutiérrez 1988:145-148). They prioritise God's saving action in the world; the church does not hold the meaning of human history, but rather God's mission. Moreover, they revise the ecclesiology theologically because of their experience. They believe that God's mission is the liberation of humanity. The struggle of liberation is pioneered and carried out by revolutionary movements and social classes (i.e. the poor), among whom Christians are a minority; moreover, the churches (both Protestant and Catholic) are usually indifferent and in some cases even hostile to this mission. For this reason the theologies of liberation have reversed Vatican II's concept of the relationship between the church and God's activity in the world: *the secular struggle for the liberation of the poor discloses the meaning of the Church*. This struggle becomes in one sense the true sacrament of God's activity, thus recalling the confessing community to its true meaning and destiny (1975h:162 author's italics).

The church does not hold the meaning of history; the struggle for liberation makes present (is a sacrament) of God's activity in the world. Only when the church joins the struggle of the poor for liberation (i.e. God's mission), it becomes the true church. Gutiérrez calls this the 'uncentering' of the church (Gutiérrez 1988:143).

5.4.5 *Problems of the New Ecclesiology*

Míguez Bonino shares this understanding of the relationship between God's activity, the world and the church but he is aware of serious dangers. One danger is that this new ecclesiology does not provide a theological understanding of the church as it exists in reality. The existential fact is that most of the church is apathetic, or even hostile to the liberation project. Most of the ecclesial structures in the world would have to be excluded from the church if the criteria of the new ecclesiology were to be taken into account. Theology should not speak of the nature of the church in 'ideological' (in the negative sense) terms and ignore the reality.

Míguez Bonino deals with this issue when reflecting upon ecumenism. The church is declared to be one but in reality is not. For the committed Christian to declare the existence of unity when it is lacking is a facile way out of a serious

difficulty. He says: 'If we satisfy ourselves with a formal appeal to transcendent unity or with a latitudinarian pluralism, we are 'healing lightly' the wounds of Christianity. The question of unity is, as we see it, the question of the mission of the Church in the world' (1984d:258). Those who try to declare unity without commitment to God's project of liberation turn this declaration of unity into an ideological smoke screen. When there is a call to unity, Míguez Bonino reacts with suspicion. 'Who calls for unity? With whom? Against whom? On what basis? For what purpose? For whose benefit?' Unity can end up 'a tool of oppression rather than of liberation' (1984d:257). If the concerns of the poor are not seen as clear categories of ecclesiology, unity becomes 'an instrument of domination that leads to both self-deception and to the deception of others' (1985h:228). It is theologically unacceptable simply to ignore the fact that the vast majority of ecclesial institutions are either indifferent or hostile to the liberation struggle of the poor.

Another theological danger is that the identity of the church is blurred. If the church is the community gathered around God's activity in the struggle for liberation, Míguez Bonino asks:

[what] distinguishes the Church *qua* Church of Jesus Christ from any other human group? Can we rest satisfied with a definition of the Church which coincides entirely with certain—real and important—needs formulated from an extra-ecclesiastical viewpoint? What is the meaning for the world of such a Church (except in a purely pragmatic, tactical game)? Is it possible to give to the face of the Church a greater definition without falling back on the imperialistic reflexes which the churches have so profoundly developed? (1975h:163).

Míguez Bonino wants the church to have a clearer definition of the relationship between its own identity and God's purposes for humanity and the world. Lack of clarity not only affects the mission of the church but also the secular struggle for liberation. When God's mission and the cause of Christ, and therefore the Church 'in any missionary understanding of it' is entirely associated with the project for social and political revolution, either Christ and his Church are made superfluous or the political and social revolution is dressed up in religious or quasi religious clothes. Either the Church ceases to exist outside the revolution, or the non-Christian revolutionary is co-opted as an 'anonymous Christian' into a species of holy war.

5.4.6 *Towards a Solution*

Creation and Salvation

Míguez Bonino suggests that the way ahead is to reflect upon the relationship between creation theology and soteriology or, 'the covenant of creation' and the 'covenant of redemption.' He asserts that God created humanity in order that it may grow towards full maturity. Human beings were not created for 'religious' reasons but for wholly 'secular' ones. Christ's work re-launches that creation movement with the same purpose. In creation, humanity has been given responsibility for its environment due to a three-way relationship: to the world; to God; and to humanity's peers. The Christian dispensation, therefore, is understood as God's purpose to restore those relationships and to reinstate humanity in its place as responsible partner in the creation process. Creation, therefore, is the inauguration of

a movement; an invitation and command to humanity to create its own history and culture, to transform the world, to make it its home and to explore the possibilities of human relationships. Sin and salvation are not part of God's original plan, but are 'accidental.' The challenge, for Míguez Bonino, is to understand the church: 'holding fast both to the original, all-encompassing, and final unity of human history and to the particular density of the events gathered around the name of Jesus Christ' (1975h:164).

The ultimate reference point for the Bible, argues Míguez Bonino, is not the church but humanity; not salvation but creation. In *Room to be People* (1979h; cf. 1975c), he argues that God 'created a human family to increase and form a community of work and love' (1979h:16) and invited human beings to be involved in making the world with God; to create a society, and to transform and perfect all creation. When God speaks to humanity in the Bible, God does not speak about divine nature and its attributes but rather about the divine purposes for humanity. God did not say: "Look at the sky and think about me," but rather: "Fill the earth and have dominion over it" (1979h:28). Conservative Evangelicals tend to think about God as the one who looks after God's followers, but Míguez Bonino is convinced that their sort of God is an idol. 'The God of the Bible, on the other hand, is constantly busy in the world, in its course, in the creation of life and its fullness, in justice and truth among people' (1979h:16).

God is not the divine nanny who arranges human life without reference to the life of humanity; God makes human beings partners in relationship through a covenant. In an article written on the subject of John Wesley's understanding of sanctification of Míguez Bonino states:

This relationship, which God wishes and has offered since creation, is "covenant". When God created the human being, a "partner" (minor) was raised up, making God a "partner" (major) with a purpose—which is the content of this partnership. This purpose can be defined in terms of its outward manifestation—the reconstruction of the world—or in its inner a motivating dynamic—the exercise of agape (1988b:22; cf.1983b:252).

This covenant relationship demonstrates the importance of seeing human life from the standpoint of a worker in God's creation. God made human beings to be workers in creation. Humanity's dignity is to be found in the mission 'to subdue and cultivate the world' (1975h:109) as God's partner. Míguez Bonino states this in his reflections upon the covenant of Genesis 9. In the context of violence, God renews the covenant with all humanity and restores humanity as partner in that covenant of life. 'The covenant puts in human hands the most precious treasure of creation, a treasure so precious that not even the just and infallible divine wrath against sin will be cause enough to abrogate the alliance' (1981a:344; cf. 1999f:50-54). Humanity is given the task of the development of human life, of justice and equity, within creation relationships: with God, with the world, and within humanity.

Míguez Bonino also deals with this question when reflecting upon the issue of *Oikoumene* (cf. 1969d and 1975j:151-153). In classical Greek *oikoumene* is the inhabited world. This meant the whole world, but more specifically the world as inhabited by humanity. For the Greeks, and later for the Romans it designated the world shaped by Greek culture and ruled by the Roman Emperor. For Christians, the word became the vehicle to embrace the idea of the whole of God's creation

(Genesis 2.15; Psalm 24.1; Acts 17.26). God wanted *oikoumene* to be inhabited by humanity in love, justice, peace and freedom.

According to Míguez Bonino, sin is the disruption and destruction of the purposes of creation. Humanity, as worker in God's creation, has denied the covenant with God and has used creation and the relationships of creation for its own benefit. Míguez Bonino worked this topic out in terms of oppression of the vulnerable and destruction of creation. Sin as a disruption of God's original harmony becomes part of everyday life. The world seen from the perspective of present human existence is not the harmonious life which God intended for humanity but a distortion of that life. Salvation is the restoration of God's original will for creation. Therefore, 'Jesus Christ does not come to superimpose a different, transcendent or celestial reality on top of the realm of nature and history' (1975h:166), but to restore the human community's ability to fulfil its creational responsibilities.

Christ as the New Human Being and the Creation of the New Humanity

The statement of the previous section that creation has primary significance and that salvation is 'accidental'; does not relativise Christ and his work. For Míguez Bonino, Christ's role in the restoration of humanity is vital in understanding the relationship of the Church to God's universal purposes in the world. The origin of the nature and mission of the church are based in Christ and his work of salvation but also the hope of all humanity, of the whole *oikoumene*. The solution to Míguez Bonino's ecclesiological problem is to be found in Christology.

The backbone of Míguez Bonino's argument is that Christ's work is representative of humanity, not substitutionary for humanity. 'Jesus Christ did not come to substitute for people but rather to open the way for them to realize their human plan [task]' (1979i:20).³ Míguez Bonino explains that being a 'substitute' means to completely and permanently take the place of another in a task. In *Christians and Marxists* he says that the substitute 'replaces and absorbs the person and initiative' (1976c:109) of the substituted. Moreover, to be a representative is to take, temporarily and within certain limits, the place of the other *until* the represented person is able to carry out the task assigned to him or her. The representative 'takes up the temporarily necessary function of doing, on behalf of the represented—a minor, incapacitated, a powerless person or a group - that which he or they cannot do, *in order that they may arrive at the point at which they themselves may do it*' (1976c:109; italics in original). In Christ, therefore, humanity is reinstated into a covenant relationship in which it can grow into full maturity, that is: 'grow into the fullness of creativity, freedom, fellowship which Christ himself displayed and made available' (1976c:109). Consequently, Míguez Bonino says that Christ's freedom before God, his love for humanity, and humanity's power over nature are not ends in themselves, they have 'a truly representational function, in order that and until we ourselves may assume such relationships' (1975h:167). Putting it in traditional terms, Míguez Bonino describes this as the forgiveness of sins; due to God's grace, human beings can take up once again the work committed

³ The original Spanish uses the word, "tarea". This is best translated "task" rather than "plan". The English seems to suggest that humanity has a job to do, apart from the reference to God. To use "task" implies that God's gave humanity a job to do and it must work out how to realize that assignment (1975c:16).

to it in creation. In *Ama y haz lo que quieras*, Míguez Bonino describes this in terms of Christ's life:

In His miracles, His merciful healings, in His teaching, in His unbreakable faithfulness to the poor and unvalued, above all in His giving himself on the cross and triumph over death, He does what the real humanity should do—He does it in representation of humanity, as its defender and advocate (1972a:52).

Christ, the perfect human being, represents distorted humanity in order that it eventually becomes true and perfect humanity.

Christ as the new human being creates the new humanity. Paraphrasing one of his colleagues at ISEDET, Lambert Schuurman, Míguez Bonino says that in Christ people become more human: 'We don't become human beings in order to become Christians; we become Christians in order to become human beings' (1979i:37). He shows how Christ restores humanity both spiritually in its relationship to God and physically as a full human being. He shows how in Matthew's account of the healing of the man let down through the roof, Jesus both forgave the man his sins and cured him of his physical illness. This act is not recounted as two separate acts but as one seamless act of salvation. 'The forgiveness and physical cure are two dimensions of the same healing' (1979i:38). An encounter with Jesus is never the end of the journey; it is rather its starting point. 'What he really did was to take imprisoned people and put them back on course, in the direction of a fuller humanity in regard to their health, integration into the community, vocation—in the final analysis, in the direction of the Kingdom of God, which is the fullness of humanity and of the world' (1979i:38).

The new humanity lives out genuine human existence not under the law but according to humanity's true and original reality. This 'original and authentic reality' has been given to humanity in Jesus Christ. Míguez Bonino describes this as follows: 'the original humanity, the quality of existence for which we were created' (1972a:32). The basic content of life is 'joyful and spontaneous obedience of love that is identified totally with the liberating purpose of the Father and therefore with the needy condition of humanity' (1972a:32). Christ's obedience is a voluntary obedience; this behaviour does not originate from a law imposed upon him from the outside but from his true existence and character, the authentic way of being the Son. Life in the Spirit is governed by a will that trusts in God's purposes. That trust, and not a set of religious traditions, is what the New Testament primarily calls faith.

Jesus Christ is this true human being. This resonates with Bonhoeffer's Christology. 'Humanity becomes human because God became human' (Bonhoeffer 2005:82). Christ became human in order that fallen humanity can regain its pristine humanity in Christ. In Christ, humanity is re-formed as humanity before God (cf. Bonhoeffer 2005:83).

This goes beyond Peter Abelard (1079-1142) and liberal theologians in their understanding of Christ as 'moral example' to humanity. Míguez Bonino sees Christ's death as objectively changing the status and character of the human individual. This seems to be the 'Recapitulation *Christus Victor*' theology of Irenaeus (ca.130-202). 'God recapitulated in himself the ancient formation of man and woman, that he might kill sin, deprive death of its power and vivify humanity' (*Against Heresies* 3.19.1). Christ's victory over sin and suffering is representative,

liberating and transforming. A person is given an example in Christ but is also empowered by Christ to give themselves on behalf of others as Christ did.

People assume the new humanity in Christ by faith. For the apostle Paul, ‘faith is a new *reality* that erupted in our world, a new *situation* in which we have been placed, a new *power* that has been allowed to be seen in its action, a new *form of existence* that has been made available to us’ (1972a:46 Italics in original). This new life goes beyond the infancy of the law and the selfishness of the flesh. It is not simply a continuation or perfection of that which came before but an invasion and interruption: ‘an act of God.’ ‘In this act of God, however, all reality participates and is transformed, not as a mere object, but upon being actively incorporated into a new relationship, in a new situation’ (1972a:47). Faith is a total change of orientation, of direction. The word “conversion” illustrates this. This means that the whole of life is reoriented, not only subjectively but also objectively, because it is placed under the dynamic sovereignty of God.

When discussing John Wesley’s view of conversion, Míguez Bonino puts it a different way. From a phenomenological point of view conversion may be ‘the encounter between the call of the Christian message and personal response’ (1988b:11) but from an ontological point of view it is ‘the process by which God incorporates the human being as active and conscious partner into God’s covenant with humankind, a covenant witnessed to, renewed, and assured in Jesus Christ’ (1988b:11). Humanity, in Christ, is re-made into a creation partner with God. The covenant is not something that simply benefits the Christian; rather it is for the benefit of all humanity. The Christian is not incorporated into the covenant to save him or her from hell but to make him or her partner with God for the transformation of the world.

Míguez Bonino does not expand upon this conversion experience in pneumatological terms. Without this, the converted person that is made a partner in God’s covenant in Jesus Christ lacks a basis for the spirituality that prompts their involvement in the transformation of the world: this can only come from the force of the Spirit in the life of the believer. The new life of Christ which drives a Christian to involvement in God’s mission comes from regeneration carried out by the Holy Spirit not through inner effort. Without this ‘prompting of the Spirit’ the temptation is for the person to enjoy the benefits of Christ’s work without taking on its responsibilities.

A dynamic pneumatological approach also may also help to resolve a problem Míguez Bonino identified earlier in this chapter; that God is on the side of the poor but the vast majority of the church is hostile to the struggle of the poor. Missionary theology must reflect upon the spirituality that transforms both the victim of sin and the middle class church into a protagonist of liberation. Without this pneumatological reflection conversion is robbed of its life force.

It is important to emphasise that the dynamic change of orientation discussed above, extends not only to individual life, but also to the whole of life and the whole of creation. ‘This life in faith is a totally new project, the new creation, that uproots all created things from their emptiness, their slavery, and puts it in harmony with the new human life, that life of the children of God’ (1972a:48). Throughout his letters, Paul relates this to various relationships. Faith is openness to this new reality in Christ and therefore it is the only way into the recreated humanity, to the new creature. ‘The goal of conversion is not just the reception of a

conceptual message or the formal acceptance of a doctrinal formula, but the “creation of a new creature” (1983c:31).

Faith is a common form of community life that embraces every aspect of life. Faith is lived out in community. Although it is an act of God, it is also a human response; it is an ‘interpersonal community relationship’ (1972a:49) with God. This is part of being the new humanity, being part of God’s family. The believer is incorporated into the community of faith and acknowledges God as *Abba*, ‘in the same act, the incorporation to humanity of the faith establishes a direct and immediate relationship with neighbour –“my brother or sister”’ (1972a:49).

The vision of the New Testament—especially in Galatians and Ephesians—is that the racial and cultural barriers caused by sin within the creation, are broken down in Christ. In Christ, there is no longer slave or free—Jesus Christ is Lord of all. This type of life finds its source in God’s own being and work and therefore defines the meaning of unity. The unity of the triune God is not solitary and non-communicative but rather an expression of ‘essentially and ontologically fellowship, co-participation and love’ (1969d:37-38). Fellowship, co-participation and love are the marks of God’s love for Godself within the Trinity and at the same time the model for Christian unity. It is useful to note that Míguez Bonino does not develop this concept of the Trinity until later in his career. It will be examined in more detail in the next chapter.

God’s work also bears the mark of this unity. God’s plan, the chosen people, salvation, God’s Word and the Church are characterised by singularity, simplicity, fellowship and love:

The totality of God’s work in our humanity—which is dispersed and divided in its sin—is a unifying work. The great terms that characterise God’s action in the New Testament underline this, from its etymological root, this character: covenant, redemption, reconciliation and conversion (*shub*: to turn around), peace, pacification. Terms such as justice, adoption, fulfilment, sanctification, election, all are closely linked with the idea to unite, reconcile, and restore fellowship (1969d:38).

This unifying will of God is all embracing—including all human beings. Already the Old Testament explains the unifying purpose of God but the New Testament is even clearer. Jesus Christ is: ‘the fulfilment of the Messianic hope and in the apostolic community is the eschatological congregation of promise’ (1969d:39). The letter to the Ephesians puts this in a different way: God will unite all things in Christ, who is the head of the body. ‘In the Church, Jesus Christ has constructed a building in which inhabits a “humanity” in which Jews and Gentiles have been reconciled, have been built into a temple whose fullness He fills out, there has been formed a body in which all people have been incorporated’ (1969d:40).

Christ has made it possible for humanity, once again to take up its role as God’s partner in creation within those relationships that God originally established. Christ did this through the creation of a new humanity that all people can enter through faith in Christ.

So in *Ama y haz lo que quieras* (1972), Míguez Bonino concludes,

The ethical contribution of the gospel to the moral crisis—that of the first century and also of our own—does not consist fundamentally in new principles, institutions or laws as much as in a *new humanity*. What Jesus Christ puts in this world is a new

humanity, and a new form of being human. And this new humanity in Jesus Christ does not last nor penetrate human history primarily through laws and institutions (that without doubt exist and have value) but rather through a message that ceaselessly engenders new life, and through a community of people “reborn” and “resurrected” to a new life, “redeemed” (that is liberated), and renewed (with a new “mind”—a totally, radically changed orientation). (1972a:26-27 *Italics in original*).

The church is this new humanity, it is those who through faith in Christ, are incorporated into the life of Christ, into this new way of being human in order to serve the world in its ethical crisis. This does not come about through laws but through announcing and living out the new life given to it by Christ himself.

Oikoumene, ecumenism and mission

Míguez Bonino has dealt with how Christ’s work in salvation relates to the creation of the new humanity. He now turns to the issue of how that new humanity relates to the world. In doing this he begins to answer his question as to what distinguishes the church *qua* church. In his understanding, if the ‘secular’ struggle for liberation is the ‘true sacrament of God’s activity’ then the church

is only truly the church when it is a witness to God’s saving activity in Jesus Christ, that means when it makes clear that God renewed the authorization, commandment, and liberation to humanity to be human, for humanity to create its own history and culture, to love and to transform the world, to claim and exercise the glorious freedom of the children of God (1975h:167).

The Christian message ‘is a call to accept that freedom;’ not to become superhuman or demigods, ‘but rather to live like human beings in the presence of God, to be lovingly responsible for the world and for other human beings’ (1979i:39). The unique message of Christianity is the certainly scandalous claim ‘that the fullness of this humanity is given in the explicit, faithful, and grateful acknowledgment of Jesus Christ’ (1975h:167). Míguez Bonino concludes: ‘the Church, that is, the fellowship of those who embrace a historical task in the freedom of God’s forgiveness and sanctification, cannot exist except as it concretely celebrates this freedom, reflects on it, and proclaims it’ (1975h:169). Leonardo Boff also views the church in these terms. The church is the community of faith that celebrates its faith and life in *koinonia*, service and ministry (cf. Boff 1992:87-91). Boff emphasises that *koinonia* always overflows into service to others. This celebration, reflection and proclamation must be carried out in the concrete context of this world.

Míguez Bonino relates this issue to the question of ecumenism time and again. He says: ‘we need to restore the relation of “ecumenism” to the “oikoumene”, to relocate it in the ground of the human’ (1982q:115). This is related to God’s ultimate desire for humanity. ‘The prayer, the task and the hope of faith is the common home--the oikoumene--the healthy body, the city of peace which is the goal and meaning of our present communities, families, bodies’ (2002b). Therefore, Míguez Bonino’s ecumenical thought and action must be conceived of in missionary terms.

Míguez Bonino has written both on the relationship between Christian unity and mission and on the concrete issues surrounding visible Christian unity. He

says that, without the former, Christian unity is simply a domestic affair and irrelevant to the world; and, without the latter, ‘the ecumenical movement is doomed to suffocate in an increasingly rarified atmosphere of abstraction’ (1969b:187).

Through faith in Christ, the church is the new humanity in the true human being—Jesus Christ; the creation of an *ekklesia* within the *oikoumene*. The church witnesses to God’s will that all human beings live within the creational relationships in freedom, fellowship and love. It lives out God’s will in its own life, celebrating, reflecting upon, and proclaiming that Christ has opened the way for a return to God’s original universal purpose for humanity. Seen in this light, Christian division is not only a domestic problem, but a tragedy for the world and a betrayal of the God given task. In the division of the church, the basis of human unity has been fragmented and the means of reconciliation is assailed by an internal conflict. This division questions the Christian message itself.

For Míguez Bonino, the search for Christian unity is both an end and a means. It is an end because it is an urgent demand of the faith and an answer to Jesus’ prayer that all believers may be one as He and father are one (John 17). It is a means because it is a ‘way towards human unity to which God has called all humanity; the integration of the whole human family in the “Oikoumene of God”’ (1969d:21).

Four statements can express the theological basis of Míguez Bonino’s understanding of the link between Christian unity and human reconciliation; between the church and world:

- (1) Unity has its origin and effectiveness in the universal will of love of the living God;
- (2) the aim of that unity is the totality, and its dynamic is the reconciliation in Jesus Christ;
- (3) the unity of the Church is ministerial to that human unity in its fullness;
- (4) the full realization of that universal unity is the work of God and has an eschatological projection (1969d:22-23).

The first two statements have already been discussed. How the church is ministerial to human unity is now examined.

Míguez Bonino understands that there have been three ways in which the church has understood its role in regard to the world’s integration; he groups these under the headings: ‘protagonic⁴’, ‘programmatic’, and ‘parabolic’ (1969b:188-191).

The church as protagonist is basically the Constantinian or Christendom model of human integration and Christian unity. It is marked by a wish for uniformity of belief, worship and practice. The unity of the church guarantees and supports the unity of society. Historically it led to institutional centralization, the formation of hierarchical structures, and precise ideological definition. It affected every part of the life of the Church—doctrine, ministry, sacraments, worship. In the decaying Roman Empire it led to the violent suppression of dissent and the forced Christianisation of subject peoples. Integralist Roman Catholicism in Latin America in general and in Argentina in particular reveals this tendency (Klaiber

⁴ It is recognised that there is no adjective for this word in English, the text will maintain the word used by Míguez Bonino for consistency.

1998:66-91). It is a constant danger and a temptation in Latin America for both Catholic and Protestant (cf. 1997a:111 and 145).

The pluralist context of the world and the gospel cannot accept an externally imposed centre of human integration. Christendom has come to an end. Since the Enlightenment diverse ideologies, religions and politics come to the fore. The church is not anymore the centre of human unity in the Western world; the vast majority of humanity in the West does not anymore accept the lordship of Christ and is even hostile to the Church.

Another way in which the relationship between Christian unity and human reconciliation and integration can be conceived is 'programmatic'. The argument is that the values, goals and institutions of Western Catholic and Latin American society have been shaped by the Christian faith. Therefore, this society can achieve unity, reconciliation and integrity through a programme motivated by the church. 'The unity of the church, therefore, is indispensable in order to enable it to provide society with a unified programme and outlook for its integration' (1969b:189). This is often propounded by Latin American politicians in order to unify the people around a single principle, whether that is the dignity of the individual, the integrity of the family or the solidarity with the poor. The Protestant church in Latin America has not broken away from this understanding either. The growth of Protestant Christian political parties in Latin America is an expression of this notion. The basic concept has clear similarities with the above mentioned understanding of the church as protagonist in human unity.

The final way proposed by Míguez Bonino is to understand the unity of the church as 'parabolic' in relation to human unity. In this view, the church points beyond itself to the ultimate horizon: the Kingdom of God. Neither Christian unity nor human integration is the ultimate goal but rather God's action in Christ to establish God's Kingdom.

It is only through this eschatological reference of Christian unity that it can be brought legitimately to bear on the problem of human integration. But it is precisely this eschatological reference that liberates Christian unity from mere subservience to human patterns of integration and makes it possible to explore the disruptive as well as the integrative function of Christian unity with regard to social integration (1969b:190).

The church does not only seek integration in human relationships by being, in its own life an example of an 'integrative' force but also through its challenge of the social system via its 'disruptive,' prophetic voice.

At a time that Christianity was being charged with being a force of disintegration and dissolution in the Roman Empire, the *Epistle to Diognetus* was published. It describes how Christians live, dress, act and are under the same laws as the whole of society. By their special mode of being they integrate society. As the soul is to the body, so the Christians are to society by means of their individual and corporate lives. Church unity is parabolic: there is no 'straight line' (1969b:190) between Christian unity and human integration. It is also parabolic because the church serves society by being a model of unity. There is no way of transposition of structure or of allegory of programme; the world must exegete its own unity from the church's unity. The church witnesses to the fact that Christ destroyed the barriers that separate humanity is done by it being a parable of human unity.

Míguez Bonino suggests various ways in which the church serves as a parable of unity in society. It is an open channel of communication in a world of broken relationships. It refuses to recognise definitive divisions in the world; it does not serve any party within the world (north or south, east or west). It is not for some people and against other people but with God for all. It is an open community where a person does not have to justify him or herself in order to be heard because all have been justified in Christ. Communication, even between natural enemies, is made possible in Jesus Christ. When the church takes the message of Jesus Christ seriously, it is an agent for openness and genuine human dialogue. Leonardo Boff expresses it in the following way: ‘there can be real communion only when the members of a community regard one another as equals’ (Boff 1992:89). Jürgen Moltmann explains the same concept in terms of ‘open friendship’ that leads to mutual acceptance (Moltmann 1978b:60-63).

The church is also a parable of human unity because it functions as a voluntary community. The church makes a call to unity rather than arbitrarily imposing it. The members of the church respond in: ‘free personal consent, in a human encounter that is projected onto a network of relationships and external structures’ (1969d:29). The church is not uniformity, but unity in diversity; it is a group of people who without coercion or compulsion choose to be unified, not in spite of but because of their diversity.

In this way the church can be a paradigm in regard to the issue of globalisation, which became important to Míguez Bonino in the late nineteen nineties. Ecumenism, with its emphasis on unity must be clearly differentiated from globalisation with its tendency to homogenise. Globalisation puts ‘everybody and everything into a single bag’ but ecumenism builds ‘a common home which all build together and each one participates keeping his or her identity’ (2002b). In regard to ecumenism, unity does not presuppose uniformity, just as diversity does not presuppose division.

Finally, Christian unity is a paradigm of the way that has been opened by Christ, the way to the human integration in a divided world. The church, in all its diversity, is a model to the world. Through patient discussion, confession of sin and free and honest appeal for forgiveness, continuous self-examination and the effort to understand others, the church seeks to show that Christ opened the way.

Consequently, the church does not try to impose unity but ‘simply offers itself, in its own search for interior community, as a servant of humanity (1969d:30). Or to put it another way: the church’s role is ‘to offer in humility and simplicity, illustrations, partial and precarious but significant realizations—small signs—of what unity in Christ means’ (1969d:80).

Intensive and Extensive Forms of Fellowship

In Míguez Bonino’s constant search for concrete effectiveness in theology, he faces the difficult problem of how the church concretely can offer ‘a service, a paradigm and a method of integration of the human community’ (1969d:31). Using concepts first proposed by the Swedish-American theologian Nels F.S. Ferré (1908-1971), Míguez Bonino suggests articulating the relationship between the church’s unity and the world in terms of ‘extensive and intensive forms of fellowship’ (Ferré 1940:59ff). He explains the extensive modes of fellowship as the resources and tools

of human co-existence: economic, social and political relationships within society. This corresponds to what Míguez Bonino later calls the total human reference. The latter are the “spiritual fellowship” upon which the former are based: the Christ reference. Ferré goes as far as to say that intensive forms of fellowship are essential because without them, ‘the extensive forms of fellowship can only be thinly good’ (Ferré, 1940:64). Míguez Bonino puts it in a slightly different way: ‘The Christian contribution to human integration consists in exploring and realizing the type of intensive fellowship that corresponds to the Church of Jesus Christ’ (1969d:32). The church cannot, and should not, try to be the centre of extensive modes of fellowship because that would be a return to the protagonic model of Christendom.

Míguez Bonino states that intensive fellowship (*koinonia*) is based upon love (*agape*); love within the church and, more importantly, love for the whole world. The Christian is part of the new humanity, a “new race” or “new genus of life”. Through faith in Christ, the Christian is enabled to live this strange way of life. The Christian is not separated from society but rather committed to others in love and open to neighbours. The first Christians were an example of this attitude. They went way beyond what the law required. When they suffered persecution they showed love; when they were in poverty, they were generous; when they were accused falsely, they blessed their accusers; when they were punished, they did good to others; and when they were injured, they honoured those who injured them. With this strange way of living the Christians enhanced the health and unity of society (cf. *Epistle to Diognetus*). Christians live out their lives in fellowship with other Christians and in service to those outside the church. So the church lives out intensive fellowship as a model and promotes extensive fellowship through its service to the world.

This fact means a double reference of fellowship for Christians—relation to God and relation to all people. The former is not primary and the latter secondary. ‘They are two inseparable and uncompromising dimensions of the same and unique reality’ (1969d:42). To be united with Christ *is* to be united with other Christians. One cannot exist without the other. It is also important to note that it ‘has to do with personal relationships not magical transmutations or the substitution or annihilation of the person’ (1969d:43). In the New Testament, these personal relationships are expressed in concrete action.

Christian fellowship is not a “spiritual” abstract unity but rather an active and concrete co-participation in the thousands of tasks, sufferings, prayers, and hopes that are included in the pathway that the Church is called to follow in the pilgrimage through history towards the Day of the Lord (1969d:43).

The New Testament expresses this fellowship of being and existence sometimes as a description, but other times as an exhortation to have “the same mind”, “the same attitude”, “the same opinion”, etc. This does not suppose homogeneity of thought, action and attitude. Any reading of the New Testament reveals a variety of practices and even theologies. There is not a call to a homogenous “healthy doctrine”⁵. Paul, in Romans 14, appeals to the Church to accept one another in spite of different

⁵ *Sana doctrina* or *Recta Doctrina* are phrases used in the Evangelical Churches in Latin America to indicate that theology which is acceptable. It has often been used both as a blunt instrument to threaten and also as a popular, ironic description of narrow mindedness.

attitudes and practices. 'The unity in Christ does not suppress these differences but integrates them into the new humanity, where they find their true meaning in mutual submission and mutual service in love' (1969d:48). This is the new humanity of acceptance and love of one another within the diversity that is the mark of all humanity (but without divisions).

Consequently, the new humanity can only find its true expression in the local congregation, not in hierarchical structures or in mega-churches. It is the local community of believers which can express this intensive fellowship as a parable to the world. In the church as hierarchy or as a pastor-centric business, religious power is experienced as the reproduction of divine power. In the congregation the Spirit is central: God is experienced as love and the individual is known and accepted and accepts the other as a 'brother or sister' in Christ. The daily life of the congregation becomes more important than the religious Sunday service.

In a society that conserves the supremacy of class and privileges through the division of labour and specialization, only the church can represent the hope in a future more human as in the charismatic congregation...the congregation is that place in which the people become subjects of their own history with God; they go beyond the religious passivity of the individual which collaborates with political oppression (1977g:8).

In this way the congregation can fundamentally identify with the people and therefore become a catalyst of fundamental renewal within society because the new creature creates new initiatives from within the congregation.

The church's so-called "religious", mystic, arcane traditions and practices are only meaningful if they are related to 'concrete creational practices.' Prayer, singing, confession, saying the creed are only truly significant when they relate to God's original plan for humanity to live in harmony with God, with each other, and with the whole of creation. In *Ama y haz* this is explained in even more radical terms: 'the only legitimate service to God is that of neighbour. God is not interested in the cultic practice but rather justice; the love of neighbour is the best prayer; service of the poor is fellowship, thus these are sacraments of the presence of Christ' (1972a:118). Involvement in the liberation of the poor is love for God. 'The Bible, prayer, the waters of baptism, the bread and wine, brotherly fellowship—these are visible signs of the covenant' (1972a:119). Therefore, intensive fellowship only has meaning as it is relevant to the promotion of extensive fellowship.

In this way, the Church becomes the medium through which the fullness of Christ expands to all and at the same time the place where this fullness is manifested: it is the illustration of the universal purpose of God, the sign of that fullness that will be achieved when God is all in all. The unity of the Church is not, therefore, accidental or secondary to its own being but rather the sign of that being. The hope and love of those in which that unity is expressed are the sign of the presence of the Lord in the Church; and the manifestations of unity—baptism, ministry and communion—find their meaning in relation to that person that give existence and unity of the Church (1969d:40-41).

From a Theology of the Church to a Sociology of the Church

David Bosch rightly points out that ‘the church is a theological and a sociological entity’ (Bosch 1991:389). Míguez Bonino seeks to understand Christian unity sociologically as well as theologically. He is convinced that the church and its theologians must use both doctrinal or ideological language (using *ideological* without pejorative meaning) and historical or sociological language to articulate how the church relates to the world. The doctrinal language is the universal declaration of unity theologically conceived. It inspires and urges the will towards unity. In this way, it acts in the same manner as the concept of utopia described in the previous chapter. At the same time, it must use “historical” or sociological language. This “historical language” is used to describe ‘the conditions of unity and conflict as they appear empirically and to describe the human actions related to them’ (1982r:122). It includes issues such as class conflict, economic, social and political oppression and the arguments which support ‘newness’. In other words: Míguez Bonino believes that the quality and texture of Christian unity must be analysed socio-theologically; to make it ‘a scientific instrument which makes it possible to unmask the insufficiency of an analysis of Christian unity that has been confined to the elements relevant to a “macro-sociological”, natural enough when the church is assimilated to civil society, but utterly unable to get at the depth of the unity of fellowship’ (1969b:193).

Basing his reflections upon Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s *Sanctorium Communio* (Bonhoeffer 1998). Míguez Bonino makes several comments in this regard. Sociality is part of human life. The human being cannot be understood without reference to the relationships in which that person is found. Bonhoeffer calls this ‘social basic-relation’ (Bonhoeffer 1998:34ff). In theological terms this means relationship to God and to other human beings. The relationships to other human beings can be studied and therefore sociology becomes a primary tool in understanding Christian and human unity. Reality also needs to be investigated from the standpoint of ‘the fall’: human relationships are corrupted and corrupting; Christians live in the ‘peccatorum communio’ (Bonhoeffer 1998:118). This caused and causes disruption into human sociality. Míguez Bonino describes it as ‘institutional objectification, despotic power, division, pride, juridical objectification of human relationships and depersonalisation, are forms—among others of this corruption’ (1969d:50). These phenomena are concrete realities of daily life and, therefore, can also be studied sociologically. Further, redemption is the restoration of the original human existence, putting humanity in correct relationship to God and to other human beings. What sociology observes can be changed for the better. At this point theology and sociology can interact. Moreover, ‘this New Creation was realised and represented in Jesus Christ: he is the new Adam—singularly and socially humanity’ (1969d:51; cf. Bonhoeffer 1998:134-141). In spite of this, the new humanity lives out its existence in the old world of sin and corruption. The purpose and power of change is Jesus Christ whose life was lived out in a corrupted world. And finally, ‘the Church must be the Church under the diverse conditions of human sociality: we expect to find in the Church institution, community and society’ (1969d:5s; cf. Bonhoeffer 1998:252ff). At the same time Church reveals the problem of all society: law, power, pressure groups, tension; and the threat of depersonalisation, as well as the means to overcome these sins and corruptions and

hopefully, the signs of the new creation of love and fellowship. Míguez Bonino puts it in the following way:

These signs are characterised by a double dynamic: on one hand they always seek its manifestation in the conditions and empirical concrete forms and on the other hand they press for the dissolution of these conditions for the realisation of a total and spontaneous sociality and the open contriteness that correspond to the original and authentic structure of humanity (1969d:52).

This, once again echoes his statements about the role of the intensive forms of fellowship of the church and their relationship to the extensive forms of fellowship of the world.

In this light, theology has various tasks. Primarily, it must search for the common centre in Christ: 'the unity of the New Creation' (1969d:53). This implies a constant redefinition of unity in all its fullness, in the light of Jesus Christ and his creation of the new humanity. Furthermore, it must take part in 'a sober analysis of the concrete conditions of human existence in the context of our historical and sociological situation' (1969d:53; cf. chapter three of this work). To understand how Christian unity relates to human integration, theology must understand how humanity relates socially. Finally, theology must determine 'the concrete forms of human mutuality in which fellowship in Jesus Christ is best articulated in terms of the analysis that we have done' (1969d:53-54). This theological task has a double framework: a universal one and Christian one. It is related to the internal and external modes of fellowship in the church. Theology examines primarily how the Christian community directly supports and develops human integration in society, how the church's service contributes to the formation, development and maintenance of extensive forms of fellowship. The church is not called to be the central protagonist of the unity in the context in which it finds itself, but rather called, along with others, to work for the destruction of the sinful structures that promote disunity, inequality and injustice, and to support and develop the creation of a society where sociality corresponds to 'original and authentic' human structures, purposed by God in creation.

Additionally theology investigates how it can aid integration through the development of 'forms of mutuality (of living together and cooperation) of the Christian community that best permit this, in the context of a given situation, how it fulfils its mission of being paradigm, instrument, and vehicle of human integration' (1969d:54). In regard to this internal mode of fellowship, the church need to seek to display the unity it has in Christ within the world as it is. The way the church is manifested in the world depends upon the way division and unity is manifested in the world around it. The expression of Christian unity in one context will not always be the same in another context. The church is not called to withdraw from the world but to use the cultural forms of expression of unity which are available at that place. In this way, the church is able to serve the world via its own internal life.

5.4.8 *Pastoral and Missionary Consequences*

The consequences of seeing the church in this way are far reaching. It has consequences in regard to the ecumenical question. Ecumenism cannot only be the search for unity in doctrine and structure but the search for unity in truth and action.

‘If there is no faith except as embodied in a concrete historical praxis, we must see ecclesiology *as a conflict for the true Church*, as the confrontation of concrete historical options embraced as the obedience that faith is’ (1975h:170). To be part of the church is to participate in the struggle for ‘true, faithful, historical obedience.’ From what has been said previously it is clear that the conflict *for* the church becomes a conflict *with* the church. How church unity is conceived is brought into question (cf. 1985h:227-230). In this context, Míguez Bonino sees the discussion of church unity as an endeavour that deals with both drawing together and taking apart, gathering and separating. He boldly declares that ‘whoever does not understand the problem of Christian ecumenism in the perspective of this panorama of ‘encounter and conflict’ of humanity in our time, will have a much reduced vision of the faith and of the unity that God wants’ (1975j:155). Those who reject the relationship between Christian unity and human integration are, therefore, treating the whole ecumenical problem as purely doctrinal, structural, creedal, and governmental. ‘This formal unity, however, has very little to do with the Christian concept of unity that is fundamentally “fellowship”, a *quality of human existence* characterized by mutual giving, service, solidarity, unity of purpose, active and concrete co-participation of task, responsibilities and historical mission of faith’ (1975j:157; cf. comments re FO in 1997a:131; italics in original). Doctrinal, structural, creedal, and governmental unity is nothing more than ‘pacification.’ The church has often taken part in this sort of ecumenism, fulfilling Marx’s view that religion is the opiate of the people. Jesus loved both Zaccheaus and the rich young ruler, but had true fellowship with the first, but not with the second. ‘A true ecumenism cannot, for us, take form except in the struggle for a true oikoumene. And in turn, the struggle for a true oikoumene (for a human habitation for the whole human family) includes the struggle for a true ecumenism, for a Christianity truly and in reality lived at the level of the whole Christian family’ (1982r:115-124). Ecumenism means conflict: conflict against sin and for true unity.

Only when Christians take responsibility for proclaiming the totality of the message of Christ, with all its consequences for humanity and society, to do it concretely in its world—in this world of hunger and underdevelopment, of exploitation and violence—and to invite its own Christian people to work bravely in the world to the service of that message, only then will the true lines of conflict and tolerance be perceived (1975j:163).

In other words: ‘The true quest for unity is not therefore to be found in the negotiations of ecclesiastical bodies—which are only a field, not the real contenders— but in this conflict and encounter which takes place within and across them’ (1975h:170).

Míguez Bonino becomes most concrete in this regard. For him, it is necessary to find means by which mutual knowledge and frequent contact among Christians can be established (cf. 1969d:92). It implies the organisation of opportunities for personal contact between both leaders and laity and eventually the finding of economic and organizational resources to facilitate this contact. Studies need to be carried out by separate ecclesiastical groups but also together in mutual consultation. Consultation and study cannot be ends in themselves; they need to lead to cooperation and celebration of the Eucharist together. The latter has been a

sticking point between Roman Catholics and Protestants but also between some Protestant groups in Latin America.

In *Christians and Marxists: The Mutual Challenge to Revolution* (1976b), Míguez Bonino reflects on the ‘promise and limits’ of Christian ‘ecumenical’ cooperation with non-Christians (1976b:118-132). He observes the fact that both Christians and Marxists already cooperate together in Latin America in the revolutionary struggle. Although there are significant differences, both groups agree on many points of theory and philosophy. Each has considerable contributions to make, both to the revolution but also to each group’s conceptualisation of that struggle.

Míguez Bonino’s understanding of the church also has consequences for the relationship of the Christian to both the church and the world. This is connected with the tension created by the total human and specific Christ reference discussed at the beginning of this chapter. It seems that the stronger the commitment to the total human reference, (i.e. to humanity and the liberation of the oppressed), the weaker the Christ reference becomes. Or the other way around: the stronger the specific Christ reference, the weaker the commitment to the world becomes. Christians tend to experience life as a tension between the importance of their historical human option that has the tendency to become self-contained and unconditional, and their Christian reference which threatens to become ‘religious’ and unconnected to their historical option—an opiate. This tension is seen on the corporate and church level as well as on the individual level. Míguez Bonino proposes that this tension can be handled by looking at the Christian’s and the Church’s tension separately in the creation—salvation framework mentioned above. On the corporate level the explicit reference point is the specific Christ reference. This is the area of confession, worship and proclamation. Historical praxis is implicit but not forgotten. Even the church, at this level, must make historical options because it is ‘a community of faith in decision’ (1975h:171). However, the primary way in which it serves the world is through its ‘intensive mode of fellowship,’ through its internal life. The church can never lose its universal projection; it serves that universal projection via being a parable, and not being a protagonist of human integration. The total human reference is implicitly served.

At the personal and individual level the governing reference is the human or ‘creational’ one. In this sense the Christian reference is for the most part implicit. The Christian does not cease to be part of church life; he or she doesn’t cease to witness, or to participate in the church community. However, his or her main reference is to be part of the Christian *diaspora* in the world; to be the salt of the earth. As a member of the church, the Christian serves the world indirectly; but as an individual he or she knows and experiences that the total human reference is primary and religion is secondary. The decisions which Christians make are made in reference to the Christian’s faith, recognising that the locus of action is the world. The Christian as an individual serves directly the extensive mode of fellowship.

Finally Míguez Bonino’s ecclesiology has consequences for the whole way the church conceives of ‘ecclesiality.’ He puts it in the following way:

If the Church is in fact that which happens in the struggle for the true faith-obedience which takes place within the “field” of the formal explicit confession of Jesus Christ, should we not recognize that “Church” is an analogical term covering a number of different instances? (1975h:172).

Or putting it in another way: “ecclesiality” is the sphere in which testimony to the liberating action of God in Christ is made explicit in the world’ (1983d:171). The church is broader than the local congregation or the ecclesiastical structure; it can be found in many “condensations” in the fight to confess Jesus Christ concretely in history. These ecclesial expressions

belong within this struggle and therefore are in their own right “churchly” as much as any national, denominational, or local Church. In fact, it is only as Christians seek together—in a common historical commitment celebrated in praise and confession—the obedience that faith is, does the face of Jesus Christ acquire identifiable features in a given time (1975h:173).

Theology needs to think through a new characterization of the church, a parallel revision to the revision of the idea of unity. Unity should be considered as ‘a reality that is manifested in different ways and assumes different characteristics in several planes and environments’ (1969d:84). The search for unity should be concentrated in the ‘determination of the places and circumstances’ (1969d:85). There is not one place where unity is centralized but rather many ‘localities’. The issue finally becomes a question as to how each of these ‘localities’ are integrated into the mission of the Church? ‘How do they fit in critically and positively into the contemporary local situation? How do they illustrate, manifest and communicate the power of the Gospel? How open are they to the participation, critique and service of other Christians and to all people’ (1969d:88). This requires constant open and critical dialogue and theological reflection.

These questions also must touch on the effectiveness of the ‘ecclesial condensations.’ Míguez Bonino says: ‘by effectiveness we understand the search for adequate structures of organization, of action; the determination of relevant methods; and evaluation in terms of the appropriate productivity in the area of the initiative’ (1969d:90). And he warns of

the tendency to detach an action from its results as to introduce criteria of success that are far away from the nature of Christian action. The secret of a Christian understanding of action seems to me to reside in the establishment of the relationship between action and result that corresponds to revelation and redemption—and this not only in general but also in the diverse type of action (1969d:90).

Seen in this light, the existence of such ecclesial ‘condensations’ is essential to theological reflection upon the church. Without these groups, theology returns to static conceptions of the church and ideologically conditioned definitions of its mission. That is to say, the mission of committed Christian groups is both the starting point and aim of Míguez Bonino’s ecclesiology.

5.5 FINAL OBSERVATIONS

This final section will summarise Míguez Bonino’s ecclesiology; highlight some more important influences on his ecclesiology and analyse how Míguez Bonino tried to resolve the God—Church—World and God—World—Church debate. The point

of departure for Míguez Bonino's ecclesiology is the experience of radical Christians taking part in the liberation project of the nineteen sixties and seventies. They discerned that the church is the community gathered around Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ is to be found among the poor. God's action is not located within the church but in the poor's struggle for freedom, in the revolution. Two dangers arise from this articulation: the Church ceases to exist outside the revolution, and the non-Christian revolutionary is co-opted as an 'anonymous Christian' into a species of holy war.

Míguez Bonino proposes that the solution can be found in the Church's relationship with Christ and Christ's relationship with God's original purposes for humanity. Christ's death and resurrection are not viewed as the salvation of individuals from individual sin for an a-historical future but rather the re-launching of the original divine project for humanity. Christ is the new human being who is the representative of that new humanity, not only giving an example to it but also empowering it to live as a representative of the world. The church therefore, is called to witness in its life and preaching to the possibility of the unity of all humanity in Christ. The church is *ekklesia* within *oikoumene*.

Theology examines how the church can directly support and develop human integration in society and how it can indirectly aid societal integration in through the development of 'forms of mutuality (of living together and cooperation) of the Christian community'. On the one hand, the lives of individual Christians should be focussed upon service to the world not upon the internal fellowship of the church. They work toward the establishment of justice, for human life and liberation; this is their spiritual service. The life of the church, on the other hand, is focussed upon its own internal fellowship as a model to the world. This does not mean that it avoids direct action in the world but its primary focus is internal.

The influences on Míguez Bonino's ecclesiology are, by definition multiple. His experience of church life in Rosario as well as the liberal theology of many of his professors was clearly an early influence on him. Reformed theology quickly made an impression on his understanding of ecclesial definitions, which he felt he had to deal with theologically. Vatican II was a watershed in Roman Catholic ecclesiology. Míguez Bonino's attendance at the Council and his association with the liberation theologians, meant that all his subsequent ecclesiological reflections were in part a reaction to Vatican II.

Although Míguez Bonino never uses the term 'missionary ecclesiology,' it is clear that this is how his understanding of the church can be expressed. Jan A.B. Jongeneel, in his description of missionary ecclesiology, states that classic missionary ecclesiology emphasises the order God – church – world. God's action in the world is mediated through the church. It 'emphasises the primacy of the church in mission but runs into the danger of making the church seem to have a monopoly of salvation' (Jongeneel 1995:92). The modern model, on the other hand, emphasises the order God – world – church. God's action is seen directly in the world without being mediated by the church. This model 'emphasises God's plan for the salvation of the whole universe but is open to the danger of relativising the role of the church' (Jongeneel 1995:92). David J. Bosch describes the tension between the varying ecclesiologies in a different but complementary way.

At one end of the spectrum, the church perceives itself to be the sole bearer of a message of the salvation on which it has a monopoly; at the other end, the church

views itself, at most as an illustration—in word and deed—of God’s involvement with the world. Where one chooses the first model, the church is seen as a partial realisation of God’s reign on earth, and mission as that activity through which individual converts are transferred from eternal death to life. Where one opts for the alternative perception, the church is, at best, only a pointer to the way God acts in respect to the world, and mission is viewed as a contribution towards the humanisation of society—a process in which the church may perhaps be involved in the role of consciousness raiser (Bosch 1991:381).

These two authors highlight a significant problem that Míguez Bonino endeavoured to confront in his ecclesiology. He attempted to maintain a dialectical understanding of the relationship between God; the church and the world by articulating a missionary ecclesiology that emphasises the priority of God’s mission in the world (the establishment of God’s Kingdom), but at the same time, highlighting the fundamental role of the church in that mission. He attempted to work out this approach in regard both to the issue of liberation and ecumenism, in the light of his theological methodology and its commitment to a praxis driven hermeneutic.

Míguez Bonino believes that God works directly in the world to re-establish the Kingdom of God; the church is not the exclusive mediator of God’s mission, it does not fill the whole horizon of ecclesiology but rather points the way towards the true horizon: the Kingdom of God. However, he does not want to see the church’s role completely relativised. The church is more than just a signpost towards the Kingdom of God. The church is seen in the same relationship to the world as Christ is to the church. Christ represents the new humanity until it can assume the role that he took and the church does the same thing for the world. Christ primarily works in the world, establishing the divine Kingdom. The church’s role is to represent the world giving both a model to the world and enabling the world to become what God originally meant the world to be.

Using Nels Ferré’s concept of intensive and extensive forms of fellowship, he states that the life of the church serves as a model of the quality of fellowship desired by God for the world. The extensive forms of fellowship of the world, however, serve the church as a model of the structure of the intensive forms of fellowship its own life. The church looks to the world as a model of the cultural forms of relating. The world looks to the life of the church as a model of the quality of those human relationships. Therefore, the quality of the church’s intensive forms of fellowship are not inward looking but lead to its members militating for the establishment of qualitative extensive forms of fellowship in the world.

Therefore, Míguez Bonino’s view of the church does not fall back onto either the God-Church-World or the God-World-Church model of ecclesiology. God acts both in the church and the world; God’s action is primary. However, God’s work in the world is done in the context of the life, witness and militancy of the church and God’s work in the church is on behalf of the world. Therefore, the Church must respond to the world’s agenda, because it is in that arena that it finds its true identity. Commitment to the world is commitment to God and to God’s mission.

6 THE *MISSIO DEI* AS THE *OPERA DEI PERSONALIA*: THE TRINITY IN THE THEOLOGY MÍGUEZ BONINO

Theologically we must dig even deeper; we must trace out the originating impulse in faith in the triune God; from that standpoint alone can we see the missionary enterprise synoptically in its relationship to the Kingdom of God in its relationship to the World. (1997:138 quoting Andersen 1955:10)

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Although Míguez Bonino is a truly trinitarian theologian, the doctrine of the Trinity has not been central to his thought until relatively recently. His theology has always been Christocentric but he has not articulated the meaning of the relationships between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in his theology. In the mid nineteen-eighties he began to reflect more seriously on the importance of this doctrine; this study now turns to Trinitarian doctrine in his theology.

Míguez Bonino's focus upon trinitarian theology does not mean that he has abandoned his theological methodology described in chapter three. His point of departure is still missionary obedience and his aim is still missionary effectiveness. His reflections on the Trinity fit into that hermeneutical framework.

Additionally, Míguez Bonino's use of the motifs of Kingdom of God and church, described in chapters four and five respectively have not been discarded. The aim of his reflections upon the Trinity is to deepen and strengthen the understanding of mission gained from the church and Kingdom of God motifs. The chapter will especially highlight how he has gone about this task.

Furthermore, Míguez Bonino has deepened his reflections upon *missio Dei* by exploring the missionary implications of *opera Dei personalia*.¹ Although, he does not use this term, it will become clear that the concept is strong in his theology. It is not only the actions of God but also the triune being of God—the very life of God—that has occupied Míguez Bonino's missionary reflections. Although his theology is fundamentally praxis orientated, this does not push him into pragmatism; he believes that it is God's person and not only God's action that should be the originating impulse for Christian life and witness. In the same way, he looks to the church's being, not only its action, as a vital theme for missionary theology; in the words of Leslie Newbigin, the church's missionary dimension as well as the missionary intension is important (Newbigin 1958: 21, 43).

Finally, this chapter will not focus so much on how Míguez Bonino *has understood* each person of the Trinity but *rather how he* has understood the relationships between the members of the Trinity and how that affects Christian life

¹ The term *opera Dei personalia* is used to express working of the inner life of the Trinity or the very life of God as it operates within the Godhead.

and mission. This is important to understand, especially in regard to the second person in relation to the first and third. A study of Míguez Bonino's understanding of the second person in the theology of Míguez Bonino would require a dissertation in itself.

6.2 DEVELOPMENTS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

This section deals with developments in trinitarian theology in the twentieth century; specifically as they relate to mission studies. The Trinity, so important to patristic scholars, had a brief revival in the Reformation period but lost importance after the Enlightenment. Nineteenth century and early twentieth century theology, assumed the veracity of Immanuel Kant's famous dictum that the doctrine of the Trinity adds nothing worthwhile to practical life (Thompson 1994:3; cf. Kant 1992).

In the mid-twentieth century trinitarian theology experienced a renaissance. There were many attempts, in almost every theological movement to articulate Trinitarian doctrine in their own terms. David Cunningham lists twenty-one introductions, technical treatments or advanced studies published on the doctrine of the Trinity during the last two decades of the twentieth century (Cunningham 1998:339-342). He comments that there are so many books still being published on the subject that the renaissance of Trinitarian theology is in danger of becoming a bandwagon (Cunningham 1998:19).

In spite of the renaissance of interest in the doctrine of the Trinity its significance for mission is a subject that rarely appears in modern theologies. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen (2004), in his global introduction to the doctrine of God, does not have a section dealing with the Trinity and mission. Alister E. McGrath does not make any reference to mission in his section on the doctrine of the Trinity (McGrath 1998:247-269). The same could be said for theological dictionaries (cf. Jensen 2000). John Thompson (1994) asserts that 'it can scarcely be said that the theology of mission has been a predominant feature of modern theological writing, much less a theology based on the Trinity (Thompson 1994:68). However, he goes on to say that since the breakdown of the *Corpus Christianum*, there has been a considerable amount of reflection upon the Trinity and its significance for the nature and goal of mission.

It was the magisterial figure of Karl Barth who re-established the Trinity as the most profound article of the Christian faith and opened the way for a trinitarian missiology. Thomas F. Torrance and Geoffrey W. Bromiley declared that *Church Dogmatics*, I/1, was the greatest treatise on the Trinity, not only since the Reformation but since Augustine. (Barth 1975:ix). Barth recovered the 'one-ness' and 'three-ness' of God based upon God's Self-Revelation through the message of God's saving and redeeming activity in Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Torrance, in a later book, makes the striking statement that Barth restored 'express knowledge of the Holy Trinity to its place in the centre of the Church's faith and worship not unlike the place given to it in the great Nicene theology and liturgy of the Early Church' (Torrance 1996:9). In the Roman Catholic Church, Karl Rahner developed a parallel understanding of the Trinity in the framework of the mystery of salvation. He brought together the contrasting approaches of Augustinian and Thomist theologies into an understanding based on the three-fold communication of God (cf.

Moltmann 1980:144). Both Barth and Rahner did much to reintroduce the doctrine of the Trinity as crucial to the understanding and development of the doctrines of the incarnation and salvation.

Barth's emphasis on the connection between the Trinity to the doctrine of salvation had profound effects upon mission studies. In Conciliar Protestantism, this can be observed in a paper given by Barth at the Brandenburg Missionary Conference (1932) (Bosch 1991:389). The concept was also taken up by the German delegation to the Tambaram meeting of the IMC (1938), which proposed that God's Kingdom would be consummated not by the missionary activity of the church but an act of the grace of God. This shift is also perceived in Johannes H. Bavinck's *The Impact of Christianity on the Non-Christian World* (Bavinck 1949), where he calls for a trinitarian understanding of mission rather than an ecclesiocentric one. It was, however, the Willingen meetings of the IMC (1952) that concretized this move in Conciliar Protestantism. Although the term was not used, the idea of the *missio Dei* found expression. The report stated radically that: 'there is no participation in Christ without participation in His mission to the world. That by which the Church receives its existence is that by which it is also given its world mission' (IMC 1952:2-3). The very nature of being Christian is inextricably linked to the mission of Christ in the world. The church's mission was seen in the light of God's action. Willingen adopted the statement declaring that the missionary calling of the church is to be sent by God to carry out God's work to the ends of the earth. Not ecclesiology or soteriology but God's nature and action are the source of the church's mission. The report of Commission I of the Willingen Conference which was concerned with the Biblical and theological bases of the missionary obligation of the church, grounded the mission of the church in the outgoing activity of God. 'Missionary theology, centred upon the reconciling action of the Triune God, is not a compound of formulae but a living way of thinking about and understanding the life of the church and the world' (Shivute 1980:116). In a report written after Willingen, Karl Hartenstein defined mission as 'the participation in the sending of the Son, in the *missio Dei*, with an all inclusive aim of establishing the lordship of Christ over the whole redeemed creation' (Freytag, Hartenstein and Lehmann 1952:54 quoted in Bassham 1979:67-68 Italics in original). According to Gerald H. Anderson, the church's mission should be seen from the perspective of a 'radical Trinitarian theocentrism' (Anderson 1961:15). Finally, Wilhelm Andersen stated:

A theological redefinition of the basis of the Christian missionary enterprise cannot be worked out within the limits of the phrase "the missionary obligation of the Church"...we must dig deeper; we must trace the originating impulse in faith in the triune God; from that standpoint alone can we see the missionary enterprise synoptically in its relationship to the Kingdom of God and its relationship to the world (Andersen 1955:10).

In regard to one of the most important international theological forums in which Míguez Bonino took part over the years, the Faith and Order Commission has done relatively little work directly on Trinitarian doctrine. It was only in 1996 that FO published their commentary on the Nicene Creed (FO 1996). Subsequent to 1974, the WCC began to facilitate consultations and seminars on mission with the Orthodox Churches. There can be little doubt that their contribution has made trinitarian doctrine more important within the council's theological reflections. The most important of those contributions took place in Neapolis, Greece in 1988 with

sixty Eastern and Oriental Orthodox representatives, eleven years after Míguez Bonino's direct involvement in FO ended. It was important because the keynote address affirmed that mission is participation in the very life of the Holy Trinity (cf. Scherer and Bevans 1992:232-241, esp. 235-236).²

In the Roman Catholic Church, the doctrine of the Trinity has always been assumed. Following Western theology³ it emphasised the unity of the Godhead rather than the individual persons of the Trinity. Following the developments in Conciliar Protestantism, the Second Vatican Council related mission to the Trinity through the concept of salvation history. Mission was still very much related to the Church but it is God who initiates, realises and guides mission. The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (LG) understands the constitution of the church to be trinitarian. 'Thus, the Church has been seen as "a people made one with the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit"(LG4). And then it declares that God makes a covenant with Israel for the benefit of all nations (LG9).

The Declaration on Mission, *Ad Gentes*, (AG) says:

The Church on earth is by its very nature missionary since, according to the plan of the Father, it has its origin in the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit. This plan flows from "fountain-like love," the love of God the Father, as the principle without principle from whom the Son is generated and from whom the Holy Spirit proceeds through the Son. (AG, 2)

God's great and merciful kindness creates humanity and calls it to share in the life and glory of the Trinity. God's divine goodness is constantly poured out so that God will at last become 'all in all' (1 Corinthians 15:28). In this way God's glory and humanity's happiness are assured.

It is notable that AG declares that the missionary activity of God does not begin with redemption but creation. Humanity is called to unity with God in its life and glory; this is done through the 'fountain-like-love' and divine goodness which issues incessantly from God in order that this double aim of God plan—the glory of God and the joy of humanity—are achieved.

The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes* (GS), deepens this understanding pneumatologically when it affirms that since Christ died for all, and since all are in fact 'called to one and the *same destiny*, which is divine, we must hold that the Holy Spirit offers to all the possibility of being made partners, in a way known to God, in the paschal mystery'. (GS, 22) The influence of the Spirit is deepened in what might be called the 'secular' dimension when it asserts that: 'the Spirit of God, who, with wondrous providence, directs the course of time and renews the face of the earth' (GS, 26).

Jürgen Moltmann, who has been a friend of Míguez Bonino since the mid-nineteen seventies, and has become a foil to many Latin American theologians, has developed a Trinitarian understanding which has been influential. The trinitarian motif is assumed, rather than explicit in *A Theology of Hope* (1967). He does, however, take Barth to task over his understanding of the immanent Trinity, believing that in Barth, the history of Jesus Christ is made to be the revelation of

² The keynote speech was given by Greek Orthodox Anastasios of Androussa (Yannoulatos). He was one of the earliest participants of the Eastern Orthodox in the WCC and, at the time, a moderator of CWME.

³ Western theology (Augustinian and Thomist) as opposed to Eastern Theology (Athanasian).

eternity rather than the revelation of the future. Moltmann is concerned that the use of terms such as the ‘pure presence of God’, an ‘eternal presence of God in time’, or a ‘present without any future’, make God’s revelation “atemporal” rather than orientated towards the future. Even here, Moltmann’s development of the Trinity as process open to the future is seen in seminal form (Moltmann 1967:50-58). The focus upon the cross of Christ in *The Crucified God* (1974) drove Moltmann to examine the relationship between Father and Son. Although he does not explicitly state this, Moltmann seems to say that, in the Christ event, God became Trinity. In *The Church in the Power of the Spirit* (1977), however, Moltmann seems to return to an understanding of the existence of the immanent Trinity original to God, prior to history. In the section ‘The Church in the Trinitarian History of God’ (Moltmann 1977:50-65), Moltmann wants to see the economic Trinity as open in front and behind to the immanent Trinity. The trinitarian history of God is understood through the missions of the Son and Spirit and, therefore, only through the inference of the ‘Trinity in the Sending’ (economic Trinity) to the ‘Trinity in the Origin’ (immanent Trinity) can humanity, in the Christ event and in the experience of the Holy Spirit, be sure that it is God whom it is treating. In *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, (1980), Moltmann is keen to unpack the claim he made in *The Crucified God*, that the doctrine of the Trinity has important implications for practical social and political life. His premise in this book is that the relationships of the Trinity are ‘relationships of fellowship and are open to the world’ (Moltmann 1980:64) and that the ultimate aim of this is freedom in the Kingdom of the Trinity. Freedom means the unrestricted participation in the eternal life of the triune God and in that fullness and glory inherent to the Trinity. Paraphrasing Augustine he concludes that: ‘our hearts are captive until they become free in the glory of the triune God’ (Moltmann 1980:222).

Various Latin American theologians have attempted to seriously treat the topic of the Trinity. Five works will be mentioned as inspirations, rather than sources of Míguez Bonino’s trinitarian reflections. Published a year before Gustavo Gutiérrez’ *A Theology of Liberation* (1973),⁴ Juan Luis Segundo’s *A Theology for Artisans of a New Humanity* (1974)⁵ drew attention to the importance of the implications of the doctrine of the Trinity for the practical implications of life in a secular and oppressive world. Especially important in this book is chapter two where Segundo sees God as *society* (*Segundo 1974:66*) and more substantially in chapter three where Segundo reflects on the danger of modalism (Segundo 1974: 98-111). His answer to modalism is to understand the Trinity as the hypostasis of persons (Segundo 1974: 111). God is primarily to be understood as person; but a person in community. The *personhood* of God ontologically precedes the personhood of other human beings; that is human beings are persons because God is person. However, epistemologically the personhood of other human beings precedes the personhood of God; that is the experience of God as person is mediated through the personhood of others from within community. Therefore, people can only truly encounter God from within community (cf. Segundo 1974: 115).

Written after Leonardo Boff was silenced by the Vatican, *Trinity and Society* (1988)⁶ is a significant book in Latin American theology’s attempt to seriously treat the issue of the Trinity in the context of Latin America. Taking the

⁴ Originally published in Spanish in 1971.

⁵ Originally published as, *Teología abierta para el laico adulto*, (1970). See especially volume 3.

⁶ Originally published as *A Trindade, a Sociedade e a Libertação* (1987)

context of suffering and oppression and the struggle for liberation as his starting point, this book is a systematic treatment of the topic of the Trinity. He discusses the heresies, historical controversies and images of the Trinity. His main thesis is that the perichoretic life of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit forms the model for human life and community: 'the basis for social and integral liberation' (Boff 1988:123ff). He describes the Father as 'the origin and goal of all liberation;' (Boff 1988:155ff) the Son as 'the mediator of integral liberation;' (Boff 1988:178ff) and the Holy Spirit as 'the driving force of liberation' (Boff 1988:189ff).

Gustavo Gutiérrez' *The God of Life* (1991)⁷ is also important for its trinitarian reflections. Gutiérrez answers three basic trinitarian questions (Gutiérrez 1991:xviii). To the question, what is God, he answers that God is the friend of life who liberates from oppression; God is the Holy God who does justice for the poor and is angry at sin; God is the faithful God who makes and keeps the covenant; God is the God who opposes the idolatry that brings death (Gutiérrez 1991:1-67). To the question, where is God, he answers that God is the God who comes to this world in the shape of a poor child; God is the one who lives out the justice of God for all nations; and God is the one who preaches justice and empowers the givers of life (Gutiérrez 1991:69-139). Finally, to the question, how are we to speak of God, he answers: through inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as in the lives and words of Jeremiah, Job and Mary (Gutiérrez 1991:141-186).

In *The God of Christians* (1991),⁸ Ronaldo Muñoz, takes the way of life and struggle of the poor as his starting point. He notes that the way that they experience urbanisation and exploitation helps them to have a true image of their God (Muñoz 1991:37ff). Within this context Muñoz examines both Old and New Testaments to draw out and articulate this image. He sees God as the God who faithfully demonstrates love towards the people of Israel, seeking justice on behalf of the poor and oppressed (Muñoz 1991:108ff). Jesus Christ discloses God as a loving Father, who discloses the nature of the Kingdom, and witnesses to himself as eternal Son (Muñoz 1991:130ff).

Guillermo Hansen, an Argentinean Lutheran and a colleague of Míguez Bonino at ISEDET, wrote his PhD dissertation on 'the Doctrine of the Trinity and Liberation Theology: A Study of the Trinitarian Doctrine and its place in Latin American Liberation Theology' (Hansen 1994). His most important contribution to Míguez Bonino's work is on the issue of synergism and enhypostasis. These will be mentioned later.

6.3 MAIN PUBLICATIONS

Míguez Bonino connects the Trinity with both theology and mission. Three of his writings provide us with his thinking on this. The major primary source is *Faces of Latin American Protestantism* (1997a), which is the product of the 1993 Carnahan Lectures given at ISEDET.⁹ Míguez Bonino treats the study of the Trinity in detail in the last two chapters. He examines this doctrine in two directions. Firstly, the function of the Trinity is a 'Hermeneutical Criterion,' in the search for theological

⁷ Originally published as *Dios de la vida*, (1989)

⁸ Originally published as *Dios de los Cristianos* (1987)

⁹ First published as *Rostros del Protestantismo Latinoamericano*, (1995).

coherence. Secondly, he proposes that Mission should be understood as ‘the Material Principle of a Latin American Protestant theology’. Consequently, for Latin America to move forward coherently in mission and in its thinking about mission (theology) there is a need for a Trinitarian missiology. This book will form the overarching framework of this chapter.

A complementary writing is a paper given at a conference on the influence of Wesley and Wesleyan theology around the world. In ‘Wesley in Latin America: A Theological and Historical Reflection’ (1998f), Míguez Bonino shows how the work of Wesley was introduced to Latin American Protestantism and then, in the light of the Latin American reality, how Wesleyan theology can contribute to Latin American theology. Especially important is a trinitarian understanding of grace.

Another contribution is a lecture given at a conference on the theology of John Wesley. It is entitled ‘Salvation as the Work of the Trinity: An attempt at a Holistic Understanding from a Latin American Perspective,’(1999i) and has tried to broaden the understanding of salvation by removing it from its purely Christological framework and setting it in a trinitarian perspective.

6.4 MISSIO DEI AND OPERA DEI PERSONALIA IN TRINITARIAN MISSIONARY THEOLOGY

6.4.1 *Presence and Absence of the Trinity in Theological Reflections*

Míguez Bonino has paid more attention to the doctrine of the Trinity during the latter part of his career. Earlier, the Trinity as a theological theme of reflection hardly appears. Evidence of this can be found in the fact that in the Argentinean Lutheran, Guillermo Hansen’s enormous thesis on the doctrine of the Trinity and Liberation Theology (1994), he has no section dealing specifically with Míguez Bonino’s understanding of the Trinity. His bibliography mentions very few of Míguez Bonino’s writings and none of which refer specifically to the Trinity.

Furthermore, Míguez Bonino seems to *ignore* the doctrine of the Trinity even when it would have been a relevant concept to apply to a specifically missionary question. A clear example of this is in the section discussing God’s nature in *Room to be People* (1979h). He calls into question the common belief that God is the one who is alone. He calls this ‘the greatest heresy, the biggest lie.’ He asserts that ‘God is precisely the one who is never alone, the one who has never wanted to be alone’ (1979h:15). It seems obvious that the doctrine of the Trinity would form part of a strong rebuttal of that belief. Instead, Míguez Bonino emphasises that God, in creation, invites humanity to be with God in the construction of a just society, and that God is the God for others. Míguez Bonino does not develop the doctrine of the Trinity at all. This may have been because the context was not conducive to a discussion on the doctrine of the Trinity—evangelistic discussions in a middle class church in the seventies--but as a central tenet of the faith, it seems as if it would have been relevant.

6.4.2 *Theological Reductionism: The stated context of Trinitarian Missionary Theology*

Míguez Bonino's later writings that begin to deal with the doctrine of the Trinity are all written in the context of reflection on the contemporary state of Latin American Protestantism. Specifically, they highlight how the theology and mission of those churches can be sharpened and deepened through a reflection on the Trinity. This is clearly illustrated in *Faces of Latin American Protestantism* (1997) where, Míguez Bonino describes and analyses what he calls the four faces of Latin American Protestantism—the Liberal face, the Evangelical face, the Pentecostal Face and the Ethnic face.¹⁰ He traces the entrance of each of the Protestant traditions into Latin America; how each tradition developed—historically and theologically—and the influence that each of them had on the Latin American church scene.

He is convinced that the responsibility of the Latin American Protestant churches, 'whatever its place might be in Latin American Religious life, is to offer a faithful witness to the gospel, which will be measured by its faithfulness in the propagation of the gospel, faithfulness in life and action, and faithfulness in the celebration—that is, its evangelisation, its praxis and worship' (1997a:111). One cannot sustain faithfulness in these areas without a missional theological reflection.

The problem Míguez Bonino observes is that Latin American Protestantism tends to exhibit a reductionist theology, rather than, no theology at all. Almost all theology has been reduced to Christology and Christology is swallowed up into soteriology. This soteriology, moreover, 'is characterised as an individual and subjective experience' (1997a:112). Earlier he says that there is an almost homogeneousness in Protestant theological tradition, which has tended towards a Christological soteriology that has basically revolved around 'God and my soul' (1991b:90-91) and was unconnected to the world. This has meant that 'the world' is an area in which theology does not get involved (cf. 1962c:74-75). Later, he comments that Latin American ministers of the 'holiness tradition' do not possess a theological undergirding for social action 'within the range of their rather individualistic, subjectivist, and spiritualist, evangelical heritage' (1999i:70).

Although, the Trinity has never been denied in Latin American Protestantism, neither did it nourish evangelisation and service (cf. 1999i:80). Míguez Bonino says that the Trinity 'has remained a generic doctrine which does not profoundly inform the theology and what is worse, the piety and life of our churches' (1997a:113). So he concludes: 'It is over against this background that I want to plead for a Trinitarian perspective that will broaden, enrich, and deepen the Christological, soteriological and pneumatological understanding which is at the very root of our Latin American Protestant tradition' (1997a:112). Míguez Bonino offers "ruminations" on the issue, rather than definitive answers. He is undeniably, 'opening up pathways'¹¹ for investigation and for further study. Through this concrete examination of both the Latin American Protestant tradition in its mission and theology, he lays the foundation for his 'hermeneutical meditation' on the Trinity.

¹⁰ The original lectures contained only the first three faces of Latin American Protestantism but responding to comments from some sectors of the Latin American Protestant community he added the fourth face—the Ethnic Face.

¹¹ Recalling C.S. Escobar's comment about Míguez Bonino.

6.4.3 *The Trinity as Hermeneutical Criterion*

Dangers in Trinitarian Doctrine

It is clear to Míguez Bonino that Latin American Protestant churches need to reflect upon the Trinity in order to enable them to be faithful in faith and action. However, he is not unaware of the dangers. Theologians must not forget that the Trinity is a ‘theological formulation of the church’ (1997a:112). Due to the aforementioned theological reductionism, pastors, church members and even some theological teachers tend to forget that the Trinity is a human construct. This does not deny the existence of the triune God, but simply asserts that no human formulation can exhaust its meaning and no doctrine can encompass its reality. The doctrine of the Trinity is simply an attempt, by the church (and theologians) to discern and understand the reality of God in God’s triune reality.

Additionally, there is the danger of sacralising the number three, which tends to become a ‘magic number’ by which the presence of God is invoked in nature or history. This type of numerology has been done in many traditions—both Christian and non-Christian. He comments under the *same heading*—*although it is a different issue*—that even more dangerous is the ‘division of labour’ that Protestants are guilty of, whereby: ‘we have declared eras of the Father, the Son or the Holy Spirit, or we have justified our confessional reductionism proclaiming that our theologies are of “the First Article,” “Christocentric,” or “spiritual” (1997a:113). Míguez Bonino’s descriptions of the different faces of Latin American Protestantism clearly revealed this danger.

Finally, theologians must not misunderstand the meaning of the ‘mystery’ of the Trinity. This mystery is due to God’s own freedom to remain the “wholly other”. God, however, is also the revealed mystery. God has entered into a covenant and *qualified God’s* action as ‘love, justice and faithfulness.’¹² This revealed mystery is the essence of trinitarian doctrine and a source of both wonder and worship. Apart from making plain his Barthian tendencies, Míguez Bonino *once again shows his close affinity to* the Epistle to the Ephesians. Ephesians with its strong emphasis on Christ’s revelation of God’s purposes is clear. It allows Míguez Bonino to maintain the idea of God as the wholly other, who will bring all things under Christ, but at the same time, the God who is revealed in the person of Jesus Christ.

Trinitarian Affirmations

Míguez Bonino believes that emphasising some important trinitarian affirmations will give Latin American Protestantism a theological framework to avoid the reductionisms mentioned earlier. It is vital to point out that Míguez Bonino is not building a systematic trinitarian framework but rather observing, in the framework of the Latin American experience, how some well established trinitarian criteria from historical and *modern theology can assist in his* task.

The doctrine of the Trinity is the expression of what *the Scriptures reveal* to us about the history of God with God’s people (1997a:114). In the Bible, God is revealed as creator, the originator of all things through the Word. Through the

¹² The English translation uses ‘fidelity’ but ‘faithfulness’ is a better translation of “fidelidad”.

covenant God is shown to be free to choose one nation—indeed the least of all nations—in order to bless all others. God chooses to live and to ‘pitch God’s tent’ among human beings in their concrete historical circumstances, and to pour out the Spirit on the Christian community and its members at Pentecost. This is the nature of the Trinity revealed in the Scriptures.

‘The God of the Trinity is not the eternal nontemporality of an ideal principle nor of an indeterminant constant’ (1997a:114). God is the God who enters history and thereby makes history. Therefore Míguez Bonino can say that ‘to believe in the triune God is to enter into that history’ (1997a:114; cf. Muñoz 1991:124-126). This is consistent with Míguez Bonino’s insistence that any revelation about God is not information but an appeal to enter in to what God is doing in the world (cf. 1966b:256). The fact the God has entered history and is acting in history is a demand to be committed to that to which God is committed. It is also possible to perceive here Míguez Bonino’s attempt to avoid the pitfalls of Barthian trinitarianism, so aptly criticised by Moltmann. Moltmann saw how Barth’s understanding of the Trinity tended to petrify God into a revelation of the eternal rather than a revelation of God’s plans for humanity in the future. Moltmann attempted to avoid the ontological by emphasising the eschatological. Míguez Bonino attempts to avoid the emphasis on the ontological element by emphasising the historical and ethical elements.

In philosophical terms, God is revealed to be the one who is “before us,” “with us,” and “in us”. God is before us in that God is transcendent. Transcendence does not mean ultimately unknowable and remote but the one who is wholly other. God cannot be held or encompassed within human concepts and institutions and God will destroy any institution that becomes an idol instead of a sacrament (cf. 1976b:65-68). God is free from human control and cannot be “conjured up” by human invention or magic. God is free to judge and to forgive. However, God is also the one who is “with us.” This balances God’s transcendence with the fact that God, in Christ, became human; became the vulnerable one among the vulnerable. God becomes *human* words, law, covenant and a people. Míguez Bonino can, therefore say: ‘God’s incarnation in history is witnessed by the concrete word in a book—the Bible—and the concrete congregation of a people—the church—where God really is, fully and truly present’ (1997a:115; italics in original). Finally God is “in us” in the vital presence of God in the Christian’s life. This is the power of the Spirit to use develop and consecrate the Christian’s gifts to God’s service in love. This is the power of joy in the Christian’s life. This corresponds to ‘experience, prayer, preaching, worship, not as mere psychological or symbolic phenomena but as the “burning bush” of God’s presence (1997a:115).

Míguez Bonino firmly places his understanding of the Trinity *in the framework* of salvation history, and is consistent with his understanding of the historical nature of revelation. God is more than the revelation of God in salvation history. Framing the concept in classical trinitarian language, the Imminent Trinity can only be known through the Economic Trinity but the Economic Trinity is the true representation of the Imminent Trinity; God’s actions are consonant with God’s character (cf. Boff, L. 1988:214-215 and Rahner 1978:136-137). Therefore, the nature of God can be known through the actions of God. ‘In this sense we begin from “the economic Trinity” and move to the affirmation of the “immanent” or “ontological Trinity”’ (1999i:80). This affirmation brings with it a danger that earlier

Liberation Theology did not know how to avoid. The relationship between God's action and human action and the eschatological significance of human action led to an "inflation of the human", whereby God becomes 'a process which is somehow made possible in human action' (1999i:80; cf. Alves 1969). Therefore, it is important to emphasise that 'the absolute priority of the immanent Trinity in the order of being is the theological safeguard of God's priority in the order of salvation' (1999i:80). He adds 'God does not become Trinitarian in God's acts; the acts reveal an eternal Trinitarian transcendence' (1999i:80). God's action, therefore, leads to the Trinitarian understanding.

Additionally, Míguez Bonino attempts to recover *the idea of the Trinity* as 'the communion of the persons' (cf. Segundo 1974: 98-111). This, of course, emanates from the concept of the Cappadocian fathers. As Leonardo Boff points out (Boff 1988:159ff), God is not the absolute "I" of the philosophers or 'the despotic monarch who projects on the skies the image of an absolute emperor' (1997a:115 cf. Moltmann 1983:48; Boff, L. 1993:390). This is important because people's view of God is greatly affected by their experience of political reality. The monotheistic declaration that God is One tends to lead to the understanding that God is a kind of monarch who concentrates power in God's own hands. This, according to Leonardo Boff is one of the difficulties in the correct understanding of God (cf. Boff 1993:390-391). It could also be said that the revelation of God as Trinity in the Christian scriptures is a corrective of that misunderstanding (Boff 1988:148-154). In Christological terms, the Christ, who makes known the God of the Trinity, is not a Celestial Monarch (cf. 1977h), he is the second person of the trinitarian community.

Míguez Bonino declares that the triune God 'is a permanent conversation, a communion of love, an identity of purpose and unity of action: Father, Son and Holy Spirit' (1997a:115). He emphasises that God's unity of action has its roots in the identity of purpose and ultimately in the fact that God is a communion of love and a permanent conversation (cf. Segundo 1974: 111). Much earlier in his career, he affirms this in regard to the unity of God as paradigm for the unity of the church. He says, 'the unity of the triune God is not in itself solitary incommunicado but rather essentially and ontologically fellowship, co-participation and love' (1969d:37-38). The very nature of God is not essentially to be found in unity conceived of as singular oneness but rather in terms of collective unity; a unity of persons committed to a purpose and action because of the reality and expression of love.

Míguez Bonino does not want to assume the full Cappadocian understanding of the Trinity—especially the danger of subordinationism—but prefers the idea of perichoresis.¹³ John of Damascus describes the concept in the following way.

The subsistences [i.e., the three Persons] dwell and are established firmly in one another. For they are inseparable and cannot part from one another, but keep to their separate courses within one another, without coalescing or mingling, but cleaving to each other. For the Son is in the Father and the Spirit: and the Spirit in the Father and the Son: and the Father in the Son and the Spirit, but there is no coalescence or commingling or confusion. And there is one and the same motion: for there is one impulse and one motion of the three subsistences, which is not to be observed in any created nature (OF 1.14).

¹³ *Circumincessio* (Lat.).

Leonardo Boff calls this “coinherence” of the persons of the Trinity (Boff 1988:4-7). Boff and Míguez Bonino follow the Greek understanding that this trinitarian relationship is the model for all human relationships.

What we are shown here is the nature of ultimate reality: The life of God is communion; identity is not affirmed by closing in on oneself *but by opening up to* the other; unity is not singularity but rather full communication. It is in that image we are created, it is in participation in that constant divine “conversation” that we find the meaning of our existence, life abundant; it is on this model we should structure our human relations. Neither the all-embracing authority of one over another, nor an undifferentiated mass uniformity, nor the self-sufficiency of the “self-made man,” but the perichoresis of love is our beginning and destiny—‘as persons, as church, as society (1997a:116).

According to Moltmann, the Trinity as social programme has its roots in the work of three nineteenth century theologians: Russian Orthodox Nicolai Fedorov, British Anglican F.D. Maurice and Danish Lutheran Nicolai Grundvig (Moltmann 1983: 56). It is a concept that those Liberation Theologians who have reflected upon the doctrine of the Trinity have used. Moltmann and the Liberationists have seen the concept of the Trinity as both a paradigm for society and a critique of the false ideology of God, which are religious reflections of monarchical socio-political philosophies (cf. Marx’s 4th Thesis on Feuerbach). This concept is decisive in Míguez Bonino’s attempt to deepen and strengthen the themes of the church and the Kingdom of God through a reflection on the doctrine of the Trinity.

Finally, ‘what the triune God does in the world—in creation, in reconciliation, in redemption—is always, at the same time and in concerted fashion, the work of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit’ (1997a:116).¹⁴ This warns us against making a division of labour within the Trinity—the Father in creation the Son in redemption and the Holy Spirit in sanctification.

This has already been mentioned in regard to the various spiritualities in Latin American Christianity, both Catholic and Protestant. The work of any member of the Trinity is the work of the Trinity as a whole. Míguez Bonino puts it in the following way: ‘Trinitarian doctrine reminds us that the God who encounters us in creation and history, in the forgiveness of sins and in the search for sanctification, is the same God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit (1997a:117). This is affirmed in regard to salvation (cf. 1969d:38). The Bible uses a wide range of terms to describe God’s action in salvation. Not all of this language—in fact very little of it has religious overtones; redemption, safety, health, liberation and restoration. The New Testament tends to use salvation more specifically as what God did in Christ and it is Pauline theology that gives these terms a more specifically theological significance. Latin American Protestantism follows this understanding and tends to assign salvation wholly to the work of the Son with the Father and the Spirit being auxiliary. Biblically speaking, however, salvation is far wider than “spiritual” aspects prevalent in Paul and is the work of the Trinity, not simply the Son (1999i:72-73). It is, therefore, to the work of this Trinity that humanity in general and the church in particular must respond in its fullness and multidimensionality.

¹⁴ Cf. Augustine’s formula, “*Opus trinitatis as extra indivisum* (or *Opera trinitatis as extra indivisa sunt*). Augustine, *De Trinitate*, I.4.7. cf. Chapter five (note 8).

The fact that the church does not follow this model is highlighted by Leonardo Boff who is fond of using the Trinity as a critique of the hierarchy of the established church. For Boff the church is a communion of believers ‘a people made one with the unity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit’ (LG 4; cf. Boff 1988:154, 225).

Míguez Bonino seems to be proposing something similar to what Anastasios of Androussa said in his plenary address to the CWME conference in San Antonio (1989). Anastasios attempts to address the theme of ‘Mission in Christ’s Way’ from a trinitarian perspective, criticising the Christocentric emphasis of the Western tradition. He asserts that

The faith and experience of the church are summed up in the phrase: the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit, creates, provides, saves. Essentially mission in Christ’s way is mission in the light of the Holy Trinity, in the mystical presence and working together of Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Scherer and Bevans 1994: 29).

Anastasios makes several noteworthy points here. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are all agents in the task of creation, provision and salvation. One cannot and should not be separated from the other. In addition, speaking in trinitarian terms, individual, spiritual salvation is not the focus but rather the integral, life affirming mission of creation, provision and salvation. Christocentric mission focuses upon one aspect of human life, whereas trinitarian mission focuses upon the whole. And finally he states that it is the mystic presence in addition to the working of the Trinity that is significant in regard to mission. That is, not only *missio Dei* but also *opera Dei personalia*. Míguez Bonino and Anastasios agree that an over emphasis on Christology within soteriology leads to an unbalanced evangelisation.

Some Contextual Issues in Trinitarian Perspective

Míguez Bonino does not try to work out these trinitarian affirmations in every area of the theological field but rather reflects upon some significant issues facing the Latin American Protestant church—Faith in Jesus Christ in the World of Religions; *the social responsibility* of Christians and a trinitarian Christological pneumatology.

Religious pluralism

In regard to the issue of Faith in Christ in the context of the world of religions, Míguez Bonino begins his reflections by examining the context of Latin American Protestantism’s relationship with ‘another religion.’ A great number of Protestants have a polemical attitude towards the Roman Catholic Church. Their relationship has generally been conceived in terms of the “truth of the Gospel” and the “errors of Romanism.” Protestants’ arguments with Roman Catholics have focussed upon issues such as purgatory, the saints and the cult of the Virgin. Some wiser theologians such as John MacKay tried relocate the question in a Christological framework (cf. MacKay 1932). The point that Míguez Bonino makes is that this discussion took place within an agreed Christological framework. Both Catholics and Protestants agreed upon certain essential Christological doctrines such as the divinity of Christ, his relationship to the Father and the Spirit, and his work on the cross.

The contemporary religious scene is far more complicated. There are vast numbers of interpretations of that scene. Míguez Bonino offers a simpler analysis. Over the past 50 years, Latin America has experienced the entrance of the great world religions. Japanese and Chinese communities are to be found in most large Latin American cities; there are African communities in the Caribbean, Brazil and Uruguay; and even some small Muslim communities in Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay. Additionally, there is a flourishing of new religious movements. There are underground indigenous movements in Peru, Bolivia and Northern Argentina; Afro-American religious expressions such as Candomble, Lucumi and Umbanda; and the re-emergence of pre-Hispanic Aztec religions, such as the cult of Quetzalcoatl. In addition the context is also complicated by growth and development of Pentecostal spiritualities that draw upon elements of popular piety. Various studies have shown how elements of the indigenous or traditional religion have been incorporated into Pentecostal spirituality as well as the way in which it is now accepted that there are certain elements in Anglo-Saxon culture that have deeply influenced the spirituality of the traditional Latin America Protestant churches. Míguez Bonino's concern is that the Christological framework of the encounter with the Roman Catholic Church will not serve the Protestant churches in this new context.

Míguez Bonino proposes a new approach. Incorporating his previous work on epistemology and the contextual view of knowledge he asserts,

[T]he new way to approach this subject should be, in this perspective, a dialogue in which differences and agreements are discovered and in which mutual influences and contributions that come to us from culture and religious experiences, when taken up in our own *faith experience*, have been reinterpreted and given new meaning in the light of revelation of the God in the covenant or if, on the contrary, they have been "baptised" without having been born again (1997a:119-120).

Dialogue, mutual understanding and mutual accountability should replace elenctic and polemic approaches (cf. 1997c:90-91; 1989c:169-170).

Míguez Bonino believes that a trinitarian Christology would provide a theological and missionary framework for the dialogue. Two dialectical statements express this framework. 'We must not separate the Jesus Christ of the New Testament from the Word "that was from the beginning" "with God and was God"' (1997a:120). The Jesus Christ of the New Testament in his historical and cultural setting must not be detached from the creative Word of God in Genesis chapter one. Míguez Bonino is careful not to use 'logos' due to the danger of understanding the universal rational principle of the philosophers, rather than the dynamic word of God found in the Old Testament.. This word is 'the creative Word that created and constantly recreates the world, the Spirit of power and life which dynamizes the natural and human world. The *dabar* (word) and *ruach* (Spirit) of Yahweh that became flesh has neither been absent from the world or the history of people' (1997a:120). There are many examples of God's word and spirit acting and inspiring those from outside of the covenant people (cf. Amos 9:7; Isaiah 44:28-45:1; Psalm 104:29-30).

Míguez Bonino has a dynamic understanding of the relationship between the Word and the Spirit. He emphasises the way the Word, through the Spirit is active in creation and in the recreation of life. God, through the creative Word and Spirit is always been working in the lives of the nations, whether those nations have

heard of that Word or not. This means that: ‘to see in the history, cultures and struggles, and in the peoples’ religions the presence of that Word and that Spirit is not to “give in” to paganism but rather to confess the One “without [whom] not one thing came into being” (1997a:120).

This perspective is a challenge to the Latin American Protestant churches. The tendency to dismiss other religions (and in some cases other denominations) as being in grave error is common in the churches. Míguez Bonino is attempting to reflect theological, rather than sociologically upon the good in other faiths and to establish the framework for dialogue.

Míguez Bonino also states that ‘it is no less true, however, that Christian theology cannot disengage the Word and the Spirit of God from the “flesh” of the son of Mary—of his teaching, his message, his life and his death, his resurrection and lordship’ (1997a:120). The flesh of the son of Mary is where the signs of the presence of the true Word and Spirit of God are to be found. The Jesus Christ who was born in Bethlehem, walked along the roads of Galilee and the streets of Jerusalem; who was assassinated by the religious leaders and imperial forces of the day and who rose again on the third day is the Word that was with God in the beginning. So he can say ‘by the yardstick of the presence of God in Jesus, one measures all presumed presence of that God in human history—there the genuine is affirmed and the idolatry of all religion and all human culture is repudiated!’ (1997a:120).

It is possible to hear echoes of Karl Barth’s assertion that God’s revelation in Jesus Christ is the denial and repudiation of all religion (Barth 1955:280-361). Míguez Bonino does not fully take on Barth’s theology of religions, but he does, as does Barth, assert that all religions are to be compared with God’s revelation in Christ. There may be other “lights” to humanity but they must be brought before the true light of Jesus Christ, where they all stand judged. Jesus Christ, as witnessed to in the gospels, is the measure of the genuine or false nature of culture and the idolatry of religion; this of course includes the idolatry of the Christian religion.

How the meaning of religious and cultural traditions is transferred needs to be investigated. Míguez Bonino believes that there is a trinitarian key. This transfer is only possible when ‘the Spirit of God works in the history and culture of peoples to witness to the meaning of Jesus Christ in their lives’ (1997a:121). In the experience of the church of Latin America this process was fractured by the Spanish invasion and imposition of a supposed Christian religion. The syncretism that resulted was not as many Protestants have assumed, due to tolerance and accommodation to the local religion by the Roman Catholic Church, but because of—on one hand—the brutal suppression of any religious form except the imported one and—on the other hand—the resilience of the indigenous beliefs to that imposition. According to Míguez Bonino, this ‘annulled the possibilities of a genuine “evangelisation”’ (1997a:121).

This is an important issue and one that does require a deeper analysis and reflection. In a footnote, Míguez Bonino notes that theology needs to reflect upon

the relation between the transcendent character of the “experience of God” whom we confess and the conditioning of all kinds (historical, ideological, psychological, cultural) of the concrete form that this experience takes (what could be called ‘the materiality’ of that experience) and the doctrinal, liturgical, or ethical expressions of that confession (1997a:121 n.19).

This is an issue that was dealt with from another angle in the section on epistemology in chapter three. In that section it was proposed that a way out of this impasse is through productive and respectful dialogue between different Christian traditions and different nations and cultures within, and across those traditions. It could also be argued that this dialogue on the presence of the Word and Spirit is one that must take place in missionary dialogue between different religions. In that dialogue the Christian and non-Christian dialogical partner can discern the meaning of Jesus Christ in their lives and in the lives of the other.

Míguez Bonino also says that theology must be aware of the risk of confusing the problem of “power” and the communication of “truth”. The fact of the violence and oppression of the first evangelisation of Latin America does not deny the truth of the gospel. Therefore, ‘to denounce the crime and senselessness of an evangelisation based on power does not mean renouncing the communication of the “truth” of the gospel, even recognizing all the inherent ambiguities in any human formulation and communication of that truth’ (1997a:121 n.19). This has been the tendency of various secular anthropologists and Protestant commentators who were keen to perpetuate the Black Legend¹⁵ and, thereby, “prove” that the evangelisation of Latin America by the first Roman Catholic missionaries was invalid and must be dispensed with. Secular anthropologists say that the violence of the first evangelisation denies modern Christians the right to evangelise. This would also deny the rights of the secular anthropologists to study the people whom they seek to protect. Protestants say that the all the accretions of the first evangelisation must be wiped away before a true evangelisation can take place. This is a simple repetition of the *tabula rasa* policy.¹⁶

Míguez Bonino proposes that ‘native Pentecostalism’ may give Latin American Protestantism a chance of recovering something of a genuine evangelisation. Genuine, in these terms would mean an ‘evangelisation from below’. He wants to see how ‘that a Trinitarian theology will try to see and hear what the Spirit of the Lord—the Jesus Christ who is present—does in the faith of those popular sectors to make real the unity of the eternal Word of Creation, the historic flesh of Jesus Christ and the faith experience of the people’ (1997a:121-122).

Míguez Bonino is concerned that evangelisation, praxis and worship of the Protestant churches of Latin America is faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ and faithful to the context in which it is placed. He rejects the pride of that tradition of Latin American Protestantism, which believes that because it possesses the Bible, that it is the owner of the truth; this is a remnant of the colonialist and imperialist missionary strategies of both Catholic and Protestant churches. True evangelisation can only take place when all tradition—cultural and religious—is placed before the benchmark of the Word of God in Jesus Christ, and it is recognised that the Spirit of God is active in all cultural and religious traditions. Míguez Bonino is, thereby, attempting to prepare Latin American Protestants for the dialogue with other belief systems that is inevitable in multi-cultural and multi-religious Latin America.

¹⁵ The Black Legend is the idea that the Spanish and Portuguese conquerors were directly responsible for the extermination of entire Indigenous populations.

¹⁶ The Tabula Rasa policy was the belief that the missionaries has to completely eliminate of vestiges of the old religion before beginning evangelisation.

Social Involvement

A second significant contextual issue is what Míguez Bonino calls ‘the most pressing and debated question in the Protestant world, namely our responsibility concerning the problems of our societies’ (1997a:122). Various theological traditions have theological problems in getting involved in social and political action (cf. 1973h) and others have attempted to articulate theologically their involvement (cf. 1964b). He identifies one of the problems of Latin American Protestantism’s social and political quietism is that it has viewed Christology and soteriology from a purely priestly framework. Christ is the one who cleanses from sin via his atoning sacrifice; he has paid the price with his blood and washes away sin. Míguez Bonino calls this a reductionist and unilateral reading of the Scriptures. It should be impossible to ignore that Jesus Christ himself, in the gospels takes up and assumes the prophetic tradition of the Old Testament (cf. 1979d:282). The reductionist reading of the Bible, views the stories of Jesus’ life and ministry; his identification with the weak; his prophetic denunciations of injustice; his works of power on behalf of the sick and possessed; his preaching and ethical demands as a preface to the passion narratives. Míguez Bonino notes, ironically that this is where dispensationalist fundamentalists and the ultraliberal existentialist Rudolf Bultmann agree! (1997a:122). The social gospel, which attempted to recapture that prophetic perspective by centring upon the “social principles” of Jesus’ teaching, was not able to integrate this with a wider theological vision. The Charismatic movement’s concentration on Christ as Lord and the consequent central focus of discipleship has prompted a move towards a wider Christology but has not been able to define the deeper social demands of the gospel. The prophetic tradition of Jesus, based in a theology of the covenant sees: *‘redemption as liberation from slavery to the oppressive powers of history—and not only from personal or collective guilt—and for a covenant that requires the practice of justice, mercy and fidelity—a covenant of shalom not and not only of eschatological salvation’* (1997a:122; italics in original).

Various studies have shown that the movement generated by Jesus Christ moved in the prophetic tradition, within the context of conflict present in the first century after Christ. ‘In Latin America, these studies confirm a hermeneutic of the gospels centred in the message of the Kingdom and the assuming of Jesus of the “tradition of the poor” in conflict with the religious and political leadership of the dominant classes of Judaism and of the imperial powers’ (1997a:123). Jesus must be viewed within that prophetic tradition. This does not mean replacing an exclusively priestly framework with an exclusively prophetic one, but rather attempting to unify them. Míguez Bonino puts it in the following way: ‘The Suffering Servant who bears the burden of sin and frees us from guilt to begin a new life is also the prophet who cleanses the temple of the money changers and calls us to a covenant of justice and shalom’ (1997a:123). He agrees with Elsa Tamez’ work on the Pauline tradition as: “free from all condemnation” to be able to love and serve in truth and justice’ (1997a:124; cf. Tamez 1993).

This priestly-prophetic view calls for a trinitarian Christology. Míguez Bonino maintains that a Christology that is aware of the work of Word and Spirit within the triune God can understand the God who works in invitation and judgement in search of shalom and justice. This is the work of invitation to participate in God’s project of the Kingdom of God and judgement of those people

and structures which militate against justice and shalom. He concludes in the following way.

That same Jesus Christ who summons us to participate in his work in society and history is the one whose teaching and historical action define the content of peace and justice, and who, in the power of the Holy Spirit, enables us to discern the modes and characteristics of our participation as believers and as churches in the historical present in which we are called to serve (1997a:124).

Anything less is not pious neutrality but treason toward the gospel.

Pneumatology

The final contextual issue discussed by Míguez Bonino in this trinitarian framework is ‘The Trinity and Christ in the Spirit.’ Latin American Protestantism has always been strongly pneumatological. It is seen in the “revival” of the Holiness Movement of the nineteenth century and the Pentecostalism of the twentieth century. None of these movements, however, have truly developed a theology of the Holy Spirit, and much less a Pneumatology, in trinitarian perspective. The work of the Spirit may have been defined as a seal in the life of the believer in classical Protestantism or the source of the ecstatic experiences within the Pentecostal movement—but the role of the Spirit in these movements has never been related to the overarching purposes of God.

Míguez Bonino proposes that, within his trinitarian Christology, the relationship Christ/Spirit should be examined in two directions: ‘the freedom and power of the Spirit and the discernment of the Spirit’ (1997a:125).

In the language of the Bible the Spirit is seen as power: the power of the triune God at work in the world—in nature and history—in order to accomplish the purpose of God. The presence of Jesus Christ established the word and power in the midst of the world. It is artificial, and a product of hellenistic rather than biblical to set ‘Christologies of the Word’ over against ‘Christologies of the Spirit.’ Both Old and New Testaments bear witness to the fact that both word and spirit include notions of, on one hand ‘action, power and completion,’ and on the other, ‘purpose, will and revelation’. Through the Word and the Spirit, God reveals and manifests God’s will—that is God’s own character—and also realises it dynamically in nature and history.

Latin American Pentecostalism has understood the Spirit in terms of redemptive power but that power is restricted to the redemption of the individual or, in the widest sense, in the redemption of the church. The world, as the arena of the Spirit, does not enter into Pentecostal theology. Therefore, the redemption of the whole of creation spoken about in Romans 8, or the power of the Spirit which inspired Cyrus, or even the Spirit who made Balaam’s donkey speak, or who anoints Melchizedek the pagan priest/king, is unknown. Consequently, the Spirit is understood to work within the church for the benefit of and edification of the church but is not understood to be active in the world; speaking into the concrete context of world events; and without doubt not speaking to the church through the world. Even with its pneumatological inclination Latin American Protestantism has tended to limit the Spirit’s work to safe ecclesial pathways. Not only is the Spirit’s work

restricted but the church's prophetic role in the world is constrained or even submerged (1997a:126).

The recognition of the freedom and power of the Holy Spirit to work both in world and church leads to the need for a 'discernment of the Spirit' (1997a:126). Without doubt, 'power' is much desired in Pentecostal and Charismatic circles. It brings leadership, prestige and influence. The question that Míguez Bonino asks is whether that power is always of the Holy Spirit. Bearing in mind that in the New Testament "discernment" is always a gift and so is not a mechanical formula, there is still the need for certain criteria of discernment. The trinitarian purposes of God provide these criteria. Biblically speaking, the Holy Spirit of the Triune God gives, protects and redeems life. The Holy Spirit is the spirit of the God of the covenant who demands justice and establishment of shalom. So Míguez Bonino claims: 'that when the power and freedom of the Spirit are invoked and claimed for actions and conduct that conspire against life, justice and mercy, we have reason to *doubt* that it be *the* Holy Spirit' (1997a:127).

In the New Testament there is a double relationship between Christ and the Spirit. On the one hand Christ comes in the power of the Spirit and on the other Christ imparts the Spirit. 'The Spirit that Jesus Christ imparts is none other than that in which he himself acts, now "interpreted" and defined in the very activity of the Son' (1997a:127). He believes, therefore, that, although the formula is unimportant, the Western creedal addition of the *filioque* clause is justified (cf. Moltmann 1981:178-187). The presence of the power and freedom of Spirit is not legitimised in the spectacular manifestations of healings, miracles, and exorcisms but in the fruit of the Spirit. Paul's lengthy discussion of love and mutual acceptance and respect in I Corinthians 12-14 demonstrate this clearly. The centre of these discussions of course is the hymn to love in chapter 13. To declare Christ as Lord is Paul's ultimate criterion for the presence of the Spirit but those who claim to have the presence of the Spirit must act according to the Spirit (Romans 1:8; Galatians 5:16, 25; Colossians 2:6). So Míguez Bonino repeats his assertion: 'When divine power is used as a means of self-aggrandizement and domination or exploitation for economic gain, faithfulness to the gospel obliges us to doubt the legitimacy of such gifts' (1997a:127). The character of the Spirit is revealed in the Scriptures and especially in the life of Jesus Christ. When the power of the Holy Spirit is claimed then the expressions of that Spirit will be in accordance with the life and character of Jesus Christ.

Each of the contextual issues treated by Míguez Bonino in the light of his christologically focussed trinitarianism, have significant consequences for the mission of the church in the Latin American Protestant churches. Clearly, the issue of Christian witness to those of non-Christian faiths and even to those of other Christian denominations is enhanced by a serious reflection upon the relationship between Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Míguez Bonino is correct not to dislocate the eternal Word from the person of Jesus Christ, witnessed to in the gospels, but he is also right to emphasise the fact that the eternal Word is also related to the Spirit of God, who is present in the world. Without the first Christ's work is only done for the benefit of the church, and not directly for the benefit of the world. Without the latter there is no possibility of seeing the work of Christ in other peoples, faiths, and cultures.

The issue of Christian action is also enhanced by Christological trinitarianism. The salvific work of Christ should never be separated from the Old Testament understanding of salvation. ‘Physical’ and ‘spiritual’ elements of salvation are not two separate entities in the Old Testament; they are united in the covenant. The covenant is always the work of the Word and Spirit of God. Only when theologians recognise that Christ stood in both the priestly and prophetic traditions of the Old Testament can they truly integrate the ethical preaching and teaching of Christ with his priestly role.

The issue of the place of the Holy Spirit in Christian mission is enriched by a Christological trinitarian reflection. In the Bible, the Holy Spirit accomplishes the will of God, in creation, inspiration and redemption. The Spirit’s power is never limited to the church; it is active in the world. The Spirit reveals God’s character to the world and is thus the spirit of mission. Discernment of that Spirit’s activity in the world and the church is, therefore, vital. The Spirit is the spirit of the covenant. That covenant is a covenant of justice and peace. Any activity—whether in the Church or world—that claims to be of the Holy Spirit will comply with those criteria of the covenant. The Spirit is also the spirit of Christ, and so the Spirit’s activity will also correspond to what is seen in the life of Christ as recorded in the gospels.

6.4.4 *A Trinitarian Missiology for Latin American Protestantism*

*Mission as Material Principle*¹⁷

This study has argued that Míguez Bonino’s theology can be described as ‘faith seeking effectiveness.’ This section investigates how he has expressed this in terms of ‘mission’ as the material principle of a Latin American Protestant theology. Although Latin American Protestant theology has often looked to the *sola fide, sola scriptura, solus Christus* formula, or justification by faith as the material principle for its existence and its self-understanding, Míguez Bonino argues that ‘mission’ could also be thought of as its material principle. It is true that Latin American Protestantism has affirmed the authority of the Bible, the doctrine of justification by faith consistently and even aggressively over the years. These have been witnesses to ‘a new transforming, and vital experience into which Latin American people were invited to participate’ (1997a:130). This is clearly true of the “Evangelical”¹⁸ and Pentecostal faces of Latin American Protestantism but, is also true of the “Liberal” face. Early liberal leaders—normally but not always missionaries—always considered their presence in Latin America to be essentially ‘missionary.’ Evidence for this is to be found in their participation in the work of the IMC and Life and Work Conferences (1916, 1925 and 1929.) Although ‘healthy doctrine’ was always a concern for these leaders the life and witness of the believer was always more important. This is probably the reason that Faith and Order (FO) never took root in Latin America. ‘Unity as mission—evangelising and social—makes sense in the self-understanding of Latin American Protestantism; unity as a predominantly doctrinal and ecclesiastical project does not evoke interest or response’ (1997a:131). Even those ecumenical organisations with their origin in Latin America, such as ISAL,

¹⁷ The formal principle is the basis or authority upon which a belief is based, whereas the material principle is the central tenet of a religious body.

¹⁸ In the Anglo-Saxon sense of the word.

UNELAM and CLAI are mainly concerned with mission. Consequently, Míguez Bonino argues 'mission' should be seen as the 'material principle' of Latin American Protestant theology.

This 'material principle' ought to be understood as 'a theological orientation which, as the best expression of the life and dynamic of the religious community, will give coherence and consistency to the understanding of the gospel and become a point of reference for the theological building up of the community' (1997a:131). It is not 'an explicit theological formulation but rather is an "ethos" that permeates the speech, worship, and life of the Protestant community, a self-understanding manifested in all attitudes, conflicts, and priorities' (1997a:131).

It is significant to note that this proposition is also clear in the early nineteen sixties. In a paper given as one of the plenary sessions of the first CELA (1961), Míguez Bonino affirms that the centre of the New Testament and the Christian faith is a message. That message is Jesus Christ (1962c:71). It is 'the totality of what we proclaim; the totality of word and action that testifies to Christ: that of the believer and that of the church (1962c:69). Verbal testimony is 'the essential articulated and the most identifiable form of this message' (1962c:69) but is also 'attitude of life, worship, the direction of our church, the life of the believers in the world, their struggles and sufferings' (1962c:69). Mission in word and deed is central to Latin American Protestantism's self-identification.

The way Míguez Bonino describes how mission 'expresses the life and dynamic' of the community and 'gives it coherence' in its self expression and its understanding of the gospel recalls Antonio Gramsci's notion of historical organic ideologies, described in chapter three. Gramsci said that these ideologies 'have a validity which is "psychological"; they "organize" human masses, they form the terrain on which human beings move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle, etc' (Gramsci 1971:367). In Latin American Protestantism, mission functions by uniting, organising, and giving self-expression in identity and struggle.

This also demonstrates how Míguez Bonino sees mission as the locus not only of theology but also of the life of the church. It is the point from which the church understands itself and from where faith seeks effectiveness.

Míguez Bonino is not unaware of the ambiguous nature of 'mission' in Latin America. Anglo-Saxon missionary movements of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries rode the wave of colonial and neo-colonial expansion and their "ethos" also took on the distinctions of that movement. Although Míguez Bonino rejects the notion that mission was directly related to British and North American imperial expansion, he asks:

To what extent has the very self-understanding that presided and mobilised the tremendous European and North American missionary enterprise of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as reflected in attitudes, worship, and theology, borne the marks of the "colonialist" spirit? (1997a:132).

The Methodist missionary movement reflected the emerging Capitalist ethos and assumed the fact that God had raised up the British Empire to take the gospel to the heathen. In the United States this ethos was transformed into the idea of 'manifest destiny' in attitudes toward the neo-colonialist project. It is also reflected in the

hymnody of the early nineteenth century.¹⁹ The missionary movement that planted churches in Latin America had internalised colonial ideology and had integrated it into its theology and mission practice.

This leads Míguez Bonino to ask two penetrating questions. These questions form the context for Míguez Bonino's the search for a new missionary theology:

First, has the postcolonial mission, or even anti-colonial mission and evangelization, which has changed the designation of boards and of missionary personal—boards of global ministries, fraternal workers, sharing of resources—found a theological articulation coherent with the desired change. Second. Perhaps more important, have the imperialist characteristics that marked the ethos and language of missions that trained us remained imprinted on our native evangelization (1997a:134).

Míguez Bonino's answer would be “no” and “yes” respectively. No, foreign mission boards have not found a theological articulation to express their postcolonial or anti-colonial mission work and yes, the ‘ethos and language’ of those who planted the churches in Latin America has remained imprinted on the life and ethos of Latin American missionary enterprise. The criterion of Latin American Protestant theology and identity maybe ‘missionary’ but this identity has been deeply influenced by the ‘imperialist characteristics’ that marked the missionary movement that planted Latin American Protestant churches and trained its leaders. The church now must seek a new theological articulation in a trinitarian missionary theology.

A New Trinitarian Missionary Theology

The early twentieth century saw the articulation of various theologies of mission in order to integrate the two theological concepts of “mission” and “church”. Míguez Bonino states that in this regard: ‘there have been two dominant and fruitful efforts: an ecclesiological missiology and a missiology of the sovereignty of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God’ (1997a:136). These have helped to begin to overcome the imperialist ethos of the missionary movement, but he fears that they could very easily give way to a new imperialism; this is especially true of the Kingdom of God. He is convinced that in Latin America ‘the option for the poor’ has partially countered this tendency. For example, Jon Sobrino identifies the Christ who announces the Kingdom of God with the Christ who identifies with the poor (Sobrino 1984:40-53). Emilio Castro shows how the Christ who reigns is the servant Christ (Castro 1985:55-56).

Using the words of Wilhelm Andersen, he proposes: ‘Theologically we must dig even deeper; we must trace out the originating impulse in faith in the triune God; from that standpoint alone can we see the missionary enterprise synoptically in its relationship to the Kingdom of God in its relationship to the World’ (1997a:138).

Although, the church and the Kingdom of God are both biblical and evangelical, Míguez Bonino believes, however, that: ‘these same motivations are strengthened and deepened when the ultimate horizon is ‘the very life of God’ and hence the mission is not only obedience and witness but also contemplation, prayer,

¹⁹ Míguez Bonino quotes the hymn by Reginald Heber (1783-1826), *From Greenland's Icy Mountains*, which is based on Acts 16:9.

praise' (1997a:139; author's italics). Essentially it is participation in who God 'is' and what God 'does.'

Míguez Bonino believes that the Christological hymns of Ephesians and Colossians describe this participation. The inclusion of the gentiles into the church is placed into the framework of the mystery of God's will and the unity of all things under Christ. Humanity, in its totality is included into the very life of God through Jesus Christ. It is this God who introduced the believer into the realms of the mystery, 'which is none other than that love of God which dwells by faith in the believer' and introduces him or her into "All the fullness of God" (Eph 3:14-19) (1997a:139). To be a believer in Christ is to be part of the life of the triune God.

Míguez Bonino explores this assertion in terms of the trinitarian affirmations made earlier. Later theology expressed Paul's statements in terms of uniting the economic Trinity—what God does (the *missio Dei*)—with the immanent Trinity (*opera Dei personalia*)—the operation of who God is. The acts of God witnessed to in the Bible, are indeed a true and authentic image of who God is. There is no way to know God—be it through Gnostic, mystic or magical means—other than the revelation of God through God's acts. He uses the words of Leonardo Boff to explain his understanding:

Now, God's revelation to us is the actual being of God. So if God appears to us as a Trinity, this is because God's actual being is a Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) not just for us, but in itself. If God appears to us as source mystery and unoriginated origin, so as absolute transcendence, and so as Father, this is because God is Father. If God is revealed to us as enlightening Word and Truth, and so as Son or eternal Logos, this is because God is Son. If God is communicated to us as love and power for the purposes of carrying out God's final plan, and so as Holy Spirit, this because God is Holy Spirit. The divine reality of the Trinity makes the manifestation of the divine in history be trinitarian, and the truly trinitarian manifestation of God makes us understand that God is in fact a Trinity of Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Boff 1988:96 quoted in 1997a:140; cf. Boff 1988:144).

This cosmic approach in Míguez Bonino's later work is a shift from his 'anthropocentric' emphasis or 'christological humanisation' of his earlier work. In the nineteen seventies, he stresses the fact that Christ as the true human makes the believer more human by being made like Christ, whereas here Míguez Bonino highlights the incorporation of the believing subject into the very life of God. Deification has replaced humanisation.

In regard to perichoresis Míguez Bonino emphasised the internal life of God; the inter-communication and interpenetration of the hypostaseis of the Godhead. There is also an 'extrovert' element in perichoresis. It is an overflowing of that life to all created reality—the world, human history, human beings themselves. This is expressed in the sendings of God. God is always sending and being sent into the world. Although the Nativity and Easter are definitive and ultimately unrepeatable historical events, they find their source in the eternal mission of 'the very trinitarian reality' (1997a:140); the very life of God. Christ's birth into this world and his death upon the cross, ultimately are expressions of the divine intra-trinitarian life.

Humanity is included into the *missio Dei* as an expression of its incorporation into the *opera Dei personalia*. The question of the role of the church in God's mission in the world; the nature of God's involvement in the world; and the

tension between concepts such as ‘humanisation’ and ‘evangelisation’ were issues that the ecumenical movement struggled to come to terms with after the Willingen meetings of the IMC (1952).

The inclusion of humanity into the divine life and mission, raises the thorny issue of synergism; human mediation in the acts of God. The question can be framed in the following way: if Christ invites humanity to participate in his work in society and history, how is that human work ‘incorporated’ or ‘assumed’ into the life and work of the trinitarian God?

For Míguez Bonino, there is no doubt that the Bible uses salvific terminology when describing human acts of justice and rescue. Put bluntly, human beings, in a limited way, provide salvation. The human subject could be a king, judge, leader, or *even* a member of *the common* people. The salvific act could be described as redeeming, liberating or restoring. In these cases, it is always clear that this salvific act is limited. Biblically speaking, God is always ‘the saviour’ par excellence. Míguez Bonino expresses that ‘the priority and singularity of divine intervention remains central to the biblical language of salvation, even when human beings are frequently the mediators or agents of God’s action’ (1999i:73). The relationship between those human acts and divine acts must be theologically articulated, avoiding synergism: traditionally, the doctrine that individual salvation is achieved through a combination of human will and divine grace.

Earlier Míguez Bonino dealt with the problem of synergism in the framework of the covenant (1983b:250-253) but in the late nineteen nineties, he avails himself of the Christological concept of *enhypostasia* to deal with this. Strictly speaking *enhypostasia* describes the relationship between the divine and human nature of Christ. It was probably Leontius of Byzantium (485-543) who first used the term to describe the notion of ‘finding one’s being in another.’

Guillermo Hansen, in his thesis on the Trinity and Liberation Theology, applies this concept to the incorporation of human activity into the divine. In a carefully worded section, Hansen argues for, what he calls, ‘A Trinitarian Solution for an Old Synergistic Habit’ (Hansen 1994:859-870). Hansen is attempting to resolve one of Liberation Theology’s perceived insoluble contradictions, namely ‘the allegedly synergistic relationship between divine and human agencies’ (Hansen 1994:860; italics in original).

Hansen’s understanding of this post-Chalcedonic term is heavily mediated by Barth. In the double election of Jesus Christ, God chose to posit within the divine being the existence of another being, yet still to remain God. The Lordship of the Father is what Hansen calls ‘contingent upon the en-hypostatization of the creatural’ (Hansen 1994:866).

Hansen transfers this to his understanding of relationship between divine action and human action. Míguez Bonino summarises Hansen’s conclusions: ‘the divine initiative gets its historical identity as it becomes incorporated (“incarnate”) in human praxis, and human praxis gets its transcendent meaning and its reality as it is assumed by the Holy Spirit’ (1999i:81). Both Míguez Bonino and Hansen are aware of the need to affirm that all human action takes place between the times and is thereby still under God’s judgement. Míguez Bonino further emphasises the fact that Christian action, not only the Christian, that is, to use a phrase of Luther, *simul justus et peccator*.

Humanity is included into God's 'visitations' in an en-hypostatic way. In creation, mission is 'work' or 'labour,' where humanity is included in God's labour of creation in the weekly rhythm of life. The continuing creation of God is made concrete in human labour. God's work exceeds human labour but never empties or alienates it. In salvation, mission is viewed as covenant. Justice, mercy and peace come to life in the law and the obedient community is included in this mission (1999i:72-72). In the sending of the Son, those who believe and who will believe are also incorporated into the mission of the Son (John 17:18). When Paul speaks of 'fulfilling in his body' the redemptive work of Christ (Colossians 1:24) he is expressing this very fact: that he is participating in the life and therefore the mission of the triune God. This is done, of course, in the power of the Spirit: 'In the operation of the Spirit that the Father and Son send, the same Trinity gives "witness" of the truth of the gospel' (1997a:141). Therefore Míguez Bonino can make the bold statement that: 'The evangelizing mission is not an external act carried out by the church but is "the visible face" of the mission of the triune God' (1997a:141); and in an interview says that the mission of the Church is 'the active participation in the purpose of the Triune God in the world' (interview 1997).

So, elaborating on the fact that the work of each member of the Trinity is at the same time the work of all, Míguez Bonino can say that the 'mission' of the Spirit does not only have to do with redemption and sanctification but with the 'total work of the triune God.' This of course includes justice, peace, righteousness—with God's involvement in human life and the history of the world. He concludes: 'Work, government, and human society; witness and service to the gospel; and the building of history are equally participation in the totality of this "mission" of the triune God who is the same Father, Son and Holy Spirit in all that God does' (1997a:141).

There are, however, within the unity of God's work, different dimensions. As the church rightly noted, the Father is not the Son or the Spirit; the Son is not the Father or the Spirit and; the Spirit is not the Father or the Son. God incorporates humanity into the divine task in different ways. And so: 'God's work and our participation in it, in the cultural, social, political, economic, ecclesial, and evangelizing task, is at once recognized and respected, and the particularity of each of these tasks is taken into account' (1997a:142). He concludes:

There are distinctions regarding the proper subject of these acts (organised society, church, individuals); the modality of participation in the varying identities we have as members of society, of families, and of the community of faith; and the way to carry out that participation—the use of power, the spheres of law and gospel, one's own autonomy, loved and ordained by God—in each of these spheres (1997a:142).

Latin American Protestants' "evangelisation" must be located therefore in this framework.

Mission and Evangelisation in the Latin American Protestant Churches

By reducing the missionary task to the announcement of the 'so-called plan of salvation' and inviting people to conversion, Latin American Protestantism has failed to participate fully in the life and work of the triune God. Míguez Bonino believes that the trinitarian framework will help correct the reductionist elements in Latin American Protestant worship, piety and conduct.

Míguez Bonino seeks to apply his framework to some missiological issues. Latin American Protestantism has 'separated evangelisation from service, conversion from the search for justice, worship of God from life in the world, participation in the community of faith from responsibility in society' (1997a:143). It is almost as though it has tried to make a division of labour within the God it worships. The liberals highlight the action of the creator, the evangelicals emphasise work of the saviour and the Pentecostals and Charismatics stress the work of the Comforter.

A truly trinitarian evangelisation—just as a truly trinitarian worship and action—is the invitation to participate in faith in the very life of the triune God and hence in totality of what God has done, is doing and will do to fulfil God's purpose of "being all in all" (1997a:144; cf. 1999i:82).

Evangelisation must be a proclamation of the whole counsel (life and work) of the triune God.

Míguez Bonino then asks the question as to whether evangelisation is at the service of the growth of the church or the transformation of the world. Individual conversion has always been important in the evangelisation campaigns in Latin American Protestantism. Most people were converted, however, through face-to-face contact and through family or friendship relationships. Míguez Bonino thinks there is a danger in focussing exclusively upon numbers. Numerical strength has led to the possibility of political power in some Latin American countries. This has been especially true of Brazil and Guatemala. Protestant politicians are welcomed on the grounds that they will facilitate evangelisation. In this way, political involvement is a means by which to make more converts. The ghosts of Christendom seems to come back to haunt the Latin American Protestantism church.

Míguez Bonino rejects the dichotomy between individual or societal conversion. The dichotomy drives a wedge between the persons of the Trinity. It separates the work of the Creator and the Redeemer.

True evangelisation must aim at the personal nucleus that makes a human subject responsible for his/her own existence as well as the mesh of surrounding interpersonal and structural relationships which condition and constitute the area of existence and action (1997a:147).

Again Míguez Bonino refers to the concept of *perichoresis* to explain the dynamics of the individual invitation life and faith and how it relates to society.

If evangelization introduces the human being to the intratrinitarian communion which is the life of God, it is not the isolated individual nor the depersonalized multitude which reproduces that life in history, but the community of love, participation, purpose: a community of worship, proclamation, personal growth, in which the participants are "sent" and "send each other mutually" to the multiplicity of tasks of "the missions" of the triune God (1997a:147; cf. 1949a and 1949b).

The central locus of a true evangelisation is the community of faith. The trinity is a paradigm of the life of the community. It is what strengthens and equips the believer for her/his life in the world. Conversion is a personal but not individual experience. Conversion is incorporation into the life of the trinity which is expressed

in the life of the community; which in turn concerned with the community life of the world.

The means and methods of evangelisation must also be subject to examination in the light of intra- and extra-trinitarian nature of God's self communication. There is no subordination of God's self communication between Father, Son and Spirit, but there is mutual submission in love. This divine conversation was clear in the ministry of Jesus Christ. His reflected the character of God by using the means of communication that reflected the trinitarian life (1997a:148). God chose this way to approach creation and the creatures that live in, and this is the paradigm that Christians should use in their communication of the gospel.

6.5 FINAL OBSERVATIONS

Míguez Bonino did not reflect deeply on the doctrine of the Trinity until late in his career. His stated context for his trinitarian missiology is the theological reductionism of much of Latin American Protestantism. Almost all theology has been reduced to Christology and Christology is swallowed up into soteriology. This soteriology, moreover, is individualistic and subjective. Theology has to do with God and the soul of the individual. Therefore, the Trinity has never really informed Latin American piety and practice. Míguez Bonino believes that reflection on some basic trinitarian affirmations will ameliorate this reductionism as well as deepen and strengthen theological reflection on the Kingdom of God and ecclesiology.

The doctrine of the Trinity is the expression of what the Scriptures reveal about the history of God with God's people. God is not revealed as Trinity in a philosophical formula but rather in God's relationship with Israel and the church. Additionally, Míguez Bonino wants to recover the Cappadocian idea of the Trinity as the 'communion of persons.' The triune God 'is a permanent conversation, a communion of love, an identity of purpose and unity of action: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.' Finally, he wants to emphasise the fact that 'what the triune God does in the world—in creation, in reconciliation, in redemption—is always, at the same time and in concerted fashion, the work of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.' Latin American Protestantism has tried to formulate a 'division of labour' within the Trinity according to theological tradition: historical churches relate to the Father; Evangelical churches relate to the Son and the Pentecostal churches relate to the Holy Spirit. A trinitarian theology should help to eliminate this theological and practical reductionism. He examines contextual issues in this light.

In regard to Christ among the World Religions he suggests that the Jesus Christ of the New Testament should not be separated from the creative Word of God and that the teaching, message, life and death, resurrection and lordship of the son of Mary should not be disengaged from the Word and Spirit of God. The life of that Jesus is the measure of all religion and culture. In regard to social action he asserts that Latin American Protestantism needs to recapture the prophetic tradition of Jesus. That tradition sees: '*redemption as liberation from slavery to the oppressive powers of history*—and not only from personal or collective guilt—and *for a covenant that requires the practice of justice, mercy and fidelity*—a covenant of *shalom* not and not only of eschatological salvation.' Finally, he explores the Trinity and the Spirit in

terms of the freedom and power of the Spirit, on one hand, and discernment of the Spirit on the other. The Holy Spirit of the Triune God gives, protects and redeems life. The Holy Spirit is the spirit of the God of the covenant who demands justice and establishment of shalom.

In this context, Míguez Bonino examines how mission can be understood as material principle of a Latin American Protestant theology. Mission, of course, is an ambiguous concept, having close association with imperialism and colonialism. He believes that a trinitarian missionary theology will help avoid Latin American Protestantism falling into colonialist tendencies. He attempts to briefly apply these reflections to some issues within the mission and evangelisation of the Latin American Protestant church. He concludes: ‘A truly trinitarian evangelisation—just as a truly trinitarian worship and action—is the invitation to participate in faith in the very life of the triune God and hence in totality of what God has done, is doing and will do to fulfil God’s purpose of “being all in all.”’

The influences upon Míguez Bonino’s trinitarian work are multiple. However, it is clear from this chapter that Míguez Bonino is drawing upon orthodox trinitarian articulations, particularly from the Cappadocian Fathers as well as Leontius of Byzantium and John of Damascus. However, those articulations are often mediated by theologians such as Karl Barth, Jürgen Moltmann, Anastasios of Androussa and select Latin American theologians.²⁰ Therefore, to engage in source criticism would be futile.

In this context, it is important to mention how the work of J.E. Leslie Newbigin (1909-1998), and especially his book, *Open Secret* (1978) are strangely absent from Míguez Bonino’s trinitarian reflections. *Open Secret* was written as an intentionally trinitarian missiology, yet Míguez Bonino does not comment on any aspect of that book, or indeed any of Newbigin’s trinitarian work. This is also strange because Newbigin and Míguez Bonino were friends for many years. Newbigin spoke at the first CELA (1961); they shared a missionary and ecumenical passion; and sat in many meetings over the years. Perhaps Míguez Bonino felt that the context of Newbigin’s work was too different from the Latin American context to be of use, or that Newbigin’s trinitarian reflections are too Christocentric and do not develop the Father or the Holy Spirit enough (cf. Goheen 2000:163-164). However, this could also be said of Míguez Bonino’s own work.

Some final comments are in order. Míguez Bonino is attempting to work out a trinitarian missiology that is faithful to his praxis driven methodology. In the context of the church’s commission to bear witness in the specific context of Latin America and from within the reality of Latin American Protestantism, he reflects contextually upon the Trinity and applies concretely to the context from which he started. It is only in deepening and strengthening theological reflection in the light of the Trinity that a Latin American Protestant theology be faithful to the gospel and faithful to the context. It is ‘faith seeking effectiveness.’

Míguez Bonino is also attempting to deepen and strengthen his work on the Kingdom of God. Earlier in his ministry, he is insistent that the Kingdom of God is established by God’s actions. However, these divine actions are not developed in trinitarian perspective: they are either the actions of God in divine unity or they are actions of one of the members of the Trinity. In his later, more developed trinitarian

²⁰ It is instructive to note that in the early sixties he translated Reinholt Seeberg’s classic text-book on the history of doctrine (1963f) into Spanish, which must have led him to reflect upon trinitarian formulae.

theology, these actions are expressed as the actions of the triune God: in creation; in redemption; and in inspiration and regeneration. He is concerned, not only to emphasise how Father, Son or Holy Spirit are involved in the establishment of divine rule, but how the members of the Trinity are jointly involved and complement one another in this process. In this way he hopes to avoid the theological reductionism and 'division of labour' described above.

Also, in the context of the Kingdom, the task of missionary theology is to discover how to respond to God's action and thereby take part in the establishment of the divine Kingdom. This raises the problem of *synergism*: how does human action relate to divine action without one subsuming the other. Míguez Bonino's earlier 'dialectical monist approach' was satisfactory at the time, but he felt the need for a more theological articulation of this issue. He believes he found it in the christological concept of *enhypostasia* as expressed by Leontius of Byzantium. Míguez Bonino declares that 'the divine initiative gets its historical identity as it becomes incorporated ("incarnate") in human praxis, and human praxis gets its transcendent meaning and its reality as it is assumed by the Holy Spirit.' The question could be asked as to whether this later articulation avoids the danger of *synergism* or of 'total immanentism' (1979d:272) expressed in chapter four. However, the point being made here is that Míguez Bonino was attempting to deepen and strengthen his earlier reflections through a trinitarian key.

In regard to Míguez Bonino's reflections on ecclesiology, he emphasised his belief that the church is the community gathered around the twin poles of faith in Christ and commitment to the poor. These poles are not two points joined by a line along which Christians locate themselves; i.e. greater commitment to Christ means less commitment to the poor and vice versa. Rather the poles are dialectically related; commitment to Christ is commitment to the poor. In trinitarian perspective, Míguez Bonino sees that commitment to Christ is commitment to the concerns of the triune God. The triune God is the God of life, who is committed to every aspect of human life. The *missio Dei* brings human beings, and indeed the whole humanity into the realms of the *opera Dei personalia*. The mission of the church is to announce and live out in its witness, action and worship the reality of that 'very life of God.'

This also deepens Míguez Bonino's reflections upon ecumenism and mission. In his writings on ecumenism, he is concerned that ecumenical discourse should not fall into ideological pronouncements with no basis in reality. Talk about church unity can easily become a smokescreen, which covers up the true rift within the church. These are not doctrinal and structural rifts but rather economic and social ones. Church unity cannot be affirmed when the majority of the church and the world lives in poverty and a privileged minority live in luxury. His reflections on the action and being of God reveal the problem of the breach between the action and being of the church. Unity in action and unity in being are linked. In the same way that there is no gap between the economic and immanent trinitaries or, put in another way, between the *missio Dei* and the *opera Dei personalia*; there should be no rift between unity of action and unity of being. Just as God is who God is revealed to be, so the church's actions should reflect its being. Too often what the church is and how it acts are diametrically opposed.

It is apparent that Míguez Bonino could have continued to reflect upon other theological and missiological themes in light of trinitarian theology. It must be

recalled, however, that when he wrote *Faces of Latin American Protestantism* he was almost 70 years old. Nevertheless, it is regrettable that he did not do so. It is the task of other Latin American theologians to take up this task and so provide the Latin American Protestant churches with the challenge to a more genuine evangelisation, action and worship of the triune God.

7 CONCLUSIONS: THE RELEVANCE AND CHALLENGE OF THE MISSIONARY THEOLOGY OF MÍGUEZ BONINO

Mission is the privilege and responsibility of the whole people of God, mission is the “ecumenical” responsibility of the whole people of God, mission is the announcement and the making present of the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of *shalom*, of *tsedaqah*, of *hesed*—by the whole people of God (2004b:431 Italics in original).

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This final chapter will explore the relevance and challenge of the missionary theology of Míguez Bonino in two directions: in terms of the context of the mission of the global Church and in terms of the development of the Latin American missionary movement.

7.2 THE GLOBAL CHURCH-IN-MISSION

Chapter one noted how mission and missiology were searching for a new self identity. The relevance and challenge of the missionary theology of Míguez Bonino is considered here in the context of the mission of the global Church in the contemporary world. ‘Mission’ is not to be understood as simply international or intercultural mission but rather the Church-in-mission, in six continents.

In a paper written for the Iguassu Dialogue held in Brazil (1999), the Peruvian Evangelical theologian, Samuel Escobar reflected upon the state of world mission at the beginning of the Twenty-first century. He mentioned eleven areas for reflection: the translatable gospel, the global Church, the new balance within world Christianity, globalisation and contextualisation, world poverty and injustice, the end of Christendom, the post-modern culture, a new religiosity, the growth of fundamentalisms, the Pentecostal phenomenon and the rediscovery of Biblical patterns for mission (Escobar 2000:25-46). These eleven topics can be grouped into four main areas. This section will use Escobar’s reflections as a framework and reflect upon the challenge of Míguez Bonino’s missionary theology to the global Church-in-mission under four headings: the context of the Church-in-Mission; the socio-political context; the religious context; and theological education.

7.2.1 *Context of the Global Church-in-mission*

The Church that carries out the missionary mandate in the world is experiencing massive and rapid change. One of the most fundamental changes over the past fifty years has been the end of Christendom and the growth of global Christianity. This is experienced in various ways. Christianity has lost power in the Western world.

‘Christendom presupposed the predominance of Christianity in Western societies and a certain degree of influence of Christian ideas and principles on the social life of nations and on their international politics’ (Escobar 2000:34). Consequently Christians expected their society to uphold Christian values and ethics and in regard to mission, missionaries expected their governments to support or protect them. This is no longer so.

Additionally, ‘colossal migration movements caused by economic change allow Christians and churches in the West and everywhere else to experience the amazing rich diverse varieties of expression of the Christian faith’ (Escobar 2000:27). Western Christians have begun to wrestle with multiculturalism. Growing churches in the traditional sending countries are made up of immigrant communities. African, Asian and Latin American Churches are those that are most vibrant and missionary within Europe and North America. New and foreign forms of worship are being experienced by traditional Christians.

Moreover, the centre of gravity of mission has moved southwards. Churches in Europe and North America, the traditionally Christian and missionary sending nations, are experiencing stagnation or even decline, whereas Churches in Africa, Asia and Latin America are experiencing rapid and vibrant growth and are even sending missionaries. There is a ‘new balance of numerical and spiritual strength in the Christian world’ (Escobar 2000:28).

Finally, the growth of the Pentecostal movement is a new phenomenon. Due to urbanisation, new groups of people have emerged in many cities around the world. These are often formed from previously hidden rural populations with little formal education. ‘The expansion of Popular Protestantism in the form of Pentecostal and Pentecostal-like Churches among these emerging masses has been one of the most surprising phenomena of our century’ (Escobar 2000:40). The existence of these Churches challenges world Christianity in various ways: how does Pentecostal spirituality challenge traditional spirituality? How does the ecumenical movement relate to these Churches? If the majority of the Protestant Christians in the world are either Pentecostal or Pentecostal-like, then how should mission theology engage with their theology? These questions will become urgent as the twenty first century progresses. An analysis of the growth, spirituality, and expression of being and mission of the Pentecostal Churches is an essential task for the global Church. It is especially urgent for the Pentecostal Churches themselves.

Although Míguez Bonino developed his missionary theology in the context of the global south he was in constant dialogue with Northern Christianity. Those Churches were working through the consequences of the end of Christendom; indeed, it could be said that Míguez Bonino, as an active participant in the WCC, was instrumental in accompanying the Northern Churches in that process. Míguez Bonino’s insistence that theology should accompany the Church in its search for missionary effectiveness and obedience, gives a framework for the continuing process of the assimilation of the end of Christendom in the world Church. This is especially true of the more conservative evangelical sector of the Church that, in some quarters, still carries out its mission from within a Christendom model. Additionally, as a Protestant in a predominantly Catholic context, Míguez Bonino never assumed the help of the state for mission efforts. His work as a pastor and a theological educator was rarely done in the context of power and privilege. There is no doubt that Northern agencies accompanied his work but it was essentially carried

out in weakness. How mission can be done without the forces of the state and without the intervention of countries that openly or covertly support Christian mission, will be an important factor in the future.

Míguez Bonino has always done theology in the context of world Christianity and the change of the centre of gravity of world Christianity. For Míguez Bonino, theology done at local level must never lose sight that it is part of a greater whole. Even more strongly, he insists that theology done at global level must have a local expression. This is especially clear in his ecclesiology: global ecumenism must always seek locality.

Additionally, it is also clear in Míguez Bonino's concern that catholicity and contextuality remain in tension. On the one hand, the desire to maintain the unity of global Christianity must not consume contextual expressions of local faith. On the other hand, local expressions must not be allowed to divide the Church. In the context of global Christianity where the stubborn belief still exists that Western theology is the norm and the fact that theologians from rich countries possess considerably greater publishing power than those from the global south, he sees the danger of the global crushing the local as more acute.

Míguez Bonino's concept of mutual accountability is vital in this area. Based upon the belief that all theologies are contextual and one cannot be used as the 'yardstick' for all others, he proposes that global theology moves beyond dialogue to an attitude of 'mutual accountability.' This was first suggested in a paper for the WCC (1986) but is equally applicable in other contexts, both international and ecumenical. Western theologians must be willing to make themselves accountable to theologians from Africa, Asia, and Latin America and not exercise the power given to them by economic factors. On the other hand, Latin American, Asian and African theologians need to have the confidence in their reflections in order to present their insights to Western theologians. This is more than simply respecting the opinions of others; it is being willing to accept correction from Christians from different cultures and different traditions.

Finally, Míguez Bonino challenges the global Church to engage with the Pentecostal Churches. His methodology forced him to reflect upon the Pentecostal phenomenon. He has been open minded enough to take Pentecostals seriously and learn from them. This does not mean that he has not been critical but rather he has been faithful to his methodology in being willing to engage in a critical but sympathetic analysis; to reflect upon this analysis in the light of the Bible and, especially Trinitarian doctrine; and then to engage in a profound dialogue with Pentecostal missionary thinkers and theologians in order to sharpen understanding of their role in the wider Church and in society.

7.2.2 Socio-Political context

Míguez Bonino's missionary theology is not only relevant to the Church-in-mission but also to the context of mission itself. The context of world mission is very complex, and there are many interpretations of it. This section will focus on two areas: globalisation and its link to the growth of poverty; and the rise of fundamentalism; especially Christian fundamentalism.

Globalisation is a highly complex phenomenon and this section does not propose to explain or even describe it; it will be sufficient to make some general

comments. Globalisation has generally spread Western, or more accurately North American, culture across the world. The liberal economic market system has encouraged the diffusion of North American culture, throughout the world and often the subsequent, irreversible and negative changes made upon indigenous cultures. Through news media, films, advertising and franchising, both ideas and products from North America, and to a lesser extent Europe, have been planted in many countries of the global south. Through television stations such as MTV, young people are connected to each other in a way that their parents never experienced.

‘In tension with the globalisation process, we have the rise and expansion of a movement that seeks to affirm local cultures in their search for autonomy and full expression. This may be described as a contextualisation movement’ (Escobar 2000:31). Globalisation is a force of unification but also of uniformity. Contextualisation pulls in the opposite direction. ‘Missionaries will be caught in the tension between globalisation and contextualisation, and they also have to avoid a provincialist attitude that exaggerates contextualisation to the detriment of biblical global awareness’ (Escobar 2000:31).

A further effect of globalisation has been the widening of social inequalities. Escobar rightly notes that on the one hand, globalisation

has generated new wealth and unprecedented comfort, placing the most sophisticated technologies within the reach of the average citizen of the rich nations and of the elites in the poor nations. On the other hand the figures indicate that a large proportion of people are being driven into extreme forms of poverty (Escobar 2000:32).

This has caused uncertainty, suffering and a decline in the quality of life for many. The vast majority of people in poorer nations are suffering not only from poverty but also from the awareness of the widening divide between their lifestyles and the lifestyles of the rich, both those in their own countries and those from rich countries. Globalisation is feeding a sense of despair.

An additional effect of globalisation facing 21st century mission is that of fundamentalism. There has been a staggering growth of Islamic fundamentalism during the past twenty years. There has also been an opposite reaction on the part of Western nations in the form of crusade mentality. ‘Unfortunately many Christians still operate within those categories’ (Escobar 2000:39). Former US President Jimmy Carter said

During the last quarter century, there has been a parallel right-wing movement within American politics, often directly tied to the attributes of like-minded Christian groups. The revolutionary new political principles involve special favours for the powerful at the expense of others, abandonment of social justice, denigration of those who differ, failure to protect the environment, attempts to exclude those who refuse to conform, a tendency toward unilateral diplomatic action and away from international agreements, an excessive inclination toward conflict, and reliance on fear as a means to persuasion. (Carter 2005:43-44).

Escobar says that Christian fundamentalism ‘became a reactionary cultural phenomenon associated with the defence of a conservative political agenda in the United States and with racism, nationalism, blind anti-Communism, and the arms race’ (Escobar 2000:40). This has been expressed in the concept of ‘Manifest

Destiny', which has been part of both North American political and missionary mythology for over a century.

Míguez Bonino challenges the Church in this context. His theology is one that takes the world seriously. He views missionary theology as a contextual reflection on the relationship between God, the world and the Church. Theology cannot only be an upward look towards God; it must also be an inward look towards itself and an outward look towards the world. In theology's upward look towards God, it cannot ignore the fact that the Bible emphasises God's relationship, not only with the Church but also with the world. God's relationship with the world is not peripheral but central to God's character.

Theology that does not take the world into account in theological reflection is ignoring an important element in the process. Theology investigates the way in which the Church exists in the world. The existence and being of the Church cannot be seen as only related to God and the divine Kingdom but also in primary relationship with the world. The Church is part of the world. Theology also investigates the world as the context in which the Church carries out its mission. The actions of the Church are not carried out in a vacuum of obedience, or disobedience to God but rather in the warp and woof of the world. Missionary effectiveness can only be encountered through a deep reflection upon the relationships between God, the world and the Church.

Míguez Bonino's contextual missionary theology, challenges the global Church-in-mission to think practically, contextually and theologically about how genuine expressions of Christian faith can take place in a globalised world. Míguez Bonino accepts that the context of the world must be the starting point of mission. A serious analysis of both macro and micro contexts is necessary if mission is to be genuinely contextual as well as global. He recognises that there is a tension between the global and the local; especially how globalisation has been expressed. Míguez Bonino is convinced that Christian globalisation (oikoumene) must be expressed differently from globalisation as it is expressed commonly in contemporary society.

Additionally, Míguez Bonino's missionary theology developed in a context of increasing poverty. The nineteen sixties and seventies—the years of theological ferment for Míguez Bonino—were years that saw the growth of poverty and violence in Argentina and in the wider context of Latin America. The contemporary context is not exactly the same but Míguez Bonino's insistence upon a profound critical analysis of the socio-political context and the causes of poverty are vital today in context which, in fact, may be even more complex. The churches in North America and Europe—churches that feel under pressure—need to rediscover God's commitment to the poor, so prevalent in Míguez Bonino's theology. God's mission in establishing divine government in a context of injustice; the Church's identity and mission being intimately associated with the struggle of the poor and oppressed and the Trinitarian commitment to justice must be recovered for the health of churches in the richer countries.

Finally, Míguez Bonino's missionary theology challenges Christian fundamentalism, and especially that fundamentalism that associates the gospel with North American Christianity. Míguez Bonino's critical hermeneutics—his epistemology and ideology critique—have exposed the myth of the absolute nature of human knowledge; all theology is partial and incomplete.

Míguez Bonino challenges fundamentalist Christianity to acknowledge the partial nature of its expression of Christianity. This must be done in mutual accountability with others and will expose the ideological presuppositions slipped into biblical and theological interpretation that gives fundamentalism its ideological logic. If this is done, Christian fundamentalism will be released from a form of cultural idolatry that makes it intolerant and vigorously opposed to any expression of Christianity other than its own. It would allow it to recognise that no political, social, religious or missionary project can be totally associated with the gospel or with God's Kingdom. Such association leads to the domestication of the radical challenge of the gospel message.

7.2.3 *Religious and Spiritual context*

The final aspect of the contemporary context for the global Church-in-mission is the religious context. For Míguez Bonino, the religious and spiritual context is very much part of the socio-political context; religions are politically located. However, this section will deal with religion and spirituality separately in order to analyse them as ideological frameworks rather than simply part of a political context.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, modernist and secular philosophers declared the death of God; religion and spirituality would fade away under the acid testing of science. The past forty years have shown how premature this pronouncement has proved to be. Today, more than any time during the past two centuries, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism are experiencing a resurgence of interest. Even in 'secular' Europe and North America, postmodern spirituality has replaced atheism.

It is clear that the resurgence of world religions is directly linked to the rise of fundamentalism, and political factors are extremely important. However, Christianity must develop a theology of religions that moves beyond conflictive doctrines into genuine dialogue. It must be sympathetic to other religions but also be faithful to God's revelation in Jesus Christ.

In regard to postmodernism, Escobar says:

The modern ideologies of indefinite progress and social utopia were actually myths that attracted and mobilised the masses for action. Their failure and collapse have brought awareness of a vacuum and disillusionment about the ability of human reason to give meaning to life and provide answers for deep existential questions (Escobar 2000:38).

This has led to postmodern expressions of life and spirituality filling that vacuum. These include: 'the predominance of feeling and the revolt against reason, the revival of paganism in elements such as the cult of the body, the search of ever more sophisticated forms of pleasure, and the ritualisation of life' (Escobar 2000:35). Missionary theology must move beyond modernist expressions of the Christian faith while remaining faithful to God's truth in Jesus Christ.

In the early nineteen nineties Míguez Bonino began to reflect directly upon other religions as a missiological issue. He attempts to develop a Christologically focussed Trinitarian theology in order to avoid either making absolute or 'relativising' the person of Jesus Christ as the second person of the Trinity. He tries to hold in tension Jesus Christ as the son of Mary and Jesus Christ as the second

person in the Godhead. By emphasising the cosmic second person of the Trinity, Míguez Bonino attempts to identify the activity of the Spirit of Christ in other religions whilst maintaining the connection with the historical Jesus. By emphasising the flesh of the son of Mary, Míguez Bonino is attempting to avoid detaching the Word of God in Christ from the biblical record of God's actions of salvation; something he has insisted upon throughout his career. Given that Míguez Bonino has developed his theology in an anti-colonialist context, this approach may point ways forward for a more profitable dialogue with other religions.

A further way in which Míguez Bonino may be a challenge to missiology done in a postmodernist context is his hermeneutic. His hermeneutical approach is closely related to a postmodern reader response approach. Basing his reflections on the work of Hans Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur, Míguez Bonino recognises that biblical interpretation must not be dogmatic and oppressive but creative and liberative. Using this approach the postmodernist reader can be involved in the creation of new meanings; the construction of new traditions and the formation of new spiritualities.

It must be recognised, however, that a theology profoundly influenced by modernist philosophy and theology, responding to modernist issues, and proposing time-bound solutions is limited in its effectiveness in a postmodern context. Míguez Bonino has drawn upon the philosophies of Karl Marx and Herbert Marcuse, as well as the theologies of Rudolf Bultmann and Karl Barth. His theology has responded to issues that were vital to the nineteen sixties and seventies but some of which are not so important in a postmodern context. His theology proposed solutions that were acceptable for the modernist period but would fail in the contemporary world. Míguez Bonino's hermeneutic can be useful in a postmodernist context, but new approaches to Christian theology, responding to postmodernist concerns, must be developed.

7.2.4 *Theological Education*

Míguez Bonino's missionary theology seriously questions the way theological, pastoral and missionary training is carried out. Primarily, the local congregation is the protagonist of missionary theology and needs to be educated theologically. Theology's primary point of reference is the Church in mission and, more specifically, the experience of the Church members in their mission. Theology, in this perspective ceases to be the preserve of the academic; it is primarily the task of ordinary Christians. The church leader, pastor or missionary accompanies the Church in its mission. In this way the concrete issues of the Church are raised for theological reflection. The role of the academic is to accompany both church and leader in the process of seeking effectiveness in mission. If the church member is the primary protagonist in the theological task, then each church member must have an awareness of biblical and theological themes. The ideal is not that the church member raises the issues for the theologian and the theologian takes these issues away and comes back with the correct answers but rather that the theologian accompanies the Church in the process of analysis, reflection and practical application.

Additionally, missionaries also need to be trained not only to do mission but also to think about mission, in short, they need to be able to do missionary

theology. Missionary training must be theological. Theology cannot be sidelined in missionary training. Inter-cultural missionaries especially need theological formation so as to be able to discern how to read and re-read the gospel from the perspective of the new context.

Moreover, in the light of Míguez Bonino's theology, the traditional way of training pastors also needs a serious review. Pastors should not be trained simply to 'care for the flock' but also to reach out to those outside the Church. If the Church is missionary then the pastoral role does not end with pastoral care; pastoral care serves the missionary mandate of the Church. Church leaders should be committed to mission both locally and globally. Pastors should be trained to reflect critically and creatively upon their mission task.

Finally, theologians must be trained to do theology not only to study and teach it. The academic should be aware how each area of theology relates to the central theological task of seeking effectiveness in missionary obedience. This is true for biblical studies, systematic theology, historical studies, sociology, psychology and pastoral studies. All these subjects should be studied in order to make mission theology more effective. They are but tools to be assumed in the greater overall task of seeking for effectiveness in mission obedience.

7.3 THE LATIN AMERICAN MISSIONARY MOVEMENT

This section will explore the challenge of Míguez Bonino's missionary theology for the Latin American missionary movement. The late twentieth century growth in cross-cultural missionary vision in Latin America can be traced to the formation of COMIBAM International in 1987. (Pate 1989:40). There is not space, at this point, to recount the history of COMIBAM but a few brief comments are required as a framework for discussion. In broad terms, Christians involved in COMIBAM reject higher biblical criticism; are theologically and politically conservative, anti-liberal, anti-liberationist and anti-socialist. They also have a world denying and often fundamentalist theology, with a generally narrow definition of mission, restricted to verbal proclamation and Church planting. Various important issues for reflection emerge from this brief analysis. Among them are: theological pragmatism in the search for a practical missiology; uncritical use of socio-analytical tools; refusal to use the tools of biblical criticism in the development of truly biblical missiology; a world denying missiology, and a weak definition of mission, the Church and the Kingdom of God. Míguez Bonino's theology challenges the Latin American missionary movement in at least four ways: theology and the Bible; the world, the Church and the Kingdom of God; wholistic and contextual mission; and missionary training.

7.3.1 *Theology and the Bible*

There is little doubt that theology and the Bible are important to the Latin American missionary movement. It is, however, defined by its enthusiastic and practical nature. The missionary task is urgent; there is no time for scholastic enquiry that does not include practical application. There is a healthy disregard for theology done for its own sake; a feeling that it shares with many Latin American theologians.

However, this has also led to an unhealthy pragmatism where theology has been marginalized and where missionary practice is never questioned.

Míguez Bonino's praxis orientated missionary theology combines practice with theological reflection. In fact, it could be said that his theology is an integral part of the missionary task. He does not separate theology from mission; in fact one needs the other. For Míguez Bonino, theology needs mission to give it a purpose and mission needs theology in order to critique its praxis. Theology without mission will be academic but mission without theology will continue to repeat the errors of the past. Theology must be seen as part of the missionary task and mission must be part of the theological task.

The Latin American missionary movement's pragmatic approach aims for effective mission practice. However, unhealthy pragmatism often leads a lack of rigor in analysis. Without rigorous analysis the missionary does not gain a precise understanding of the context of mission. This can lead to misunderstanding about important issues for the context and more importantly it could lead to faulty praxis.

Míguez Bonino's insistence that analysis should be an integral part of the missionary theological task reduces the danger of misunderstanding. Analysis must be nuanced and not simply rely upon cultural anthropology. Míguez Bonino's dialectical and later structuralist and semiotic approaches to social analysis has made it possible to understand a society in the grip of rapid social change. Analysis that explains the dynamics of social change is essential for understanding the effects of preaching the gospel and the presence of Christian witness in society. It also reveals how the Church should be expressed culturally within society.

However, there is a need to expand the horizons of social, cultural and religious analysis to include issues such as the place of women in mission, understanding of race and racism and inter-religious tension. Míguez Bonino did not deal with these issues in any depth but the contemporary context requires such a deepening of the analytical tools.

The Latin American missionary movement is convinced of the need for biblical understanding of mission. The insistence on the literalist use of the Bible has sometimes led to subjective and individualistic readings of the Christian scriptures. There are serious dangers when this kind of hermeneutic is used in an inter-cultural setting. The message of the Bible is weakened by an uncritical hermeneutical method. It becomes an imported and foreign message. The missionary's narrow and culturally biased interpretation is imposed upon the recipient. The message of the gospel can remain forever lost. This means that reading the Bible through the eyes of the people is made impossible.

Míguez Bonino's dynamic biblical hermeneutic allows the missionary to think and act biblically as well as contextually. He emphasised that Jesus Christ is the true revelation of God; revelation is historical. Neither the Bible nor any other human reading of that revelation can be equated with Christ. However, the first witnesses to this event were in a privileged position to interpret God's revelation in Christ; the Bible is special in any reading of the gospel. The missionary task is to reread God's action in Christ, through the experiences of the first witnesses, in the light of the traditions handed down from Christian history, from the perspective of the new missionary context, and with the help of the Holy Spirit. This rereading must be a dialogical encounter between the Bible and the people, who are accompanied in this task by the missionary. Both the missionary and the hearer are

able to encounter the gospel in a powerful way: the reserve of meaning can be revealed. The hearer can recognise his or her own cultural ‘accent’ in the message and the missionary can hear the message in a completely new way. The challenge to the Latin American missionary movement is clear.

Finally, the Latin American missionary movement has a strong focus on the role of the Holy Spirit. However, this role has been confined to work in the lives of individual believers. The Spirit’s role in mission has had little place in the movement’s missiological reflection. One area where this role is especially undeveloped and undervalued is the role of interpretation. Supernatural interpretations of dreams and visions are common but the role of the Spirit in Bible reading is not deepened.

Míguez Bonino has emphasised the role of the Holy Spirit in the process of re-reading the Bible from a new context. He based his reflections on the work of Oscar Cullmann who insisted that the gift of the Holy Spirit, as part of Salvation History and so accompanies the Church in its interpretation of the Christian scriptures. The Church must have the presence of the Holy Spirit in order to re-read God’s actions in Jesus Christ from a new missionary context.

7.3.2 *The World, the Church and the Kingdom of God*

The Latin American Protestant churches’ accepted eschatology has almost uniformly been dispensationalist. This has influenced the missionary movement’s understanding of the relationship between the world, the Church and the Kingdom of God. The world is an enemy of both God and the Church and therefore antagonistic to the Kingdom. The Kingdom is viewed as an entirely future reality with no present importance apart from being the arena for individuals to make a decision for eternity. The Kingdom is future and spiritual. Therefore, mission is calling people to make a decision now to enter that spiritual future and by nature, therefore, mission is a ‘religious’ activity.

In regard to the dominant COMIBAM missiology, the ‘nations’ of Matthew 24:14 are interpreted as ‘ethno-linguistic groups’ or ‘people groups.’ These ‘people groups’ are unreached because they must have the gospel of the Kingdom preached among them. The concept of a ‘reached people group’ is one that has a viable Church, with the Bible in their own language that can reproduce itself. The task of mission is to establish self-multiplying churches among those groups and this will bring about the Parousia. Because the Church is equated with the Kingdom, the world is seen to be totally outside the Kingdom. The world—being outside of the Kingdom—belongs to Satan. The Church—being in the Kingdom—belongs to God. The Church is the haven from the world. This makes the Latin American missionary movement world denying and dualistic in its thinking.

Míguez Bonino challenges this way of thinking in various ways. He emphasises that the Kingdom is present in this world. The Kingdom of God is not only a future event but also a present reality. It was inaugurated in Jesus Christ and will be fulfilled in the Parousia. He does not deny an ‘eschatological reserve’ (Moltmann) but the presence of the Kingdom is eschatologically important. It was seen in the life of Israel and perfected in Jesus Christ. Preaching the gospel, calling people to repentance and planting churches are not the ultimate aim of mission; they are only steps along the way. The ultimate goal of mission is the Kingdom of God—

God's reign over nature and history. The present era is the time where God is building the Kingdom for the good of humanity now.

Additionally, Míguez Bonino asserts that God is active in the world to bring about the Kingdom. The Kingdom of God is primarily the work of God; it is God's rule over nature and history. It is not the work of humanity, nor is it the work of the Church. God's mission is to establish God's Kingdom. Mission is not primarily the mission of the Church but the mission of God. God not only works in the lives of individual human beings but in the life of the world. In fact, God works directly in the world without the agency of the Church. The world is the arena of God's work towards the divine Kingdom

Also, Míguez Bonino is in no doubt that the Church contributes to the extension of the Kingdom of God but not in a direct way. The Church, in mission, witnesses to the Kingdom by 'naming the Kingdom' and living it out. It must discern the presence of the Kingdom of God in present history. This discernment takes place only in obedience. It is not the result of magical divination nor is it the product of intellectual study but obedient action and reflection. It is a spiritual exercise done in concrete obedience.

The Latin American missionary movement often uses the slogan: 'united that the world may believe.' In spite of this, most of the churches involved in the movement are anti-ecumenical. The slogan encourages churches to unite in the sending of missionaries, rather than ecumenical unity. Once the need for cooperation disappears then unity can be dispensed with. This pragmatic ecumenism needs to have a theological articulation.

Míguez Bonino has insisted that unity must begin with the practice of unity rather than either an ideological declaration or a theological discussion. In his ecclesiology, he makes a very close association between unity and mission. In short the unity of the Church serves the reconciliation of the world; ecumenism serves *oikoumene*. The Church demonstrates to the world God's desire for all humanity. Church division is not an internal and domestic matter; it is a tragedy for both the Church and the world.

According to Míguez Bonino true missionary ecumenism is achieved by the Church acting as a paradigm for the world. The Church both establishes its own internal unity as a model for the world but it also militates within the world for the establishment of human unity. The Church must exegete from the world the forms of unity. It must ask the questions as to how the world, in this context and this situation expresses its unity. The Church then demonstrates the quality and centre of that unity to the world in Christ. It offers to the world the example of its unity, based upon unity in Christ but expressed in terms the world recognises. The world then is able to exegete its own unity from the unified life of the Church.

If the Latin American missionary movement assumed some of these theological insights then the pragmatic ecumenism described above would be challenged to ecumenical commitment beyond expediency. Unity would become a truly missionary concept.

7.3.3 *Wholistic and Contextual Mission*

Early on in its existence, COMIBAM adopted missiological concepts and methodologies such as "unreached people groups," "the 10/40 window," and the

“Adopt-a-People” programme of the AD2000 Movement. This is what Samuel Escobar ironically describes, as ‘managerial missiology’ (Escobar 2002:159). Missionary methodology and strategy are the major concerns of this missiology rather than theology. Many of the books published by COMIBAM tend towards a pragmatic approach rather than a theological one.

Spiritual warfare missiology has been inserted into “unreached people group” teaching. In ‘reaching’ the ‘unreached group,’ the missionary is ‘claiming the ground’ and ‘defeating Satan.’ The terminology of warfare is heard alongside that of adoption. Planting a Church among the group means ‘bringing God’s Kingdom.’ This has led to the tendency to see mission in only religious or spiritual term, and commitment to Christ in terms of personal and legalist ethics. William D. Taylor says: ‘COMIBAM’s missiology must develop and strengthen into a more holistic and contextualised mission of the Church if it wants to avoid the charge of shallow theology and activism’ (Taylor and Nunez 1996:173).

Míguez Bonino’s missionary theology challenges this attitude in various ways. This study has repeatedly insisted that his theology is ‘faith seeking effectiveness.’ Effectiveness is not seen in terms of simple pragmatism: the quickest and cheapest way of doing mission. For mission to be effective it must be both wholistic and contextual. That is, it must be faithful to both the gospel—a gospel which affects every area of human life—and to the world—in all its contextual complexity. For Míguez Bonino, mission has always been preaching and social activity. From his earliest days, of ministry he has insisted that the gospel is essentially a message to be announced and lived out. Theology must accompany the Church to preach and live out its mission in the context (1960e:91). Even in his latest publication he still insists on the same thing.

Mission is the privilege and responsibility of the whole people of God, mission is the “ecumenical” responsibility of the whole people of God, mission is the announcement and the making present of the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of *shalom*, of *tsedaqah*, of *hesed*—by the whole people of God (2004b:431 Italics in original).

Míguez Bonino has also insisted that the establishment and growth of the Church is not the ultimate aim of mission. The Church does not serve itself but rather the world. Mission aims at the transformation of the world rather than its own growth and glory. Evangelisation does not come to an end when a Church is planted in the area; this is the beginning of the mission of the Church. The Church takes on the role of a community sent into the world in order to announce and point the world towards the fulfilment of the Kingdom of God. In this case, this is a reorientation of the aims of mission.

Míguez Bonino rejects the ‘people group’ theory of mission’ mainly because it treats human beings as part of ‘groups,’ ‘targets,’ or ‘peoples.’ The tendency, in practice is to convert as many people as possible in order to make sure that a people can be said to be ‘reached.’ The missionary motivation demonstrated here is not love but statistical success. To Míguez Bonino, this is less than Christian.

7.3.4 *Missionary Training*

Latin American missionaries must be trained to understand theology as an integral part of the missionary task. Without a dynamic missionary theology the burgeoning

Latin American missionary movement is doomed to repeat the mistakes made by its predecessors. It will be incapable of preaching the gospel in a relevant and contextual way. This missionary theology must be done at every level. Primarily it must be done at the level of the individual missionary. The experience of the Latin American missionary must be the starting point. Missionaries need to learn how to relate the context in which they are working to the reading of the Bible and how to apply this reading to an improved missionary practice. Theological education of missionaries cannot be a matter of filling heads with knowledge but rather giving them the tools to take part in a dynamic theological process of action and reflection. There is no doubt that this process requires the presence of knowledge but it is rather what is done with that knowledge that is more important.

The mention of the need for knowledge raises the issue of curriculum. Missionary training requires biblical, systematic and practical knowledge, as well as sociological tools. Courses on the human sciences cannot be viewed as peripheral; they are central to the theological process. Finally, the ability to use the knowledge gained to analyse and interpret new contexts is also essential. A course on theological integration cannot be ignored. Without integration and the ability to carry out the process of theological reflection knowledge remains academic

The experience of Latin American missionaries and their theological reflection is also the point of departure for the theological reflection of Latin American missionary movement as a whole. Missionary leaders in Latin America must respond to the theological and missionary needs of Latin American missionaries. The tendency is toward ‘one way traffic;’ missionary leaders instruct missionaries. The feedback and rethinking of biblical, systematic and practical issues on the basis of the experience and reflection of Latin American missionaries is essential for the development and maturing of the Latin American missionary movement. Finally, at a professional level, the cross-cultural missionary experience of Latin Americans must also be included into the academic theology of Latin American theologians. If it is true that missionary contact with those of other faiths and worldviews is the fuel for theology, then Latin American academic theology must be ready to engage in that dialogue. Latin American missionary theology must be directed toward both the non-person—as was expressed in Liberation Theology—but also toward the non-believer—as expressed by COMIBAM missionary theology.

To conclude, in an article written for the 2004 Forum for World Evangelisation, Charles Van Engen, The Arthur F. Glasser Professor of Biblical Theology of Mission at Fuller Seminary School of Intercultural Studies, asserted that the contemporary world context requires a missiology that

builds on classical concepts of mission developed over the past 100 years; overcomes the dichotomies between evangelism and social action that arose 50 years ago; and recreates itself in a trinitarian praxis of mission appropriate to the global/local challenges of Church and world in this new century (Van Engen 2004: 93).

This study has made it clear that Míguez Bonino’s missionary theology is relevant and a challenge to both the world church in its mission to transform the world and also the Latin American missionary movement.

APPENDICES

1. LIST OF INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY AND ECUMENICAL CONFERENCES

World Missionary Conference

1910 Edinburgh, Scotland

Conferences of the International Missionary Council

1928 Jerusalem, Palestine

1938 Madras, India

1947 Whitby, Canada

1952 Willengen, Germany

1958 Accra, Ghana

Assemblies of the World Council of Churches

1948 Amsterdam, Netherlands

1954 Evanston, U.S.A.

1961 New Dehli, India

1968 Uppsala, Sweden

1975 Nairobi, Kenya

1983 Vancouver, Canada

1991 Canberra, Australia

1998 Harare, Zimbabwe

Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches

1963 Mexico City, Mexico

1973 Bangkok, Thailand

1980 Melbourne, Australia

1989 San Antonio, U.S.A.

1998 Salvador, Brazil

2005 Athens, Greece

*Meetings of the Commission on Faith and Order*1927 Lausanne, Switzerland (1st Conference)1937 Edinburgh, Scotland (2nd Conference)1952 Lund, Sweden (3rd Conference)1963 Montreal, Canada (4th Conference)

1967 Bristol, England

1971 Louvain, Belgium (Standing Commission Meeting)

1974 Accra, Ghana

1978 Bangalore, India

1982 Lima, Peru (Plenary Commission)

1985 Stavanger, Norway (Plenary Commission)

1989 Budapest, Hungary

- 1993 Santiago de Compostelo, Spain (5th Conference)
- 1996 Moshi, Tanzania (Plenary Commission)
- 2004 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (Plenary Commission)

2. LIST OF LATIN AMERICAN MISSIONARY AND ECUMENICAL MEETINGS

Protestant Missionary Conferences

- 1916 Panama City, Panama
- 1925 Montevideo, Uruguay
- 1929 La Havana, Cuba

Conferencias Evangélicas de Latinoamérica (CELA)

- 1949 Buenos Aires, Argentina (CELA I)
- 1961 Lima, Peru (CELA II)
- 1969 Buenos Aires, Argentina (CELA III)

Comisión Provisional Pro Unidad Evangélica Latinoamericana (UNELAM)

- 1964 Montevideo, Uruguay (formation of UNELAM)
- 1965 Campinas, Brazil (1st Assembly)
- 1970 Lima, Peru (2nd Assembly)

Consejo Latinoamericano de Iglesias (CLAI)

- 1978 Oaxtepec, Mexico
- 1982 Huampaní, Peru (1st Assembly)
- 1988 Indaiatuba, Brazil (2nd Assembly)
- 1995 Concepción, Chile (3rd Assembly)

Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina (ISAL)

- 1961 Huampaní, Peru
- 1966 El Tabo, Chile
- 1967 Montevideo, Uruguay
- 1971 Naña, Peru

Congresos Latinoamericanos de Evangelización (CLADE)

- 1969 Bogota, Colombia (CLADE I)
- 1979 Lima, Peru (CLADE II)
- 1992 Quito, Ecuador (CLADE III)
- 2000 Quito, Ecuador (CLADE IV)

3. CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE OF MÍGUEZ BONINO

- 1924 Born 24th April, 1924 in Santa Fe, Argentina:
- 1924-1931 Early years in Santa Fe. (Primary School)
- 1931-1941 Early years in Rosario, Argentina (Primary and Secondary School)
- 1941-1943 Medical student at the University of Rosario

- 1943-1946 Theological student at the *Facultad Evangélica de Teología (FET)*, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- 1946-1947 Teacher at the American School and student pastor in the Methodist Church. Cochabamba, Bolivia,
- 1947-1948 Theological student at the *Facultad Evangélica de Teología (FET)*, Buenos Aires, Seminary and part-time pastor at Methodist church, Ramos Mejía, Buenos Aires.
- 1949-1952 Pastor of Local Church in San Rafael, Argentina.
- 1952-1953 Masters student at the Candler School of Theology, Atlanta Georgia, U.S.A.
- 1953-1958 Youth secretary of the Methodist Church, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- 1958-1960 Doctoral student at Union Seminary, New York, U.S.A.
- 1960-1970 Rector of *Facultad Evangélica de Teología (FET)*, Buenos Aires, Argentina: 1961-1977 Member of the Commission of Faith and Order (FO)
- 1968-1975 Member of Central Committee of the World council of Churches
- 1970-1975 Executive Secretary of the *Asociación de Seminarios e Institutos Teológicos, (ASIT)* Buenos Aires, Argentina:
- 1975-1983 Member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches
- 1975-1985 Post-Graduate Director *Instituto Superior Evangélico de Estudios Teológicos (ISEDET)*, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- 1985ff "Retirement"

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. PRIMARY SOURCES: WORKS OF MÍGUEZ BONINO (ARRANGED CHRONOLOGICALLY)
- 1946a 'Estampas Bolivianas, Su palabra no vuelve vacía', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 63:1, pp. 21-22.
- 1946b 'Significación de la Escuela Dominical para el futuro de la Iglesia', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 63:11, pp. 21-23.
- 1946c Su Palabra no vuelve vacía. *Estandarte Evangélico*, pp. 22-¿?.
- 1948a 'Así se incuban las guerras', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 65:2, pp. 9-10.
- 1948b 'Hombre y Dios en el siglo XVI, Estudio e interpretación de las relaciones entre Renacimiento y Reforma en la persona, obra y pensamiento de Lutero y Erasmo de Rotterdam; su influencia y su actualidad', Licenciante Thesis, Facultad Evangélica de Teología, Buenos Aires.
- 1949a 'Evangelismo por inclusión', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 66:11, pp. 5-6.
- 1949b 'Evangelismo por inclusión', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 66:12, pp. 10-11.
- 1949c 'Una palabra oportuna', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 66:5, p. 12 and p. 31.
- 1950a 'Lutero y la cultura', *El Predicador Evangélico*, 8:30, pp. 103-112.
- 1950b 'Nuestra civilización puesta a prueba', *Movimiento Estudiantil Cristiana*, V:17-8, pp. 3-6
- 1950b 'Nuestra herencia protestante, La estrella matutina de la Reforma', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 67:8 (1950), pp. 166-167 and p. 182.
- 1950d 'La Santa Cena (Doctrina protestante y católico romana)', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 67:19, pp. 440-442.
- 1950 'Ven, Señor Jesús; (Soneto, Ap. 22, 20)', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 67:20, p. 469.
- 1951a 'Juan Wesley y la teología de la Reforma', *Cuadernos Teológicos*, 1:3, pp. 61-70.
- 1951b 'Wesley y Calvino', *Cuadernos Teológicos*, 1:4, pp. 47-63.
- 1952a 'El despertar metodista', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 69:12, pp. 6-8.
- 1952b 'La Iglesia en China: sin libertad de palabra y sin libertad de silencio', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 70:15, p. 3.
- 1952c 'La juventud cristiana frente al noviazgo', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 69:1, pp. 4-6.
- 1952d 'La juventud cristiana frente al noviazgo II', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 69:3, pp. 45-46.
- 1952e 'La juventud cristiana frente al noviazgo III', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 69:4, pp. 62-63.
- 1952f 'La obligación misionera de la Iglesia', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 70:17, p. 2.
- 1952g 'Un testimonio evangélico a puertas abiertas', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 70:15, p. 10.

- 1952h 'Vamos pasando de la época de la misión puramente confesional a la misión ecuménica; Otros puntos destacados de la Conferencia Misionera Internacional', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 70:17, p. 5.
- 1953a '¿Qué debemos esperar de Evanston, 1954?', *Cuadernos Teológicos*, 2:8, pp. 67-77.
- 1953b *La tarea misionera de la Iglesia: Estudios bíblicos basados en 12 pasajes del libro de los Hechos*. Federación Mundial Cristiana de Estudiantes: Buenos Aires, 1953.
- 1954a 'Ante un viaje fecundo, Algunas valiosas observaciones sobre la vida de las iglesias Europeas y Estadounidenses; Declaraciones de José Míguez Bonino', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 71:3-4 (1954), pp. 7-9.
- 1954b 'La juventud de la Iglesia en marcha', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 71:5-6, p. 12.
- 1954c 'La juventud en la Iglesia', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 71:8, p. 10.
- 1954d 'Página de la juventud', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 71:10, p. 13.
- 1954e 'Transformaciones en la vida institucional de la iglesia', *Cuadernos Teológicos*, 3:12, pp. 50-62.
- 1955a 'Creencias Evangélicas Fundamentales', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 72:5, pp. 4 y 9.
- 1955b 'Letras Evangélicas,' *Estandarte Evangélico*, 73:13, pp. 8-9. Book review.
- 1955c *El mundo nuevo de Dios, Estudios bíblicos sobre el Sermón del Monte*, Federación Mundial Cristiana de Estudiantes: Buenos Aires, 1955.
- 1955d 'La teología del Nuevo Testamento de Rudolf Bultmann', *Cuadernos Teológicos*, 18-19, pp. 34-57.
- 1956a *La Epístola a los Efesios*, Federación Argentina de Ligas Juveniles Evangélicas (FALJE): Buenos Aires, 1956.
- 1956b 'Perspectivas para nuestro ministerio', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 74:18, pp. 4 -5 and p. 10.
- 1956c '...que envíe obreros', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 74:20, p. 5 and pp. 11-12.
- 1957a 'Abismos y Pontífices', *Testimonium*, 5:1-2, pp. 1-3.
- 1957b 'Apuñalad, aplastad, matad; ¿Cómo interpretar la doble actitud de Lutero frente a la demanda y revuelta campesina?', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 75:6, pp. 193-194.
- 1957c 'La democracia es modo de vida de gente en marcha...', *Testimonium*, 5:3-4, pp. 1-5.
- 1957d 'El gozo de tu salvación', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 75:1, pp. 13-14 and p. 26.
- 1957e '...más una nota personal', *Testimonium*, 5:1-2, p. 46.
- 1957f 'La responsabilidad política del estudiante cristiano en América Latina', *Testimonium*, 5:3-4, pp. 41-50.
- 1958a 'El lugar de la ciencia', *Testimonium*, 6:3, pp. 1-8.
- 1958b 'En este número...', *Testimonium*, 6:1, pp. 3-5.
- 1958c '¿La verdad?', *Testimonium*, 6:1, pp. 1-3.
- 1958d '¿Una verdadera Revolución?', *Testimonium*, 6:2, 1-12.

- 1959a 'Educación teológica para una iglesia en transición', *Cuadernos Teológicos*, 8:4, pp. 223-234.
- 1959b 'Encounter between Evangelization and Theology', *International Review of Missions*, 48:192 (Oct), pp. 455-458.
- 1959c 'La juventud en el mundo moderno', *Testimonium*, 7:3, pp. 1-4.
- 1960a '¿Y amarse también a sí mismo?', *Testimonium*, 7:2, pp. 16-20.
- 1960b 'Escritura y Tradición: un antiguo problema en una nueva perspectiva', *Cuadernos Teológicos*, 9:2, pp. 94-107.
- 1960c 'Iglesia y Secta: revisión de un vocabulario', *Cuadernos Teológicos*, 9:1, pp. 3-12.
- 1960d 'La secularización de la iglesia, Reflexiones sobre Estrasburgo, 1960', *Testimonium*, 7:3, pp. 51-55.
- 1960e 'A Study of Some Recent Roman Catholic and Protestant Thought on the Relation of Scripture and Tradition', Th. D. Dissertation, Union Theological Seminary, New York, EE.UU.
- 1960f 'Theological Education for a Church in Transition, Viewpoint of Latin American', *International Review of Missions*, 49, pp. 148-156.
- 1961a 'Camino de reconciliación mundial', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 79:9, p. 265.
- 1961b '¿Fundamento bíblico de la responsabilidad de la Iglesia en la Sociedad?', *Cuadernos Teológicos*, 10:4, pp. 231-242.
- 1961c 'Fundamentos bíblicos y teológicos de la responsabilidad cristiana' in ISAL *Encuentro y Desafío; La acción cristiana evangélica ante la cambiante situación social, política y económica; Conclusiones de la Primera Consulta Evangélica Latinoamericana sobre Iglesia y Sociedad*, Buenos Aires: La Aurora – CUPSA: and México, pp. 19-26.
- 1961d 'La misión de la Iglesia en un continente descristianizado', *Testimonium*, 9:1, pp. 31-40.
- 1961e 'Obedience and Freedom in Christian Theology', *International Review of Missions*, 50:1, pp. 90-93.
- 1961f 'Un programa de Educación Teológica', *El Predicador Evangélico*, 19:74 pp. 84-88.
- 1961g '¿Qué debemos esperar de Lima 1961?', *El Predicador Evangélico*, 18:71, pp. 161-165.
- 1961h 'Sentido de la revolución abortada', *Testimonium*, 9:2, pp. 43-47.
- 1961i 'La situación religiosa latinoamericana', *Cuadernos Teológicos*, 10:2, p. 75.
- 1961j 'III Asamblea del CMI', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 79:10, pp. 304-305.
- 1961k 'Witness in a de-Christianized Continent [Catholicism and Evangelicalism in Latin America]', *Student World*, 54:1-2, pp. 96-110.
- 1962a 'Biblical Basis for the Church's Responsibility in Society', *Background Information*, 30, pp. 1-9.
- 1962b 'El ministerio docente de la Iglesia en la perspectiva histórica', *Cuadernos Teológicos*, 11:3, pp. 161-174.
- 1962c 'Nuestro Mensaje' in *Cristo, la esperanza para América Latina*, Buenos Aires: Editorial Confederación Evangélica del Río de la Plata, pp. 67-92.

- 1962d 'Un observador en el Vaticano II', *Criterio*, 35:1417/18, pp. 929-932.
- 1962e 'La renovación en la Iglesia' in Max Warren and Luis Bucafusco (eds.) *La iglesia, Naturaleza, Misión, situación y renovación* Buenos Aires: Consulta Latinoamericana, pp. 23-32.
- 1962f 'Roman Catholic Renewal in Latin America', *Frontier*, 3:5, pp. 491-495.
- 1963a 'Catolicismo y catolicismos', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 80:11, pp. 326-332 and p. 349.
- 1963b *Católicos y Protestantes hoy en América Latina*, Rome, Leaflet.
- 1963c 'Crónicas del Vaticano', *Acción y Superación*, (México) 1:1.
- 1963d 'Del Catolicismo Romano', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 81:3, pp. 294-295. Book review.
- 1963e 'Libertad religiosa,' *Cuadernos Teológicos*, xii, Oct-Dec, p. 4.
- 1963f 'Prefacio del traductor' in Seeberg, Reinhold *Manual de historia de las doctrinas*, Buenos Aires: Juan Bautista de Publicaciones, pp. vi-xi.
- 1963g ¿*Protestantes en Roma?* Buenos Aires, Leaflet, FET.
- 1963h 'The Teaching Ministry in Historical Perspective', *Religious Education*, 58:1, pp. 12-20.
- 1964a 'Algunas reflexiones en torno al diálogo ecuménico', *Teología y Vida*, 5:2, pp. 88-98.
- 1964b 'Fundamentos Teológicos de la Responsabilidad Social de la Iglesia' in Rodolfo Obermüller, *La Responsabilidad Social del Cristiano*, Montevideo: ISAL, pp. 22-31.
- 1964c *The Impact of the Vatican Council on Latin American Roman Catholicism and Protestantism*. Mimeographed text.
- 1964d 'Latin America' in M. Searle Bates and Wilhelm Pauck, (eds), *The Prospects of Christianity Throughout the World*, New York: Charles Scribner's sons, pp. 166-182.
- 1964e 'La libertad religiosa como cuestión ecuménica', *Criterio*, 37: 1465/66, pp. 912-916.
- 1964f 'Observadores Protestantes en el Concilio Vaticano II' (pp. 11-18), 'Antecedentes y Realización en el Concilio Vaticano II' (pp. 38-46), 'Diferencias y semejanzas teológicas entre el protestantismo y el catolicismo romano' (pp. 62-72), 'Implicaciones del Segundo Concilio Vaticano para la vida religiosa en nuestros tiempos' (pp. 96-101) in Federico J. Huegel,., *Los protestantes y el Segundo Concilio Vaticano*: Mexico: Casa Unida de Publicaciones S.A.
- 1964g 'Notas para una consideración de la situación teológica del protestantismo latinoamericano', Leaflet, ISAL.
- 1964h 'Prosiguen los encuentros Católicos - Protestantes', *El Estandarte Evangélico*, 82:8, pp. 255-257.
- 1964i 'Tensión, puntos de contacto y esperanza en las relaciones entre católicos romanos y protestantes en la América Latina' in Instituto de sociología y Pastoral Aplicadas, *El ecumenismo en el mundo* Barcelona: Estela, pp. 105-112. Published in French as 'Tension, rencontre et espoir dans les relations entre catholiques romains et protestants', in *Amérique Latine' Documentation Hollandaise du Concile Do-C* (Roma) n. 103.

- 1964j 'Theological Education in Latin America', *International Review of Missions*, 53:335-338, pp. 335-338. Book review.
- 1964k 'Vatican II and Latin America', *The Christian Century*, 81:53, pp.1616-1617.
- 1965a 'Bases bíblicas y teológicas para la consideración del lugar de la mujer en la Iglesia', in *Manual para las Sociedades Femeninas*, Buenos Aires, pp. 5-23.
- 1965b 'Catholics and Protestants in Latin America', in *Frontier*, 8, pp. 129-132.
- 1965c 'Comments on the Decree on Ecumenism Enacted in the Second Vatican Council and Promulgated on November the 21st., 1964', *The Ecumenical Review*, 17:2, pp. 93-112.
- 1965d 'La Constitución Pastoral en una perspectiva Protestante y Ecuménica', *Criterio*, 38:1489/90, pp. 932-939.
- 1965e 'La educación teológica protestante en un continente de tradición Católica Romana', in Justo González '...Por la renovación del entendimiento...' *La educación teológica en la América Latina: Essays in honour of Tomas J. Liggett*, Puerto Rico: La Reforma, pp. 45-61.
- 1965f 'Por que nos interesa Bonhoeffer', *Testimonium*, 9:1, pp. 1-10.
- 1965g 'La Unidad de la Iglesia', Leaflet, Comisión Rioplatense para la Unidad de las Iglesias, Buenos Aires.
- 1966a 'Christians and the Political Revolution', *Motive*, 27:3 (1966) pp. 37-40;
- 1966b '¿Cómo actúa Dios en la historia?', *Cuadernos Teológicos*, 15:4, pp. 256-266;
- 1966c 'Un concilio para la renovación de la Iglesia', *Lecciones Cristianas*, 10:4, pp. 1-5.
- 1966d 'Una evaluación del Concilio Vaticano II', *Noticiero de la Fe*, 32:3, pp. 4-5 and p. 21.
- 1966e 'Los evangélicos y el Concilio Católico Romano', *Lecciones Cristianas*, 10:5, pp. 1-5.
- 1966f 'Un Dios que actúa y renueva la Iglesia', in ISAL, *América Hoy, II Consulta Latinoamericana de Iglesia y Sociedad*, ISAL: Montevideo, pp. 37-55.
- 1966g 'Evangelisk enhet i Latinamerika', in *Svensk Missionstidskrift*, 54:2, pp. 155-170.
- 1966h 'Introducción' (pp. 7-11); 'La actitud evangélica' (pp. 12-16); 'Hacia una orientación de la práctica ecuménica' (pp. 68-86), in José Míguez Bonino (ed.) *Polémica, diálogo y misión, Catolicismo romano y protestantismo en la América Latina*, Uruguay: Imprenta Comunidad del Sur.
- 1966i 'Lo cambiante y lo permanente en la Iglesia de hoy', *Educación Cristiana*, 21:83, pp. 9-11.
- 1966j 'Occidental y Cristiano', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 84:7, pp. 106-109.
- 1966k '¿Qué significa ser iglesia de Cristo aquí, hoy?', Leaflet, Methopress, Buenos Aires.

- 1966l 'Reacción y comentarios, ante la declaración del Vaticano II sobre la libertad religiosa', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 84:1, pp. 4-9.
- 1966m 'Wie waltet Gott in der Geschichte' in Vicedom, George F. (ed.) *Theologische Stimmen aus Asien, Afrika, und Lateinamerika* Munich:Kaiser, pp. 30-42. Translation of 1966b.
- 1967a 'An Approach to the Discussion of Tradition in a Heilsgeschichtliche Frame of Reference', in F. Christ, (ed.) *Oikonomia; Heilsgeschichte als Thema der Theologie; O. Cullmann zum 65. Geburtstag gewidmet* (Hamburg:Herbert Reich.), pp. 295-301.
- 1967b 'Christians and the Political Revolution', *Risk*, 3:1-2, pp. 100-110. Reprinted from 1966a.
- 1967c *Concilio abierto, Una interpretación protestante del Concilio Vaticano II*, Buenos Aires: La Aurora.
- 1968 'Christians and the Political Revolution', *Overseas Mission Review* 13:2, pp. 1-11.
- 1968a 'La IV Asamblea del Consejo Mundial de Iglesias', *Vispera*, 2:7, pp. 29-33.
- 1968c 'Is Revolution Inevitable?' *Classmate*, pp. 1-3.
- 1968d 'Missionary Planning and National Integrity', *Christianity and Crisis*, 28:11, pp. 140-143.
- 1968e 'The Church and the Latin American Social Revolution', *Perspective*, 9, pp. 213-232.
- 1968f 'Main Currents of Protestantism' in Shapiro, S. *Integration of Man and Society in Latin America*, University of Notre Dame Press, pp. 9-12.
- 1968g 'Reportaje, Al Doctor José Míguez Bonino; [A su regreso del Union Theological Seminary de New York]', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 86:3, pp. 10-12.
- 1969a 'El camino del teólogo protestante latinoamericano', *Cuadernos de Marcha*, 29, pp. 59-67.
- 1969b 'Christian Unity in Search of Locality', *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 6:2, pp. 185-199.
- 1969c 'Das Verhältnis des Katholizismus zum Protestantismus aus protestantischer Sicht' (pp. 112-120); 'Neue Konzepte christlicher Einheit', in Tschuy, T. *Explosives Lateinamerika*, Berlin: Lettner Verlag, pp. 197-205.
- 1969d '*Integración humana y unidad cristiana*, Río Piedras:La Reforma.
- 1969e 'Medellín y el ecumenismo', *Teología*, 7:15/16, pp. 228-232.
- 1969f 'Un Nuevo Pacto (Jeremías 31:31-34)', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 87:7, pp. 9-12.
- 1969g 'Una opinión protestante sobre *Humanae Vitae*', *Teología*, 7:14, pp. 72-76.
- 1969h 'Our Debt as Evangelicals to the Roman Catholic Community', *The Ecumenical Review* 21, pp. 310-319.
- 1969i 'Nuestra deuda para con la comunidad católica romana', *Criterio*, 47:1578, pp. 570-574.

- 1970a 'Bases teológicas para una filosofía de la educación cristiana', in CELADEC, *Segunda Consulta sobre Educación Cristiana in Seminarios de Teología*, pp. 37-42.
- 1970b 'Nuestra deuda para con la comunidad católica romana', *Cristianismo y Sociedad*, 8:22, pp. 31-40.
- 1970b *Out of the Hurt and Hope*, (ed.) New York: Friendship Press.
- 1970c 'Prólogo' in Alves, Rubem *Religión, ópio o instrumento de liberación?* Montevideo: Ediciones Tierra Nueva, pp. i-xii.
- 1970d *Fichas de ISAL*, 3:3, pp. 19-20.
- 1970e '¿Qué piensa Dios de nuestras celebraciones?', *Criterio*, 62:1589/90, pp. 96-98.
- 1970f 'Teología y liberación', *Actualidad Pastoral*, 3:30, pp. 83-85. Reprinting of 1970g.
- 1970g 'Teología y liberación', *Fichas de ISAL*, 3:26, pp. 2-5.
- 1971a 'A Comment from Argentina', *The Ecumenical Review*, 22, pp. 35-37.
- 1971b 'Cristianismo en América Latina', *Educación Cristiana*, 26:103;
- 1971c 'Cristianismo en América Latina' *Orientación*, 19:1, pp. 3-11
- 1971d 'New Theological Perspectives', *Religious Education*, 66:6, pp. 403-413.
- 1971e 'Protestantism's Contribution to Latin America', *The Lutheran Quarterly*, 22, pp. 92-98.
- 1971f 'La violencia: una reflexión teológica', *Cristianismo y Sociedad*, 9:28 (1971), pp. 5-11.
- 1972a *Ama y haz lo que quieras, Hacia una ética del hombre nuevo*, Buenos Aires: La Aurora.
- 1972b 'Comments on Unity of the Church – Unity of Mankind', *The Ecumenical Review*, 24, pp. 47-50.
- 1972c 'How does God Act in History' in George Vicedom, *Christ and the Younger Churches; Theological Contributions from Asia, Africa and Latin America*, London: S.P.C.U.
- 1972d 'J. Schoof, TM; *La nueva teología católica*, 340, pp. 23-25. Book review.
1972 *Cuadernos de Teología*, 2:1, pp. 71-73.
- 1972e 'Jules Girardi, *Amor cristiano y lucha de clases* Salamanca Ediciones: Sígueme. Book review also, *Cuadernos de Teología*, 2:1, pp. 80-81.
- 1972f 'Nuevas perspectivas teológicas' in Assmann, Hugo (ed.), *Pueblo oprimido, Señor de la historia*, Montevideo: Tierra Nueva, pp. 197-212.
- 1972g '¿Partidismo o solidaridad?', *Cristianismo y Sociedad*, 10:33/34 (1972), pp. 93-99. Also in Assmann, Hugo and others, *Cristianos por el socialismo, Exigencias de una opción* Montevideo: Tierra Nueva, pp. 103-110.
- 1972h 'Qué es un estudio bíblico', *Testimonio Cristiano*, 1, pp. 27-29.
- 1972i 'La secularización: ¿aliado o enemigo?', *Boletín ASIT*, 8, pp. 1-5.
- 1972j 'La secularización en América Latina', Mimeographed for the 9th Assembly of ASIT, Buenos Aires,

- 1972k 'Stellungnahme zu dem Vortrag 'Einheit der Kirche – Einheit der Menschheit' ', *Oekumenische Rundschau*, 21:2, pp. 160-177. Translation of 1972b.
- 1972l 'Theology and Liberation', *International Review of Mission*, 69:241, pp. 67-72. Translation of 1970f.
- 1972m 'Unidad cristiana y Reconciliación social: coincidencia y tensión', *Cuadernos de Teología*, 2:2, pp. 109-123.
- 1972n 'Unidad cristiana y Reconciliación social: coincidencia y tensión', *Fichas de ISAL*, 4:38/39, pp. 3-9. Reprinting of 1972m.
- 1972o 'Violence and Liberation', *Christianity and Crisis*, 32 (1972), pp. 169-172.
- 1973a *Ama e faz o que quiseres, Uma ética para o novo homem* Translated by do Luiz Aparecido Caruso, São Paulo: Imprensa Metodista. Translation of 1972a.
- 1973b 'Christian Unity and Social reconciliation, Consonance and Tension' Translated by H. France, *Study Encounter*, 9:1, pp. 1-8. Translation of 1972m.
- 1973c 'El compromiso cristiano ante la liberación', *Acción Popular Ecuménica*, 1:1, pp. 18-28.
- 1973d 'Cuatro años de Autonomía', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 90:4, p. 2.
- 1973e 'Presentación', in J. Asiaín, *María, ¿Hoy?*, Buenos Aires: Bonum, pp. 7-9.
- 1973f 'Unidad cristiana y Reconciliación social: coincidencia y tensión', *Teología y Vida*, 14, pp. 286-289. Reprinting of 1972m.
- 1973g 'Violence: A Theological Reflection', *The Ecumenical Review*, 25, pp. 468-474. Translation of 1971f.
- 1973h 'Visión del cambio social y sus tareas desde las iglesias cristianas no católicas', in Instituto Fe y Secularidad, *Fe Cristiana y Cambio social en América Latina*, Salamanca: Sígueme, pp. 179-202.
- 1974a 'The Church in a Turbulent Latin America', *This Month*, 6, pp. 3-5.
- 1974b 'Die Frage der Einheit – Der Versuch einer Ortbestimmung aus lateinamerikanischer Sicht' in Groscurth, Reinhard (ed.), *Wandernde Horizonte auf dem Weg zu kirchlicher Einheit*. Frankfurt: Otto Lembeck, pp. 67-80. Translation of 1974d.
- 1974c 'Un intento latinoamericano para situar el problema de la unidad', *Diálogo Ecuménico*, 9:34, pp. 267-279. Translation of 1974d.
- 1974d 'A Latin American Attempt to Locate the Question of Unity', *The Ecumenical Review*, 26:2, pp. 210-221.
- 1974e Letter from Míguez Bonino to John Stott (Birmingham, U.K. 21.1.1974).
- 1974f 'Marxist Critical Tools: Are they Helpful in Breaking the Stranglehold of Idealist Hermeneutics?', in *Movement*, no. 15.
- 1974g 'Nuestra fe y nuestro tiempo', *Cuadernos de Cristianismo y Sociedad*, 4, pp. 1-12.
- 1974h 'El nuevo catolicismo' in C. René Padilla (ed.), *Fe cristiana y Latinoamérica, hoy* (Buenos Aires: Certeza), pp. 83-118.
- 1974i 'Piedad popular en América Latina', *Concilium*, 10:96, pp. 440-447.

- 1974j 'Present Crisis in Mission', IDOC, *International Documentation*, 63, pp. 74-78.
- 1974k 'Reino de Dios e historia, Reflexiones para una discusión del tema', *Acción Pastoral Ecuμένηca*, 2:2, pp. 4-16. Paper given in 1972
- 1974l 'The Spirit Groans', in Dow Kirkpatrick, (ed.), *The Holy Spirit*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press), pp. 234-238.
- 1974m 'Violenza: una riflessione teologica', *Humanitas*, 29, pp. 752-755. Translation of 1971f.
- 1975a 'Conclusiones del grupo de teólogos luterano – católicos de EE.UU. sobre el primado del Papa; El diálogo católico protestante y el papado', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 92:19, pp. 10-11.
- 1975b *Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation*, Philadelphia: Fortress.
- 1975c *Espacio para ser hombres, Una interpretación del mensaje de la Biblia para nuestro tiempo*, Buenos Aires: Tierra Nueva.
- 1975d 'Un intento latinoamericano para situar el problema de la unidad', in Lonning, P. (ed.), *El futuro del ecumenismo*, (Buenos Aires: La Aurora), pp. 125-146. Reprinting of 1974d.
- 1975e 'Offen für das Wort von draussen', *Aktuelle Gespräche*, 23, pp. 4-7.
- 1975f '¿Quién es Jesucristo hoy en América Latina?', *Cristianismo y Sociedad*, 13:43/44, pp. 5-11;
- 1975g 'El reino de Dios y la historia' in Padilla, C. René (ed.) *El reino de Dios y América Latina*, Alabama - El Paso: Casa Bautista de Publicaciones, pp. 75-95.
- 1975h *Revolutionary Theology Comes of Age*, London: SPCK. English Edition of 1975b
- 1975i *Theologie im Kontext der Befreiung*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck, P. Ruprecht. Translation of 1975b.
- 1975j 'The Test of Unity,' *One World*, N°. 6. Leaflet
- 1975k 'The Struggle of the Poor and the Church', *The Ecumenical Review*, 27, pp. 36-43.
- 1975l 'Unidad Cristiana y reconciliación social: coincidencia y tensión, in *Panorama de la teología latinoamericana*, Santiago: Universidad Católica, pp. 149-164. Reprinting of 1972m.
- 1975m 'Whatever Happened to Theology? Reflections', *Christianity and Crisis*, 35:8, pp. 111-112.
- 1976a 'La aventura cristiana de Dietrich Bonhoeffer. I: Discernimiento de la fe', *Cuadernos de Teología*, 4:3, pp. 149-152.
- 1976b *Christians and Marxists. The Mutual Challenge to Revolution*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans). North American Edition of 1976c.
- 1976c. *Christians and Marxists. The Mutual Challenge to Revolution*, (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1976);
- 1976d *Cristiani e marxisti, la sfida reciproca alla rivoluzione*, Torino: Claudiana. Italian Edition of 1976c.
- 1976e 'El ecumenismo en 1975', in *Actualidad Pastoral*, 9:95/96, pp. 76-77.
- 1976f *Fare teologia in una situazione rivoluzionaria*, Brescia: Queriniana. Translation of 1975b.
- 1976g 'Five Theses Towards an Understanding of the 'Theology of Liberation'' *The Expository Times*, 87, pp. 196-200.

- 1976h 'Gottes Handeln in menschlicher Geschichte' in *Parteinahme für die Unrentablen, Kirche im Spannungsfeld der Entwicklung*, Missionsjahrbuch der Schweiz, Schweizerischer Katholischer Missionsrat, Freiburg; Schweizerischer Evangelischer Missionsrat, Base, pp. 52-53. Translation and reprinting of 1966b.
- 1976i 'La iglesia: su naturaleza, misión y estructura', *Encuentro*, 16, pp. 14-18.
- 1976j 'Kingdom of God and History', in CCPD DOCUMENTS, 9, pp. 1-12. Translation of 1975g.
- 1976k 'Piedad popular en América Latina', *Cristianismo y Sociedad*, 14:47, pp. 31-38.
- 1976l 'Piedad popular en América Latina', *Mensaje Iboamericano*, 129/130, pp. 2-5.
- 1976m 'Quello che ci costa l'unità', *Oikoumenikon*, 16:11-12, pp. 767-772.
- 1976n 'Reflexión teológica sobre la violencia', *Selecciones de teología*, 15:60, pp. 281-283. Reprinting of 1971f.
- 1976o 'Statement by José Míguez Bonino' in Sergio Torres, and John Eagleson, (Eds.), *Theology in the Americas*, Maryknoll, Orbis Books. pp. 275-279.
- 1976p 'Violence: A Theological Reflection', in Gerald H. Anderson, and Thomas F Stransky, (eds.), *Mission Trends N ° 3, Third World Theologies, Asian, African and Latin American Realignment in the Church*, New York: Paulist Press, pp. 118-126. Translation of 1971f.
- 1980 'Ponencia de José Míguez Bonino', in Sergio Torres, and John Eagleson, *Teología en las Américas*, Salamanca: Sígueme, pp. 315-319. Translation of 1976h.
- 1977a *La fe en busca de eficacia, Una interpretación de la reflexión teológica latinoamericana de liberación* Salamanca: Sígueme. Translation and extension of 1975b.
- 1977b 'La fidelidad del evangelio en la defensa de la vida, A las iglesias miembros del CMI en los países del continente', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 94:9-10, p. 12.
- 1977c 'Haciendo teología en presencia del otro, Ecos de la conferencia final del Dr. Jürgen Moltmann', *Cuadernos de Teología*, 5:1, pp. 21-23.
- 1977d 'How Does United States Presence in Latin American Help, Hinder or Compromise Christian Mission in Latin America?', in *Review and Expositor*, 74:2, pp. 173-182.
- 1977e La congregación de Cristo y las señales del Espíritu. *Cuadernos de Teología*, 5:1, pp. 5-20.
- 1977f 'Nuevas tendencias en teología', *Pasos*, 9, pp. 18-23. 'New Trends in Theology', *The Duke Divinity School Review*, 42:3, pp. 131-142.
- 1977g 'Poverty as Curse. Blessing and Challenge', *The Iliff Review*, 34:3, pp. 3-13.
- 1977h 'Praxis histórica e identidad cristiana', in Rosino Gibellini, (ed.) *La nueva frontera de la teología en América Latina*, Salamanca: Sígueme, pp. 240-260.
- 1977i 'Problemática histórica del protestantismo en América Latina: I Encuentro del Equipo protestante-CEHILA', in Enrique Dussel, (ed.),

- Para una historia de la evangelización en América Latina*, Barcelona: Nova Terra, pp. 163-317.
- 1977j 'Prólogo', in *Jesús: ni vencido ni monarca celestial*, Buenos Aires: Tierra Nueva, pp. 9-17.
- 1977k *Uno spazio per essere uomini*, Torino: Claudiana. Translation of 1975b.
- 1977l 'Whose Human Rights? A Historic-theological Meditation', *International Review of Mission*, 66:262, pp. 220-224;
- 1978a 'Carta aos bispos da América Latina', *SEDOC*, 10:109, pp. 760-761. Translation of 1978f.
- 1978b 'Carta fraternal a los obispos católicos de América Latina', *Actualidad Pastoral*, 11:121, p. 130. Reprinting of 1978f.
- 1978c 'Carta fraternal a los obispos católicos de América Latina', *Chile – América*, 43-45, p. 161. Reprinting of 1978f.
- 1978d 'Carta fraternal a los obispos católicos de América Latina', *Cristianismo y Sociedad*, 16:55, p. 59. Reprinting of 1978f.
- 1978e 'Carta fraternal a los obispos católicos de América Latina', *DOCET CELAM III (I Servicio)*, 6, pp. 1-2. Reprinting of 1978f.
- 1978f 'Carta fraternal a los obispos católicos de América Latina', *Mensaje*, 27:270, pp. 249.
- 1978g 'Los derechos humanos: ¿de quiénes? Una reflexión histórico-teológica', in Assmann, H., *Carter y la lógica del imperialismo*, (San José: Educa), pp. 333-338. Translation of 1977k.
- 1978h 'Los derechos humanos: ¿de quiénes? Una reflexión histórico-teológica,' *Estandarte Evangélico*, 95:6, p. 3. Translation of 1977k.
- 1978i 'Ecclesia Pauper, Ecclesia Pauperum en el Vaticano II y en la teología católica latinoamericana reciente', in José Severino Croatto, (ed.), *Los pobres, Encuentro y compromiso*, Buenos Aires: La Aurora, pp. 133-147.
- 1978j 'Introduction', in *Faces of Jesus: Latin American Christologies*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, pp. 1-6. Translation of 1977h
- 1978k 'The Human and the System', *Theology Today*, 35:1, pp. 14-24.
- 1978l 'Mission as Conflict and Challenge'. Toronto:Ecumenical Forum of Canada.
- 1978m 'Notas sobre la 'teología episcopal' latinoamericana; Una reflexión ecuménica en camino hacia Puebla', *Cristianismo y Sociedad*, 16:58, pp. 3-11.
- 1978n 'Oaxtepec: entre el recelo y la esperanza', *Cuadernos de Teología*, 5:3, pp. 255-257. and *Cristianismo y Sociedad*, 17:59, pp. 77-78. Also in 1979, *El Estandarte Evangélico*, 96:2, p. 11.
- 1978o 'Popular Piety in Latin America', in IDOC International, *The Church at the Crossroads, Christians in Latin America: From Medellín to Puebla 1968-1978*, (Rome: IDOC International), pp. 78-84. Translation of 1974h.
- 1978p 'Reacción de José Míguez Bonino' (pp. 25-28), 'Reacción de Míguez Bonino' (pp. 57-59), 'Reacción de Míguez Bonino' (pp. 77-80), 'Reacción de Míguez Bonino' (pp. 102-107) 'Reacción de Míguez

- Bonino' (pp. 135-137) in Moltmann, Jürgen *Temas para la teología de la esperanza*, Buenos Aires: La Aurora.
- 1978q *Theologie van Verdrukten*, Kampen: Uitgeversnaatschappij, J. H. Kok. Translation of 1975b.
- 1979a 'Análisis de las relaciones del protestantismo con el catolicismo romano hasta 1960', in Various Authors, *Lectura teológica del tiempo latinoamericano, Ensayos en honor del Doctor Wilton M. Nelson*, San José: Sebila, pp. 195-206.
- 1979b 'Gedanken zu biblischen Texten', in W Jeus., (ed.) *Associationen*, Stuttgart: Radius Bücher, pp. 124-129.
- 1979c 'Hacia un protestantismo ecuménico', *Cuadernos de Teología*, 5:4, pp. 272-285.
- 1979d 'Historical Praxis and Christian Identity', in Rosino Gibellini (ed.), *Frontiers in Latin American Theology*, London: SCM Press. Translation of 1977g.
- 1979e 'La Iglesia en Puebla', *Cristianismo y Sociedad*, 17:61-62, pp. 5-14;
- 1979f '...Le pondrás por nombre Jesús', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 96:8, p. 6.
- 1979g 'El Papa en América Latina', *Cristianismo y Sociedad*, 17:59, pp. 79-83.
- 1979h 'Reflexiones críticas sobre Puebla y Oaxtepec', *Cristianismo y Sociedad*, 17:3-4, pp. 5-98.
- 1979i *Room to Be People, An Interpretation of the Message of the Bible for Today's World* Philadelphia: Fortress. Translated by from 1975b.
- 1979j 'Teología de la liberación y Pastoral Juvenil', *ULAJE Comparte*, 18, pp. 12-13.
- 1980a 'Características Básicas de la Preparación Ministerial en una Institución Teológica', in ASIT, *Consulta Regional de Teología: Asunción, Paraguay, 6-8.IX.1979*, Buenos Aires: ASIT, pp. 69-76.
- 1980b 'Discernimiento y compromiso', *Cuadernos de Teología*, 6:1, pp. 11-14.
- 1980c 'External Perspective, A View From Latin America' in Rex Ambler, and D Haslam (eds.), *Agenda for Prophets. Towards a Political Theology for Britain*, London: Bowerdean Press, pp. 102-108.
- 1980d 'For Life and Against Death. A Theology that Take Sides', *The Christian Century*, 17:38, pp. 1154-1158.
- 1980e 'Hacia un protestantismo ecuménico; Notas para una evaluación histórica del Protestantismo entre la 1° y 2° CELA (1949-1960)', in CLAI, *Oaxtepec 1978, Unidad y misión en América Latina* San José: CLAI, pp. 65-80.
- 1980f 'La Iglesia en Puebla' in *Puebla y Oaxtepec, Una crítica protestante y católica*, Buenos Aires: Tierra Nueva, and Mexico City: Casa Unida de Publicaciones, pp. 7-22. Reprinting of 1979d.
- 1980g 'Latin American Theology after Puebla' (pp. 5-10); 'Latin American Theology; Questions for Britain' (pp. 11-16); in Derek Winter, (ed.) *Putting Theology to Work*, London: Conference for World Mission.
- 1980h 'Para uma igreja solidaria com os pobres', in *Tempo y Presença*, 164, pp. 14-15.

- 1980i 'Religious Commitment and Human Rights' in A. D. Falconer (ed.) *Understanding Human Rights* Dublin: Irish School of Ecumenics, pp. 21-33.
- 1980j 'Teología católico-romana', ISEDET, Buenos Aires.
- 1981a 'A covenant of Life; A Mediation on Gen 9:1-17', *The Ecumenical Review*, 33:4, pp. 341-345; Reprinted in *The Lord of Life* (Geneva: WCC), pp. 70-74.
- 1981b 'Doing Theology in the Context of the Struggles of the Poor', *Midstream*, 20:4, pp. 369-373.
- 1981c 'Foreword' in James, Armstrong, *From the Underside, Evangelism from a Third Vantage point*, Maryknoll: Orbis Press, pp. 9-12.
- 1981d 'A Mirror for the Ecumenical Movement? Ecumenism in Latin América?', in A Van der Bent, (ed.) *Voices of Unity: Essays in Honour of W. A. Visser's Hooft in Ocassion of his 80th Birthday*, Geneva: WCC, pp. 41-56.
- 1981e *Rum för människam*, (Stockholm). Translation of 1975b.
- 1981f 'Soberanía, Paz y Derechos Humanos', *APDH*, n. 10, pp. 2-5.
- 1981g 'The View from Latin America', in *Fellowship*, 47:9, pp. 12-13.
- 1981h 'Vocación y Misión de los Cristianos de América Latina en la década del '80', *Cristianismo y Sociedad*, 20:73, pp. 7-14;
- 1981i 'Wesley's Doctrine of Sanctification from a Liberationist Perspective', in T. Runyon (ed.) *Sanctification & Liberation, Liberation Theologies on Light of the Wesleyan Tradition*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, pp. 49-63.
- 1982a 'La confrontación como medio de comunicación', *Concilium*, 18:3 178, pp. 252-258.
- 1982b 'Editorial', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 98:3, p. 9.
- 1982c 'Einheit zwischen Hoffnung und Geschichte, Blick auf die ökumenische Bewegung aus der Perspective der Dritten Welt', *Oekumenische Rundschau*, 31:3, pp. 326-340. Translation of 1982q.
- 1982d 'Frieden ist Hoffnung', in Albertz, Heinrich u.a., *Zumutungen des Friedens, Kurt Scharf zum 80. Geburtstag*; Hamburg:, Rowohlt, pp. 261-268.
- 1982e 'A guerra pelas Malvinas', *Tempo e Presença*, 174, pp. 15-16.
- 1982f 'Jesucristo: vocación comprometida con el Reino (En busca de una interpretación del CLAI)', *Actualidad Pastoral*, 15:144, pp. 311-314.
- 1982g 'Jesucristo: vocación comprometida con el Reino (En busca de una interpretación del CLAI)', *Pastoralia*, 4:9, p. 92-98. Reprinting of 1982e.
- 1982h 'Jesucristo: vocación comprometida con el Reino (En busca de una interpretación del CLAI)', in C Valle, (ed.), *Semilla de Comunión*, Buenos Aires: La Aurora, pp. 27-33. Reprinting of 1982e.
- 1982i 'Jesus Cristo: vocação comprometida com o Reino. A procura de uma interpretação do CLAI', in *Tempo e Presenta*, 180, pp. 10-13. Translation of 1982e.
- 1982j 'Mirando desde otro horizonte... con los mismos ojos!', *Cuadernos de Teología*, 6:2, pp. 19-22.

- 1982k 'Much Will Be Required', in Justo González, (ed.) *Proclaiming the Acceptable Year*, Valley Forge: Judson Press, pp. 13-17.
- 1982l 'L' oecuménisme dans la perspective du Tiers Monde. Le combat pour l'oikoumène', *Revue D'histoire et Philosophie Religieuses*, 62:2, pp. 151-164. Translation 1982q.
- 1982m 'Uma perspectiva do Terceiro Mundo sobre o movimento ecuménico', *Simposio*, 5:2, pp. 134-145.
- 1982n 'One Mission', in Joe Hale (ed.) *Fourteenth World Methodist Conference*, Lake Junaluska: The World Methodist Council, pp. 72-77.
- 1982o A propósito de 'Un nuevo y extraño ecumenismo', *Criterio*, 54:1875, pp. 30-31.
- 1982p 'Tendencias teológicas en América Latina', in WACC, *Misión de la literatura cristiana en América Latina*, Buenos Aires: WACC, pp. 47-58.
- 1982q 'A 'Third World' Perspective on the Ecumenical Movement' in Michael Kinnnamon (ed.), *Toward Visible Unity, Commission on Faith and Order, Lima, 1982, Volume 1: Minutes and Addresses*, Geneva, WCC, pp. 58-67.
- 1982r 'A 'Third World' Perspective on the Ecumenical Movement', *The Ecumenical Review*, 34:2, pp. 115-124. Reprinting of 1982q.
- 1982s 'Toward a philosophy of Praxis', book review.
- 1982t 'L'unite de l'Eglise entre le 'déja' et le 'pas encore'', in *Istina*, 27:1, pp. 64-75.
- 1983a 'El Consejo Mundial de Iglesias. Siete lustros y una larga prehistoria', *Actualidad Pastoral*, 16:150, pp. 235-250.
- 1983 'De oecumenische beweging vanuit het perspectief van de 'Derde Wereld', *Wending*, 38:5, pp. 315-327. Translation of 1982q.
- 1983b '¿Fue el metodismo un movimiento liberador? (pp. 63-74), 'Conversión, hombre nuevo y compromiso' (pp. 207-218), 'Justificación, santificación y plenitud' (pp. 243-256); 'La eclesiología wesleyana' (pp. 277-286); '¿Conservar el metodismo? En busca de un genuino ecumenismo' (pp. 329-342) in José Duque (ed.) *La tradición protestante en la teología latinoamericana, Primer intento: Lectura de la tradición metodista*, San José: DEI, 1983.
- 1983c "Conversion, New Creature and Commitment", *International Review of Mission*, 72:324-332, (1983).
- 1983d 'Cuestiones eclesiológicas fundamentales, Punto de vista protestante' in Torres, Sergio (ed.), *Teología de la liberación y comunidades eclesiales de base. IV Congreso Internacional Ecuménico de Teología*, Salamanca: Sígueme, pp. 167-172.
- 1983e 'Democracia: ¿Mal menor o bien mayor?', in José. Severino Croatto, , *Democracia. Una opción evangélica*, (Buenos Aires: La Aurora), pp. 37-46.
- 1983f 'Fundamentele levenservaringen als een factor van theologiseren', *Gereformeerd Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 83:3-4, pp. 144-147.
- 1983g 'Historia y misión', in Míguez Bonino, José; Alvarez, Carmelo and Craig Roberto (eds.), *Protestantismo y liberalismo en América Latina*,

- San José: DEI – Sebila, pp. 15-36; ‘Historia y misión’, in Pablo Richard, (ed.) *Raíces de la teología latinoamericana: Nuevos materiales para la historia de la teología*, San José: DEI – CEHILA, 1985, pp. 241-251.
- 1983h ‘How Do You Hear God’s Word?’, in D. McCarthy (ed.) *Pastoral Theology and Ministry* Kingston: The Association for Theological Field Education, pp. 35-39.
- 1983i ‘Iglesia, Pueblo y Vanguardia’ in Codina, Víctor, *La Iglesia de los Pobres en América Latina* Santiago: PEC – ECO-SEPADE, pp. 54-80. Reprinting of chapter eight of *Fe en busca de eficacia* Salamanca: Sígueme, 1977, pp. 183-203.
- 1983j ‘Jesucristo: vocación comprometida con el Reino (En busca de una interpretación del CLAI)’, *Revista Parroquial*, 88:5, Special supplement. Reprinting of 1982e.
- 1983k ‘Llamamiento por la paz, la vida y la justicia’, *Actualidad Pastoral*, 16:148, pp. 148-150;
- 1983l ‘Llamamiento por la paz, la vida y la justicia’, *Estandarte Evangélico*, 100:5, pp. 2-3.
- 1983m *Towards a Christian Political Ethics*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press.
- 1983n ‘Vancouver 1983: ¿qué es una asamblea?’, *Actualidad Pastoral*, 16:150, pp. 249-262.
- 1984a ‘Análisis de las relaciones entre el Consejo Mundial de Iglesias y el Vaticano’, *Prensa Ecuémica*, 1:2, pp. 5-9
- 1984b ‘Compromiso cristão frente ao sofrimento’, *Revista Eclesiástica Brasileira*, 44:173, pp. 73-81;
- 1984c ‘18 años de diálogo protestante - católico’, *Estandarte Evangélico*, 101:3, pp. 11.
- 1984d ‘Freedom through Unity – Liberation through Ecumenism in Latin America’, *Thought*, 59:233, pp. 255-264.
- 1984e ‘La justicia del cristiano’ in David Arcaute, (ed.), *Lutero, Ayer y hoy* Buenos Aires: La Aurora, pp. 35-53.
- 1984f ‘Presencia y ausencia protestante en la Argentina del proceso militar 1976-1983’, *Cristianismo y Sociedad*, 83, pp. 81-85.
- 1984g ‘La teología de la liberación, Hecho ecumenico’, *Servicio de Informaciones Religiosas*, 65, pp. 16-20.
- 1984h ‘A Theological Definition of Human Rights’, *LADOC*, 14:3, pp. 47-48.
- 1984i ‘Vox Evangelii, Presentación’, *Vox Evangelio*, 2:1, pp. 5-6.
- 1985a ‘Argentina en la búsqueda de la democracia’, *Cristianismo y Sociedad*, 23:83, pp. 7-8.
- 1985b ‘Las bases bíblicas de la justicia’ in DWME, *La justificación y la justicia*, New York: Lutheran Church in America Division for World Mission and Ecumenism, pp. 1-13.
- 1985c ‘Dos lecturas de la Instrucción, Sobre algunos aspectos de la Teología de la liberación’, *Cristianismo y Sociedad*, 23:84, pp. 107-109. Reprinting of 1985d.
- 1985d ‘Dos lecturas de la Instrucción, Sobre algunos aspectos de la Teología de la liberación’, *Cuadernos de Teología*, 6:4, pp. 113-115;

- 1985e 'Filosofía contemporánea, ciencias del hombre y pensamiento teológico' in Celina, A Lértora, (ed.), *Estudios en homenaje a Luis Farré*, Buenos Aires: FEPAI, pp. 84-91.
- 1985f 'Foi o metodismo un movimento libertador?' (pp. 22-33), 'Metodismo, releitura latinoamericana' (pp.131-168) in Míguez Bonino, José; Santa Ana, Julio; Jorge, Pixley, y Assmann, Hugo, *Pela vida e evangelização, A tradição metodista na teologia latinoamericana*, São Paulo: Edições Paulinas. Translation of 1983b.
- 1985g 'La lucha por la vida' in CMI – MEDH, *Entre el dolor y la esperanza*. Buenos Aires: Movimiento Ecuménico por los Derechos Humanos, pp. 5-8.
- 1985h 'Oikumene and Anti-Oikumene', in *Cultures in Dialogue: Documents from a Symposium in Honour of Philip A. Potter*, WCC: Geneva, pp. 227-230.
- 1985i 'Propuesta programática'. *APDH*, 47, pp. 39-44.
- 1985j 'La recepción del 'Vaticano II' en América Latina', *Cuadernos de Teología*, 7:2, pp. 71-81;
- 1985k 'The Reception of Vatican II in Latin America', *The Ecumenical Review*, 37:3, pp. 266-274. Translation of 1985j.
- 1985l 'La teología de la liberación es un hecho ecuménico', in *Prensa Ecuménica*, 2:25, pp. 9-14. Reprinting of 1984g.
- 1985m 'Unidad Cristiana y Reconciliación Social', *Mensaje Iberoamericano*, 234, pp. 12-19. Translation of 1985n.
- 1985n 'Unidade Cristã e reconciliação social', *Tempo e Presenta*, 196, pp. 13-18
- 1986a 'Comprensión wesleyana de la evangelización', in CIEMAL, *La evangelización y el Reino de Dios Santiago*: CIEMAL, pp. 103-120.
- 1986b 'Crece el cristianismo en China, *Estandarte Evangélico*, 103:7, p. 9.
- 1987c *A Fe em busca de eficácia. Uma interpretação da reflexão teológica latino-americana sobre libertação*, San Leopoldo: Sinodal. Translation of 1977a.
- 1986d 'Hermeneutics, Truth and Praxis' in Donald K McKim, *A Guide to Contemporary Hermeneutics Major Trends in Biblical Interpretation*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, pp. 344-357. Reprinting of chapter five of 1975b.
- 1986e 'Introducción' in Karl Barth *Introducción a la teología evangélica*. Buenos Aires: La Aurora, pp. 11-25.
- 1986f 'José Míguez Bonino' in Elsa Támez (ed.) *Teólogos de la liberación hablan sobre la mujer*. San José: DEI, pp. 61-69.
- 1986g 'Luis Ferré, *Democracia, Religión y Divorcio* Buenos Aires: La Aurora, *Cuadernos de Teología*, 7:4, pp. 334-336.
- 1987a 'The Biblical Roots of Justice', *Word & World*, 7, pp. 12-21. Translation of 1985b.
- 1987b 'Los evangélicos y el papado', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 104:11, p 12.
- 1987c 'Una hora con Míguez Bonino' in Eliseo – Pérez Alvarez, Luis Vázquez Buenfil, , *Fe cristiana, Teología protestante, Iglesia y misión en América Latina. Entrevista con tres teólogos protestantes latinoamericanos*, Madrid: CUPSA, pp. 7-20.

- 1987d 'Reacción a 'Conversión, Liberación y Justificación'', in Walter Altmann *Confrontación y Liberación*, *Vox Evangelii*, 2:2, pp. 57-58. Carnahan Lectures 1983
- 1988a 'Algunas reflexiones acerca de la autoridad del pronunciamiento eclesiástico sobre temas de actualidad', *Cuadernos de Teología*, 9:2, pp. 165-175.
- 1988b 'Conversion: A Latin-American Rereading', in D Kirkpatrick, *Faith born in the Struggle for Life*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- 1988c 'Dor e esperança Ecumenismo; Sinal de Esperança', in *Tempo e Presença*, 235, pp. 6-7.
- 1988d 'A Latin American Looks at Minjung Theology', in Jung Young Lee, *An Emerging Theology in World Perspective*. Mystic: Twenty Third Publications, pp. 157-168.
- 1988e 'La Teología de la liberación nos ha permitido participar de la vida de nuestro prójimo', *Pastoral Popular*, 39:188, pp. 20-22.
- 1988f 'La teología, la política y la paz', *Teología en Comunidad*, 2, pp. 45-48.
- 1989a 'Adam, Karl (1876-1966)' (p. 9), 'Assmann, Hugo (1933-)' (pp. 97-98), 'Catolicismo Romano en América Latina' (pp. 228-229), 'Congar, Yves M. J. (1904-)' (p. 273), 'Informe de Chimbote' (pp. 322-323), 'Dussel, Enrique (1934-)' (p. 363), 'Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana' (p. 460), 'Gutiérrez, Gustavo (1928-)' (p. 498), 'Iglesia' (pp. 543-544), 'Misiones Católicas Coloniales en América Latina' (pp. 737-738), 'Neotomismo' (pp. 776-777), 'Papado' (pp. 822-823), 'Positivismo en América Latina' (p. 859), 'Teología de la liberación' (pp. 1000-1001), 'Uppsala' (pp. 1039-1040) in Wilton M Nelson, (ed.) *Diccionario de Historia de la Iglesia*, Miami: Editorial Caribe.
- 1989b 'Comunicación y liberación. Pesimismo y optimismo en dos ponencias', WACC *Comunicación para la comunidad. Prensa Ecueménica*, 9, pp. 3-19.
- 1989c 'Comunicación y mundo de los pobres', *Actualidad Pastoral*, 22:180 (1989), pp. 212-215
- 1989d 'The Concern for a Vital and Coherent Theology', *The Ecumenical Review*, 41, pp. 160-176.
- 1989e 'Compromiso cristiano ante el sufrimiento', *Senderos*, 34, pp. 25-36. Translation of 1984b.
- 1989f 'Love and Social Transformation in Liberation Theology', in Marc Ellis, and Otto Maduro, (eds.) *The Future of Liberation Theology. Essays in Honor of Gustavo Gutiérrez*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books. pp. 121-128.
- 1989g 'El poder', *Cuadernos de Teología*, X:2, pp. 7-13.
- 1989h 'Some Reflections on Power and Authority in the Church's Teaching on Social Questions', *Ogbomoso Journal of Theology* 4, pp. 30-37. Translation of 1988a.
- 1990a 'Commonalities: A Latin American Perspective', in K.C. Abraham, *Third World Theologies, Commonalties and Divergences*. Maryknoll: Orbis Press, pp. 105-110.

- 1990b 'Comunicación y liberación' in WACC, *Comunicación para la comunidad* Buenos Aires: La Aurora, pp. 73-81.
- 1990c *Para que tengan vida, Encuentros con Jesús en el evangelio de Juan*, with Míguez, Néstor Oscar, New York, Office of Resources in Spanish of the United Methodist Church.
- 1991a 'Conflict' (pp. 216-217), 'Ethics' (pp. 364-369), 'Fascism' (pp. 417-418), 'Imperialism' (p. 504), 'Land' (pp. 586-587), 'Land and the State of Israel' (pp. 587-589), 'Medellín' (pp. 666-667), 'Middle axioms' (p. 675), 'National Security' (pp. 711-712), 'Natural Law' (pp. 712-715), 'Praxis' (pp. 815-816), 'South America: Andean region' (pp. 941-942), 'Theology liberation' (pp. 997-998), 'Totalitarianism' (pp. 1011-1012) in Nicholas Lossky,; et al. (eds.) *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* WCC Publications, Geneva and Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids.
- 1991b 'Comentarios e interrogantes', (pp. 85-91), reaction to John Howard Poder, 'Violencia y no violencia' (pp. 79-84); 'Comentarios e interrogantes', (pp. 102-108), reaction to Rene Padilla, 'Pobreza y mayordomía' (pp. 93-101); 'Comentarios e interrogantes', (pp. 124-129), reaction to Samuel Escobar, 'Opresión y Justicia' (pp. 109-123); 'Comentarios e interrogantes', (pp. 146-154) reaction to Samuel Escobar, 'Autoritarismo y Poder' (pp. 131-145), and 'El futuro del protestantismo en América Latina, Mesa Redonda', (pp. 155-157); *Boletín Teológico*, 42-43.
- 1991c '¿Qué es la teología de la liberación latinoamericana?', en *Revista Parroquial*, :1-2, pp. 7-11.
- 1991d Simplemente una experiencia. *Boletín Teológico*, pp. 200-210.
- 1992a 'The Dimensions of Oppression, Theoretical Model, Unity of Theologies of Liberation', in Lorine M. Getz, and Ruy O. Costa, (eds.) *Struggles for Solidarity. Liberation Theologies in Tension*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, pp. 27-35.
- 1992b '¿Decae la influencia de la teología de la liberación?', *El Estandarte Evangélico*, 108:8, p. 20.
- 1992c 'Misión, presencia e identidad evangélica en la Argentina' (Carlos Paz, Córdoba Encuentro Nacional de Pastores) Leaflet
- 1992d 'The Social Imagination of Radical Christianity'. *Pacifica*, pp. 67-83
- 1993a 'CLADE III, como reunión ecuménica', in *Boletín Teológico*, 25:51, pp. 161-164.
- 1993b 'El evangelio de reconciliación,' in CLADE III, *Tercer Congreso Latinoamericano de Evangelización, Todo el Evangelio para todos los pueblos de América Latina*, Buenos Aires:FTL. pp.100-114.
- 1993c 'Evangelio y Cristiandad, Apuntes para una reflexión sobre 500 años de evangelización católica en América Latina', *Cuadernos de Teología*. 13:1, pp. 27-46.
- 1993d La Iglesia Católica y la evangelización. in CLADE III, *Tercer Congreso Latinoamericano de Evangelización, Todo el Evangelio para todos los pueblos de América Latina*, Buenos Aires:FTL. pp. 421-428.

- 1993e 'El movimiento ecuménico y la universidad', in José Míguez Bonino,, J. Severino Croatto; Eugenio L Stockwell, (eds.) *Universidad y pensamiento cristiano* Rosario: Universidad del Centro Educativo Latinoamericano, pp. 6-9.
- 1993f 'New Paths in Lutheran Ecumenism, The New Oikoumene', in *LWF Documentation*, 32, pp. 113-116.
- 1993g 'The Politics of Bible Study', in Norman K Gottwald,. and Richard A. Horsley, (eds.), *The Bible and Liberation. Political and Social Hermeneutics*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, pp. 107-115. Reprinting of 1974e.
- 1994a 'El aborto: Un tema que es necesario debatir; Hace ya treinta años, la Iglesia Metodista de Inglaterra planteó la necesidad de analizar el marco social en que se inserta esta problemática', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 111:4, p. 4.
- 1994b 'La Constitución sola no va a transformar la sociedad', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 111:4, pp. 6-7.
- 1994c 'A mis hermanos evangélicos: ¿Participar en la Reforma Constitucional?', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 110:5, p. 17.
- 1994d 'Pentecostal Missions is More than what it Claims', in *Pneuma*, 16, pp. 283-284.
- 1995a 'Las iglesias protestantes y evangélicas en América Latina y el Caribe. Un ensayo interpretativo', *Cuadernos de Teología*, 14:2, pp. 29-38.
- 1995b 'El rostro evangélico del Protestantismo Latinoamericano', *Boletín Teológico*, 59-60, pp. 65-86.
- 1995c *Rostros del protestantismo latinoamericano*, Buenos Aires: Nueva Creación.
- 1996a 'Formas de religiosidad en los albores del tercer milenio', en *Boletín de la Biblioteca del Congreso de la Nación*, 109, pp. 117-122.
- 1996b 'Preface' in Peterson, Douglas, *Not by Might, nor by Power: A Pentecostal Theology of Social Concern in Latin America*, Oxford: Regnum Books. pp. ix-xvi.
- 1996c 'Producción teológica en Abya Yala al umbral del tercer milenio' in Jorge Duque (ed.), *Por una sociedad donde quedan todos*. San José: DEI, pp. 107-112.
- 1997a *Faces of Latin American Protestantism*, (Grand Rapids; Eerdmans). Translation of 1995c.
- 1997b 'La Teología evangélica y los evangélicos', *Boletín Teológico*, 29:65, (Jan), pp. 7-15
- 1997c 'Universalidad y contextualidad en teología', *Cuadernos de Teología*, 16:1-2, pp. 87-97.
- 1998a 'Buscad a Dios con la alegría de la esperanza'. (CLAI). Leaflet
- 1998b 'Pre-asamblea del CMI, Rumbo a Harare', *Estandarte Evangélico*, 115:4, pp.2-3.
- 1998c 'Ponencia' in Juan Carlos Maccarone (ed.), *Hacia un nuevo Compromiso Social. La dignidad del trabajo. El compromiso frente a la pobreza. La reconstrucción de la solidaridad*. Cámara de Diputados de la Provincia de Buenos Aires, pp. 39-49.

- 1998d 'Prólogo' in Roy H., May, *Discernimiento moral, Una introducción a la ética cristiana*, San José: DEI, pp. 13-15.
- 1998e 'The Struggle for Justice and Peace', in Chetti Daniel and M.P. Joseph, *Ethical Issues in the Struggles for Justice*, (Kerala: The Christava Sahitya Samiti), pp.36-52.
- 1998f 'Wesley in Latin America: A Theological and Historical Reflection', in Randy L Maddox, (Ed), *Rethinking Wesley's Theology for Contemporary Methodism*, Sherbourne: Kingswood Books.
- 1999a 'The Case of Argentina', in Paul Sigmund (ed.) *Religious Freedom and Evangelization in Latin America*, Maryknoll: Orbis Press, pp. 187-203.
- 1999b 'Changing Paradigms: A Response,' in Murray Dempster, , W., Byron D., Klaus, Douglas Peterson, *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel*, Oxford: Regnum Books, pp. 116-123.
- 1999c 'Economía y hermenéutica bíblica', *Ribla*, 30, pp. 17-24.
- 1999d 'Envejeciendo con el siglo: ¿un problema de vocabulario?', in Santiago Pszemiarower, (ed.), *Ancianidad y Derechos Humanos* Buenos Aires: APDH BID, pp. 125-136.
- 1999e 'Genesis 11:1-9' (pp. 13-17); 'Acts 2:1-42' (pp. 161-167), in Priscila Pope-Levinson and John R Levinson, (eds.) *Return to Babel, Global Perspectives on the Bible* Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
- 1999f *Poder del Evangelio y poder político*, Buenos Aires, Editorial Kairós.
- 1999g 'Por un metodismo contextualizado y fiel a su tradición', *Estandarte Evangélico*, Special Edition, pp. 16-17.
- 1999h 'Prólogo' in Alberto F. Roldán, *¿Para qué sirve la teología? Una respuesta crítica con horizonte abierto*, Buenos Aires: Facultad Internacional de Educación Teológica, pp. 11-14.
- 1999i 'Salvation as the Work of the Trinity', in M Douglas Meeks(ed.) *Trinity, Community and Power*, Abingdon Press:, Nashville Tennessee, pp. 69-83;
- 1999j 'Salvation as the Work of the Trinity', *Norsk Teologisk Tidsskrif*, 100, pp. 32-42. Reprinting with modifications of 1999i.
- 2000a 'Reading Jürgen Moltmann from Latin America', *The Asbury Theological Journal*, 55:1, pp. 105-114.
- 2000b 'La unidad de la Iglesia, ¿Qué significa? ¿Cómo se manifiesta? ¿Qué debemos hacer?', *Iglesia y Misión*, 19:1-2 (71-72), pp. 24-27.
- 2000c 'Marxism', in Virginia Fabella, and R.S. Sugirtharajah, *Dictionary of Third World Theologies*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- 2000d 'Unidad y Misión: Una invitación del Señor', in Comisión de Teología de CLAI, *Unidad y Misión en América Latina: Documentos de reflexión para la Consulta de Misión y la Cuarta Asamblea de CLAI*, Quito: CLAI, pp. 9-18.
- 2001b 'La mente cristiana frente a las demandas educativas actuales', in Sydney Rooy, (ed.), *Presencia cristiana en el mundo académico*, Buenos Aires: Editorial Kairós, pp. 41-49.
- 2001b 'The Protestant Churches in Latin America in the New Millennium, in Stanley E. Porter, Michael A. Hayes and David Tombs, *Faith in the Millennium* Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.

- 2002a 'La educación teológica latinoamericana en busca de profundidad y relevancia', in *Encuentro y Diálogo*: 16, pp. 143-144.
- 2002b 'Building Community: Transforming the World', keynote speech given at the 15th World Council of YMCAs – 15 to 20 July, 2002, Oaxtepec, Mexico.
www.ymca.int/world_councils/WC2002/speeches.htm. (Accessed 02/10/2003).
- 2004a 'Latin America', in John Parratt (ed.), *An Introduction to Third World Theologies* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 2004b 'Un silbo apacible y suave...' (1 Reyes 19:12) Notas autobiográficas de un recorrido pastoral y teológico, in Guillermo Hansen (ed.), *El Silbo ecumenico del Espiritu: Homenaje a JMB en sus 80 anos*. Buenos Aires: ISEDET, 2004.

2. SECONDARY SOURCES: WORKS ON MÍGUEZ BONINO

- BISELL COOPER Roy. 1986. *A Critical Analysis of Liberation Theology in the Works of Jose Míguez Bonino and Ronald J. Sider*. Dissertation. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
- BORMAN John. 1983. 'A Study in Christianity, Marxist Ideology and Historical Engagement with Special Reference to the Liberation Theology of Jose Míguez Bonino'. Dissertation. University Of Cape Town (South Africa).
- CASEY-RUTLAND, Ransom Eugene. 1991., *An Examination of the Issue of Violence in the Writings of Selected Latin American Liberation Theologians*. Dissertation. Emory University.
- CHOPP, Rebecca. 1992. *The Praxis of Suffering: An Interpretation of Liberation and Political Theologies*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- ELIZONDO Javier. 1988. *The Use of the Bible in the Moral Deliberation of Liberation Theologians: An Examination of the Works of Leonardo Boff, Jose Míguez Bonino and Porfirio Miranda*. Dissertation. Baylor University.
- ESTRADA Sergio Antonio 1992. *A critique of liberationist exegesis of the Gospel of Luke as reflected in the writings of Jose Míguez Bonino, Leonardo Boff, and Gustavo Gutiérrez*. Dissertsation. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.
- HANSEN, Guillermo. 2004. *El Silbo Ecuménico: Homenaje a José Míguez Bonino en sus 80 años*. Buenos Aires: ISEDET.
- ISEDET. 1985. *Fe, Compromiso y Teología: Homenaje a José Míguez Bonino*. Buenos Aires: ISEDET .
- KEE, Alistair, *Marx and the Failure of Liberation Theology*. London: SCM Press.
- MOLTMANN, Jürgen. 1979. 'An Open Letter to Jose Míguez Bonino,' in ed. Gerald Anderson and Thomas R. Stransky, *Mission Trends No. 4: Liberation Theologies in North America and Europe*, New York: Paulist Press; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publishing Co., pp. 59-69.
- SCHUBECK S.J. 1993. *Liberation Ethics: Sources, Models and Norms*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.
- STOTT, J. 1974a. Letter from Stott to Míguez Bonino, (London, 13.3.1974).

- STOTT, J. 1974b a. Promotional material for the lectures produced by *Langham Trust*.
- WEISHEIN, Jorge Daniel. 2000. *La dialéctica de la obediencia: La tematización del cambio social en el discurso teológico protestante de José Míguez Bonino entre 1958 -1984*, Licenciatura Thesis, ISEDET, Buenos Aires.

3. GENERAL LITERATURE

- ANDROUSSA, Anastasios of. 1989. 'Address by the Conference Moderator', *International Review of Mission*. 78:311/312 July-October 1989. pp. 316-328.
- ALVES, Rubem. 1969. *The Theology of Human Hope*. Washington: Corpus Books.
- ANDERSEN, Wilhelm. 1955. *Towards a Theology of Mission*, IMC Research Pamphlet No. 2. London: SCM Press.
- ANDERSON, Gerald H. (ed.). 1961. *The Theology of the Christian Mission*. London: SCM Press.
- _____. 1998. *Biographical Dictionary of Mission*. New York: Simon & Schuster MacMillan.
- AROYO, Gonzalo. 1973. *Los cristianos y el socialismo: Primer encuentro latinoamericano* Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI editores.
- ATEEK, Naim Stifan. 1989. *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian Theology of Liberation*. Maryknoll, Orbis Books.
- BARTH, Karl. 1933a. *Epistle to the Romans*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- _____. 1933b. *Theologische Existenz Heute!* Munich: Ch. Kaiser.
- _____. 1960. *Anselm: Fides Quaerens Intellectum*. Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press.
- _____. 1961. *The Humanity of God*. London: Collins.
- _____. 1962. *Church Dogmatics, IV/1 The Doctrine of Reconciliation.* Edinburgh: T & T Clark.
- _____. 1963. *Evangelical Theology: An introduction.*, London: Collins.
- _____. 1966. *How I've Changed my Mind*. Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press.
- _____. 1975. *Church Dogmatics, I/1 The Doctrine of the Word of God: Prolegomena to Church Dogmatics*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark.
- _____. 1986. *Introducción a la Teología Evangélica.*, Buenos Aires: Ediciones Aurora.
- BASSHAM, Roger C. 1979. *Mission Theology: 1948-1975 Years of Worldwide Creative Tension Ecumenical, Evangelical and Roman Catholic*. Pasadena: William Carey Library.
- BASTIAN, Jean-Pierre. 1990. *Historia del Protestantismo en América Latina*. Mexico: CUSA-CEHILA
- BAVINCK, Johannes H. 1949. *The Impact of Christianity on the Non-Christian World*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- _____. 1960. *An Introduction to the Science of Missions*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed.
- BEVANS, Stephen B. 2002. *Models of Contextual Theology: Faith and Cultures*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.

- BEYERHAUS, Peter, 1979. 'The three selves formula: Is it built on biblical foundations?' in: Charles Kraft (Ed). *Readings in Dynamic Indigeneity*. Pasadena: William Carey Library. pp. 15-30.
- BLOCH, E. 1986. *The Principle of Hope*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.
- BOESAK, Allen A. and Leonard Sweetman. 1982. *Black and Reformed: Apartheid, Liberation and Calvinist Tradition*. Maryknoll, Orbis Books.
- BOESAK, Allen. 1978. *Farewell to Innocence: A Socio-Ethical Study on Black Theology & Black Power*. Maryknoll, Orbis Books.
- BOFF, Clodovis. 1987. *Theology and Praxis: Epistemological Foundations*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- _____. 1993. 'Methodology of the Theology of Liberation', in J. Sobrino, I. Ellacuría, *Systematic Theology: Perspectives from Liberation Theology*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books. pp. 1-21.
- BOFF Leonardo. 1985. *Church, Charism, and Power*. London: SCM Press.
- _____. 1988. *Trinity and Society*, Tumbridge Wells: Burns and Oates.
- _____. 1993. 'Trinity', in Ignacio Ellacuría, S.J. *Mysterium Liberationis: Fundamental Concepts of Liberation Theology*, North Blackburn, Victoria: ColinDove.
- _____. 1992. *Good News to the Poor: A New Evangelisation*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- BONHOEFFER, Dietrich. 1961. *Act and Being*. New York: Harper & Row
- _____. 1998. *Sanctorum Communio: A Theological Study of the Sociology of the Church*. Augsburg: Fortress Publishers.
- _____. 2005. *Ethics*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- BONNARD, Pierre. 1970. 'Quelques récits évangéliques relatifs Réssuscité', *Foi et Vie*, January-February.
- BOSCH, David J. 1991. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- BROWN, Colin. 1967. *Karl Barth and the Christian Message*. Cambridge: Tyndale Press.
- BUCKLEY, James J. 2000. 'Christian community, baptism and the Lord's supper', in John Webster, *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Barth*. pp. 195-221.
- CARRIKER, C. Timothy, 1993. 'Missiological Hermeneutic and Pauline Apolalyptic Eschatology', in Charles Van Engen, Dean S. Guilliland and Paul Pierson (eds.), *Good News of the Kingdom*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books. pp. 45-55.
- CARTER, Jimmy. 2005. *Our Endangered Values: America's Moral Crisis*. London: Simon & Schuster Inc
- CASTRO, Emilio. 1985. *Freedom in Mission: The Perspective of the kingdom of God*. Geneva: WCC Publications.
- CEHILA. 1992. *500 años de Cristianismo en Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Centro Nueva Tierra.
- CELA. 1962. *Cristo la Esperanza para América Latina: Ponencias - Informes - Comentarios de la Segunda Conferencia Evangélica Latinoamericana*. Buenos Aires: Confederación Evangélica del Río de la Plata.
- CLADE. 1993. *Tercer Congreso Latinoamericano de Evangelización, Todo el Evangelio para todos los pueblos de América Latina*. Buenos Aires: FTL.

- CLARKE, William Newton 1898. *An Outline of Christian Theology*. New York
- COLEMAN, William J. 1958. *Latin American Catholicism: A Self-Evaluation*. Maryknoll Publications, Maryknoll, New York.
- COMMISSION ON CONCERNS OF THE CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE OF ASIA. 1983. (eds.) *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books. (revised edition).
- CONE, James H. 1984. *For My People and the Black Church*. Maryknoll, Orbis Books.
- _____. 1975. *God of the Oppressed*. Maryknoll, Orbis Books.
- _____. 1969. *Black Theology and Black Power*. Maryknoll, Orbis Books.
- COOK Guillermo. 1985. *The Expectation of the Poor: Latin American Base Ecclesial Communities in Protestant Perspective*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- COSTAS, Orlando E. 1976. *Theology of the Crossroads in Contemporary Latin America: Missiology in Mainline Protestantism: 1969-1974*. Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi.
- _____. 1977. 'Missiology in Contemporary Latin America: A Survey' *Missiology* (5:1). pp. 89-114.
- CROATTO, J. Severino. 1981. *Exodus: a Hermeneutics of Freedom*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- _____. Severino. 1987. *Biblical Hermeneutics: Toward a Theory of Reading As the Production of Meaning*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- CULLMANN, O. 1946 *Christus und die Zeit*. Zollikon-Zurich: Evangelischer Verlag A.G.
- _____. 1951. *Christ and Time*. London: SCM Press.
- CUNNINGHAM, David S. 1998. *These Three Are One: The Practice of Trinitarian Theology*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- DAVIES, Ronald E. 1995. *The Historic Fruits of Revival*, All Nations Christian College, Public Lecture.
- DAWSON, Andrew. 1998. *The Birth and Impact of the Base Ecclesial Community and Liberative Theological Discourse in Brazil* (1998). Lanham, MD.: University Press of America
- DE AZEVEDO, Marcello C. 1993. 'Basic Ecclesial Communities', in Ignacio Ellacuria, S.J. and Jon Sobrino, S.J., (eds.) *Mysterium Liberationis: Fundamental Concepts of Liberation Theology*. North Blackburn, Victoria: ColinDove. pp. 636-653
- DEIROS, Pablo A. 1997. *Diccionario Hispanoamericano de la Misión*, Guatemala City: COMIBAM.
- DEMPSTER, Murray, W. Byron D. Klaus and Douglas Peterson(eds.), 1999. *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel*. Oxford: Regnum Books.
- D'EPINEY, Christian Lalive. 1969. *Haven of the Masses: A Study of the Pentecostal Movement in Chile*. London: Lutterworth Press.
- DICKSON, Kwesi A. 1984. *Theology in Africa*. Maryknoll, Orbis Books.
- DIVISION OF WORLD MISSIONS OF THE METHODIST CHURCH. 1956. *Methodist Overseas Missions: Gazetteer and Statistics*. Division of World Missions of the Methodist Church.

- DOUGLAS, James. D. 1995. *Twentieth Century Dictionary of Christian Biography*. Carlisle: Paternoster Press and Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House.
- DULLES Avery 1988. *Models of the Church: A Critical Assessment of the Church in All its aspects*, 2nd Edition. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan.
- ELLACURÍA, S.J., Ignacio. 1984. *Conversión de la iglesia al reino de Dios: Para anunciarlo y realizarlo en la historia*. Sal Terrae:, Santander.
- _____. Ignacio. 1993. *Mysterium Liberationis: Fundamental Concepts of Liberation Theology*, North Blackburn, Victoria: ColinDove.
- ELLIS, Marc. H. 1987. *Towards a Jewish Theology of Liberation*. Maryknoll, Orbis Books.
- ENNS, Arno W. 1971. *Man Milieu and Mission in Argentina*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- ERSKINE, Noel Leo, 1981. *Decolonizing Theology: A Caribbean Perspective*, Maryknoll, Orbis Books.
- _____. 1998. *Decolonizing Theology: A Caribbean Perspective*, Trenton, N.J. and Asmara: Africa World Press.
- ESCOBAR, Samuel. 1987. *La Fe Evangélica y las Teologías de la Liberación*. El Paso: Casa Bautista.
- _____. 1991. 'The Promise and Precariousness of Latin American Protestantism' in Millar, Daniel, *Coming of Age: Protestantism in Latin America*. Lanham and London: University Press of America.
- _____. 2000. 'The Global Scenario at the Turn of the Century' in Taylor, William (ed.), *Global Missiology for the 21st Century: The Iguassu Dialogue*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic. pp. 25-46.
- FABELLA, Virginia and R.S. Sugirtharajah, 2000. *Dictionary of Third World Theologies*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- FABELLA Virginia, M.M. 2000. 'EATWOT', in Virginia Fabella, M.M. and R. S. Sugirtharajah (eds.), *Dictionary of Third World Theologies*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books. p. 70.
- FERM, Deane W. 1988. *Profiles of Liberation: 36 Portraits of Third World Theologians*, Connecticut: Twenty Third Publications.
- FERRÉ, Nels. 1940. *The Christian Fellowship*. New York and London: Harper and Brothers.
- FLESSEMAN-VAN LEER E. ed. 1983. The Authority of the Bible, Louvain, 1971 in: *The Bible. Its Authority and Interpretation in the Ecumenical Movement*, Faith and Order Paper No. 99, WCC: Geneva 1983 (2nd edition), pp. 42-57.
- FO 1963. *The Report of the Theological Commission on Tradition and Traditions*. Faith and Order Paper No. 40. Geneva.
- _____. 1996. *Towards Sharing the One Faith: A Study Guide for Discussion Groups*, Faith and Order Paper No. 173.
- _____. 1998. *A Treasure in Earthen Vessels: An Instrument for an Ecumenical Reflection on Hermeneutics*. Faith and Order paper no. 182.
- FREYTAG, Walter, Hartenstein, Karl and Lehmann, Paul. 1952. *Mission zwischen Gestern and Morgen*, Stuttgart: Evangelischer Missnverlag.
- FRIGERIO, Alejandro (editor). 1994. *El Pentecostalismo en la Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Biblioteca Popular.

- GADAMER, Hans Georg, 1960. *Wahrheit und Methode*. English translation *Truth and Method* (1975).
- GOCN 2006. <http://www.gocn.org/agenda.html> (accessed 6.2.2006)
- GOHEEN, Michael W. 2000. *'As the Father has Sent Me, I am Sending You': J, E, Lesslie Newbigin's Missionary Ecclesiology*. Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum.
- GOSLIN, Thomas S. 1993. *Bowman Foster Stockwell: la historia de una misión*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones La Aurora.
- GRAMSCI, Antonio. 1971. *Selections from Prison Notebooks*, London: Laurence ad Wishhard. Edited and translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith.
- GRENZ, Stanley J. and Olsen, Roger E. 1992. *20th Century Theology: God and the World in a Transitional Age*. Carlisle: Paternoster Press
- GUTIÉRREZ, Gustavo 1971. *Teología de la liberación*, Lima: CEP.
- _____. 1984. *We Drink from our own Wells: The Spiritual Journey of a People*. London: SCM Press.
- _____. 1985. *The Power of the Poor in History*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- _____. 1987. *On Job: God Talk and the Suffering of the Innocent*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- _____. 1991. *God of Life*. London: SCM Press
- _____. 1995. *A Theology of Liberation*, London: SCM Press.
- _____. 1996. *Essential Writings*, London: SCM Press.
- HANSEN, Guillermo. 1994. *The Doctrine of the Trinity and Liberation Theology: A Study of the Trinitarian Doctrine and its place in Latin American Liberation Theology*, PhD, Chicago.
- HANSPICKER, Meredith B. 1970. "Faith and Order 1948-1968" in Harold E. Fey (ed) *A History....The Ecumenical Advance*. Geneva: WCC. p.151.
- HIEBERT, Paul. 1985. *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books.
- HOEKENDIJK Johannes C. 1952. *The Church in Missionary Thinking*, *International Review of Missions*, Vol. XLI, July. pp. 324-336.
- _____. 1967. *Kirche und Volk in der deutschen Missionsswissenschaft*. Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag.
- HUNSINGER, George R. (ed.). 1976. *Karl Barth and Radical Politics*, Philadelphia: Westminster Press.
- HUNSINGER, George R. and Van Gelder, Craig (eds.). 1996. *Karl Barth and Radical Politics*, Philadelphia: Westminster Press.
- IMC. 1952. *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*. New York and London, International Missionary Council.
- ISAL: 1961. *Encuentro y Desafío: La acción cristiana evangélica latinoamericana ante la cambiante situación social, política y económica Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina: Conclusiones y resoluciones de la Primera Consulta Evangélica Latinoamericana sobre la Iglesia y Sociedad realizada en Huampani, Perú, del 23 al 27 de julio de 1961*. Montevideo: Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina.
- JEREMIAS, Joachim. 1972. *The Parables of Jesus.*, London: SCM Press.

- JENSEN, Robert. 2000. 'Trinity', in Hastings, Adrian, *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought: Intellectual, Spiritual, and Moral Horizons of Christianity*, Oxford: OUP.
- JOHNSTONE, Patrick. 1995. *Operation World*. Carlisle: OM Publishing.
- JONGENEEL, J.A.B. and VAN ENGELLEN, J.M. 1995. 'Contemporary Currents in Missiology' in Verstraelen et. Al., *Missiology: An Ecumenical Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. pp. 442-3.
- JONGENEEL, J.A.B. 1995. *Philosophy, Science, and Theology of Mission in the 19th and 20th Centuries: a missiological encyclopedia*, part 1. New York : P. Lang.
- _____. 1997. *Philosophy, Science, and Theology of Mission in the 19th and 20th Centuries: a missiological encyclopedia*, part 2. New York : P. Lang.
- KANT, Emmanuel. 1992. *Conflict of the Faculties*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press (1798)
- KÄRKKÄINEN, Veli-Matti. 2002. *An Introduction to Ecclesiology: Ecumenical, Historical and Global Perspectives*, Downers Grove: IVP.
- _____. 2004. *The Doctrine of God: A Global Introduction*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books.
- KLAIBER Jeffery S.J.1998. *The Church, Dictatorship and Democracy in Latin America*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- KLOOTWIJK Euwout. 1992. *Commitment and Openness: The Interreligious dialogue and Theology of Religions in the Work of Stanley J. Samartha*. Zoetermeer: Uitgeverij Boekencentrum.
- KRAEMER, Hendrik, 1960. 'History's Lesson for Tomorrow's Mission', *Special edition of Student World*.
- LAPOINTE, Roger. 1968. *Les trois dimensions de l'hermeneutique*. Paris:O.M.I.
- LCWE. 1983. *Transformation: The Church in Response to Human Need*. Oxford: Grove Books Ltd.
- LEHMANN, P. 1963. *Ethics in a Christian Context*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers.
- LEHLONEN, Risto. 1998. *The Ecumenical Student Movement in the Turmoil of Revolution: 1968-1973*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- LIMPIC, Ted. 2002. *Catálogo de organizaciones misioneras iberoamericana* Guatemala City: COMIBAM.
- LOSSKY, Nicholas, José Míguez Bonino, Pobee, John S., Tom F Stransky, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Pauline Webb. 1991. *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*. Geneva: WCC Pub.
- LUNA, Felix. 1997. *Breve historia de los Argentinos*. Buenos Aires: Planeta.
- MACKAY, John. 1932. *The Other Spanish Christ: A Study in the Spiritual History of Spain and South America*, London: Student Christian Movement Press.
- MARSDEN, George M, 1980. *Fundamentalism and American Culture, The Shaping of Twentieth Century Evangelicalism, 1870-1925*, New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- MARTIN, David. 1990. *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America*. London: Basil Blackwell.
- MARX, K. 1886. *On Religion*. Moscow: Progress Publications (ed. 1957).

- MCAFFEE BROWN, Robert. 1990. *Kairos: Three Prophetic Challenges to the Church*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- MCGRATH, Alister E. 1993. *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Thought*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- _____. 1998. *Christian Theology: An Introduction*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- MCINTOSH, Stuart. 1990. *Misiología*. Unpublished booklet.
- MÍGUEZ, Daniel P. 1997. "'To Help you Find God': The Making of a Pentecostal identity in a Buenos Aires Suburb'. Free University of Amsterdam. PhD thesis.
- MILLER, Ed L. and GRENZ, Stanley J. 1998 *Fortress Introduction to Contemporary Theologies*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- MINEAR, Paul S (ed.). *Faith and Order: The Report to the Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order*. London: SCM Press.
- MIRANDA, José P. 1974. *Marx and the Bible: A Critique of the Philosophy of Oppression*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- MOLTMANN, Jürgen. 1967. *A Theology of Hope*, London: SCM Press.
- _____. 1974. *The Crucified God*, London: SCM Press.
- _____. 1977. *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, London: SCM Press.
- _____. 1978a. *Temas para una teología de esperanza*. Buenos Aires: ISEDET.
- _____. 1978b. *The Open Church: The Invitation to a Messianic Life-Style*. London: SCM Press.
- _____. 1980. *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, London: SCM Press.
- _____. 1983. The Reconciling Powers of the Trinity in the Church and the World, in *The Reconciling Power of the Trinity, Geneva Conference of European Churches*, C.E.C. Occasional Paper No. 15. Geneva: C.E.C.
- MONTI, Daniel P. 1976. *Ubicación del Metodismo en el Río de la Plata*. Buenos Aires: La Aurora.
- MOREAU, Scott A. 2000. *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books.
- MÜLLER, Karl, Sundermeier, Theo, Bevans, Stephen B., and Blise, Richard H. 1997. *Dictionary of Mission: Theology, History, Perspective*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- MUÑOZ, Ronaldo. 1991. *The God of the Christians*, Tumbridge Wells: Burns and Oates.
- MUZOREWA, Gwinyai H. 1985. *The Origins and Development of African Theology*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- NEWBIGIN, J.E. Lesslie. 1958. *One Body, One Gospel, One World*, London and New York: International Missionary Council.
- _____. 1978. *Open Secret: Sketches for a Missionary Theology*. London: SPCK.
- NIEBUHR, H. Richard. 1957. *The Kingdom of God in America*, New York: Harper Torchbook.
- NUÑEZ, Emilio. 1985. *Liberation Theology* Chicago: Moody Press.
- OBERMÜLLER, Rodolfo, 'Dos palabras de amistad', in ISEDET, *Fe, compromiso y teología: homenaje a José Míguez Bonino*, (Buenos Aires: ISEDET, 1985), pp. 37-40.

- ODELL, L. 1985. The Church and Society Exploitation in Latin America' *Ecumenical Review*, 37:1, Jan. pp. 34-40.
- ORCHARD, Ronald K. 1964. *Missions in a Time of Testing: Thought and Practice in Contemporary Missions*. London: Lutterworth Press.
- PADILLA, C. René. 1972. *Fe Cristiana y Latinoamérica hoy*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Certeza. pp. 18-33.
- _____. 1974. 'Iglesia y sociedad en América Latina' in Padilla, C. Rene, *Fé Cristiana y Latinoamérica Hoy*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Certeza. pp. 119'147.
- _____. 1991. *Boletín Teológico*, 42/43.
- PAGURA, Federico J. 1985. 'Profeta y pastor entre los suyos' in ISEDET, *Fe, compromiso y teología: homenaje a José Míguez Bonino*. Buenos Aires: Asociación Interconfesionales de Estudios Teológicos.
- PETERSON, Douglas. 1996. *Not by Might nor by Power: A Pentecostal Theology of Social Concern*. Oxford: Regnum Books, 1996.
- PHILIP, T .V. 1999. *Edinburgh to Salvador: Twentieth Century Ecumenical Missiology*. Delhi: ISPCK.
- PHILLIPS, James A., and COOKE, Robert T., (eds.) 1993. *Towards the 21st Century Mission*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- POBEE, John S. 2002. 'Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians', in Nicholas Lossky, José Míguez Bonino, John Pobee, Tom F. Stransky, Geoffrey Wainwright and Pauline Webb (eds.), *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, 2nd Edition. Geneva: WCC Publications. p. 358.
- POTTER, Philip. 1980. 'From Edinburgh to Melbourne', in WCC, *Your Kingdom Come: Mission Perspectives*. Geneva: WCC. pp. 6-21.
- PRIEN, Hans- Jürgen. 1987. *Historia del Cristianismo en América Latina*. Salamanca: Ediciones Sígueme.
- RAHNER, Karl. 1978. *Foundations of Christian Faith*, London: Darton, Longman and Todd.
- RAUSCHENBUSCH, Walter. 1917. *Theology for the Social Gospel*. New York: Abingdon Press.
- RAYAN Samuel, S.J. 2000. 'Decolonising Theology', in Virginia Fabella, M.M. and R. S. Sugirtharajah (eds.), *Dictionary of Third World Theologies*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books. pp. 65-66.
- RICOEUR, Paul. 1976. *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning*. Fort Worth, TX: Texas Christian University Press.
- ROBERTSON, C. Alton 'The Student and the Church Institutional', *Theology Today* 19:2, (July 1962).
- ROCK, David. 1986. *Argentina: 1515-1982*. Berkley: University of California Press.
- ROMERO, Luis Alberto. 2002. *A History of Argentina in the Twentieth Century*. Philadelphia: Penn State Press.
- RUETHER, Rosemary. 1986. *Women-Church: Theology and practice of Feminist Liturgical Communities*. San Francisco: Harper & Row.
- _____. 1983. *Sexism and God-Talk: Towards a Feminist Theology*. Boston: Beacon Press.

- RUSSELL, Letty M. 1974. *Human Liberation in a Feminist Perspective - a Theology*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press.
- _____. 1987. *Household of Freedom: Authority in Feminist Theology*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press.
- SARACCO, J. Noberto. 1989. 'Argentine Pentecostalism: Its History and Theology', Dissertation. University of Birmingham.
- SCHERER, James A. and Bevans, Stephen B. 1992. *New Directions in Mission and Evangelism I: Basic Statements 1974-1991*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- _____. 1994. *New Directions in Mission and Evangelism II: Theological Foundations*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- _____. 1999. *New Directions in Mission and Evangelism III: Faith and Culture*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- SCHERER, James A., 1993. 'Mission Theology' in James A. Phillips and Robert T. Cooke (eds.), *Towards the 21st Century Mission*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, pp. 195-197.
- SEGUNDO, Juan Luis. 1973. *The Community Called Church. A Theology for Artisans of a New Humanity, Volume I*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- _____. 1974. *A Theology for the Artisans of a New Humanity*, volume 3. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- _____. 1976. *The Liberation of Theology*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- _____. 1984. *Faith and Ideologies: Jesus of Nazareth Yesterday and Today, volume I*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- SHIVUTE, Tomas. 1980. *The Theology of Mission and Evangelism in the International Missionary Council from Edinburgh to New Delhi*, Helsinki: Finnish Society for Missiology & Ecumenics.
- SOBRINO, Jon. 1984. *The True Church and the Poor*, Maryknoll: Orbis Press.
- SOBRINO, Jon. and J. Hernandez Pico. 1985. *Theology of Christian Solidarity*. Maryknoll: Orbis Press.
- TAMEZ, Elsa. 1993. *The Amnesty of Grace: Justification by Faith from a Latin American Perspective*. Nashville: Abbingdon Press, 1993.
- THOMPSON, John. 1994. *Modern Trinitarian Perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- TOMKINS, Oliver S. ed., 1953. *The Third World Conference on Faith and Order Held at Lund, August 15th to 28th, 1952*. London: SCM Press.
- TORRANCE, Thomas..F.. 1996. *The Christian Doctrine of God: One Being, Three Persons*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark.
- TORRES, Sergio and John Eagleson. 1978. *Theology in the Americas*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- _____. 1980. *Teología en las Américas*. Sígueme: Salamanca.
- VAN ENGEN, Charles. 2004. 'Towards a Missiology of Transformation', in Bush, Luis K. (ed.), *A Unifying Vision of the Church's Mission*. Lausanne Forum for World Evangelisation. pp. 93-117.
- VERKUYL, Johannes. 1978. *Contemporary Missiology: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- VERSTRAELEN, Frans. J., Camps, A., and Hoedemaker, L. A. 1995. *Missiology: An Ecumenical Introduction: Texts and Contexts of Global Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

- WARD, Gasque, W. 1980. "The promise of Adolf Schlatter", *Evangelical Review of Theology*, 4/1, April. pp. 20-30.
- WCC. 1962. *Christian Ministry in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Geneva: WCC, 1962. pp. 97-98.
- _____. *Your Kingdom Come. Report on the World Conference on Mission and Evangelism*. Geneva: WCC.
- WILLEMS, Emilio. 1967. *Followers of the New Faith*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.
- WILLIAMSON, Edwin, *The Penguin History of Argentina* (1992)
- WILMORE, Gayraud S. and Cone, James H. 1979. *Black Theology: A Documentary History, 1966-1979*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- WINTER Ralph. (ed.). 1999. *Perspectives on the World Missionary Movement: A Reader*. Pasadena: William Carey Library Publishers.
- WITVLIET, Theo. 1985. *A Place in the Sun: An Introduction to Liberation Theology in the Third World*. Maryknoll, Orbis Books.

SAMENVATTING

Dit proefschrift beargumenteert dat de theologie van José Miguez Bonino een zendingstheologie is die gedreven wordt door de praktijk. Zij is, zoals elke theologie, contextueel, dat wil zeggen geschreven vanuit het perspectief van de context, en is diep beïnvloed door haar context. Het gaat echter verder dan contextualiteit om een gecontextualiseerde theologie te worden; een theologie die gedreven wordt door de context. Miguez Bonino heeft niet als doel om een systematische theologie te schrijven, die alle gebieden van de theologie behandelt, maar denkt meer over en commentarieert de context vanuit een geloofsperspectief. Zijn primaire doelen zijn niet de logische progressie en ontwikkeling, maar meer een samenhangend perspectief, een manier van kijken naar de wereld. Zijn geschriften zijn vervaardigd als essays, lezingen voor conferenties en hoofdstukken in boeken of artikelen geschreven voor of gepubliceerd in theologische tijdschriften.

Miguez Bonino werd geboren in eenvoudige omstandigheden, maar nadat hij een goede middelbare school opleiding had gekregen, kon hij studeren voor Methodisten predikant. Hij heeft gediend als predikant van een lokale kerk en als jeugdwerker voordat hij aan zijn academische carrière begon. Hij doceerde theologie en ethiek aan verschillende instituten in Argentinië en wereldwijd. Tot 2003 heeft hij ook uitgebreid geschreven, totdat hij beperkt werd door een beroerte. Dit proefschrift beschrijft en analyseert zijn theologische methodologie, zijn eschatologie, zijn ecclesiologie en zijn begrip van de Drie-eenheid.

Miguez Bonino's theologische methodologie begint met de zendingspraktijk en richt zich op meer effectieve zendingspraktijk. Gehoorzame betrokkenheid bij zending leidt tot een sociologische analyse van zowel de context van zending als de plaats van de kerk in die context. De onderwerpen opgeroepen door zijn analyse, worden opgepakt in een bijbelse en theologische reflectie. Dit leidt tot een nieuw en levend herlezen van het evangelie in het licht van de nieuwe context. Tenslotte, de bijbelse en theologische reflectie suggereert nieuwe en meer effectieve wegen voor zendingsgehoorzaamheid.

Miguez Bonino definieert het koninkrijk van God als 'de soevereine actie van God over de wereld (natuurlijk en historisch in zijn eenheid en totaliteit), voornamelijk en representatief beoefend en waarvan getuigd is in Israel, volmaakt in Jezus Christus en beloofd in zijn volle manifestatie in de wederkomst van Jezus Christus'. Hij verklaart dat de rol van Christelijke theologie is om te ontdekken hoe we 'de actieve en dynamische aanwezigheid van God's koninkrijk in onze geschiedenis kunnen begrijpen, zodat we hieraan onze getuigenis en onze activiteit kunnen aanpassen, juist op dit moment, voornamelijk in Latijns Amerika, wanneer we ons geloof moeten belijden en de Heere dienen.' Hij benadrukt dat het koninkrijk van God God's actie in de geschiedenis is en hoe menselijke actie zich verhoudt tot goddelijke actie.

In Miguez Bonino's ecclesiology is de kerk de gemeenschap die samengekomen is rond Jezus Christus. Echter, Jezus Christus is degene die zichzelf identificeert met de armen. Daarom vormen de armen de centrale plaats in de kerk. Jezus Christus begint God's scheppingsproject opnieuw en lijft de mensheid in in dat project door het geloof. Christus als de waarachtige mens. De nieuwe mensheid in Christus – de kerk – wordt daarom de vertegenwoordiger van de universele nieuwe mensheid wanneer zij getuigt 'van God's reddende activiteit in Jezus Christus. Dat betekent: wanneer zij duidelijk maakt dat God de volmacht en het gebod aan en de bevrijding van de mensheid om menselijk te zijn heeft vernieuwd, voor de mensheid om haar eigen geschiedenis en cultuur te creëren, de wereld lief te hebben en te veranderen, de heerlijke vrijheid van de kinderen van God op te eisen en te beoefenen.'

Miguez Bonino's begrip van de Drie-eenheid in verhouding tot zending heeft zijn context in het theologische reductionisme van veel Latijns Amerikaans Protestantisme. Hij gelooft dat de Drie-eenheid als een hermeneutische maatstaf de Latijns Amerikaanse theologie in staat zal stellen om deze reductionismes te boven te komen. Door in de actie van de Drie-eenheid zowel schepping als verbond te omvatten, wordt het begrip redding verbreedt. Hij ziet 'zending' ook als het materiële principe van de Latijns Amerikaanse eenheid. Het hele Latijns Amerikaanse Protestantisme heeft zijn wortels in 'zending'. Zending, gedefinieerd in een christologisch en trinitarisch perspectief, geeft het Latijns Amerikaans Protestantisme de mogelijkheid om verder te gaan dan de traditionele indelingen. Deze inzichten van Miguez Bonino worden toegepast in verschillende missiologische tradities.

Tenslotte beschouwt deze studie de uitdaging van Miguez Bonino's zendingstheologie in de context van de wereldwijde kerk-in-zending en in de Latijns Amerikaanse zendingsbeweging.

Translated by Dieke Folmer

Index of Personal Names

Abelard, Peter	125
Alfonsín, Raúl	27
Alves, Rubém	3, 6, 18, 43, 94, 151
Anastasios of Androussa	84, 144, 153, 168
Andersen, Wilhelm	141, 143, 162
Anderson, Gerlad	2, 5, 11, 143
Annacondia, Carlos	38
Anselm	1, 39
Arana Quiróz, Pedro	6
Arias, Mortimer	3, 17
Ateek, Naim	3
Augustine	26, 103, 142, 145, 152
Barbieri, Santo U.	18
Barth, Karl 8, 11, 13, 16, 18, 32, 33, 34, 35, 40, 42, 44, 46, 47, 49, 51, 63, 66, 77, 78, 79, 80, 88, 97, 118, 142, 143, 144, 150, 155, 164, 168, 177	
Bassham, Roger C.	12, 50, 88, 143
Bastian, Jean Pierre	11
Bavinck, Johannes H.	2, 143
Berkhof, Hendrick	11
Bevans, Stephen B.	11, 79, 144, 153
Beyerhaus, Peter	5
Bissell Cooper, Roy	10
Blise, Richard H.	11
Bloch, Ernst	11, 100
Boff, Clodovis	42, 55, 58
Boff, Leonardo	10, 73, 110, 116, 128, 131, 145, 151, 152, 153, 163
Bonhoeffer, Dietrich	8, 10, 42, 85, 105, 106, 116, 117, 119, 125, 134
Bonino, Aurelia Agustina	13
Bonnard, Pierre	71
Borman, John	10
Bosch, David J.	2, 12, 34, 42, 46, 80, 97, 112, 113, 114, 134, 139, 140, 143
Botterweck, G. Johannes	51
Bromiley, Geoffery W.	142
Bultmann, Rudolf	19, 52, 157, 176
Calvin, John	67, 98, 118
Cámara, Dom Hélder	10
Carriker, C. Timothy	40
Carter, Jimmy	174
Casey-Rutland, Ransom E.	10
Castro, Emilio	17, 25, 32, 33, 82, 162
Chardin, Tielhard de	86, 90, 93
Chopp, Rebacca	10, 52, 55, 99
Clarke, William Newton	16
Cleary, Edward L.	32
Cone, James	3, 37
Congar, Yves	112

Cook, Guillermo	110
Costas, Orlando E.	2, 4, 32, 45
Cox, Harvey G.	32
Croatto, J. Severino.....	21, 42, 70, 71, 72, 78
Cullmann, Oscar	10, 11, 78, 83, 88, 106, 180
Cunningham, David S.....	142
d'Épinay, Christian Lalive.....	62, 63
Daniel, Yves	22, 35, 36, 112
Dawson, Andrew	110
de Santa Ana, Julio	3, 17, 18
Deiros, Pablo A.....	4, 11, 25
Dickson, Kwesi A.	3
Douglas, James D.	16, 32
Eagleson, Jon	29
Elizondo, Javier	10
Ellacuría, Ignacio.....	82
Ellis, Marc H.....	3
Enns, Arno W.	11
Erasmus, Desiderius	18
Erskine, Noel L.....	3
Escobar, Samuel	6, 31, 41, 42, 47, 148, 170, 171, 173, 174, 175, 182
Fabella, Virginia	11, 43, 78
Fedorov, Nicolai	152
Ferm, Deane W.....	4, 14, 15
Ferré, Nels	131, 140
Feuerbach, Ludwig A.	39, 152
Freytag, Walter	143
Gadamer, Hans Georg	42, 71, 78, 177
Galland, Valdo	18, 37
Galtieri, Leopold.....	27
Gattinoni, Carlos.....	16, 28
Glasser, Arthur F.	84, 183
Godin, Henri	112
Goheen, Michael W.	168
González, Justo	30
Gramsci, Antonio.....	58, 62, 161
Grundvig, Nocolai	152
Gutiérrez, Gustavo.....	3, 11, 38, 42, 43, 48, 51, 65, 86, 93, 94, 95, 120, 121, 145, 146
Hansen, Guillermo.....	146, 147, 164
Hartenstein, Karl.....	143
Hiebert, Paul.....	5
Hoekendijk, Johannes C.	5, 83, 113
Jeremias, Joachin.....	53
John of Damascus	151, 168
Jongeneel, Jan A.B.	5, 6, 12, 40, 97, 139
Kant, Emmanuel	142
Kärkkäinen, Veli Matti	142
Kee, Alistair.....	10

Kennedy, John F.	60, 86
Kirk, Andrew	4, 26
Klootwijk, Euwout.....	13
Kraemer, Hendrick	113
Küng, Hans	80
Ladd, George	84
Lancaster, Joseph.....	15
Lapointe, Roger	71
Lazareth, William H.	3
Lehmann, Paul	103, 143
Leontius of Byzantium	164, 168, 169
Levoratti, Armando J.	29
Liggett, Thomas.....	115
Limpic, Ted	5
Lossky, Nicholas	11, 30
Luna, Félix.....	14
Luther, Martin.....	18, 45, 68, 98, 118, 165
MacKay, John.....	153
Marcuse, Herbert.....	177
Marsden, George M.	6
Marx, Karl	10, 39, 53, 59, 61, 100, 136, 152, 177
Maurice, F.D.....	152
Maury, Pierre	18
McGrath, Alister.....	11, 142
Menem, Carlos R.....	30
Metz, Johannes Baptist	98
Míguez, Daniel	22, 35, 36
Míguez, José (father)	13
Míguez, Nestor	11, 18, 35, 36
Miranda, José P.....	10
Moltmann, Jürgen...8, 10, 11, 28, 29, 86, 98, 101, 103, 104, 107, 131, 142, 144, 150, 151, 152, 159, 168	
Moreau, Scott A.....	11
Müller, Karl	11
Muñoz, Ronaldo	146, 150
Muzorewa, Gwinyai	3
Newbiggin, J. E. Lesslie	6, 141, 168
Niebuhr, H. Richard.....	34, 63
Nieuwenhuize, Noemí F. A.	18, 19, 35, 36
Nuñez, Emilio.....	111, 182
Obermüller, Rudolph.....	16
Onganía, Juan C.....	20, 46
Orchard, Ronald K.....	2
Origen	103
Padilla, C. René	4, 31, 61, 85, 92
Pagura, Federico	14, 18, 19
Pannenberg, Wolfhart.....	83
Pate, Larry	178

Perón, Juan Domingo.....	16, 19, 24, 28, 86
Philip, T.V.	82, 83
Pinochet, Augusto.....	23, 27
Pobee, John S.....	11, 43
Pope John Paul II.....	37, 81, 82
Pope John XXIII.....	21
Pope Paul VI.....	81, 113
Potter, Philip.....	83
Poulantzas, N.....	58
Prien, Hans Jürgen.....	11
Rahner, Karl.....	80, 142, 150
Rauschenbusch, Walter.....	16
Rayan, Samuel.....	43
Ricoeur, Paul.....	42, 52, 71, 72, 78, 177
Ridderbos, Herman.....	84
Rock, David.....	11
Ruether, Rosemary.....	3
Russell, Letty M.....	3
Sabanes, Julio R.....	30
Samuel, Viney.....	32
Sarmiento, Domingo F.....	15
Savage, Peter.....	4
Scherer, James A.....	2, 144, 153
Schillebeeckx, Edward.....	80
Schlatter, Adolf.....	16
Schuback, Thomas L.....	10
Schuurman, Lambert.....	125
Schweitzer, Albert.....	80
Segundo, Juan Luis.....	10, 42, 48, 57, 62, 68, 94, 95, 99, 145, 151
Shaull, Richard.....	18, 88, 90
Shivute, Tomas.....	143
Sider, Ronald.....	10
Sobrino, Jon.....	42, 82, 162
Stott, John R.W.....	4, 26
Stransky, Thomas F.....	11
Sugirtharajah, R.S.....	11
Sundermeier, Theo.....	11
Támez, Elsa.....	78, 157
Taylor, William.....	182
Thompson, James Diego.....	15
Thompson, John.....	142
Torrance, Thomas F.....	142
Torres, Sergio.....	29
van Engelen, Johannes M.....	5
van Engen, Charles.....	183
van Leer, E.....	40
Venn, Henry.....	5
Verkuy, Johannes.....	2, 12

Verstraelen, Frans J.	2
Videla, Jorge.....	24
Weishein, Jorge	17, 18, 33
Weiss, Johannes.....	80
Wesley, John.....	46, 96, 123, 126
Weth, Rudolf	99
Williamson, Edwin	11, 14
Wilmore, Gayraud S.	3
Winter, Ralph.....	39
Witvliet, Theo.....	3
Yoder, John H.....	31

CURRICULUM VITAE

Paul J. Davies was born 29th October 1962 in Darlington, England. Son of a Baptist Minister, he studied agriculture and farm management before spending a year as a youth pastor in Mississippi, USA. Subsequent to returning, he gained DipHE in Biblical and Cross-Cultural Studies (1993) and an MA in Aspects of Christian Missiology at All Nations Christian College (1994). With his wife, Wilma, he spent 9 ½ years as a missionary trainer in Latin America (1995-2004). He taught mainly in Argentina but regularly travelled to various other Latin American countries in order to teach biblical, theological and historical subjects related to mission. He is currently tutor in theology of mission and Dean of Post-Graduate Studies at All Nations Christian College, Easneye, Ware, Herts.