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INCULTURATION AND THE SPIRITAN CHARISM

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Inculturation is popularly associated with the incarnation of the Gospel in a particular sociocultural setting. It involves a two-way process. First, there is the intimate penetration or “taking flesh” of the Christian Gospel in a novel setting, the Gospel proclaimed by missionaries who themselves come from a particular Church. Second, it is a process of the receiving community being empowered by the energy of the Gospel. The particular community responds to the actual or novel questions that only their context can raise and thereby enriches profoundly the Christian tradition.

The charism of a particular religious congregation emerges from the insight of its founder/s, who are profoundly grasped by the gift-giving Holy Spirit of God that enables them to read the signs of the times, discern the passage or traces of the passage of God, lay hold of it, and convince others to re-explore life and the world through this insight. My focus is the Spiritan charism.

In the Footsteps of the Founders

Spiritane mission and Spiritane charism are marked by the visionary praxis of Claude Poullart des Places (1679-1709) and Venerable Francis Libermann (1802-1852). Both had a passion for the poor.

Claude’s original or natural cultural home was the French middle class—the embodiment of high culture that transmitted the dominant ideology of culture as “formal and articulate systems of meanings.” While retaining the finer humane or life-enhancing aspects of this culture for the common good (communicated through universalistic evangelism), he abandoned totally the discriminatory, alienating, and arrogant self-perception of the middle class. He welcomed the world and culture of the poor—the “mixed and inarticulate consciousness of marginalized peoples.”¹ This enabled him to engineer his men to embrace his creative focus, reinvest agency in the poor in order to redeem them from their coarseness and from those limitations that keep them from experiencing full dignified humanity.

Francis Libermann, on his part, emerged from and was nurtured within a despised ethnic group (European Jewry). He assimilated and was profoundly soaked in the spiritual depth of his Jewish cultural matrix. He struggled with and transcended his ghettoized ancestry, to guide, with what amounted to a touch of genius, an amorphous group called to mission to the most despised or

marginalized of his time. He affirmed the humanity and cultural world of Black Slaves, assumed the task of opening them up, through “civilization” permeated by a universalist evangelism, to the project of self-transcendence. Black Slaves draw from the wealth of their particularity—those humane qualities nurtured from their African ancestry and forged in the heat of inhuman oppression—to set aside their particularist limitations so as to share in the wider project of a new humanity.

The heart and inspiration of these two great men are at the root of the Spiritan charism. Their commitment to mission was a cultural action of liberation. Spiritan charism and the Spiritan evangelistic project are only an expansion of the initial vision of the founders.

Claude Poullart des Places

Claude’s initial commitment to the ‘Savoyards’ (chimney sweepers) prepared the ground for developing the project of building community with indigent seminarians—that is seminarians unable to pay for their board. The new Spiritan seminary founded on the Feast of Pentecost, May 27, 1703, refused up-front to accept seminarians who were able to pay for their keep. The readjustments required of Claude, to leave aside material comfort and his middle class cultural environment, could justifiably be described today as “culture shock.”²

Claude had faith in the human dignity of indigent seminarians as well as the value of their culture-world for humanizing the wider world. From their experience of having little, and strengthened by the integral and demanding formation they had to undergo, they would overflow with the spirit of respect and honor for the person and world of the poor and despised. The first official Rule of the Holy Spirit Seminary, written by Louis Bouic (1734), embodied this kenotic missionary spirituality and focus. Their pastoral activity would focus on caring for inmates of hospices; the preferential direction of evangelism was towards the poor and infidels, and towards those duties for which ministers are difficult to find.

The “cultural revolution” that Claude initiated had the intention of assembling personnel for mission that could not be described as “celestial cannon fodder.” Andrew F. Walls believes that 18th/19th century Christian mission to Africa was dominated by those with brawn as opposed to brain. This cultural peculiarity contrasted sharply with the requirements of those missionaries sent to Asia that were equipped with “superior academic or intellectual credentials.”³ Claude’s program of missionary formation was integral—piety suffused with learning. Therefore

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he would not do business with pious but ignorant priests or with learned priests who disdained virtue.⁴ The humble conditions of his seminarians were seen as an advantage to be committed to the poor, to develop profound piety, and to acquire the necessary learning for mission. Ironically, priests trained in the Holy Spirit Seminary were later sent to the colonies and more often than not failed to embody Claude's ideal. They shared the colonial prejudice against the colonized. Libermann considered them an obstacle to the radical evangelism required for the Black Slaves.

The initial focus of Poullart des Places on the education of indigent seminarians, who would learn from the culture-world of the marginalized in order to evangelize them, still constitutes a key dimension of Spiritan charism today. It challenges, and perhaps haunts, Spiritan educational ministry from Duquesne University, Pittsburgh (USA), through Blackrock College, Dublin (Ireland), to the Holy Ghost Juniorate, Ihiala (Nigeria).

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Francis Libermann

Libermann, founder and guide of the missionaries of the Holy Heart of Mary, was dominated by the passion to mission to the Blacks (*l'Œuvre des Noirs*). A visionary and mystic, he was penetrated and grasped by the humanum; this led him to have profound trust in the value and giftedness of each human group, especially the most oppressed Blacks. *This formed the centerpiece as well as the measure of the truth of Spiritan mission. It embodies the depth of Spiritan charism and missionary spirituality that Spiritans aspire to but hardly ever attain.*

Long before Vatican II moved away from the classicist view of culture to the anthropological view that each human group is nurtured in culture ("Man comes to a true and full humanity only through culture, that is through the cultivation of the goods and values of nature"), Libermann and his collaborators Eugene Tisserant and Frederick Le Vasseur went through an agonizing "dark night" that structurally redefined their horizon of understanding reality. It was a creative "dark night," spent in contemplating the horror of Black Slavery that contrasts sharply with the truth of all humans as image of God, and the Pauline evangelistic challenge of being all things to all people (cf. 1Cor 9:19-23). Their journey was nourished on the one hand by kenotic spirituality—the embodiment of "the crucified mind" that is the polar opposite of the "crusading mind"⁶ (cf. Phil 2:5-8). On the other hand, the human tragedy of Black Slavery was the immediate cause of their overhaul of the Western jaundiced view of the other. Their conversion was both a spiritual and cultural revolution. Where else would Libermann draw the confidence to

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reject the prevailing prejudices of the West if not from a profound discovery of an alternative worldview and an alternate horizon of understanding? Without having ever set foot on the West coast of Africa, he wrote to his communities:

A final observation: do not listen easily to the stories of those travelers around the coast when they speak to you about the small tribes they have visited, even if they have stayed there for a number of years. Hear what they say to you, but let their words not have any influence on your judgment. Scrutinize things in the spirit of Jesus Christ, free from all impressions, prejudices, but filled and animated by the charity of God and the pure zeal that his Spirit gives you. I am sure that you would be able to judge quite differently our poor blacks than those who speak to you about them.... (Letter to the Community in Dakar and Gabon, November 19, 1847).

The *defining experience* of Black Slavery—guided by the *practical liberating mystical rapture in the “Spirit of Jesus Christ”*—encouraged him to state in the same letter without equivocation: *“Strip yourself of Europe, its customs and its mentality; make yourselves Negro with the Negroes in order to form them as they ought to be, not in the European manner, but leave to them what is their own.”*

The school of formation, or the wellsprings of Spiritan charism, was so intimately connected with *Work for the Blacks* (*l’Œuvre des Noirs*) that some Spiritans argue passionately that undertaking any other work is unfaithful to the Spiritan vocation.⁷ While this view misses the spirit of Libermann, who even contemplated ministry in marginalized subcultures of France, one would also miss the spirit of the founder by pretending that today the *Work for the Blacks* would take backstage. Today more than ever, from the USA where systemic racism racializes identity, to the global market place where Africa remains marginalized, the passion of the founders for the poor keeps the *Work for the Blacks* on the front burner.

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Spiritan Life Challenged by the Absolute of Spiritan Charism

The focus of both Poullart des Places and Francis Libermann is without doubt the poor and marginalized. The *Work for the Blacks* became self-defining for Libermann. The *Spiritan Rule of Life* (1987) specifically states that, in faithfulness to the intuitions of our founders, we give preference to an apostolate that takes us to those oppressed and most disadvantaged as a group or as individuals.⁸ The style and strategy of the founders

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for realizing the vision are not incidental to their intuitions or charism. If one wants to find out how Spiritans differ from, for example, Sulpicians or Jesuits, in other words what constitutes the driving force or specificity of Spiritan charism, one might find Libermann's comments on the Sulpician way and the Jesuit educational focus very interesting.

Saint Sulpice nurtured Libermann. He imbibed and transmitted Sulpician spirituality. However, despite the undeniable importance of Sulpicians in seminary formation, they were, in Libermann's view, inward looking and ill-equipped to handle issues outside their houses.⁹ They would therefore lack the *flexibility and freedom* demanded by the new *Work for the Blacks*. One could, of course, contest Libermann's opinion. But it highlights the role freedom and flexibility play in appreciating Spiritan charism or spirituality. Secondly, though Libermann would reject the hostility of his friend Mgr Jean Luquet towards the Jesuits, yet he shared his convictions on the local clergy, local agency, and residential bishops. Libermann had great esteem for the Jesuits' giftedness in educational work; they would be more competent than his own Society in the formation of the "Black child." However, the Jesuits cannot "establish an indigenous clergy; this is totally at variance with their system of mission." Furthermore, the Jesuit esprit de corps favors centralization that will complicate the consuming focus of the *Work for the Blacks* that has local agency as its foundation.¹⁰ The strong statement about a highly esteemed group does not appear to come from prejudice. Libermann was firmly convinced that decentralization rather than centralization is the way of mission. Secondly, Libermann's vision of the Church was reinforced by the profound convictions of Jean Luquet anchored on the episcopacy—the recognition of the authority of the residential bishop over his Church rather than dependency on the metropolitan (e.g. in Paris). Luquet, in his diatribe against the Jesuits, pointed to their mission in Paraguay and Asia as producing no episcopacy. Decentralization is good for the Church and highlights the specific orientation of Spiritan charism on the ground; it is a key molding block of the Spiritan missionary strategy. Indeed it is the key to inculturation.

Fidelity to the charism of the founders implies that Spiritans must embrace at least two missionary absolutes: [1] freedom, flexibility, and openness to change; and [2] the spirit of decentralization necessary for the emergence of a true local Church.

Freedom, Flexibility, and Openness to Change

The life and vocation of Libermann before and after ordination were a great struggle to get his community's project understood and approved. The new and urgent *Work for the Blacks* needed

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people open to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and therefore enjoying the creative freedom of the children of God. Openness to change is of the nature of Spiritan missionary vocation; it is the very opposite of being closed up within one's tradition, ways, and times.

Spiritan mission, open to change, is fundamentally attentive to the "signs of the times"—remarkable events that reveal the "hand of God," or at least traces of the "passage of God," those events that reveal the challenge of God's freedom addressing human freedom. Nigerian novelist, Chinua Achebe, captures the attentiveness to change in an Igbo aphorism, "a man must dance the dance prevailing in his time."¹¹ Igbo world, constructed on flexibility and relationality, understands *change* as implacable, respecting neither individuals, nor community, nor divinities. Nnolim insists, "The forces of change are the modern Fates, the Nemesis that must forcefully tame the stubborn individual."¹²

Libermann wanted the new missionaries to respond holistically to the changing world, take advantage of its possibilities in the mission for the Blacks. Deeply spiritual and focused on mission to the Blacks, missionaries must be firmly schooled in the social, economic, political, and ideological realities of the time. First, ***Work for the Blacks*** *reveals the challenge of God's freedom addressing human freedom*, requiring total commitment to God who created all humans in God's image. Aware of the prejudiced judgments against Blacks prevalent in the colonies and French society, Libermann rallied to their defense. Black Slaves are not profoundly "perverted"! Nurtured and purified in the *via crucis* and convinced that the Calvary of slavery was wrongheaded, he boldly challenged the missionary Church to learn from the Black culture (incarnation) and honor the legacy of the virtues of the "destroyed, unfortunate, and crushed souls" (1846 Memoir to the Propaganda). Blacks like all humans have their weaknesses. But Black cultural resources did not lack the refinement, intelligence, or determination to competently strategize, manage, realize freedom, and administer their communities, Church or State. Libermann proudly pointed to their organizational abilities in mobilizing revolt, as well as the experience of the Black republic of Haiti. Second, attentiveness to the signs of the times made Libermann seek out Isaac Louverture, son of Toussaint Louverture (ex-slave and father of independent Haiti), ask for his advice over his vision and strategy for holistic education in the colonies and Africa, and share with him his idea of a true local Church in Haiti that would be independent of the metropolitan archbishop of Paris. The system of education envisaged would spread "civilization" through formation in the arts, technical education,

and agriculture, as well as the special formation of indigenous clergy and the upbringing of catechists in minor orders.¹³ “Civilization”—humane Christian formation—would seize the historical opportunities created by the work of abolitionists, the cooperation of France and England to put an end to slavery, and especially create an environment where Blacks would not feel inferior to those who despise them, nor would one class among them look down on the other.

Today, Spiritans in Ethiopia where Christianity dates to Patristic times, in Papua New Guinea where a local Church is being born, or in Ireland, which like France of the 1930s is mission country, must embody freedom, flexibility, and openness to change. This involves being schooled in and being deeply challenged by the ambient cultures, the rapid political, social, religious, and economic changes, globalization and the impact of secularism in Europe and the wider world. Only in openness and flexibility to change would Spiritans be faithful to the charism of the founders. The orientating intuition of the *Work for the Blacks* imposes itself as the self-defining prism through which Spiritans engage in and evaluate *other works* in Asia, the Americas, Europe, and Africa. Scores of African Spiritans are today missionaries in Europe, Asia, and the Americas. Learning, listening, and receiving—the incarnational and kenotic principles lived in attentiveness to the promptings of the Spirit of freedom—are imperative for being faithful to the Spiritan charism.

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The Local Church

Libermann’s perception of the centrality of the local Church in the *Work for the Blacks* was certainly ahead of his time. Freedom and flexibility, the domain of the Holy Spirit, enable openness to diversity and the ability to train a local clergy. Libermann’s exercise of freedom against the ecclesiastical odds was nothing short of heroism. His wider horizon, ability to consult and get good information, and especially his capacity to digest the views of others and make these bear the stamp of his mystic insight, mark his originality. Spiritan historian, Paul Coulon, discovered Libermann’s original (“secret”?) 1846 Memoir to the Propaganda that contrasts with the received 1846 Memoir. The “secret” or suppressed Memoir, neatly overlaid with the received text,¹⁴ fully reveals Libermann’s radical viewpoint on mission and his inspirational vision of true local Churches based on the episcopacy. The ecclesiological conviction of Luquet (contained in his *Clarifications* of the decisions of the Synod of Pondicherry presented to the Propaganda) certainly formed the backbone of (or reinforced) Libermann’s vision.¹⁵ They became so natural to

Libermann that he incorporated them into the original Memoir without acknowledging his sources.

Having a true clergy is the sign [of the presence] of a Church; it is a Church with a bishop acting freely and fully by virtue of the grace reserved to the episcopal consecration. [p. 8]

The episcopacy, an indigenous episcopacy, is therefore the true foundation of those Churches that our Lord reserves to be enduring. One may assemble all sorts of objections against the application of this principle in the present mission countries, but it remains incontestable that the episcopacy is established as the base of the Churches by our savior Jesus Christ. [p. 81].¹⁶

Libermann was unable to carry this project through. He bowed to the advice of the secretary to the Propaganda and requested only for a Vicariate Apostolic.¹⁷ Libermann's dream would have created Churches perhaps similar to those of apostolic times, instead of extraverted missions turned towards the metropolis like the colonial administration. It was intolerable and harmful to the Church that the archbishop of Paris should preside over the Church of Haiti. It was intolerable that Vicars be appointed in Dakar and Gabon instead of a true indigenous episcopacy. Only Rome should supervise centralization, but not in every detail. The ultramontane wing of French Catholicism that accorded a special place to the Pope and the Church of Rome influenced Libermann and his bishops, like Benôit Truffet of Dakar, as well as founders like Marion de Bréssillac (founder of the Society of African Missions). They believed that fidelity to the Pope and to Rome protected the new Churches from the influence of the French or other European monarchs. It was beneficial at the time.¹⁸

The structure of the Church Libermann hoped to establish was revolutionary at the time, though based on sound Catholic ecclesiology. It was in accord with the 1845 instruction of Gregory XVI on mission, *Neminem Profecto*, which insisted on instituting and forming the local clergy. It re-appropriated the focus of the 1659 instruction of Propaganda Fide to give full value to local agency. One had to wait for Vatican II for its approximate realization. His vision would have laid the foundation for true incarnation in the new Churches; an incarnational dimension that makes the local Church the agent of inculturation. Libermann would agree with Bréssillac that,

According to the ways established in the order of grace, missionaries are so useful everywhere that it may be said they are everywhere necessary. Nevertheless, in the work of

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*sanctifying souls, they should everywhere be only auxiliary. Unhappy the country where the voice of a missionary is never heard. But still more unhappy is the country that has only missionaries to look at.*¹⁹

...once the missionary begins preaching s/he prepares his/her handover note...

This is to say that once the missionary begins preaching s/he prepares his/her handover note; or effects, in Henry Venn's words, the "euthanasia of mission!"²⁰ This can be realized only by instituting local Churches with true episcopacy. Fidelity to the Spiritan charism is fidelity to this insight. The Spiritan policy of supporting the choice of bishops from the local clergy, as opposed to choosing Spiritan missionaries as bishops, is faithful to the imperatives of the Spiritan charism.

The Spiritan orientation finds a kindred spirit in the Evangelical Church of England's (CMS) General Secretary (1841-1872), Henry Venn—a passionate proponent of local agency. Venn hinged his ecclesiology on a "three self policy": self-government, self-support, and self-propagation. This would yield a "Native Church under Native Pastors and a Native Episcopate."²¹ Libermann, Luquet, and Bréssillac (ultramontanes that regarded Protestants as heretics) could not have imagined that their views were shared by Protestant contemporaries. Ironically, neither Spiritan confreres in the 19th and early 20th century nor the CMS collaborators of Venn approved of local agency. Spiritan confreres in Gabon found the idea intolerable. According to the report of Charles Duparquet, the idea of local clergy sounded like heresy to the confreres in Gabon (1857). They felt that "the Venerated Father was hugely mistaken" on the matter.²² White CMS missionaries in West Africa reacted exactly the same way to Henry Venn's views. Vatican II secured this ecclesiology.

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Libermann's Memoir outlining the focus of his community's mission was the first of its type in Catholic mission to Africa. It is the embodiment of Spiritan charism that Spiritans and the local Churches aspire to without ever completely attaining. Fidelity to Spiritan charism is enabling this vision to prosper. The Association of Member Episcopal Conferences of Eastern Africa (AMECEA) decided in 1973 to restructure their Church and re-orientate pastoral activity based on local agency and patterned on Small Christian Communities. Their statement on local agency integrates the Catholic (Libermann) and Protestant (Venn) viewpoints: "We are convinced that in these countries of Eastern Africa it is time for the Church to become really 'local', that is: self-ministering, self-propagating and self-supporting. Our plan is aimed at building such local Churches for the coming years."²³

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Concluding Remarks

Poullart des Places and Francis Libermann bequeathed to Spiritans a way that is challenging and pertinent for mission in the contemporary world. Their focus on education that empowers the weak, that acknowledges the value of their culture-world, endows the weak with self-confidence to transform the world as free children of God. The cultural action of education liberates them from any complexes of inferiority. The foundational link between the origin of Libermann's vocation and the *Work for the Blacks* opens a *palace* of freedom and creativity for mission in the most difficult areas of our world. Mission eschews paternalism and focuses on the establishment of real local Churches equal in all respects to the Churches that send missionaries. It is never a question of superior and inferior Churches. Mission that waits on the providential grace of the Holy Spirit is mission in weakness and therefore firmly secured in the Lord. The evaluation of Spiritan mission in Ethiopia in 1993 by Pierre Schouver and his visitation team captures the potency and actuality of Spiritan charism that delights in flexibility, openness, and a spirit of decentralization. The report says, Spiritans "go to work outside, in activities, projects, structures which are not their own. They have their place, their inspiration and their area of influence, but they have practically no works of their own." Spiritan charism testifies to the truth that mission belongs to God.

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Footnotes

- ¹ See Daniel Franklin Pilario, "Politics of 'Culture' and the Project of Inculturation," in *Jahrbuch Für Kontextuelle Theologien 1999* (Frankfurt: IKO - Verlag für Interkulturelle Kommunikation, 1999), 178-180.
- ² Christian de Mare believes it was a "culture shock." See his "Plan for Our Journey Across Spiritan Spirituality." Lecture Notes on Formation of Formators, SIST, 1999.
- ³ Andrew F. Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith* (New York & Edinburgh: Orbis and T. & T. Clark, 2002). According to Walls "Africa saw no equivalent of the medical missionary investment that produced entire medical faculties for the Chinese Empire." (p.117.)
- ⁴ Gallia Christiana, t.7, col. 1045; cited in Christian de Mare, Lecture Notes, SIST, 1999.
- ⁵ Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, 53
- ⁶ See Kosuke Koyama, *No Handle on the Cross - an Asian Meditation on the Crucified Mind* (London: SCM, 1976). Mgr Benôit Truffet of Dakar used a similar expression to describe the mysticism that evangelization presents to the slaves—they are empowered to realise that "they are *children* and *brothers* of a crucified God to whom they should offer, with resignation and confidence, their tears, their hard labour and their prayers." This text was sent to the Annals of the Archconfraternity of Our Lady of Victories

but was never published. See Paul Coulon and Paule Brasseur, eds., *Liebermann 1802-1852. Une pensée et une mystique missionnaires* (Paris: Cerf, 1988), 410-411.

⁷ This is the controversial position of Lucien Laverdière of the Province of Canada. See the collection of his views printed and distributed as typescript (over 300 pages)—Lucien Laverdière, “Grandeur et décadence d’une province spiritaine (Véridique histoire édifiante et stupéfiante à maints égards).” (Montréal - Centre de Documentation: nd).

⁸ Spiritan Rule of Life, no 12.

⁹ Letter to Le Vasseur, March 10, 1844, A. Cabon, ed., *Notes et Documents relatifs à la vie et à l’œuvre du Vénérable François-Marie-Paul Liebermann*, vol. VI (Paris: 1937), p. 118; See Christy Burke, *Morality and Mission - a Case Study: Francis Liebermann and Slavery (1802-1852)* (Nairobi: Pauline Publications Africa, 1998), 46.

¹⁰ See Letter to Le Vasseur, April 9, 1845, A. Cabon, ed., *Notes et Documents relatifs à la vie et à l’œuvre du Vénérable François-Marie-Paul Liebermann*, vol. VII (Paris: 1938), 132, where Liebermann discusses the Jesuits’ competence in education and incompetence regarding local clergy. See also his letter to Mother Javouhey in Cabon, ed., *Notes et Documents relatifs à la vie et à l’œuvre du Vénérable François-Marie-Paul Liebermann*, VII, p. 227, where he makes remarks about the Jesuit penchant for centralization. The frequent temptations of Le Vasseur to join the Jesuits were burdensome for Liebermann. This was finally resolved, see *Notes et Documents IX*, pp. 282-294. Christy Burke believes Liebermann’s statement about Jesuits may be exaggerated, cf. Burke, *Morality and Mission - a Case Study: Francis Liebermann and Slavery (1802-1852)*, pp. 68-69. Coulon discusses Luquet’s influence on Liebermann, cf. Paul Coulon and Paule Brasseur, eds., *Liebermann 1802-1852. Une pensée et une mystique missionnaires*, pp. 412-429, 444-448.

¹¹ See Chinua Achebe, *Arrow of God*, [1st American. ed.] (New York: J. Day, 1967).

¹² Charles Nnolim, *Approaches to the African Novel: Essays in Analysis*, 1999 ed. (Owerri, Nigeria: Ihem Davis Press, 1992). See especially the chapter with title “Technique and Meaning in Achebe’s *Arrow of God*”, pp.209-233, p.210.

¹³ See Le Mémoire, pp. 17-18. See Paul Coulon and Paule Brasseur, eds., *Liebermann 1802-1852. Une pensée et une mystique missionnaires*, pp.239-240, 246-247, 556-558 ; Burke, *Morality and Mission - a Case Study: Francis Liebermann and Slavery (1802-1852)*, p. 61. For an illustration of the potency of Black cultural resources see Anthony B. Pinn, *Terror and Triumph - the Nature of Black Religion* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003).

¹⁴ Paul Coulon, “Un mémoire secret de Liebermann à la Propagande en 1846? Enquête et suspense,” *Mémoire Spiritaine* 3, no. 1e Semestre (1996). Coulon had to get special clearance to get the Vatican librarian take the dossier to the bindery and peel off the top layer containing the received text in order to reveal the suppressed text.

¹⁵ Coulon and Brasseur, eds., *Liebermann 1802-1852. Une pensée et une mystique missionnaires*, pp.422, 442. Luquet was mandated to transmit to Rome the Acts of the Synod of Pondicherry (1844) that was firmly committed to establishing true local Churches, i.e. dioceses with residential bishops.

¹⁶ Coulon, “Un Mémoire Secret de Liebermann à la Propagande en 1846? Enquête et suspense,” p. 41. (my translation)

¹⁷ 1846 Memoir, p.37.

¹⁸ See comments of Coulon and Brasseur on ultramontanism in reference to Mgr Jean Benoît Truffet in Coulon and Brasseur, eds., *Libermann 1802-1852. Une pensée et une mystique missionnaires*, pp.404-408, 476. See also Michael McCabe, "The Missionary Vision of Bishop De Marion Bréssillac," *Society of African Missions, [Irish Province] Bulletin*, no. Summer (1996), 4-5; and Michael McCabe, "The Relevance and Limits of De Bressillac's Missionary Vision Today," *Society of African Missions, [Irish Province] Bulletin*, no. Christmas (1996).

¹⁹ Bréssillac "My Thoughts on the Mission" [c. 1855], see Marion de Bréssillac, *Mission and Foundation Documents nd.*, trans. Bob Hales SMA (Paris: Mediaspaul, 1986), no.5.

²⁰ See Adrian Hastings, *The Church in Africa 1450-1950* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 294.

²¹ See *Ibid.*, p.294; see also Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 36.

²² Coulon and Brasseur, eds., *Libermann 1802-1852. Une pensée et une mystique missionnaires*, p. 454.

²³ AMECEA Bishops, «Planning for the Church in Eastern Africa in the 1980s....» *AFER* 16/1&2, 1974.