Shusaku Endo's *Silence*: Inculturation in the Religious Culture of Japan

Presented by
James T. Bretzke, S.J.
Boston College School of Theology & Ministry

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Prologue & Presumptions

★ Basic knowledge of the Christian persecutions in Japan
★ Basic knowledge & acceptance of hermeneutical theory
★ Many of you have either read the novel, seen the movie, or both
★ Some of the key Japanese linguistic & cultural context is terra incognita

Chinmoku "Silence" (1966)
Function of Ideograms (Kanji)

1. In-built ambiguity, complexity, and excess of meaning, calling for reflection & discernment
2. See handout on ideograms related to "silence" & Christianity

Ideograms Related to Silence

"News reached the Church in Rome" (1st line of Silence)
"Don't Do It!"
Negative Reactions to Silence

Martyrdom as Fertilizer for Faith

THE BLOOD OF THE MARTYRS IS THE SEED OF THE CHURCH

Role of Kichijiro in Silence
1. Foil to Rodrigues
2. His name written only in katagana and not in kanji
3. The "Common Man" ala Bolt's device in the play "A Man for All Seasons"
4. Koan function
"Re-peace-ire: Zen as Meditation

Remove Distractions & Afflictive Emotions (Klesa)

Afflictive emotions - our jealousy, anger, hatred, fear - can be put to an end. When you realize that these emotions are only temporary, that they always pass as like clouds in the sky, you also realize they can ultimately be abandoned.

(Dalai Lama)

Enso: Beginning, End, Oneness
Wu-Wei (Non-Action)

Zen Koans

1. The master asked Nan-ch'ou (Nansen), "What is the Way?"
   Nan-ch'ou said, "Ordinary mind is the Way."
2. The master said, "Then may I direct myself towards it or not?"
   Nan-ch'ou said, "To seek [it] is to deviate [from it]."
3. The master said, "If I do not seek, how can I know about the Way?"
   Nan-ch'ou said, "The Way does not belong to knowing or not knowing.
   To know is to have a concept; to not know is to be ignorant.
   If you truly realize the Way of no doubts, it is just like the sky;
   wide open vast empty.
   How can you say 'yes' or 'no' to it?"
4. As these words the master had sudden enlightenment.
   His mind became like the clear moon.

5. Nan-ch'ou was the master of Ch'ao-ch'un (Jueh).  

Enemy or Opponent as Possible Facilitator or Aid to Enlightenment

1. Lord Inoue as representative of Samurai & failed convert
2. Christianity not suited to grow in the "swamp" of Japan
3. Christianity counter-productive to Japanese well-being
Ignatian Koan: 3rd Degree of Humility Identification with Xt.

The third is most perfect humility, namely, when in order to imitate and be more actually like Christ our Lord, I want and choose poverty with Christ poor rather than riches, opprobrium with Christ replete with it rather than honors, and to desire to be rated as worthless and a fool for Christ, Who first was held as such, rather than wise or prudent in this world. Spiritual Exercises #167

Breaking the Silence: “Trample!”

The Ultimate Christian Koan: Unmerited Forgiveness of Personal Sin
Listening to the "Deep Silence"

1. The sound of one-hand clapping
2. The chirping of the cicada
3. The cooing of the turtle dove
4. Moaning of the Christians in the pit
5. Kichijiro's Pleas for Confession
6. Concluding Buddhist chant: *Namu Amida Butsu* ("turn around and rely upon the infinite awakening")

Mt 5:44-5: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous.

For Further Reading

Love, Remembrance, and Peace (person 2.2)

Wishing you all peaceful and loving times.

Reconciliation can

bring hope.

Silence

Education and Knowledge

Christ, Sacrifice (4

of peace)

Culture, Religion

Peace, Self

Self

6/20, 2013

Love, Peace, Reconciliation

Mission, Voice