

gating violence I become much more careful: who am I that I may sit in judgement? Is his violence not directed against me? Is my pleading on behalf of non-violence a subtle way of disarming my Latin American and Rhodesian 'enemies'?

At the end of the book, Hengel admits that certain situations may be contradictory and that one cannot always avoid bringing guilt upon oneself and upon society. We thus are back at the point from where we started. Could it not be that in certain circumstances using violence would be a lesser evil—though an evil—than accepting suppression? Generally it may be better to be suppressed than to use violence

and to suppress oneself, but is this always valid? Is the distinction between violence and non-violence as clear? With Hengel we accept that violence can only be overcome definitively by dying in the way Jesus died but Hengel should have shown that Jesus's death was not simply a surrender to the powers that be and that a historical situation is never completely the same.

I have no sympathy for violence, either because I am a Christian or because my room is too comfortable to condone the use of violence, but the question of how to bring about change without violence is too important to be answered by simply saying that violence is out of the question.

ANDREW LASCARIS, OP

MOZAMBIQUE, MEMOIRS OF A REVOLUTION, by John Paul. *Penguin*, Harmondsworth, 1975. 232 pp. 80p.

The author was an Anglican missionary in northern Mozambique from 1958 to 1970, in charge of Messumba, close to Lake Nyasa, a well-established mission surrounded by many thousands of loyal Anglican Christians. The Portuguese colonial presence had been minimal in these remote parts until the mid-1960s. Everything which did exist in the way of school and hospital had come from Messumba. The Catholic Church had been a latecomer in the area, largely concerned to poach Anglicans, while the government was always more or less distrustful of this 'foreign' mission with its considerable influence.

John Paul describes in a sober and highly reliable manner, with a great deal of detail, his work during those twelve years, the life of the mission, the traditional pattern of Portuguese administration, the coming of Frelimo and the war, the Portuguese reaction, the immediate disastrous consequences for his parish. From this summary it might well appear that this is a moderately interesting book but one of no great importance. John Paul is not a theorist and he was not in the centre of events of national importance—but then a guerrilla war really has no centre, and people living at some so-called 'centre' may see its true pattern least. In my opinion this is an immensely important and interesting book both for modern African history and for the Church. Just because of its very careful account of the doings and attitudes of many named, but not very important, people—both black and white—within a fairly

small area over a number of years, it provides a picture of a very recent local African history at a time of critical change, which is unique. No other book of Mozambique can be compared with it and no other book on an African topic of which I am aware. He is so absolutely fair to individuals on both sides and several Portuguese officials come out of it pretty well.

From the viewpoint of the Church it shows an honesty which ecclesiastical writers of their memoirs or of near contemporary history almost never evince.

What emerges most clearly from the overall story is the disastrous character of Portuguese colonialism: at the best of times uncreative and bullying, providing almost no amenities with which to justify the assumption of domination over an alien people; then simply murderous as the war developed—murderous, yet wildly inefficient, torturing people without hesitation but almost always the wrong people. The method was exemplary as to how to alienate a rural population and lose a guerrilla war. Some civilian administrative officers continued to try honestly, if ineffectually, to behave decently and even protect people from their own side, but their efforts were nullified again and again both by the political police and by some army units.

Frelimo, on the other hand, appears as a remarkably gentle and restrained movement; its representatives went to quite considerable lengths, for instance, to ensure that white missionaries (both Anglican and Catholic) were not hurt

as a result of its operations. When they slipped up over this they were immediately most apologetic. As one reads this book of an uncommitted observer, one cannot help but rejoice that for once the right side clearly won.

Among the many incidents described two may serve to show how illuminating this straightforward story can be in terms of a wider social and cultural history. The first time Paul himself met Frelimo troops was when three of them arrived one evening at his house. Greeting him in the traditional way 'May Our Lord Jesus Christ be praised', they brought him a message about the mining of certain roads which he must therefore not use. A little later some more came to ask permission to say the rosary in his church, and then to enquire whether he could sell them some more rosaries as there were many people at their base who wanted them. Paul promised to acquire some for them from the nearest Catholic mission.

On one occasion, when being given a lift down the lake on a Portuguese gunboat, the author became seasick and the Commanding Officer kindly lent him his cabin and a small book to read: *The Thoughts of Mao* in Portuguese. Today it is well known that the Portuguese navy is the most Marxist of the three services, yet it remains odd, if enlightening, that in the 1960s a guest

on board one of Salazar's ships should be lent *The Thoughts of Mao*, just as it is odd but enlightening that the soldiers of a 'Marxist' liberation movement should be anxious to acquire rosaries.

John Paul emerges from the book as a priest of great integrity. His sympathies were by the end clear enough but his political commitment is a limited one. He steered his old-fashioned mission as best he could through a long and agonising crisis, and he served individual people without stint. He proved himself and his little church a 'sacrament of salvation'. As his parishioners declared with pathetic gratitude for small mercies in their disintegrating world when they made their farewell address, describing his practical response to the many extra people who settled down in the slightly greater security of the mission when so many other places became uninhabitable: 'You arranged places to sleep, a water supply, food, clothes, and blankets. You agreed to store the belongings of those who asked you, and afterwards when they collected them, they found them as they had left them. You welcomed, without question, all who came to you, and helped people who found themselves in unexpected distress at any time—even at night. Thus we know that God chose you as the means of saving us your children'.

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