

Editorial

This publication reproduces the materials of the 15. International Seminar on Intercultural Pastoral Care and Counselling.

The SIPCC stepped on virgin soil this time in various regards:

- in regard with the title “Global economy and the every-day-life of people” where we tried to bring together issues from two different fields, which had not been brought together in the German setting of pastoral care and counselling before. Implicitly we also intended to bring together two different ‘life-worlds’ or ‘milieus’ (i.e. the ‘world’ of CPE-people and the ‘world’ of economists) which (at least in Germany) are not at all used to talking to each other on a professional level.
- in regard with the venue of the seminar, taking place in the ‘Ecumenical Workshop’(EW) of the “United in Mission”-Missionary Society (UIM) and with the shared leadership of the seminar where EW of UIM and the SIPCC were cooperating, i.e. two organisations with a different onset where encountering each other: ecumenical formation and intercultural pastoral care and counselling! Among the participants this was symbolized by a group of women from Indonesia, which were in Training at the EW at that time, so called ‘Bible Women’, and which were not familiar with the certain ‘aura’ of CPE-people.

On the other hand:

All this at the same time, is a clear consequence of the former work of the SIPCC, too. For a long time the SIPCC had stressed the importance of “contextuality” in pastoral care and counselling, especially focussing on political and economical contexts. The other strata, i.e. the ecumenical cooperation, had been present in the former work of the SIPCC, too, since there was an actual form of ‘living ecumenism’ among the participants, which had always coined the intercultural seminars. The international members of the SIPCC always had strongly asked for looking at the issues of pastoral care and counselling from an ecumenical point of view, especially when it came down to decide on the main topic of each respective seminar.

The seminar dynamics

During the *preparation-period* of the seminar we, there German people in the planning committee, started to wonder about the way the registration went. It seemed that applications from German were very few, and that they came only reluctantly. Our colleagues from the ‘scene’ of pastoral care and counselling told us how much they felt that the issue of globalisation was far off from their daily experience in their field of work (but when we argued about it they remembered a lot of different cases). Our friends from the ‘scene’ of pastoral/political activists told us how much they felt that dealing with the issue of pastoral care and counselling wasn’t really the thing they would need in their work (though when arguing with them they told enough ‘material’ where people personally suffered from the hardship of their work, from the hardship of facing tragic situation, from burn-out among colleagues etc.)

Now among the actual participants of the seminar the dynamic was an opposite one: Many of them came from places where they were/are staying in the midst of problems directly deriving from globalisation, in their personal life as well as in their working-field experiences. They felt and they are confronted with what might be called the losing side of globalisation, and they wanted to express that during the seminar and to show their deep concern.

All this together was a major background factor of the seminar's dynamic. Sometimes it wasn't easy to find a way of proceeding with the topics, to find a way of giving time and space to all the urgent needs and emotions that came up.

On the other hand it seemed that this was one of the major learning experiences, that a somewhat 'detached', academic discussion and –nevertheless necessary- intellectual analysing of issues is impossible when the existing 'pressure' of the victims or survivors of this pressure is as high as it is. Ways out of this 'trap', ways of encountering each other under the given conditions and the given emotions, ways of elaborating an understanding, ways of transforming actions have yet to be found, have yet to be formed and trained!

Another feature of the seminar dynamics was the encounter of 'ecumenists' and 'economists'. It wasn't quite a "clash of cultures", but precaution and a kind of scanning of the respective partners was obvious. In the discussions one could sense a remarkable distance, and it seemed that even some form of basic distrust remained.

The encounter of Pastoral Care and Ethics of Economy

Some of the questions and aspects which showed up during the seminar, could not be dealt with during the seminar, neither tentatively nor finally. But there was a strong voicing to go ahead with the work, to look out for consequences that could be applied to one's actual work, i.e. to accept some 'homework' to do. This impulse was somewhat channelled into a 'Statement', that the plenary accepted, after *Julia Head* (GB), *James Farris* (Brazil) and *Charles Konadu* (Ghana) had helped to formulate the text according to inputs from the participants.

Existing initiatives in this realm (see *G. Dilschneider and the Oicocredit-Project*) were presented at the seminar, even if not mentioned in the statement.

It seems that the interconnectedness of Pastoral Care und Counselling and Ethics of Economy and ethically relevant models of trade may produce positive consequences whenever people discover that personal and structural issues, that issues of political pastoral actions (actions aiming at communities and society) and endeavours of Pastoral Care and Spiritual Care must be perceived as just one cluster of questions.

So *Jutta Beldermann* (see her article) came up with this formula "***Pastoral Care needs Pastoral Action and Pastoral Action needs Pastoral Care***". This refers to some comments of *Ronaldo Sathler-Rosa* during the discussions and mirrors an understanding of Pastoral Care, which is more common in the South-American context. Among the three lectures on Ethics of Economy, the lecture of *Manfred Linz* (see his *vita*) was widely welcomed by the participants. It seemed that his ideas and arguments could be interlinked with concepts of Pastoral Care more easily than the arguments of a more modern-liberal onset (*G. Henschel*) or the arguments of the (historically West-German) concept of the "Social Market Economy" (*Th. Koester*).

There was no time and space in the seminar, unfortunately, to take a deeper look at those discussions that go on within the academic community of scholars of Ethics of Economy, where they come up with arguments 'from within' economy itself, - may those be based on mere economic reasoning, economic-ecological reasoning, humanistic reasoning or communitarian thinking about civil societies. This surely would be a great chance for theologians to indulge in a special kind of 'intercultural encounter'!

Right here at the seminar there remained open questions like this:

what may be the hindrance to theologians, that keeps them off so persistently from staying in contact with economists, when they, like *Dr. Koester*, stress on quality and competence in the market-competition as ethical arguments from their point of view, or like *Dr. Henschel*, when they stress on freedom and the responsibility of the single person as ethical argument.

And vice versa: what may be the hindrance to economists when dealing with ethics, that keeps them off from accepting the reality of theologians' everyday-working-experiences (see the case studies) as an argument that has to be valued and taken into account when arguing in the framework of ethics of economy, moreover: to have this "reported reality" of the living conditions of the 'losers' of globalisation valued as an equally strong argument as any other argument that is used to underline or to criticize economic arguments, and to integrate these experiences into their figures and concepts of argumentation?

From the point of view of theologians it is promising to see that the debate within the community of scholars of Ethics of Economy developed moral argumentations 'from within' and started to ask moral questions:

when the 'free-market-economy' started there existed ethical goals – but now it shows that these goals basically are not achieved – why is this?

Why is it, that on a worldwide scale, free market economy cannot reach the possibly greatest 'satisfaction of needs' with the least amount of aggressive means?

Why is it that the destruction of natural resources is about to endanger the system of the market itself?

Why is it that large scale corruption is undermining the basic principles that are needed to guarantee the full functioning of a free competition system (in order to be "the invisible hand").

The case studies that our various colleagues report from various countries all over this world are showing drastic examples for those key-words like poverty/unemployment, destruction of resources and nepotism!

The excursion day:

Visiting the Leverkusen-site of the Bayer Company.

The seminars' participants had another immersion-experience to struggle with business-ethics 'hands-on' when they went to this excursion. There were to focuses of that days set during the planning period. First, to see the site of the plant at Leverkusen, its dimensions, and to get to know about the structure and the products of this global player, especially to take a look at the politics and practices of environmental-protection efforts established there at the site.

Secondly to deal with the company's biotechnological branch, its philosophy, ethics and practice there.

But, since 'life' differs from 'plans' a third big issue 'crept' into the agenda as a hidden curriculum, i.e. the so called 'Lip-Bay-scandal' which the Bayer Company had to face in the US-courts. The key-lecturer of the day, *Dr. Uwe Gottschalk*, the leading officer of the research-department of the company's Wuppertal site, where Lipo-Bay-medication had been developed and produced, conveyed to the audience [aside from his brilliant lecture!] what it meant to his fellow-researchers as well as the many employees in this production line, if a product had to be laid off (even if it turned out that the allegations were basically wrong!), and if this part of the company was closed down and the employees lost their jobs – and all this not because of an objective reason in the quality of their work and research, but because of the reaction of the stock-exchange.

In regard with Pastoral Care und Counselling-practice participants started to reflect about questions like:

What is 'appropriate' counselling to these workers who got fired from their original jobs [under German conditions and in a huge company like this they usually will have to change

their job assignments and their place/city of work, but they –usually- will not become jobless at all.. but still..]? How about counselling for the feelings of (sensed) guilt or public accusations [even if they turned out to be objectively wrong]?

Other question that came up after this ‘immersion’:

what would appropriate counselling look like, if the working time of leading officers in a global-playing-situation (the “global virtual village”) is 24 hours a day by means of IT-technologies, and if a family and all its members have to stand this context of single family members?

How do we deal with the vast differences, when we see that (in a German context) these issues seem to be hard ones on a single person, whereas (as you can see from the case-studies) the fate of the fired persons in other countries is much harsher and more cruel and drastic?

Both groups –in their specific context- suffer from their experiences in their –differing- every-day-life!

The SIPCC would like to pursue the questions raised in the seminar. We all will have to learn more about the interconnectedness of Global Economy, Every-Day-Life and Pastoral Care und Counselling, and to find a deeper understanding of the structures involved and about the ways we can walk in these areas.

“Think globally – act locally” – we, also, will have to transfer this slogan into our field of work. We will have to find appropriate forms of Pastoral Care und Counselling and Pastoral Action within our specific and respective contexts in regard with international interculturality, but also in regard with our domestic, subcultural interculturality. And it would be a good field for practicing this and a good example, when it comes down to ecumenists and economists of the same mother tongue trying to talk to each other and trying to understand each other, when they talk to each other.

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