

**Response to the papers by**  
**Hellen Bandiho, *The Challenges Faced by Business Schools within Newly Founded Catholic Universities: The Case of Tanzania***  
**and**  
**Mario Molteni, Frank Cinque *The ALTIS experience: A new Business School, ALTIS (Postgraduate School Business & Society) of the Catholic University of Sacred Heart***

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In the very beginning of my response I would like to express my gratitude to God for letting me be the part of this conference and to the authors of both papers I am going to respond to. Their lecture was a fascinating and inspiring experience for me. As a Catholic working in public and lay university it helped me also to understand better my mission and obligations in the place where I serve actually. Although my employer doesn't demand that I strive to combine (merge) the values of my Catholic faith with knowledge I deal with I understand more and more that this is the only way for me to perform my duties. Also the historical and political context of the country where I come from makes me curious how do Catholics in different places struggle to answer their vocation in the best possible way. I am talking more about it in my paper and now I want to concentrate on the things that are described in the texts by Hellen Bandiho and Mario Molteni and Frank Cinque.

I must admit that although they describe two very different realities somehow they are complementary and reading them both helps to understand better the problem of Catholic identity of the university and the challenges it may encounter. This comparison may result in discovering how Catholic universities functioning in different regions of the world may support each other and create multinational community of scholars and students as a visible part of our Church. Also developing close ties - personal and institutional - between them may enrich their experience and become a useful lesson of spreading the Gospel in academic and scientific world and creating possibilities for all (especially poor) to enter it.

### **The challenges**

Starting from the paper by sister Hellen I must admit that the picture she draws in her text gives me impression as if I was reading the report from the battlefield and in fact I think it can be called this way – the evangelization front. The whole history of higher education in Tanzania and transformation that the country undergoes is in some way similar to Polish situation (e.g. too close relations between world of politics and business), where after over four decades of socialism and communism the nation and the state try to return to normality. The disasters as a heritage after old political system may be different of course and not easy to compare but I am sure that in both cases they include moral and nonmaterial pathologies as well as material problems. All the wounds that the society has after living in and dealing with the structures of sin need time to heal. Even though material progress can be realized faster one should not forget that full – let's call it mental – recovery certainly will take some time.

Of course the other thing is that new situation brings new problems and it may result in strange mixture of socialistic and capitalistic mentality with strong deficit of moral sensibility.

The challenge mentioned by Hellen Bandiho which is to teach to perceive the world in terms of common good seems to be especially important and twice difficult in Tanzania (and Poland) where socialism promoting collectivism systems left the society with aversion to collective interest what creates favourable climate for development of unlimited individualism. Also in situation of widening the sphere of freedom and fostering liberalization I believe that it is the Catholic university that should remind of proper understanding of human freedom and indicate these social issues where it is misunderstood. It touches the problem of defending every person – especially those people that are marginalized – in these situations that sometimes are the result of wrongly perceived and realized freedom when stronger or richer have more rights than weaker or poorer. The author of the paper rightly speaks and reminds of the mission of our Catholic Church which is also to be the voice of the voiceless in every place and time, what often means speaking uncomfortable truths.

### **To save the business**

When we look and analyze the problems of contemporary economy we may come to conclusion that although it seems to be very sophisticated theoretically, technically and materially it is still underdeveloped morally and spiritually. I think this is true whatever country we look at – whether it belongs to so called first, second or third world. In these circumstances it's necessary to say that the Catholic truth about man and his wounded by original sin nature is actual no matter the time and continent. This diagnosis shows the fundamental mission of Catholic universities mentioned by Hellen Bandiho to develop, advance business and work to influence the direction people choose for their economical activity. I would add that contemporary world – so interested in searching new ways to improve quality, efficiency and productivity needs to be reminded that Holy Spirit is the only spirit of real innovation and entrepreneurship. Apart from practice also business theory needs to be humanized and baptized – which means corrected and reformulated if necessary so we may see that this body of knowledge serves again the full development of human person as it ought to. It will surely help Catholic universities described by Hellen Bandiho as a nursery for future leaders. Just as the Catholic family is called to give life to and form people ready to answer God's plan He has for them, the Catholic university (following primary and secondary education) would play crucial role and be the culmination in preparing human person to enter the society and become its active member. Also having the possibility to cooperate with scholars living their faith everyday must be attractive for the young who - so often these days - are left guideless by those who should be first to help them to grow mentally and spiritually and train their ability to choose between wrong and right.

### **“Do not be satisfied with mediocrity”**

I am beginning next part of my response to Hellen Bandiho paper with the quote from John Paul II who said these words in Castel Gandolfo in August 1981. It corresponds well with the notion of value added by Catholic universities which are called to go step further than other schools. In doing this Catholic university should save its integrity which is the condition for helping others to discover and reach their integrity. Also putting stress on being private institution Sister Bandiho indicates that it is the best possible way for the university to stay independent e.g. in telling the truth about social and state pathologies. Another problem is recognition of the difference between public and Catholic university which should be careful

in deciding on its growth and development which should be different as the nature of Catholic university is. I would also see the unique role of Catholic universities in protecting the priceless idea of university against being swallowed by the “educational market” way of thinking. By their work they should show that there are always values more important than demand and supply. There always seems to be tension between quality and quantity which somehow leads us to financial problems that SAUT faces. They show that the Catholic university as a part of Christian community and working for it needs to be supported and taken care of as its natural function is not that of making financial profit but its existence demands money from the local and – if necessary - international Catholic community. This must be well understood in the first place among us - the members of the Church – which not by accident is called universal!

One of the last things I want to discuss in response to the first paper is the recruitment strategy. Striving for excellence may be the best way of attracting best stuff. Of course one should remember – and Sister Hellen talks about it - that for a Catholic university “best” should mean not only advanced and outstanding professionally scholar but dedicated Catholic at the same time. (And that seems to be more difficult but if we consider faith and grace that we can always count on nothing should be regarded as impossible.) But if we agree – and I do and love this expression – that Catholic university scholars are the spiritual directors of their students at the same time, the stake is too high to risk the failure. We must not forget what our Lord said: “for what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Mt 16, 26)

### **New business school at the old university**

Now I would like to turn to the second paper by Mario Molteni and Frank Cinque describing ALTIS experience of the new Business School of the Catholic University of Sacred Heart in Italy. It is hard to thoroughly separate the response into two parts so some issues that appear in both texts will not be discussed again, only signalled.

The story of ALTIS seems to be good example of dynamic potential that our Catholic identity has. The context behind the ALTIS birth is very interesting – the newly founded school in the structure of experienced university – if given enough independence – must be regarded as a great opportunity to start from the right perspective and great enthusiasm which is visible in Molteni and Cinque paper. What more, the paper shows that behind the development of ALTIS is a concrete strategy (also expressed in the strategic management language) and it is another proof of cooperation of professional and religious ambition of its founders and initiators .

In this text authors show how personal commitment to Christianity may look for fulfillment in professional sphere and how they both together may result in creating new institutional initiative. Very significant is the conviction that “our faith could be the source of a positive experience in management education and research, providing hospitable environment for the student and a catalyst for the development of knowledge” (p. 2). At the same time the question posed by the ”fathers founders” is one of these in my opinion that demands urgent answer nowadays (“How can we help our students to be glad to be Christian and how can we increase in them the desire to live this identity at work?” p. 2).

Description of the assumptions that create the foundation for ALTIS gives interesting signpost for those who may be interested in establishing Catholic universities. The starting point is the problem of proper understanding of Christian identity and invitation not to limit it

to ethics and moral issues. It can be summarized as the extraordinary way to live the ordinary. Here also – as in Hellen Bandiho’s paper – one can find belief that Catholic universities are called to be the avant-garde among others.

In Molteni and Cinque paper the question of the core group – like the Evangelical salt or light (Mt 5, 13-16) - responsible for identity of a university is even more stressed as it opens the list of ten crucial ingredients that combined together result in proper understanding of its mission and ability to realize this. Then authors put stress on the importance of organizational culture. I would add that Catholic profile (or style, culture) should be regarded - whatever institution we may look at - not as an obstacle but as a serious and unique source of competitive advantage. Another on the list is friendship (which in our Polish Catholic tradition is also known as “social love”) and unity. Further on authors analyze other issues connected with the problem of employees and organization of all the didactic and scientific work of the university. One thing there deserves especially to be pointed - the problem of mainstreaming the ideal within the contents of the maximum number of courses. I confirm that in fact it is urgent challenge for all Catholic scholars (perhaps all over the world). At least from my Polish perspective I can say that it’s hard or sometimes impossible to find readings and handbooks that would take into consideration these issues and notions that are fundamental for CST. What is also worth underlining authors declare that for them “Catholic” is very close in meaning to “modern” and “open”. It leads us to another challenge: to analyse through the lens of CST and compare these contemporary theories that aim at rebuilding and reforming the traditional way of thinking about business. It should be done in order to find allies and perhaps engage them and their vocabulary to communicate with – let’s call it – XXI century lay economy.

### **The Catholic potential**

Molteni and Cinque deserve my applause again for pointing out that we must look at our faith not as it would be habit or legacy we once got and have to carry on without much understanding and enthusiasm but rather that it is the source of real and true life. Being the fruit of an encounter with living Jesus Christ Catholic faith is a dynamic reality that has the power to renew not only our life but also lives of those living around us. That is why it has to be said that faith in its nature is innovative and entrepreneurial – in every dimension of human life.

The stress put again on Catholic identity and treating it as the foundation of all other things that are to come is also worth noticing. Authors prove that their vision is not uncritically optimistic but that they understand that the culture that we are immersed in cannot be called Christian anymore and that we need time to develop concepts and transform economic systems. What we can do now is to be present and trust that the solutions will emerge in time – I do agree. Another thing that makes me glad is that ALTIS pays attention to the problem of responsible consumption which I call the CSR number two – Consumer Social Responsibility.

Coming slowly to the end I must underline that in this paper – as well as in the first one – also appears the question of cooperation between Catholic schools, staff exchange and responsibility for versatile formation of business leaders for a better world.

### **Proposals and conclusions**

I will start by making a small remark and it doesn’t only apply to Sister Bandiho, and Mario Molteni and Frank Cinque paper. I wonder if the name “human resources” and

“Human Resources Management” fits to CST and whether Catholics should uncritically accept and use the names that portray different way of thinking of human person and its nature. I personally am against using this exact expression and I would encourage to look for better words that would not lose the human essence of the working man (maybe Personnel Management would do...). It may be small contribution to humanization of the reality we live in.

Another thing which I want to mention is the Tanzanian government initiative to introduce Foundations of Ethics in all educational curriculums which should be highly praised (and followed elsewhere if possible and necessary). Also the idea of staff exchange between Catholic universities seems to be reasonable and realistic solution to the problem of lacking staff.

Especially dramatic seems to be the poverty among students in Africa. Probably you have encountered the initiative of spiritual adoption of the unborn child. Maybe similar way of support – with prayer and money – could help to solve some problems and such spiritual adoption of a Catholic student by a student or scholar from sister university or anyone who wants to support others in this way would work. (Maybe this spiritual adoption could start right here, right now between brothers and sisters from ALTIS and SAUT)

Coming to the end I want to thank Sister Hellen for sharing her thoughts and experiences with us and want to express my admiration that she and her SAUT community is able to do so much with so little. It proves that Christ has really risen and it is His spirit that is the key!

My gratitude comes also to Mr. Molteni and Mr. Cinque for sharing with us their clear vision of Catholic business school that strives to build dialogue and understanding between different languages and dialects of our economic reality and to convince others that the Catholic university may be this special place where true human good is right in the center of its heart.