I. ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL

1.1. The need for a relevant liturgy

Another Brick in the Wall (Part I)

Daddy's flown across the ocean
Leaving just a memory
A snapshot in the family album
Daddy, what else did you leave for me
All in all it was just a brick in the wall
All in all it was all just bricks in the wall
(R. Waters 1979 PINK FLOYD Music Publishers Ltd.)

What is meant here by liturgy? And more specifically:
- What is the meaning and purpose of a public worship service?
- Why a song of Pink Floyd as introduction instead of a traditional, biblically inspired psalm?

At first sight a definition of liturgy does not seem so important. It is evident that liturgy has something to do with worship and according to Kunnumpuram this term can be used in a broad sense to signify a prayer, a church service, or any rite showing reverence for, or devotion to, God.

"It could mean anything from the fleeting ejaculatory prayer of a busy housewife to a solemn pontifical celebration in St. Peter's Basilica" (K. Kunnumpuram, Worship in a secular World. In: Jeevadhara 2, 1972, 12, 454).

At a closer look, however, a basic assumption seems to underly these very questions, namely that H. Cox was right in saying that our worship services are more or less meaningless to most of us (H. Cox, The Feast of Fools, 1969, 80).
Muma Damien, in his article 'Man-centred liturgy', is of the same opinion. According to him even the Eucharist is received in a vacuum devoid of human concern and interest:

"Christians go to Mass on Sunday without a clue of what the Mass is going to be about. To make things worse, the theme of that Sunday is already fixed for them, including the readings and prayers." (Muma Damien, Man-centred liturgy. In: Afer 19, 1977, 1, 35)

If Damien is right, the question arises whether a profane piece of music such as a song made by Pink Floyd could not be spiritually effective in a liturgical setting. It brings us, in other words, to the important theme of the relation between liturgy and people's daily life.

Among most writers on liturgy it is common ground that the church has built high walls between the secular world and the sacred places where christians seek to praise the Lord.

"Modern man finds liturgical worship irrelevant because of its separation from everyday life" (Kunnumpuram, 459).

....

"The secular man is scandalized by the fact that worship has apparently so little influence on the daily life of the worshippers" (Kunnumpuram, 461).

Raised walls indeed.... outside by laying bricks for fine edifices, and inside by ritualizing almost every act. The liturgical celebration is a world apart with its own language and gestures, signs and symbols. Does all this mean that the liturgical celebration comes to a dead end against high ecclesiastic walls, or is there a break in the wall?

According to H. Cox there are several ways out!

"One is to shake up existing liturgies so that their hidden themes begin to stimulate fantasy and innovation... The other and perhaps more promising path to living liturgy today is to begin not in the churches but in the world. Start where people seek to celebrate life and hope....(H. Cox, 81, italics mine)

What sounds as a missionary dedication, the device 'go the world', is the main topic in most articles on our subject.

C. Sekwa, for instance, has written an article in which he attempted to respond to some of the above mentioned questions. Central in his argument is the plea for a 'natural liturgy':