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# Modeling and Reflexions About of Missionary Pedagogy

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**Abstract:** In the course of our research, we discovered, in the archives of religious missionary congregations, directories and treatises of missionaries proposing pedagogical advice for evangelization. From the Apostle Paul to the popes of the 20th century, an approach to inculturate Christianity was built up empirically. Theorized by the Propaganda Fide Instructions of 1659, it was applied between the 17th and 20th centuries with the support of the popes. However, the comparative approach of the sources reveals a "fact" that was not even suspected until now: the existence of an identical pedagogical process in both form and content. What we have called "the Pauline process" is articulated in two great stages, themselves subdivided into progressive phases: first, the insertion of the missionary into the culture (kenosis, knowledge of the language and living according to their customs, then the phase of pastoral inculturation (the culture as a vehicle of the Gospel, hermeneutics/precedence, and the indigenous clergy). Going further, we noticed that there was a shift in the Christian pedagogy of the Redemption and that of the Apostle Paul. They overlap perfectly. From there we have modeled this "Pauline process" in order to draw out its Christian anthropology and to highlight its coherence over twenty centuries. This pedagogical process places the missionary and the missioned in a symmetrical relationship of dialogue, exchange and interrelation. There is a stripping away and a mutual contribution. For the missionary it is a cultural stripping and for the missioned it is religious. Both "meet" and "come closer" in a process of reciprocal renunciation/adoption which puts into action their own will, their free will. This is a unique pedagogy in the annals of history. This has led us to derive a "meta-process" that could provide the basis for a pedagogy applicable in various fields.

**Keywords:** Catholic Missions, Treaties of Missionary Pedagogy, Cultural Insertion, Inculturation, Catholic Anthropology, Missionary Theology

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## 1. Introduction

Having worked for several years on Catholic missions in the world [9], we discovered during our research in the archives of missionary congregations, collections and texts of pedagogies and pastoral care to evangelize peoples in the nineteenth century. The first pedagogical texts encountered are directories of apostolic vicars in Oceania [10]. As we continued our investigation concerning the same time period, we discovered other directories, briefs and series of letters concerning similar pedagogies for Africa [12] and Asia [13]. The authors came from four missionary congregations: the Lazarists of Paris, the Fathers of the Holy Spirit of Paris, the Marists of Lyon and the missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Issoudun. These discoveries were important because they were institutions which had an extraordinary influence

throughout the 19th century and were responsible for several apostolic vicariates.

While comparing these pedagogies, we noticed a curious fact: they all present a *stage of insertion of the missionary into the culture*, and then a *stage of pastoral inculturation*, insisting on the importance of the native clergy. However, where did this singular resemblance come from when the designers of these educational directories came from various congregations working on different continents? Did such pedagogies arise "ex-nihilo" from the thought of strategists of evangelization? Why do they present a common substratum? Were these recent practices in the history of the Church, or do they go further back in time? At some point in its history, did the Church define an "official" pedagogy of

evangelism and if so, what did I look like? To respond to this complex issue, what approach, what working method should be adopted? We have undertaken a survey of twenty centuries of the history of Catholic Missions which was exposed in our last study [14].

In this article, we will present the heuristic and its historical results. Next, we will look at modeling from the perspective of Christian anthropology and missionary theology. Finally, based off of a derived meta-model, we will explain its characteristics to show that it can still be applied today.

## 2. Missionary Pedagogy of Twenty Centuries

### 2.1. The Discovery of a Missionary Pedagogy

We started from the principle that what is illegible in an “event-driven sequence” of time can be revealed through a diachronic study that transcends periodization. Firstly, for the heuristic investigation we have adopted the regressive method of Lucien Febvre according to whom it is necessary to “Understand the present by the past, and also, and above all, the past by the present”. This conception of heuristics has borne fruit, revealing to us, back from Saint Paul in the 1st century and up until the Popes of the beginning of the 20th century, several figures of pedagogues of the mission “*ad gentes*” who left books, treatises, directories, papal texts, and letters which present similar pedagogies and are based on common sources.

While some of these sources<sup>1</sup> are known, many of them remain unpublished, some were never translated into French, and most were never studied from an educational point of view and compared. Thus, the long-term study has brought to light an unknown “event”, almost unthinkable not long ago: the existence of a missionary educational thought and its slow growing complexity within a two-thousand-year-old institution. The pedagogies observed in this study come from texts written by theorists that we have been able to list at present. This prosopography cannot therefore be exhaustive, and the research will bring out of nowhere other thinkers, and other treatises on missionary pedagogies. However, the quality and importance of the “cases” we present here are broadly representative, to enable us to understand how the Catholic Church and many missionaries intended to share the gospel.

Based in these supports, it is the comparative method that prevails. According to Marc Bloch, to apply the comparative approach in history one needs “a certain similarity between the observed facts - that goes without saying - and a certain dissimilarity between the environments in which they occurred.” However, we cannot compare the same object, a pedagogy, across different periods and environments. Both conditions are thus met

here, especially since we take into account the dual dimension of space and time. This method does not go without discussing the chronology, allowing us to register all its “cases” in the long term in order to arrive at “the identification of common characteristics allowing the verification of explanations and the formulation of models.” The comparison is therefore done through diachrony, or long time, and by integrating all geographic and cultural spaces.

### 2.2. Synthesis and Historical Considerations

Thus, the paralleling, or the superposition of all these pedagogies<sup>2</sup>, reveals a common structure and a coherent approach, as shown in the summary and comparative table:

Here, we are in possession of a photographic snapshot that highlights the emergence of a surprising and unique pedagogy. This process, which goes back to the Apostle Paul, seems to have had a special fate and an important role in the spread of Christianity. However, in order to avoid any misunderstanding, and for the sake of objectivity, it should be made clear that this pedagogy has not been exclusive of other practices throughout history. We do not pretend to generalize, since some would object, and rightly so, that it is not uncommon to encounter various other forms of evangelization. Indeed, the reality - if we except the more or less forced discussions which fall within the scope of policies [27, 7, 8] - reveals pedagogies that range from “*tabula rasa*” to inculturation.

On the other hand, from Saint Paul all the way up until the Popes of the twentieth century, why was this precise method of evangelization imposed? On the one hand, the Catholic Church has existed for twenty centuries and functions in its own way: it draws on these founding texts and it always questions its past as a reference. Its doctrine remains stable according to the formula of Vincent de Lérins: “*eodem sensu eademque sententia*”. In other words, progress is a deepening, a homogeneous development of its doctrine and of its practices. On the other hand, as we see from the sources, it appears that for the sake of orthodoxy and efficiency, the designers of missionary pedagogies have always turned to their predecessors, whom they cite in their treatises. The *Propaganda Fide*, in its three Instructions [18, 17], quotes the Scriptures, Saint Paul, Gregory the Great, and José d’Acosta. This process, theorized by the elites and Roman institutions of the great Baroque age, is the fruit of the integral Christian humanism of the Jesuits and of the Counter-Reformation of the Council of Trent. A whole Christian elite supported the creation of the Urban College to train missionaries and the creation of the *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*, in 1622. If missionaries applied this pedagogy, particularly in the 19th century, it was not until the first 20th century to see Popes take these missionary practices as a reference in encyclicals and apostolic letters.

This capitalization of missionary experiences has resulted

<sup>1</sup> In this table we have only put the main sources. Often other texts, letters or documents provide valuable information on their pedagogy.

<sup>2</sup> In this comparative table we have added missionaries who were not necessarily theorists but who applied an approach comparable to the cases we studied.

in the emergence of a pedagogy of evangelization which has retained an identical basic structure articulated in two main stages and sub-stages: 1) cultural integration and “self-forgetting”, learning languages and living according to

their usages; 2) the pastoral care of inculturation which sees culture as a vehicle of the Gospel, then cultural and religious hermeneutics, and finally the creation of a local clergy.

**Table 1.** Treaties of missionary pedagogy from the 1<sup>st</sup> century to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

THEORISTS	TEXTS
Paul of Tarse (Apostle, I, Asia):	New Testament: Acts of the Apostles and Epistles of Saint Paul.
Brother Montecorvino (Franciscan, XIII, Asia):	Letter of January 8, 1305, Khanbaliq.
Gregory the Great (Pope, V-VI):	Letter to Mellitus in 601.
Joan Focher (Franciscan, XVI, Mexico):	<i>Itinerarium</i> announces <i>infideles catholicum proficiscentium convertendos</i> , published in Seville in 1574.
José de Acosta (Jesuit, XVI, Peru):	<i>De Promulgando evangelio apud barbaros, sive de propaganda indorum salute a indorum salute</i> , published in Salamanca in 1588.
Father Valignano (Jesuit, XVI, Asia):	Guidelines and advice on the mentalities and customs of Japan (October 1581).
Congregation of Propaganda Fide, (XVI):	Abbot William Lesley, Instructions to the Apostolic Vicars of the Kingdoms of Tonkin and Cochinchina (1659); Pallu François & Motte Pierre Lambert de la, <i>Monita ad missionarios</i> . Instructions to Missionaries of the Sacred Congregation for Propaganda. Ayuthaya (Siam), 1665. Edited by the Archives des Missions Etrangères in Paris, Paris 2000.
Bishop Pompallier (Marist Father, XIX, Oceania):	Instructions for the work of the mission of January 29, 1841. Archives of the Diocese of Auckland, POM 14-3.
Bishop Navarre (Missionary of the Sacred Heart of Issoudun, XIX, Oceania):	Directory of Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Issoudun. Manuscript, Port-Léon, March 19, 1892.
Father Libermann (Spiritan, XIX, Africa):	Small Memoir on Foreign Missions March 27, 1840; Memory on the missions of the Blacks in general and on those of Guinea in particular presented to the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda, August 1846; Various letters to apostolic vicars and missionaries.
Bishop Truffet (Spiritan, XIX, Africa):	Letters to Father Libermann.
Bishop Le Roy (Spiritan, XX, Africa):	General directory of missions. Congregation of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Heart of Mary, May 1, 1930.
Father Gabet (Lazarist, XIX, Asia):	A glance at the state of the missions in China presented to the Holy Father Pope Pius IX. Imp. Gustave Olivier, Poissy, 1848; Thevenet Jacqueline, Joseph Gabet-Evariste Huc. Letters from China and elsewhere, 1835-1860. <i>Les Indes savantes</i> , Paris, 2005.
Benedict XV (Pope, XX):	Instruction <i>Quo efficacius</i> , January 6, 1920; Encyclical <i>Maximum illud</i> , November 30, 1919.
Pius XI (Pope, XX):	<i>Motu proprio Ramanorum Pontificum</i> , on the transfer to Rome of the Work of the Propagation of the Faith, May 3, 1922; Speech at the 1st International Congress of the Missionary Union of the Clergy, June 3, 1922; Letter to sviluppo of May 20, 1923; Encyclical <i>Rerum Ecclesiae</i> of February 28, 1924.
Pius XII (Pope, XX):	Encyclical <i>Fidei donum</i> on the Situation of Catholic missions, particularly in Africa, April 21, 1957; Encyclical <i>Evangelii Praecones</i> , June 2, 1951; Encyclical <i>Summi pontificatus</i> , October 20, 1939.
John XXIII (Pope, XX):	Encyclical <i>Princeps pastorem</i> on the missions of November 28, 1959.

**Table 2.** Comparison of missionary pedagogies from the 1<sup>st</sup> century to the 20<sup>th</sup> century: step 1.

EXAMPLES	CONGREGATION	STEP 1: DO EVERYTHING TOGETHER		
		1 Kenosis	2 Speak languages	3 Live with them
Paul (I, Asia)	<i>Apostle</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Montecorvino (XIII, Asia)	<i>Franciscan</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jerome of Loaisa (XVI, America)	<i>Dominican</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Turibio de Mogrovejo (XVI, America)	<i>None</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vasco de Quiroga (XVI, America)	<i>None</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Valignano (XVI, Asia)	<i>Jesuit</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ricci (XVI, Asia)	<i>Jesuit</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
De Rhodes (XVI, Asia)	<i>Jesuit</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Propaganda Fide (XVI)	<i>Roman Institution</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pompallier (XIX, Oceania)	<i>Marist Father</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Navarre (XIX, Oceania)	<i>Missionary of the Sacred Heart of Issoudun</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Libermann (XIX, Africa)	<i>Father of the Holy Spirit</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Truffet (XIX, Africa)	<i>Father of the Holy Spirit</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Le Roy (XX, Africa)	<i>Father of the Holy Spirit</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Marion-Brésillac (XIX, Africa)	<i>African Missions of Lyon</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lavigerie (XIX, Africa)	<i>Missionaries of Africa</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pallegoix (XIX, Asia)	<i>Foreign Missions of Paris</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gabet (XIX, Asia)	<i>Congregation of the Mission (Lazarist)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lebbe (XIX, Asia)	<i>Congregation of the Mission (Lazarist)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Benedict XV, Pius XI, Pius XII, John XXIII (XX)	<i>Popes</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 3. Comparison of missionary pedagogies from the 1<sup>st</sup> century to the 20<sup>th</sup> century: step 2.

EXAMPLES	CONGREGATION	STEP II: LEAD THEM TO CHRIST		
		1 Practice their culture	2 Propaedeutics, hermeneutics	3 Indigenous clergy
Paul (I, Asia)	<i>Apostle</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Montecorvino (XIII, Asia)	<i>Franciscan</i>	Yes		
Jerome of Loaisa (XVI, America)	<i>Dominican</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Turibio de Mogrovejo (XVI, America)	<i>None</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vasco de Quiroga (XVI, America)	<i>None</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Valignano (XVI, Asia)	<i>Jesuit</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ricci (XVI, Asia)	<i>Jesuit</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
De Rhodes (XVI, Asia)	<i>Jesuit</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Propaganda Fide (XVI)	<i>Roman Institution</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pompallier (XIX, Oceania)	<i>Marist Father</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Navarre (XIX, Oceania)	<i>Missionary of the Sacred Heart of Issoudun</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Libermann (XIX, Africa)	<i>Father of the Holy Spirit</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Truffet (XIX, Africa)	<i>Father of the Holy Spirit</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Le Roy (XX, Africa)	<i>Father of the Holy Spirit</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Marion-Brésillac (XIX, Africa)	<i>African Missions of Lyon</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lavigerie (XIX, Africa)	<i>Missionaries of Africa</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pallegoix (XIX, Asia)	<i>Foreign Missions of Paris</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gabet (XIX, Asia)	<i>Congregation of the Mission (Lazarist)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lebbe (XIX, Asia)	<i>Congregation of the Mission (Lazarist)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Benedict XV, Pius XI, Pius XII, John XXIII (XX)	<i>Popes</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes

### 3. Modeling of the “Paulian Process”

Such a discovery gave us the idea of extending this study by modeling the process. Pascal Bressoux explains that “it is a question of showing how the construction of the model makes it possible to move from a weak, implicit, individualized structuring, to a strong, controlled, explicit structuring of the objects and, thereby, to gain the universal without for all that referring the lived experience to a simple illusion, nor tending to ontologize the structures. We are therefore not in an appearance / reality opposition, but in the passage from the perception of a phenomenon to the construction of an object [4].” However, in order to extract the architecture common to all the cases studied, in order to reach the essence of the missionary thought of the Church, we needed to create specific concepts<sup>3</sup>. They have served to differentiate and characterize with precision the various phases and sub-phases of this pedagogy.

#### 3.1. First Stage of the Paulian Process: To Do Everything Together

The Church's long missionary experience, and her contact with many cultures, enabled her to test the relevance of the famous formula of “I did everything as one with the people,”<sup>4</sup> and of fitting into a culture as well as possible. The anthropologist Malinowski (1884-1942) immersed himself in the cultures he studied by learning the language in order to understand the mentalities of the Natives [23]. From there, he had forged the concept of “participant observation”, the founding principle of the

scientific approach of ethnologists and anthropologists. What the science of anthropology was gradually discovering about the importance of language and of living among populations to become one of their own, missionaries had lived for a long time. What is acculturation for the anthropologist is Paul's “everything with the people” for the missionary, but whose purpose is different.

Now, this Paulian insertion into a culture is based on the sending of the Apostles by Christ during the Ascension, reported by the *Gospels* and the *Acts of the Apostles*<sup>5</sup>, and on the *Instructions* of the *Propaganda Fide*. According to the *Gospels*, the mission is a divine mandate and therefore of the Church. Also, the *Instructions* of 1659 draw the conclusion that the missionary does not come in the name of a nation and “transport to the Chinese France, Spain, Italy or some other country in Europe” [18], but only a universal and religious message. From the texts of *Propaganda Fide* this has been perfectly clear to the strategists of evangelization. More particularly, in the 19th century “the founders of Catholic missionary societies warned their members against the temptation to confuse mission and national interest”, and “at the height of the colonial consensus”, missionaries continued to recall the distinction between colonialism and the goals of Christian mission [25].

This stage of the Apostle Paul's “doing everything with the people”, or of cultural integration, is broken down into three closely related phases in order to fit deep into the culture of the missionaries to become one of them:

- 1) The kenotic phase. This word used by Saint Paul comes from the Greek verb *kénoō* and means “to empty

3 Thanks to Aurélie MISSAL, professor and specialist in ancient languages, who helped me transcribe the new concepts into Greek

4 PAUL, Epistle to the Corinthians, I Letter, chapter 9. V. 19-22.

5 Saint MARK, Chapter XVI, v. 15-20; Saint LUC, Chapter XXIV, v. 46-53; Saint MATTHIEU, Chapter XXVIII, v. 16-20; the Acts of the Apostles, Chapter I, v. 1-11.

oneself”, “to shed oneself” or even “to renounce oneself”. The goal for the missionary is to imitate Christ and like him to become one with the people, to identify with the missionaries as required by all the treatises on missionary pedagogy, all the Instructions of *Propaganda Fide* and of the Popes. The missionary must put his ego and his European culture on hold in order to be embodied in a culture other than his own in order to be the mediator of Christ.

- 2) The *syndialogical* phase. The term *syndialogical* means going to the other “by means of the *logos*” or “through the word”. What brings more contact and creates dialogue if not language? Language belongs to and depends on a culture. As a cause and consequence of a culture, it expresses its essence. According to Edward Sapir “we may think of language as the symbolic guide to culture [26]”. Thus, knowledge of the language is the first step in a long cognitive process which imperceptibly brings the missionary closer to the other, because he will gradually assimilate concepts which put the other in contact with him, and which will provide him with the keys to understanding the functioning modes of the inhabitants. This is why *Propaganda Fide* made the learning of local languages compulsory in its directives to apostolic vicars<sup>6</sup>. It was reminded often on pain of punishment. All the founders and superiors of congregations, as well as the apostolic vicars, made the learning of local languages compulsory.
- 3) The “*enethnological*” phase means “becoming one of the people”. A stage which commits the missionary to the path of cultural relativism, of the reduction of his ethnocentrism. As we have seen through the treaties and the Instructions of the *Propaganda Fide* or of the founders of congregations, the apostolic vicars and their missionaries asked the missionaries to follow the customs of the inhabitants and to live like them. This means that all missionaries must mingle with the inhabitants, adopt the local customs, ways of life and conditions of the ones the missionary must try to bring to Christ.

The triple insertion of the missionary - forgetting himself, speaking the language and adopting customs - becomes a capital factor in the establishment of a pastoral ministry of inculturation, because what the missionary preaches will be evaluated at the height of its insertion into the culture. This means that the missionaries, or those to whom the speech is addressed, will not distinguish between the individual and his teaching: in their perception the two are inseparable<sup>7</sup> and mutually legitimize each other. Through the religious message passes the ethos of the missionary. If the missionaries encounter a loophole, a distortion between speech and example, it can ruin all the work of the missionary and the credibility of the message.

6 See above.

7 In Oceania, where there was competition between Protestants and Catholics, sources reveal that the inhabitants often chose a confession for the consistency between the speech and the life of the missionary [11].

### 3.2. Second Step of the Paulian Process: The Pastoral Care of Inculturation

What term should be used to qualify the educational process which consists in preaching the Gospel and trying to root Christianity in a culture: adaptation or inculturation? Inculturation is a recent concept<sup>8</sup> that falls under theology and has a dual meaning. On the one hand, it refers to the method of embodying Christianity in a culture, and on the other hand, it refers to the way in which the inhabitants appropriate Christianity [2, 24, 6, 15, 19, 22]. What we retain here is the method of embodying the Gospel. As the term is recent, it is noted that prior to its creation missionaries did not “inculturate” but adapt Christianity. Yet according to Bruno Luiselli and the Jesuit Hervé Carrier [5], even if the word did not exist already during the first centuries of the extension of Christianity, bishops and councils had entered into a logic of inculturation of Christianity [21]<sup>9</sup>. So, here is a new concept which designates a pastoral missionary practice that Saint Paul had already defined:

“I planted; Apollos watered; but it was God who gave growth. So, the one who plants does not count, nor the one who waters; only the one who gives growth counts: God.”<sup>10</sup>

The “Mediator” has sown the seed of the “Word” and “God” is reaping. Numerous treatises on missionary pedagogy and the texts of the *Propaganda Fide*, up to those of the Popes of the twentieth century, recall this evidence that the missionary is only a “sower” of the Word through a culture in which God will act.

This stage of pastoral care which consists in trying to “save someone at all costs” as the Apostle Paul says, presents three phases of the missionary’s action:

- 1) The “*diaethnic*” phase, or literally, bringing the “Word through culture”: Christianity is the religion of the Word which spreads itself through the word, and is preached using culture as a channel. The Instructions of the *Propaganda Fide*, the Popes of the twentieth century, and many superiors of congregations and missions insist on a fundamental principle: Christianity is not linked to any culture. As a consequence, it forbids missionaries from showing any zeal, from putting forward “any argument to convince these peoples to change their rites, their customs and their morals, unless they are obviously contrary to religion and morality [18].”
- 2) The *propaedeutic* / *hermeneutic* phase: in other words, to practice an interpretation of cosmogonies. The man who formalized in the second century, the doctrine of the “*praeparatio evangelica*” is an apologetic Father, Justin the Martyr. This converted pagan philosopher used his pagan science and culture to defend Christianity. It starts from the principle that the *Logos*

8 See the general introduction [11].

9 Bruno Luiselli, is Professor of Latin Literature at La Sapienza University in Rome and at the Augustinianum Patristic Institute in Rome. In the 19th century, for the evangelization of Wallis and Futuna, Frédéric Angleviel also employed the concept of inculturation [1].

10 PAUL, Epistle to the Corinthians, Letter III, chapter 1. v. 1-7

placed, in pre-Christian cultures and religions, “seeds of the Word” or “*semina verbi*”. Therefore, Christianity can use, reinvest parts of paganism which are not specifically pagan, but bearers of universal values adaptable to the Gospel. This principle can therefore be applied, with discernment, to all pre-Christian religions, in other words cultures which have not yet heard of the message of Christ. In terms of pedagogy, this phase of “propaedeutics”, or preparation for inculturation, consists for the missionary in developing, if possible, a hermeneutics of religious cosmogonies, in order to show the missionaries that many points of their religious traditions are the result of deviations over time. It suffices to fill in the holes, reduce the obscure points and change the names to reveal similarities, or supposedly such. The process consists in interpreting their tradition in a Christian sense in order to bring about a shift or a transfer from one religion to another without the missionaries having the feeling of being decultured and dispossessed of their culture.

- 3) The root phase. Catechetical teaching presents two challenges for missionaries: the translation of Christian truths into the local language and the establishment of a formation path. Often missionaries are aware that words must make sense in the receiving culture of the gospel. If the language does not comply with Christian concepts, we must find a way to get around the difficulty without betraying Christian thought, or even practicing hermeneutics on the linguistic level. Then, the Christian message must be transmitted through the establishment of a catechesis, that is to say, of an educational path adapted to catechumens and neophytes of the catechumenal type of the first centuries. The catechist constitutes the elite of converts, the one who adheres best to the Christian message and proves to be the most capable of transmitting it to his own according to the missionary. For a strategist of evangelization, the catechist is the evangelization of a people by himself: from the middle through the middle. Finally, the native clergy is a practice of the Church that dates back to apostolic times. A true local Church is firmly established when it is self-sufficient with its hierarchy made up of native bishops and priests who have the task of bringing to completion the local naturalization of Christianity, the fruit of inculturation.

## 4. Thoughts About the “Paulian Process”

### 4.1. The Essence of the “Paulian Process”

Under ideal conditions, this “Paulian process” places the missionary and the receptor in a symmetrical relationship of dialogue, exchange and interrelation. There is mutual contribution and “stripping”: for the missionary, it is a cultural stripping and for the receptor it is religious. However, the ideal conditions for application have never existed on a historical scale. “Misunderstandings”, rejections

for various reasons, persecution in certain areas, local conflicts, and many other reasons have parasitized its application. The difficulty, or inability of missionaries to adapt has also been a factor of failure. Finally, like any instrument for bringing people together or for teaching people to reach others, finds its main limit in human free will. If a global historical epistemology does not exist, concerning the implementation of this pedagogy, the fact remains that it is the sole example, because history does not give another example. It comes straight from the Judeo-Christian world and the Bible. Thus, Christianity, in various forms, has made the missionary a “professional contact person [20]” in the practice of evangelization, in the words of anthropologist Laburthe-Tolra.

This Paulian approach is intrinsic to Christianity because it is based on the absolute gift of oneself to offer “salvation” to the missionaries. The martyred missionaries expressed it in tortures and never ceased to love. As Victor Hugo expressed it in *Les Châtiments*, with regard to Saint Jean-Louis Bonnard, “Those towards whom this apostle was going slew his throat...” We can also quote the words of Mahatma Gandhi about Father Damien de Veuster, who had contracted leprosy while treating lepers in Molokai: “If assistance to lepers is so dear to the hearts of Catholic missionaries, it is because no other work demands a spirit of sacrifice like it. This demands the highest ideal, the most perfect self-sacrifice. The political and journalistic world does not know of a hero of whom it can boast and who is comparable to Father Damien of Molokai. The Catholic Church counts among her own, thousands of men and women who, following her example, have sacrificed their lives in the service of the poor and sick all over the world. It would be worth investigating the source of such heroism”. Anthropologist René Girard perfectly expressed this source: “Only the desire of the Other can generate desire [...] The more the distance decreases between the mediator and the subject, the more the difference diminishes [16].” It is the *agape*, anthropologically the disinterested love of one being for another being, in order to bring him the Word, which the “missioned” could accept or reject.

At this stage of our discovery, the question on the origin of the essence of this evangelization approach validated by the Church, arose. To answer this question, we propose to do so through the following comparative table and by basing ourselves on the biblical texts:

This comparative table brings us to an observation: this pedagogy is an integral part of Christianity’s very substance. The approach of the missionaries that we call the “Pauline process”, from Saint Paul to the popes of the 20th century, has its roots in the “divine” anthropology revealed in the biblical texts.

### 4.2. To a “Meta-process” for Applications in Various Fields

It is a surprising discovery to see a missionary pedagogy that has been stable in its essence for twenty centuries, but which has slowly become more complex in the face of the reflections generated by the encounters of thousands of

cultures among the missionaries. It is a realistic, concrete and eminently anthropological pedagogy in the sense that it grasps man in all his human, cultural, social and religious components. According to an ethical and humanistic

application, this approach cannot be "violated" or "rushed"; it must be imposed on the conscience by conviction, by the adherence of the will itself. As we have seen, this was the fundamental approach of the missionaries.

Table 4. Essence of Paulinian process.

	Cultural Insertion			Pastoral care of inculturation		
	Sub-phase 1	Sub-phase 2	Sub-phase 3	Sub-phase 1	Sub-phase 2	Sub-phase 3
Christ	It carries a triple identity: divine, human and cultural.	Speak the local languages	He lives as a Jew, according to custom.	Preaches in synagogues, and public places.	His message travels through the Old Testament and parables.	He ordains bishops, founding the Church.
Saint Paul	"Do everything with everyone". Kenosis. Endorse various conditions.	Bearer of three cultures: Hebrew, Hellene, Latin.	Adapts to the cultures of Asia Minor.	Preaches in synagogues, and public places.	Propaedeutics, Hermeneutics.	Order, appoint priests.
Church	Kenosis of the missionary, to identify with Christ and the inhabitants.	Learn and speak local dialects.	Live with them and adopt their way of life.	Uses social order and cultural elements to evangelize.	Propaedeutic "Semina verbi" Hermeneutics	Catechists, Native clergy

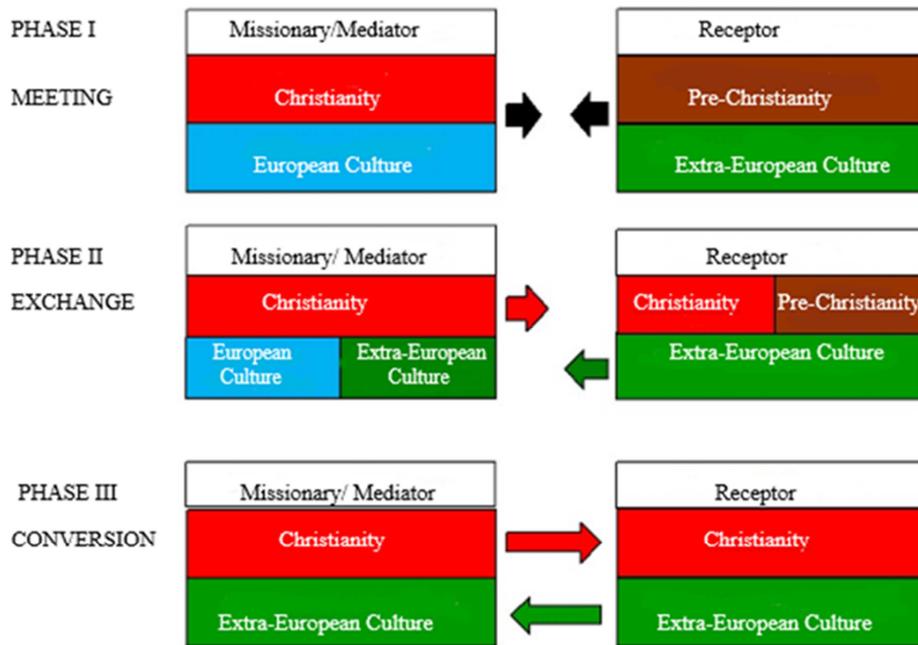


Figure 1. Phases of the relation between missionary and receptor.

One of the characteristics that is at the foundation of this "pedagogy" is the stripping of the ego in order to be able to understand the other. René Girard writes that "a victory over self-love allows us to descend deeply into the ego and delivers to us, in the same movement, the knowledge of the Other [16]." The mediator must, momentarily, abolish his ego to take on another condition go towards this "other" who is not so far from him, because all participate in the human condition. This distance remains a fragile "window", as the anthropologist Alban Bensa explains:

"Therefore, there can be no end to exoticism without the misunderstanding of otherness being cleared up. A negative construction that poses a distance from the outset in order to better contemplate its effects, the hypostasis of otherness oscillates between idolatry (the other could only be marvelous) and anxiety (the other is feared because it does not seem to be me). To stop playing at being troubled by

angels or demons, all you have to do (it is not always easy) is to settle down with people who are said to be other and to talk to them. The feeling of otherness is born as soon as we no longer understand. If this mortgage is removed, there is no otherness but only difference, that is to say a small gap that can be bridged by mutual learning [3]."

Another characteristic, which follows from the previous one, is that it triggers a double movement: a cultural transformation of the sender, or mediator, a condition of the religious transformation of the receiver. This process, which begins with a reciprocal stripping, does not end with a mutual enrichment that takes the place of the stripping. It is a continual coming and going between the sender and the receiver because pedagogy respect the "individuality"<sup>11</sup>, or the

<sup>11</sup> "individuality" are the intrinsic components of a person, namely his body, his being distinct from all others, in short his personality.

sacred dimension of the person. Paulinian pedagogy is not the abolition of identities, it brings enrichment, as shown in the diagram:

Faced with the modeling of this pedagogy, and its characteristics, we wondered if it would not be interesting to derive a "meta-model"? In computer science, this has become a commonplace, especially with the development of conceptual diagrams. Some people talk about three levels: the process, the process model and, finally, the process meta-model. Here, the "process" (first level) is Pauline pedagogy

inscribed in history. Then, the "process model" (second level) is the ahistorical, anthropological and theological model that we have proposed. Finally, the "process meta-model" (third level) to be constructed.

As it is a process of convincing, of "bringing to", we propose to rename it as "epagogical process". The Greek word *epagô* literally means "to bring to", "to convert". In general, the "meta-process" keeps the formal structure of the "Pauline process", as well as its logical and anthropological approach, but reformulated:

Table 5. Meta-process.

To join the other in his difference, to become like him to understand him, to establish a dialogue.				To bring the other to... To bring him a good. To make him progress		
<i>To strip oneself, to put between brackets one's culture, one's self.</i>	<i>Speak their language.</i>	<i>To put ourselves to their uses. an equal relationship of trust.</i>	<i>Develop</i>	<i>Use their "culture," their way of life.</i>	<i>Find the points that connect.</i>	<i>Integration, adoption, transformation.</i>

If the meta-process seems to popularize this pedagogy, it reveals even more its logic and coherence. Thus theorized, would such a process be useful today, and in what fields: education, training, business?

### 5. Conclusion

Over twenty centuries of Christian expansion history, popes, superiors of missionary congregations, and field missionaries have developed a pedagogy of evangelization. They have sought the best way to respond to the command of Christ in the Gospels to his Apostles, at the time of his "Ascension". Thus, what we call the "Pauline process" has deepened with time and the experience of the Church. With each new wave of evangelization, theorists have drawn from their predecessors the bases for their missionary actions. This explains its remarkable theological stability and coherence.

In this unique pedagogy, the "all to all" and inculturation are "intricately" linked. This is the strength of the Pauline method which gives the evangelical "Word" an exceptional dynamic. Given the reciprocity between the sender of the word and the receiver who adopts it, one can speak of a spiritual, religious "gift and counter-gift". In spite of the fact that this "Word" wants to be universal and addresses what is universal in people of all cultures and conditions, it has met with resistance and rejection. In many cases, it has been recuperated, instrumentalized and even hijacked, as many current studies show.

The stability of this pedagogy, throughout the twenty centuries of Christian history, gave us the idea of carrying out an ahistorical modeling in order to better understand its essence, its theological dimension and its anthropological relevance. This relevance led us to derive a meta-process, stripped of its initial religious purpose, but not of an ethic, of a humanism in order not to make it a manipulative approach. In other words, if such a pedagogy were to find applications, the categorical imperative would be for the sender to define his goal with the receiver. The telos must be a greater good, a reciprocal enrichment.

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