

MF - Norwegian School of Theology

**A Critique of Northern Theology by Theologians from the Global
South**

Master's thesis (AVH5035 60 ECTS)

Master in Religion: Society and Global issues

By

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1. Introduction

Statistics in Europe and North America from public authorities disclose that Christianity on these continents is showing very low numbers. If we look at statistics from a decade ago, we see that although the general population has increased, the actual number of Christians has decreased. People have been leaving the church year after year.

Now we are asking, “Why is this so?” People are concerned about these statistics and they are looking for reasons. Christian leaders from the Global South have looked at the problem and may be able to provide some answers.

Following the end of colonialism in the 1970s, theologians of the Global South have been increasingly critical of western theology and the decline of evangelization. Christian leaders of the Global South do not easily accept the spiritual leadership of the west. They now feel free to break away and lead the Global South without influence from weakened Christian leadership that is seemingly unable to stem the tide of a shrinking Christian population.

Now, with free voices, Christian leadership in the Global South has taken a critical look at the Christian church in the west. Research is showing them the inadequacies of western Christian leadership. It might be that church leaders in the west could benefit from an outside view. How are they falling short? What adjustments in methods do they need to make? Has there been a theological drift that has caused deterioration in the focus and strength of the church? The Global South realizes that, in many cases, they can no longer accept the beliefs, methods or morals of the western church. It has normally been internal weakness rather than external pressure that has caused the deterioration of the church. For example, historically, did Constantine’s acceptance of the church as an institution actually cause weakness in the early church, as cultural norms were accepted in the church and the testimony of lives well lived was no longer the pillar of evangelism?

My thesis is focused on weaknesses of the western church and trying to express from the Global South theologian’s eyes primary criticisms of western theology and church leadership. I believe we will be able to answer these questions by considering the views of theologians and church leaders of Global South.

1.1 My personal motivation

My inspiration to write this research started in taking the subject Theology and Church in the South at the school of Norwegian Theology (MF). Theology and Church in the South (MV601) was a very interesting course about Christianity and missions in the Global South. I saw that theologians from the Global South were blaming the decline in Christianity on many changes in the northern church, and in my opinion this „blaming“ should be heard by the Global North. This subject shows me that Western Theology has done many speculative and challenging things in missions. Christian thinking, God’s wisdom and the Bible are studied more on an academic level because Western Theology is in the “Age of Reason” where God is not as important as what people have made (for example legal laws). In addition Christianity has little place in the public sphere, such as in governments and institutions. Before I thought that the Global South, such as Africa, Asia and Latin America, needed our help in evangelization and missions, but I was wrong. We need them, because some people (from the Global North) have left God. But He is still with us, and those countries can share with us their testimonies of believing in God.

My second motivation was that in the year 2007 I started taking my Bachelor degree in Lutheran Theology at the Bible School in Martin, Slovakia. During my studies we had a chance to help missionaries from the South Korea, who were in Slovakia at our school and helping us to “make disciples in youth work”. I will never forget our missionaries. The names of the missionaries from the South Korean mission society were: Pastor Oak, Deacon San and youth workers Jean, Bebe, Kenny and Jully. I learned many things in youth ministry from them. We did a daily camp for youth who came from all over Slovakia. As a result of the help from these missionaries, there was much fruit. The people who came to this camp are still in youth groups worshiping God, and many later became youth group leaders in their congregations. They found inspiration as a result of this event. During the last day of this camp, we had Sunday service with them, and I was very surprised that people from the South Korea were giving testimonies. What they said about God and their experience was so useful for me and continues to encourage me to have a deeper relationship with God, to read the Bible, and not just talking about missions (This will be described in chapter “unengaged theology”), but also to practice it. I learned many things from them, and I have been using their methodology working with youth for many years. My youth ministry and missions in my congregation are successful with God’s help.

During my studies at MF and while taking the subject MV601, I often remembered my experience with the missionaries from the South Korea. I started thinking about my studies in Theology and what I had learned. I noticed that Western Theology is based on academics and academic reasoning, less and less on the Bible and God's wisdom. I started looking at myself and where I have been. I would often reject miracles such as healing, exorcism and the Holy Spirit and his gifts, because I had been taught in theological schools in western countries where supernatural things are often rejected. In addition, my Bachelor thesis was about rejecting these things on an academic level. I did not realize that the Bible is more than what the scholars were claiming. When I looked at my bachelor thesis again, I have to say that I was wrong in many things and my thesis should be rewritten. I believe this thesis will help me to adjust my thinking on an academic level and to go back to believing in Biblical truths.

These motivations led me to do this research, which I am calling "A Critique of Northern Theology by Theologians from the Global South"

1.2 Research question and purpose of my thesis

I decided to write up my project: "*A Critique of Northern Theology by Theologians from the Global South*" so my research question is: **What is the critique of Northern theology from theologians from the Global South?** To help answer the research question, the following sub-questions will be used:

What are they criticizing? Who is criticizing? What is the contribution from the global South to the ongoing Northern Theology?

I decided to look for the main points of criticizing Northern theology from the Global South perspective that have been written by scholars mainly from the Global South, and then to interpret their findings, to analyze it, to show contributions, challenges and opportunities from the Global South, and how they criticize the Global North. I want to show these things in chapters two and three. I am going to discuss whether the criticism from the Global South to the Global North is fair and whether there are some differences between North and South.

I believe that it is possible to answer this research question because this topic is actually new and there are not many books about my research, but MF's Library does provide a few books.

Challenges to my research are the fact that I am a Westerner and my thinking is itself shaped by the scientific approach to knowledge; because my Bachelor and Master studies have been very strongly based on “scientifically based” theology; and I believe that someone from the Global South may not agree with me in many ways, like in understanding culture, interpretation of Bible texts and so on.

1.3 Limitations of my thesis

In my thesis, my intention is not to explain in detail, but to just briefly speak to some terms such as the Holy Spirit, Trinity, understanding missions according the Scriptures and so on, because I believe to go into depth in these areas would be too long and time consuming and has no relevance to the research question. It is also not my intention to describe in detail Christian groups such as Pentecostals, Evangelicals and so on (again just briefly). I will not be writing about the emigration process and their advantages and disadvantages and do not have any participant observation in this research. At this time, I will not use many in depth research techniques due to lack of time.

1.4 Methodology

In my thesis, I will be using a hermeneutics method. The main method in my research will be to use hermeneutics to interpret the findings of the authors as well as the interpretation of the Bible from the global South theologians. This methodology will be seen in all chapters.

1.4.1 Hermeneutics

The method in my thesis will be conducted through the use of hermeneutics. Bernard says about this method:

Hermeneutics originally referred to the close study of the Bible. In traditional hermeneutics, it is assumed that the Bible contains truth and that human beings can extract those truths through careful studies and exegesis. The hermeneutical tradition has come into social sciences with the close and careful study of free flowing texts. In anthropology, for example, the texts may be myths or folktales. The hermeneutical approach would stress that the myths contain some underlying meaning, at least for the people who tell the myths, and that it is our job to discover the meaning (Bernard 2000: 19).

Because Bernardt did not write much about a biblical approach and because in my research I will interpret some texts from the Bible, I will write more about it. It is a critical approach to studying texts in the Bible. The researcher or scholar is looking for the most accurate meaning possible of

foreign words which can be found in Bible dictionaries and commentaries, interpretation of historical and literary context and at the end to show the story in the context of contemporary time. Preachers or scholars are looking for the in depth meaning of the text and how to say it with contemporary words (Hroboň 2010).

The term hermeneutics was imported into social science and is the interpretative understanding of social action (Bryman 2008: 15). In my research, it is my own understanding of books which have examined the findings of others, and then my own contribution to these findings. I have interpreted different authors and combined their findings looking for agreement or disagreement between the various authors. In short, I will interpret the findings of various authors, and then write up in my own words the results and conclusions.

1.5 The outline of the Thesis

After the introduction, I would like to present the outline of my thesis, where I want to highlight points about what I am going to write in my research in each chapter.

Chapter 2 gives a brief presentation of the Global South Christianity, mission work and society. At the beginning I am giving you a short presentation identifying where the global South is, because a majority of people don't understand what makes up the Global South and North. Then I am presenting a brief description of the Global South church. Poverty is very typical in the Global South and daily survival is common for a majority of people in the Global South. In addition, trouble with political-socio-economic issues in society is a daily experience, so they often look to the Bible to determine how those issues can be resolved according the Scriptures. By looking to Jesus as the lawyer of poor people and in reconciling these issues in the society. In addition, the Global South doesn't follow or know much about the Age of Enlightenment and different philosophical ways of thinking, and as a result Christianity is deeply involved in the public sphere. Religious leaders are struggling for the human rights, and politicians support Christians' involvement in government. This chapter illustrates Christianity and society in the Global South before discussing it.

Chapter 3 gives a presentation of critical issues of Western Theology as they are seen from the eyes of theologians from the Global South. I will mainly be discussing the results of the Age of Enlightenment on Western Theology, because it has been shaped by this Age of Reason. We will

see how many philosophical points-of-view brought about the rejection of religion either in thinking or in its relevance to society. I will use critical points presented by theologians from the South, who have written regarding critical issues in Western Theology and will comment as to the validity of the Southern theologians' criticisms of Western theology as seen through Southern theologians' eyes.

Chapter 4 will be the discussion part of my thesis. I will use ideas obtained from books by Western/Southern theologians. I will be focused on the question of whether this criticism from the global South is relevant or "fair" to Global North Christianity, I will discuss the rejection of miracles, Western missions to the Global South and Liberal theology in the Global North. The main concern will be in validity of the Southern critics observations.

Chapter 5 will be the conclusion of my thesis where I want to provide the answer to my research question. The main critique is in the Age of Enlightenment and the consequences of science, materialism and freedom in Theology and missions.

2. Presentation of Global South Christianity

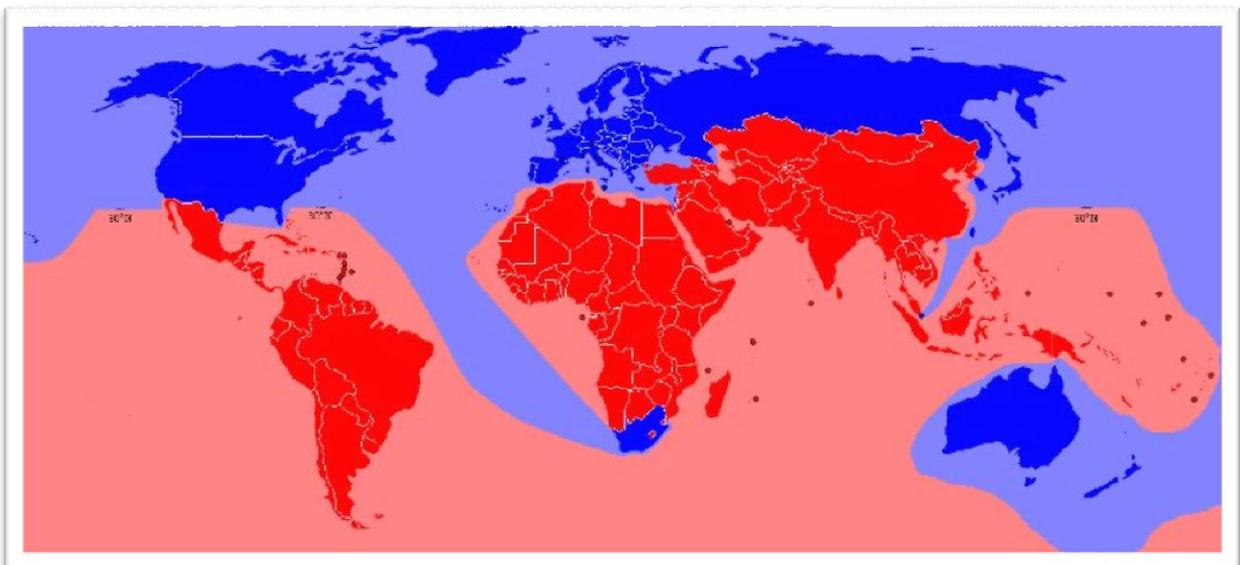
This chapter presents the points of Christianity and theology which are typical in the Global South. My intension is not describing each country independently because that is not relevant to my current research question; however, my intension in this chapter is to introduce what are typically the main points in Global South Christianity. I wish to discuss challenges, contributions and opportunities in the Global South Theology. I believe that readers of my thesis should have an overall picture of Christianity and theology in the Global South before criticizing the Global North. Each continent in the Global South has a few differences, so I will look for common or global points.

I will discuss these topics in this chapter: first, I will show where the Global South is on the map because some people may not know what areas are included in the Global South and the Global North. Then, I will give a brief history on missions. I will discuss the situation in the Global South and how introducing Christianity from North to South had both a positive and a negative impact on missions from in 15th-19th century. Then I will turn to current statistical information to see if that there are more Christians in the Global South than in the North in recent years. Then I will discuss the church and society, to determine whether there is a connection between them or not, and how Christianity contributes or influences society and the public sphere. I will include a discussion about whether churches are ecumenical and if people can join together in the struggle for human rights against oppression. These topics are typical for Liberation and Black theology. Then I will turn to the reading and interpretation of the Bible and discuss whether Bible can also influence the public sphere and society in the Global South. Then I will discuss whether Christianity really belongs to conservative type of thinking and whether there is also liberal thinking. I will discuss about mission work and jobs in the Global South. I will discuss about how the community is oriented and why there is a very strong group orientation in the South in contrast to strong individualism in the North. These are the topics I wish to discuss in this chapter. In addition I am going to interpret Southern theologian's books and what has been written on this topic.

2.1 Where is the Global South Christianity?

(Picture 1) The Global South is located on three continents, South America, Asia, Africa and the Pacific Islands (Red color). The Global North includes North America, Europe, Russia, Japan and Australia (Blue color). There is no theoretical reason why those churches are divided because doctrines are same in both hemispheres, and they have the same Bible - “it is just divided geographically” (Jenkins 2007: 3). Maimela adds that there is also an economical division between the rich and poor countries (Maimela 1991: 2). Some authors used to divide these countries as the West and the Third world countries. These books were published during the cold war where the Global South was named the “Third World”. I decided to work with terms the Global North (West) and the Global South.

Picture 1 (Wikipedia 2011)



2.2 Mission history from the Global North to the Global South

The Global South started being of interest to the missionaries of the Roman Catholics between 15th-17th centuries and later in 18th-19th centuries by Protestants (Escobar 2002: 24). Many European countries were competing for controlling more area and were not satisfied with what they had. The strongest countries wanted to govern those countries. Countries, such as the Great Britain and France, wanted to occupy mainly Africa and Asia, while Spain and Portugal wanted to occupy mainly Latin America. Initially Christianity was spread out along with goods and

products from the market, but later came slavery and colonization in these countries (Bediako 1992: 226).

The pope proclaimed if any country wanted to colonize any other country they were supposed to evangelize the indigenous people or the people who lived there. Missionaries were mainly monks from the North such as the Dominicans or Scottish monks (Catholic missions). However, after the Reformation, there were also Protestant missionaries from Europe and the USA sent to Latin America, and many other parts of the world¹.

Missionaries often reported what they saw. They saw people with different skins called “non-white” (justified biologically), who had their own religion and were savages. People were worshipping many different gods, ancestors, practiced polygamy and held very enthusiastic services around the fire. People were illiterate because they did not have a written language. Many were oral societies and often did not put any clothes on, so went about naked. These early observations of the Global South cultures by the missionaries were very shocking (Bediako 1992: 227).

Missionaries demonized these people for several reasons: there was a division between white and non-white. The white thought that they were very culturally and ethically developed and knew the ethical issues of how to be “polite” in the society so they brought their own Northern culture to the South, or as Bediako says they “imported Northern values” (Bediako 1992: 227). People were supposed to change in a very radical way because they were supposed to give up all their customs such as polygamy, worshipping ancestors and other gods and to be like people from the North (Mugambi 1989: 68). The native people were expected to learn the missionaries’ language such as English, Spanish and other languages of colonizers. People from the South were supposed to become literate and to leave all their old habits (Bediako 1992: 227-228).

So colonization, according to Bediako, brought about “Westernization of the Global South” (Bediako 1992: 227). In other words, people from the South had to accommodate by adopting the same values, beliefs and traditions from the North to include Christianity. This time was a very difficult time for the global South because it started slavery and colonization. Bediako says that

¹My own notes from MV601 Church and Theology in the South: prof. Engelsviken was lecturing about the Latin America Christianity

“Westerners [showed] superiority in the Global South” (Bediako 1992: 227). Many people from the Global South were brought as slaves to the North to work for white people. They were brought as Bediako says “to improve [the] economy and [with] very cheap workers for no salary for whites on farms and [in] factories” (Bediako 1992: 226). People were very oppressed by whites because in the eyes of whites these people were black, dirty and sometimes moving evils. They often justified these actions because of the biological differences of “white vs. black”, and from this point, it seems that they held the racism ideology of the superiority of whites. Bediako says that “it was a very harmful time for the Global South” (Bediako 1992: 228).

In addition to the North importing religion, it also brought political power and church planting. Indeed it was a result of colonialism that people were oppressed and were, in the eyes of the people from the North, very bad people (Maimela 1991: 3). On the one hand, the South must be happy that the Christianity was introduced to them, but on the other, they were negatively impacted by way that Northern would communicate the message as if it were one “Westerner communicating to another Westerner” (Mugambi 1989: 69). They brought Northern concepts, values and people into the South. The people of the South often failed to understand the message and had to find their own identity in Christianity many years later.

Escobar believed that Church planting was not very successful. People from the Global North built the church buildings, but the local cultures did not understand what was going on. The people from the North used the same building techniques common in their home countries. The building techniques and culture arts (pictures or sculptures) familiar to the local people were not included. Here we must ask the question whether building a church building in the middle of any village where the local culture is living is an indication that all people are converted Christians, or if it isn't rather something the colonizers did to show that this is our people, and they belong to us like our property (Escobar 2002: 57). Here we can say also that church planting must have been thought of as establishing power: This belongs to us! It is our property, to include the people.

Idowu shows us a different view of the Northern missionary to the Global South. He claims that we cannot criticize the missionary history from the Global North to the Global South and look only at the many negatives in slavery, in the preaching the Gospel and in colonization like Bediako did. Idowu proclaims that “we (as the Global South) are very happy that Westerners brought to us the knowledge about God and translated the Bible” (Bediako 1992: 303) Idowu

shows satisfaction with what the missionaries did in Africa. They brought knowledge about God and translated the Bible, so they did the best, according Idowu (Bediako 1992: 303).

Generally, I can say that missions had both positive and negative elements to the Global South. I would say that the positive elements included that Christianity was introduced to the Global South, so they got to know Christ. Among the negative elements are that cultures were changed in a very short time, and the local people were often criticized by the people from the Global North. I would say that another negative thing in colonization was that the people were oppressed under the politically powerful, and missions were more or less a “secondary thing”, because the “home” countries wanted to spread their influence to unexplored countries in the Global South who were not strong enough to stand against “modern guns”.

2.3 High numbers of Christians in the Global South and its future compared to the Global North

Christianity in the Global South has many believers according statistics. Oduyoye claims that Christianity in the Global South is showing us an increasing role of religious belonging and the Global North is showing us a decreasing role of belonging (Oduyoye 2004: 63). Escobar and Oduyoye add that people are first, living longer, and second, Christians in the Global North, according statistics, have more old people than young people (Oduyoye 2004: 63). Escobar asks: “If they died who would attend at church in the Global North?” (Escobar 2002: 8). Different views are provided by Yung and Jenkins. Yung in discussing why, in the Global North, there is a rapid decline of religion gives several reasons. First is the Age of Reason, where humans live in freedom and can decide to say “I want to be believer or I do not want to be a believer.” (Yung 1997: 49) In other words they have the freedom to decide to be a member or not. The second reason is that the greatest number of immigrants to Europe are not Christians but Muslims. Jenkins believes that by 2050 Christianity will be second place in Europe statistically at around 10-12% of the population being Christian with Muslims moving into first place (Jenkins 2007: 93). The reason is that Islam has a high reproduction rate (having many children) and Christianity not as high a rate in Europe (Jenkins 2007:6, 189-190). The normal white family in Europe or in North America have two or three children, but the Muslim families’ have more than three children. As a result, Christianity in Europe (not in the North America) will be replaced by Muslims because high rates of babies born to Muslims.

In the Global South the situation is much different. Miller points out that “the statistics reveal something far more meaningful: a boom in conversions across the South and the rise of new independent churches.” (Miller 2002:20). Statistically, Miller believes that the reason for the population “boom” is that statistics and newspapers show us that more people, in general, in the Global South are on the other side in the Global South. Some statistics indicate that the Roman Catholic Church is still the biggest in the Global South and Catholicism itself encourages child bearing. My own summarization of all the articles found in the Catechism of the Catholic Church could be: Have many children because the family is more blessed, and you are obligated to bring up children in the faith (Catechism of the Catholic church: Articles 1689, 2201, 2204). This can be seen in Table 1 (on page 13) where in Mexico and Philippines a majority of the people are involved in the Roman Catholic movement (Kim 2008: 187,165).

In Table 1, Jenkins shows that the biggest Christianity communities will be (or “are” now) in the Global South. If we compare the biggest Christianity “boom” – very rapid growth of Christians, in Asia, the Philippines will have the highest, and the majority will belong to the Roman Catholic Church (Jenkins 2007: 105-106). Escobar believes that in the Latin America the fastest growing Christian groups will be mainly in Mexico among the Roman Catholics and in Brazil in the “popular Protestantism” (Pentecostals) among indigenous and poor people (Escobar 2002: 78). USA is still the biggest, but there is quite a mixture of cultures so Jenkins believes that the largest growth will be in the non-white (or “emigrant”) churches in USA (Jenkins 2007: 117). I added to this table Slovakia. The author of this statistic used the same methodology as Jenkins. He claims that the reason Slovaks have been leaving the church of Slovakia is that there is very high rate of emigration to richer countries (such as Germany, Austria, Denmark and Norway) because people can make more money there than they can in Slovakia. Another reason they leave is to marry someone who comes from these countries. This also applies to Poland, which explains why the Roman Catholic Church in Poland shows a decrease in numbers (Krajcer 2011). I believe we could look at many different nations to determine how many Christians will be there, but for this purpose Table 1, copied from Jenkins book, is adequate to support our point.

Table 1 (Jenkins 2007: 104)

Nation	Estimated Christian Population (millions) in		
	2000	2025	2050
Brazil	164	190	195
Mexico	95	127	145
Philippines	77	116	145
Nigeria	50	83	123
D.R. Congo	34	70	121
Ethiopia	36	65	79
Russia	90	85	80
China	50	60	60
Germany	58	61	57
USA	225	270	330
Slovakia ^x	4.5 (in year 2001)	3.7	2.8

^xstatistic taken from the Ministry of culture of the Slovak Republic (2011)

2.4 Poverty in the Global South and church

Escobar says that a majority of the people in the South are poorer than in the North (Escobar 2002: 3). We cannot say that all people are poor in the Global South, for example according to (Picture 1), we can say that in Asia, Japan and South Korea are economically well developed, so

they belong to the Global North. Also in the Global South are a few exceptions of rich people. People don't have much in the Global South. It is hard to get a job in the South and difficult to survive. People think something like this "nobody wants to take care of me so I will die soon". "I don't have much, and I need a help". There is a daily struggle for survival (Escobar 2002: 121). Their primary concern is how to get something to eat or where to sleep. Much like the homeless in the North.

The churches in the Global South are able to fight against poverty. The reason is that everything is inspired by the Bible. Jesus ministered mainly to the poor people and helped to show them that the Kingdom of God is mainly for poor people. "The churches in the South are able to offer sanctuary, community and a social safety where governments cannot or will not" (Escobar 2002: 53). Escobar looks like he is engaged with the Liberation Theology. Jenkins also lifts up just the poor people. So, it seems to me, that this means that the Global North, because it is very rich, cannot enter into the Kingdom of God according Liberation Theology. Bosh does not agree with Escobar and Jenkins, because as Bosh looks into Paul's letters, we see that we are justified by faith. If you believe, you can enter to the Kingdom of God. God doesn't make any distinction between rich and poor people. He just asks for belief. If you believe, you have "a voucher" to enter to the Kingdom of God. In addition, the following Bosh arguments from the Bible reject Escobar's and Jenkins's thinking that only the poor people enter into the Kingdom of God and not the rich.

Bosh argues that we cannot forget that Jesus also worked with rich people. This is the primary criticism of Liberation Theology, which claims that the Kingdom is just for poor people. He points out that, in the Bible, we have a story about the tax collector, Zacchaeus (read Luke 19:1-10). Tax collectors were very rich and collected money from the people for the Roman Empire. We also see that one of Jesus' disciple, Mathew, was a tax collector. People in Jerusalem did not like tax collectors, because a tax collector could ask for more money than was required by the Romans. The Roman Empire was only interested in having an income, and sometimes those collectors "put too much money in their pockets" (Novotný 1992: 89). One can conclude that The Kingdom of God belongs to both the rich people and the poor because God loves anyone without any distinctions. So the kingdom is for anyone who believes in Him like the case of Zacchaeus

(Bosh 1991: 101-103). This story shows us that through belief we can get the salvation promised by Christ.

Theologians from the South do agree that the Global South is not so economically developed, with a few exceptions, people don't have much money in their wallets, and it is hard to get jobs there. It is very interesting that people in need look for churches that provide food, water, shelter and protection. I believe that providing these essentials also brings about conversion to the faith. These things are not just for poor people but also for the rich people. God doesn't make distinction between people and everyone who is a believer can enter into the Kingdom of God. This fight against poverty and hard social conditions belong to Liberation and Black Theology and will be discussed in the chapter 2.8 where religion is fighting for human rights and better social conditions.

2.5 Engaged theology

Yung claims that “church is not oriented only in belief (orthodoxy) matters but there is a very strong intension to practical consideration (orthopraxy)” (Yung 1997:19). This is Yung's theory of Engaged Theology. The Global South is moving toward diaconal and pastoral thinking and in fact missions must be pastoral also (Yung 1997: 19).

Christians often help people medically (not through the use of medical science) through the healing act ministry. They also provide shelters for poor people, because since everything is inspired by Bible, we are to “love your brothers and sisters” (read for example in Luke 10:25-37). The parable of the Good Samaritan is the inspiration for us to do the same thing. Samaritans were not seen as pious people in the Jewish society, because they came from the diasporas, and Jews did not like Samaritans. Jesus told this parable and put the question to the people, “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hand of robbers?” (Luke 10:36 NIV). How do you love your God? This is the main diaconal story as well as the inspiration for doing diaconal work. The question could be asked for this time, “Would you give help to someone who is dirty, smells bad like an onion...and so on?” I believe that for Christians in the South this is not a problem. Belief is not only on a theoretical level, but is connected with practice (Escobar 2002: 100). “Theology must be missiological and pastoral” (Yung 1997: 19).

In addition, Christianity in the Global South provides pastoral counseling. It is something like “psychological counseling”. Pastoral counseling is a part of practical theology and co-operates with psychology and the psychology of communication. Pastoral counseling means to give a helping word in the difficult, complicated life situations of individuals. A person, who has a psychological problem, can be helped by talking with and listening to another person. Here we should make a differentiation between diaconal work and pastoral counseling. Both are similar in that they are sub-disciplines of practical theology, but diaconal ministry is to help by acts, like our case of the parable of the good Samaritan, and pastoral counseling by words, so it tends to be like “psychological counseling” (Yung 1997: 19-22).

Escobar adds that people in the South are much poorer than in the North and the medical care (this also includes psychological help such as pastoral counseling) is very expensive. Because the countries don’t provide health insurance, and don’t have the money to build hospitals or social centers, people often ask for help from Christian churches that provide the ministry of healing. Escobar adds that there must be a conversion and not hiding God behind those activities, like in the North, where God is not mentioned (Escobar 2002: 97). I will discuss this last sentence more in third chapter where missions are directed from “top-to-bottom” in chapter 3.9.2.

2.6 Cultural parallels in the Old Testament

Christianity in the Global South prefers reading the Old Testament, because they can see a picture of their own culture in the Jewish/Hebrew culture (Jenkins 2006: 47). Jenkins says, “In Africa Christians have been excited by the obvious cultural parallels that exist between their own societies and the Hebrew Testament” (Jenkins 2006: 45). This author claims that the New Testament is disregarded. This raises the question as to why? I am asking because Yung says that they believe in the supernatural world (angels, spirits, etc.) and this is written about in both the Old and New Testaments (Yung 1997: 3). What is the exact meaning of cultural parallels in this statement? I will try to find out because these authors disagree with each other. Let us start with a small discussion.

There are reasons why the New Testament was more or less not preferred at first. Paul preached to a Hellenistic, philosophical society, which was based on thinking and rejecting. This fits the Global North, whose thinking is based strongly on a philosophical approach. The Global South

doesn't belong here, because they don't follow this way of thinking very well. Lists are preached to philosophers and this is relevant for the Global North (Bediako 1992: 240). Secondly, the Southern "societies are based on oral level emphasizes on stories and then remembering the stories" (Escobar 2002: 55, 81). Indeed, the Old Testament and Gospels are written from the oral society perspective because in Jewish societies every story must be passed down from father to son. The sons (of course based on very strong community life learning) had to recognize the story and its application. Teaching and learning through stories is typical for oral societies. The majority of the people of the South are less literate and their learning and history is based more on stories. Wisdom literature is found in the Old Testament (Jenkins 2006: 26-28). Thirdly, in connection with second point, Yung says that "people are community oriented" (Yung 1997: 3). He is in agreement with Jenkins that the Old Testament is preferred because Jewish fathers told the stories to their sons, there are no women because "Jews and Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) preferred a patriarchal approach to family, so the male sex is preferred" (Hroboň 2010). This means that the stories were told in communities. It is like one is preaching and the people around him are listening to him. This is like a picture of a community in the Global South (Young 1997: 3). Fourthly, "they don't use term "the church" but rather "the temple" inspired by the Jew tradition" (Jenkins 2006: 50). Fifthly, the cultural parallels of Ethiopia and South Africa, where societies live in conditions similar to the Jews in the Old Testament and have similar customs. And finally, "sacrificing the Lamb" and "sacrificing Abraham's son" – it is like Christ's crucifixion." There are many symbols in Old Testament, and symbols play very important role in the Global South (Jenkins 2006: 45).

Jenkins contends that the Old Testament is more preferred than the New Testament. Jenkins states that people in the Global South see the cultural parallels between their way of living and the way that the Israelites lived in the Old Testament. Based on several reasons that I mention above in this point, I can agree with him, because their lifestyle and lives are similar to the Biblical Jews. He seems to be saying that they read the Old Testament more than they read the New Testament. I disagree with Jenkins because Yung says that people are looking for relevant verses in the Bible (in both Testaments) and try to look for texts where Christ is the center of everything, where Jesus struggles against social injustice. The picture of Jesus' crucifixion symbolize the victory against this injustice (Yung 1997: 3, 65-67). For Yung it means that there is injustice in every society. The start point is Christ, who will start establishing good social

order. In addition, from my reading of books, people in the South believe in a spiritual world with spirits, healing and so on (Yung 1997: 3), and this is described in the New Testament as well. So in this way, Yung does not agree with Jenkins who says that the Old Testament is preferred over the New Testament. Yung says they are both read the same.

Both Testaments are taken seriously and there is no discussion between both Testaments. Yung and Escobar show us in their books the importance of the New Testament, because they both strongly believe in miracles. For example, in the New Testament there are stories about healing and exorcism in Jesus ministry, and Jesus is taken seriously here because he is a perfect example of what to do and how to practice. On the one hand, Jenkins' point about cultural parallels with the Old Testament, that Jews in Jesus time were very poor and have the same cultural values, would be true; however, on the other hand, Escobar and Yung cannot agree with Jenkins when he states that the New testament is read less. That is not true because people in the Global South lift up Jesus as the perfect example of missions and ministry.

2.7 Bible reading in the Global South

The claim that the Bible is an authoritative source comes from Protestant theology (Yung 1997: 43). For the Global South this means that the language of the Bible can touch everyday situations such as injustice, poverty, and social disorder (Escobar 2002: 144), as well as different ethical issues such as homosexuality, abortions, divorcing and premarital sex (Yung 1997: 231).

People in the global South read the Scriptures literally. This means everything that is written in the Bible is taken very seriously and there is no place for discussion, rejections or debate. Looking at the Bible in a scientific way with interpretations based on observations is common in the Northern hemisphere (Yung 1997: 43). Interpretation is looking for relevant texts in the Bible for a specific socio-economic-political situation (Yung 1997: 221) where people are oppressed or struggling for justice (Escobar 2002: 13). Now I will present stories from New Testament and Old Testament, which are interpreted in the Global South as speaking against oppression with my own summary of texts taken from King James Version of the Bible. This is an illustration of how the Bible is read and interpreted through the eyes of the Global South.

My interpretation of New Testament is that Jesus crucifixion is the way of winning against the evil forces, and in the Old Testament, Exodus is where God liberated the Israelites from the

Pharaoh. Both of these stories relate to Liberation theology and Black Theology. I will discuss this issue more in the next chapter. Now let us look at the interpretation of these two texts in the Bible.

In New Testament, “The books of Gospels” look at Jesus’ life from his childhood through miracles of healing until his crucifixion. These books provide stories where generally common people are very oppressed by the Roman Empire, the Pharisees and tax collectors, but Christ’s crucifixion plays the key role for the Global South people and Christians (Mugambi 1998: 58). God won his fight against the Beast in his resurrection, and he will help anyone who believes in Him. Whoever believes in me [Jesus], will never fall into the Beast’s hands (KJV). So the interpretation for the Global South would be: Dictators can be like the Beast’s forces, and Jesus and his disciples are on the other side. Because Jesus won against the Beast on the cross, they believe that Christians connect their power in uniting with all denominations and will be able to win against those dictators, because God is on their side (Escobar 2002: 144).

We should illustrate something from Old Testament in a similar fashion. Exodus, from Old Testament, will be the next text. In Africa, Latin America and Asia, people believe, according to the Bible in Exodus, that the people of Israel (or “God’s children”) were oppressed by the Pharaoh of Egypt. Because these people believed in God and prayed for an “exodus from Egypt”, God decided to help them and sent Moses. The people were waiting and praying for a messiah to come. Here God helps “His children” to move out of Egypt and then punishes the Egyptians who worship many gods and many things against God’s will because God likes the Israelites (KJV). Those stories are in the Bible and let us interpret them in context of the Global South for better understanding as to why all texts in the Bible must be interpreted. All nations in the Global South have had experiences with dictators. Those dictators are represented in the Bible in terms of “the Roman Empire and Pharaoh.” People identified as “God’s children” and “the oppressed Christians in the Roman Empire” were praying for justice. God is with people anytime, so this means that God helps to win against dictators and Christians will live again in love because God is involved there (Escobar 2002: 13-15). These stories are viewed, mainly about oppression, because in the Global South countries have had experiences with oppression from dictators or political powers. There are also stories about poverty, but I already discussed about that in the

sub-chapter about poverty. My main point was that Jesus worked with poor people, and he loved and respected them. So we see how texts in the Bible are preached and talked about.

The next point of Bible reading in the global South is about infallibility. The Bible is an infallible source, so there is less critical researching of texts in the Global South than there is in the Global North. The Global North is looking for scientific argumentation or rejection because of the Age of Enlightenment and is trying to replace Biblical truth with scientific arguments. These arguments are a more primal source than Biblical argumentation. I will discuss more about this topic in the next chapter about the Age of Enlightenment and rationale level thinking. The Global South believes that the Holy Spirit is important here just like it is written in Acts 2 (sending the Holy Spirit) or in 1st Corinthians 12 (the gifts of the Holy Spirit), or healings and exorcism as miracles performed during Jesus' ministry as reported in the Gospels (for example Luke 13:11-13). There are many places in the New Testament where healing acts, exorcism and other gifts of the Holy Spirit are proclaimed by Jesus and his disciples. In the Global South, there is no critical discussions or debates as to whether these are true or false like in the global North (Yung 1997: 230).

Southern theology is very biblically based. It is the authority for all of one's personal life and influences society as well. Bible can touch on any conflict in the society and be helpful for individuals as well. The Bible is not read critically and doesn't follow the thinking on the university level where there is a very strong critique about what was written. People in the Global South often justify everything by what is written in the Bible. What is not written in the Bible they try to exclude and say that it is not true. In questions of ethics, people very often connect their thinking with the Bible, and use it to determine if something is either good or bad.

2.8 The church and society are fighting for human rights

The next point is about Christianity and society. Christianity in the Global South actively cooperate with society, presidents, kings and policy makers, so religion is very alive in the public sphere (Maimela 1991: 4). Important religious leaders are playing very crucial role in politics. Christianity is able to connect with politicians and to fight for justice. For example "in Africa or in Latin America Christians fought against dictatorships, where many dictators often had oppressed people and sometimes had been killing innocent people and undercut democracy and

human rights” (Escobar 2002: 13). The church in the Global South is able to connect people and to spread democracy. It is fighting for human rights and justice in every country. These activities have been inspired by Bible stories (Escobar 2002: 144).

Everything looks positive, but Appleby takes a different point of view. He says that “religion can contribute peace but also conflicts” (Appleby 1997: 19). Jenkins also looks at this positively. He describes Christianity in the Global North as “providers of human rights and democracy” (Jenkins 2006: 56). Escobar doesn’t have such a “peaceful view”. This author has described stories where Catholics in Latin America were violent and actively involved in government and military action against Protestants. They cannot agree with the above paragraph where religion is described as “good peacemakers”. They point out that religion is in many instances a good peacemaker and can build a way for reconciliation, but it also generates conflicts. Escobar gives an example in Brasilia where Catholics were violent against Protestants and killed many Protestants and indigenous people. Many of these conflicts took place in the 1950’s prior to the 2nd Vatican council (1962-1965), so in Catholics eyes all Protestants and Pentecostals were thought of as sects or evil (Escobar 2002: 90-91). We need to bear in mind that any religion can provide both of these things (conflicts and reconciliations or peace). This is the reason for the disagreement with Jenkin’s book, which did not touch on the topic that religion can also be violent. Escobar, as a Southern theologian, agrees with Appleby that this fight for the social order can also be a way to obtain political power.

“This theology in the Global South meaning of fighting for human rights’ is very involved in Liberation theology and, in Africa, in Black theology” (Mugambi 1998: 28). The main point of Liberation theology is the struggle for human justice, or in different words “struggling for human rights” for poor and oppressed people. Liberation theology prefers poor people and trying to struggle with them for human rights and equal social conditions with rich people. A possible positive critique of this movement is that it can be the trigger for listening and a voice of poor people by people who are in power, but on the other hand, it is also Liberation Theology can be violent in many ways (Song 1990: 221). A primary criticism of Liberation Theology is that it is looking for political power.

From a theological perspective, there are additional criticisms of Liberation theology. First, Liberation theology is only for poor people, but if we read Matt. 19:23-27, Jesus is discussing

with his workers that poor are preferential, but he goes on to say that in God's name everything is possible. This means that rich people can also get salvation, because it is not up to human beings but up to God (Song 1990: 231). I discussed this issue in chapter 2.4 too about Zacchaeus. The next theological criticism is that "Liberation theology and fighting for human rights doesn't come from God but from human beings" (Seo 2005: 41). So God is not involved in these fights for human rights but human beings. Inspirations are texts from Exodus (Ferm 1986: 15), but the difference here is that God was fighting with human beings under his guidance, but Liberation theology mostly fights under the guidance of human beings, because this movement looks more for political power (Seo 2005: 23, 41, 62).

"Black theology" is in Africa and it is almost same as Liberation theology in the sense of fighting for human rights. Its main point is to have equal life conditions as the whites, so it is against racial discrimination (Mugambi 1998: 28). A good example of Black theology can be found in South Africa where discrimination of black people by white people was very strong. This separation of whites from other people, especially blacks, was called apartheid (Maimela 1991: 2-4).

The Global South sees the Bible as the primary source of reconciliation in questions of human rights. They proclaim that Jesus Christ is a liberator who came to the Earth to fight for "human rights" (for example against oppressions). This is connected with the Theology of Liberation and Black Theology (Mugambi 1989: 14). Indeed Mugambi is right in that the struggle for justice is seen in the Bible and is Biblical. However, Liberation Theology can be dangerous, and in many instances is, because, as Seo says, this can be an act from human beings and not from God. I also see here, whether Liberation theology fights more for political power or not, the question can be asked: Do we fight for God or for power as human beings?

The Global South theology is very strong into fighting for human rights, and this tends to Liberation Theology and Black Theology, because the fight involved in these movements are based on the Bible. On one hand, there is a positive point in fighting for better social conditions where people who have power in society will listen to people without power. But, on the other side, there is the criticism that this movement is violent and looking for political power as well. There are some theological critics that say that salvation is not just for poor people, and God, and not human beings, must be involved in fighting for human rights, because, if He is not, it would

only a fight for political power, like I discussed in the Latin American context. In summary, the Global South sees the reconciliation of any injustices in the cross where Jesus won against all oppressors in the world.

2.9 Conservative Christianity in the Global South

Christianity in the Global South is more conservative and less liberal in Theology. I believe that we must first define what is to be conservative and what it is to be liberal. Conservative type of Christianity we can define as every issue (problem) in society can be resolved by the Bible. I would like to use homosexuality as just one example because this topic is a very volatile or hot topic for Southern theologians. So if we say that homosexuality is good, then conservatives show us that it is a sin and cannot be tolerated in this situation. This means that Christian values are preferred and thus rejects the modern thinking of human rights for homosexuals. In contrast, liberal theologians would say that they are Christians. The problem with this is that they have accommodated theology to the contemporary world. So if we talk about homosexuality as being good as the liberals say, then we must look for some ways that it is really judged as goodness, especially since they connect it with “secular” human rights. This approach is not found in Christianity, but by human beings. Human beings are fallible but God is not. Liberalist often use the concept of *imago Dei* in Genesis, and so we have to respect anyone with their faults. But a question from the Southern theologians would be, what about Leviticus 18: 22? Isn't it sin? So conservative Christianity is strongly committed to keeping with Christian values, and Liberalism is more a deflection of Christianity in order to support contemporary human rights which liberalists accept (Escobar 2002: 174). This is just an illustration to show what is to be Christian conservative. The main idea of this type of thinking is “to be connected with the Bible,” in contrast with Liberal Theology which adapts to the current social thinking. I will discuss this conflict between Liberalism and Conservatism in the chapter 3.7 where Southern theologians criticize it.

Maimela says that to be a Christian in the Global South doesn't mean that I can do anything, but rather the Christian says: “I cannot do anything because I am the child of Him, and if God doesn't agree I won't do that because I am saved by Him” (My own summarization) (Maimela 1991: 155). It means that every social issue is judged through God and the Bible there is no other way.

2.10 Community oriented in the Global South Christianity

As an Asian theologian Yung observes, Christianity in the Global South, and people in general in the Global South, are more oriented in community and everything must be shared (Yung 1997: 3). Southerners meet in fellowships, share Bible stories with each other, and discuss them. This is based on a very biblical instruction given in Matthew 18:20. Community life is the basis of the church. In addition, people are able to share their property and food (Yung 1997: 83).

Escobar sees this from a different perspective. The reason why the Global South is community oriented, according to Escobar, is that “people are less literate and more oral oriented societies” (Escobar 2002: 41). People are less educated. They often meet in a circle, and the leader of the village, who is educated, can read any text from the Bible to all of them. This is very biblical as written about in Matthew 18:20. The picture of the Christianity should be one of community.

Hwa Yung discusses the family group in the Global South starting with two important points: “every hard decision of an individual must be discussed in the family” (Yung 1997: 82) there are no individual decisions left up to me. My family or the tribal family has to discuss everything with me and then makes the final decision. The second is that every member of his or her family must take care of every member of every member in his or her family from his/her childhood until his/her death (Yung 1997: 83). So it can be said that members of the family live together and are not separated and help each other. Yung shows us evidence that community oriented cultures are based on the family and there is less individualism or separation from community life.

Oduyoye contributes to Yung’s observations of community life. She agrees with Yung that societies in the Global South are oriented to community life, but she says that “community life provides hospitality” (Oduyoye 2001: 93). She understands hospitality as “welcoming, shelter, protection as well as borrowing” (Oduyoye 2001: 93-94). She says that community life tends to hospitality. This means that the community provides shelter and food to foreigners and strangers as well. Societies in the Global South are something like “sharing societies” based on Oduyoye’s meaning. This looks to me to be very biblical. There are some verses in the Bible which say, in my own words, that if someone knocks on the door it will be opened. This means that Christians

should provide shelter and protection for the night as well as sharing your own things. To me this is very Biblical.

My point here is that the Global South is less individualistic but more group oriented. Everything is shared from the word of God to things between brothers and sisters. Yung and Oduyoye lift up these two points as the evidence of group oriented communities. This is not generally just an Asian and African concept, but is found throughout the whole global South. As I have said Christianity is not about individualism. Mugambi says: “People are more open to share with another people things and words of God in fellowships” (Mugambi 1989: 47).

2.11 Women in the Global South Christianity

Women in the Global South appear on the outside that everything is ok and there is no oppression. However, if we watch any documentaries from Africa, we can see that women are very active in the church life and are better examples than men. But a question is raised as to whether it is true that it is ok for women in the Global South to be priests or church helpers? What does the culture in Africa say about it? I will provide two very different views on this topic: one will be Northern thinking presented by Miller and the second will be Oduyoya’s view. I will discuss what they say as to whether to be a woman in the church is easy or not in the Global South.

Women in the Global South also play a very important role just like men. They are very active in Christianity, sometimes more than the man because women are not as lazy as the men and demonstrate a deep faith in God and stronger relationships between people (Valčová 2009: 71). Valčová has done psychological research comparing males and females and I think she is right in this area.

Miller says this about the role of women in the Global South:

Woman in the church life provided testimonies and also they have gifts of healing, prophecy, discernment, etc. and their newfound strength leads them to gradually change the pattern of relationship with their husbands, and contribute to the conversion of many and thus to the transformation of family life. In addition women are involved in missions more than man and also using women as laity in services (Miller 2002: 24).

So women play an important role in the church, mainly in the areas of evangelism and helping at services. Based on my own experience, they share both inside and outside the church. According Miller and Valčová it is easy for women to be in the church.

Two questions arise here, as to whether women can be priests in the Global South and whether Miller's comments are true. I wish to examine this at this time. I will use Oduyoye's books, because she is an expert in dealing with theological questions of women in the Global South. Oduyoye begins her arguments by looking at culture in Africa. She has concluded that many countries in Africa have a patriarchal type of family, which means that the males are gender dominant in these cultures (Oduyoye 2001: 67) and women just have to nurture the children and to take care of things around the house. The next point examines why women were oppressed during the Westernization of countries in Africa during the colonization time. She claims that the Western culture oppressed women in society in the colonial age. Women often did not get the same education or have the same opportunities as men (Oduyoye 2004: 92). In a patriarchal type of family, there is not equality between men and women. Westernization of the Global South supported this type of family more in the colonial age.

Concerning the church and women in the Global South, Miller says that women are ok in the church, but Oduyoye doesn't agree with Miller's conclusions of equality between gender in the Global South. She says that "the church in the global South is always having language against women and teaching as well" (Oduyoye 2001: 82). According the Bible, women are always sinful in society and also shall be obedient to their husband according Paul (Oduyoye 2001: 72). So women, in eyes of man in the Global South, are dominated and there is not equality.

Oduyoye sees that there is a very big problem with the patriarchal family type where male domination is preferred. Oduyoya goes on arguing that women have a very important role concerning religious questions in family, because the women are trying to bring up men (husbands) to be good Christians and as well as children (Oduyoye 2001: 91,107). Women play a very important role in spiritual development of the family trying to bring up children and husbands to be good Christians who will follow Christ. It is possible to agree with Miller in the last words of her quotations that women have a strong influence on the family.

Considering the question of ordination of women to the priesthood, there is still a problem as to their being a priest/pastor and leading any congregation. As I said above there is still a lot of language against women. Teaching is always saying something against women and how they are sinful. They support their arguments by noting that Paul said that women should be silent which means that they cannot have any voice in the church. If we accept the concept that “humans” were created in the image of God then there should be equality between genders. But Augustine says that “women are not created in the image of God” (Oduyoye 2004: 70), but that they were created as a “second person”, so men are advanced and have more rights than women (Mugambi 1998: 128). Here Oduyoye sees a problem, on one side that this is a patriarchal type of family, and on the other, as I have already discussed, the Global South believes that everything written in the Bible is to be taken seriously. She believes that the problem is not just in the type of family, but also in the type of Biblical teaching. Oduyoye sees that to solve this conflict women should struggle to be a part of the church. The church is for anyone and males should look closely at their thinking (Oduyoye 2001: 112). Mugambi sees reconciliation in this conflict differently. Jesus Christ is a liberator who will help women get equality and prosperity in the Global South. Both sexes can participate in the creation of a better world for all (Mugambi 1998: 131, 134).

Considering Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians, Mugambi wouldn't say that women are in the position of oppression, because many leaders say that the Holy Spirit is able to pour down equally on anyone but with different gifts. So here leaders want to say that the Holy Spirit can be poured down on both sexes equally (Mugambi 1995: 128). In Protestant churches there can be female priests too, like in Pentecostal and Charismatic, as I said but the problem is in the culture, because, as I said, it is in a patriarchal type of family.

To close this section, I reached the conclusion that to be a woman in the Global South is very complicated in Christianity. As I said, I believe that probably looking from the outside into the church it looks like Miller says, women can be helpful and serve as priests. But inside the church, there is the problem between sexes where women are still in a kind of oppression. The problem, as I see it, is that societies have parallels with the Old Testament where women have no voice (see the chapter 2.6), and generally the Bible is read very literally in the Global South, and Paul says that women should be silent. Taking the Bible literally is the reason why women are oppressed.

2.12 Charismatic tension

Leopoldo A. Sánchez M, a Latin American Catholic priest, starts by saying: “Christianity in the Global South is more charismatic than traditional (or orthodox) churches” (Leopoldo 2011: 43). This definition needs to be explained, so first I will explain the meaning of traditional and then the charismatic view. Traditional means that our faith is based upon doctrines of the church and if we want to add something new it must be rejected because it is not according to these doctrines (Yung 1997: 3). So it can be said that orthodoxy is based more on doctrines, which are the authority of judging everything in Christianity and theology, and there is no other way. But the reaction against orthodoxy can be found in charismatic tension (Escobar 2002: 101-102). Charismatic churches respect doctrines but the authority for judging everything is the Bible. They are open for new ideas, providing “a fresh reading of the Bible” and Christianity is renewed and reformatted (Yung 1997:3).

My own summary of how Escobar describes Charismatic Christianity in the Global South would be: they take the Bible very seriously; they believe in the presence and gifts of the Holy Spirit who is involved in your whole life; you are to be a missionary and to preach the Gospel; they are strong worshipers, and practice healing-exorcism ministry; and have strong fellowships centered on praying and Bible studying (Escobar 2002: 101). As we can see here, the evidence indicates that the Global South is more oriented on the Bible as the authority of their life as a Christian.

Leopoldo, a Latin American Catholic priest, asks and then answers the question as to what is a charismatic church:

What is characteristic for charismatic churches in the Global South? The label meant that, within a fairly orderly liturgical setting, worship was not to be without many spontaneous expression of dancing, clapping and gestures of praise such as the lifting of hands but it is rather as being within the realm of what can be allowed by biblical standards as prayer for healing from sickness and deliverance from the evil one and his spirits (Leopoldo 2011: 43).

Leopoldo, Yung and Escobar are the same in claiming that Christianity is Charismatic. Mugambi adds that Charismatic churches are not just independent churches which are separated from big churches such as Catholics, Lutherans, Calvins and so on, but those “big churches” themselves are more Charismatic in character in the Global South, so it is not right to think that the meaning of the word is just separated churches but it is also involved in the thinking of “the big traditions”

in the Global South and indeed churches in the Global South really are in Charismatic tension (Mugambi 1995: 200).

2.13 Ecumenism in the Global South

Yung mentions that “everything is shared or built by community” (Yung 1997: 3). This statement raises a question as to whether churches can co-operate together or the question can be reformulated as: are churches ecumenical? Escobar states that “Christians in the Global South are able to meet together to build unity and to fight together against social injustice” (Escobar 2002: 144) There is evidence that all denominations must be together because those cultures are strongly based on community life and have to have a dialog between them and then fighting together for better social conditions (Mugambi 1995: 199-200).

The other view on ecumenism was discussed already in the chapter 2.8. Denominations can still be violent and not respect others. Before Vatican II there was no ecumenism, and Catholics, in Latin America for example, with connections with the army were killing other Christians. After Vatican II there is a paragraph about ecumenism stating that Catholics should respect other Christians. Now, in the modern age, it is still possible to start conflicts among denominations, because, as I discussed in the chapter 2.8, religion can provide either conflict or peace.

2.14 Summary of this chapter

Let us sum up this whole second chapter in a few words. We can ask a question: “What is typical for Churches and Theology in the Global South?” I would provide some answers:

- Christianity is more conservative and in questions such as divorcing, homosexuality, and abortions uses the Bible as the authoritative source, which is able to answer any ethical issues in the society.
- Bible is read literally, everything is taken literally as it is written in the Scriptures and there are no critical studies on the Bible. The Bible is often applied to contemporary situations for better understanding and “the hot topic” is mainly about injustice.
- Christianity in the South is very involved in the society and there is no separation between Christianity and the public sphere. Many politicians, kings and presidents think as Christians. Here we can see the highest moral standards in society as well as the struggle

for human rights. Churches are able to bring together and to fight for justice, which is inspired by the Scriptures, not as individuals but as a community. Many religious voices are heard in governments or in the public sphere.

- All churches show us that missions are not about words or theoretical issues, but about acts. Acts can prepare people to be Jesus' followers and can be a testimony to these people about how to live for God. Jesus didn't talk just about missions, but in the New Testament there are also many stories about his acts of healing and exorcism and what conversion means.
- Churches in the Global South tend to be more charismatic using the Holy Spirit who gives them opportunity to receive the gifts of healing, tongues, exorcism and prophecy, as well as, sending them on missions and using these gifts. Many traditional churches such as Roman Catholic and Lutherans are more charismatic in character than traditional based on doctrines (or being in orthodoxy).
- The number of Christians in the Global South is increasing because of population growth and increased conversions. The majority of Christians in the future is not expected to be in Europe nor in the North America, but in the Global South. Many will be in Africa.
- The Global South is more oriented toward community life. Everything is shared in community life. Equality among members and hospitality is very important. Community life is very Biblically based.
- There is some kind of equality between men and women in the Global South Christianity, but because these societies are based on a patriarchal type of family, the church often preaches against women at services.

These points are very typical for the Global South. Some points are also found in Western theology. Because the Global South Christianity was influenced by Western Theology, it is not my intention to judge Christianity in the Global North as very bad. Idowu says that there should be gratitude toward missionaries from West, because they brought the knowledge about God and the Bible translation (Bediako 1992: 304). Here it was my intention to show what is typical for the church in the Global South just to give a picture of Christianity and Theology in the Global South. I will finish this chapter with Yung's picture of the Global South Christianity. He says:

Christianity in the Global South is generally much more holistic, without the sharp distinction between the natural and the supernatural with its emphasizes on the world of spirits and the dead, decidedly less

materialistic, no less humanistic, but not so at the expense denying divine, no less rational but nevertheless open to knowledge through intuition and other non-rational media, and community oriented rather than ruggedly individualistic (Yung 1997: 3).

3. The main points of criticism of Northern Theology from the Global South Christianity perspective

We have discussed the functioning of Christianity in the Global South. I discussed the opportunities, challenges and contributions of the Global South. It is now my intension to discuss how southern theologians view the Global North Christianity.

In this chapter I am going to discuss these issues in more detail. Southern theologians will show how theology in the Global North has been influenced by the Age of Enlightenment. Then Southern theologians will criticize missions; show how they have been affected by the Age of Enlightenment; how the superiority of northern culture was dominant in the mission work. Lastly southern theologians will discuss Christians and society and how the secular/spiritual separation is dangerous for society in dealing with the issues of liberalism and human rights. Of course everything will be interpreted through the eyes of the Global South. Generally, the intension in this chapter is to look for the main points of criticism of western theology from the viewpoint of the theologians of the Global South, considering questions of theology, missions and social life in the Global North.

3.1 The global North Christianity is in the Age of Enlightenment

3.1.1 Introduction of the Age of Enlightenment and Secularism

This topic for South theologians is a very “burning” topic, and as we will see, this is the main criticism from the South theologians of the Global North church. In reading all of the articles, they believe that Christianity and theology in the Global North has changed their face, and the Bible is no longer relevant to the North. The result of this thinking will show us how the church has lost its meaning in the contemporary world. There is no need to listen to the church in the Global North now, because the church and Christianity are not important in the life of people and society. Besides, it is possible to “make goodness for ourselves in this world”. Christianity is no more an interest of people and people are leaving the church because they believe that the church is wrong in many of its claims and science has proved, for example, miracles are not possible. This has happened in the post-modern world. Another area where theologians from the South see a problem is that the Age of Enlightenment supported the idea of the freedom. Now human

beings are free to make their own decisions. They do not have to belong to the church. They are free to decide whether to be a Christian or not, or to belong to a non-Christian group, or generally to be independent in any decision. This freedom provides us the next reason why people, or in this case societies, have been leaving the church in the global North. There is a separation of the church and public places. By “public places,” we mean society, politics, public institutions and so on. The main criticism at this point is that society is “sick”. This sickness demonstrates itself in that now society is free to make any decision. Now we are opening ethical questions and decisions based on reasoning rather than Biblical standards, for example, we are for human rights in homosexuality. This is seen also in the church, where now more liberal societies are saying, “Yes” to same-sex marriages or allowing gay and lesbians in the priesthood. This has happened in Sweden. Of course, there are many questions in such areas as abortion, euthanasia and so on. This is really a misuse of freedom, because we have the power in our hands to make society as we want. Theologians from the South see as a result of the separation church and society, that societies, and the church as well, in the global North are “getting more sick” because they are open to such questions as homosexuality, and this is so unbiblical.

Theologians go on in their criticism of Western theology by saying that theology has also been influenced by the Age of Enlightenment. This can be seen in critical studies of the Bible. The Bible itself is judged as any human article is. It supports the exploration of the Bible, not by God, but by human beings. As a result, theology is more speculative. The next point is that people are individualized and don't need to have fellowships. The reason is that cultures in the Global North are educated and there is no need to study the Bible in fellowships, which is emphasized in the Bible, but human beings like to study the Bible him/her-self.

The last thing is “unengaged theology”. This is also touched by the Age of Enlightenment. We have separated two things orthodoxy and orthopraxy. Western missionaries are able to talk about missions on a very high philosophical/academically level. They can provide us many important words, but how about the practical consideration of the mission? This is too complicated for missionaries because they do not know how. As we can see “unengaged theology” is more of a science debate, and as I discussed above, Enlightenment supports the idea of exploring God rationally.

This is written in general terms of how theologians have seen the global Church and Christianity, and the negative impact of the Age of Enlightenment. However, I will discuss these topics in several sub-chapters. I will start by introducing how Southern theologians see the Age of Enlightenment in the Global North Christianity and then discussing Christianity. I will analyze Yung's definition of Christianity and compare it with other theologians from the global South.

3.2. Seven characteristics of Age of Enlightenment's worldview in Northern Christendom according South theologians

Seven characteristics of the Age of Enlightenment are taken from Yung's book *Mangoes and Bananas*. Yung has described very well how Western Theology has been shaped by the Age of Enlightenment by these seven characteristics. Yung discusses things like the rationale level in Western theology, superiority of Western Theology and philosophical issues of rejections of religion. I wish to explore these points. First, I will present a line of arguments from Yung's book and his own comments from Bosh's book *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, where he is using this book as the source of writing this chapter. Then, I will take points that Yung and Bosh give their understanding of how the Age of Enlightenment shaped Western theology and how it can be dangerous for theology.

3.2.1 The Supremacy of Reason

Yung and Bosh want to express that religion is more and more discovered. People have decided to discover supernatural things as well as religion's claims. If we talk about supernatural things, for example about miracles and especially about healing of course, Western culture says that it is not possible because miracles don't work. Doctors can cure people more with science than with religion. This is the reason for rejecting these issues. We can see why this age is called the Age of Reason, because we, as people, can answer any question, and we like to discover for ourselves the exact meaning. We often prefer what has been found by scientists and accept this as the truth. The Age of Reason brings us skepticism about believing in miracles, such as healing, and in Christianity as well (Yung 1997: 44).

The next thing is that often religious claims are rejected. For example, if we take Copernicus's and Aristotle's claims about the Earth, and on other side the church claim's from the Middle Ages that the Earth is the center of the universe or the second claim was that the world is "a

swimming wood on water”. Copernicus observations demonstrated that this was not true because the center of the universe was the sun, and Aristotle demonstrated that the Earth is the sphere and not “a swimming wood on water”. So the church was cajoling to people. The supremacy of reason generated in us strong skepticism about religious claims that are not true (Yung 1997: 44-45).

So empiricism makes us in the Western culture skeptical about religion and miracles as well. Christianity must be explored empirically, because we want some witness that what is written in the Bible works. So Empiricism also shaped Western theology and now all talk about faith is on a university level, and this tends to lead to speculative theology because every theologian has different claims. Biblical truths are “rewritten”, so the main ideas of Christianity different from the Scriptures (Yung 1997: 44-45).

3.2.2 Subject-Object Dichotomy

What Yung and Bosh both say is that we connected object and subject. In theology, we can see it in critical studies of all texts in the Bible and in judging it like any human document that has been written by people. Then they ask a question as to whether these things can be really both subject and object? Meaning, can we discover and critically study the Bible and also consider the Bible as the source or channel of God’s revelation? We have two different meanings and this helps the theologian in that they are allowed to study the Bible, or in different words to “discover God”. The result is the conflict between reason and the authority of the Bible (Yung 1997: 45-46).

3.2.3 Elimination of the Idea of Purpose

Yung says here that people drop God’s purpose and Him as the first cause; instead we believe in the purpose of science. As a consequence there is no longer room for miracles or the supernatural. People think that we can explain and control everything (Yung 1997:46).

3.2.4 Optimism in Progress

Yung says here that the Age of Enlightenment also shaped missiology and work outside of the Western culture, mainly in the superiority (or dominance) of Western Theology. Western theology started to believe that it was “the theology” (Bediako 1992: 12-15) in other words, this theology is the only one and without mistakes, and therefore, Western culture must “Westernize

evangelized indigenous people” so Western values and habits were “imported”. Contextualization was forgotten. This created a problem, because without contextualization evangelized indigenous people can take on all the habits and values, but they will never understand why they do these. So, we may think that our thinking and values are same as theirs, and this is being optimistic. The reality is that these evangelized people don’t really understand us. We optimistically believe that this brings progress in evangelized societies (Yung 1997: 47). This issue will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.4.2.

3.2.5 Distinction between “Facts” and “Values”

Here Yung and Bosh say, according to theologians from the North, that “facts” are things that are proven by scientists and well-known in public places. “Values” are something private, and this is belief. So here in this context, it means that the “public” knows that, for example miracles cannot happen, and if you belief in miracles it is your personal thing that you believe in miracles, and public opinions will never convince you that is not true because it is your own personal decision that you believe in miracles (Yung 1997: 47-48).

3.2.6 All Problems are Solvable in Principle

Yung says that every unusual problem is solvable. Empiricism wants to solve all problems in the Earth which are unusual, and by using modern scientific sources, it thinks it can discover why it happened. People need to have smart arguments to explain when something strange happens, and if there is no smart argument, for example in Biblical healing, we will never believe in the miraculous (Yung 1997: 48).

3.2.7 Humans are Emancipated and Autonomous Individuals

Here Yung summarizes that: “Everyone was free to believe what he or she wished and to choose accordingly” (Yung 1997: 49). Yung’s point is that human beings are free. He says that it is up to people whether to be or not to be Christians, so they are free to make their own decisions. The second point is that people are free to choose to believe whatever they want. Because of this teaching in theology, we have many sects and cults which are able to control people, and to influence people in a very negative way causing them to become psychologically ill. A Southern theologian, Seo Bo-Myung, adds that “to have freedom and whether to belong to the church or

not is the reason for atheism” (Seo 2005: 7-8). Because now we are free to be a member or not (refer to-chapter 2.3), we can now better understand why there is a strong decline of Christians in the Western culture. Seo and Yung, both Asian theologians, see the problem with freedom of choice. This freedom tends to lead to atheism, because we can now decide to belong or not, and generally, the statistics are showing, the decisions are to not believe.

Mugambi can contribute to this last issue. He agrees with Yung and Seo, and he adds that the problem of individualism can be seen in the new technologies and in the Internet. People don't have to go to church because the Internet provides us “live TV broadcasting” (Mugambi 1995: 54) there is no need to be in community and to share things with brothers and sisters. It is better to make my own individualistic world while sitting at home. Is that Biblical?

Escobar places more emphasis on the lack of education. His point is that people in the Global North are very educated. They are more literate than the South and can read and write for themselves (Escobar 2002: 55).

3.2.8 Conclusion

These seven characteristics show us, according to theologians from the South, the negative impact of the Age of Enlightenment and how Christianity has been transformed. Yung has discussed how society was shaped by these values and how the notion of religion has been replaced by the “Age of Reason”. In the characteristics presented in points 1,2,4 and 5, Yung says that modern scientist and philosophers are able to reject religious ideas based on various empirical research and to draw conclusions that are not true, claiming that texts in Bible are false because modern research methods have not proved that those things could happen. The result is that theology must protect Biblical truth. Now there is competition between science and theology, and of course theologians do the same type of research as scientist because they want to prove their claims. They go to empiricism and explore it. Point 3 shows us that the belief in the superiority of Western culture as seen in mission work. Western culture still thinks that it is “the best culture” and without mistake. They think that all cultures must be like the West, and everything will be ok if we “import” our values, living conditions and beliefs. People are able to get used to it. It is just a matter of time. But the question still remains why they still don't understand the Gospel. Why they do they have to be like Western culture? Why do they have to

give up everything? The optimism pictured by the idea that “Western culture can redeem all” and that this will bring progress is often presented as fact, but the fact is, that their view is very different. Yung urges the continued use of contextualization of faith (See the chapter 3.4.2). Last point 7 shows us that people are free, and it is up to human beings whether we will be a believer or not. People have freedom in any decision and this has tended to result in atheism in the Global North. So the main criticism is directed toward the philosophy of materialism which has allowed science is able to reject all ideas from Christianity, and then the freedom to do or believe anything.

3.3 The negative impact the Age of Enlightenment to theology in the Global North according the Southern Theologians’ perspective

Here I wish to discuss Yung’s characterization of Western Christianity and the negative impact of Enlightenment to Western theology. In his book *Mangoes and bananas* published in 1997. Yung has characterized Christianity in the Global North. He says that he:

characterizes the Western world view as naturalistic, with the supernatural largely disregarded, as being governed by materialistic values, as being humanistic, thus making God largely irrelevant, as being rationalistic, thus rejecting anything that appears to fall outside the purview of rigorous rational analyzes, and as individualistic (Yung 1997: 3).

I wish to analyze this definition and to discuss it more. My plan is to split out this chapter to sub-chapters. I will discuss the rationale level, where I will proclaim that theology in the Global North is a more “scholarly exploration of God” which means that Northern theology is based on scholastic claims, so theology is closed at the university level and is more speculative. The next point is that the North is less community oriented, where I will be discussing why Christianity in the Global North is individualized. I will be discussing the philosophical way of materialism, and the main point is that this philosophical way is a separation between ideas and matter, where matter is more preferred than ideas. In other words, people have to see or to touch things, and if this is not possible, they won’t believe, because people need more than just ideas or words to believe.

In addition, Bosh also provides his critical view of the negative impact of the Age of Enlightenment. He has written some characteristics but most of them are similar. His points are: “science, growing neo-paganism, atheism, secularism, unbelief, superstition, pluralism, dividing

poor vs. rich, and separation church and state” (Bosh 1991: 265-267). Because Bosh is a Northern scholar, I would prefer South theologians rather than Northerners because this chapter is not from Northern eyes but from Southern eyes points of view. I will examine his characteristics of the global North in a few sub-chapters.

3.3.1 Rationale level

I would like first to use Yung’s arguments as to how theology was shaped in the Global North through the philosophy of Rene Descartes, and its negative impact on Western Theology. Yung (1997:4-5) begins with the European rationalist philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries like Rene Descartes and Baruch Spinoza, and others who were basically concerned with affirming the rationality of the universe and the ability of reason to grasp it. Behind the complexity of nature was a rational mind that could be understood through the proper use of reason. They were not ultimately concerned with debunking faith in God. But wittingly or unwittingly, some of their ideas, taken together with those of some others traditions like Deism, have paved the way for rationalism, which, understood in the narrower sense, is the attempt to judge everything in light of reason. When reason is completed, it will have disposed of the supernatural, and we will be left with nothing but nature and facts.

Then Yung (1997: 5) goes on describing various philosophers: Descartes, generally considered to be the founder of modern philosophy, obviously is the most important of the rationalist. His philosophy starts with the resolve to reject as false anything whose existence can in anyway be doubted. Thus he posited his famous *Cogito, ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am). The net result of this is that, whether or not he is indeed guilty, Descartes has been often perceived as the one who led the shift to making the individual self-consciousness the final criterion of truth in philosophy. Descartes paves the way for making the relevance of the knowing self the center of thought. This focus on the individual self-consciousness is what characterizes modern (in contrast to conservative) or Cartesian theology, which includes those of Lessing, Schleiermacher, Bultmann and Tillich. The dominant interest is on the addressee of the kerygma, the one who is to appropriate it. Whereas before the so-called modern period, theology was not focused on the individual addressed, the conditions of credibility or the understandability of the message, all that has changed. In Cartesian theology a general and pre-Christian self-understanding of man is a separate theme, which must be dealt with before the theological agenda is tackled. Since these

matters concern man's general situation, since they are pre-theological...the implied existential analysis can be left to secular philosophy. Bultmann and Tillich and their predecessors all have philosophical sponsors. Even when theologians do the analysis on their own, like Schleiermacher, they stress the fact that they have no privileges as believers but are in solidarity and make its own secular self-consciousness plain to these men without the aid of revelation.

Then Yung (1997: 5) concludes in this discussion about philosophers: stating that the problem with this is that theology is henceforth reduced to anthropology as the prior condition of credibility and approbation, derived from analysis of the human self-consciousness. This effectively filters out parts of the kerygmatic content. Thus despite protestation of openness, the autonomy of the addressee in Cartesian theology ends up regulating the kerygma and limiting what one is prepared to receive instead. Here we see the final consequence on theology of the shift set in motion by Descartes emphasizes on the individual self-consciousness as the final criterion for truth. What began as an emphasis on the proper use of reason to understand a rational universe ended up in the elevation of instrumental theoretical reason into an autonomous principle by which the Christian message is judged. Inevitably, skepticism ensues.

Then Yung (1997: 6) looks at Empiricism and notes that a second point of Enlightenment thought that has contributed to the skepticism in Western theology is the impact of empiricism, which is the view that the sole source of knowledge comes from sense perception. It arose in part out of the reaction to philosophical rationalism, and its belief that reason was the basis of certain knowledge. Empiricism leads to skepticism concerning the human self, the denial of causation, the rejection of miracles and religious beliefs in general.

Those were the line of arguments from Yung, and now I would like to present what is important from those arguments. He says that philosophy and the science have influenced Western type of thinking and theology as well. People started thinking skeptically about concepts in the Age of Enlightenment. For example, if we have miracles like healing or prophecy and other miracles, people cannot accept these things because people look at concepts very critically, and skepticism tends to empiricism. This means, for this purpose, that we want to find out some result, and to say this is not true because empiricism helps to support the idea of exploration of many things (Yung 1997: 3).

Northern thinking is based too much on the “scientific or rationale level”. Everything is based on reason. Human beings are looking for the truth and then to be able to say whether something is true or false (Yung 1997: 48). Now science or natural sciences, like archeology and physics have more truth and people believe them because they are more trusted and understandable. For example, in the area of archeology, we want to look for some things in Israel. Just imagine that we want to find a piece of the original manuscripts of the Bible. People have to find those old papers somewhere in Israel and to observe according special research criteria when this paper was written (McGrath 2007: 321-322). Words are nothing now, people have to touch and then they can believe. In physics, we can see it in the questions of the creation. Christians say that God made it, but physicists say that the Big-Bang made it. People decided to explore the truth through physics and trust their theories more because they are “physical and measurable” and more understandable. But the question is, “Are not their theories just a guess?” All scientists are not sure in this point. This is a negative impact of the Age of Enlightenment that people need to have real evidence, and then they can believe in God. This is always challenging for theology to fight with different sciences.

This scientific or rationale thinking is also involved in Christianity and theology in the Global North. Theology in the Global North is indeed based on science or rationale thinking because the Bible is being studied through critical eyes. Theologians, or scholars in Theology, have written many books about Christianity, the Bible and doctrines. We see that many scholars have written different opinions, for example of one Bible verse, and then we are confused as to what the meaning really is. This tends to result in speculative theology. This is evidence that theology is now based on discussions between theologians, and it is always challenging to find the general truth and really tends to generate speculation of texts. There are always agreements and disagreements between various theologians. They judge the Bible as if it were a normal human document and not a channel of communication between God and people. Generally, critically studying the Bible on a rationale level is the major criticism, and this is a negative impact of the Age of Enlightenment in the view of Southern theologians (Yung 1997: 8-20). Rationale level thinking started skepticism in religious questions. We have seen that, first, the natural sciences reject many religious claims, and second, that rational thinking has led to studying the Bible critically. Why is it like this? Of course that is a result of the Age of Enlightenment, which supports the exploring of everything, but Yung adds a very interesting analysis of the thinking in

the Global North and can answer the question as to why rationale thinking dominates Northern theology and society.

The North is very often critical and skeptical in their analysis of miracles. Yung concludes that “[concerning] the question of veracity of reported miracles, the Western mind focuses on critical conceptual and analytic issues like asking the question: ‘How can miracles be possible in a scientific age?’ The whole Global South minds are likely to ask: ‘Can I trust the person who reported, witnessed and told me of the miracle’ thus focusing on the relationship between the teller and the listener” (Yung 1997: 80). So the North often is skeptical in their thinking. This skepticism is based on concepts and trying to look for scientifically based arguments which have been done by scholars. If we say that miracles are possible, the North only takes the concept of “miracles” from this statement. They analyze it in their minds and find, in their mind, that this never happened, because we don’t have any evidence of miracles, so of course he would likely say: “Miracles don’t exist because we haven’t seen one.” Or he could use a philosophical argument. We can see, in this case, he combines the concept with his personal experience, which is also his primary source of thinking, and concludes that miracles must not exist. In contrast, the thinking of the South is based on relationships between people because people in the South don’t look at concepts, but asks: “Do you believe in miracles?” He or she could say “How could I trust a person who I don’t know very well?” This is a difference between the South and the North. The rejection in the Western culture comes from their thought process, which is shaped by the Age of Enlightenment (Yung 1997: 80).

Now I would like to present some cases or examples where the Northern theology rejects Biblical truths on an intellectual level. Let us start by discussing healing. If I hear this word in my mind (as a Westerner), with many people around me, I think of healing belonging only in hospitals or medical care centers where doctors are able to help us cure our body when we are sick and to help us become well in the next few days. Or I may think of a psychologist helping to heal our minds through counseling or talking. I see many medical centers around me where I can be cured. My point is that health centers “cure” me and there is no other way. (People in the Global North would agree with this.). So, in my own words, I believe that the secular places help me to get well because I have witnessed it with my own eyes that the scientific healing process works. If I follow it, then I will be well again. I have grown-up in the North, and Christianity in the North

has “little room” for questions on healing. The Global South sees this differently. Theologians who are from the North have problems noticing that Christianity provides healing. Many priests in the global North don’t have any interest in healing because they are educated on the basis that everything about healing is in the hands of doctors (typical thinking in the North), where scientific sources can help more than Christianity. Priests are very often scared if they hear the world healing, and often can find scholars, as well as Christian writers, who present arguments against and reject “Christian healing” (Escobar 2002: 86). Escobar points out that healing is rejected in some churches and there has been a decrease in the ministry of healing.

African theologians view healing differently. While there is little room for a healing ministry in the North, African theologians are often complaining that there is a misunderstanding of healing. In Northern eyes healing is affected on a scientific level, which, of course, is a result of the thinking from the Age of Enlightenment. It is something that medical doctors or psychologists provide, curing your body and your mind. Doctors in the Global North, of course can read the Bible and find verses where Jesus healed many sick people with different illness, but healing is more than just healing your body and your mind. In view of the South exorcism is also healing. In Africa they believe that you are sick because the Beast eats you inside, because you said or did something wrong against God. The main misunderstanding of Jesus ministry is that: “Jesus also healed the society in fighting for peace and against injustice” (Schreiter 1992: 130). We have many stories where Jesus directly was healing society’s conflicts between people or communities, for example Jesus and Pharisees (Schreiter 1992: 130). Adolf Novotný says in his Bible dictionary about the Pharisees that the Pharisees were a Jewish social group whose thinking was based on “Pentateuch” (The first five books in the Old Testament – the books of Moses). They took the Law very seriously, and were always criticizing anything that was not according the Law. The differences between Jesus and the Pharisees were: cultic purity (here it means to purify that without sins), Sabbath (people could not work on Saturdays) and divorces. Pharisees could not sit at a table with people who were not purified, because they were sinners. But Jesus often sat with sinners and was criticized by Pharisees for doing so. (An example in healing can be found in Matthew 9:2-7 or in the Gospel of Luke 5:17-26) (Novotný 1956: 169). “Jesus also healed minds in society where there were conflicts either between individuals or communities. We can see that Jesus was not only ministered like a “medical doctor” but also like a “mediator”

and exorcist between people” (Schreiter 1992: 130). Those two examples provide us with pictures of miracles, which are looked at very skeptically in the eyes of the West.

Scholars and scientist, on a rationale level, can very easily influence people in their thinking. As a result the global North says that the Bible is fallible in the area of healing ministry and thus generally look at healing in Christianity with skepticism. The truth is that Christianity must be involved in the ministry of healing; however, we can see how rational thinking can lead us to reject a basic biblical truth.

To summarize, human beings often are looking for the truth in science because it is more trusted. As a result of the Age of Enlightenment, rationale thinking has had a strong influence on theology in the Global North. The main criticism is their critical analysis of the Bible. The Bible is no longer treated as the channel between God and people but something to be discussed between scholars. This is very dangerous for theology, because then the written texts in the Bible have lost their obvious meanings. We can be confused by the many different findings of various scholars and no longer know what is relevant. Preaching and theology become speculative and wander away from the main point of the Bible. The emphasis on rationale thinking has started to lead theology and people into asking first whether it is true or false. To determine this, we are supposed to explore something first and then make a final decision.

3.3.2 Individualism

In continuing his definition about the Western theology, Yung says that they are “...valuing individualism and independence above community and group-identity” (Yung 1997: 3). So Yung’s understanding is that people in Global North Christianity are less likely to share anything among themselves. If we compare this with the Global South, as I discussed in the last chapter, there is a very strong community life, and people are able to do and make many things together. For example, they are able to fight for the human rights and support one another especially in the family. His point is that people in the Global North make many hard decisions without any talking with the family members. So they do everything themselves, and it is up to them what they would do in every hard situation (Yung 1997: 82-83). So they have freedom in the individual choices.

Escobar sees individualism differently. His views are similar to Yung, but where Yung describes more cultural values Escobar places more emphasis on the lack of education. His point is that people in the Global North are very educated. They are more literate than the South and can read and write for themselves (Escobar 2002: 55). He says that due to individualism in Northern Christianity, people in the North like to read the Bible for themselves. They are literate and there is a rejection of group reading of the Bible. Yung is right that the group-oriented community is missing (Yung 1997: 3). Here these authors say that Western congregations don't meet very often, because people can read the Bible for themselves and there is no need to meet. Of course there are some fellowships, but people only come "time to time".

The next point about individualism is taken from Mugambi. He agrees with Escobar and Yung and adds that Christians often are challenged by new communication technologies. For example, we can see services for free on the Internet and television or listen on the radio without going to church and asking for forgiveness. The result is a strong rejection of community-oriented groups (Mugambi 1995: 60).

Mugambi believes "Individualism" generally speaking looks unbiblical, because, according the Bible, "We are not to give up meeting together" (Hebrews 10:25 NIV) (also read Matthew 18:20). God calls us to fellowships and to be together with other people for Bible reading and asking for forgiveness. There is no place in the Bible where we are told we can read the Bible alone. This is why there are fewer fellowships in the global North than in the South, because people are able to read the Bible for themselves (Mugambi 1995: 60).

Missions also come under criticism. From the Southern point-of-view, Christians in the North can decide whether or not to go on a mission because each individual is autonomous and can decide to go or not to go on a mission (Yung 1997: 48). We have many offers to preach the Gospel anywhere, and we would be supported. Yung claims this means that everything is up to us. Escobar sees this problem as being unbiblical. He says that because we have the Great Commission (read Matt. 28:19-20), it is our obligation to preach the Gospel to anyone who has never heard. It is not up to us whether to go or not to go on a mission (Escobar 2002: 168). Escobar and Yung are right in that the philosophy of individualism leaves everything up to us. We don't want to listen and to obey God as much, and we make our own way. This problem of individualism and making any decision by yourself is generally dangerous theology. So

according Yung, individualism is very dangerous because it gives freedom and has led to a decrease interest in Christianity in the global North.

There are many arguments on individualism and about individualism, which I have already discussed in the chapter 3.2.7, but the main criticism from a Southern perspective, is that individualism in theology, and for people in general, is dangerous. The main thing is that we can do everything our self. We have the freedom in making decisions. It means that “I” determine what is good or bad just for me. We justify why people are not Christians, or just belonging not believing, because it is her/his individual decision. Yung also believes that individualism leads to atheism, because now we are free in any decision of belonging. The next point is that we can make our own “Christianity” (or religion) believing things that are wrong and/or unbiblical. Individualism in the freedom to make our own decisions is dangerous (Yung 1997: 49).

3.3.3 Materialism

Yung continues, “The Age of Enlightenment brings us materialism and is very strong in rejecting supernatural” (Yung 1997: 3). “supernatural” and “materialism” need to be defined first. “Supernatural” in Yung’s understanding is: believing in spirit worlds, God, healing, demons and angels, or something “magical” which is described in the Bible. On the other side, “materialism” comes from Latin word *materia* and is substance or matter. It is a philosophy, which prefers substance before ideas. So substance is preferred and ideas are in second place (Yung 1997: 3).

Because the Age of Enlightenment relies on reason, we see that we are again in the scientific world. As I have already mentioned, the Global North adheres to materialism, which is all about what we can touch or not touch. The supernatural, in this case, is rejected because, according materialism, we cannot believe something that cannot be explored by scholars. We don’t have any witnesses of the spirit world, God, angels and demons. They are just ideas or written texts, not material. We cannot touch, taste, smell, see or hear them. Since materialism deals the material things all things around us, it concludes that God and all supernatural beings and miracles don’t exist or don’t work, thus Christianity is fallible.

3.4 In mission work the Global North has not respected cultures of the Global South

In the following subchapters I will discuss mission work in the Global South by the Global North and the negative impact of understanding Christianity through missions from the Global North to the Global South from the perspective of theologians from the Global South. I will start the discussion with the anthropological approach as viewed by theologians of the Global South. Is there any validity to an anthropological approach to mission strategy and whether anthropological principles have any value in evangelization or has the emphasis on anthropological science merely been an emphasis stemming from the Age of Enlightenment. Secondly I will discuss Bible translation and whether terms are interchangeable between cultures, western cultures in particular. Thirdly, I will discuss contextualization as it pertains to the concerns of southern theologians who consider that communication of the Gospel to local cultures from western missionaries is attempted without consideration of indigenous vocabulary and idioms. It is often as though they were speaking westerner to westerner, inadvertently trying to transform the local culture to western values, traditions and beliefs without respecting the local way of life in natural settings.

3.4.1 Mission at anthropological and linguistic levels

Missions from the Global North are at the anthropological and linguistic level (Escobar 2002 17-18). Anthropology is a social science based on ethnographic research. According to Bryman, a sociologist, it is: “a research method in which the researcher immerses him or herself in a social setting for an extended period of time, observing behavior, listening to what is said in conversation” (Bryman 2008: 693). We can summarize Escobar by saying that it is the observation of people or a specific culture where researchers (in these case missionaries) observe the behavior of people, listening to what they say and observing what they do in their natural setting (Escobar 2002: 17). Both authors show us similar definitions. Linguistics generally is concerned with the scientific study of language. In this case, a prime function of the missionary is learning the indigenous language, putting it in written form where necessary, and then translating Scripture into that language (Escobar 2002: 83). I will discuss this conflict in missions, to determine whether Escobar’s critique is relevant.

Anthropological level

Hiebert says that “every culture must first be studied and then evangelized”. This is my own summary of his article, *Gospel and Culture*, published in 1985. He expresses that missions should start by understanding the culture and then evangelizing it. Hiebert seems to say that first research should be done on a scientific level or merely participate as an observer on the mission field for a few years just as observers, doing basic language study, taking notes and developing an elemental dictionary. This observation can probably take a number of years. But this raises a question, “when does conversion begin?” Escobar argues that “missions must be about conversion” (Escobar 2002: 17). Are we there as missionaries or just observers? At this point we can move on to the critique provided by Escobar. Escobar claims that missions started being more of a sociological movement where conversion was hidden by anthropology and linguistics (Escobar 2002: 17). So Escobar states that missions to the Global South from the Global North nowadays is more of a science, and he claims this was shaped by the Age of Enlightenment. To the missionaries from the Global North, as a result of the Age of Enlightenment, rational observation comes before conversion (Yung 1997: 3). Indeed missions became based more on a scientific level and less on a Biblical level because of the Age of Enlightenment. (Yung 1997: 23) Missions are observed on an anthropological or a sociological level (Escobar 2002: 18, 167), and in Escobar’s eyes, this is not a good way to evangelize people because sociology does not convert people to Christ, the Spirit of God does; theology should stand in first position.

Anthropology can be summarized by saying that it is observing people, what they do in specific situations, or how they behave in their natural setting. On an anthropological level, the specific goal is to observe behavior in a natural setting. Escobar’s point here is to show that anthropology should not be emphasized so much in missions. Escobar points out that anthropology is a social science, and just shows us the outside things of people in the society, that is, what they say and do in a natural setting. But Escobar points out that an anthropological system cannot touch beliefs and what people feel inside their soul. He says that missions cannot be about looking at what people do, from which social group they come and specific behaviors (Escobar 2002: 82-83). What is important to say here is that the work of conversion is the work of the Holy Spirit, who is able to touch inside the souls of people and transform them. In this, sociology cannot explain their emotions and cannot explain what is going on when the Holy Spirit comes into their hearts.

Sociology can just explain that people received gifts and are speaking in tongues (Escobar 2002: 83). Escobar can ask an anthropologist as to whether his science is biblically based? Can science help the process of conversion? (Escobar 2002: 83-84).

There is a disagreement between Escobar and Yung, both southern theologians, in using anthropology in missions. Yung claims that in conversion, we should look at how people live in the specific socio-economic-political situation. Yung says that we should observe these cultures and look for relevant Bible texts that can help the specific culture to reconcile with God about specific problems. So Yung's anthropological methods should be used together with the Bible (Yung 1997: 65). Yung points out ideas which come from anthropology. We should look for specific problems in the society and then use these to evangelize. While it looks like Escobar is not right in some points, he is right in that in anthropology there is no place for conversion by just observing a specific culture and its behavior. But according to Yung we must look for the problems. When we identify the problems in a society, we will understand it better, and find relevant texts in the Bible relating to these problems.

Linguistic level

Escobar, in his book *Changing Tides*, published in 2002, says that a mission based only on linguistics is not good for the mission. Then he continues that when the Bible is translated, terms are used from a western point of view and not from the point of view of the specific culture (Escobar 2002: 168). For example, just imagine that people who live somewhere in Africa, say in Sahara, actually do not know what palm trees are. So the word must be replaced with fig trees because people know what they are (Shreiter 1997:100). So the language of the Bible must be adjusted and I would say that this is positive view for Global North missions, to translate in terms familiar to the local people and language group, and not from the point-of-view of the missionaries from the Global North (Escobar 2002: 168). It is not my intension to say that such a Bible translation from the missionaries from the Global North, is bad for the indigenous people because as Bolaji Idowu says, "we (southerners) are satisfied that we got the Bible translated into our own language, because it is like a gift from God, but we also need it in our terms." (Bediako 1992: 303). Idowu is in agreement with Escobar from an African point-of-view. Escobar believes that in translating the Gospel into a native language, one must use terms specific to that culture, and that the Biblical meaning is maintained this way (Escobar 2002: 5). Bediako adds

that we need a translation by people that come from the native culture. The ideal translation would be from the original languages to the native language, but the reality is that we have translations from the original languages through a western language to the native language and there are many terms which are foreign for us (Bediako 1992: 124).

The central point is that missions, at the linguistic level, must consider the culture. Missionaries first learn the language and try to establish a book of this language. This process takes a long time. It is not my intension here to criticize the western approach, because it is Biblically based, but to say that a linguistic approach, based on terms which are not used by the people, is not right, because the people don't use the same terms as we use in our western culture. The communication of the Gospel must be in the same words being used by the specific culture and not terms used by our western theology. This is the central point of all Global South theologians as they criticize this point.

We have seen an interesting discussion between Escobar and Yung. Escobar rejects anthropology. He connects it with social sciences, and he proclaims that social science cannot evangelize people. Sociology just describes how institutions work and can describe the social classes. Theology can describe what goes on inside the souls of believers. On the other side, Yung agrees with observing people. He says that is very important to understand how people live in the specific socio-economic-political situations and then look for relevant verses in the Bible where God touches on the specific situations. So here is a bit conflict between these authors. Concerning the linguistic level, there is not as much criticism from the Global South, because they appreciate that they now have Bibles in their native languages. The problem is that often the "native words" were missing. In other words, the Bible must be translated into specific terms for every culture. I will discuss later about the Age of Enlightenment's negative impact on the western church.

3.4.2 Contextualization was forgotten in the Global North

Contextualization is a term used in theology. Contextualization in my own words can be summarized as adaptation, translation and accommodation of faith to the local context (to local culture). My own definition is not very strong, so I will discuss contextualization from many views in the next paragraphs. Yung says that "it is a reaction to anti-colonialism" (Yung 1997:

62). The problem, as presented in this chapter, lies in the Western missionary speaking in their own context (I have already discussed this in chapter 2.2) like “Westerner to Westerner” and don’t use local terms specific to the culture they were sent to (Yung 1997: 62). In this chapter, I wish to examine what exactly contextualization is according theologians from the South using a few definitions and then to critique why contextualization was forgotten in Global North missionary outreaches, and its contribution to theology in general terms. This chapter is the reaction to chapter 2.2 where people gave up their habits and cultural traditions. Contextualization can be one of the solutions and contributions to respecting people of other cultures.

Escobar describes contextualization like this:

Contextualization, in theology terms, refers to the way in which the text of the Bible or Christian theology is understood within its own cultural and historical context. Also it can be understood in a more general way as a movement that seeks to affirm local cultures in their own search of their autonomy and full expression” (Escobar 2003: 60-61).

So contextualization, for Escobar, is allowing a specific culture to shape their faith, in this case Christianity, in their own terms, or, in other words, translation of their faith in their own culture’s terms.

African and Asian writers view contextualization from a different perspective. It is not just a matter of words and grammar but cultural concepts and images must be considered. The methods and what makes sense in their culture cannot be ignored. They cannot deal with European issues but those that are relevant to their culture. How are concepts traditionally expressed? Is it narrative or in a story-telling format? It must be relevant to the African or Asian Christian community represented. It must be expressed in terms of practical theology in which the Christian community at large participates; it must require local Christian commitment and involvement (Yung 1997: 12).

Yung thinks that though contextualization is a buzz word of the day, we cannot discard it. The Word is alive and active, affecting not only our spiritual lives but our physical wellbeing as well. We also hear of indigenization but that term is more limited in scope than the more encompassing contextualization. Indigenization focuses more on relating the Gospel to a single culture. Contextualization, on the other hand, considers a more complex array of life concerns in the third

world such as the role of advancing secularism, technology and the cry for human justice. If contextualization is to become a central issue in a real theological reflection then it must influence missions, theology, education, and the way the local church is structured (Yung 1997: 13).

This definition wants to express the same things as the last few before, but it adds that contextualization is also about what we as missionaries observe about people, how they live and what they need. For example, people are oppressed from dictators. We then look for relevant verses in the Bible for this situation, for example, from the Old Testament, Exodus, and from the New Testament, the cross of the Christ and his victory over the Beast. These stories are discussed in the chapter 2.7. Here we see an example of how the Church, Christ and the Bible can fight for the human rights. This is also is a demonstration of the contextualization of faith and how the Bible can provide answers concerning injustice in the World.

Yung summarizes and defines our few definitions about the contextualization like this:

It is the total process wherein reflection and action are combined as the indigenous church, having properly grasped the meaning of the Gospel of Christ from within its own culture and sociopolitical and economic realities, seeks, on the one hand to live out its new faith in accord with the cultural patterns of the local society and, on the other hand, to transform that society and individuals therein, in response to their felt needs under the guidance of the Christian Scriptures and the Holy Spirit (Yung 1997: 13-14).

In summary: contextualization is that the message of gospel must be translated into local terms and its own expressions telling how Christ, or the Bible in general, can help people to answer or to resolve a specific socio-economic-political situation (for example in injustice). It is up to the culture, and not the missionaries, to shape their faith and determine how they can resolve the conflict themselves. Contextualization must be everywhere in missions. Not trying to change the culture, but to “keep up” with specific cultural patterns and to add something new. I am touching on the second problem here, which, generally speaking, is the next point of criticism of Western Theology. The criticism here is the fact that contextualization was forgotten by the missionaries’ endeavors during the colonial age (as I described it in the chapter 2.2). I will try to touch on this point in the next paragraph.

In the second chapter introducing the Global South Christianity, I wrote a section criticizing missionary history and the negative impact of colonization in the Global South Christianity. Theologians from the Global South stated that colonization “imported” to the Global South

values, beliefs, ethics and religion of the Western world. People were evangelized in a way “from Westerners to Westerners”, or in different words, people from Global South had to get used to learning entirely new values and beliefs along with Christianity.

They destroyed their cultures, destroyed specific values and beliefs of the various cultures and radically changed people by forcing the Western culture on them. The Global South had to accommodate their values to the Westerners. A lot of pressure was applied to transform their culture into a Western cultural. In the areas of Christianity and evangelization, they were transformed into Westerners because Westerners proclaimed that our culture is the top one and we can help you. Here contextualization was forgotten and contextualization itself had an anti-colonial voice. Contextualization doesn't oppress cultures but helps that cultures translate or bring about the incarnation of the message of the Gospel in the local terms. The example of Christ in the Bible can help reconcile injustices in the specific cultures.

The next point from Southern theologians is also to say and to encourage contextualization of faith to anyone who is going to serve as a missionary. Please pay attention now: preaching the Gospel, not from a missionary's (or our) eyes, but from eyes of the culture in which they are serving. This is challenging nowadays and can be very difficult, but this is contextualization. Contextualization cannot be forgotten and is an effective way to convert people to Christ. It provides a better understanding of Christ in their own local context and helps them deal with the injustices they experience.

Contextualization in general terms is a contribution to theology from the Global South, because South theologians believe it is important for the spreading of the Gospel. Christ's mission and His message need to be contextualized. This is not just for evangelizing people from developed countries, but this is valid also for different social groups who lived in our Western culture. There are many different social groups that have different values, beliefs and so on than our own. This is a good place to contextualize Christianity and connect it with their natural social setting. Then the message will be listened to. This is same situation Paul speaks to in the Bible where he had to contextualize Christianity as he connected Christianity with philosophical thinking. This is an example of contextualization, if we want to have evidence from the Bible. This story can be used as an example of contextualization to different cultures in every part of the world.

3.5 Church and society are privatized

Church is more privatized in the Global North. What is meant by being privatized? The church no longer has a strong voice in public affairs. The economy, schools, policy and the family all belong in the public arena. If the church in Europe has something to say in the public sphere, it doesn't have much influence on public opinion. If we look at church history, the church in Europe used to have a strong influence in the public sphere. There are many stories from the Middle Ages relating to the church's influence. The French revolution changed that. The church has lost its influence in the public sphere. A new term, used in the separation of the church and its influence on society is taken from the Age of Enlightenment, is "secularism" (I will explain this term later in more detailed). I wish to explore this problem of the privatization of the church and society in this chapter. I will start with the historical background, and then examine the connection between the church and society found in early Christianity. Then I will discuss how the separation started with the French Revolution and the Age of Enlightenment, and finally discuss the negative impact of this separation to the Global North, from the viewpoint of the Southern theologians.

Tony Lane says about connection of the church and state: "The idea connecting the church and society using this term has its grassroots in Christianity. Augustine, who was the bishop in Hippo (he was called sometimes "Augustine of Hippo"), the greatest Christian theologian since the apostles and the Father of the Western church, lived 350-430" (Lane 2006: 47). He wrote his longest work *The City of God* where in the second part he discusses the idea of the church and society. Lane says about this second part:

Augustine traces the course, from creation to eternity of two different cities or societies: the city of God and the city of Satan, the heavenly and the earthly city, Jerusalem and Babylon. These are not two rival nations, nor two organization (such as the church and the state) but two groups of people. They are marked by two different loves: the love of God versus the love of self, the love of eternal versus love of temporal things (Lane 2006: 53).

Augustine says that we have two worlds: one is the world of God led by God's love and the second is "the public sphere" (my own translation) these worlds don't fight each other but should influence themselves in opinions. So for our purposes, it means that the church and society, or the church and public sphere, should work together to fight for better social conditions and for

“human rights” together (Lane 2006: 53). Augustine wrote to this point in *The City of God* 14.28-15.2 in Lane`s book:

Two cities have been formed by two loves: the earthly city by the love of self, leading to contempt of God and the heavenly city by the love of God, leading to contempt of self. The former glories in itself, the latter in the Lord....In the one city, the rulers and the nation that it subdues are ruled by the love of ruling, in the other city, rulers and subjects serve one another in love- the subjects by obeying, the rulers by caring for all...These two cities are two communities of men. One is predestinated to reign eternally with God, the other to suffer eternal punishment with the devil...Citizens are born into the earthly city by a nature spoiled by sin but they are born into the heavenly city by grace freeing nature from sin (Lane 2006: 53).

In the next paragraph I want to look at church history and to show exactly where this separation started, or in other words, when the church lost its influence on society The idea of separation between the church and state in Europe started with the French Revolution (1789-1799). The first aim of this revolution was to reject the French king because he ruled in absolutism by divine right, this term means that the king had unlimited power. What the king said must be respected and followed. If the people did not, they were killed or imprisoned. The second aim of the French Revolution was the elimination of the classes in society. At this time the society was divided into two levels or classes. The “first level” was “privileged”, first the clergy and second the aristocracy (around two percent of the general population). They had political power, did not have to pay taxes and had unlimited business work. The “second level” was un-privileged peasants and craftsman (around 89 percent of population). They had to pay taxes, had limited business work, and no political power. In addition, there were poor people. People in the first level lived in very rich conditions and had many estates. Those in the second level lived in very poor conditions, and the price of a meal was increasing very rapidly (Kováčka 2000: 209).

Another reason why people wanted to “put a stop to religion to public life” was that people were very fed up with seeing many religious conflicts like “the 100 Years War”, or “Anti-reformation” (both between Catholics and Protestants), and also fighting for the Spanish throne. These conflicts were very cruel and bloody and did not bring the victory but a lot of losses. People lived in constant fear and wanted it to stop (Valčo 2009: 83).

Historically there has been a relation between society and the church. Those two points show us that religions leaders were in the “privileged” population, were very rich and owned too many estates. People hated them because they wanted equality. The second point is that people were

fed up with the blood conflicts and wanted them to stop because they did not have any positive results. Here we see how the idea of separation started. This look into history shows why the French revolution started putting boundaries between society and the church. The church lost its influence in the public sphere. “The French revolution said to religion stop taking care of people!” (Kovačka 2000: 212)

In this postmodern time, the separation between the church and society is called “secularization”. This term is derived from the Latin word *sekularis* and means “to chop”, to “cut off”. For our text, it means “worldly rather than spiritual” in other words “disconnections between the church and society” (Latin dictionary 2012). The Age of Enlightenment gave us the term “secularization” which means for our purpose “not connected to church” (Valčo 2009: 83) “Secularization is the process of not being involved in society, which goes to deism. (Deism is a theology that says that “God had come and then he left us when he created the world) and deism tends to atheism” (Valčo 2009: 83). So here we see that the age of the Enlightenment started separating society and the church. We are discussing here the theory of secularization dealing with the separation between public places and the church. José Casanova can help us to understand “secularization”. Casanova points out that: “the process of secularization would bring in its wake the progressive shrinkage and decline of religion” (Casanova 1994: 20) and, he continues, “the process of secularization would bring in its wake privatization and, some added, marginalization in the modern era” (Casanova 1994: 20). The term “secularization” means, in short, separation between the church and society where society or public institutions do not have any interest in religion and religion no longer has influence in society or public places.

What is the status of secularization now in the Global North? The relation between the church and society is described very well in Demerath’s book *The Crossing the Gods: World Religions and Worldly Politics*. In his book, he discusses the relationship between church and society. He provides us with case studies in different countries, not only in the Christian context but also in Islam, Buddhism and Shintoism. He starts his book with the question “Why is religion interested in the public sphere”? His answer is “because governments provide to religion mainly money as supporters and also is looking for the political power” (Demerath 2003: 2-3). And the second question is “Why the public sphere is interested in religion?” He answers “because religion provides to politics morality and in the sense of that they are against abortion, widespread

poverty, peacemakers. Providing social agenda and no poorness” (Demerath 2003: 3). In Demerath’s book we can see why religion is interested in the public sphere, because it provides money or the financial support for the church and the public sector is mainly interested in the social agenda of the church. The ideas from Augustine of the connection between the church and state has a different meaning then than now. It is still about money, and if the budgets of the states are low then it tends toward separation. Then the church has to make money itself. So the first reason why the church turns to secularization is the financial support. This conclusion is provided by a critic from the Global North, and should be respected, even though this comes from a Northern perspective. But our purpose is to look at secularization from the global South’s perspective.

Connecting my arguments from the previous chapters, there are first historical rejections. People often look back before the French revolution and claim that “Christianity is very rich and they have never helped me yet.” Other voices look at history and say that Christianity has had many faults, for example they were involved in many conflicts such as Anti-reformation in Europe, crusaders in Israel and so on so. People believe that Christianity is violent and not “peace makers” as Christians claim (Mugambi 1995: 60). These are just some of the historical rejections giving reasons why religion tends to privatization.

The second reason why religion is rejected by society is based on philosophical and scientific arguments. I have discussed this topic already, so I will just summarize it here. The philosophy of materialism prefers matter rather than ideas. This philosophy separates matter and ideas. Ideas are secondary and belong to religion. Ideas are nothing now! In the contemporary world, people need to be able to touch or measure it, and if this is not possible they will never accept it. They reject miracles or the “supernatural” because there is no “evidence” to support them (Yung 1997: 3). This thinking is connected with modern science where religious claims are not accepted. A scientist will provide us with a different responds to the creation, healing and so on. It is trusted more, and then Christianity is challenged. If science can explain “strange situations”, this creates skepticism in miracles, creation and so on (Yung 1997: 3, 82-83). So science and philosophy have claimed that religion is always lying to people and then Christianity is not to be trusted in society or public places.

Finally, there is the problem of freedom. Society now has more freedom in making any decisions without any influence of anyone (Yung 1997: 48-49). This means that people who have power (such as politicians, kings etc.) can decide freely to say strongly “NO!” to religion, and then the separation between the church and society begins. As we can see Southern theologians see the problem of the separation not just in the financial support as Demerath stated, but in the Age of Enlightenment. Now I would like to discuss what happens when separation occurs in the global North.

Mugambi states that “the society falls down to liberalism” (Liberalism means to live “free” and be equal among people and to have freedom to make individual decisions) and then society starts resolving “very strange” new ethical issues without the church’s input. (Mugambi 1995: 61-62). For example society doesn’t have any problem talking about homosexuality, abortions, using “soft” drugs (as marihuana, ecstasy etc.), and so on. Now people are free to decide to say something without taking personal responsibility, to say that this is good for people and we have to accept it. The church is not allowed to respond. Its input is now rejected, so it cannot influence any decisions in society and is not allowed to challenge society in any decisions². Southern theologians believe that liberalism is like a living hell on the Earth now. It is the result of the Age of Enlightenment, where society has the freedom to make any decision (Yung 1997: 49).

This has resulted in the separation of the church and society. People think now that it is better to not listen to the church. After several years they will find out that the church is needed in the society because the society needs to have some kind of control which will hold society accountable for its actions (Mugambi 1995: 61). I will discuss more about liberalism in chapter 3.7.

3.6 Unengaged Theology

Yung starts his critique by saying that “Western Theology is an unengaged theology” (Yung 1997: 8). Then he goes on, “Western theology is often perceived as being built on an idealistic conception of truth which sharply, distinguishes it from practice. It leads to a theology which is

²Contemporary context in Slovakian churches (taken from lectures by Valčo Michal at the University of Žilina in 2010). For example In Norway this situation is different and the church of Norway is allowed to respond to ethical issues.

“unengaged” and therefore, lacks the power for human and social transformation” (Yung 1997: 8). Yung claims that Western theology creates boundaries between “orthodoxy and orthopraxy”. In simple English this means the “separation between truth and practice in missions”.

Western theology is based on a strong academic base in missions and as a result is much too speculative. This theology provides us with a very high theoretical perspective or knowledge about God. There are many theories about mission work, as I have already discussed in part of my thesis. Western theology is strongly shaped by the Age of Enlightenment on a rational level which is “moulded by Western philosophy, and preoccupied with intellectual concerns” (Yung 1997: 9). Western theology is related only in theory and not in practice. Yung says: “it leads to the related perception that it often fails to be pastorally and missiologically irrelevant” (Yung 1997: 9). The reason is that “the intellect has little or no relevance to the realities of life, that it is narrowly preoccupied with the Christ of the kerygma at the expense of the “enflesh” Jesus and his historical implications, and that its *Sitz im Leben* is not the church but the academia”(Yung 1997: 9). So Yung concludes by quoting Guteréz that: “orthodoxy and orthopraxy need one another, and each is adversely affected when sight is lost of the other” (Yung 1997: 8). Theology is relevant for mission work not just on an academic level but also on a practical level, or in different words “To do and practice” (Engelsviken 2011: 10). Yung argues that missions are being based on rational and this means that the Enlightenment is strongly involved in missions.

This issue shows us that missions in the Global North is strongly influenced by the Age of Enlightenment. This has had a negative impact in mission, because, as I have discussed already, the Enlightenment supports rationale level thinking. Southern theologians see the problem resulting from the Age of Enlightenment and the strong influence its values have had on missions. This critique about “unengaged theology” really looks like a contribution to theology, because theology cannot be just observations but about “doing” and “practicing” as well.

3.7 Liberal North Christianity

Jenkins says about the Global North Christianity: “The Global North is very liberal in issues of ethics than conservatism...” (Jenkins 2007: 3). This claim is not very clear and more needs to be said about liberalism in theology from a Southern theologian’s perspective. Escobar claims that Liberalism in Western Theology is trying to accommodate theology to contemporary times,

which results in the deformation of Christianity. Conservatism in the Global South/North, by contrast, is trying to keep in step with the Bible, and if there is any question, they go to the Scriptures to find the solutions (Escobar 2002: 10). Biblical conservatism is in conflict against liberalism (Escobar 2002: 169). Liberalism in Christianity is trying to accept, and is open to, many “strange” ethical issues in Christianity (for example same-sex marriages). Because they want to keep Christians in churches and to invite new people to the church as a means of increasing church membership, they are willing to sacrifice any Biblical truth (Lane 1996: 202), for example, we accept homosexuality in the church as is being done in Sweden. I will discuss what is taking place in Sweden later and will be using them as a typical illustration of liberalism in a Christian society in the church of Sweden. I will start by discussing of the exact meaning of liberalism in Theology, and then Southern theologians discuss the Biblical rejection of homosexuality. Southern theologians are looking at homosexuality because this is very a controversial and “hot” topic in liberal North Christianity.

Let us start with the question: “What is liberalism in theology?” According Tony Lane, liberalism in Christianity started in Northern Christianity and is one of the negative impacts of the Age of Enlightenment. Liberalism has some very well-known writers such as Schlechmayer, Von Harnack and Ritschl, but the meaning of “old-school” liberalism has changed already. According to Lane the main point is to accommodate theology to the contemporary world and to rewrite some biblical aspects to contemporary times (it is like contextualization in the global North). The result is the deformation of Christianity. The main argument is that Jesus Christ’s death on the cross means that everything is forgiven, so I don’t have to do anything for the salvation. The second point is that God loves everyone, and I can do anything despite being a Christian. Therefore, the Bible must be rewritten to contemporary time so human beings are free to do anything (Lane 1996: 208-211).

This is my own summarization of what liberalism is in contemporary theology taken from Lane. So in this connection, it means that if I have an issue as whether to bless same sex marriages or not, the liberal would say “of course” because God loves anyone and the Bible must be rewritten in this point. We need to respect everyone because every human being has the freedom to make any decision (Yung 1997: 49). By contrast, conservatism in the Global South would say since the Bible says “no” to homosexuality, we cannot bless-same sex marriages. Southern theologians see

a conflict between two sides. Liberalism uses *imago Dei* (see chapter 4.3) as the justification of the equality among people, but what about the Law in Leviticus 13:18 that calls homosexuality a sin? Song asks, “isn’t the decision to say yes for homosexuality [made] by human beings?” (Song 1990: 61). I believe that there are many conflicts concerning different ethical issues, but I have decided to work with homosexuality because this concept is a topic of discussion in the church in recent years in the global North. Now I will more closely examine the issue of homosexuality and the Church in the global North using Sweden as a case study.

The Church of Sweden has given their blessing to same-sex marriages since May 1st 2009. The reason was, that after the year 2000, the membership of the church of Sweden had started to decrease (Svenska kyrkan 2011). James Demerath, who is a religious scholar, adds that they thought that gays would increase membership and the church would be supported more financially from the state. The reality is that the church of Sweden is privatized and the State does not provide money for this church anymore (Demerath 2001: 98). There is a separation of the state and the church. The next controversial thing that happened in the church of Sweden is that the church had the first lesbian bishop, Eva Brunne, in the Stockholm diocese. She lives with Gunhild Linden, who is “her wife” and they have a son (ECAV 2011). This is just an illustration of how the thinking in the Swedish church is unbiblical, and how this thinking has led to blessing same-sex marriages, even in the priesthood, like the bishop of the Stockholm diocese. Now I can see the connection with the chapter 3.7 where I proclaimed, according Southern theologians, that the separation can tend to open new ethically questions such as homosexuality and that people or authorities in churches have the freedom to make decisions.

Many churches and countries in Europe have very differently opinions on homosexuality. In countries where the majority of the population is Catholic, they are still conservative on the question of homosexuality, so they say no to homosexuality. This is desirable because the Catechism of the Catholic Church, article 2357, states that homosexuality according the Bible is not allowed since it is not possible make children,” and goes on that homosexuals cannot serve the people as priests and His followers (my own summary). Catechism shows us a disagreement with Jenkins, because he said that the global North Christianity is liberal (Jenkins 2007: 3). According the Roman Catholic teaching, homosexuality is neither possible nor accepted.

In Protestant teaching, the Bible is the authority in life for all Protestants, so it must again be undesirable to accept homosexuality in Protestants theology because in the Bible are many sentences against homosexuality for example in Leviticus (Yung 1997: 17, 49). Both teaching shows us strong disagreement with homosexuality. This raises the question as to why those two big churches both biblically and doctrinally reject homosexuality, when the reality is that it is not a problem for them to say yes in the case of Sweden. I want to look first into the Bible to see what Leviticus says on this issue. I realize that there are many texts against homosexuality but theologians from the South prefer texts in Leviticus.

Here is how Leviticus is interpreted according to commentaries and the Bible dictionary. “It is interpreted in Leviticus 18 and verses 6-20:22-23 and in Leviticus 20:9-21 (read both texts) and those verses are addressed especially sexual transgressions” (Balentine 2002: 151-152). But in keeping to our topic, Leviticus 18:22 and Leviticus 20:13 (KJV) speak very directly against practicing homosexuality (Leviticus 18:22) and in the 20:13 it states, “their blood shall upon them” (KJV) “Blood in this sense means that God connects it with the practice of pagans and it is something against the Gods law” (Novotný 1956: 355). This interpretation of the Bible shows us that Liberal thinking in Christianity is connected with pagans and the practice of pagans before Christianity. It looks like the pagan’s thinking is like liberalism in the Church, which tends to not follow God’s instruction but follows people who have the freedom to make any decision. This is the global South’s point of criticism of Western Theology.

Here we can again demonstrate that Liberalism has been influenced strongly by the Age of Enlightenment. First, Liberalism is a Latin word, which means “freedom” (Latin Dictionary 2012) Taking Yung’s discussion about freedom from chapter 3.2.7 (the last point), where Yung is discussing about freedom in making any decisions and people are free to do anything.

In the question of homosexuality, people no longer care about listening to the church. People are all equal and don’t have to listen the church, because they are autonomous and free (Yung 1997: 49). This point illustrated the negative impact of the Age of Enlightenment on society, as I discussed in the chapter 3.5 as well. Liberalism is like “a sub-chapter” of the Age of Enlightenment. Because they are now free, people can do anything. Secondly, why this point is influenced by the Age of Enlightenment, because as Bosh says “it is in the practice of pagans” (Bosh 1991: 271). The Bible is very strong in its stand against homosexuality, because it was

practiced by the pagans. Mugambi proclaims that the practicing of pagans' religion is connected with the Age of Enlightenment (Mugambi 1995: 60-61). So the main criticism here is in the freedom of people who state that human beings are autonomous and don't have to listen the church, and thus should have equality in human rights for homosexuals. The next is practicing of paganism. Both those issues belong to the Age of Enlightenment and have resulted in a negative impact on the Global North.

3.8 Priesthood of all believers and missions

The idea of "priesthood of all believers" comes from Martin Luther's dogma and Escobar has presented it in his book *Changing tides: The Latin American Christianity and Mission*. Here Escobar is discussing whether all believers can be like priests and preach the Gospel to all who haven't heard it. He states the Global North Christianity has rejected this idea, because there the emphasis is on education and they require academic degrees even for their missionaries. The author is not looking for any reason which comes from different laws or academic/theological reasons, but he looks into the Bible and tries to find some verses which can reject the thinking in the Global North where everyone has to have academic degrees to be priests and missionaries. Here we will see, as well as discuss, how theology and doctrines based on just rational level thinking can lead to belief in things other than those which are supported Biblically.

Escobar starts explaining this idea of the priesthood of all believers and looking to Protestantism and says:

Priesthood of all believers was formulated first by Luther and if we read him in context, it entailed a rejection of two evils prevailing in the Christendom that he was seeking to reform: sacramentalism and clericalism. In other words, the exclusive power claimed by the institutional church for administering divine grace through external practices despite the corrupt moral conditions into which that very institution had fallen and the monopoly of clergy on the tasks proper to the life of the church, in which the faithful ended up being mere spectators (Escobar 2002: 100).

Escobar says that Luther was seeking to reform the Church in the Middle Ages, and in our case, he wanted to reform clericalism where anyone who believes in God can preach the Gospel according the Scriptures. Escobar continues that Luther tried it to support the idea of priesthood of all believers, but even so the Lutheran churches continue in clericalism and sacramentalism. He says: "Luther, however, failed to create new structures that would facilitate the participation of all believers as priests of God in mutual ministry. A century after Luther, the Lutheran

churches themselves had fallen into clericalism and sacramentalism” (Escobar 2002: 100). Luther wanted to reject a boundary between clergy and believers. He was trying to make equality between them where anybody who is believer can preach the Gospel according scriptures to all people who have never heard it. So the idea or grassroots of priesthood of all believers started with Martin Luther in Protestant theology in the Reformation.

Then Escobar continues that Lutheranism is still in Orthodoxy in the Global North. Everything is based more on academic doctrines. The fight against Orthodoxy by Lutheran, or generally by Protestant traditions, started with Pietism, which helped to reject Orthodoxy. Escobar introduces Pietism like this:

Pietism was unfolded in the eighteenth century as something new in the history of Protestantism. Interest in missions went hand in hand with an awaking of individual religiosity. The leaders of Pietism were protesting against the older Protestant theology and, although they themselves were for the most part properly trained theologians, to emphasize the importance of practical Christian life over theological formulas. Important in Pietism is the individual conversion; Bible as the primary source of living, receiving the Holy Spirit and then his gifts and to be active involved in the mission (Escobar 2002: 101-102).

So in Pietism we can see that the priesthood of all believers is supported because of Pietism. In Lutheran tradition, Luther was trying to reject the Orthodoxy where faith was based more on doctrines and academia.

Pietism also started establishing new Christian movements, which fought strongly against intellectualism, trying to support the idea of priesthood of all believers. Escobar says: “Pietism tends to explore a new Protestant movement of Pentecostalism because Pentecostal churches reject intellectual level and incorporates in the priesthood of all believers” (Escobar 2002: 78-79). The problem according Yung lies that Western theology is too focused on Orthodoxy where doctrines and academia are something more than the Bible. This is “rationalism” (Yung 1997: 8). Western Theology asks for academic degrees and then people can work as priests/missionaries. The Bible looks at this point differently and very strongly rejects thinking on a rationale level.

Escobar sees a problem Biblically, because in the Bible there is no place where Jesus asks someone to have academic “rationale” degrees in missions or to be priest in order to preach the Gospel. Let us take a look on Matthew 28:19-20 and in John 20:21. Neither text is telling us that just priests can preach the Gospel but all believers. Jesus, who got his authority from God, sends *all* believers, not just the clergy, to preach the Gospel. We have to listen to and obey the Great

Commission (Escobar 2002: 79-82). The point here is that the idea of the priesthood of all believers on a Biblical level has continuity with the Bible. There is no place in the Bible where Jesus asked for academic training. According to the Gospel of Matthew our obligation is to preach the Gospel, and not just clergy, but all believers are obligated to do that.

The last paragraph raises a question: If one doesn't have to be a priest but just a believer or a member of some church as Escobar claims, then what should the ideal missionary should look like? Tormod Engelsen can provide us some answers from theologians from the Global South in his article about: *The Challenge of the Missional Church in the South*. He believes that there are a few important points if someone wants to be missionary/preacher: First, he/she has to have a strong spiritual conviction that God has called him/her to be a missionary, Second, he/she belongs to a movement, renewal or revival within the church. Third, he/she has to have knowledge (education, training) in Theology, and last, he/she belongs to a strong Christian fellowship (Engelsen 2011: 6-7). So according Engelsen, it is very important to have some theological training before beginning evangelization, but Escobar is against the idea of requiring an education, because (it appears to me) he says that this is unbiblical. Generally, Engelsen believes that missionaries or preachers, according to Acts, have to have knowledge about God and the Bible which is provided through training or education. If a missionary/preacher did not have any knowledge of the Bible, he/she would be sharing the Gospel as he/she wishes without a good knowledge base and possibly incorrect application (Engelsen 2011: 6).

The criticism of theology from the viewpoint of the South is that theology in the Global North is based strongly on rational level thinking of "the discovering of God and the Bible" and keeping up with doctrines, so education is the only way there is to be a theologian and preacher. But looking critically at this point, provided by Engelsen through the eyes of Southern theologians, preachers, missionaries and theologians have to have a little knowledge about the Bible and God, so here Escobar is not entirely accurate. I am not going to explain rationale level thinking here because it was discussed in the chapter 3.3.1 along with its negative impact on theology. However, we have to say here that Yung is right in his definition that Western theology is based on rationale level thinking (Yung 1997: 3) and the negative impact of the Age of Enlightenment to Western theology. The truth of the Bible and the Great Commission is not taken seriously as the purpose for missions. Theologians from the global South believe that Bible

should be the authority of all believers, not doctrines, because it is possible to find the truth in the Bible.

3.9 Mission from “top-down” and “bottom-up”

Mission work in this contemporary time has a different meaning. Cecé Kolié, an African theologian, and Escobar discuss two types of missions in their articles. One type of missions is called “top-down”. This type mission work is found mainly in Western Theology. A typical example of this type of mission would be one providing healing, but only medical healing or science healing, money for developing countries found in some projects and reconciling conflicts using lawyers. On the other side is the mission work from South. Mission work from South is based from the bottom-up. So the missions start at the bottom, with scripture. I will discuss more about those two approached to missions in the next two sub-chapters.

3.9.1 Mission bottom-up

Missions “bottom-up” characterizes the Global South. As an African Theologian, Charles Nyamiti, says:

the starting point is below, so it starts in Jesus of Nazareth- where South stress on the historical background and biblical text concerning him. Jesus lived in society which was oppressed and exploited by the Romans. He was poor because of Roman exploitation and oppression. It was the mission that Jesus fights this poverty, oppression and lack of freedom. Hence the text needs to be interpreted in this sense- Jesus died in this fight against oppression (Schreiter 1992: 13).

Missions start in the Bible or Christ and look for the texts which can touch on the specific socio-political-economic situation (Yung 1997: 65). The global South takes these texts very seriously. For example, in Africa, Christ’s resurrection is the victory of Christ against the evil forces, where evil forces are dictators or political powers and where people are oppressed. This is also represented in the Bible story in Exodus, where the Israelites were oppressed by Pharaoh. and then, through their belief, God helps them win against evil forces and reconciles any conflicts (Escobar 2002: 144). So this type of missions represents more spirituality than materialism. Now let us look at missions which is based on materialism.

3.9.2 Mission from top-down

Mission from top-down is more typical for the Global North. It is very different than my paragraph above. “Rich countries send to poorer countries money for something to build where they have some projects with them or providing the social services” (Escobar 2002: 97).

A theologian from Africa provides a different view of missions from top-down. Why does the Global North Christianity provide the same services as the secular sphere? An African Theologian, Cécé Kolié, provides us with the answer in area of healing and says “Missionaries from the West provide us scientific healing and not spiritual” (Schreiter 1992: 143) so conversion is hidden behind those activities. The next thing is that Christians from the North try to reconcile conflicts in the global South using special laws, which have their grassroots in law and not in the Bible. Escobar asks, “Where is Jesus mentioned? Did he start doing and practicing missions in the name of “materialism” (Escobar 2002:49)?

As we can see again missions “top-down” is influenced by the Age of Enlightenment. The problem is found in the philosophy of materialism (see the chapter 3.2.3), by providing things that we can touch such as money, scientific healing and mediation in conflicts. As demonstrated here, Western missions put materialism before spirituality. This is a misunderstanding of missions. Theologians from the global South believe that missions have to start in Christ and in conversion. This is exactly the idea of missions, to prefer the spiritual world rather than materialism, but Yung’s description of Western culture is right, the philosophy of materialism is involved and this too is again a negative impact of the Age of Enlightenment in mission work.

3.10 Summary

I have provided some critical points from the Global South theologians. I do believe that there are more points than I have written, but I picked “hot” points of critique of Northern theology from the view of the Global South. As we have seen the main “hot” topics of criticism from the Global South are a result of the Age of Enlightenment. These points are not just involved in theology but can be seen in mission work as well. The Age of Enlightenment is characterized by: scientific observations resulting in the rejecting of miracles and the belief in God; the philosophy of materialism which prefers material things more than spiritual; in freedom of people leading to the thinking that people can do and believe anything they wish and don’t have to listen to the church

in the new ethical questions; the separation of the church and state; rationale observations of the Bible and God thus rejecting the miraculous and many Biblical truths; individualism leading to believing what he/she wants a decrease in active participation in fellowships. In missiology, the major criticism is “unengaged theology”, so, rather than practicing what Jesus showed us to do in the Bible, missions have become a discussion between theologians. Social sciences, mainly anthropology, are involved in the mission work, where we would rather observe people than evangelize and show them who Jesus is. As we can see, Western theology has adapted every point of these values. The Age of Enlightenment is still influencing the church and missions, and in fact, it has had a very negative impact in Western Theology.

The next point of my discussion was the contribution of theologians from the South to theology. I will highlight two points. As we can see “engaged theology” is the best way to evangelize people. The main statement is that theology must be more than just academic discussion about ideas, but must be to practice what we say as well. The next point of contribution is seen in contextualized theology. In short, this is that the Gospel is influenced by the view and cultural of the evangelized people and not having them accommodate to the cultural values of the missionaries. These cultures will then understand the Gospel more clearly

4. Discussion

In the last chapter I found out that theologians from the Global South are criticizing Western Theology mainly because this theology has been shaped by the Age of Enlightenment. We have seen that this is not just involved in Western theology but in missions as well. The main points of criticism from Southern theologians were: science rejections of miracles; the philosophy of materialism where people are asking for touchable things; and the last “hot” topic in the eyes of Southern theologians is that people are free to do anything based on individual choices. These same points of criticism show up in missions but in different ways. Materialism is introduced through money and projects where no spiritual conversion is sought. Science is introduced in anthropology, where missionaries are primarily observing people and conversion cannot or does not happen, and in “unengaged theology” there is no practical consideration but just scientific arguments about missions. I would like to discuss these topics in this chapter. During my reading of all the books, I found that these topics are often discussed in books of Southern theologians, so I picked them out. I am aware that there are other interesting topics, which could be discussed, but the Age of Enlightenment will be the main concern in my discussion because this is the main criticism from the global South.

My discussion will be conducted in four subchapters. In the first-subchapter, I would like to present the background of theologians from the North and South. In the second-subchapter, my aim will to provide reading in context of the various authors. In the third-subchapter, my aim will be to present the relevance of their critique and to discuss if this critic from the global South is fair. In the fourth-subchapter, I will be discussing whether all or most Christians in the global North are influenced by the Age of Enlightenment.

4.1 General discussion about the Age of Enlightenment

My goal in this subchapter is to observe whether the criticism from the Global South about Northern theology is valid. I have discussed the rejection of miracles, the approach of missions by the Global North to the Global South and Liberalism in Northern church. This discussion has shown us that these criticisms from the Global South are in some cases very true, in other cases not accurate, and sometimes there is a mix of accuracy and inaccuracy. A very valid point is in the discussion that Western theology has been strongly influenced by the Age of Enlightenment.

As a result of the Age of Enlightenment and its emphasis on tangible proofs miracles are being rejected. Scientists proclaim that there is no evidence that miracles work. These scientists have influenced theology in their rejection of miracles and emancipation from them. In materialism, which was shaped by the Age of Enlightenment, I found out that human beings need to have personal experiences with miracles (for example healing) to touch, to taste and have some personal experience, and then they accept them. The last problem in my discussion about miracles is the freedom of believing or not believing in them.

The second part of my discussion was about mission work from the Western church to the Global South and how theologians from the Global South see this work. The most important point in my discussion was that missions are too often based on just an academic understanding, which provide us just knowledge about God and theoretical points about mission work. What is missing are the practical considerations, and in missions both practical and theoretical must be included according to Yung. The next discussion in this topic was whether Anthropology is dangerous for mission because it science. My conclusion was that Anthropology and missions help each other because anthropology helps one to understand the problems in various cultures before evangelization is attempted. After we have some understanding of the culture, we could look for relevant texts, in the Bible where Jesus resolves similar problems and connect them with the struggles which were observed before. This approach is very Biblical. Paul first observed people getting to know them and how they lived, and then he preached the Gospel. The last point in this discussion was about materialism and whether it is dangerous in impeding conversion. I found that it is not, because money collected from church offerings helps people or Christians in developed countries survive. I believe that this is an act of love from Christians in the North to people of the South. When people are interested and care what is going on and make friends within a culture of a developing country, then it will be easy to communicate the Gospel with them.

The last part of my discussion was about the question of whether theologians from the global South are really fair in their discussion of homosexuality in the churches in the global North, and whether it is ethical or not. I found that they are not as accurate in this criticism because churches in the global North fight against Liberal thinking in theology. If there are new ethical question, as

in the problem of homosexuality, we must look to the authority of the Bible and of the church's doctrine, as well as his/her background.

This discussion supports the last of the 3rd chapter, where I was discussing the main criticism from the global South to the North is that Western theology is influenced too much by the Age of Enlightenment mainly in academia and science. Western theology has become skeptical about many Biblical truths (for example miracles and believing in God). This theology is primarily at universities and discussions among theologians or scholars in theology.

This has been a general discussion about the Age of Enlightenment. Now I will discuss in more detail the worldviews of authors and how they see the various points from the view point of the global North/South. The aim of this detailed discussion is to examine the relevance and validity of the critiques by the theologians from the Global South. My aim is not just to provide the critique of Southern theologians by reviewing the relevant literature, but also from my own eyes and my own experience with the Global North Theology and missions. Lastly I will discuss whether it is possible to “reform” the Global North Christianity in those areas of concern raised by the Global South.

4.2. The problem of miracles in Northern Theology

In chapter 3.2, Southern theologians discussed the rejection of miracles in Northern theology. They started discussing the rejection by science, then freedom of believing in miracles and the rejections of miracles as a result of materialism. I will divide this chapter in three subchapters, where I will present worldviews and discussions by Southern and Northern theologians about the rejections of miracles and whether this criticism is valid.

4.2.1 World views

Science rejection of miracles

The author, Alister E. McGrath, who is an Anglican theologian and natural scientist, has written many books, where he was discussing the relationship between belief and natural sciences and the rejection of miracles on a scientific level. He presents in his book *Christian Theology: An Introduction* how the Age of Enlightenment and science is challenging Christians' belief in miracles among people. He provides us an example of miracles such as resurrection, where he

says that on a scientific level this is not possible because when man dies he or she cannot rise again. He then explains the worldview of some scientists, who say that Christianity is lying to people because after death there is no evidence of the eternal life but only darkness or nothing (McGrath 2007: 321).

Joe R. Jones, who is an evangelical priest, provides us a very interesting look at the Bible through scientists' eyes in his studies of Western theology. The scientists are criticizing belief in miracles and say that Jesus' twelve disciples were probably drunk or under the influence of drugs and could have had very strange behavior when they saw the resurrection. The disciples had hallucinations. The Bible then is lying to Christians because, as scientists say, this situation can happen to people when they are drunk or use drugs; they can see strange things like miracles (Jones 2002: 64).

Miracles rejections in materialism

Robert W. Jenson, who is a Lutheran priest in the USA in his book "Systematic theology" presents his own experience with the Age of Enlightenment in his congregation among the members of his church. He has personal experience with philosophical rejections of miracles in his congregation where he used to work. He says that "nowadays it is very important to have personal experiences with miracles" (Jenson 2001: 112). In the word "experiences", he meant that we have got to touch, to taste and see. if this is not possible, then people will never believe in miracles. Materialism prefers more "touchable" material than "untouchable" non-material concepts, and people need to have a personal experience of touching, tasting or seeing miracles. If this touch was successful then it would be possible to believe in miracles. (Jenson 2001: 112).

Freedom to believe in miracles

Jenson says from his own experience in his congregation, when he was doing research, he asked people to fill out a questionnaire about miracles. The results were that in his congregation, belief in miracles is a personal choice and nobody should criticize you for that (Jenson 2001: 42-43). The Age of Enlightenment supports the idea of freedom to believe in miracles or not (more in chapter 3.2.2) now it is up to the individual person to believe or not to believe in miracles and nobody should criticize you for your belief, but respect your personal decision. (Yung 1997: 49).

Jenson, Jones and McGrath as authors believe in miracles and accept them as well, but in their books they provide us critical views on miracles from scientific rejection, materialism and freedom of believing.

4.2.2 Reading in context

According Jenson, Jones and McGrath, we see that there is a real problem of human experiences with miracles. First, McGrath and Jenson are showing that people need to have some evidence to believe in miracles. Many people think that if there is no evidence, then the church is really lying to people and as a result many people have left the Northern church. Secondly, Jones provides us speculative opinions about miracles through different philosophers, for example that Jesus disciples were drunk. Here again is the observation that science rejects the theology of miracles. Somebody could say that this is just “stupid talk” about the resurrection. The disciples were drunk or under drugs and saw strange hallucinations like the image of Jesus. The story of the resurrection is the evidence that they were using drugs and alcohol, because people can see very strange things when they are drunk or high on drugs. This raises a question however, how can they be so sure that disciples were drunk? This tends to different speculative narratives from scientists, who claim that only drunk people can see strange situations. So as we can see, opinions and claims about religion are very skeptical. The last point is presented by Jenson and says that to believe in miracles is a private matter and nobody can criticize you for that because it is your decision to believe in miracles.

4.2.3 Relevance

Science rejections

Here the question is raised as to whether it is fair for the Global South to criticize the issue of the rejection of miracles. In chapter 3.2 and other subchapters, I was discussing the academic level of the Age of Enlightenment from Hwa Yung’s book, who is representative of Southern theology in criticizing Northern theology. He says that science started thinking about miracles in skeptical ways. Science really shows us the rejection of miracles in skepticism and is trying to say that these could have never happened based on different researchers, and then to reject it as scientific conclusions. Here people think that the church is misleading Christians, so people become

skeptical about Christianity and don't want to be Christians, because the church just lies about miracles and other issues (Yung 1997: 44-45).

I think theologians from the global North/South could ask scientists whether they represent facts, or if they are also basing their judgments about what is true and false according to their own personal worldview. Scientists are not always sure whether, for example, the creation as reported in the Bible is true or not. Scientists are often talking about the Bing-Bang theory, which is much too complicated for people to understand. But, if we listen to the different interpretations of this theory, we can see many different opinions. So I am asking them: Aren't scientists representing their own beliefs instead facts? Scientists often use their own beliefs to reject creation but where are the facts?

Here the criticism from the Global South is valid concerning scientific conclusions because these scientific "researchers" have dangerously undermined the Bible. Natural sciences can have too much influence over people and say that miracles have never happened. People then believe more in science than religion. Generally science can challenge Christianity too much in different issues of faith. It is too complicated to fight against scientists. Even many theological scholars are influenced by scientific findings and reject miracles as well. As I said, it is hard to resist science, which holds the power in argumentation that there is no evidence supporting miracles.

Materialism

The next point is about materialism. Yung claims that this philosophy says that miracles are untouchable and there is no evidence to believe them. Materialism believes that miracles are just words and words are not concrete and therefore do not provide the evidence that miracles really exist. They are untouchable in this case. Materialism prefers material things that are possible to touch, to taste or to have personal experience with (Yung 1997: 3). This philosophy brings to Christianity skepticism on a philosophical level because people believe that religion is just about "irrelevant talks" about the promise of eternal life, healing and so on but these things don't really work because they are just immaterial words, which are not possible to confirm through personal experience.

This criticism looks partly valid. People in the global North really prefer material things more than the non-material belief of the relevance of miracles. Generally they need to touch, to taste

and to experience. Words in the Bible are not adequate for them to believe in miracles. They need more, because they think that these are just “empty words”. They need to have something touchable. On the other hand, the Holy Communion shows us that the words and promises from God are touchable in the wine and the bread, where we get forgiveness for our trespasses. It is touchable, and we can taste it.

Freedom

The last point why miracles are rejected is inside the church and among believers. This is freedom among believers to believe in miracles or not. Now, in the church or in public places, whether you believe or don't believe in miracles is a person's individual choice and others should respect your belief in miracles because it is your individual choice (Yung 1997: 3).

This criticism looks partly relevant. On one hand people still believe in miracles so miracles are not rejected everywhere among Christians, like in Pentecostal/Charismatic churches in the global North churches (I will discuss about it in the next subchapter below), but on the other hand Yung is right in that your freedom to believe or not it looks like some people reject some portions of the Bible and think it is alright. Why do they reject it? Because, as I said in the last sub-chapters, there is a problem with science and philosophy, which rejects miracles. Because they cannot be confirmed through observation, they conclude that miracles have never happened and are just immaterial words. People are always asking for evidence and personal experience.

4.2.4 Is this issue involved everywhere among Christians in the Global North?

This raises the question: Is Enlightenment only involved where academic theology is among Christians? Does Northern Theology or the church really reject miracles in all churches? In the Global North, we have Evangelical revivals and Pentecostal/Charismatic churches. McGrath says about these churches: “One of the most significant developments in Christianity in the 20th century was the rise of Charismatic and Pentecostal groupings, which affirm that modern Christianity can rediscover and re-appropriate the power of the Holy Spirit, described in the new Testament and particularly in the Acts of the Apostles” (McGrath 2007: 81).

These churches are less influenced by the Age of Enlightenment in science and materialism. There are no critical points of view from Biblical academia on miracles, which means that there

is not the rejection of miracles from church life. The Bible is accepted as an infallible source for them and everything that is written is taken seriously. The Bible is preached and used without critical errors. These churches reject the ideas of science and materialism or scientific discussion between scholars (McGrath 2001: 81). The criticism from the global South in the rejection of miracles is partly invalid because in the Global North there are still Pentecostal/Charismatic churches, which take miracles very seriously, where the Biblical miracles are not rejected by scholars.

Considering older traditions such as Roman Catholics and Lutherans there are different approaches to miracles. Catholics don't reject miracles as much because they have special healing springs from different saints or pious people, pilgrimages which can heal people. Catholics believe that these water springs and pilgrimages can cure people through faith in miracles. For example, in the USA there is a pilgrimage, El Santuario de Chimayo, in New Mexico. There is a hot spring there where people believe that one can be healed from illnesses. According to a legend by Native Indians, Saint Mary once appeared there and blessed this spring (El Santuario de Chimayo 2012). I think Catholics often use different signs to prove that this spring can help heal ill people. They connect it with Biblical people such as Mary, or where one of the patriarchs worked or is thought to be buried. (For example, Santiago de Compostela, where Jacob's bones are, and when you touch them you can see miracles of blessing and healing).

In Lutheran churches, there is always a challenge to miracles because, as I said, there is much discussion among theologians and authorities of the church who struggle with the idea of miracles. Generally they believe in miracles but have problems accepting them in the church. On one side they don't want to be like Pentecostal/Charismatic churches and want to keep the traditional thinking of Lutheranism in doctrines, and on the other side Lutheran theologians are always criticizing miracles in scientific arguments. I think that the Global South's criticism is very relevant. They see the influence of the Age of Enlightenment in science arguments, in skeptical thinking, in miracles and liberal theology which helps to reject or exclude miracles from the life church (This is not valid for the resurrection)³.

The theologians McGrath, Jones and Jenson, who I described at the beginning of this discussion,

³contemporary discussion in the Evangelical Lutheran church in Slovakia

present themselves as theologians who believe in miracles, but they have also described the scientific position in relation to miracles. I have reached the conclusion, that some theologians or scholars, who have done research in the area of miracles, still believe in miracles and They have not personally accepted the rationale thinking of rejecting miracles.

4.3 Mission work from Northern church to the Global South

Western missions in the eyes of the Global South theologians are scientific in their use of anthropology in the observing of people and materials where there is no connection to spiritual conversion but just with material things, such as money. Projects and the last critique is unengaged Theology provides us just the theoretical knowledge about missions (orthodoxy) without practical consideration in missions (orthopraxy). I would like to discuss whether what the critics say about these topics are valid or invalid.

4.3.1 Mission

Scientific mission

Paul G. Hiebert, who is a missionary and scholar in anthropology from the North, says in his article “Gospel and Culture” that he believes that in mission work it is very important first to observe people in their natural setting and then to evangelize. He believes the most effective way to get inside the culture is through research of people and how they live in their natural setting. Generally the aim of Anthropology in missions is to understand people’s behavior in their natural setting before evangelization (Hiebert 1986: 28-38).

I think that Hiebert’s ideas are valid. It seems to me that this method of missions follows the Biblical example of Paul when he preached to Greek-Roman culture. This culture was based strongly on philosophy/rational level thinking. Paul first walked among the people and listened to what they said and did. He wanted to get to know the culture. After obtaining some understanding of their culture, he was able to preach. So if I were to paraphrase Hiebert’s words: Before evangelization, it is important to research a culture, like Paul, listening to and observing the people. After getting to know and understand the culture, we will be able to preach the Gospel. I believe that this can be a good preparation for missionaries, who are going to evangelize people.

The next point concerning the science of missions is what Hwa Yung calls an “unengaged theology”. Yung is the Methodist bishop of Malaysia, who has written many books in the field of missions and Asian Christianity. In his book *Mangoes and Bananas*, where he criticizes Northern theology from an Asian perspective, he explains the term “unengaged theology”. He believes that missions from the Northern church are unengaged because they separate orthodoxy (believing) and orthopraxy (practice) too much. These missions provide us just orthodoxy, which means that they provide just high theoretical or knowledge points of missions and God. He calls this “science mission” because it just talks about how to do mission and to provide scientific conversation about missions without practice (Yung 1997: 19).

I think that “unengaged theology” is a valid point. When we want to evangelize any culture or society, we should show both theory and practice and separate it. In theory, we have to provide the knowledge about God, and in practice, we have to show how a Christian should live - for example: how to make good decisions in ethical questions, sending people out on missions, how to develop healthy fellowships, how to worship God, how to pray and how to read the Bible. The problem has been that Northern theology provides just theory, where they can show high theoretical points about God; however, there is no relevancy with real life and how people live. We need practical application of the Christian life. It is fine to have the knowledge, but without the practice of living out the Christian life in real life situations, the whole aim and purpose of evangelization is useless and soon forgotten. On the other side I believe that there has been development in the Global North of trying to connect the theory with practice.

Materialism in missions

Samuel Escobar, who is a Latin American Pentecostal theologian, has written a book called *Changing Tides*. In this book, he presents Latin American Christianity and some criticism of the global North Christianity. He points out from his view that the Western church provides just money and special projects for developing countries where he doesn't see any spiritual conversion. He is confident that these missions from the North are influenced by materialism, which are founded in money and projects and are touchable. But he asks the Western church: “Where is the spiritual conversion?” (Escobar 1997: 77)

4.3.2 Reading in context

Hiebert presents in his explanation of mission from Western eyes that missionaries have to observe cultures first and then can begin evangelization. So there is a science which observes cultures and it is called Anthropology. This science is described in an English dictionary: “the science that deals with the origins, physical and cultural development, biological characteristics, and social customs and beliefs of humankind” (Dictionary 2012). So in mission work anthropology is just about the observing of the culture, what they do and say in their natural setting and afterwards we can evangelize.

The next point is that Yung is confident that Northern theology typically emphasizes Orthodoxy in missions today Orthodoxy provides mission workers a lot of knowledge or theoretical points about missions, or in different words, how to do missions. When Northern missionaries come to different countries, they don't know how to practice because missions cannot be theoretical, but needs to have practical considerations and show people how Christians live their life practically, by being a good example of Christ.

The last point is the involvement of materialism, such as money, in mission work. God is hidden behind these activities because materialism prefers touchable things more than non-material, such as spiritual conversion. For example, it is building social centers and different kinds of projects. To help build or develop something important like water wells, water barriers against floods and so on.

4.3.3 Relevance

Science and missions:

Anthropology

Escobar counters Hiebert's arguments that missions from the global North are now more involved in anthropology and social science than theological. He criticizes Hiebert by saying that Hiebert is starting a mission by observing the people in their natural setting and afterwards he would evangelize people. He believes that anthropological observations can take as many years as direct conversion. By “direct conversion” Escobar means that we have to present the Gospel and to baptize them afterwards. He says that this is the mission and there is no science. Escobar

believes that this starts with science but science cannot bring about the conversion of people. Only theology leads to conversion. Anthropology has no relevance to conversion (Escobar 2002:17).

Yung, as the next Southern theologian, believes that conversion must be involved in missions, but he doesn't think that "direct conversion" of the people can be useful. He is thinking along the same lines as Hiebert, because he believes that observing people must be involved in missions in order to have a better understanding of the socio-political-economic struggles. He believes that the missionary has become familiar with the problems with which the cultures struggle before conversion. These struggles he describes as socio-economic-political struggles, for example dictatorships, social injustice and so on. He claims that in mission work the observation of people is very important because missionaries have to understand the socio-political-economic context in advance. If missionaries understand where the problems are, they can then look for relevant texts in the Bible which can provide answers or insights, such as Jesus reconciling oppression issues. (Yung 1997: 60). Yung emphasizes the observation of people first and then evangelize them, because he believes that a missionary has to get familiar with the problems through observing how people live and what they struggle with, and afterwards to look for verses in the Bible, where God reconciles the problems of people.

There is a disagreement between the Global South theologians (Yung and Escobar) on the question of observing people. From Escobar's point of view, he doesn't agree with this way of doing mission work by observing people. He is more about the theological impact in missions, but this raises a question for Escobar: Does he think that his preaching would "touch" the hearts of people without knowing their problems? How would people understand his Christianity with no connection of the socio-political-economic context of how Jesus can help?

I think Yung and Hiebert are right in stating that every missionary has to get to know the problems of people's lives and their struggles before evangelization. It seems to me very Biblical and not just scientific as Escobar thinks. Paul, when he preached in Greco-Roman cultures, walked the streets where these people lived, listened to what people said and observed what they did. After getting to know the problems, he preached, and as we can see, his preaching was successful. So this is not only scientific, but Biblical as well.

Escobar's criticism is not fair, because as we have seen, the observation of people must be involved in missions. We have to get to know their problems are first and then to evangelize by looking for relevant texts in the Bible. This is also Biblical. Paul before he began his preaching he had to get to know the problems and then preach. It looks that both hemispheres use this missionary strategy as an effective way of evangelizing people through observation and then evangelization.

Unengaged theology

Unengaged theology is taken from Yung's book. Yung says that this theology separates orthodoxy and orthopraxis, where just orthodoxy is recognized. This theology provides us a strong theoretical base or knowledge about God and has many theories about mission work, but is missing orthopraxy. The practical considerations of mission work is missing, so missions are just academic or theoretical and not practical.

This point appears to be a valid criticism of Northern theology and is even a contribution to theology. As I discussed already, the reason why missions are more theoretical is the fact that many of the ideas from the Age of Enlightenment are involved here. They support academic thinking in missions, and as a result provide a strong theoretical understanding of missions. But missions cannot be just theoretical, there must also be a practical application (Practical means how to pray, how to read Bible, how to worship God etc.). It must be both. I think, in the recent years, missions from the global North have been developed based on this criticism from Yung. Missionaries are now trying to be less theoretical and more practical in their mission works. They take their work seriously without complaining.

Materialism

Escobar says that materialism is still involved in mission because the church from North doesn't emphasize conversion just money and projects. He believes that Christ is hidden behind those activities and there is no spiritual conversion. The fact is that materialism prefers material, for example money, more than the non-material spiritual conversion (Escobar 2002: 18). This criticism of materialism by the Global South, especially as it relates to issues of money for various projects, does not appear to be valid. The reason is that money, which has been collected at services as offerings, is still needed for projects in developing countries to improve their social

conditions. These projects are used to rebuild the social infrastructure in areas where there is hunger, homelessness, floods, and social/ethnic/religious wars. These projects can help to build social centers such as hospitals, housing for people and bringing water and electricity to houses where it is much needed. This raises a question for Escobar: How would people live without those projects? If there were no projects these people wouldn't be alive anymore. Some countries would be without human beings because there would be sickness, flood, hungers and lot of things which destroy human beings. These countries would just be empty and without Christians either. I believe that if these projects did not exist Christians and other people would soon die. It is the goal of missions to help your brothers and sisters as Jesus taught and God says in the "greatest commandments". (Matt. 7:12; Matt. 22:37-40)

General look at missions from the North to the Global South through Southern eyes

Bolaji Idowu, who was a Methodist priest, has written many critical points about Northern theology and missions from his Global South point of view. In Bediako's book, he is generally looking at missions from the Northern church to the Global South. He is confident that is not fair for Southern theologians to criticize the mission work from the West to the South without looking at what Western missionaries have done in foreign countries. He says that many theologians from the Global South have written articles which are not very positive about mission work from the North to the South. Idowu believes that missionaries from the North have done the best in mission work because they have brought to the Global South Christianity, knowledge about God and translated Bibles in the local languages. He believes that without missionaries from the North the Global South wouldn't know about Jesus and Christianity (Bediako 1992: 303).

4.3.4 Is this issue involved everywhere among Christians in the Global North?

Although missions in the global North has been influenced by the Age of Enlightenment, it is very important to say that among Christians in the global North this type of scientific mission work is not a part of every Christian denomination. For instances, in Evangelical and Pentecostal/Charismatic churches there is no evidence of their having an "unengaged theology". They provide less academia in missions because, as Lane has written, they are less influenced by the Age of Enlightenment. There is not just knowledge or theoretical ideas about missions but also practical missions through acts (Lane 1996: 209-210). Engelsviken believes that Evangelical

churches and Pentecostal churches can be a very good example for big traditional churches, like Roman Catholics and Lutheran churches, as to how to do (orthodoxy) and to practice (orthopraxy) missions together (Engelsviken 2011: 10). I believe that in Northern missions, including the big traditional churches, in recent years have been trying to develop mission works which are less theoretical and more practical since Yung`s critic was accepted.

Looking at mission work from the North to the South, it is generally not so bad. There is validity to the criticism of just using an academic approach in mission work, which provides just high theoretical points of missions or knowledge of missions without practice. In recent years, however, Northern mission works have been developing the missionary who works at trying to use both orthodoxy and orthopraxy, which is pastorally and missiologically relevant. The next criticism of using Anthropology is absolutely invalid because one must first observe people and get to know what some of the society`s struggles are in a socio-economic-political context and afterwards to look for relevant texts, where Jesus helps to reconcile these struggles. The point about materialism is absolutely invalid in criticizing Northern Theology. Projects and money collected through offerings can help people to live in better social conditions without hunger, floods and so on because Christians have shown love toward their brothers and sisters fulfilling the “Greatest Commandments” and Jesus` teaching. Generally we have to say, according Idowu, that missions from the North to the South hasn`t been so bad, because missionaries have done their best in foreign countries and have brought the Gospel, with a few mistakes, in a meaningful positive way.

4.4. Liberal theology in the Global North Christianity

Liberal theology is protestant theology of the 19th century seeking to adapt religious historicism to contemporary secular culture, science, social and political theory. A very typical sign of liberal theology is freedom to do anything in Christianity. For example liberals follow natural sciences in their rejection of miracles, support human rights, there is no problem in accepting homosexual priests and in blessing homosexual couples (Lane 1996: 163). In chapter 3.7 I discussed homosexuality. My aim here is to observe if theologians from the Global South are accurate in their criticism of Christianity in countries in the global North and in liberal theology. I believe that there are many issues surfacing in liberal theological thinking in such areas as abortions,

euthanasia, rejecting miracles and so on, but my main concern will be centered on homosexuality as I discussed in chapter 3.7.

4.4.1 World views

Philip Jenkins, who is a religious scholar and Roman Catholic member from the Global North has written many articles criticizing Northern Theology from the Global South's point of view. He says in his book: *The New Face of Christianity*, that in the Global South, they believe what the Bible says about homosexuality; however, the state churches in the whole global North are liberal and see no problem in becoming a priests as a homosexual or in blessing same-sex marriages (Jenkins 2008: 141). I wish to examine this statement.

Bo-Myung Seo is a southern Protestant theologian from South Korea and scholar of theology and contemporary culture at an American university, where his concentration is mainly in the shift of Christianity from the North to the South. He has written his doctoral thesis criticizing Northern theology from the viewpoint of the third world. In one chapter, he was discussing Liberal theology and putting this theology into contemporary words. He explains how Liberal theology interprets *imago Dei* (the image of God). He states that it means that equality and dignity among human beings must be accepted including homosexuals. Liberals say that people should not criticize them for some illness such as homosexuality, but respect that they also have the right to be priests and to have normal weddings in churches acknowledging contemporary human rights (Seo 2005: 62-63).

Michal Valčo explained what Seo meant in greater detail. Valčo, a northern conservative Lutheran priest and scholar in Christian dogmatic and missiology, says in his studies of Christian doctrines through Liberal theology eyes, that Seo criticizes the liberal interpretation of *imago Dei* in Christianity in Northern Church. Liberal theologians claim that *imago Dei* provides us with equality among people so people can live in freedom. He adds that with changing and expanding human rights Liberalism wants to engage with them because it is important to be connected with people of the world or public places (secularism) nowadays, who are asking for their rights everywhere. The church must then be connected with the world of people and with their needs found in human rights, as in our case homosexuals' weddings and priesthood. Valčo goes on to say Liberal movements in Christianity try to accommodate contemporary human rights mainly in

the area of homosexuality (as in the priesthood and blessing same-sex marriages). They believe that people have to live in equality and this means that Christianity must bless same sex marriages and also allow homosexual priests (Valčo 2007: 38-39).

4.4.2 Reading in context

In chapter 3.5 I was discussing mainly about homosexuality in the Northern church. I presented the case of Sweden and Finland, where I pointed out that homosexuality is allowed in these churches. In the case of Sweden there is a lesbian bishop and in the case of Finland a transwomen. The problem is with human rights and *imago Dei*, because liberals claim that both things speak to equality among people. Liberal theology very often mixes *imago Dei* as a Christian doctrine with human rights, which helps to raise the very controversial discussion about homosexuality in the church. Valčo is confident that “human rights” and “*imago Dei*” have very different meanings. For Valčo, *imago Dei* is where God commanded people to take care of the creation and to worship him (Valčo 2009: 37-38, 45). There is nothing about equality as the Liberals say. Richard J. Plantinga contributes to Valčo’s arguments by stating that in *imago Dei* there is no freedom but finite power (Plantinga 2010: 539). So the Liberals claims that we have freedom in *imago Dei* is not true, but the reality is that God gives us finite power and not “unlimited” freedom.

The Biblical interpretation of *imago Dei* by the Liberals and Conservatives is very different from each other. Southern theologians see the problem of Liberal Christianity in the global North centering mainly in homosexuality. This raises the question as to whether the criticism of Liberal Christianity by the global South is valid or invalid.

4.4.3 Relevance

Are Really Liberal churches in the Global North very Liberal?

First I would like to discuss Jenkin’s statement, who claimed, after reading Southern theologians, that the whole Global North church is liberal. I think it is not possible to agree with Jenkins because churches in many countries are still conservative concerning the question of homosexuality and reject the new ethical issues raised by homosexuality. For example, in countries where the Roman Catholic Church is in the majority the “Social Compendium of the

Catholic church” printed in Western countries says in articles 2357, 2538 and 2539 that homosexuals in the priesthood cannot serve God as priests to people, because these persons are sinners against the Bible and not cleansed. If he wants to serve God he has to ask for forgiveness. In the question of same sex marriage, the Roman Catholic Church rejects this idea too, because this church believes that they cannot beget children, and the church sees in children “the next followers of Christ”. The Catholic Church doesn’t reject people in the church life who are homosexuals, but that they cannot take a part in serving. It helps to cure homosexuality through prayers and the Holy Communion (The Social Compendium of the Catholic Church 2012). According these articles the Roman Catholic Church in the Global North is still against same-sex marriages and homosexual priests.

If we look at Protestant churches, homosexuality is not allowed there as well. Protestant traditions take the Bible very seriously (Valčo 2009: 46). The Bible in Leviticus 18:13 judges homosexuality as a sin upon human beings. As I discussed in the chapter 3.5, homosexuality was the practice and symbol of the pagans in the Roman Empire and was not accepted by the early Christians. In some parts of Protestantism, homosexuality is against God and his will and is very sinful. For these reasons, homosexuality is not allowed in Protestant traditions.

According to traditional church doctrines and Biblical interpretation in both denominations homosexuality is not allowed. On the other side, I think that Jenkins’s point is partly valid because I think it depends on the individual person and his/her character. Some priest can be homosexual in his/her personal life and agree with homosexuality, but not practice it openly. In these cases the churches cannot do anything. If she or he openly practices homosexuality and encourages homosexuality in the church, then the church can do something against that person and he/she can lose his/her ordination and no longer serve as priests.

Liberal *Imago Dei* as the source of saying “yes” for homosexuality in Northern church?

In the last sub-chapter, I started discussing the different Bible interpretations between Conservative and Liberal Christianity of *Imago Dei*. Valčo and Plantinga, as conservative theologians, say that *imago Dei* for them means to take care of the creation, worship God and to have finite power as human beings. Liberalism sees this point differently and says that *imago Dei* is equality and so people have to respect people everywhere and their individual rights.

Liberalism tries to accommodate their thinking to cotemporary times and believes that respecting the rights of homosexuals in the church must be involved. The fact is that Liberals very often mix *imago Dei* with human rights, and the fact is that human rights were not established by God but people, and human beings are fallible not perfect (Valčo 2009: 69). If we translate Liberalism into English terms, it means “freedom, equality and dignity”. Liberals can and do interpret the Bible as they wish trying to adapt Christianity to the modern era and reject traditional conservative thinking about homosexuality, which is strongly against the Bible (Yung 1997: 48-49). Generally liberalism interprets the Bible freely, which has no relevance to God’s wisdom but with the desires of human beings.

This criticism is partly valid. On one hand, churches in the Global North fight against the idea of homosexuality and it is impossible to accept into the priesthood or the marriages of homosexuals according Scriptures and the church doctrines in the Global North. On the other hand, I see the problem in backgrounds of people and his/her personal character where he/she can be a homosexual inside and the church cannot do anything.

4.4.4 Is this issue involved everywhere among Christians in the global North?

A question needs to be raised here: Do all Christians in the global North accept liberal theology? From the last subchapters it is clear that Christianity must still be conservative according Scriptures and doctrines. I think that the problem is in the individual person, who is homosexual in the state churches and in his/her background in theological thinking. According my findings in my research, I do believe that Christians in the Global North are still more conservative than liberal. If there is a possibility of opening new questions in ethics in the church it comes from people, who are liberal theologians.

4.5 Is it possible to reform theology and mission work from the Global North?

After this discussion and the main points of criticism of Northern Theology from theologians in the Global South, the question arises as to whether it is possible to change or “reform” theology and mission work from the Global North. Responses to this question are very hard to find in the literature, but between my own experience with Northern Theology and my reading I was able find out some answers. I believe that the process of “reformation” of Western Christianity would be very hard to start. I remember what Professor Knud Jørgensen, when he was lecturing about

Asian's Christianity, said: "We (as Northern Christians) are the children of Enlightenment (parents)." In relation to our question, this means that "little children got skeptical thinking about religion from their parents" and this process is ongoing "from one generation to the next generation." So, the ideas from the Age of Enlightenment which created skepticism are inside of Christians since the children were born. This also involves the church authorities such as bishops and priests, because they have the same thinking as "the children of Enlightenment." I see this problem as being a part of the culture in the global North. The Western culture has been significantly influenced by the Age of Enlightenment. Everything must be explored to determine if it is true or false or have I had a personal experience with a given issue such as miracles. I still see the problem of "reformation" in the Global North Christianity because, in fact, "what we learned as children at an early age we cannot easily change when we are adults." This is the same in Christianity in Western churches. "If you are used to practicing your faith for many years in a given way, it will be hard to get used to getting to know and accept something new." Reformation of Christianity in the Global North to include the problem areas pointed out by the theologians from the Global South would be very slow. I believe that it would take many years before the Global North Christianity would "reformat" itself according those points. In fact, it is hard to change something which has been practiced for ages.

Probably the Global South must think that a reformation would take just a few years and could occur immediately, but the problem is that the Global South is familiar with religious terms such as miracles and spirits. I believe that they just changed gods and practices. For example, people in the Global South are familiar with healing, because they used to practice shamanism in healing from their old religion, so it wasn't very hard to grasp and to accept biblical teaching from missionaries very fast. I do not want to say that the Global South Christianity is not the right way, but I doubt the solution from Southern theologians for Northern Christianity to get back to a primal religion (or in other words: to pre-Enlightenment Christianity) so fast, if we don't take into consideration that Christians in the global North have been brought up as "the children of the Enlightenment" and have learned to think about Christianity in a skeptical way from their "parents". My belief is that this process of "reformation" would take many years to get back to the primal religion, because something that has been practiced for ages will be very difficult to change. Christians would have to get used to accepting and practicing the "reformed" things from the Global South.

4.6 Summarization

The main point of my discussion was examining the Age of Enlightenment and its consequences to Northern Theology and to look for accuracy in my line of thought. Southern theologians' criticisms that Northern theology is too academic, resulting in skeptical thinking and often just a discussion among theologians is valid. The next point involved freedom, where human beings can decide to believe or not to believe in miracles. Materialism plays into the question of miracles. This philosophy teaches that we have to touch, to taste or generally have an experience with miracles. If we have a personal experience then we can believe that miracles are real. Miracles still play important roles in the church in the Global North, but churches are divided on this question. Some places they are acceptable, and some places they are not.

The next point of my discussion was about missions. Theologians from the Global South claim that there is too much science, materialism and rationale level thinking in theology from the North. In science, there are questions about observing the people who are going to be evangelized. Theologians from the global South disagree on this question. Escobar is against this idea, but supports direct evangelization. Yung claims that observing a culture or society first is good, because first we have to get to know the issues people are struggling with and then look for relevant texts in the Bible where God can help to reconcile these struggles. This point has Biblical support, because Paul did this very thing. Concerning the question of Materialism in missions, the Global South theologian Escobar is not very accurate in his observations. Projects and money from offerings can help to people survive in an undeveloped country. If you help someone, then she/he will trust you more. This makes it much easier for missionaries to build good relationships, and as a result, those you have helped are more likely to listen to the Gospel. The last point is about rationale level thinking where I discussed unengaged theology. Missions often provide just theoretical points, which have no relevancy as to how people should live. Practical application of the Christian life needs to be practiced.

The last part was a discussion between Liberal and Conservative theology on the question of homosexuality. I concluded that this has to do with whether the individual theologian's personal views were liberal or conservative. Since the church is led by the Bible and doctrines, it is not easy to justify homosexuality. If there are some voices supporting, homosexuality, they are found among people with liberal thinking.

5. Conclusion

I set out to research the question of the criticisms of Northern theology by theologians from the Global South. I found out that theologians from the Global South have described the main problems lie in the thinking and views coming from the Age of Enlightenment, which has strongly influenced theology and missions in the Global North. The Age of Enlightenment brings to Western theology skeptical thinking, mainly about miracles, believing in God and other Biblical truths through academia and a rationale level approach where Christianity is no longer trusted in the eyes of people and Christians as well.

The philosophy of Materialism criticizes Christianity on the grounds that it deals with non-material things which cannot be demonstrated or touched, in other words are just “empty words”. Thus Christianity in the Global North is not trusted. This could be the reason why people have left the church in the Global North. People in our contemporary time have to touch, to taste and to see or generally have to have a personal experience, for example a miraculous healing, before they will believe. Just words or theories about healing will not replace personal experience, but people might believe in healing for example if they have had a personal experience.

The next important thing is that the Age of Enlightenment brings us freedom. This freedom is centered mainly in the right to make any decision I want. This freedom can lead people to become atheists, because it is now our individual decision to become a member or not. On the other side freedom is also involved in churches, because it allows one to believe or not believe in miracles. It is a personal matter and nobody will criticize you for that.

Lastly, there is a very important critique of Liberal theology, which opens new ethical questions. Church doctrines, as well as the Bible, forbid homosexuality. Theologians from the Global South argue that the blessing of homosexual couples and the ordination of homosexual priests does not come from God’s Word but is very unbiblical. God’s Law in the Old Testament (Leviticus 18:22) states that it is a practice of pagans and was punishable by death. In the New Testament, Paul in Rome 1: 24-32 argues that homosexuality is a sin against God and is the result of “shameful lusts” and a “depraved mind.” Theologians from the Global South wonder why in some churches, for example Church of Sweden, in the global North allow homosexuality in the church leadership, when both the Bible and Church doctrines are against it.

Concerning Christian missions from Northern churches, I found that missions are very strong in theoretical points, which provide us theories about God and how to do mission work, but when Western missionaries come to a foreign culture then they don't know how to put into practice what they have learned and what the people might need. The reason why missions are just theoretical is that Western theology has been shaped by ideas coming out of the Age of Enlightenment. These ideas support rationale thinking and thus missions are just theoretical and not practical.

Hwa Yung calls this “unengaged theology” and is a new contribution to the Theology. There needs to be both practical and theoretical in evangelization. If one is just theoretical in his approach, he can never understand how to apply Biblical principles to the daily issues of life. We need practical application for doing *and* practicing missions.

Contextualization was the next point of criticism concerning Christian missions. According to the theologians from the Global South, contextualization has often been forgotten by the Global North missionaries. Contextualization of faith helps the indigenous people to understand God and the Gospel, not through the eyes of the missionaries but from the perspective of the evangelized people or culture. Various cultures can adapt the wording of Scripture to fit their own natural setting.

Contextualization is, according Yung and Samuel Escobar, the next contribution to Theology. Contextualization would be utilizing terms and situations which are familiar and in use in the local culture when they are translating the Bible. It would also include the missionaries adapting to the local culture in their own living situations, in how they verbally present the Gospel, and in the way they help the local people adapt Christian principles into their lives, rather than having the evangelized culture trying to adapt to the missionaries' cultural, values, and terminology.

Generally speaking the Age of Enlightenment is the most important area of criticism of Northern church from the Global South. The Age of Enlightenment brought to theology: academia, where theology is closed at the university level and generally is just discussions among theologians. Theology has become much too skeptical and speculative. Then freedom to believe in God, miracles, supernatural and to do anything people wish in the church or in theology as well is a

point of criticism. Lastly the philosophy of materialism has made it possible to reject miracles, especially in churches where there is just talk and no personal experience involved.

Southern theologians claim if Christianity in the Global North wants to “reform” it has to get back to a primal religion that is characterized by the pre-Enlightenment Christianity. As I discussed in my discussion part in the Global North, there are Christians who are less influenced by the Age of Enlightenment, primarily Evangelicals and Pentecostal/Charismatic churches, which can be good examples for reforming Christianity in the Global North in the post-modern age, which is so skeptical in their belief of God and the Bible, but as I said in the summarization of the discussion, this process could take ages. It is hard to get used to practicing “reformed” Christianity when we are used to practicing “traditional” forms of Christianity for ages.

In conclusion, the main criticism presented by Southern theologians is really the negative consequences to Western theology and mission work coming out of the rational thinking in the Age of Enlightenment. Western Theology should listen to the voices of the Southern theologians. They can help to “reform” Christianity in the global North in theology and missions. Southern theologians are open to having dialogues with the Global North only on a Biblical level. This can be useful in helping the Global North to get back to a primal; however, this process could take many years.

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