Landas

JOURNAL OF LOYOLA SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
Vol. 29, No. 2 (2015)
ISSN: 0116-4856

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Fons et Finis *of Mission*
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in Light of the New Evangelization
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Landas (The Way), Journal of the Loyola School of Theology, is published twice a year by the Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City. The Landas postal address is: Loyola School of Theology, P.O. Box 240, U.P., 1144 Quezon City, Philippines. Editorial matters are the responsibility of Felipe Fruto Ll. Ramirez, S.J. (framirez@phjesuits.org). Circulation and business matters should be addressed to Susan Isorena-Arcega (siouxstar@gmail.com). Domestic subscription rates: PhP 450 local institutional/individual subscription (one year); PhP 275 local single copy. Elsewhere: US$ 45 foreign institutional/individual subscription (one year); US$ 27.50 foreign single copy.

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

The 51st International Eucharistic Congress held in Cebu City last January 20–31, 2016, has provided a rare opportunity—not only for the thousands of people who participated in it, but also for millions of people who watched it on TV, YouTube, or social media—to reflect on the profound significance of the Eucharist for contemporary society. Speakers from various parts of the world shared their theological insights and personal testimonies about this great gift which the Lord Jesus Christ has given to his Church.

The Papal Legate, Charles Maung Cardinal Bo, S.D.B., stressed the social dimension of the Eucharist. In his homily at the opening Mass, he said:

> The Eucharist of the disciple continues with the streets as altar. Christ died in the street, [was] dragged on the streets, proclaimed his good news on the streets, and affirmed the human dignity in the streets. His altar was the world; he broke the bread of healing, he broke the bread of feeding, he broke the bread of reconciling, he broke the bread of Good News. His disciples carried on the task.[1]

Timothy Radcliffe, O.P., focused on the virtue of hope expressed in the celebration of the Eucharist. He said:

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[1]Charles Maung Bo, "Opening Mass Homily," 51st International Eucharistic Congress (Cebu City, Philippines: January 24, 2016), https://youtu.be/jxhqTATV3Qg (accessed May 1, 2016).

> Our hope is that our God remains with us; and so we show our hope by remaining, by abiding, not running away .... To remain is a sign of trust in the Lord who remains with us. I wonder if many of you have seen that wonderful film *Des hommes et des dieux* (Of Gods and Men). It's a story of a little Trappist community in Algeria who lived in the middle of this Muslim country. They see the growth of violence and they have to decide: will they go or will they stay? And one of the monks says to his Muslim neighbors, "we're like birds on the branch, birds who don't know whether they will fly away or stay on the branch." And the villagers reply, "we are the birds, you are the branch; if you leave, we lose our footing." So they stay and they die. They stay because that's the sign of God's fidelity to us .... When I visited our brothers and sisters in Baghdad and Syria, we celebrated the Eucharist together in the middle of the war zone and that is a sacrament of hope.[2]

Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle tackled the problem of the culture of individualism and alienation in the modern world. He recalled how Jesus hosted and participated in meals by calling together all sorts of people to a community to become his family, his body. To illustrate this, Cardinal Tagle tells us this story:

> When I was a parish priest in the 1990s, I invited some of the youth, the sick, the women, the people with disabilities, and the unknowns to come up to the altar so that their feet could be washed at the commemoration of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday. That particular Holy Thursday, we invited the poor girl who regularly sold flowers and candles at the church grounds to be one of the Twelve. This girl had polio; she had to walk on crutches. Many people must have bought from her candles and flowers without seeing her, without [them] knowing her. But that evening, to commemorate the Supper of the Lord, she processed to the altar, bearing the pains and sufferings of the poor and the lame. I will never forget how it felt, to hold, to wash, and to kiss her foot—her limped and shriveled foot. It would be forever etched in my memory. And I understood what Jesus meant when Peter

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[2]Timothy Radcliffe, "The Christian Virtue of Hope," 51st International Eucharistic Congress (Cebu City, Philippines: January 20, 2006), https://youtu.be/-PJ3D4RzXTU (accessed May 1, 2016).

> refused to be washed. Washing the shriveled foot of this girl, I felt she has become part of me, and I have become part of her. And her broken body has found its proper place within this family called the Body of Christ. And a few hours after the Mass, she came to me exuberant with the good news: "Father, people flocked to me after the Mass and they bought my flowers and candles." Then she asked me, "Will you wash again my feet next year?" She is no longer just a polio stricken flower and candle vendor. She has entered the community. The wall of alienation has been torn down at the Supper of the Lord.[3]

These are just a few examples of the profound thoughts and personal witness shared by some of the congress speakers. Credit for the inspiring catechesis on the meaning of the Eucharist belongs partly to the local Theological Commission that drew up a list of themes for the IEC 2016. The overall theme chosen for the congress, "Christ in You, Our Hope of Glory," was drawn from Colossians 1:27.

In a speech he gave at the National Orientation on the Catechism of IEC 2016, Catalino G. Arévalo, S.J. ("*Christus in Vobis, Spes Gloriae:* The Eucharist, 'Missionary Event,' *Fons et Finis* of Mission") explains the theological significance of Col. 1:24–29. He notes that this scripture passage is a "missionary text" which deals with St. Paul's tireless effort to bring the redeeming and elevating presence of Christ to the people of Colossae. Paul reminds the Christian community there that Christ—"in whom all the fullness of divinity dwells in bodily form" (Col. 2:9)—is already in them and among them. He is the hope of glory (*kavodh*)—the manifestation of God's presence (*shekinah*) long awaited by the Jews to return to the Temple but now residing in the Body of Christ, the New Temple (cf. John 2:19–21). Arévalo notes that "applying this theology of 'Christ in/among you' directly to the Eucharist would not really be difficult for us who accept in

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[3]Luis Antonio G. Tagle, "The Eucharist and the Dialogue with Cultures," 51st International Eucharistic Congress (Cebu City, Philippines: January 28, 2006), https://youtu.be/78_pgAkJeaE (accessed May 1, 2016).

faith the mystery of the Eucharist" (9). We believe that in the Eucharist, the Paschal mystery of Christ, his saving deed, is made present in the community and in the world—"the event of the Cross and Resurrection abides and draws everything toward life" (CCC 1085). For this reason, the evangelizing mission of the Church draws its efficacy from the Eucharist and culminates in its celebration of our communion with God (*fons et finis* of mission).

In a lecture delivered on October 17, 2013 at the First Philippine Congress on New Evangelization held at the University of Santo Tomás, Manila, Timoteo J. M. Ofrasio, S.J. ("Liturgy and the Eucharist in Light of the New Evangelization") dealt with the question of how the Eucharist can be an effective vehicle of new evangelization in a secularized world where religion has lost much of its influence. Indeed, how can the Eucharist convey the real presence of Christ to people who have lost the sense of the sacred and have become oblivious to spiritual values? While there are many factors that contribute to a dignified celebration of the Mass, Ofrasio finds the internal disposition of the priest and the congregation as most important of all. He notes that the "*ars celebrandi*, the proper celebration of the liturgical rites, is greatly affected by the interior disposition of the priest" (25). This involves not just proper decorum at Mass but understanding *what* and *why* we celebrate the Eucharist. For this reason, there is need for a liturgical catechesis so people will be able to appreciate the Eucharist and somehow grasp the unfolding Paschal Mystery of Christ in the Mass.

Although the Eucharist and the other sacraments that flow from it are the primary channels of grace, the Church recognizes other ways by which people reach out to God and partake of his blessings. James H. Kroeger, M.M. ("Discovering the Rich Treasures of Popular Piety: Theological-Pastoral-Missiological Insights") bears testimony to the invaluable contribution of traditional Catholic religious practices such as processions, novenas, litanies, *via crucis*, passion plays, and others in propagating, nourishing, and

preserving the Christian faith. He said: "popular forms of piety should be welcomed as tools of evangelization because dramatics, pageantry, socio-religious rituals, and festivity can often constitute, in themselves, an actual proclamation of biblical faith!" (33). Kroeger's article answers questions often asked regarding such folk religious practices, and he concludes that, indeed, "popular piety remains a potent resource that necessarily must be at the service of a renewed evangelization for future generations of believers .... [It] should thus figure prominently in all effective programs of the 'new evangelization,' especially for the youth" (49).

In Asia, where only seven percent of the population are Christians, the Church needs to engage in dialogue with people of different faiths. Jojo M. Fung, S.J. ("An Emerging Mystic Theology of Sustainability amidst Rapid Changes for an Indigenous Church of Asia") proposes a new way of being Church among the indigenous peoples of Asia—by dialoguing with them in everyday interaction, accompaniment, and religious experience, with the latter achieved only by means of "experiential participation" in their religious rituals so as to discover their religious and moral values that resonate with the Christian faith. In addition to this form of dialogue at the level of religious experience, Fung also sees the need to engage in what he calls "dialogue of liberative struggle," i.e., identification with the indigenous people's struggle against all forms of oppression: political, social, economic, ecological, etc. "In this way," Fung says, "the Church of Asia is truly inculturated from within to become a truly indigenous way of being the Church of Asia in the tribal ancestral homeland" (73).

Interfaith dialogue is possible because God reveals himself in a direct and personal way to people regardless of their religion. Earl Allyson P. Valdez ("Henri de Lubac's Theology of Revelation: From Distance to Mystery") provides an insight on how such an experience of the divine mystery, which transcends the God we know from reason (and theologizing!), "opens up the human heart towards a greater and richer affirmation of God ... [and] summons

the human person to a new life and a new way of living" (100–101). According to Valdez, de Lubac's theology of revelation has negative and positive affirmations. On the one hand, de Lubac affirms the incomprehensibility of God, thus placing him at a distance from human reason; he cannot be reduced to the god that the human mind creates for itself. On the other hand, de Lubac points out that God reveals himself to the human person in a more direct, immediate, and inter-subjective way—as a *Thou* who encounters the subject at his innermost core. Spiritual writers in the ancient and the medieval Church have tried to describe this ineffable experience of the mystery of God through words and images that are extraordinary, yet convincingly honest and real. This way of understanding divine revelation shows the human creature to be essentially linked to the Creator as his final end. In and through Jesus Christ, God draws the human person to himself in a communion that is analogous to the union of the human and divine natures in Christ.

Amado T. Tumbali, Jr., S.J. ("Maritain's 'Rights': A Heritage of Neo-Thomism in the Twentieth Century") explains Maritain's contribution to the development of the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Using the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas and the neo-scholastics, he staunchly defended a natural law ethics. He regarded moral norms as intrinsically bound to human nature. Unlike other philosophers who regarded human rights as the product of a sociological form of rule setting, or a reasoned agreement of people to accept norms imposed by a legitimate authority in exchange for security and economic benefit (cf. John Rawls' *Law of Peoples*), Maritain traced the underlying basis of the concept of human rights to natural law, particularly to human nature. For Maritain, these rights are known primarily through what he calls *connaturality* or *congeniality* which develops in human persons as they grow in moral experience and maturity. Maritain's way of philosophizing on human rights has thus laid a more stable foundation for the universal and immutable character of these rights.

Felipe Fruto Ll. Ramirez, S.J. ("Are the Allusions to Jacob and Moses in Hosea 12 Late Insertions?") notes that the one and only evidence we have that some of the stories of Jacob and Moses already existed in the second half of the eighth century BCE is Hosea 12. Various attempts to invalidate this evidence on the basis of poetic structure, vocabulary, grammar, typology of ideas, etc. prove to be unsatisfactory. On the contrary, the use of the binomial *Israel/Jacob* in eighth century prophetic writings as well as the gentilics *Isaac* and *Joseph* in Amos presumes the existence of patriarchal stories that explain the connection of these names to the northern kingdom. Moreover, Hosea's allusion to an incident in Jacob's life not found in Genesis may attest to an early period before the fixing of the patriarchal traditions in late Judean history. Hosea's allusions to both patriarchal and Mosaic traditions may thus give us a good indication that the epic legend of Israel's salvation history narrated in Genesis-Exodus was already beginning to take shape during his prophetic ministry in the eighth century.

Felipe Fruto Ll. Ramirez, S.J.

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CHRISTUS IN VOBIS, SPES GLORIAE

The Eucharist, "Missionary Event," *Fons et Finis* of Mission[1]

Catalino G. Arévalo, S.J.

There is a "basic theological text" which was meant to serve as a kind of "textbook" to be reflected upon in preparation for the 51st International Eucharistic Congress (IEC) held last January 24–31, 2016 in Cebu City, Philippines. The present article is meant to be an introduction to this text.

Archbishop Piero Marini, head of the Pontifical Committee for International Eucharistic Congresses, gave us a basic and comprehensive presentation on IECs and their diverse objectives. He also brought the 51st IEC into the present Asian and Philippine "Church horizon," the fruit of quite extensive and discerning research. We can assume, then, what he has so well given us (and for which we are most grateful), and we can go on from that.

The points I will take up myself are those which are "more specific" in the document of the local "theological commission" (TC/Phil) created by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) on instructions from the Holy See. The TC/Phil tried to put together a text which would more or less focus on the question "what are the

[1]From a presentation by the author (given on April 26, 2015) on the local theological commission of the CBCP (TC/Phil) text entitled "Theological Thematic for the 51st International Eucharistic Congress."

themes 'more properly, most relevantly related' to the 51st IEC?" We will choose just a few among those themes, topics which fit into one somewhat synthetic—and yet necessarily partial—view. The objective here would be to answer the question "*what is a theological perspective/vision which this IEC in Cebu 2016 can really call its 'own'?*"

Context

The Church in the Philippines is preparing to mark the 500th anniversary of the very first coming of the Christian Faith and the Catholic Church to our land. In 1521, Ferdinand Magellan landed with his ships—coming all the way from Europe!—in what we now call the Visayan sector of our country, most significantly in the place we now know as Cebu, where baptisms were performed which made a good number of our ancestors, of high and low estates, Catholic Christians. Hence were the "first beginnings" of Christianity in our land; this is the historic event we are preparing to celebrate in 2021.

Our bishops have organized a "nine year novena" for this preparation. The splendid and memorably moving visit of Pope Francis, and the 51st IEC—all unexpectedly, I believe—entered into the "novena-years of preparation" as superb and truly providential "gifts from heaven." Moreover, as the entire Church pursues all over the world, and of course also in the Philippines, the "New Evangelization," the 51st IEC also becomes an especially meaningful chapter within the effort to bring anew and more radiantly the presence of Christ Jesus and His Gospel to our people and the peoples of Asia. Surely, the 51st IEC is not just for the Philippines and Asia, but inevitably, providentially, and once again, its first impact will be in our own part of the world.

The Theme Drawn from the Letter to the Colossians 1:24–29

"*The mystery … Christ among you [Christus in vobis] … hope for glory*"—The Scripture text which was chosen, and from which the

theological thematic for the 51st IEC was drawn, is from the Letter to the Colossians 1:24–29:

> Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of his body, which is the church, of which I am a minister in accordance with God's stewardship given to me to bring to completion for you the word of God, the mystery hidden from ages and from generations past. But now it has been manifested to his holy ones, to whom God chose to make known the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentles: it is Christ in you, the hope for glory. It is he whom we proclaim, admonishing everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. For this I labor and struggle, in accord with the exercise of his power working within me. (Col. 1:24–29)

We realize from deeper study that the chosen passage from Colossians concerns (what we would call) "mission": it is a "missionary text"! And so it places clearly before us the perfect thematic for the 51st IEC: the Eucharist as a "missionary reality and event." Dublin's 50th IEC had as its theme the Eucharist as communion. Cebu's 51st IEC's theme follows upon it perfectly: *the Eucharist as mission: the Eucharist as "fons et finis" of mission.*

The Church as mission, for Asia and the world: this has been the overarching theme of what we might be allowed to call the "magisterial theology of the Church in Asia" since Vatican II. From the history-making visit of Blessed Paul VI in November 1970 "to all the peoples of Asia"; consistently through the thought and pronouncements of the assemblies and "meetings-cum-seminars" of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) from 1974 onwards; in the Synod of Bishops for Asia (1998) and in St. John Paul II's subsequent *Ecclesia in Asia* [1999]; in the relatively recent international mission symposium in Thailand (2006), our number one theological concern has predominantly been "mission," *the Church's essential, defining task to bring Christ Jesus, his story, his Gospel, "to all the peoples of Asia" … and the world.*

At this moment, we are told that Asia, the vast continent made up of incredibly diverse peoples, nations, cultures, and histories, has over

four billion people within its boundaries and that some 92% to 93% of these people have not yet really *significantly* encountered *Christ Jesus, his story, his Gospel, his people—his Body on earth—the Church.* Only some 7% to 8% are Christians and thus (we trust) have more fully encountered Christ Jesus in Asia.[2] Over 60% of humanity is in Asia;[3] more than 90% of them have not yet come to know Jesus Christ! And yet, "For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day" (John 6:40); "I have come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

Furthermore, and of immediate relevance for Cebu's IEC, every pope from Pius XI to Francis has explicitly told the Church in the Philippines that, because of its geographical location and above all its history, it has—in God's providence—a special calling and mission to "bring Jesus, his story, his Gospel, his people [his Body the Church] to all the peoples of Asia" … and (of course, also) to all the world.

Thus, the 51st IEC in Cebu must be, for all the world to see, a real "explosion of faith"—of faith and love, and hope—in the heart of Asia, from this part of the earth. It is not only fitting then but also necessary(!) that IEC 51 should have at its center *the Eucharist, "fons et finis" of mission!*

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[2]Statistics vary widely. According to the *Britannica Book of the Year 2014* (ed. Karen Jacobs Sparks [Chicago/London: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 2014], 324), there are about 365 million Christians in Asia who constitute about 8.5% of its total population of 4.3 billion. However, according to the Pew Research Center, there are 287 million Christians in Asia who comprise 7.1% of its total population of 4 billion (see http://www.pewforum.org/2012/12/18/global-religious-landscape-christians/ [accessed June 9, 2016]). The Christian population in Asia is projected to rise to 7.7% by 2050 (see http://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/asia-pacific/ [accessed June 9, 2016]).

[3]Asia has 4.3 billion or 60.6% of the 7.1 billion world population (*Britannica Book of the Year 2014*, 234).

Christus in Vobis, Spes Gloriae: "Christ in you, Christ among you, your hope of glory"

Now, to return to Col. 1:24–29—at its center is "Christus in vobis, spes gloriae." The translations read "Christ in you" or preferably, as some scholars would translate Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν, "Christ among you (Christ in your minds, hearts and spirit; *Christ in your midst*)—your hope of glory."

First, the person of Christ Jesus towers in the Colossians text. Chapter One, beginning at verse 15, rises to the magnificent hymn on the preeminence of Christ: "He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation." Then, in Chapter Two, from verse 2, we meet that resounding profession of faith which begins with:

> … as they are brought together in love, to have all the riches of fully assured understanding, for the knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. [vv. 2–3] … For in him dwells the whole fullness of the deity bodily, and you share in this fullness in him, who is the head of every principality and power. [v. 9][4]

It seems that the Colossians were being tempted to base their beliefs and their hopes not on Christ Jesus only but on other sources as well; they were tempted to create some sort of syncretistic religious ideology.

Paul tells them, with his usual moving passion for Christ: "In Christ Jesus there indwells, bodily, the fullness of divinity." And thus, "In Christ Jesus we have everything!" This is "the mystery of God." Its revelation to the Colossians is the supreme task in the ministry Paul himself has been given, the purpose of his mighty and incessant labors, of the outpouring of all the energy—the power of the Risen Christ Jesus—"which works so mightily within me."[5]

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[4]Some real grasp of the Letter to the Colossians and its "mission theme" should be in all of us in order to enter fully into IEC 51's full significance—so I believe!

[5]The outstanding New Testament exegete, N. T. Wright, believes that so much of the doubt cast on the Pauline authorship of the Letters to the Colossians and Ephesians is because of their so strongly affirmative "high Christology and

There is so much more to say about the Colossians text itself, but all we can do now is swiftly sketch something of its message.[6] We will of course have to link all this up, this "Christus in vobis spes gloriae," this presence of Christ in you and amongst you—*link it all with the Eucharist*. But for us who believe in the Eucharistic mystery, it is not really, in faith, a difficult task!

"Christ in You, the Hope of Glory": Paul's "Reconstruction" of Israel's Understanding of Eschatological Hope[7]

Central to Jewish faith is this conviction: if Israel's God is the author of all creation, then, at the end of time, God will "put the world aright at last."

When the First Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 587/586 BC because of the idolatry of the priests in the Temple, the *Shekinah*, the glory of God which had stayed in the Temple since Solomon's time, vanished. But when the Temple is rebuilt, the *Shekinah* will dwell again in it. The *prophecy of returning glory* was widespread in later Jewish literature. But it is not only the glory of God himself which is to be restored in the coming new age, when God will bring his mercy and judgment to bear on the world again. It is also the glory of humankind, made unto the image of God—"the glory of

high ecclesiology"! He considers these Letters truly Pauline (see N. T. Wright, *The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and to Philemon: An Introduction and Commentary* [Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1986], 31–34). On the authorship of the Christological hymn in Col. 1:15–20, see N. T. Wright, "Poetry and Theology in Colossians 1:15–20," in *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (London: T&T Clark Ltd, 1993), 119.

[6]But you are challenged to "dig into it" so as to set your minds and hearts on fire!

[7]Here I follow and borrow heavily *from the Pauline studies of N. T. Wright*, in some places using his very own words. I believe all of us must make what follows in some way our own!

Adam"—which will be restored and renewed; this glory will pour out to fill and fulfill humanity: thus God will dwell amongst his people.[8]

In 2 Samuel 7, King David proposes to build a house for the Lord. But it is the Lord who will "build himself a house," a physical Temple where his glory can indwell. But God will give David a son, a new king to sit on David's throne. This son will turn out to be "God's own son." The physical Temple will only be a sign and symbol pointing to this king. This king will be himself the real Temple wherein God will dwell anew among his people.

This is the background for Psalm 2, and for the hymn of "the all-sufficient Christ" in Colossians (Col. 1:15–29; cf. Col. 2:9–15): "In Christ the fullness of deity resides in bodily form. Yours is a share in this fullness, in him who is the head of every principality and power" (Col. 2:9–10). *The long awaited return of the Shekinah is, for Paul, in Christ Jesus, son of David and God's own Son.* Christ Jesus himself is the fulfillment of the hope of Israel that God's glory would return, dwelling in the restored Temple. *Jesus is himself the new Temple*; in him the *Shekinah* indwells *fully and bodily*, for "God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' … has shone in our hearts to bring to light the knowledge of the glory of God on the face of Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6).

The mystery of God is Christ Jesus crucified and risen; in him is revealed, not only the glory of the one Creator-God, but the true glory of all humankind (the "glory of Adam") which was lost in the Fall. The coming, long-awaited restoration of God's glory has now been accomplished in Christ Jesus**:** *"the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"* (2 Cor. 4:6).

"*Yours is a share in the fullness [of deity] in him* …" (Col. 2:9). It is not only in Jesus where God's glory is revealed, but also in his Body, the

[8]This "glory of Adam," to be fulfilled by the sharing in "the glory of God in Christ Jesus," is a significant theme in the Pauline eschatological vision. See N. T. Wright, "Adam in Pauline Christology," in K. H. Richards, ed., *SBL Seminar Papers 22* (Chico: Scholars' Press, 1983), 359–389; N. T. Wright, "Poetry and Theology in Colossians 1:15–20," 99–119.

Church.[9] In the Church as a whole, in Christian communities and in individual Christians, in their "shared Christ-life," there is also shared this indwelling of God in Christ (Eph. 3:17: "… that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith"; v. 19 " … that you may be filled with all the fullness of God").

Do we glimpse now the real content of Paul's "Christus in vobis, spes gloriae," "Christ in you, Christ among you, your hope of glory"?

Let me end this by citing Bishop N. T. Wright directly and more fully:

> For Second Temple Jews, the hope of glory was the hope that God's own glorious presence would return to the Temple in Jerusalem, thus exalting the people of Israel over the nations. For Paul, this hope has been realized in Christ Jesus and the Spirit.
>
> But in Paul, it [the hope of glory, the hope of the return of God's glorious presence to the Temple of Jerusalem] has been turned over completely inside out. For Paul, the whole of creation is now God's holy land, hearing the good news of the victory of the creator God over all the powers of evil. The eschatological truth, for Paul, the thing God always intended to do in the end, but had kept secret up to this point, is that instead of coming to live in a Temple made of stone, located in one particular city, *God has now decided to dwell, not just in Jesus Christ, but in his people spread throughout the world* [italics mine]. The church is the strange fulfillment of the ancient Jewish promise, but it is a fulfillment for and among all the nations of the world. Because the Messiah lives in the hearts, lives in the worship of the people, whoever they are, that people constitutes the true eschatological Temple, the place where the glory of God is revealed.
>
> The hope of glory in Col. 1:27 is not only the hope of glory for the whole church (Rom. 5:2), but also the hope of glory for the whole world (Rom. 8:21). The whole creation will share "the freedom of the glory of the children of God." God's presence in the end will be manifest throughout his creation, and the life of the church in the present time is the advance sign of that, and perhaps also the means toward it. Paul reworked the eschatology of the glory of God in the light of Jesus Christ, his death and resurrection, and the gift of the

[9]Rom. 9:22–24; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 1:18; Col. 3:4; 1 Thess. 2:11–12; 2 Thess. 2:14.

> Spirit. The result is *a cosmic eschatology of future glory, anticipated in the fact of his church* [italics mine].[10]

"Christ in You, Christ among You": The Presence of Christ Jesus in Christian Life, in the Life of the Church, and in Christian Worship

It has been said above that applying this theology of "Christ in/among you" directly to the Eucharist would not really be difficult for us who accept in faith the mystery of the Eucharist. At this point, therefore, we can turn to the worship of the Church and the "mystery of faith" present in that worship and in the sacred liturgy. We now turn to the sacramental presence which might be called the "culminating presence" (*fons et finis:* finis), the "Eucharistic Emmanuel-presence": our Lord with us in the Eucharist—sacrifice, sacrament, and "real presence." In the Eucharist, we have Jesus Christ in whom dwells the fullness of divinity in bodily form—"in the flesh," dwelling with us, one *with us. "Fons et finis" of mission, we have said. This presence is, in truth and depth, the final fulfillment of mission.*

In the teaching of the Church, we also have in the Eucharist Jesus Christ's presence "in action," in the reality of his entire Paschal Mystery. We turn for this, conveniently, to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 1084 to 1099). CCC 1085 reads:

> In the liturgy of the Church, it is principally his own Paschal mystery that Christ signifies and makes present. During his earthly life Jesus announced his Paschal mystery by his teaching and anticipated it by his actions. When his Hour comes, he lives out the unique event of

[10]This text from Bishop Wright I have cited at length so we may grasp the real and full breadth of what "Christus in vobis, spes gloriae" truly means, and not read into Paul's words and thought some narrow understanding we have picked up from sermons. See N. T. Wright, "'Christ in You, the Hope of Glory' (Col. 1:27): Eschatology in St. Paul," in Demetrios Trakatellis & John Chryssavgis, eds., *In the Footsteps of St. Paul: An Academic Symposium—Papers Presented at the Pauline Symposium, October 11–16, 2008* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2011), 19–36.

> history which does not pass away: Jesus dies, is buried, rises from the dead, and is seated at the right hand of the Father "once for all." [The] Paschal mystery is a real event that occurred in our history, but it is unique: all other historical events happen once, and then they pass away, swallowed up in the past. The Paschal mystery of Christ, by contrast, cannot remain only in the past, because by his death he destroyed death, and all that Christ is—all that he did and suffered for all men—participates in the divine eternity, and so transcends all times while being made present in them all. The event of the Cross and Resurrection *abides* and draws everything toward life.[11] (CCC 1085)

This chapter in the CCC will be something of a "revelation" to most of us. Implicit in it is the basic theological insight of the *Mysterien-theologie* (the "Mystery theology") proposed by Dom Odo Casel, a Benedictine monk and scholar at Maria Laach. Casel's liturgical/theological reflection—later taken up, developed, "corrected," and modified—was yet considered by Joseph Ratzinger (later Pope Benedict XVI) as perhaps the most fruitful theological theme raised up in the 20th century.

Furthermore, a prior and complementary text, taken from Vatican II's *Presbyterorum Ordinis* (on the priesthood), no. 5, reads thus:

> The other sacraments, as well as with every ministry of the Church and every work of the apostolate, are tied together with the Eucharist and are directed toward it. The Most Blessed Eucharist contains the entire spiritual boon of the Church, that is, Christ himself, our Pasch and Living Bread, by the action of the Holy Spirit through his very flesh vital and vitalizing, giving life to men who are thus invited and encouraged to offer themselves, their labors and all created things, together with him.

We must note that CCC 1085 affirms a theology—more a *Church teaching*—not much known or grasped even by many priests, and surely not by most of the faithful. We have learned that it is not even much taught to our people. It is profound and thus "difficult to grasp." But it is surely worth our time and effort to come to some understanding and "experience" of this reality. The catechesis (and prayerful reflection) for

[11] This CCC text is, I believe, an invaluable "theological treasure" for reflection.

the IEC 51 might fruitfully serve as a way we can make this teaching known and grasped more widely among us.

The "event" that is the Paschal Mystery (even this term, so much taken up in the Church after Vatican II, is frequently not understood!) is an "event"—a "single mystery"—understood as a "doing of Jesus," a "doing by" Christ Jesus done for us, for our sakes. Going back to CCC 1085, because Jesus Christ is and acts as the Son-made-flesh, everything he does "participates in the divine eternity."

Perhaps we in turn might put it this way: the divine eternity flows into all that the Son-made-man is and does. In some true way, it assumes all of it, takes all of it up, into the life of God. But the events which make up the Paschal Mystery, as the Church has always believed, in the most eminent way "abide in eternity" in such a way that in them the Lord does take up our lives and our deeds, offered to Him, and then are by Him (in and by the Spirit) joined to His own passion, to His redeeming death and resurrection, so that they may be redeemed and in a true way participate in His own saving mystery.

Our Faith tells us, and the Church teaches us, that this is what happens in our worship, in the Church's liturgy first of all—pre-eminently in the Eucharistic sacrifice and in "the Supper of the Lamb." This "takes place" at every Mass. Jesus takes us up into His saving action "here and now" so that that action becomes present to us and we become present "in it" and become "part of it"; its transforming grace flows into our lives to make us more one with Him, more conformed to Him, to make our lives and deeds "instruments" of His saving work in the world. This is the Eucharistic presence of "Christ in you, the hope of glory." *Surely it is a "presence"—a "Christifying presence"—particularly significant for the Cebu Eucharistic Congress, and its opening out to "mission" for Asia, for our "new age and our new world."*

May I end this with what I believe is an important remark: this grasp of the "mystery" is not so much the "work of words and our own thinking"; it is grace given us by the Lord: *given to us in grace*, through our truly and fully opening up of our spirit to the presence and action within us, and in our lives, of the Spirit of Jesus.

The Eucharist: *Fons et Finis* of Mission

Before we complete our reflection on the theme of "Christ in you, Christ among you" as *spes gloriae*, "hope of glory," we have to take up some clarifications on the understanding of "mission" today, especially in the Asian context.

For the Asian bishops, above all in the FABC statements, mission of course involves proclamation—proclamation of Jesus, his story, his Gospel, yes! But proclamation is done by means of dialogue. There are different modes of dialogue, but the most basic of all is the "dialogue of life."[12]

The "dialogue of life"—this notion came to the FABC originally through Pope Paul VI's encyclical, *Ecclesiam suam*.[13] The Indian bishops

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[12]The document *Dialogue and Proclamation* of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (1991) enumerates various forms of dialogue: e.g.,

> (a) the *dialogue of life*, where people strive to live in an open and neighborly spirit, sharing their joys and sorrows, their human problems and preoccupations; (b) the *dialogue of action*, in which Christians and others collaborate for the integral development and liberation of people; (c) the *dialogue of theological exchange*, where specialists seek to deepen their understanding of their respective religious heritages, and to appreciate each other's spiritual values; (d) the *dialogue of religious experience*, where persons, rooted in their own religious traditions, share their spiritual riches, for instance with regard to prayer and contemplation, faith and ways of searching for God or the Absolute. (no. 42)

[13]Paul VI's encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam* (1964) does not use the term "dialogue of life," but the notion can be found in section no. 87:

> Since the world cannot be saved from the outside, we must first of all identify ourselves with those to whom we would bring the Christian message—like the Word of God who Himself became a man. Next we must forego all privilege … and adopt the way of life of ordinary people in all that is human and honorable. … Then, before speaking, we must take great care to listen not only to what men say, but more especially to what they have it in their hearts to say. Only then will

first highlighted it for Asia. Through it, we Christians live and rub shoulders with people of other religious traditions, "other faiths," and other world-views and even ideologies. Through it, people in their diversities get to know each other, respect each other, and learn from each other.

Other ways of dialogue are: a) through joint involvement in tasks for community-building, social justice, and peace; b) through "the dialogue of religious experience," through coming together to pray, each in his/her own way, and lastly, c) the dialogue—among "experts"—of theological exchange.

The "SVD theology of mission" stresses mission as prophetic dialogue.[14] This means we proclaim our beliefs regarding God's vision of humanity and the world as revealed in "the person and story of Jesus." But we share our beliefs primarily the way God himself did it in Jesus: through his presence, his "being with" us, his loving self-giving, with respect, with patience, and by way of humility and service (Francis' "culture of encounter"). Mission as prophetic dialogue derives from the presence of Jesus among us, in some true way in ourselves and in every human person (cf. John Paul II, *Redemptor Hominis*, no. 14), and it moves forward "toward the Kingdom of God" and toward the fullness of humanity. This, "the glory of Adam" (we believe), is truly realized by entering into the "fullness of shared divine life" in and

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we understand them and respect them, and even, as far as possible, agree with them.

Cf. also no. 97 (dialogue with mankind).

[14]"Prophetic dialogue" is the understanding of mission proposed by the 10th General Council of the Society of the Divine Word; see *In Dialogue with the Word No. 1* (Rome: SVD Publications, 2000), 31; Stephen B. Bevans & Roger P. Schroeder, *Constants and Context: A Theology of Mission for Today* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004), 281–398, esp. 348; Stephen B. Bevans, "Mission as Prophetic Dialogue," https://www.relforcon.org/sites/default/files/Transform_Wkshp-MISSION_AS_PROPHETIC_DIALOGUE-final.pdf.pdf (accessed June 12, 2016).

through Jesus and his Spirit. "Christ in you, Christ among you, your hope of glory."

Mission as prophetic dialogue rejects "proselytism." Both John Paul II in *Redemptoris Missio* and Francis (in several statements[15]) have warned us against proselytism[16] as hypocritically hidden within dialogue. Prophetic dialogue proclaims Jesus, fosters encounter with the presence-and-story of Jesus, fosters the "values of the Gospel," and moves toward the fullness of the truly human, toward the fulfillment of authentic humanity and authentic human community (go back to what we said earlier about Paul's "reworked eschatology," especially in Colossians/Ephesians).

If the Eucharist is the "real symbol," given to us and for us, of Jesus' presence, of the presence of his Paschal Mystery (CCC 1085), then it is a "missionary event"; it is the source of mission and the fulfillment of mission. It quite simply embodies Christ in all his preeminence ("in whom dwells the fullness of divinity" which he wills to share with us), in his presence and action, in his "here-and-now" sharing of the divine life with us—the purpose for which he came (John 10:10).

For what we have called the "SVD theology of mission," two very meaningful images of mission today are table fellowship and foot-washing (service)—the "Holy Thursday" images.

Table fellowship was the theme of several parables of Jesus, the object of meals he shared with sinners and outcasts.

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[15]*Message of Pope Francis on World Mission Day* (May 19, 2013), no. 4: "The Church's missionary spirit is not about proselytizing, but the testimony of a life that illuminates the path, which brings hope and love." See also the *Address of Pope Francis to the Catechists* on the occasion of the International Congress on Catechism (September 27, 2013), no. 1.

[16]The word "proselyte"—from the Greek προσήλυτος ("new comer")—refers to a convert from pagan religion to Judaism (Mt. 23:15; Acts 2:11; 6:5; 13:43). In modern usage, however, the word "proselytism" has acquired a pejorative connotation of attempting to convert people to a religion by using means, and for motives, which do not safeguard the freedom and dignity of the human person.

> Through this image [table fellowship], Jesus announced that God, whom he personally experienced as compassionate love, was inviting everyone—everyone without exception—to communion with him. This required, however, personal conversion as well as social transformation. For only when human persons begin to live in communion with one another as brothers and sisters, will communion with God—as Father, Son, Spirit—become possible and real.[17]

Foot-washing, in turn, is the moving image of God's own Son coming to serve (kneeling before us!), coming in unconditional love to share and give his life to us and for us.

These two "Holy Thursday images" are also "communion-images" (the Gospel of John signifies the "Eucharist as communion" with this foot-washing image). Holy Thursday's "communion-images" also become "images of mission" simply because communion is the fount of mission "from which mission flows," and communion is also the fulfillment of mission in which and for which mission comes to its term (how striking that, in a true sense, Holy Thursday becomes a "day of mission"!). A citation from former SVD Superior-General Fr. Tony Pernia:

> The Eucharist epitomizes our mission by demonstrating what "communion" is all about, and anticipating the final, ultimate communion in the Kingdom of God. The Eucharist is the core, the heart of the community, the embodiment of what community is, and of what community is called to be. And thus, in this sense, *the Eucharist is Mission*.[18]

Christ Jesus, the "Hope of Glory": But What of the Cross?

Paul's reworking of the understanding of the eschatological hope of glory—"already … but not yet"—would seem to be a rather

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[17]Antonio Pernia, *The Eucharist and Our Mission, Following the Word 7* (Rome: SVD Publications, 1996), 38.

[18]Pernia, *The Eucharist and Our Mission*, 38.

triumphalistic vision. But, confronting present realities in the lives of Christians, in the life and history of the Church—the Church as one and universal, and in its local communities—what about the failings, the shortcomings, the all-too-obvious divisions and scandals (e.g., of sexual abuse and financial corruption)? What about so much pride, power-seeking and power-abuse, and rampant sin and evil in the lives of church people, of its ministers and leaders—so much "ugliness and shame" which only recently filled the public media and shattered the image of the Church in so many countries?

For sure Paul knows this (as all of us do also!). His vision "has taken it on board": he is clear that the "eschatology of glory" has begun, but that "it is emphatically not yet completed, and stands in enormous tension with the continuing realities of present existence"[19] and history. This tension was only too obviously present in Paul's own apostolic life. He wrote *Colossians* and *Ephesians* while in captivity; he wrote of the appalling sufferings he had to bear. Col. 1:24 precisely speaks of "my sufferings for your sake[,] and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of his body, which is the Church." In 2 Cor. 6:9, he says of himself: *"* … dying, and behold we live," and that we "bear about in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also appear in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor. 4:10). Somehow, through the suffering of the apostle, the glory of God abounds (2 Cor. 4:15). At the heart of 2 Corinthians is the profound and paradoxical Pauline theme, the weakness of man through which God's power is revealed. Unveiling God's glory in the apostolic ministry requires suffering undertaken not merely as an accompaniment but as a necessary means. In Paul, as in the Gospel of John, God's eschatological glory was revealed in the self-giving death of Jesus, in the form of uttermost love.

In the vision of faith, in the realities of all earthly existence—all Christian existence first of all—the glory of God and the Cross of Jesus are not opposed; on the contrary, they belong together. To speak

[19]Wright, "'Christ in You, the Hope of Glory' (Col. 1:27): Eschatology in St. Paul," 29.

of glory is not to ignore the cross, which is God's radical response in the face of radical evil. For the Christian, taking evil seriously means seeking hope in God's promise of glory.

New Testament scholars tell us that what may be seen as hinted at in the earlier Scriptures regarding the glory (*kavodh*) of God comes to full manifestation in Jesus. God's saving self-revelation, his self-giving mercy, appears in a unique way in him. In Jesus is revealed to us what God's "true godliness" really is: it is his saving mercy; it is his compassion.

> Through an astounding diversity of voices, the New Testament proclaims that central to the experience of God's glory is the Paschal Mystery: the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. The essential paradox of the figure of Jesus reaches its climax in the utter poverty, powerlessness, [and] suffering of the one who claimed to speak with unheard-of authority, of the one who was conscious of a unique intimate relationship with God (*abba*), and yet who is nailed unto death on a cross. It is there on that cross that the truest glory of God is revealed. The cross of Christ as the end and fullness of a life lived completely "from God for others" is the revelation of God's majesty and power as self-emptying love.
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> That such apparently powerless love is, in reality, the absolute power of God, becomes visible, of course, only in the light of the resurrection.
>
> In their essential unity, the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ are the revelation of the glory and majesty of a love stronger than all the power of sin and death, a love greater than which, it is impossible to conceive. It is precisely God's glory (*kavodh*) that God, while remaining God and Lord of all, is "powerful" enough to enter into sin and death which has disfigured God's creation … and from within, in loving solidarity and sharing, to save his own beloved world.[20]

Thus it has also been said that the Paschal Mystery of Jesus reveals to us that within God's glory (*kavodh*), within his godliness, lurks what we might call "the Divine Pity"—a vulnerability which is, ultimately,

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[20]John R. Sachs, "Glory," *The New Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Joseph A. Komonchak, Mary Collins, & Dermot A. Lane (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1987), 418f.

his love. In *Deus Caritas Est*, Benedict XVI likes to speak of "Jesus as the incarnate love of God …. His death on the Cross is the culmination of that turning of God against himself in which he gives himself in order to raise man up and save him. This is love in its most radical form."[21]

Thus "Christ in us, Christ among us, the hope of glory," in earthly existence and life, is most visible to us in Jesus—in his Paschal Mystery, in the compassion of God manifest in Him, and it is expressed in our lives after the life-pattern of Jesus, in the deeds of our own compassion towards our brothers and sisters. It is through compassion also that the process of our grace-transformation into the likeness of Christ Jesus is most realized. Our compassion, joined to that of Jesus' own, is therefore also our own deepest sharing in the glory of God in our lives, and the truest access for us to the glory of God's kingdom. "Christ in us, Christ among us … our hope of glory."

The Eucharist: The Fulfillment, "Finis" of Mission

As we end, we return to the end-term (*finis*) and fulfillment of mission. We may therefore fruitfully turn to two final images of God's kingdom both promised and to come.[22]

First is St. Augustine's image of Adam—fallen, broken up, and scattered in pieces all over the earth but, in the divine mercy, picked up, piece by piece, fitted together, and made one—and living—once again. It is "the great Artist" who does this, God himself, remaking the New Adam, Christ Jesus.

Augustine gives the names of the four parts of the earth—Anatolia (East); Dusis (West); Arctus (North); Mesembria (South)—their first letters spelling out the name ADAM.

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[21]Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est* 12.

[22]This conclusion is drawn from "The Eucharist, Call to Mission," Jaime Cardinal Sin's conference at the Seville IEC (1993).

> Adam is scattered throughout the globe. Set in one place, he fell, as it were broken into small pieces, he has filled up the whole world. … But the divine mercy gathered up the fragments from every side, forged them in the fire of love, and welded into one what had been broken.[23]

God is the "master artist," who

> knew what to do … an immense task indeed, but think who the artist was: the Great Artist who remade the broken Adam, was himself the Maker. … Thus God in his mercy welded the pieces together into the New Adam … into the Christ.[24]

Secondly, one of the great themes of mission is *catholicity*—Augustine's "catholica unitas," the catholicity of the Church, the ultimate gathering together of the nations as God's Holy People.

The end-term of history, in Old Testment imagery, is *that of the eschatological pilgrimage of the nations* to the Holy Mountain of God. The end-term of mission is imaged as the great Messianic Banquet, the worship of the Gentiles on the Holy Mountain.

> And on this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees […] and he will destroy on this mountain the face of the covering that is cast over all peoples, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will destroy death forever. (Isaiah 25:6–8)[25]

> There, upon the Holy Mountain, all peoples shall hold festival before the Lord. They shall be, all of them, God's chosen peoples. They shall behold the face of their God, and they shall be his people … they

[23]Augustine, *On Psalm 95(96)* (P. L. Migne, xxxvii, 1236); cf. Jaime Sin, "The Eucharist: Summons and Stimulus, Call and Challenge to Evangelization: The Eucharist as a Missionary Event," in *Christ, Light of Nations: Eucharist and Evangelization, Conferences of the International Eucharistic Congress of Seville* (Sherbrooke, QC: Edicions Paulines, 1994), 116–117.

[24]Augustine, *On Psalm 95(96)*; cf. Sin, "The Eucharist: Summons and Stimulus, Call and Challenge to Evangelization: The Eucharist as a Missionary Event," 117.

[25]Sin, "The Eucharist: Summons and Stimulus, Call and Challenge to Evangelization: The Eucharist as a Missionary Event," 134.

> will proclaim God upon cleansed lips. "For thou art great, thou doest wonderful things, thou who art God alone." (Ps. 86:10)[26]
>
> And God responds as the peoples worship him. He pronounces the amazing blessing, transcending all national boundaries: "Blessed be Egypt my people, Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel, mine inheritance." (Isaiah 19:24)[27]

From these great images, we can envision the Eucharist now as, in a true sense, "the sacrament of mission fulfilled." All mission reaches its term at the Lord's table. At the great banquet on the Holy Mountain, all peoples are God's holy people; all are brothers and sisters. At the Eucharist, God's love embraces all peoples' ultimate dream and desire: oneness in God's life, *catholica unitas*, where God shall be all in all.

Are not International Eucharistic Congresses foreshadowings of the end-time's great Messianic Banquet? Is not the Eucharist here at IEC its summons and fulfillment, promise and presence, *fons et finis*? We lift up our eyes and see, looking all about us, the coming-to-realization of that amazing blessing, where upon each one, and upon each people, falls that amazing grace whereby each of us, and every race and nation among us, hears our own name, spoken in the symphony of the spirit which is the Church, "sacrament of the oneness of all humankind," and which is proclaimed at the Eucharist, "sacrament and promise of God's coming kingdom."

Listen, listen and hear! Blessed be China, my people; India, Thailand, Indonesia, Myanmar, each one my people, each the work of my hands … *and blessed be you, Filipinas, Filipinas—blessed, my own, my people, my inheritance! Amen, Amen!*

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[26]Sin, "The Eucharist: Summons and Stimulus, Call and Challenge to Evangelization: The Eucharist as a Missionary Event," 134.

[27]Sin, "The Eucharist: Summons and Stimulus, Call and Challenge to Evangelization: The Eucharist as a Missionary Event," 134–135.

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LITURGY AND THE EUCHARIST IN LIGHT OF THE NEW EVANGELIZATION[1]

Timoteo J. M. Ofrasio, S.J.

Clarification of Terms

First we need to clarify what we mean by "new evangelization." When we say "new evangelization," we mean the process of transmitting Christ's message of salvation in today's world.[2] This process is not as simple as it sounds. First of all, there is a need to clarify what Christ's message of salvation is; second, there is also a need to clarify what the world of today is.

[1]From a talk given at the First Philippine Congress on New Evangelization (University of Santo Tomás, Manila: October 17, 2013).

[2]Pope St. John Paul II first used the term in 1985 in an address to Latin American bishops. A clearer definition may be found in John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio* 33. For Pope Benedict XVI, the new evangelization is focused on "re-proposing" the Gospel to those who have experienced a crisis of faith. He called for the re-proposing of the Gospel "to those regions awaiting the first evangelization and to those regions where the roots of Christianity are deep but who have experienced a serious crisis of faith due to secularization" ("Homily of First Vespers on the Solemnity of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul," http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/homilies/2010/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20100628_vespri-pietro-paolo_en.html [accessed Sept. 8, 2015]). In other words, the new evangelization invites each Catholic to renew their relationship with Jesus Christ and his Church.

Christ's message of salvation remains unchanged ever since it was first proclaimed. Pope John Paul II says that evangelization cannot be new in its content since its very theme is always the one gospel given in Jesus Christ.[3] By evangelization the Church means most fundamentally the proclamation of the basic Christian message: salvation through Jesus Christ.[4] On this foundation of the basic message of eternal life in God, John Paul II extends the notion of evangelization. Briefly, therefore, the message is this: God's love for us, His human creatures, is so great that He did not hesitate to send His Only-Begotten Son to lead us, lost humanity, back to Him by redeeming us from slavery to sin and the power of Satan. This He did through the Incarnation and the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ His Son (His Paschal Mystery), and in the process restored back the shattered dignity of humanity as God's children. This salvation won for us by Jesus Christ is offered to those willing to accept this message of salvation. This message, which has been entrusted to the Church, is what she has always proclaimed from the earliest times.

It is in this context of the new evangelization that we treat the topics of liturgy and Eucharist, for the liturgy and the Eucharist are apt vehicles for proclaiming this message of salvation through Jesus Christ. Take away the Eucharist and liturgy and the Church will cease to exist. As John Paul II's encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* says, "the Eucharist builds the Church, and the Church makes the Eucharist."[5]

Today's world to which the Church must proclaim this message of Christ has changed much since the first proclamation was made. Today's world has been greatly affected by secularization, and the process of secularization has produced a serious crisis in the sense of the Christian faith and the role of the Church. Secularization is the transformation of a society from close identification with religious values and institutions towards identification with non-religious (or

[3]John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte* 29.

[4]Cf. Rom. 6:23.

[5]John Paul II, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* 26.

irreligious) values and secular institutions. The *secularization thesis* refers to the belief that as societies progress, particularly through modernization and rationalization, religion loses its authority in all aspects of social life and governance. Even in places where the Church has long existed—mainly in Europe—secularization has surreptitiously crept in, and even in traditionally Catholic and Christian cultures there is now a felt need to "promote a renewed evangelisation" due to the progressive secularization of society and a sort of "eclipse of the sense of God."[6]

Secularization is further aggravated by the dictatorship of relativism "that does not recognize anything as definitive, and whose ultimate goal consists solely of one's own ego and desires."[7] This pretty much describes our world today, and it is to this secularized, relativistic world that the Gospel of Christ needs to be proclaimed anew.

Having thus defined what we mean by "new evangelization," let us now look at the topic at hand: Eucharist and liturgy in the light of the new evangelization.

Dialogue
(Personal Experiences and Pastoral Practice)

Vatican II tells us that liturgy is the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed, and at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows.[8] This image of the liturgy as the source and summit is re-echoed in the Council's description of the

[6]Pippa Norris & Ronald Inglehart, "The Secularization Debate," in *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide* (Cambridge/New York/Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2004), chapter 1.

[7]Joseph Ratzinger, Homily at the Mass for the Election of the Supreme Pontiff (St. Peter's Basilica: April 18, 2005). Cf. Benedict XVI, *Light of the World: A Conversation with Peter Seewald* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2010), 50ff.

[8]*Sacrosanctum Concilium* 10.

Eucharist as the source and summit of Christian life.[9] Indeed, this so close as to be almost interchangeable association between liturgy and the Eucharist is seen in the Constitution on the Liturgy which says that the liturgy "'through which the work of our redemption is accomplished,' most of all in the divine sacrifice of the Eucharist, is the outstanding means whereby the faithful may express in their lives, and manifest to others, the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true Church."[10]

Today, the topic of the liturgy and the Holy Mass is one that is very much alive and of great concern to practically all Catholics of all stripes—from the archconservative type to the most liberal. If one seeks a lively discussion of Church concerns, assign liturgy and the Eucharist as the topic for discussion, and one is sure to elicit passionate responses from participants. This is an indication of the great interest this topic has for us Catholics.

All of us could relate to a feeling of encounter with God in the celebration of the Holy Mass. We presume that feeling to be one of a calming, embracing love of God which sustains us in our daily lives and leaves a mark on us.

In my experience as a priest, there are a lot of variables which are important to having a dignified celebration of the Mass. I personally find that the most important of all is the *internal* or *interior disposition* of the individual—whether one is a priest, a lay liturgical minister, or simply an ordinary Mass-goer. What I refer to here is the attitude of mind and heart of both priest and people.

When I as a priest celebrate the Mass—from vesting to actual presiding—what is my disposition, what is my attitude? Do I interiorly withdraw to myself and pray for worthiness to offer the Sacrifice, or do I just rush in from a previous activity and put on my vestments nonchalantly as if I were putting on a new shirt, not paying much attention to the importance of the rite I am about to lead? Do I reflect

[9] *Lumen Gentium* 11; Catechism of the Catholic Church 1324.

[10] *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 2.

and pray on God's word which I am about to proclaim? In other words, the *ars celebrandi*, the proper celebration of the liturgical rites, is greatly affected by the interior disposition of the priest.[11]

As an ordinary Mass-goer, what is my disposition, what is my attitude? Do I prepare myself interiorly, do I recollect myself, as I get ready for Mass from the house, on the way, and when I get to church? Am I actively involved, interiorly disposed, to participate in the liturgical action unfolding before my eyes?[12] Or do I engage in distractions, idle talk, even criticism and gossip as I meet friends and acquaintances, or tinker with my mobile phone or tablet, or let my thoughts fly to some not-so-holy thoughts? Is my attitude one of arrogance, of looking down at others who do not know how to behave well during worship time in church? There are a myriad of examples of attitudes and dispositions we assume when we go to church.

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[11] *Ars celebrandi* involves: 1) fidelity to the texts and rubrics of the liturgical rite; 2) prayerful understanding of the liturgical texts, feasts, and seasons; 3) reverent sense of the priest and other ministers as well as of the faithful who are engaged in a dialogue of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and 4) proper preparation for celebrating the liturgical rite.

[12] *Actuosa participatio* (cf. *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 11 and 14) does not mean that everyone must sing everything, carry stuff, clap their hands, etc. What the Council really wanted was first and foremost a lively interior and spiritual participation and, as a result of that, an outward expression of participation. "*Actuosa*" conveys a more interior sense. "The real action in the liturgy in which we are all supposed to participate is the action of God Himself. This is what is new and distinctive about the Catholic liturgy: God Himself acts and does what is essential" (Benedict XVI, *The Spirit of the Liturgy* [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000], 173). This kind of participation in the very action of Christ the High Priest requires from us nothing less than an attitude of being totally absorbed in him. "The point is that, ultimately, the difference between the *actio Christi* and our own action is done away with. There is only one action, which is at the same time His and ours—ours because we have become one body and one spirit 'with Him'" (Benedict XVI, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 174). *Actuosa participatio,* thus, is not giving way to any activism but an integral and total assimilation into the person of Jesus Christ, who is truly the High Priest of that eternal and uninterrupted celebration of the heavenly liturgy.

There are also people who go out of their way, even far from their parishes, to look for a priest whose celebration of the Holy Mass would inspire them, and here we do not mean the homily alone. It is the way the Holy Mass is celebrated: solemn and dignified in its simplicity, with soul, as it were, and where the sense of God is palpable.

Certainly the interior disposition of a validly ordained priest has no bearing on the efficacy of the Eucharist. As long as it is validly celebrated, the Eucharist is efficacious (has an effect) on those who attend Mass and receive Holy Communion. However, it would be preferable if the priest is in the state of grace when he celebrates the Holy Mass. His internal disposition is of utmost importance for the Mass-goers to encounter God. He sets the tone, as it were. That there are people willing to drive as much as an hour just to hear Mass should be a wake up call to our priests.

Another important aspect to consider is the internal or interior disposition of lay liturgical ministers.[13] It is a fact that a good number of priests celebrate the Mass more solemnly because of the manner in which their master of ceremonies assists them in the smooth flow of the celebration. Also, the interior disposition of the lector affects how he or she proclaims God's word in Scripture, and this is felt by Mass-goers. This goes beyond mere technicalities like correct diction, cadence in reading, and eye contact; body language, which is largely symbolic, plays an important role in communicating God's word from one's heart. The attitude and interior disposition of the extraordinary minister of Holy Communion is made manifest in the manner by which he handles the Body of Christ: is he reverent and deferential in his approach, knowing that he holds God in his hands, or does he distribute Communion as if he were distributing candies or coins to the communicant?

Lastly, the interior disposition of the church-goer is also important in the encounter with God that takes place at the Holy Mass. Do we try to immerse ourselves in the mystery unfolding before us at Mass, or are we distracted by the many goings-on around us that our

[13] *Redemptionis Sacramentum* 43–46.

religious activity is no different from our sitting around at the mall or waiting for a show to begin? Is our Mass-going an opportunity to update ourselves about the latest gossip, or a preparation for a good lunch or supper after Mass?

Many of us here may be wondering why we bring up this matter of interior attitude and disposition. The obvious reason is that for a very large majority of Mass-going Catholics, the only experience they have with the Church or even any faith group is the Holy Mass. It is also this very large majority that we are being called and challenged to re-evangelize. They are among those whose sense of God has been eclipsed by the rapid secularization of today's culture.[14]

Discern
(Input Grounded on Scriptures and Church Teaching)

When we talk about the Eucharist and liturgy as "source and summit" of Christian life and the activity of the Church, we find that the reality hardly corresponds with the ideal, that the *what is* does not correspond with the *what should be*. Why is this so? Most probably it is because we do not know or understand the reason why we celebrate the Eucharist and liturgy, or even if we do know, we have lost appreciation for the celebration because it has become all-too-familiar to us. Thus, it will be beneficial for us to understand or be reminded once more why we celebrate the liturgy, and the Eucharist in particular.

Vatican II in its Constitution on Sacred Liturgy tells us that liturgy is part of salvation history.[15] It considers liturgy not just as a simple

[14] *Redemptoris Missio* 33: "Thirdly, there is an intermediate situation, particularly in countries with ancient Christian roots, and occasionally in the younger Churches as well, where entire groups of the baptized have lost a living sense of the faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church, and live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel. In this case what is needed is a 'new evangelization' or a 're-evangelization.'"

[15] *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 5.

ritual celebration governed by rules and norms but as part of God's self-disclosure or encounter with us. This self-disclosure or encounter with us takes place in a series of events which reveals God's plan of salvation for humanity.

After the fall of our first parents and our subsequent slavery to sin, God drew a plan to save us and restore to us our lost dignity as His children. God promised to send a Messiah to redeem us, and called ancient Israel to be His chosen people from whom the Redeemer would arise.

Since Old Testament times, God has announced this plan in words and deeds through the patriarchs and the prophets. The Exodus event, when the angel of death spared the first-born of Israel from death through the blood of the paschal lamb, and when Moses led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt, prefigured our own liberation from slavery to sin. This significant event of liberation in the Old Testament is called the Passover or the ancient Pasch that prefigured a much greater passing over that was to come.

When the fullness of time came, God sent His Only-Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to fulfil His promise of salvation. He took flesh from the Virgin Mary. With the Incarnation, salvation entered into the world, and was finally accomplished with the Death-Resurrection-Ascension of Christ (the Paschal Mystery). And so the Passover of Christ, or the reality of the redemption accomplished by Christ, is at the center of salvation history and of liturgy.[16]

Salvation history did not end with Pentecost. It is still taking place up to our time. God in Jesus Christ continues to save us. We are assured of this ongoing salvation because Jesus Christ did not leave us, His Church, as orphans. He promised to remain and be present with us until the end of time. Vatican II teaches us that our Lord's presence in the liturgy is fourfold: 1) in the Sacrifice of the Mass—in the priest and in the sacrament as Victim (sacrament) and as the One who offers (Christ as the Eternal Priest); 2) in the celebration of the sacraments, because in them it is Christ who acts; 3) in the word proclaimed in the

[16] *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 6.

community of the Church; and 4) in common prayer, because Christ is always present among those who gather in His name. Relying on His assurance, the Church celebrates the salvation offered by God through the Paschal Mystery of her Redeemer in the liturgy, particularly in the Eucharist.[17]

Because of Christ's presence in the liturgy, we encounter His Paschal Mystery, and participate in the various saving moments of the total Passover of Christ. Through the Paschal Mystery we are reborn in Baptism as children of God (Rom. 6:3–4); the Spirit is given us in Confirmation (Acts 2:8; 2:33); we share in the sacrifice of Christ and the highest point of the Passover is communicated to us in the Eucharist (Lk. 22:19–20); and the Spirit given us after the Resurrection makes possible the sacrament of Penance (Jn. 20:22–23). For this reason, all the sacraments, while giving each one a share in the particular aspect of the total mystery of Christ, are in some way linked to the Eucharist, which is the center and summit of the Paschal Mystery. Because of this, every event in the life of Christ—from His Birth to His Ascension, to the Pentecost and the end of the ages—is celebrated and communicated in the Paschal Mystery of the death of the Lord (Holy Mass) in the course of the liturgical year. Liturgy, therefore, essentially tends to make us live the salvation-Paschal Mystery in its singular moments, and it does this by accomplishing in us the Paschal Mystery taken in its highest moment: the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. God's salvific action through Christ thus still continues in the Church, and we continue to be saved and to experience this salvation every time we celebrate the liturgy and the Eucharist. This is the truth that today's secularized culture needs to hear and experience.

In the face of this reality of God in Jesus Christ actively saving us each time we celebrate the Eucharist and the liturgy, how can we ignore or lose sight of this great gift of salvation that we receive? How can we be indifferent to the action of God who reaches out to us in the Eucharist as He gives us His own Body and Blood to give us life? Should not our response be one of gratitude and thanksgiving, of awe and wonder at this wondrous gift?

[17] *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 7.

Deeds
(Pastoral Recommendations and Pastoral Application)

Given the present situation that warrants the new evangelization, there is serious need for liturgical catechesis and formation of the laity, especially those who are directly involved in liturgical animation and altar service. It is through catechesis and formation that the laity will be able to participate truly, fully, consciously, and actively in the liturgy.[18]

There is also a need for the empowerment of existing avenues of evangelization, with correct basic theological training for leaders so as to ensure orthodoxy in their praiseworthy attempts to grow in the faith and transmit and communicate that faith to others.

And lastly, for all of us—and perhaps this is the most important—we need a change of attitude about the celebration of the Eucharist. The Holy Mass is not a show, a spectacle to entertain us. If this is our attitude, then our focus is on ourselves—"self-referential," as Pope Francis calls it.[19] Let us not seek to be entertained at Mass, as it were, to "enjoy" it. The Holy Mass is not about us; it is about God. The focus is on God, not on us; we love Him, we worship Him, we adore Him. It is important, therefore, to examine ourselves: do I really love God?

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[18]Congregation for the Clergy, *General Directory for Catechesis* 85 (August 11, 1997).

[19]In a pre-conclave meeting, Jorge Bergoglio gave a short speech which impressed the cardinals and probably got him elected as Pope. He said:

> When the Church does not come out of herself to evangelize, she becomes self-referential …. The evils that, over time, happen in ecclesial institutions have their root in self-referentiality and a kind of theological narcissism. … When the Church is self-referential, inadvertently, she believes she has her own light; she ceases to be the *mysterium lunae* … reflecting the light of Christ … [She] gives way to that very serious evil, spiritual worldliness …. It lives to give glory only to one another.

For the full text, see http://www.catholic.com/blog/jimmy-akin/the-4-minute-speech-that-got-pope-francis-elected (accessed December 3, 2013).

Do I really love Christ? If our answer is "yes," it will not be difficult for us to accept the Holy Mass as an act of love, worship, and adoration. We will not deem it an obligation to be complied with, but rather as an opportunity to give thanks together with the Christian community. It will not be seen and experienced as "dry" and "boring" because we understand that there is a great mystery being accomplished during the celebration of the Mass, and this great mystery is our salvation being accomplished by God in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Landas 29:2 (2015) 33–50

DISCOVERING THE RICH TREASURES OF POPULAR PIETY

Theological-Pastoral-Missiological Insights

James H. Kroeger, M.M.

In the contemporary experience of missionaries, catechists, preachers, and liturgists, the task of evangelization is immensely enriched by drawing upon the insights and rituals of popular religiosity. In diverse cultural milieus, pastoral agents are discovering that their task of announcing the Gospel is facilitated and enhanced through the creative use of popular ritual and dramatics. In a word, folk religious practices, diversely termed "popular religiosity," "popular piety," and "popular spirituality," are a resource for evangelization awaiting full exploration; Pope Francis would wholeheartedly agree!

Often culturally unique, local traditions and pageants can creatively portray core themes of Christianity and biblical faith. Such inculturated proclamation originates in the encounter of life and faith, and is then manifested through the pageantry and festivity of popular religiosity. This approach to liturgy and evangelization enables communities to artistically portray and celebrate their lived Christian identity.

Moreover, lively expressions of a community's faith-life need not raise undue anxieties about dogmatic orthodoxy or faithfulness to biblical texts. On the contrary, popular forms of piety should be welcomed as tools of evangelization because dramatics, pageantry, socio-religious rituals, and festivity can often constitute, in themselves, an actual proclamation of biblical faith!

In *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Pope Paul VI's famous exhortation on evangelization in the modern world, a lengthy section is devoted to the role that popular piety should play in announcing the Good News. While noting its possible limitations, the pope asserted that

> if it is well oriented, above all by a pedagogy of evangelization, it is rich in values; … one must be sensitive to it, know how to perceive its interior dimensions and undeniable values…. When it is well oriented, this popular religiosity can be more and more for multitudes of our peoples a true encounter with God in Jesus Christ.[1]

Employing the traditional question-and-answer catechetical approach, this piece will explore some basic questions about popular devotional practices. The authenticity of popular piety, its role in the spiritual life of Catholics, and its employment in the promotion of the faith will be explored through a brief and focused discussion on some important aspects of this worldwide phenomenon.

1. What is a common understanding of "popular piety," "popular religiosity," or "traditional devotional practices"? Perhaps the most complete and authoritative resource for understanding the many dimensions of this subject is the *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy: Principles and Guidelines*. This truly helpful document was issued by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments in 2001, and reaches to well over two hundred pages. Here one reads that "popular piety" designates "those diverse cultic expressions of a private or community nature" which derive "from a particular nation or people or from their culture."[2] They are manifested in a wide variety of external practices such as "prayers, hymns, observances attached to particular times or places, [use of] insignia [and] medals, habits or customs"; they emerge from "an attitude of

[1]Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 48.

[2]Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy: Principles and Guidelines* (Vatican City: December 2001), 9.

faith" and manifest a "particular relationship of the faithful with the Divine Persons, or the Blessed Virgin Mary … or with the Saints."[3]

The document goes on to explain additional aspects of popular piety: gestures, texts and formulae, song and music, sacred images, sacred places, and sacred times.[4] Several common examples illustrate the importance and impact of popular pious devotions: stations of the cross (*via crucis*), praying of the Rosary, novenas, litanies, and even lyrical children's prayers. Indeed, the Church's popular devotions are extensive, diverse, and multifaceted; above all else, they are a rich treasure to be preserved and propagated!

2. Did the Second Vatican Council discuss "popular piety"? This subject was addressed by the Council in several documents. The document on the liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*) noted:

> The spiritual life, however, is not limited solely to participation in the liturgy. The Christian is indeed called to pray with his brothers and sisters, but he must also enter into his chamber to pray to the Father in secret … he should pray without ceasing.… Popular devotions of the Christian people are to be highly commended, provided they accord with the laws and norms of the Church…. Devotions proper to individual Churches also have a special dignity….[5]

The Decree on Priestly Formation (*Optatam Totius*) asserted: "'Those practices of piety that are commended by the long usage of the Church should be zealously cultivated" among those preparing for ordained ministry in the Church.[6] In the Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*), one finds a clear encouragement that priests develop a strong Eucharistic spiritual life; this certainly includes the Eucharist itself, but also includes "the daily colloquy

[3] *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy: Principles and Guidelines*, 8.

[4] *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy: Principles and Guidelines*, 15–20.

[5] *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 12–13.

[6] *Optatam Totius* 8.

with Christ, a visit to and veneration of the Most Holy Eucharist."[7] In a word, Vatican II recommended practices of traditional piety, but also indicated some conditions that would guarantee their legitimacy and validity.

3. Have recent popes spoken about "popular religiosity"? Paul VI devoted an entire section[8] of *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, the *magna carta* of contemporary evangelization, to popular piety. He noted that one finds among Catholics "particular expressions of the search for God and for faith [that] were for a long time regarded as less pure and were sometimes despised, but [which today are] almost everywhere being rediscovered." As noted earlier, Paul VI saw the value of popular piety and that it "can be more and more for multitudes of our people a true encounter with God in Jesus Christ."[9]

Paul VI also gifted the Church with the apostolic exhortation *Marialis Cultus,* a 1974 document that focused on "The Right Ordering and Development of Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary." The intention of the pope was to shape and guide the Church's devotion (including popular piety) to the Blessed Virgin in light of the theological, liturgical, spiritual, and pastoral renewal promoted by the Second Vatican Council. The document also underscored the proper relation of popular devotions to the liturgy and the ecumenical dimensions of Marian devotion, as well as the necessary connection of such devotions with the promotion of social justice, eloquently expressed in Mary's prayer, the *Magnificat.*

Saint Pope John Paul II has spoken positively about popular religiosity:

> Popular piety is an expression of faith which avails of certain cultural elements proper to a specific environment…. Genuine forms of popular piety, expressed in a multitude of different ways, derive from the faith, and therefore, must be valued and promoted. Such authentic

[7] *Presbyterorum Ordinis* 18.

[8] *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 48.

[9] *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 48.

> expressions of popular piety are not at odds with the centrality of the Sacred Liturgy. Rather, in promoting the faith of the people, who regard popular piety as a natural religious expression, they predispose the people for the celebration of the Sacred Mysteries.[10]

Pope Benedict XVI, when he addressed the Fifth General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean on May 13, 2007 at the shrine of Aparecida in Brazil, spoke of "the rich and profound popular religiosity, in which we see the soul of the Latin American peoples." This faith emerges as "a synthesis between their cultures and the Christian faith"; it is marked by "love for the suffering Christ, the God of compassion, pardon and reconciliation … the God who is close to the poor and to those who suffer." Here one finds a "profound devotion to the most holy Virgin of Guadalupe, the *Aparecida*, the Virgin invoked under various national and local titles."[11]

Benedict continued:

> This religiosity is also expressed in devotion to the saints with their patronal feasts, in love for the Pope and the other Pastors, and in love for the Universal Church as the great family of God…. All this forms the great mosaic of popular piety which is the precious treasure of the Catholic Church in Latin America, and must be protected, promoted and, when necessary, purified.[12]

Francis has spoken and written extensively about popular piety, both as Archbishop of Buenos Aires and as Pope. His thought will be highlighted in some later sections of this presentation.

4. What are some values found in popular or folk religiosity? Paul VI eloquently noted the values of popular religiosity:

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[10]John Paul II, address to the plenary assembly of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments (September 20 2001).

[11]Benedict XVI, homily for the inauguration of the Fifth General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean (Aparecida, Brazil: May 13, 2007).

[12]Benedict XVI, homily for the inauguration of the Fifth General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean.

> It manifests a thirst for God which only the simple and poor can know. It makes people capable of generosity and sacrifice even to the point of heroism, when it is a question of manifesting belief. It involves an acute awareness of profound attributes of God: fatherhood, providence, loving and constant presence. It engenders interior attitudes rarely observed to the same degree elsewhere: patience, the sense of the Cross in daily life, detachment, openness to others, devotion. By reason of these aspects, we readily call it "popular piety," that is, religion of the people.[13]

Speaking to a group of pilgrims, John Paul II asserted that popular piety is a form of evangelization; he noted:

> I earnestly hope that these significant forms of popular piety, which sprung from faith-filled communities[,] will continue today to be effective tools of evangelization. May they serve as an encouragement to prayer and contemplation, and instill, especially in young people, the same spiritual enthusiasm as in past generations.[14]

Addressing a group of American bishops in similar fashion, the pope affirmed that authentic popular piety can build the faith:

> Another great gift that divine grace brought to life in America is popular piety, deeply rooted in the different nations. This particular characteristic of the American people, when correctly guided, purified and enriched by genuine elements of Catholic doctrine, can become a useful instrument to help the faithful deal appropriately with the challenges of secularization.[15]

5. Have the Philippine bishops written about popular religiosity? The official *National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines* (NCDP), which bears the title *Maturing in Christian Faith*, observes:

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[13]*Evangelii Nuntiandi* 48.

[14]John Paul II, Angelus message (June 27, 1999). Available at https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/angelus/1999/documents/hf_jp-ii_ang_19990627.html.

[15]John Paul II, address to participants at the Ninth Meeting of the Post-Synodal Council of the General Secretariat for the Special Assembly for America of the Synod of Bishops (November 5, 2004).

> With the introduction of "Hispanic Christianity" by the early Spanish missionaries into an already existing indigenous belief system, the beginning of what is called today "folk" or "popular Catholicism" was initiated … this popular religiosity still remains strong [among Filipino Catholics].[16]

> Traces of veneration of dead ancestors—apparently a pre-Christian Filipino practice—can still be found today. Catholic devotion to the souls in purgatory, and the celebration of All Saints and All Souls Days, has tended to reinforce these beliefs at times. Perhaps the most characteristic aspect of Filipino popular religiosity … is devotion to saints. This fits in well with the Filipino's natural attraction for the concrete as well as for mediators…. The value of devotion to the saints remains high, but the catechetical effort must lead it to a more direct link with Christ, the source and goal of each saint's life.[17]

The same affirmation of folk religiosity "can be made of the traditional Filipino devotion to Mary, which is grounded in Filipino Catholicism's Hispanic roots, as well as in Filipino society's esteem and respect for women, especially mothers—itself a cultural trait fostered and deepened by the Christian Faith." There are many "common titles under which Mary is venerated: Our Lady of the Rosary, Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, of Lourdes, of Mount Carmel, of Sorrows, etc. Mary plays an important role in both Christmas and Holy Week festivities."[18]

The Philippine bishops, while noting the positive elements of popular religion, also assert that there is a need for "evaluating popular religiosity" and "attempting various purifications." This renewal process is necessary because "practices that are good in themselves" are sometimes "no longer responsive to the new social, cultural, or even economic status of the people." In short, "popular religiosity is

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[16]*Maturing in Christian Faith: National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines* (Pasay City: Daughters of St. Paul: 1984), 36.

[17]*Maturing in Christian Faith: National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines*, 40.

[18]*Maturing in Christian Faith: National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines*, 43.

to be developed into authentic mature Filipino Christian living."[19] An excellent example of the renewal of popular religiosity can be found in *Ang Mahal na Birhen: Mary in Philippine Life Today*, the 1975 pastoral letter of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines.

6. Have episcopal bodies from other parts of the world spoken about popular piety? Perhaps the most extensive positive presentation of popular religiosity in recent years is found in the concluding document of the Fifth General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean held in Aparecida, Brazil in 2007. Two paragraphs (263–264) of the lengthy document express well the profound thought of the assembled bishops.

> We cannot deprecate popular spirituality, or consider it a secondary mode of Christian life, for that would be to forget the primacy of the action of the Spirit and God's free initiative of love. Popular piety contains and expresses a powerful sense of transcendence, a spontaneous ability to find support in God and a true experience of theological love. It is also an expression of supernatural wisdom, because the wisdom of love does not depend directly on the enlightenment of the mind, but on the internal action of grace. That is why we call it popular spirituality, that is, a Christian spirituality which, while it is a personal encounter with the Lord, includes much of the bodily, the perceptible, the symbolic, and people's most concrete needs. It is a spirituality incarnated in the culture of the lowly, which is not thereby less spiritual, but is so in another manner.
>
> Popular spirituality is a legitimate way of living the faith, a way of feeling part of the Church and a manner of being missionaries, where the deepest vibrations of America's depths come together. It is part of a "cultural historic originality" of the poor of this continent, and fruit of a "synthesis between their cultures and the Christian faith." In the environment of secularization experienced by our peoples, it is still a powerful confession of the living God who acts in history, and a channel for handing on the faith. Journeying together to shrines and taking part in other manifestations of popular piety, also taking one's children or inviting others, is in itself an evangelizing gesture by

[19] *Maturing in Christian Faith: National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines*, 45.

> which the Christian people evangelizes itself and fulfills the Church's missionary calling.[20]

7. How can customary popular religiosity be renewed? To respond to this important question, one could draw an example from the traditional devotion to the Sacred Heart. The Church dedicates the month of June to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. In addition, many Catholics are familiar with the "First Friday" tradition of receiving the Eucharist for nine consecutive months. This custom originated in the promise that Christ is alleged to have made in a private revelation to Margaret Mary Alacoque (1647–1690), a French Visitation nun. She asserted that those keeping the First Fridays would not die in sin or without the sacraments, that Christ would be their refuge at the hour of death.

How can such a devotion, which could often be limited to a personal, private practice, be renewed and become relevant today? One could look back to the original symbol that was manifested to Margaret Mary: *a heart afire with love for humanity that was surmounted by a cross.* This symbol clearly implies that devotion to the Sacred Heart is intimately connected with the Paschal Mystery: the mystery of Jesus' dying and rising again. In a word, it means that the Sacred Heart calls the Christian to a self-sacrificing love for one's neighbor, a committed and concerned love that is ready to face the challenges of genuinely loving social service.

Our hearts must be transformed into loving replicas of the Heart of Jesus, who reached out to the lost, lonely, little, least, and last in society. Thus, in contemporary society, devotees of the Sacred Heart are called upon to concretize their love in the face of challenging social realities. As Antonio Lambino has written,

> today, much more than in earlier times, serving the poor and the disadvantaged involves intelligent effort to change unjust structures in society…. To be holy means to fight what is inhuman, unChristian

[20]Concluding document of the Fifth General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean (Aparecida, Brazil: May 13–31, 2007), paragraphs 263–264.

> and sinful in public life and to work generously to make public life more human, more Christian, and more abounding in grace. This could be for many of us a revolutionary change in the idea of holiness and Christian spirituality.[21]

Linking the Sacred Heart devotion with growth in heartfelt compassion for the needy would thus contribute significantly to the renewal of this traditional popular devotion, making it more responsive to contemporary societal realities.

8. How are popular devotions related to the Bible? The Bible stands at the core of God's revelation to the Church. Thus, genuine popular devotions should naturally be strongly linked with biblical themes and imagery. Paul VI noted: "Today it is recognized as a general need of Christian piety that every form of worship should have a biblical imprint."[22] The pope applied this principle to Marian devotions: "What is needed is that texts of prayers and chants should draw their inspiration and wording from the Bible, and above all, that devotion to the Virgin should be imbued with the great themes of the Christian message."[23]

In speaking of the Rosary, John Paul II emphasized that it is not a substitute for the reading of the Bible: "on the contrary, it presupposes and promotes" prayerful reading of the Holy Scriptures. While the mysteries of the Rosary "do no more than outline the fundamental elements of the life of Christ, they easily draw the mind to a more expansive reflection on the rest of the Gospel, especially when the rosary is prayed in a setting of prolonged recollection."[24]

The previous section presented the devotion to the Sacred Heart. The deepening and renewal of this devotion can readily be linked with the Scriptures—one could validly recall the parable of the Good

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[21] Antonio B. Lambino, "Modern Man and the Devotion to the Sacred Heart," *Philippine Priests' Forum* 7:3 (1975): 70.

[22] Paul VI, *Marialis Cultus* 30.

[23] *Marialis Cultus* 31.

[24] John Paul II, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae* 29.

Samaritan as it is told in the Gospel of Luke (10:25–37). It is only the person with a compassionate heart (a "sacred" heart) who reaches out to the traveler attacked by robbers; the Good Samaritan spends of his own time and money to care for the stranger. Is not this a model of Christian love in our day? Jesus' life and teaching was a constant reaching out to the needy (the woman caught in adultery, the man born blind, the ten lepers, the hemorrhaging woman, the widow who lost her only son, the hungry crowd). Linking popular piety with texts of Scripture will contribute significantly to its genuine renewal.

9. What is the relationship between popular religiosity and culture? Popular piety arises out of the interaction between culture and the Catholic faith. When the faith enters a cultural milieu, two kinds of transformation take place (missionaries are very cognizant of this dynamic). First, the newly introduced faith begins to have a transformative effect on the culture; the Gospel and its values begin to leave an imprint on the people and their socio-cultural realities. At the same time, however, the Church begins to assimilate certain cultural aspects, absorbing positive elements into her life and practice. In brief, this is the two-fold action found in the process of inculturating the faith.

A short description of the growth of popular religiosity, drawn from the *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy*, is as follows:

> In genuine forms of popular piety, the Gospel message assimilates expressive forms particular to a given culture while also permeating the consciousness of that culture with the content of the Gospel, and its idea of life and death, and of human freedom, mission and destiny.[25]

This means that the Christian faith is able to enter every culture, and people are able to begin living their faith within their own cultural milieu.

As the document of the USA bishops notes, while

> this inculturation of the faith takes place in the liturgy, popular devotions carry the faith a step deeper into the everyday life of a

[25] *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy: Principles and Guidelines*, 63.

> particular culture. When properly ordered to the liturgy, popular devotions perform an irreplaceable function of bringing worship into daily life for people of various cultures and times.[26]

A clear benefit of this "religion-culture interpenetration" is that faith begins to permeate the daily lives of the ordinary faithful. Such "inculturated proclamation" is the goal of all effective missionary evangelization.

10. How does one explain the fact that there are so many different forms of popular devotion? Popular devotions clearly manifest the fact that "one size does not fit all." Various devotional practices correspond to the diverse spiritual needs of certain people at different times and places. In addition, cultural diversity and sensibilities differ greatly; various artistic and aesthetic expressions possess a different appeal for a variety of individuals. In a word, what appeals to a Filipino may not attract a Korean; the religious "tastes" or "preferences" of an Indonesian believer are divergent from those of a Japanese Christian.

Commenting on the different forms of Marian devotion emerging from various cultural and historical contexts, Paul VI explained that the Church

> does not bind herself to any particular expression of an individual cultural epoch or to the particular anthropological ideas underlying such expressions. The Church understands that certain outward religious expressions, while perfectly valid in themselves, may be less suitable to men and women of different ages and cultures.[27]

This present discussion clearly surfaces the larger question of effective approaches to evangelization and the communication of the faith. Evidently, adaptation and flexibility are necessary in selecting and promoting the popular devotions most suitable for diverse groups of people. The Church and her evangelizers need to enter deeply into

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[26]United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Popular Devotional Practices: Basic Questions and Answers* (2003), 4.

[27]*Marialis Cultus* 36.

the realities of a particular people so as to understand their unique spiritual needs and gifts. Incarnating the faith in new missionary situations is a never-ending and challenging task, needing the active guidance of the Holy Spirit coupled with the creativity and dedication of committed evangelizers.

11. What is the ideal relationship between the liturgy and popular devotions? The liturgy remains the center of the devotional life of the Church; thus, popular devotions should never be portrayed as equal to the liturgy or as a substitute for it. The liturgy-popular piety relationship

> must be approached primarily from the perspective of the directives contained in the constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* [the Vatican II document on the liturgy], which seeks to establish a harmonious relationship between both of these expressions of piety, in which popular piety is objectively subordinated to, and directed towards, the Liturgy.[28]

Succinctly stated, the position of the Church is: "The liturgy and popular piety, while not coterminous, remain two legitimate expressions of Christian worship." Indeed, "the liturgy and popular piety are two forms of worship which are in mutual and fruitful relationship with each other." It is also a fact that "popular piety, because of its symbolic and expressive qualities, can often provide the liturgy with important insights for inculturation and stimulate an effective dynamic creativity."[29]

Paul VI, however, recognized that maintaining a proper balance may not always be easy. He noted that there are two extreme attitudes that should be avoided. On the one hand, he rejected the position of those

> who scorn, *a priori,* devotions of piety which, in their correct forms, have been recommended by the magisterium, who leave them aside and in this way create a vacuum which they do not fill. They forget

[28] *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy: Principles and Guidelines*, 50.

[29] *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy: Principles and Guidelines*, 58.

> that the Council has said that devotions of piety should harmonize with the liturgy, not be suppressed.[30]

On the other hand, Paul VI likewise did not accept the position of

> those who without wholesome liturgical and pastoral criteria mix practices of piety and liturgical acts in hybrid celebrations. It sometimes happens that novenas or similar practices are inserted into the very celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice. This creates the danger that the Lord's memorial rite, instead of being the culmination of the meeting of the Christian community, becomes the occasion as it were for devotional practices.[31]

Themes such as balance, harmonization, proper independence, and prudent coordination seem to express the guiding norms for relating liturgy and popular piety. In this area, much pastoral sensitivity and wisdom is required by the leaders of the Christian community.

12. Has Pope Francis expressed his views on popular piety? In his comprehensive apostolic exhortation, *The Joy of the Gospel* (*Evangelii Gaudium*), Francis devotes an entire section to "the evangelizing power of popular piety."[32] Some brief selections capture the thought of the pope.

> Popular piety enables us to see how the faith, once received, becomes embodied in a culture and is constantly passed on. Once looked down upon, popular piety came to be appreciated once more in the decades following the Council. In the Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Pope Paul VI gave a decisive impulse in this area. There he stated that popular piety "manifests a thirst for God which only the poor and the simple can know" and that "it makes people capable of generosity and sacrifice even to the point of heroism, when it is a question of bearing witness to belief." Closer to our own time, Benedict XVI, speaking about Latin America, pointed out that popular piety is "a precious

[30] *Marialis Cultus* 31.

[31] *Marialis Cultus* 15.

[32] Cf. Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* 122–126.

> treasure of the Catholic Church," in which "we see the soul of the Latin American peoples."[33]
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> The Aparecida Document describes the riches which the Holy Spirit pours forth in popular piety by his gratuitous initiative. On that beloved continent, where many Christians express their faith through popular piety, the bishops also refer to it as "popular spirituality" or "the people's mysticism." It is truly "a spirituality incarnated in the culture of the lowly…." It is "a legitimate way of living the faith, a way of feeling part of the Church and a manner of being missionaries"; it brings with itself the grace of being a missionary, of coming out of oneself and setting out on pilgrimage.[34]
>
> Underlying popular piety, as a fruit of the inculturated Gospel, is an active evangelizing power which we must not underestimate: to do so would be to fail to recognize the work of the Holy Spirit. Instead, we are called to promote and strengthen it, in order to deepen the never-ending process of inculturation. Expressions of popular piety have much to teach us; for those who are capable of reading them, they are a *locus theologicus* which demands our attention, especially at a time when we are looking to the new evangelization.[35]

13. Did Pope Francis speak about popular piety before he became pope? In a 2012 lecture, then-Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio spoke about the "theology of the people," which he holds in high regard. According to him, this theology is rooted in the ordinary people's deep faith, which they expressed through their customs, traditions, religious practices, and sense of justice. He considered popular piety as an antithesis of the pervasive secularization in modern society.

Although the Latin American society is saddled with poverty and injustices, Bergoglio notes that its people manifest a wealth of religiosity through festive and lively forms of piety such as vigils, processions, communal prayers, etc.—which the Aparecida document of 2007 calls "popular spirituality." He said: "When we approach our people with

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[33] *Evangelii Gaudium* 123.

[34] *Evangelii Gaudium* 124.

[35] *Evangelii Gaudium* 126.

the gaze of the good shepherd, when we do not come to judge but to love, we can find out that this cultural way to express the Christian faith is still present among us, especially in our poor." He affirmed that "popular spirituality is the original way through which the Holy Spirit has led and continues to lead millions of our brothers."[36]

Cardinal Bergoglio himself promoted various forms of popular piety in Buenos Aires. For example, he popularized the devotion to "Our Lady, Undoer of Knots." He propagated the suggestive image of *La Virgen Desatanudos*, a title originating in Augsburg, Germany (*Maria Knotenlöserin*). He has also popularized the image of the "Sleeping Saint Joseph." Cardinal Tagle of Manila has thus affirmed that Francis is very comfortable with popular religiosity because it is a means to strengthen the faith; in popular piety, "the Holy Spirit and the culture of the poor meet."[37]

Confirming his plans to visit Mexico in 2016 during a Mass held on December 12, 2015, the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Francis said that he will pray for Christian communities that they "may become oases and rivers of mercy." He added: "To ask her this, in a strong way, I will travel to venerate her at her shrine on February 13 [2016]. There I will ask this for all of America, of whom she is especially a mother." Francis' appreciation of popular piety and spirituality can truly serve as an inspiration for the entire Church.[38]

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[36]Andrea Gagliarducci, "The 'Theology of the People', according to Pope Francis," *Catholic News Agency* (http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/the-theology-of-the-people-according-to-pope-francis-83384/ [accessed April 28, 2015]).

[37]Jasper Emmanuel Arcalas, "What Francis Likes: 'Popular Piety' that Plays Big Roles in Pinoys' Faith," *The Filipino Connection* (http://thefilipinoconnection.net/papal-visit-2015-what-francis-likes-popular-piety-that-plays-big-roles-in-pinoys-faith/ [accessed January 13, 2015]).

[38]Junno Arocho Esteves, "Pope Francis Will Venerate Mary at Mexico Shrine Next Year," *Catholic News Service* (http://www.catholicnews.com/services/englishnews/2015/pope-francis-will-venerate-mary-at-mexico-shrine-next-year.cfm [accessed December 14, 2015]).

Conclusion. The lengthy experience of the Church has taught it that authentic popular devotions are an invaluable means of promoting the faith and a deeper love of God, and that the profound spiritual values present in popular piety are to be preserved and promoted. Popular religiosity has, in fact, preserved the faith of countless Catholics across the globe, especially those who have lacked adequate catechesis and the presence of ordained ministers of the Church.

Such conclusions are truly valid in the Philippine context (the *locus* of this author's pastoral experience) where the people-per-priest ratio is among the highest in the world. The veracity of these assertions would be readily confirmed by priests, religious, catechists, and missionaries working in diverse contexts. Filipino popular religiosity, especially its Marian dimensions, has been recognized for its significant contribution in preserving and promoting the faith-life of local Christians, as this author can verify. In 1985, John Paul II wrote to Filipino Catholics: "One of your best-loved hymns says that you are a '*pueblo amante de Maria*,' a people with a special love and devotion to Mary. My earnest wish is that you will never cease to be '*pueblo amante de Maria*'; … Be confident that your turning to Mary's intercession … will not be in vain."[39]

Indeed, popular piety remains a potent resource that necessarily must be at the service of a renewed evangelization for future generations of believers across the face of global Catholicism. Folk religiosity should thus figure prominently in all effective programs of the "new evangelization," especially for the youth. The challenge to profoundly integrate faith and life remains urgent, and so, as fervent Catholics, the popular prayer to Mary remains in our hearts, on our

[39]John Paul II, "Message to Dearly Beloved Sisters and Brothers in the Philippines (December 8, 1985)," in Howard Q. Dee, et al., eds., *Bimillennium—Kaarawan ni Maria: 1985 Marian Year Book* (Makati City, Philippines: Bahay Maria-Assisi Development Foundation, 1986), 4–5. See also Antonio Ll. Mabutas, "The Marian Year 1985: A Pilgrimage of Hope with Our Blessed Mother" (Pastoral Exhortation on the Marian Year 1985 issued on February 2, 1985), in Pedro Quitorio, ed., *Pastoral Letters: 1945–1995* (Manila: Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, 1996), 593–602.

lips, and guides our efforts as missionary disciples: "Mary, show us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus."

Landas 29:2 (2015) 51–73

AN EMERGING MYSTIC THEOLOGY OF SUSTAINABILITY AMIDST RAPID CHANGES FOR AN INDIGENOUS CHURCH OF ASIA[1]

Jojo M. Fung, S.J.

In the indigenous homeland of Asia, the local Churches, whose cultural identity becomes strong through the FABC's call to engage in a triple dialogue with the rich religio-cultural traditions of indigenous communities, need to enable these communities to negotiate more effectively with the rapid changes related to globalization. The first section of this article thus recounts a lived experience of the inaugural ritual of the sacred worship place of the marginal Lahu communities (who are still strong in their practice of traditional religion) known as *hawye* (pronounced ho-ye). The inauguration of the *hawye* has to be understood within the context of the rapid changes that the Lahu communities are negotiating with; this is explained in section two. The lived experience and context of contestation then call for a contextualized understanding of dialogue which in turn is explained in the third section. In the final section, sacred sustainability is explained as a mystical sense that is foundational to an emerging mystic theology that enables the local Churches to become a new way of being Church, a way that engages in the liberative struggle of the indigenous communities of Asia.

[1]This article is based on a research among Karen and Lahu spiritual leaders which was conducted on March–June 2014 and December 2015, as well as

1. Lived Experience: An Inaugural Ritual

A new way of being Church amongst the indigenous peoples of Asia needs to begin with a felt experience of traditional indigenous ritual celebration through active "experiential participation."[2]

The inaugural ritual took place on December 21, 2015, in the *Lahu Nyi* (black Lahu) village called Ban Muen Mae, located in the Fang District of Chiangmai Province (Thailand). It was the first dedication after almost two years of the new sacred worship place of the Lahu traditional religion known as *hawye* to *Guisha*, the Creator of heaven and earth of the *Lahu Nyi*. This *hawye* became the latest addition to 30 existing *hawye* scattered throughout 75 organized Lahu communities across a total of 250 villages.

The first part of the inauguration was the "cutting of the ribbon" by the province senator, the district officer, and the head of the local municipality. After the ribbon was cut, we were invited into the *hawye* for lunch. When that was over, everyone lined up outside the *hawye* for the purification rite, with the women queued up on the left and the men on the right of the *hawye*. A Lahu woman, accompanied by another woman, poured water from a bamboo container onto the hands of the women and men. All washed their hands in preparation for the sacred worship.

After the purification, we were invited into the *hawye*. The dignitaries lit candles and then left. At the sound of the gong, the shamanic/spiritual leaders known as *tobo*, *tala*, and *ado*, and the priestesses, *adoma* and *kasoma*, broke out in a chorus of melodious chant, a mixture of loud incantations and songs. The leading *tobo* continued

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on personal interviews with priests and lay pastoral workers in the diocese of Chiangmai, Thailand.

[2]For more detail, see Jonathan Yun-Ka Tan, "A New Way of Being Church in Asia: The Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) at the Service of Life in Pluralistic Asia," *Missiology: An International Review*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 1 (January 2005): 72–94, quote at 78.

beating the gong to accompany the chorus of chanting until it reached a crescendo. Then came the contemplative moments of silence, with the sound of the gong resonating in the background as all became discerningly attentive to the climax called *Guisha-yelowe* in which Guisha descends with communications for the Lahu people. Guisha's counsels are clear and decisive for the forward journey of his people who are experiencing the menace of corruption, drug trafficking and drug addiction, exploitation, poverty, and the untold suffering that is taking a toll on the women, the adults, youth, and children.

Pipe music soon broke forth, and scores of women got up and danced clockwise in the inner circle, with more women and men joining them in the sacred dance in three to four concentric circles. In the meantime, those at the altar and in the sacred dance offered incantations to Guisha. Some women and men danced with zest and gusto, while others joined hands and danced prayerfully to the enchanting rhythm of the pipe music. The sacred dance continued for about two hours, with the sacred dancers coming and leaving in three to four waves, and then culminated with the last ritual, the tying of white cotton thread on the wrist by the female and male religious leaders as a sign of Guisha's blessing.

The Lahu communities believe that a mystical spirituality is the bedrock of their communal strength in the perennial negotiation of rapid changes in the context of contestation in Thailand.

2. The Context of Lahu Struggle

The lived experience of the Lahu traditional spirituality that vitalizes their faith and braces them in their negotiation of rapid changes has to be understood within the context of the capitalist-rationalistic logic that has spawned virulent secularism and the unsustainability of the interventionist model of development with the resultant climate changes at the global level. These global forces also play themselves out in the indigenous villages in Thailand, where there has been a systematic erosion of traditional religiosity, cultures, and the self-sufficient economy of rural communities. This erosion

is attributed to the commoditization of arable land and marketable crops by large-scale plantations and production under the aegis of the nation states and their ensuing policies that favor a capital intensive and market oriented economy.

In the early nineteenth century, such logic was mediated through the British and French colonial powers with "the desire to control trade, and exploit […] natural and human resources."[3] The colonized, in turn, have "resisted colonial exploitation and subjugation although with varying degrees of intensity and success."[4] Thailand was one of the resource suppliers, and the British Borneo Company was known for its unfettered logging in Northern Thailand.[5]

This kind of impact was more acutely felt in the post-independence and post-Cold War period[6] in the large agricultural communities, and

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[3]S. Sothi Rachagan & Richard F. Dorall, "The Conflict in Mindanao: Perspectives from South of the Border," paper presented at the 4th Annual National Conference of Ugnayang Pang-Agham Tao, Inc. (UGAT), April 2–4 (Dumaguete City: Silliman University, 1981), 55; Don McCaskill, "From Tribal Peoples to Ethnic Minorities: The Transformation of Indigenous Peoples: A Theoretical Discussion," in D. McCaskill & K. Kampe, eds., *Development or Domestication? Indigenous Peoples of Southeast Asia* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 1997), 43; Karl M. Gaspar, *Manobo Dreams in Arakan: A People's Struggle to Keep their Homeland* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2011), 77. See also Karl M. Gaspar, "To Speak with Boldness," in R. Odchigue & E. M. Genilo, eds., *Reimaging Christianity for a Green World* (Quezon City: St. Vincent School of Theology, 2011), 31.

[4]Rachagan & Dorall, "The Conflict in Mindanao: Perspectives from South of the Border," 55; Gaspar, *Manobo Dreams in Arakan: A People's Struggle to Keep their Homeland*, 77.

[5]For a narrative of the operations of Borneo Company, see Prasert Trakansuphakon, "Space of Resistance and Place of Local Knowledge in the Northern Thailand Ecological Movement," Ph.D diss. (Chiangmai University, 2007), 268–269.

[6]Pinkaew Laungaramsri, "Epilogue," in Don McCaskill, Prasit Leepreecha, & He Shaoying, eds., *Living in a Globalized World: Ethnic Minorities in the Greater Mekong Subregion* (Chiangmai: Mekong Press, 2008), 318.

more particularly in the north and northeast of Thailand when the country as a whole gradually (though more rapidly than neighboring ASEAN nations) shifted "from subsistence farming to more diversified economies, and to more open, market-based systems."[7] In about half a century, the Thai state had brought about socio-economic and cultural changes in the upland indigenous communities through intensive nationalism, modernization, and globalization of its economy. Her membership in regional entities like ASEAN and the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Economic Cooperation Initiatives further accentuated its growth through the processes of regionalization and globalization.[8]

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[7]Don McCaskill, Prasit Leepreecha, & He Shaoying, "Globalization, Nationalism, Regionalism, and Ethnic Minorities in the Greater Mekong Subregion: A Comparative Analysis," in Don McCaskill, Prasit Leepreecha, & He Shaoying, eds., *Living in a Globalized World: Ethnic Minorities in the Greater Mekong Subregion* (Chiangmai: Mekong Press, 2008), 4. Siamwalla Ammar (quoted in Laungaramsri, "Epilogue," 319) states that the encounter between the West and the Greater Mekong Subregion "dates back to the mid[-]nineteenth century when the Industrial Revolution turned the great delta of the Mekong into a resource supplier for the colonial powers." For details, see Laungaramsri, "Epilogue," 319. See also Siamwalla Ammar, "Globalization and its Governance in Historical Perspective," in Mingsarn Kaosa-ard & John Dore, eds., *Social Challenges for the Mekong Region* (Chiang Mai: Social Research Institute, Chiang Mai University, 2003), 13–46.

[8]ASEAN was established in 1967 while the Greater Mekong Subregion Economic Cooperation Initiative was established by the Asian Development Bank in 1992. The GMS is a natural economic area comprising the six states of the Mekong River basin, namely Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, and Yunnan Province, China; it is bound together by the Mekong River, covering 2.6 million square kilometers, and has a combined population of around 326 million. ASEAN economic cooperation calls for greater sectoral cooperation in trade, investment, industry, services, finance, agriculture, forestry, energy, transportation, communication, intellectual property, small and medium enterprises, and tourism. See McCaskill, Leepreecha, & Shaoying, "Globalization, Nationalism, Regionalism, and Ethnic Minorities in the Greater Mekong Subregion: A Comparative Analysis," 1–57. For the history of ASEAN, see http://www.asean.org/asean/about-asean/history (accessed May 9, 2013); for

Such regional modernization in Thailand coincides with the modern capitalism that operates insidiously in contemporary Thai society through "the commodification of social life."[9] Modern capitalism is known for its pervasive "expansion into culture, leisure and sexuality, the bureaucratization of society, and the homogenization of social life by the invasive power of the mass media."[10]

Regionalism as a conduit of late capitalism is not without its peril, however. The Asian Development Bank has warned against the

> disparity between urban and rural communities, a growing gap between rich and poor, inadequate attention [paid] to the special needs of ethnic minorities, gender inequality, lack of access to basic health and education and the inadequate protection of the environment on which traditional livelihood depends.[11]

In addition to the regionalization of the economy of Thailand, political integration and economic progress have to be considered. Kwanchewan Buadaeng and Panadda Boonyasaranai argue that the latter has been achieved through a systematic enforcement of the nationalist ideology of *Thai nation-state*, *Buddhist religion*, and the *monarchy*.[12] The state's political apparatus and its "technologies of power"[13] are used to exercise "state control over the use of the

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GMS, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greater_Mekong_Subregion (accessed May 31, 2013).

[9]For details, see Joe Foweraker, *Theorizing Social Movements* (London: Pluto Press, 1995), here at 41.

[10]Gaspar, *Manobo Dreams in Arakan: A People's Struggle to Keep Their Homeland*, 148.

[11]McCaskill, Leepreecha, & Shaoying, "Globalization, Nationalism, Regionalism, and Ethnic Minorities in the Greater Mekong Subregion: A Comparative Analysis," 6.

[12]Prasit Leepreecha, "The Role of Media Technology in Reproducing Hmong Ethnic Identity," in D. McCaskill, Prasit Leepreecha, & He Shaoying, eds., *Living in a Globalized World: Ethnic Minorities in the Greater Mekong Subregion* (Chiangmai: Mekong Press, 2008), 93.

[13]Leepreecha, "The Role of Media Technology in Reproducing Hmong Ethnic Identity," 93.

forests and forest products, the establishment of a centralized village administration system, the installation of infrastructure such as roads, electricity, [and] the extension of formal education" aimed at assimilating indigenous people as Thai citizens and productive members of a global community.[14]

The enforcement of such rationalized systems in Thailand has occasioned the contemptuous political dismissal of the "agrarian societies … [T]raditional cultural views of the world, which might employ local indigenous knowledge systems involving mythical and spiritual understandings, are devalued and labeled negatively."[15]

This capitalist rationality and statist ideology have their adverse impacts on most if not all of the indigenous communities. As Jürgen Habermas rightly points out, the "capitalistic economic system marks the breakthrough to this level of system differentiation" because "it owes its emergence to a new mechanism, the steering medium of money."[16] Sunthorn Wongjomporn attests that the "villagers are confronted with […] powerful cash crop production … which involve[s] environmental degradation, pollution of air, water and soil and leads to extinction of other beings" which are considered sacred but now eroded by "the secularized mode of development."[17]

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[14]Kwanchewan Buadaeng & Panadda Boonyasaranai, "Religious Conversion and Ethnic Identity: The Karen and the Akha in Northern Thailand," in D. McCaskill, Prasit Leepreecha, & He Shaoying, eds., *Living in a Globalized World: Ethnic Minorities in the Greater Mekong Subregion* (Chiangmai: Mekong Press, 2008), 85.

[15]McCaskill, Leepreecha, & Shaoying, "Globalization, Nationalism, Regionalism, and Ethnic Minorities in the Greater Mekong Subregion: A Comparative Analysis," 4.

[16]Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action* Vol. 2: *Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987), 171, quoted in Gaspar, *Manobo Dreams in Arakan: A People's Struggle to Keep their Homeland*, 61.

[17]Sunthorn Wongjomporn, "Re-creating Sacred Space through the Water Spirit Ritual: A Model for Sustainable Development in Dokdaeng Village, Chiangmai, Thailand," Ph.D diss. (Manila: Asian Social Institute, 2008), 4.

3. A Fourfold Dialogical Model

More than a decade of interaction with indigenous communities alerts me that the local Churches of Asia need to contextualize the triple dialogue. There is a need to add a fourth dimension that enjoins the Church to engage in the communities' liberative struggle. This fourfold dialogue is indeed a new way of being a more effective Church among the indigenous peoples of Asia.

3.1. Dialogue of Everyday Interaction

The first dialogue is the dialogue of everyday interaction in which the local Churches of Asia learn about the value of reverential relationship, with the spiritual leaders as our dialogue partners. This dialogue accords them equal dignity and regards them as contemporaries, thus eliminating any unequal (time and space) relation that suggests a power differential between a civilized urbanite and an illiterate primitive. In this reciprocal relationship, equal dignity and mutual respect are non-negotiable moral relational values if a mutual relationship of trust and entrusting of local knowledge is to be built up by both. Only the practice of dialogic reverence will ensure respect for the differences of traditional beliefs and practices without having to denigrate the indigenous cultural dignity and so decimate the otherness of the spiritual leaders of traditional religion.

The indigenous shamanic leaders show great reverence for Mother Earth based on the indigenous logic that both the indwelling divine being and shamanic spirits have made the earth sacred. Profit-driven development and economics are not without their consequences for the ecological well-being of planet Earth, albeit these are unforeseen, especially in terms of a rupture in the harmonious relationship between the earth and humankind that has resulted in lamentable global warming, climate change, and untimely death in the aftermath of ecological crises. In this uncalled-for suffering, humankind is confronted with the naked truth about the ultimate meaning of existence on earth.[18]

[18]In fact, Diarmuid O' Murchu suggests that "it is not about life on earth, but

The dialogue of everyday interaction with shamanic leaders enables the Church of Asia to learn the value of dialogic reverence towards the earth. The relational value of this dialogic reverence has its basis in the covenant God entered into with humankind through Noah (Gen. 9:12–17). Under the aegis of this covenant, humankind is exhorted to live in harmony with God's creation. This entails a dialogic relationship in which the embodiment and manifestation of dialogic reverence to all of God's creation—"every living thing that is found on the earth" (Gen. 9:17)—is of paramount importance for sustaining the wellbeing of environmental ecology.

This dialogic reverence for creation is akin to the experience and exposition of a group of scientists, including 32 Nobel Prize winners, in a petition sent to a meeting of spiritual leaders from 83 countries. With frankness and clarity, they acknowledge that, "as scientists, many of [them] have had profound experiences of awe and reverence before the universe. [They] understand that what is regarded as sacred is more likely to be treated with care and respect."[19] Dialogic reverence is due to the earth and creation because, as explained by Benedict XVI, the earth is "the wonderful result of God's creative activity" —"a gift of the Creator" with an intrinsic organic value.[20] Dialogic reverence will lead the Church of Asia towards the responsible use of the earth's resources to "satisfy our legitimate needs, material or otherwise, while respecting the intrinsic balance of creation."[21] In this way, dialogic reverence in everyday interaction, as exhorted by Pope Francis, strives towards "a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to

about the life that is earth," and that this life "is affected, for weal and for woe, by the quality of our respect for its inherent processes and our willingness to interact [with] (relate to) all life forms in a gentle, nonexploitative, cooperative manner." See Diarmuid O' Murchu, *Quantum Theology: Spiritual Implications of the New Physics* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 2004), 110, 38.

[19]John Moore, "'Caritas in Veritate': An Ecological Perspective," *JCTR Bulletin* 85 (2010): 25.

[20]Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate* 48.

[21]*Caritas in Veritate* 48.

achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life."[22]

3.2. Dialogue of Accompaniment

The indigenous shamanic leaders believe that accompaniment is "from within." First, it means living in the midst of the village communities. Second, it means guiding the communities through ritual celebrations so that they have an inner mystical experience of the sacred power of the divine being. As Moses steps onto the sacred ground of God's divine presence, symbolized by the burning bush (Ex. 3:2–6), the Lahu spiritual leaders themselves, through communal prayers, chants, and dance, enter into the sacred presence of God. In mystical union, the Lahu spiritual leaders enter an intimate and mystical experience of God who descends and missions them to act on God's behalf as salvific intermediaries. Like Moses who guided the indigenous tribes across the wilderness, the Red Sea, and the desert to the promised land, and acted as their intermediary for manna, quail (Ex. 16:1–36), water (Ex. 17:1–7), and further revelation from God (Ex. 24:18; 33:1–35) on the relationship of Israel with Yahweh, so too do the indigenous spiritual leaders who accompany their communities constantly seek God in ritual celebrations and act on God's counsels for the good of their communities. Their intimate experience of God in ritual celebrations resonates with Jesus' theophanic Abba experience at his baptism, transfiguration, and at the hour of his anguish before his arrest (Jn. 12:28–30; Lk. 22:43–44). Only recurrent and intimate mystical experiences of God such as these can empower the indigenous spiritual leaders to guide their communities out of the different forms of addiction, evil desires, and especially greed, which St. Paul equates with idolatry (Col. 3:5), and thus to stay faithful to God. Fidelity to God entails the perpetual renunciation of these idols (Ex. 20:2, Col. 3:5) so that the poor indigenous communities will be delivered from the burden of poverty, offered new life for the lifeless, justice for the oppressed, and the joy of sustainable livelihood.

[22]See Francis, *Laudato Si'* 207.

This lived experience enjoins the Church to accompany the spiritual leaders by establishing a network for them so that they feel strengthened as a community of like-minded indigenous women and men healers, exorcists, prophets, shamans, ritual performers, and sages. The presence of the Church during the process of accompaniment lends moral support to their agro-based, eco-sensitive, and cosmic ritual celebrations, with the Church fully aware that God's Spirit is active outside of Christianity.[23] The presence of the Church legitimizes the indigenous religio-cultural traditions as the loci of God's salvation and revelation. The presence of the Church acknowledges and affirms their revelatory and salvific significance in the economy of God's plan of salvation. On the one hand, the empowering presence and protection of the Church ensures the "full flourishing" of these religio-cultural traditions.[24] On the other hand, the Church is in a position to resolve the many dilemmas which these leaders face with regard to the menace of drug trafficking and addiction among the young. A case in point is Fr. Niphot Thianvihan, the director of the Research and Training Center for Religio-cultural Community (RTRC) in the Chiangmai Diocese, who for twelve years has been accompanying the

[23]See *Bishops' Institute for Interreligious Affairs* II, Art. 12, in Gaudencio Rosales & C. G. Arévalo, eds., *For All the Peoples of Asia: Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences Documents from 1970 to 1991* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992), 115 (hereafter referred to as *BIRA*). Cf. *BIRA* IV/1, Art. 10, in Rosales & Arévalo, *For All the Peoples of Asia*, 249.

[24]The Lahu regarded Jean-Pierre Oxibar (1898–1964), a Betharram priest, as a prophet, a liberator, and a protector of the Lahu who

> rejoiced in such indigenous traditions as being those of a people who, like his own Basques, could become Christians but still express their joy of life through the ways of their ancestors. Moreover, it was Oxibar's hope, Saint-Guily states, that "these ancestral traditions would flower still more gracefully" under the protection of the new religion and "through his presence and his prayers."

For more detail, see Anthony R. Walker, *Merit and Millennium: Routine and Crisis in the Ritual Lives of the Lahu People* (Delhi: Hindustan Publishing Cooperation, 2003), 621.

Lahu communities in their three-pronged approach of firming up their spirituality through the building of their *hawye*, the formal education of their children, and the formation of their youth in cultural agriculture based on the aspirations and values of *Laudato Si'*.[25]

3.3. Dialogue of Religious Experience

The nature of this dialogue enjoins the Church of Asia to put out into the deep by taking a plunge into indigenous ritual celebrations so as to take delight in the mystical experience of the sacred. This dialogue of religious experience enables the Church to understand the importance of entering the inner world of the mystical experience of indigenous spiritual leaders in order to understand and appreciate the richness therein and thus be disposed to receive the revelation of God who is at work in their rites.[26]

This dialogue of religious experience with indigenous spiritual leaders is not always discursive and therefore academic, but rather conversational and experiential. Upon the invitation of the spiritual leaders, there will be opportunities to attend and participate in the ritual celebrations presided over by them, be it listening to the chants

[25]Conversation with Fr. Niphot Thianvihan (December 12, 2015).

[26]Participation in the shamanic rituals draws its assurance and inspiration from the Asian bishops who state that in

> Asia, the dialogue of prayer and spirituality is highly valued. Prayer together, in ways congruent with the faith of those who take part, is an occasion for Christians and followers of other faiths to appreciate better the spiritual riches which each group possesses, as well as to grow in respect for one another as fellow pilgrims on the path through life. Human solidarity is deepened when people approach the divine as one human family. (Formation Institute for Interreligious Affairs IV [Pattaya: Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences], 8. See also FABC III [Bangkok: 1982]).

The Church of Asia is thus urged to journey in dialogue with people of other faiths so that we can better discern how God speaks to them in their lives, rituals, histories, and, through them, to us as well.

as observers or taking part in communal dancing as participants in order to experience spirit-possession by the God-who-descends. Such spirit-possession enables the Church to gain an inner experience of the depth of mystical experience, an inner experience that complements what is observed on the outside. It is therefore important for the Church to have both observational experience from the outside and participatory experience from the inside in order to attain the desired complementarity of human and mystical experience.

This dialogue of religious experience will enable the local Churches of Asia to increasingly understand the inscrutable omnipresence of the Pentecostal Spirit[27] who shattered a mono-ecclesial Jewish community and poured forth into the Greco-Roman milieu. This universalization of the Creative Spirit, alluded to in the multi-glossarial phenomenon of Pentecost (Acts 2:1–13), is a multi-religio-cultural manifestation and presence well attested to by the spiritual leaders, the religious sages, and the Church of Asia involved in this dialogue of religious experience. This multi-religio-cultural manifestation paves the way for the Church to enter into a gradual understanding of the alternative ways by which the spiritual leaders of the indigenous communities express their religious experience and how they articulate their understanding of God, their experience of being possessed by the Spirit, and the liberative-salvific mission of this God. This articulation is more of a conversational and personal sharing, either on a one-on-one basis or in a small group that involves recognition and clarification of what each dialogue partner is saying.

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[27]The Asian bishops state the same conviction that

> Christians believe that God's saving will is at work, in different ways, in all religions. It has been recognized since the time of the apostolic Church, and stated clearly again by the Second Vatican Council (cf. *Gaudium et Spes* 22; *Lumen Gentium* 16), that the Spirit of Christ is active outside the bounds of the visible Church (cf. *Redemptor hominis*, 6). God's saving grace is not limited to members of the Church, but is offered to every person …. His ways are mysterious and unfathomable, and no one can dictate the direction of His grace. (BIRA II [Kuala Lumpur], 12)

What appears to be personal sharing is indeed an ongoing verbalized reflection on mystical experiences in the indigenous ritual celebrations. By participating in this conversation, the Church is able to receive the revelation of God in indigenous religio-cultural traditions. God's Spirit is already at work, purifying, elevating current understanding, and completing the experience with a new awareness so that "whatever truth and grace are to be found among the nations … whatever good is found to be sown in the hearts and minds of men, or in the rites and cultures peculiar to various peoples, not only is not lost, but is healed, uplifted, and perfected for the glory of God."[28]

In this dialogical process, the Church is able to perceive, intuit, and understand how God's Spirit is revealing from within the spiritual leaders' mystical experiences. It is important for the Church to understand the verbalization of their shamanic *spirit*-uality—the uniqueness of their God (*Theo*). God is *Guisha* our father by being the Creator of the heaven/sky, and is our mother because *Guisha* created the earth. The universe is like a spider web and *Guisha* lives at the center of the web. *Guisha* descends in Spirit, invisible to human eyes but experienceable in the human heart as a divine touch and a mystical spark. The Church needs to experience and understand how these spiritual leaders are being overshadowed by *Guisha* and hence Spirit-possessed, and how this divine Savior (*Soter*) is the saving power in the life-struggles of the indigenous marginal communities. In fact, the communal prayer, sacred chant, and dance signify the liturgical enactment of the local indigenous *theo*-logy, *pneuma*-tology, and *soter*-iology of the indigenous primal religion.

The ritual reenactment of a local indigenous *theo*-logy, *pneuma*-tology, and *soter*-iology alert the local Churches of Asia to the omnipresence of God's Spirit, who blows where the Spirit pleases (Jn. 3:8), operating "in" and "out" of ecclesiastical structures, never totally monopolized or domesticated, always empowering, liberating, and saving God's marginal peoples.[29]

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[28] *Ad Gentes* 9; cf. *Lumen Gentium* 17.

[29] See *Theses on Interreligious Dialogue*, FABC Papers No. 48, Art. 6.5.

As intermediary of God in this dialogue, the Church is invited to affirm and supplement what is needed to enrich the indigenous local theologies and liberate them from any undue shadows of irreligious and unethical influences. Finally, as a co-pilgrim, the Church is enjoined to "lift up" (as opposed to suppress and denigrate [cf. Jn. 8:28; 12:32; Nb. 21:8]) the local indigenous theologies and communicate them in language intelligible to the outside world so as to challenge and enrich the local, regional, and global Church and society.[30]

3.4. Dialogue of Liberative Struggle

Enkindled by mystical God-experiences, empowered by indigenous *theo*-logy, *pneuma*-tology, and *soter*-iology, and motivated by an indigenous *spirit*-uality, both dialogue partners are poised for action—a praxis involving the liberative struggle of the indigenous communities in partnership with other stakeholders in civil society and local councils. In the Chiangmai Diocese, the RTRC, the Diocesan Social Action Committee (DISAC), the men, women, and youth committees of the diocese, the Society of Jesus, the Good Shepherd Congregation, the Ban Marina Sisters, and the Betharram Priests have engaged in the communal struggle of the indigenous peoples for sustainable livelihood along with greater security and dignity in their villages.

The intimate experience of mystic spirituality, theology, pneumatology, and soteriology enabled RTRC to launch, in 2013–2014, a new orientation in the formation of young indigenous farmers in their struggle for sustainable livelihood in their upland communities. The young farmers came to RTRC for a six-month course which enabled them to learn about agriculture that incorporates the mystic eco-spirituality and theology of their shamanic leaders that resonate with the Assisian-mysticism of *Laudato Si'*. For two months, the

[30]The Asian bishops have declared that "each local church, each people's history, each people's culture, meanings and values, each people's traditions are taken up, not diminished nor destroyed, but celebrated and renewed, purified if need be, and fulfilled … in the life of the Spirit" (International Mission Congress [Manila, 1979], 15, as cited in James H. Kroeger, "Asia's Dynamic, Missionary Local Churches: FABC Perspectives," *Landas* 19:2 [2005]: 181).

young farmers sat in the lotus position in the morning and learned to contemplate (*samadi*) in silence. They contemplated in the vegetable gardens, with the soil in their hands, and near the edge of the fish ponds. Through *samadi*, they entered into a reciprocal relationship with Mother Earth. At the end of the course, a 16-year-old farmer said that he heard the rebuke of Mother Earth— "My ungrateful son, why are you killing me?"—and that he thus resolved to reverse the tide of chemical farming in his upland village, first by starting his own organic farm.[31]

The DISAC women committee similarly engages in the liberative struggle by encouraging the indigenous women in the villages to treasure and sustain their *pumpanya* or traditional wisdom.[32] Women's wisdom inculcates in the village communities a dialogic reverence of the spirit (understood as *khwan* in Thai), the trees, the leaves, the bark of the trees for making dyes, the water to make natural dye, and the earth, our mother. This pool of indigenous wisdom enables the village women to produce handicrafts, textiles, and even attempt to cultivate their own cotton for the production of their own fabric.

After the early phase of welfare and community leadership training (1975–1985), the DISAC main executive committee, on the other hand, launched the vision and mission of a self-reliant economy for sustainable community (2012–2015). In partnership with RTRC, the latest phase calls for a spirituality-infused way of doing agriculture to attain food security and sovereignty while deepening the community's sensitivity to the environment in light of *Laudato Si'*.[33] In this partnership, DISAC intends to implement the new vision and mission in collaboration with the government's National Research

[31]Conversation with Fr. Niphot Thianvihan.

[32]Conversation with Naiyana (December 13, 2015). She has worked with the DISAC youth, women, and eventually with the National Women Commission of Thailand. She has since retired and works as the administrator of RTRC.

[33]Conversation with Dr. Sunthorn Wongjomporn, the Executive Director of DISAC, Chiangmai Diocese.

Fund, the Land Reform Department, and various universities in terms of participatory action research. From 2016 onwards, DISAC will also collaborate with the Maryknoll Society in initiating organic farming and sustainable communities, and will create community markets in Catholic schools, children's centres, parishes, and religious congregations. The Rice-Merit Network, a movement of indigenous and lowland Thai farmers initiated by DISAC in 2000, will explore the production of organic fertilizers for the farmers in order to sustain their organic farming. DISAC will also initiate Eco-Agri-Tourism for city dwellers so as to re-orient them in the mystic cosmology of the indigenous communities and *Laudato Si'*.

The liberative struggle of indigenous peoples is most urgent at the frontier located at the border between Thailand and Myanmar, otherwise known as the Karen State. According to Vinai Boonlue, the only Jesuit priest in Karen who ministers to the refugees at the camps along the border and at the borderland, "cross-border ministry is an illegal kind of activity. But people keep crossing the border[;] it is not as though they transgress the border. The border transgresses their lives. They never cut the line but the line [cuts] their lives."[34] This frontier ministry in the war-zone over the last 67 years (since 1948) helps to create a sacred space and a sacred time known as "sacramental moments" for story-telling—of war for the men and escape for the women with their children. Sacramental reenactment flows from these safe and sacred moments into the "actual walking" of the battlefield which facilitates the healing of memories within the web of relationships that embraces their land and their homes, along with their livestock and vegetable gardens in Myanmar and the refugee camps in Thailand.

This contextualized fourfold "dialogical model is in fact a new way of being church"[35] that "seeks not to exclude others but to be truly catholic in its concerns, in its appreciation of the gifts of others, and in its readiness to work with others [*even the shamanic leaders*] for a world at

[34]Conversation with Fr. Vinai Boonlue, S.J. (December 24, 2015).

[35]*BIRA* IV/12, Art. 48, in Rosales & Arévalo, *For All the Peoples of Asia*, 332.

once more human and more divine."[36] This dialogical model is essential for the Church to imbibe the mystic spirituality of sacred sustainability so as to be effective in the liberative struggle of indigenous peoples.

4. Mystical Sense of Sacred Sustainability

The fourfold dialogical model enables the local Churches of Asia to intimate her indigenous members (Catholics, catechists, brothers, nuns, priests, and bishops) to the mystical sense of God who is the omnipresent and omnipotent Spirit (Jn. 4:24). This mystical sense is a felt bodily experience that God and God's Spirit-power is everywhere, in everything and everyone, in God's creation. God's creation is therefore suffused with the presence and power of God's Spirit; God's creation is therefore spirited and sacred, hence, "*the sacred is in everything and everything has spirit*."[37]

This sacredness is also a relational sense that is inseparably linked to rituals, places, spirits, and events. Rituals thus make places sacred when blessings are invoked and thanksgiving is offered. Hence, when rituals are celebrated with offerings to the *khwan* ("spirit" in Thai) of the forest and the water, the forest, the river, and the water become sacred.[38] This pervasive spirit presence and sacred power that sacralize creation

[36]*BIRA* IV/12, Art. 49, in Rosales & Arévalo, *For All the Peoples of Asia*, 333 (emphasis mine). See also Tan, "A New Way of Being Church in Asia," 91.

[37]Almost all of the 45 participants interviewed in the village of Dok Daeng agreed that "rituals make everything sacred" and that "the sacred is in everything and everything has spirit." They were also the participants of the Youth Leadership Seminar (Dok Daeng: May 18, 2013). The theme of the seminar was "Sacred Nature and Sustainable Life." It was organized under the aegis of the Seven Fountains Jesuit Retreat House, Chiangmai, Northern Thailand, which also acts as a Chaplaincy Center for the university students.

[38]For the theological relationship between God's Spirit and the ancestral and nature spirits, see Chapter VI of Jojo M. Fung's upcoming book, *A Shamanic Pneumatology of Sacred Sustainability: The Spirit of the Earth* (New York: Palgrave McMillian, 2016).

also sensitize everyone to God's Spirit-power and presence that sustains God's creation. This is the mystical sense of sacred sustainability that has to inform and transform the spirituality of the Church of Asia amongst the indigenous communities. Out of this mystic spirituality of sacred sustainability emerges a mystic theology of the God whose sacred presence and spirit suffuses, sacralizes, sensitizes, and sustains the *cosmos* and *anthropos*.

4.1. *Suffusing*. The whole *cosmos* and *anthropos* enjoy the life of profundity, creativity, and harmony due to the suffusing presence of God's Spirit. Hence, most indigenous spiritual leaders believe that the spirit is in everything and that all directions have spirits. The suffusing presence of God's Spirit enlivens all and everything so that creation is sacredly alive in the presence and power of God's Spirit. This suffusing presence enshrouds all and everything with a sense of the mystery of creation and of life itself.

4.2. *Sensitizing*. God's Spirit sensitizes humankind to the spirit-presence and power of God's Spirit, to the ancestral and nature spirits, through tangible consequences of rituals. Indigenous spiritual leaders believe that, subsequent to the rituals, the villagers become sensitized by the outcomes of the ritual celebrations. The tangible signs are a better harvest this year compared to previous years, and the messages of admonition from dreams and everyday events in the villages as understood by the spiritual leaders. As a result, the indigenous communities in the ancestral homeland live with a heightened sensitivity to the presence and power of God's Spirit, to the ancestral and nature spirits. This sensitivity is visibly manifested in a reverential relationship of awe, marvel, reverence, and wonder so that indigenous peoples behold nature as spirited and sacred.

4.3. *Sacralizing*. Through the annual agricultural ritual celebrations, indigenous spiritual leaders, elders, and healers opine that God's Spirit sacralizes families, farms and forests, and, in addition to the web of relations between the spirit world and the human world, humans and fellow humans, and lastly, humankind and nature. For this reason, these spiritual leaders subscribe that rituals make everything sacred. They describe the world as spirited and thus sacralized by the presence and

power of God's Spirit. This sacralization renders all and everything in creation sacred and therefore needs to be beholden with awe, reverence, and wonder, tinged with an aura of fear and the mystery of the sacredness of life.

4.4. *Sustaining*. The suffusing, sensitizing, and sacralizing presence of God's Spirit is at the same time a sacred power that sustains the cosmic world and the earth community. The indigenous spiritual leaders believe that the presence of God's Spirit, the ancestral and nature spirits, sustains life in nature and in the villagers from generation to generation. They convey a sense of sacred sustainability that persists through every evolutionary stage of cosmic implosion-explosion. This sense also persists through the epochal changes in the collective memory of the indigenous communities, humankind, and the cosmos.

The mystic spirituality at the heart of the emerging mystic theology of sacred sustainability enables the local Churches of Asia to be increasingly sensitized by this mystical cosmology that propounds that *all things are God* and that *all things have spirits*.[39] The core of this mystical cosmology is akin to the mystical insight of St. John of the Cross that postulates that "the realities and experiences of this world" are "present in God eminently and infinitely, or more properly, in each of these sublime realities is God" to the extent that "the mystic experiences the intimate connection between God and all beings, and thus feels that 'all things are God.'"[40] In other words, if all things/persons created are God, then God who is spirit truly suffuses all things/persons in creation. In this mystical sense, all things/persons thus suffused pervasively by God are divinized and are God. In the same mystical sense, all things are suffused by God's Spirit and all things have God's Spirit.

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[39]See Jojo M. Fung, *A Shamanic Theology of Sacred Sustainability: Church in Dialogue with Shamans for Liberative Struggle in Asia* (Manila: Jesuit Communications Foundations Inc., 2014).

[40]*Laudato Si'* 234, quoting St. John of the Cross (*Cántico Espiritual*, XIV, 5).

The mystic spirituality that explains the mystic presence of God in creation is foundational to understand *panentheism* (all-in-God) as the flip side of *theos-en-pasin* (God-in-all), establishing the "compenetrative presencing or indwelling" of God in creation and creation in God. *Panentheism* bespeaks of the indwelling of created realities from the incarnated perspective that postulates that God is already an indwelling presence by virtue of creation's subsistence in God. On the other hand, *theos-en-pasin* offers an incarnational perspective wherein the God who suffuses creation is an indwelling presence that sacralizes and sustains creation. This "compenetrative presencing" is crucial to understand the *unfathomable* and even controversial belief in the pantheon of Asian deities who are spirits (god/spirit of the kitchen, god/spirit of the sky, god/spirit of the earth) inhabiting nature (spirit of the tree, forest, mountain, animals, and water).

God's incarnational presencing *in* creation becomes the incarnated presence of God who is the life-giving Spirit (Jn. 4:24) in creation. In the *anthropos*, God's Spirit-presence becomes the incarnated spirit of each particular person—God's Spirit indwelling in Joan is an incarnated spirit that suffuses, sacralizes, and sustains Joan. This Spirit-presence is an invisible life-giving principle that is known as the spirit of Joan. In the natural and human ecology, God's Spirit-presence in nature and human habitat is analogously explained as the spirit of the animals, the trees, the mountains, the water, the kitchen, the sky, and the earth. This is the mystico-theological insight of the mystics that is borne of a *profoundly intimate inner experience* of this mystical cosmology. This quintessential insight of "compenetrative presencing" has laid the foundation for *Laudato Si'* to explain this mystical cosmology in ways such that "everything is interconnected,"[41] "interdependent,"[42] and "interrelated" as "we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for

[41] *Laudato Si'* 70.

[42] *Laudato Si'* 86.

each of his creatures and which also unites us in fond affection with brother sun, sister moon, brother river and mother earth."[43]

The mystical nexus between *all things are God* and therefore *all things have spirits* is borne out of the lived experience which makes it discursively apparent that the incarnational perspective of the *one Divine Spirit* is manifested through the *many incarnated presences of God's Spirit in created things and persons*. The multiple spirits are but multiple manifestations at the level of creation of the incarnation of *one Divine Spirit* in creation. The mystical experience intimates the pray-ers to a mystical insight of the created reality as double-sided—*theos-en-pasin* from the incarnational perspective and *panentheism* from the incarnated perspective.

Imbibing this indigenous mystical cosmology enables the Church to "enflesh" and "en-soul" herself with the spirit of indigenous cosmological mysticism. In this way, the Church amongst marginal indigenous peoples arrives at her most inculturated cultural identity[44] wherein the mystic power is translated as the spirit-power in the liberative struggle of marginal indigenous communities. The Church that has become indigenized at her core and engaged in the liberative struggle of indigenous peoples will become a new and effective way of being an indigenous Church of Asia. This new way of "en-souling" the cosmological mysticism of indigenous peoples articulates with the enchanting ways by which God's Spirit is transforming the universal Church and humankind through the mystical spirituality of St. Francis of Assisi in *Laudato Si'*.

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[43] *Laudato Si'* 138.

[44] *BIRA* IV/12, Art. 50, in Rosales & Arévalo, *For All the Peoples of Asia*, 333. It is interesting to note that the Asian Colloquium on Ministries in the Church (Art. 14 [ii]) states unequivocally that "if Asian churches do not discover their own identity, they will have no future" (Rosales & Arévalo, *For All the Peoples of Asia*, 70). See also Tan, "A New Way of Being Church in Asia," 92.

Conclusion

With an extended engagement of the FABC's thesis of triple dialogue, it becomes apparent that this dialogue has to become fourfold. A fourfold dialogical model enables the Church of Asia to accompany all peoples—traditional believers, Protestants, Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, and Catholics—amongst the indigenous communities. In this way, the Church engages in their liberative struggle that involves their mystic spirituality of sacred sustainability. This mystic spirituality is the foundation for the emergence of an Asian mystic theology of sacred sustainability that proclaims God as the Spirit that suffuses, sacralizes, sensitizes, and sustains the *cosmos* and *anthropos*. A Church that lives the mystic experience of sacred sustainability and engages in the liberative struggle of marginal indigenous communities has allowed God to fully transform her ontic-ecclesial identity as a new way of being Church of Asia amongst indigenous peoples. In this way, the Church of Asia is truly inculturated from within to become a truly indigenous way of being the Church of Asia in the tribal ancestral homeland.

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HENRI DE LUBAC'S THEOLOGY OF REVELATION

From Distance to Mystery

Earl A. P. Valdez

I. Henri de Lubac and His Legacy

Among those who belong to the *nouvelle theologie* movement, Henri de Lubac, S.J., seems to have made the greatest effort to go back to the rich tradition of the Church in order to resolve conflicts way ahead of him.[1] This has resulted in several works on various aspects of the Christian faith such as the catholicity of the Church, the sacramental element of the Eucharist, and the spiritual interpretation of the Scriptures, among others. De Lubac's intellectual endeavours eventually left treasures which the Church (especially in and after the Second Vatican Council) has come to appreciate and adopt in her faith and life.

One of these treasures is de Lubac's unique way of articulating divine revelation which is heavily rooted in the spiritual experience of the Church Fathers, an experience which led them to develop a mystical way of speaking about God, a kind of "negative theology"

[1]David Grumett, "Henri de Lubac: Looking for Books to Read the World," in Gabriel Flynn & Paul D. Murray, eds., *Ressourcement: A Movement for Renewal in Twentieth-century Catholic Theology*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 237–238.

that was significant even until the time of the medieval period. This way of speaking about God—which implied that knowledge and experience of him can only be intuited by faith—did not attempt to exhaust or define God's mystery. In this light, one may ask: *how should one understand de Lubac's articulation of divine revelation, and in what way is it significant in his theology?*

The present article attempts to answer this question by presenting a sketch of de Lubac's own theology of revelation which distinctly bears elements of the "negative" theological tradition of the Church Fathers. This involves discussing several themes in de Lubac's own thought, namely a) the intellectual atmosphere to which de Lubac responds with a "rediscovery" of divine revelation, b) his articulation of divine revelation in his work *The Discovery of God*, which has both positive and negative elements of divine revelation, and c) the significance of this articulation alongside other themes on Christian faith and life which de Lubac has worked on. Lastly, this article shows that, for de Lubac, Christianity revolves around coming to know the mystery of God and living in that mystery which lies at an *infinite distance* from the mind. Although the mind desires to define and understand the mystery of God, it is visible and open only through the eyes of faith and love.

II. Understanding the Various Forms of Atheism Outside and Within Catholic Theology

Hans Urs von Balthasar regarded de Lubac's theological enterprise as his endeavour to confront the humanism of his time. It was a period heavily characterized by the loss of a sense of transcendence and an affirmation of humanity that had no need for a divine figure above it.[2] De Lubac's interest in divine revelation was primarily anthropological—he desired to redefine human existence and

[2]See Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Theology of Henri de Lubac: An Overview*, trans. Joseph Fessio & Michael M. Waldstein (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1991), 46–54.

humanity's search for meaning and transcendence according to how the Christian faith sees and understands the human being.[3]

More than that, however, de Lubac was also concerned with the problem of neo-Scholastic theology during his time, which alienated the human being and his life of faith from Church teaching and theology. These two forms of atheism within and outside the Church and Catholic theology prompted de Lubac to reflect on divine revelation and rethink the way it was thought of and presented.

In *The Drama of Atheist Humanism,* "a collection of articles loosely gathered together but internally a powerfully constructive work,"[4] de Lubac broadly analysed an array of prominent thinkers who spoke of God, faith, and religion. The first of its three parts discussed how the understanding of human life in the philosophies of Ludwig Feuerbach, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Karl Marx eventually led to a total separation of the human being from God. However, the idea of becoming human without the need for God was duly critiqued by Søren Kierkegaard, who delved into the depths of human experience to affirm in his own way the God who had been denied and considered dead.[5] The second part was devoted to the positivist philosophy of Auguste Comte, who yearned to replace the decadent Catholic Church in France with a vibrant positivism which stressed the evolution of the human mind towards a state in which a person could do away with God.[6] The common ground among these thinkers was the rejection of God in order to give way to the rise of humanity, with a radical affirmation of freedom and self-determination.

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[3]This is already evident in his discussion of atheist humanism, as he expresses to respond to an understanding of the human being which brings him towards himself but thrusts himself away from God (Henri de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, trans. Edith M. Riley [Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1950], vii–viii).

[4]von Balthasar, *The Theology of Henri de Lubac*, 48.

[5]de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, 54.

[6]de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, 77–78.

According to de Lubac, Feuerbach's rejection of God was founded on his own concept of God as a mere expression of human aspirations.[7] As such, it was necessary that God—who is but a myth which the human being projects of himself—be banished so that he could be replaced by the human being who, after all, is the true god who possesses "liberty, dignity, reason, and prosperity," the very things that the god or gods of myth have deprived the human being of.[8] Marx then took this thesis to the threshold when he said that what Feuerbach ultimately lacked in his rejection of God was a total critique of religion and the actual conditions of his time. This was what Marx had set out to do— he developed Feuerbach's "cult of the abstract man" towards a religion of workers concerned with material conditions of living that rejected God as its basis.[9] Through this, Marx believed that he had properly restored the human being's divinity as he thought it should be.

Nietzsche, also a disciple of Feuerbach, moved toward another direction as he announced the death of God which the human being should wish for.[10] This "murder" of the divine would allow the human being to emerge as himself, to transcend his present condition. In de Lubac's view, Nietzsche calls the human being to

> produce out of himself—out of nothingness—something with which to transcend humanity; let him trample his own head under foot and shoot forth beyond his shadow …. The endurance test to which he was condemned himself will reveal to him his own divinity by bringing it into being. God is dead, long live the Superman![11]

This "Superman," creating his own fate and values and affirming his own human power, now walks alone and free to determine his end

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[7]de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, 8.

[8]de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, 13.

[9]de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, 14–15.

[10]de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, 22.

[11]de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, 25.

and destiny, for he has no other God to bow to, and look forward to, except himself.[12]

In de Lubac's view, Nietzsche's and Marx's portrayal of the human being shows them to be atheistic humanists. While de Lubac finds in this way of thinking the value of affirming the human being's power, he points out that, in the end, this kind of humanism fails to truly understand the human being and his search for meaning.[13] Coming from the perspective of the Christian faith, de Lubac points out that this atheistic endeavour to liberate and develop the human being leads to self-destruction. This denial of God indeed allows the human being to emerge, but as one who is alone and by himself, unable to understand himself and pursue the meaning of existence. This is so because he has been fully extracted from the ultimate transcendence, from God who has shown himself to the human person as the ultimate purpose, meaning, and destiny that he seeks.[14] Simply put, humanity in rejecting God is also rejected and replaced with idols that speak of empty freedom and grandeur.

The same conclusion can be drawn from Auguste Comte's positivism, which he hails as the peak of the human being's intellectual

[12]de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, 26–27.

[13]This is more evident in the second chapter of *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, when de Lubac juxtaposes Nietzsche with the philosopher Kierkegaard. Nietzsche's critique of Socrates and Socratism in order to pave the way for acknowledging and appreciating the element of mystery in the life of the human being in a sense also allowed Christian thought to break away from a narrow rationalism that left the Christian religion dry, and towards something that affirms and enriches life. Kierkegaard, however, sees the value of Socrates in terms of his method, and uses his method not to deny God like Nietzsche did but instead to affirm Him as part of the mystery that the human being questions and confronts in his existence. For de Lubac, Kierkegaard points out that the true end of Socratic questioning is in fact a recognition of the failure to completely understand this mystery, and thus calls for the human being's faith that leads to a "deeper immersion in existence." See de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, 40–44, 52–55, 60.

[14]de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, 32.

evolution. From this standpoint, Comte sees religion as fetishistic and infantile. In him, de Lubac sees an atheism that, beyond denying God, goes toward "the ideal of humanity" which can be achieved only through the comprehensive understanding of "nature, history, and mind" as promised by positivism.[15] Comte asserts, therefore, that positivism must replace Catholicism in all its aspects, as the human mind of his age is mature enough to take its place.

Such a replacement comes in the form of radical "transpositions" that supplant aspects of Catholicism with their counterparts in positivism. The foundation of this positivist religion is not the Triune God but the trinity of "Being, Fetish, and Environment,"[16] and the faith of its believers is demonstrable, founded on arguments that are certain.[17] The decadent Catholic priesthood is going to be replaced with scientists and positivist thinkers who bear a certain "encyclopaedic mind" which systematizes everything.[18] Above all, what is worshipped is humanity itself, not the Catholic God whose power and omnipotence only lead to the egoism of the human being.[19]

In all these efforts, de Lubac sees Comte luring himself into his own trap, caught in the same illusion that the human being can come to know himself through his own powers.[20] With no possibility for transcendence, the human being remains within himself. The result is a sociocracy that can easily degenerate into sociolatry, an undue veneration of society or state that resembles a "tyrannic regime." In effect, the forces that the human being desires to control within himself

[15]de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, 79–81.

[16]de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, 131.

[17]de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, 141.

[18]de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, 138–139.

[19]See de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, 107–108.

[20]de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, 147.

and within his society will crush him and deprive him of meaning and purpose.[21]

De Lubac's critique of this atheistic humanism leads to the question "who, then, is the God that the Christian faith believes in?" It is certainly not the God as understood and presented by the Catholic theology of his time, which has fundamentally failed to understand God's revelation and his relationship with the human being. In a way, this could be regarded as the other kind of atheism which de Lubac had to confront, an atheism of a sort which was very much present within the intellectual tradition of the Church.

The Catholic theology that de Lubac inherited and worked with, especially during his years in formation at the Jesuit houses in France and England,[22] was the Church's own effort to defend Christianity from modernism, which stressed the primacy of reason in all aspects of human life, religion and faith included.[23] In this regard, the Church returned to the authority of St. Thomas Aquinas, with Pope Leo XIII establishing neo-scholasticism as the Church's official intellectual framework for defending its teachings against, and attacking the errors of, modernism.[24] This move proved to be beneficial for the Church,

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[21]de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, 157.

[22]John Milbank, *The Suspended Middle: Henri de Lubac and the Debate Concerning the Supernatural* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2005), 1–2. See also Aidan Nichols, "Henri de Lubac: Panorama and Proposal," *The New Blackfriars* 93:1043 (2012): 10–12; Georges Chantraine, "The Supernatural Discernment of Catholic Thought According to Henri de Lubac," in Serge-Thomas Bonino, ed., *Surnaturel: A Controversy at the Heart of Twentieth-century Thomistic Thought*, trans. Robert Williams (Ave Maria, FL: Sapientia Press, 2009), 22–23.

[23]For a brief background on modernism and its influence on Catholic theology during the 19th century, see Gerald A. McCool, *Nineteenth-century Scholasticism: The Search for a Unitary Method* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1989), 17–19.

[24]See Leo XIII, *Aeterni Patris* 21–23, available at http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_04081879_aeterni-patris.html. It is important to note here that Leo XIII not only established the primacy of

as it paved the way for a more synthetic and systematic articulation of the Christian faith. Moreover, this also allowed for the emergence of a rich neo-scholastic tradition which de Lubac himself largely benefited from.

De Lubac, however, was not satisfied with the Thomism which he studied. It was not so much because of St. Thomas himself; rather, it was because of the way St. Thomas was interpreted and discussed by his commentators, most especially Thomas Cajetan and Francisco Suarez, whose Thomism de Lubac received from his Jesuit formation.[25] An important concern for de Lubac was the way neo-scholasticism understood the human being, God, and the relationship between the two. Thus, what he found disconcerting and seemingly erroneous in neo-scholasticism was its view on the relationship between grace and nature in the human being's search for God.

What was problematic for de Lubac in Cajetan's and Suarez's reading of St. Thomas was the view that human existence had two possible ends: one natural, by virtue of his existence as a human being, and another supernatural, a separate order which was only possible for the human being through the grace of God. Furthermore, to preserve the gratuity of being ordained towards a natural end, Cajetan used the idea of "pure nature" (*natura pura*). According to him, the human being had a purely natural end outside the elevation of grace.[26]

St. Thomas' thought in terms of its synthetic value. He also saw it fit because it has historical precedence and provides practical benefits, among which is the means for a defense against the heretics of its time. See also Grumett, "Henri de Lubac: Looking for Books to Read the World," 237.

[25]De Lubac learned Suarezian Thomism under the tutelage of Fr. Pedro Descoqs, his Jesuit professor in philosophy (Chantraine, "The Supernatural Discernment of Catholic Thought According to Henri de Lubac," 25).

[26]See Henri de Lubac, "The Mystery of the Supernatural," in *Theology in History*, trans. Anne Englund Nash (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1996), 296–297. De Lubac shows that it was, in fact, Cajetan who was able to fully articulate this notion as, more than just being a hypothesis, something that is real and separated from "supernature" made possible by grace (see Henri de Lubac, *The Mystery*

In the broader perspective of the relationship between God and the human being, this meant reducing God as a distant end to be pursued. This kind of thinking created a greater rift between the realm of the human being and the life of God, as if the former could be separated from the latter. De Lubac observed that,

> [w]hile wishing to protect the supernatural from any contamination, people had in fact exiled it altogether—both from intellectual and from social life—leaving the field free to be taken over by secularism. Today that secularism, following its course, is beginning to enter the minds even of Christians. They too seek to find a harmony with all things based upon an idea of nature which might be acceptable to a deist or an atheist: everything that comes from Christ, everything that should lead to him, is pursued so far into the background as to look like disappearing for good. The last word in Christian progress and the entry into adulthood would then appear to consist in a total secularization which would expel God not merely from the life of society, but from culture and even from personal relationships.[27]

Moreover, this sense of secularism comes with a perspective of God who is absent from the everyday concerns of the human being, from his mundane preoccupations with the ultimate questions that continually disturb him and call for his attention. This act of postulating a purely natural world eventually leads people to conceive "beyond that universe another, designated as 'supernatural' and declared 'more excellent,' 'more perfect,' or rather perfect in a different way, but of which there remains nothing else that can be said."[28] Examined

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of the Supernatural, trans. Rosemary Sheed [London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1967], 7–9; Susan Wood, "The Nature-Grace Problematic Within Henri de Lubac's Christological Paradox," *Communio* 19 [1992]: 391; Chantraine, "The Supernatural Discernment of Catholic Thought According to Henri de Lubac," 28).

[27]de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, xi–xii, 61. See also Chantraine, "The Supernatural Discernment of Catholic Thought According to Henri de Lubac," 30–31, which outlines the various consequences of the concept of *natura pura*, among which includes one of de Lubac's main concerns: the separation between philosophy and theology.

[28]de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, 55–59.

closely, it is nothing but a practical form of agnosticism in which God is reduced to a principle that cannot be achieved by the human being, a first and last term, taken in its narrow sense, in a link of causes. At best, it is a separation of human life from faith and theology, a life without anything to reflect on except its own ideas and concepts.[29] As a consequence, what remains is a human being that is "isolated, uprooted, and 'disconcerted,'" and left with a world that is broken.[30] What happens here in a way is a loss of the sense of God even within the Christian faith, and the result is another form of atheism similar to that which the Church has tried to defend herself against.

Responding to these two forms of atheism that challenge the Christian faith, de Lubac embarked on a rediscovery of the nature of God and his relationship with the human being.

III. The Discovery of God: The Intertwining Paths of Negation and Affirmation

Using various sources available to him during his time, de Lubac searched for an answer to the question of divine revelation. First, he returned to the writings of the Church Fathers in which he found a uniquely Christian way of being, believing, and acting that stood largely unnoticed in his time. De Lubac thus firmly believed that grappling with the questions and answers of the Fathers of the Faith would bring out a more genuine understanding of Christianity for his own time. Through them, he was able to bring out "certain permanent features … among the very diverse and sometimes contrary trends of Tradition."[31]

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[29]See Chantraine, "The Supernatural Discernment of Catholic Thought According to Henri de Lubac," 31; Nichols, "Henri de Lubac: Panorama and Proposal," 14.

[30]Henri de Lubac, "Christian Explanation of Our Times," in *Theology in History*, trans. Anne Englund Nash (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1996), 443.

[31]Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism: Christ and the Common Destiny of Man*, trans. Lancelot Sheppard & Elizabeth Anne Englund (San Francisco: Ignatius Press,

Regarding divine revelation in particular, de Lubac frequently went back to St. Augustine who was able to explain the different aspects of Christianity and synthesize them into an organic whole.[32]

Beyond the rich Christian literature offered by the ancient Church, de Lubac also made use of his extensive formation in literature and philosophy, which provided him with an opportunity to encounter and confront figures (such as Fyodor Dostoevsky and Paul Claudel) whose insights on the human condition allowed him to speak and react against the prevailing intellectual atmosphere of his time.[33] Moreover, he used the existential philosophy of his time which dealt with the mystery of human existence;[34] among these philosophers, Maurice Blondel exercised a great influence on de Lubac with his own insight on human action as that which opens the human being toward transcendence.[35]

1988), 19–20; Grumett, "Henri de Lubac: Looking for Books to Read the World," 247.

[32]For the influence of St. Augustine in de Lubac's articulation of revelation, see Henri de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, trans. Alexander Dru (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, Ltd., 1960), 11–17. Milbank sees this Augustinian influence on the pages of *Surnaturel* and *Augustinisme et théologie moderne*, where de Lubac used Augustine against those who have misread him, particularly Baius and Jansenius (see Milbank, *The Suspended Middle*, 33–34). See also Nichols, "Henri de Lubac: Panorama and Proposal," 14.

[33]While Claudel was mentioned all throughout *The Discovery of God* (see Xavier Tilliette, "Henri de Lubac: The Legacy of a Theologican," trans. Mark Sebanc, *Communio* 19 [1992]: 338), de Lubac devotes a whole part of *The Drama of Atheist Humanism* to the novels of Dostoevsky (see de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, 161–244).

[34]Scattered around his various works were references to philosophers like Henri Bergson, Gabriel Marcel, and Martin Buber, among many others, who take the understanding of human existence towards a direction that is largely phenomenological. In fact, he has written several reflections on the works of these existential thinkers. See Tilliette, "Henri de Lubac: The Legacy of a Theologican," 333.

[35]Grumett, "Henri de Lubac: Looking for Books to Read the World," 236–237; Nichols, "Henri de Lubac: Panorama and Proposal," 5–10.

One, however, must not discredit the great influence of St. Thomas Aquinas on de Lubac. His own study of the Angelic Doctor and the development of his thought in history led de Lubac to challenge and confront the Thomism of his time. He saw in St. Thomas a great desire and effort, grounded in the spiritual life and the Sacred Scriptures, to articulate his own faith. It was therefore necessary to return to this desire to fully understand St. Thomas' philosophical and theological synthesis. In doing so, de Lubac was aided by the works of French neo-scholastics such as Joseph Maréchal, Jacques Maritain, and Étienne Gilson, among many others.[36]

Through this rich variety of sources, de Lubac tried to articulate an understanding of divine revelation that countered the reductionist rationalism of his time. This effort is fully seen in *The Discovery of God*, which he deliberately leaves fragmentary yet which conveys his single and most coherent thought on divine revelation.[37] Here de Lubac presents two evident paths: the first path, a "negative" one, establishes God's *distance* from any concept of Him; this distance, however, paves the way for the second path, a "positive" one, which affirms the mystery of God who reveals himself as love most especially in and through Jesus Christ.

In the book's introductory essay "Abyssus Abyssum Invocat," de Lubac lays down his project of showing who and what God really is. He speaks of the God who introduced himself to Moses as the negation of all human gods constructed by myth and legend.[38] From there, he points out the incomprehensibility of God as the abyss that cannot be fathomed, much less equated with the gods the human being created for himself. This leads to an important question: in what way is this God *not* the same as the other gods of human thought and imagination?

The answer to this is found throughout all of de Lubac's works, and all of these converge upon a single answer: the incomprehensible God

[36]See von Balthasar, *The Theology of Henri de Lubac*, 12–16.

[37]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 9.

[38]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 12.

cannot be identified with any single concept, or with any combination of all these concepts. De Lubac is aware how the concept of God has been used by the modernist thinkers to establish and galvanize systems of thought; in doing so, however, they ultimately "lean upon God in the very act of denying Him."[39] Simply put, the real ground for their denial of God is in thinking that God is the same as their concepts of him and nothing more.

But the Christian God is not the God of reason and progress, "the first being in the chain of causes," and thus a mere principle or starting point to be able to explain everything.[40] He is also not the ultimate point of a historical evolution brought about by dissatisfaction with the earlier gods the human mind invented,[41] and he is definitely not a mere principle that offers sufficient reason for everything, or the conclusion of arguments that lead logically to belief.[42] For de Lubac, the God of Christianity, in his whole Godself, could in no way be reduced to these concepts.

But what can be said of God when all the concepts that the human being has mistaken for God have been rejected? At this point, de Lubac borrows the mystical insight of the thinkers of the ancient and medieval Church, whose words and thoughts he valued because their experience of God was more direct and immediate as opposed to the philosophers' knowledge of God which is mediated and conditioned by reason and understanding.[43] Because the mystics desire union with

[39]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 41. He thus points out that the reduction of God to concepts that would complete philosophical systems would eventually be denied of His existence, further alienating God from human experience. This is the god that Nietzsche denies, one who "cannot live anywhere but in the human mind" (de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, 19).

[40]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 42, 67.

[41]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 34.

[42]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 41.

[43]This does not mean, however, that the philosopher cannot gain access to a genuine knowledge of God. De Lubac points to St. Thomas as one who

the God whom they come to know in their own contemplation and prayer, they arrive at something greater, "more fundamental and more total than the demands of reason."[44] Because they desire and ask for something that goes beyond mere knowledge, the mystics have been given a genuine experience of God.[45]

What de Lubac then saw in the mystical tradition is an attempt to speak of God as he shows Himself. Its language touches upon the divine reality but at the same time does not provide a complete definition of who God is. For St. Augustine and St. Anselm, God is the "illuminating" and "inaccessible" Light.[46] For St. Bernard of Clairvaux, he is "beyond weight and measure and number."[47] For St. Hilary, "there is nothing above him [God], nothing outside him, nothing without him. Beneath him, in him and with him are all things …." According to St. Gregory the Great, he is "everywhere … one and the same … penetrating all things by engulfing them, engulfing them by

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goes beyond the desire to explain and understand everything around him, from knowing the cause to the very nature of this cause. There is, however, a bridge that separates the concept of God from God Himself which can only be crossed by a "mystical impulse," one which St. Thomas was not able to fully articulate but nevertheless was able to arrive at by admitting that reason cannot fully understand and fathom the nature of this cause. See de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 141–148.

[44]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 143.

[45]De Lubac emphasizes this when he speaks of divine revelation and knowledge of it in experience as "belonging to [a] different order" (Henri de Lubac, *A Brief Catechesis on Nature & Grace*, trans. Brother Richard Arnandez [San Francisco: St. Ignatius Press, 1984], 28–29), echoing the words of Blaise Pascal regarding divine revelation (see Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, trans. A. J. Krailsheimer [London: Penguin, 1966], §308/793).

[46]See de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 15, 47. He also sees the image of light in Hugh of St. Victor's and St. John of the Cross' exegesis of Rom. 1:20 (see de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 93).

[47]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 76.

penetrating them."[48] Pseudo-Dionysius describes him as "being his own being," but also the "being of all."[49] And St. Thomas, the great philosopher of Being, admits that one does not and cannot completely know "'what he is': we only know 'the relation of everything else to him.'"[50] All these ways of naming God point to what St. Gregory of Nyssa and St. Augustine describe as one who is beyond comprehension, identification, and description.[51]

The experience and teachings of the ancient and medieval thinkers, which contain elements of mysticism, show that God would always escape thought. Just when the human mind thinks that it has known God, He withdraws from reason and eludes comprehension. He remains "above all names and all thought, beyond every ideal and beyond all value."[52]

From this careful consideration of what God is *not*, de Lubac was able to establish the negative element of divine revelation as "the incommensurable, the inapprehensible, that is to say impregnable."[53] In this way, de Lubac was able to affirm the *distance* of God from reason, that is, from total representation and conceptualization.

This does not mean, however, that this distance is the final word about God, as if he can be relegated to an abstract, unnameable mystery. For de Lubac, this is only a step towards coming to know who God really is. This negation, therefore, is in service of greater affirmation

[48]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 99.

[49]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 92.

[50]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 143.

[51]Gregory of Nyssa shows that knowing the name of God does not mean getting a hold of it (de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 145). St. Augustine expresses this more directly, saying that, in de Lubac's words, "[r]easoning by itself, supposing that the initiative were entirely mine … would give me only a completely indirect and wholly abstract knowledge" (de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 95).

[52]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 107; see also 121.

[53]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 120.

that knowledge of God can only come from God Himself, who gratuitously makes Himself known to his creatures.[54] Thus, knowledge of God comes not from the effort of the human mind to comprehend and define Him, but from His own self-disclosure.[55]

This paves the way for the second path to the knowledge of God which allows the human being to recognize and identify the inexhaustible and ineffable mystery of God, that mystery which goes beyond mere affirmations or negations, or the dialectical relationship between the two. For de Lubac, this knowledge is found at the very site where God comes to make Himself known—the innermost depths of the human spirit. That is where God resides and where the human being comes to be aware of Him. This kind of knowledge is deeper than any of the metaphysical and logical proofs of God's existence as it is in this instance that the human being becomes aware of something that lies beyond himself and yet within himself.[56]

By looking inward, the human being comes to see and hear the mysterious God calling to him, showing Himself to be his fulfilment, the ultimate meaning and transcendence that he seeks and ultimately desires. Here, according to de Lubac, is the unique path, in fact the truly Christian path, towards the affirmation of God. Instead of positing arguments that show the logical and rational necessity for belief, de Lubac shifts toward a language of invitation. He not only affirms that the mystery of God cannot be grasped by a concept; he also shows that this mystery can only be experienced and affirmed in the depths of the human being. In other words, this God can only be known *intimately* and *personally*. The idea of God that originates from such knowledge is far from being the objective ideas and concepts that the sciences produce in the mind. And while it is true that doubt can

[54]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 123, 127.

[55]De Lubac sees this point in the words of St. Irenaeus: "God himself is our authority about God; otherwise he is not known …. No one can have any knowledge of God unless God teaches him" (de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 13).

[56]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 12–14.

be cast on this idea, as the human sciences explain it to be something else and attribute a certain origin or cause to it, de Lubac is aware that the inward movements are still valid and would certainly lead to God.[57]

In going to the inner depths of the human consciousness and spirit, what does the human person find there in relation to the God whom he is seeking? Certainly, he does not find an objective and rational principle within. Instead, he finds a *Thou* who invites him to a personal encounter and relationship. Such an experience goes beyond understanding in the mind, for it affects the human being in his totality. Furthermore, this *Thou*, who calls the human person from the depths of his heart, reveals Himself within the context of the relationship that He wishes to establish. In other words, He discloses Himself in relation to the human being. This self-disclosure is not something "objective":

> It exists within an inter-subjectivity. It is not the exteriority of a *He* … but of the *Thou par excellence*. It is not the exteriority of an object which one dominates … but that of a subject to which one gives oneself, in which one finds oneself, which one has to think of as subsistent. That subject is in truth the *Other*, in the strongest possible sense of the word: the absolute Other, the mysterious Being enclosed within itself, always beyond our grasp, the totally personal Being, "the only *Thou* which, by definition, cannot be *That*." He cannot be represented, but whose reality is all the more compelling; through the knowledge of whom we become conscious of ourselves ….[58]

Here one can see how de Lubac strengthens the notion of God's distance from thought, and yet he provides a way, in fact the only way, towards affirming God's existence and his relationship with the human being. Therefore, inseparable from this notion of distance is a personal and intimate nearness to God not as a distant idea of the Absolute, but as the Absolute Himself whom the human being ultimately and wholly desires. In this way, there is a greater affirmation of God which in no way negates or displaces any of the concepts attributed to Him. In fact, it is only in the context of this personal encounter that these

[57]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 13–15. Regarding the idea of God, see 18–21.

[58]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 101–102.

concepts can be fully understood as pointing to, but not defining, God, that all ways of naming God imply that he is not merely such.[59] One recognizes, therefore, an abyss that thought and language cannot completely fathom.[60] All ideas of God put together cannot fully grasp or comprehend him, for they constitute only a part of his inexhaustible mystery that the human being cannot understand in its totality.

If there is, however, a more "precise" way of naming and identifying God in our language and thought, it can only be done through the use of *paradox* and *analogy*. The images and significations we use of God belong to the order of symbols and metaphors. They point to something that is of another order, higher than that of reason and thought.[61] On the one hand, analogy would always remind us that whatever we attribute to God always comes from our encounter with God as articulated in human language, and thus cannot be wholly accurate. On the other hand, the paradoxes we apply to God and his mystery (e.g., distant yet near, universal and absolute yet personal, known yet unknowable, transcendent yet immanent) are not mere figures of speech to communicate what is seemingly incommunicable; rather, they are very real paradoxes, truths placed against each other not to invalidate but to enrich each other.[62] They are not meant to be analysed to achieve clarity of thought; rather, they invite the human being to enter into the mystery they refer to.

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[59]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 78. In affirming this, de Lubac also affirms a fundamental epistemological claim implicit in all proofs and concepts of God, namely that, according to Maréchal, "there is always more in the concept than the concept itself" (de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 95).

[60]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 116.

[61]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 23, 93; de Lubac, *A Brief Catechesis on Nature & Grace*, 67. Referring specifically to the paradox of mystery, he refers to paradoxes as those which arise in every mystery as "the hallmark of a truth that is beyond our depth" (de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, 218).

[62]de Lubac, "The Mystery of the Supernatural," 308; Henri de Lubac, *Paradoxes*, trans. Paule Simon & Sadie Kreilkamp (South Bend: Fides Publishers, 1948), 12.

One enters this mystery only by faith through which these paradoxes are resolved and at the same time maintained. It is through the most personal act of believing, which "reaches the secret depths of the soul," that the human being has an authentic experience and knowledge of the God who reveals Himself.[63] Through faith, the human being comes to see clearly God's mystery not in the form of mere propositions that provide clear definitions, but as the truth which penetrates his whole being and is definitely more than what he can say or describe.[64]

For de Lubac, this personal encounter with the mystery of God grants the human being the capability to know and name God as He really is: "God is Charity," as Saint John would point out (1 John 4:8, 16). He is himself the Truth, Justice, and Wisdom which are always infinitely beyond the truth, justice, and wisdom that the human being possesses and at the same time searches for.[65] God gives himself as a gift to the human being, a gift which, in the depths of his soul, he longs to see and receive.[66] In order to receive this gift, he is called to respond to its summons, namely, to live a life of charity, truth, justice, and wisdom, for only in doing so can he "possess" God,

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[63]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 154; de Lubac, *Paradoxes*, 9–10; de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, 222–223.

[64]de Lubac, "The Mystery of the Supernatural," 309; de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 111–112; de Lubac, *A Brief Catechesis on Nature & Grace*, 71. This mystery, for de Lubac, summons us toward action and being, which one experiences in seeing one's own situation in relation to the God who is always beyond himself (de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 156). Regarding this, Tilliette points out how de Lubac refers to the mystery of God through the notion of "ontological mystery" which de Lubac sees as well in Gabriel Marcel, Maurice Blondel, Charles Péguy, and Paul Claudel (see Tilliette, "Henri de Lubac: The Legacy of a Theologican," 338).

[65]de Lubac, *Paradoxes*, 13; de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 107; de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural,* 299.

[66]de Lubac, "The Mystery of the Supernatural," 298.

be in union with Him, and thus live in the ultimate transcendence and meaning that he constantly searches for, and is on the way toward.[67]

As a *Thou*, God does not reveal Himself as a voice from heaven like the one Abraham and Moses heard. Rather, out of His gratuity, that is, His charity, He manifests Himself to the human being as a *Thou* to be encountered personally in his concrete life situation. "The Christian knows that the only way to a real encounter with God is the Living Way which is called Jesus Christ."[68]

It is the glory of Christ shining in all his thoughts, words, and actions which grasps His disciples and leads them toward a different way of living and being. Christ reveals the mystery of God in its fullness.[69] His glory shines resplendently in the mystery of the Cross by which God gathers humanity in His embrace and renews it through a love that is never self-centered, a love that is offered even under the pain of not being loved back, a love that ultimately saves the human being from sin and death.[70] It is through the Cross that the human being—grasped and engulfed by the truth and glory of Christ—sees God and enters into a very intimate union with him. Christ thus stands at the center of the mystery that the believer seeks to enter into. In Christ, everything is brought together in a synthesis that goes beyond

[67]See de Lubac, *Paradoxes*, 13–14.

[68]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 212. It is also remarkable at this point to note that, for de Lubac, it is in the mystery of the Incarnation, and thus in Jesus Christ, that paradoxes become alive and palpable for the human being without being reduced or relegated to one term or another, as He Himself is the paradox that is both God and man (see Wood, "The Nature-Grace Problematic Within Henri de Lubac's Christological Paradox," 401; de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 28–29).

[69]See de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 209–210; de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, 298; de Lubac, *A Brief Catechesis on Nature & Grace*, 153–154.

[70]de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 367–369; de Lubac, *A Brief Catechesis on Nature & Grace*, 157–161. See also Wood, "The Nature-Grace Problematic Within Henri de Lubac's Christological Paradox," 399–401; Tilliette, "Henri de Lubac: The Legacy of a Theologican," 339–340.

any form of synthetic or dialectic reasoning.[71] As such, He also stands as the center and foundation of the Christian faith and life.

Looking at de Lubac's treatment of divine revelation as a whole, we can then conclude that the distance of God from reason which de Lubac sought to establish is only in view of a further and ever greater affirmation. De Lubac points out that we can truly encounter and fully experience the mystery of God only in Jesus Christ who reveals Himself in the depths of our human heart. In and through Christ, God draws us toward union with Him in whom we can find our ultimate meaning and destiny. For de Lubac, this is the path towards discovering God, as well as being the foundation of his whole theology.

IV. Mystery as the Foundation of the Christian Faith and Life

In providing a panorama of de Lubac's whole life and how it shaped and influenced his theology, Aidan Nichols proposes that de Lubac's concern for *unity* in all aspects stands as the center of all his efforts.[72] However, with this articulation of divine revelation, it is possible to dig deeper and claim that something more fundamental lies within it. The concern for unity in de Lubac is rooted in a deeper and firmer foundation: the desire to comprehend and live in the mystery of the God who reveals Himself.[73] To show this rootedness, three aspects will be briefly discussed: the human person's understanding of his own existence, the relationship between nature and grace (widely known as de Lubac's greatest contribution to theology), and the life of the Church and her final destiny in Christ.

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[71]von Balthasar, *The Theology of Henri de Lubac*, 61.

[72]Nichols, "Henri de Lubac: Panorama and Proposal," 31–32.

[73]Xavier Tilliette, a disciple of de Lubac, emphasizes that what stands as the "guiding thread" of de Lubac's works is "[t]he Idea of God" and the "life of the spirit" (Tilliette, "Henri de Lubac: The Legacy of a Theologican," 336).

First, de Lubac finds this understanding of divine revelation to be the foundation of his understanding of human existence. Returning to the great insights of the ancient and medieval Church on creation, he says that this way of understanding divine revelation also leads us to a certain way of understanding the human being as a *creature*. De Lubac sees the human person as inevitably and strongly linked to the Creator in whose image he is made. This has several implications and consequences for being truly human.[74] Like God in an analogical manner, the human being himself is *incomprehensible*. He is also a mystery, an abyss unto himself. The meaning of his existence is linked to the God who is his true and final end. What he must do is understand his own being in relation to God, in whom alone he can truly understand and see himself.[75] Above all, the ultimate demand placed on the human being as a creature is to enter into the charity of God, i.e., to live His own life of charity, which in a way allows the human being to be moved and elevated towards something outside and above himself.[76] A certain unity is thus established here by the mystery of God: namely, the unity between the human being and God, in whom the former can attain the beatitude which he longs for. In this unity, however, there is distance and nearness, similarity and difference, existing at the same time, or, simply put, a paradox that finds its root in the paradox of the mystery of God.

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[74]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 126–127; de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, 127. By extension, de Lubac also notes that in the recognition of all other beings as creatures, one also sees in them a *theophany*, or the manifestation of God Himself (Tilliette, "Henri de Lubac: The Legacy of a Theologican," 336; de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, 84; de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 92–93).

[75]de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 12, 16; de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 29–30. In this regard, de Lubac goes back to St. Augustine, who points out that in pursuing the desire for the human being to know himself, one becomes aware only of one thing—that, as a creature, the human being is created only by and for the Creator (see de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 17, 156).

[76]Henri de Lubac, "The Total Meaning of Man and the World," trans. D. C. Schindler, *Communio* 35 (2008): 636–667. See also de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 112–113.

One must note that this unity is fully realized in the recognition and acceptance of the mystery of Christ. He is able to cross the infinite distance that exists—due to their ontological difference and also because of human sin—between God and humanity; Christ grants the human being new life in God through His death and resurrection.[77] It is in and through Christ that this unity is achieved by the grace of the God who reveals himself as Love.

This is inevitably related to the second aspect of the faith which is founded on God's mystery—namely, the relationship between nature and grace, or, for de Lubac, nature and the supernatural. Against the interpretation of Cajetan and Suarez, de Lubac argues that there really is, i.e., ontologically, no *pure nature* that stands apart from the supernatural.[78] He points out that the human being, by its very nature, is ordained towards a supernatural end, thus bearing a "divine vocation."[79] This ordination, however, is granted as *grace* springing forth from the magnanimous God.

De Lubac defends his stand and explains it further in the context of the relationship between God as Creator and the human being as creature. According to de Lubac, the very act of creating the human

[77]de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 39–40. De Lubac further adds that through Christ, the human being comes to know not only God's charity but also the charity that he is called to live and be (see de Lubac, "The Mystery of the Supernatural," 314–315). But more than that, it is also through Christ that the human being comes to fully know himself as such (de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 339).

[78]de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, 94–95. De Lubac recognizes the complexity of the term "human nature," saying that, contrary to the modernist commentators of St. Thomas, it is far from being a thing by and unto itself, and which can be equated to all other existing "natures." This complexity, however, can only be seen when nature is understood from the point of view of creation and the richness and mystery of human existence, which, as embodied spirit made in the image and likeness of God, is oriented to God as its end (see de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, 69–72; de Lubac, *A Brief Catechesis on Nature & Grace*, 14–15).

[79]Chantraine, "The Supernatural Discernment of Catholic Thought According to Henri de Lubac," 39.

being is itself grace.[80] But, besides this *datum optimum*, God also grants "another" grace, the *donum perfectum*, which is the ordination of the human being toward his final end which is God Himself.[81]

This should not be taken, however, as a mere superimposition of one thing (*donum perfectum*) over another (*datum optimum*), as if grace is a thing to be merely handed over. For de Lubac, it is clear that, in the act of existing, the human being is ordained towards a supernatural end. But this should not also be taken as identical with nature. He maintains that this ordination to the final end still stands as a separate gift (*donum*) from that which is given (*datum*) to the human being at the moment of creation. Through this articulation, de Lubac is still able to preserve God's gratuity towards the human being without resorting to two separate planes that stand against each other.[82]

We see here de Lubac's solution to the modern problem of nature and grace. Being paradoxical in nature, this solution can only be understood within the logic of gratuity, i.e., the love and magnanimity

[80]de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, 100–102.

[81]de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, 114–116; Chantraine, "The Supernatural Discernment of Catholic Thought According to Henri de Lubac," 38. Wood points out that de Lubac describes this as a "circumincession." It must be clarified that supernature does not add itself to nature, and yet it is both in unity with and distinction from nature within the human being (de Lubac, *A Brief Catechesis on Nature & Grace*, 43; Wood, "The Nature-Grace Problematic Within Henri de Lubac's Christological Paradox," 398).

[82]This raises a question: what, then, is the place of *obediential potency*, described as a certain "non-repugnance" toward God and used by Cajetan and other modernist commentators to refer to the natural desire for God that opens the human being towards a supernatural end (Wood, "The Nature-Grace Problematic Within Henri de Lubac's Christological Paradox," 390–391)? For de Lubac, it would be conceptually inadequate to express this natural desire, as this concept is tied to the concept of *pure nature* as a real order separate from a "supernature." He sees this as St. Thomas' own way of explaining the natural desire for God only if there is a purely natural order for the human being, which, as de Lubac shows in the whole *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, would not be the case (Wood, "The Nature-Grace Problematic Within Henri de Lubac's Christological Paradox," 393; de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, 182–185).

of God who gives it in the first place. The *donum* granted to the human being is ultimately rooted in its source—namely, the mystery of God who reveals Himself.[83] This enables us to see that nature and grace—or to be more precise, nature and supernatural—are expressions and manifestations of God's mystery as charity, this time in human existence.[84] Furthermore, the paradox between nature and grace is ultimately rooted in the hypostatic union of divine and human natures in Jesus Christ, in whom this paradox is resolved and clearly seen. The relationship between nature and grace is analogous to the relationship between the human nature and the divine nature in Jesus Christ. Most importantly, the ordination of the human being to its supernatural end, which is God's *donum perfectum* given in charity, is seen in Christ's own life, which culminates in His glorification through His passion, death, and resurrection.[85] Thus, one can see here that the unity of nature and grace can only be traced to, and founded in, the mystery of God.

A third aspect which can also be explored and shown to be rooted in the mystery of God is the Church as the Body of Christ. The mystery of God, revealed fully in Christ's glorification on the Cross, is shared by the community which is Christ's own Body with Himself as the head.[86]

De Lubac elaborates this unity further when he says that the Church by its very nature is *Catholic*, i.e., it embraces everyone and does not see itself merely as an association of a select few.[87] Moreover, Christ saves not just people but all of creation—the Church renews the

[83]See de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, 262–263; de Lubac, *A Brief Catechesis on Nature & Grace*, 65.

[84]de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, 217–218. On de Lubac's argument regarding the distinction between "nature" and "supernatural," in opposition to "nature" and "supernature," see de Lubac, *A Brief Catechesis on Nature & Grace*, 37–53.

[85]Wood, "The Nature-Grace Problematic Within Henri de Lubac's Christological Paradox," 401; de Lubac, *A Brief Catechesis on Nature & Grace*, 81–83.

[86]See de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 39–40, 56–60.

[87]de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 48–53.

world and gathers all of it toward Christ.[88] This enables us to see the call and mission of the Church, as the Body of Christ, to take part in Christ's own mission of uniting the world to Himself as the common and final destiny of all. Here one sees the paradoxical nature of the Church: it is particular and yet universal, in this world but not of this world. These are characteristics that the Church shares analogously and participatively with Christ, who is both human and divine. This unity, expressed in paradoxes, can only be fully understood in God's revelation in Jesus Christ, both immanent and transcendent.

For de Lubac, what stands as the foundation of these three interrelated elements is divine revelation—God's personal self-disclosure that can only be understood in the context of our own encounter with Him in faith. In acknowledging and entering this mystery, we can understand the unity of Christian life in all its aspects, a unity expressed in various paradoxical unities (the human being and God, nature and grace, the Church and Christ, among others) that are already realized and yet still striving to be fully realized. For de Lubac, the final word regarding these paradoxes is yet to be explored and discovered. Like "the deep calling to the deep" (Psalm 42:7), God calls us from the depths of our being to new ways of seeing and experiencing the truth, to a new way of encountering and knowing Him whom we long for.[89]

V. Conclusion

This discussion of de Lubac's theology of revelation brings out a profound truth about God and human existence in relation to Him. Against various forms of atheism of his time, de Lubac points out that the Christian God is infinitely beyond the God that human reason understands. Here de Lubac establishes a distance between God and the human mind, yet this distance opens up the human heart towards

[88]See de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 282–298; Wood, "The Nature-Grace Problematic Within Henri de Lubac's Christological Paradox," 401–402.

[89]See de Lubac, *The Discovery of God*, 211–212.

a greater and richer affirmation of God—the mystery that summons the human person to a new life and a new way of living. Moreover, the mystery of God who reveals Himself as charity is fully manifested in and through Jesus Christ; this mystery stands as the foundation not just of the knowledge of God but also of the human being himself and the world. De Lubac's articulation of divine revelation thus sheds light on several aspects of the Christian faith and life, especially those we confront and grapple with today.

What emerges from all of this is a unique intellectual attitude towards faith and belief. We can detect in de Lubac's work a fundamental openness to engage the questions of his time, as well as the willingness to provide answers which take into account the early Christian sources and the great theologians of the Church. In his grappling with questions on human existence and its inseparable link with God, de Lubac has left us a great heritage: a commitment to, and passion for, knowledge of the Christian faith which leads to a renewal and reorientation of one's life.

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MARITAIN'S "RIGHTS"

A Heritage of Neo-Thomism in the Twentieth Century

Amado T. Tumbali, Jr., S.J.

When Pope Paul VI gave his "Address to Men of Thought and Science" on December 8, 1965, he dedicated it to Jacques Maritain whom he considered "his dear friend and mentor."[1] In 1967, the Pontiff likewise gave the Catholic philosopher credit for inspiring the landmark encyclical on economic justice, *Populorum Progressio*. As a matter of fact, the Pope also offered him a cardinal's hat which he declined. When Maritain died in 1973, the Pope did not hesitate to acclaim him as "master of the art of thinking, of living, and of praying."[2]

This article will attempt to demonstrate Jacques Maritain's influence on Church social teachings in the twentieth century. It was indeed generally known during his time how his concept of "rights," which he generously expounded in his book *Man and the State*, was favorably heard in the conciliar discussions which resulted in the

[1]Brian Jones, "Jacques Maritain and 'Dignitatis Humanae,'" http://www.ignatiusinsight.com/features2009/print2009/bjones_maritaindh_dec09.html (accessed February 10, 2015).

[2]Donald DeMarco, "The Christian Personalism of Jacques Maritain," http://www.ewtn.com/library/THEOLOGY/FR91201.htm (accessed February 10, 2015).

drafting of *Dignitatis Humanae*, the Second Vatican Council's declaration on the fundamental rights of each human person, including the right to religious freedom.

Jacques Maritain: A Brief Biography

Jacques Maritain was born in Paris on November 18, 1882. He studied in the Sorbonne and there, in 1901, met his lifelong companion Raïssa Oumansoff, a daughter of Jewish Russian immigrants, whom he married in 1904. She was also his lifetime confidante in the search for meaning in life—in the first year of their relationship, they promised to take their own lives if, within a year, they did not find profound meaning in them.

With Raïssa and Charles Péguy, Maritain attended Henri Bergson's lectures at the College de France. In 1906, due to the strong influence of Léon Bloy, Jacques and Raïssa were converted to the Catholic faith which resulted in their defection from Bergsonism. The following year, while Raïssa was convalescing from an illness, their spiritual director, Humbert Clérissac, O.P., introduced her to the works of St. Thomas Aquinas.[3] She read the saint's writings with excitement and, in turn, prodded her husband to read them. This initiated the Maritains into an extensive study of the works of the Angelic Doctor.[4]

In 1914, Maritain launched his teaching career at the Institut Catholique de Paris. After World War I, he started to philosophize, using Thomas Aquinas, about the current social and political issues of his time. By the 1930s, he was already famous among circles of Catholic idealists. He then left Europe in 1939 to embark on a new life in the United States. Except for a brief period when he became

[3]Humbert Clérissac, who was an ardent advocate of the *Action Française*, may have also influenced Maritain to sympathize with the right-wing monarchist movement. See Justus George Lawler, *Popes and Politics: Reform, Resentment, and the Holocaust* (New York: Continuum, 2004), 204.

[4]John G. Trapani, *Poetry, Beauty, and Contemplation: The Complete Aesthetics of Jacques Maritain* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University Press, 2011), 20.

the French Ambassador to the Vatican, Maritain lectured at Princeton University, Columbia University, the University of Notre Dame, and the University of Chicago.

While he was French Ambassador to the Vatican from 1945 to 1948, Maritain became a good friend of Giovanni Battista Montini, who later became Paul VI. Together they "tried to persuade Pius XII to issue a forthright condemnation of the Holocaust."[5] As a diplomat, Maritain was instrumental in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.

In 1960, the Maritains returned to France. Jacques' arrival fortuitously coincided with the opening of the Second Vatican Council and the election of his friend Cardinal Montini to the papacy. When Raïssa died a year after, Jacques lived with the members of the Little Brothers of Jesus in Toulouse where he died on April 28, 1973. He was buried alongside his wife in the Alsatian village of Kolbsheim.

Maritain's "Rights": Neo-Thomism in the Twentieth Century

Jacques Maritain found himself in the right place at the right time. Having just experienced two world wars, people needed a more solid understanding of the value of human life than what the modernist philosophers had offered. "After the horrors of the two world wars, the need for a minimal common standard of decency seemed evident."[6] The world was justifiably clamoring for an all-encompassing declaration of basic human rights that could protect humanity regardless of race, religion, sex, and nationality.

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[5]John W. O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2008), 79. Cf. Michael R. Marrus, "The Ambassador and the Pope: Pius XII, Jacques Maritain and the Jews," *Commonweal* (October 22, 2004): 14–19.

[6]Mary Ann Glendon, "Foundations of Human Rights: The Unfinished Business," *American Journal of Jurisprudence* 44 (1999): 2. Cf. Meghan J. Clark, "Reasoned Agreement Versus Practical Reasonableness: Grounding Human Rights in Maritain and Rawls," *The Heythrop Journal* LIII/4 (July 2012): 637.

In 1947, as French Ambassador to the Vatican, Maritain was chosen to lead the French delegation at a UNESCO conference in Mexico which precipitated the formulation of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights the following year in San Francisco, U.S.A. At that time, Maritain already enjoyed a reputation as a philosopher. As a loyal Catholic and a sharp critic, he was much appreciated both inside and outside Church circles. As early as 1922, he advanced the idea that the Catholic Church possessed a "bold ability to adapt itself to the new conditions erupting suddenly in the life of the world." This was against many Catholics at that time who wanted to remake the world in a medieval pattern. "Maritain's *Antimoderne* argued that Catholicism was by definition adaptable to different cultures and situations."[7]

Maritain and American political philosopher John Rawls both theorized about the origin and basis of human rights. "Maritain examines the reasoned agreement of human rights offering a philosophical foundation for human rights based in natural law theory; whereas, Rawls grounds human rights in the practical reasonableness of his Law of Peoples."[8] Order thus must always presuppose any form of intelligibility. For Maritain, there is no entry point to discussion about any universal right "unless a certain order—which can be violated in fact—is inviolably required by *what things are* in their intelligible type or their essence, or by what the nature of man is, and is cut out for."[9] Thus, for Maritain, the only way to address the question of human rights was by identifying its foundational legitimacy, and only then can it be powerfully defended. "While both philosophers [were] aiming at a similar practical application of human rights theory, Maritain's willingness to go behind the reasoned agreement and provide a comprehensive answer to *why* reasoned agreement was achieved … provides a stronger foundation for the universality of human rights."[10]

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[7]O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II*, 79.

[8]Clark, "Reasoned Agreement," 637.

[9]Jacques Maritain, *Man and the State* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), 96.

[10]Clark, "Reasoned Agreement," 637.

For Maritain, that minimal common standard among all human beings is natural law. With the attributes of immutability (therefore free from all accidents) and intelligibility (via rational knowledge and not by inclination), the natural law is the ground of human essence. According to Maritain,

> [since] man is endowed with intelligence and determines his own ends, it is up to him to put himself in tune with the ends necessarily demanded by his nature. This means that there is, by the very virtue of human nature, an order or disposition which human reason can discover and according to which the human will must act in order to attune itself to the essential and necessary ends of the human being. The unwritten law, or natural law, is nothing more than that.[11]

It is the ontological reality among all human beings which exists and "dwells as an ideal order in the very being of all existing men."[12] Admittedly, however, this is not a knowledge that can easily be accessed by human memory and comprehension. "The knowledge that our own moral conscience has of this law is doubtless still imperfect and will very likely continue to develop and to become more refined as [long as] humanity exists."[13] Hence, it is also, at the same time, gnoseological, i.e., it is capable of being known in some way through *connaturality* or *congeniality*.[14] It is not freely conceptualized

> but results from a conceptualization bound to the essential inclinations of being, and of living nature and of reason, which are at work in man, and because it develops in proportion to the degree of moral experience and self-reflection, and of social experience, also of which man is capable in the various ages of his history.[15]

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[11]Maritain, *Man and the State*, 85–86.

[12]Maritain, *Man and the State*, 89.

[13]Maritain, *Man and the State*, 90.

[14]Lawrence Dewan, *Wisdom, Law, and Virtue: Essays in Thomistic Ethics* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 213.

[15]Maritain, *Man and the State*, 94. Cf. Jacques Maritain, "Natural Law and Moral Law," in Joseph W. Evans & Leo R. Ward, eds., *Jacques Maritain: Challenges and Renewals* (Cleveland: Meridian Books, 1968), 213–221. Maritain clarifies that

This developing proportion to a universal degree of moral perfection inevitably comes along with the freedom, dignity, and rights of all human persons, scattered in diversity, which only make sense under a single essence assured by natural law.

Indeed, as an interpreter of St. Thomas Aquinas in the twentieth century, Maritain says that the foundation of these human rights "exists in a separate Spirit, in an Absolute which is superior to the world, in what perennial philosophy calls the Eternal Law."[16] Thus, human rights are not to be achieved or made; they do not exist by themselves, like sitting on a new throne of knowledge, an idea earlier endorsed by Enlightenment philosophers which "led men to conceive of rights as divine in themselves, hence infinite, escaping every objective measure, denying every limitation imposed upon the claims of ego."[17] Maritain was convinced that the philosophical basis of the human rights advocated by Jacques Rousseau and Immanuel Kant separated the human person from God.[18]

Human rights have always been with every human being; therefore, "civil society does not have to grant but [only] to recognize and sanction [human rights] as universally valid, and which no social necessity can authorize [for] us, even momentarily to abolish or disregard."[19] Maritain

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though the "natural knowledge of ethical values … is a knowledge by inclination … [it must be] *grafted with reason*" (Jacques Maritain, "The 'Natural' Knowledge of Moral Values," *Neuf leçons sur les notions premières de la philosophie morale* [Paris: Tequi, 1951], 47–59).

[16]Maritain, *Man and the State*, 97.

[17]Maritain, *Man and the State*, 84. See also Gary B. Herbert, *A Philosophical History of Rights* (New Brunswick, NJ/London: Transaction Publishers, 2002), 280.

[18]Luis Cortest, *The Disfigured Face: Traditional Law and Its Encounter with Modernity* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 84; Bradley R. Munro, "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Maritain and the Universality of Human Rights," in William Sweet, ed., *Philosophical Theory and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (Ottawa: Ottawa University Press, 2003), 113.

[19]Maritain, *Man and the State*, 96.

adds that human rights "are inalienable since they are grounded on the very nature of man, which of course no man can lose."[20] Meghan Clark provides a summary of the relationship between human rights and the inherent dignity of every person: "The justification of human rights comes from the affirmation that there is an inherent dignity and value in the very being of the human person. If the nature of man as free and intelligent is not affirmed as valuable, then the very concept of … human rights is unintelligible."[21]

Maritain's Influence on the Second Vatican Council

Maritain's contribution to the philosophy of human rights and his grounding them on the natural law earned him the respect and admiration of many Catholic thinkers. His writings and speeches which gained fame shaped the minds of many who participated in the Second Vatican Council. According to Richard Schenk, a Dominican Maritain expert, "not only had Maritain influenced the council in matters such as religious liberty and human rights, but he represented the kind of echo that the council fathers were hoping to elicit from academics and other intellectuals."[22] Robert A. Graham, a Jesuit researcher at the Vatican Archives, likewise observed that "[no] one can deny Maritain his rightful credit for his part in creating the conditions that led ultimately to the renewal of the Church through Vatican II."[23]

Maritain's influence on the Second Vatican Council was most directly felt when Paul VI had asked him for "an opinion on the schema

[20]Maritain, *Man and the State*, 101.

[21]Clark, "Reasoned Agreement," 640.

[22]Richard Schenk, "Vatican II and Jacques Maritain: Resources for the Future? Approaching the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Council," *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture* 13:1 (Winter 2010): 79.

[23]Robert A. Graham, "Jacques Maritain on *Aggiornamento*," *America* (March 11, 1967): 349.

On Religious Liberty [*Dignitatis Humanae*]."[24] He might have also inspired other conciliar documents—as John O'Malley notes, "[with] perhaps an allusion to Maritain's *True Humanism*,[25] *Gaudium et Spes* affirms: 'We are witnessing, then, the birth of a new humanism, where men and women are defined before all else by their responsibility to one another at the court of history.'"[26]

Summary: Assessing Maritain

The historical situation between the two world wars found Jacques Maritain's Thomism useful. Enlightenment philosophy, liberal political science, and the scientific and industrial revolutions proved to be incapable of maintaining peace and prosperity. Humanity was shocked and horrified at the devastation caused by war, but steadfastly coped with, and rose from, the aftermath of totalitarianism with a real thirst for redefining human beings with attributes that were universal, inclusive, and transcendent. Using his knowledge of the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas, Maritain commented on and offered persuasive answers to grave problems that arose after the First World War, including the problem of anti-Semitism. Influenced no doubt by his marriage to Raïssa, a daughter of Russian Jewish immigrants, Maritain vehemently opposed anti-Semitism even before the Holocaust happened.[27]

Even worse devastation brought about by the Second World War made Maritain's Thomism all the more sought after, and his firsthand experiences made his words even more credible. Having witnessed the dissolution of nations and kingdoms in the Treaty of Versailles after World War I, and the annihilation of many during World War II, Maritain spoke strongly and urgently of "the need to sweep away

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[24]O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II*, 249.

[25]Jacques Maritain, *True Humanism*, trans. Margot Robert Adamson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938).

[26]O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II*, 249.

[27]O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II*, 79.

the obstacles caused by the myths of states as sovereign persons."[28] Yet, not leaving the world in a vacuum, he was convinced that the states would be obliged "to make a choice for or against the Gospel."[29] He insisted on a single morality based on the natural law universally inherent among all humans "to keep in view the common good and the peace of a given populace."[30] Immutability and solidity were the buzz words in the post-war era when the world needed a permanent set of human values.

Maritain was keenly aware that the interdependence of nations which emerged after the war was at best fragile and temporary because it was built upon "economic interdependence, not a politically agreed-upon, willed, and built up independence."[31] Jude Dougherty says, "[on] the possibility of global unity, [that] Maritain is convinced that the interdependence of nations is essentially an economic interdependence."[32] He explains:

> It must be realized that nations are no longer autonomous in their economic life; they are even only half autonomous in their political life because their political life is impaired by the lasting threat of war and, Maritain adds, also by the interference in domestic affairs by the ideology and pressure of other nations.[33]

Following the Aristotelian model of the perfect society as one that is relatively self-sufficient, Maritain took the stance that it is the

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[28]Jude P. Dougherty, *Jacques Maritain: An Intellectual Profile* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2003), 101.

[29]Maritain, *Man and the State*, 159.

[30]Jacques Maritain, *Humanisme Intégral* (1936) in Joseph F. Power, "Bishops and Politics," *America* 181:11 (October 16, 1999): 9.

[31]Maritain, *Man and the State*, 189.

[32]Dougherty, *Jacques Maritain*, 98. "It is Maritain's view that the very interdependence of nations economically itself threatens world peace," says Irving Louis Horowitz (*The Idea of War and Peace*, 3rd ed. [New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publisher, 2008], 70).

[33]Dougherty, *Jacques Maritain*, 101.

international community, politically organized, which can ensure lasting world peace. "It is by means of freedom," he said, "that the peoples of the earth will have been brought to a common will to live together."[34]

Schenk calls him "Maritain of the human rights movement."[35] With his reputation as a loyal adherent and interpreter of Thomas Aquinas in his time, his great influence in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and his close friendship with Paul VI, Maritain became an informal insider of the Vatican, and he almost received the red hat. There he made a lasting impact on some of the Pope's speeches and on some Vatican II conciliar documents, especially *Dignitatis Humanae*.

After the council, however, a different Maritain was heard. In one of his last books, *The Peasant of the Garonne*,[36] he lambasted the way Vatican II was implemented. He rejected the new theological approaches, including Teilhard de Chardin's Christogenic view of material evolution. He lamented over the seeming exaggeration placed on what pertains to earth rather than to eschatology. "In a period in which almost all Catholic intellectuals celebrated the *aggiornamento* of Vatican II, Maritain's criticism of changes in Catholic thought and practice was bound to be unpopular."[37]

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[34]Maritain, *Man and the State*, 206. "*De Monarchia* was controversial in Dante's day, yet the logic which asserts a connection between world peace and world government has continued to exert influence. … Maritain, of course, did not want a universal monarch, but, like Dante, he did think that one condition for world peace was a 'genuinely political organization of the world,'" says H. David Baer (*Recovering Christian Realism: Just War Theory as a Political Ethic* [London: Lexington Books, 2015], 68).

[35]Schenk, "Vatican II and Jacques Maritain," 93.

[36]Jacques Maritain, *The Peasant of Garrone*, trans. Michael Cuddihy & Elizabeth Hughes (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1968).

[37]Deal W. Hudson & Matthew J. Mancini, *Understanding Maritain: Philosopher and Friend* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987), 236.

Maritain taught about the immutability of truth in Thomism, but ironically, because of it, he became entrenched in his own ideas and never rejuvenated to catch up with the philosophical currents of his time. As Graham concludes, "some surmise that his life-long affiliation with Thomism and speculative philosophy has made it difficult for him to welcome or to understand the different philosophical framework[s] of much of modern ideological writing."[38]

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[38]Graham, "Jacques Maritain on *Aggiornamento*," 349.

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Landas 29:2 (2015) 119–143

ARE THE ALLUSIONS TO JACOB AND MOSES IN HOSEA 12 LATE INSERTIONS?

Felipe Fruto Ll. Ramirez, S.J.

Among the prophets, Hosea seems to have the most number of references to the stories of the Patriarchs. For instance, Hos. 2:1a—"Yet the number of the people of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which can be neither measured nor numbered"—seems to reiterate the covenantal promise made to Abraham in Gen. 22:17 and to Jacob in Gen. 32:13. Hos. 11:8a—"How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, O Israel? How can I make you like Admah? How can I treat you like Zeboiim?"—apparently refers to the story of the destruction of the cities of the plain (Gen. 19:24–29; Deut. 29:22). Hosea 12 in particular is replete with allusions to Israel's eponymous ancestor, Jacob.[1]

בבטן עקב את־אחיו	4	In the womb he tried to supplant his brother,
ובאונו שׂרה את־אלהים׃		and in his manhood he strove with God.
ויּשׂר אל־מלאך ויכל	5	He strove with the angel and prevailed,
בכה ויתחנן־לו		he wept and sought his favor;
בית־אל ימצאנו		he met him at Bethel,
ושׁם ידבר עמנו		and there he spoke with him.

[1]For an intertextual comparison between the Jacob stories in Genesis and Hosea's allusions to them, see Felipe Fruto Ll. Ramirez, "Typology of Sin, Repentance, and Grace in Hosea 12:3–7," *Landas* 26:2 (2012): 41–78.

ויהוה אלהי הצבאות	6	The Lord the God of hosts,
יהוה זכרו		the Lord is his name!
ויברח יעקב שׂדה ארם	13	Jacob fled to the land of Aram,
ויעבד ישׂראל באשׁה		there Israel served for a wife,
ובאשׁה שׁמר		and for a wife he guarded sheep.

Verse 4a alludes to the birth story of Jacob and Esau (Gen. 25:21–26), and how Jacob had managed to supplant his twin brother Esau, first by acquiring his birthright (Gen. 25:27–34), and second, by deceiving his father into giving him the blessing (Gen. 27:1–46). Verses 4b and 5a refer to the incident at the Jabbok crossing where Jacob wrestled with an old man who turned out to be God; Jacob prevailed over him, for which reason he bestowed on the patriarch a new name, Israel (Gen. 32:23–33). Verse 5b possibly points to a tradition, now lost, connected with "the oak of weeping" in Gen. 35:8,[2] or possibly to the reconciliation of Jacob and Esau in which the verbs *bākāh* ("to weep") and *hitḥannēn* or *māṣā' ḥēn* ("to find favor") are recurring keywords (Gen. 33:1–16).[3] Verse 5cd most likely refers to Jacob's dream at Bethel in which YHWH promised to protect him on his journey and bring him back safely to Canaan (Gen. 28:10–22). Verse 13 hints at Jacob's flight to Haran and his service of Laban to acquire Leah and Rachel as his wives (Gen. 29:1–35).

Hosea also has many references to the traditions connected with Moses. He alludes to the liberation of the Israelites from Egypt (Exodus 13–15): "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son" (Hos. 11:1; 12:14; also Hos. 2:17). For Hosea, the wilderness sojourn was the time when the LORD wooed the heart of

[2]According to E. M. Good, "In Gen. xxxv 8 is the unexplained naming of a place, אלון־בכות 'the oak of weeping'. All we are told is that Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died and was buried under the oak below Bethel, which was given the otherwise unexplained name. There must have been a story behind this that we do not have; but perhaps Hosea did" ("Hosea and the Jacob Tradition," *VT* 16 [1966]: 144).

[3]Ramirez, "Typology," 59–61.

Israel (Hos. 2:16–17; 9:10a; 13:5). It was there at Sinai where God made a covenant with Israel, constituting them as his people and he as their God (Hos. 2:25; cf. 6:7; 8:1), a holy people consecrated to God: "Like grapes in the wilderness, I found Israel; like the first fruit on the fig tree, in its first season, I saw your ancestors …" (Hos. 9:10a).[4] Without mentioning the prophet's name, Hos. 12:14 alludes to Moses and to his role in leading the Israelites out of Egypt and safeguarding them.

ואנכי יהוה אלהיך	10	I am the LORD your God
מארץ מצרים		from the land of Egypt;
עד אושיבך באהלים		I will make you live in tents again,
כימי מועד		as in the days of the appointed festival.
ובנביא העלה יהוה	14	By a prophet the LORD brought up
את־ישׂראל ממצרים		Israel from Egypt,
ובנביא נשׁמר		and by a prophet he was guarded.

Pentateuchal research has established the separate origin of the patriarchal traditions from the Mosaic traditions. It has long been held by source critics that the patriarchal narratives (Genesis 12–36), along with the primeval history (Genesis 1–11) and the Joseph story (Genesis 37–48), were combined with the stories of the Exodus, the wilderness sojourn, and the Covenant at Sinai only at a much later time. We do not know for sure when the two traditions were put together, but if Hosea's allusions to both traditions are original and not a later addition, it may well be that we have already begun to see the epic narration of Israel's *Heilsgeshichte* taking shape towards the end of the 8th century BCE.

[4]Hosea seems to know also some of the legal materials in the Torah. For example, in Hos. 4:2, the prophets seems to be hinting at the Decalogue (Exod. 20:1–17; Deut. 5:6–21). In Hos. 4:17; 8:4; 11:2; and 13:2, he echoes the prohibition of idolatry in Lev. 19:4; 26:1, 30. Cf. Deut. 29:17; 32:21. In Hos. 5:3 and 6:10, he knows that adultery causes defilement (Lev. 18:20). Similarly, in Hos. 9:4, he is aware that a corpse pollutes everything in its vicinity (Num. 19:14–16).

A. Refuting the Arguments for a Late Date

The dating of the patriarchal allusions has long been a point of contention among scholars. Early in the previous century, most of those who took up *Literarkritik* regarded the patriarchal materials as a late addition. The reasons given for this may be summarized as follows: a) the order in which they are presented in Hos. 12 does not conform to the chronology of the Genesis account; b) the present text does not exhibit a regular meter and stichometry; c) the ambiguous presentation of Jacob is the result of a gloss that was made to mitigate the harsh view of the prophet; d) the vocabulary and grammar show them to be a late composition; e) some of the ideas and motifs found in them have affinities with Deuteronomic or post-exilic thought; and f) the other pre-exilic writings are curiously silent about the patriarchs.

By the middle of the last century, scholars were evenly divided on the question of date. On the one hand, most form critics defended the authenticity of the patriarchal allusions, even if they could not agree on the nature of their source—whether they were oral or written, and whether they were basically the same as those in Genesis or not. On the other hand, the scholars who took up the *Überlieferungsgeschichte* approach thought that the entire book was fixed in writing only at a later date, even though the process of oral transmission may have preserved some of the authentic sayings of the prophet.

Today, there seems to be a trend—if one can speak thus of the number of books and articles published recently—advocating a late date for the patriarchal stories. The issue is now often related with the new theories about the composition of the Pentateuch[5] and the

[5]H. H. Schmid, *Der sogennante Jahwist* (Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 1976), 24–41, 61–84; J. van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1975), esp. 309–313; R. Rendtorff, *Das überlieferungsgeschichtliche Problem des Pentateuchs*, BZAW 147 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1977), 2–28, 75–79; E. Blum, *Die Komposition der Vätergeschichte*, WMANT 75 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984), esp. 202–203,

prophetic corpus,[6] yet the claim and reasoning put forward by modern proponents are still basically a rehash of the old arguments.

We shall bypass the larger issue of the compositional history of the *Tōrāh* and the *Nebî'îm*, and simply focus on the arguments used for proving the patriarchal allusions to be a late redactional work and dating them to the Deuteronomic or even post-exilic period. Ultimately, any grand theory about the formation of the biblical literature must come to grips with the results of the investigation of smaller units, and not the other way around.

1. *The order in which the patriarchal allusions are presented in Hosea 12 does not conform to the chronology of the Genesis account.* This is the weakest argument, a *non sequitur*, really. As far as we know, only Wellhausen and Nowack used it.[7] They probably thought that Hosea was incapable of rearranging the traditional materials, and that any disarray in the present text was the result of tampering by a later hand. Moreover, it probably never occurred to them that Hosea may have relied on an oral presentation of the life of the patriarch in which the "correct" sequence of some vignettes did not as yet matter so much.

2. *The present text does not exhibit a regular meter and stichometry.* This is another flawed argument, based on a false premise that Hebrew poetry essentially contains a fixed number of verse lines and a regular pattern of stresses, and thus any jaggedness in the present text is thought to be the result of a conflation of two or more poems with different structures, or an intrusion of foreign elements into the original text. Some early literary critics such as Harper, Duhm, Praetorius, and others went as far as presenting their own reconstruction of the original text

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258–261; R. N. Whybray, *The Making of the Pentateuch*, JSOT Sup. Ser. 53 (1987), esp. 221–242.

[6]B. Peckham, *History and Prophecy: The Development of Late Judean Literary Traditions* (New York: Doubleday, 1993).

[7]J. Wellhausen, *Die kleinen Propheten* (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1898), 128–129; W. Nowack, *Die kleinen Propheten*, 2nd ed., HKAT III/4 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1903), 76.

based on a neat and orderly strophic structure.[8] But in every case, symmetry was achieved only by doing violence to the text.

Today, however, scholars seek to define Hebrew poetry on its own terms, using norms that are more appropriate to the Semitic way of composing verses.[9] Thus, for instance, O'Connor's constriction of the Hebrew verse sidesteps altogether the issue of meter and latches simply onto syntactic requirements.[10] In addition, modern literary critics are also more sensitive to the idiosyncratic style of a particular author. Andersen and Freedman, for example, call attention to Hosea's distinctive manner of blending prose and poetic features, the recognition of which could have avoided a variety of errors in treating his materials.[11]

The early literary critics who insisted on a regular meter and stichometry can thus be justly accused of imposing alien criteria on Hosea's poetry.

3. *The ambiguous presentation of Jacob is the result of a gloss that was made to mitigate the harsh view of the prophet.* This explanation, favored by the

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[8]W. R. Harper (*Amos and Hosea*, ICC [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1904], 373) reconstructed a poem consisting of ten-liner strophes in trimeter movement; B. Duhm ("Anmerkungen zu den zwölf Pro-pheten," *ZAW* 31 [1911]: 37–38) considered the present chapter a conflation of three original poems in quatrains of two or three stresses; F. Praetorius (*Neue Bemerkungen zu Hosea* [Berlin: Verlag von Reuther und Reichard, 1922], 30, 33) insisted that the original poem was a *Doppeldreier* and thus fitted all the verses into this scheme.

[9]M. O'Connor, *Hebrew Verse Structure* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1980), 29–54.

[10]O'Connor, *Hebrew Verse Structure*, 65.

[11]"Chief among these is the notion that the prophet himself spoke in a lyric poetic style and therefore we must attempt to disentangle the pristine material from accretions which have crept in, or the paraphrases provided by editors and commentators" (F. I. Andersen & D. N. Freedman, *Hosea*, AB 24 [New York: Doubleday, 1980], 65).

early critics[12] and recently taken up by Yee,[13] may have some merit to it; after all, a consistent point of view is a mark of a unified composition. Nevertheless, too rigid an insistence on it can be a liability.

If the function of literature is to mirror human life in all its subtlety, then there must be room for ambiguity in character portrayal. Even in the classic stories of Greek heroes the authors often allow some tragic flaw to shine through. This is also true of the characterization of Jacob in Genesis: it is not evident to the reader whether the ingenious ploy by which Jacob bamboozles Esau is recounted simply to be censured. That Jacob is depicted with warts and all makes his story convincingly human and therefore accessible to all.[14]

Moreover, the ambiguity serves the purpose of making a profound theological statement. The patriarchal narrative never really creates the impression that Jacob's standing with God is grounded on piety, or given as a prize after testing (like that of Abraham in Genesis 22). Still in his mother's womb, Jacob had already been chosen to receive the blessing (Gen. 25:23). "The point is made in the way the story is told that his covenant status is always a gift, never a reward for his virtue, and is in no way neutralized by his personality traits as a 'cheat.'"[15]

Should we expect the patriarchal allusions in Hosea 12 to be less nuanced and less profound?

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[12]Nowack, *Die kleinen Propheten*, 76; Harper, *Amos and Hosea*, 373; K. Marti, *Das Dodekapropheton*, Kurzer Handkommentar 13 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr / Paul Siebeck, 1904), 95.

[13]G. A. Yee, *Composition and Tradition in the Book of Hosea: A Redaction Critical Investigation*, SBL Diss. 102 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 245.

[14]The portrayal of Jacob is not always edifying even at a later period when one might expect greater reverence for the patriarch on account of the growing canonical status of his stories (see Jer. 9:3 and Isa. 43:27, which contain veiled criticisms against Jacob; cf. Mal. 9:3).

[15]Andersen & Freedman, *Hosea*, 600. Similarly, according to P. R. Ackroyd, "the emphasis [in Hos. 12:4–5] lies upon the mysterious nature of divine purpose" ("Hosea and Jacob," *VT* 13 [1963]: 259).

4. *The vocabulary and grammar of some verses mark them out as a late composition*. Proponents of this argument cite the following example: שׂדה ארם (field of Aram) in v. 13 is thought to be a Hebrew translation of *Paddan-aram* from the Priestly source.[16] The noun *paddan* has an Arabic cognate that means "field," and hence it is conjectured that Aramaic may also have had this as the regular meaning of the word.[17]

The basis of the argument is very precarious. The usual meaning of the word *paddan* in either Aramaic or Syriac is "plough" or "yoke." Even in Arabic, the primary meaning is "yoke" as well. The derivative meaning "field" is probably the result of a development confined to Arabic.[18]

Furthermore, even if one grants for the sake of argument that שׂדה ארם is the Hebrew rendering of *Paddan-aram*, no conclusion in favor of a late date can be drawn from this. Although the place name *Paddan-aram* appears only in the later Priestly writings, it may have been derived from a tradition that was already current in Hosea's time.[19]

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[16]Duhm, "Anmerkungen," 39. Also see R. de Vaux, "Les patriarches hebreux et les découvertes Modernes," *RB* 55 (1948): 321–347.

[17]For another explanation of the name *Paddan-Aram*, see R. T. O'Callaghan, *Aram Naharaim*, AnOr 26 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1948), 96.

[18]W. T. Pitard, *s.v.* "Paddan-Aram," *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 5 (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 55.

[19]Contrary to prevalent belief, many of the traditions found in the Priestly source are ancient. This is shown by its language which is pre-exilic (A. Hurvitz, "The Language of the Priestly Source and Its Historical Setting—The Case for an Early Date," *PWCJS* 8 [Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1981], 83–94; A. Hurvitz, *A Linguistic Study of the Relationship between the Priestly Source and the Book of Ezekiel—A New Approach to an Old Problem*, CahRB 20 [Paris: Gabalda et Cie, 1982]; A. Hurvitz, "Dating the Priestly Source in the Light of the Historical Study of Biblical Hebrew a Century after Wellhausen," BZAW 100 [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1988], 88–99).

That the shorter name *Paddan* (Gen. 48:7)[20] and another name, *Haran* (Gen. 28:10; 29:4), are also used for the place indicates that there were probably various traditions existing side by side in ancient times.

Another example offered in support of a late date is the passive *niphal* נִשְׁמַר in v. 14, the use of which is considered uncharacteristic of an ancient author.[21]

It is true that many grammarians think the *niphal* had primarily (and purely?) a medio-reflexive sense;[22] only later on did it also acquire a passive sense, so that eventually it replaced the *qal* passive form in the Hebrew verbal system.[23] However, the dislodging of the *qal* passive by the *niphal* may have happened much earlier than Hosea because the use of the *niphal* with a passive sense was already relatively pervasive by the eighth century BCE.[24]

5. *Ideas and motifs found in some verses have affinities with Deuteronomic or exilic concerns.* Two examples are usually offered for this argument: a) the designation of Moses as a prophet in v. 14 appears nowhere else in the writings of the pre-exilic prophets but is mentioned first

[20]Source critics cannot decide whether Gen. 48:7 belongs to the Priestly writer or not (see G. von Rad, *Genesis*, OTL, trans. J. H. Marks [London: SCM Press, 1972], 414–415).

[21]Wellhausen, *Die kleinen Propheten*, 130.

[22]C. Brockelmann, *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der semitischen Sprachen* Vol. 1 (Berlin: Reuter und Reichard, 1908), 536; C. Brockelmann, *Hebräische Syntax* (Neukirchen Kreis Moers: Buchhandlung des Erziehungsvereins, 1956), 37; B. K. Waltke & M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 378–380, #23.1a–j; P. Joüon & T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* Vol. 1 (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1991), 150.

[23]Waltke & O'Connor, *Syntax*, 385, #23.3ab.

[24]To cite only a few examples of a *niphal* with a passive sense: Gen. 2:23 (J); 4:18 (J); 21:8 (E); 31:15 (J); Exod. 14:5 (JE); Exod. 22:2.

in Deuteronomy,[25] and b) the Exodus motif in v. 14 is said to reflect an exilic concern.[26]

This kind of argumentation, which may be called "typology of ideas," has been fashionable among historians of religion. Just as archaeologists determine the date of a particular stratum by comparing, say, a potsherd found on that level with a pottery typology based on shape, make, material, etc., so too do historians of religion claim that a certain theological concept can be dated by locating its proper place within the developmental stages of Israelite religious thought.

There are several difficulties with this type of argumentation. First, the history of Israelite religion is still, for the most part, obscure. Hence, theological ideas are hard to pin down on a particular period.[27] Second, editors and compilers of the Israelite tradition sometimes retroject later materials into an earlier period; hence, certain religious ideas are no longer found *in situ*.[28] Third, it is not enough to be able to detect

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[25]Wellhausen, *Die kleinen Propheten*, 128–129; T. H. Robinson, "Hosea," in T. H. Robinson & F. Horst, hrsg., *Die zwölf kleinen Propheten*, HAT 14 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr / Paul Siebeck, 1964), 49; E. Day, "Is the Book of Hosea Exilic?" *AJSL* 26/2 (1909–1910): 125. The argument finds its fullest expression in Yee (*Composition and Tradition*, 240–246) who assigns Hos. 12:14 to a Deuteronomistic editor (R2).

[26]Yee, *Composition and Tradition*, 245.

[27]A good example of this is the development of monotheism and the prohibition of icons (Morton Smith, *Palestinian Parties and Politics that Shaped the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. [London: SCM Press, 1987], 11–42; R. Albertz, "Der Ort des Monotheismus in der israelitischen Religions-geschichte," in W. Dietrich & M. A. Klopfenstein, hrsg., *Ein Gott allein? JHWH-Verehrung und biblischer Monotheismus im Kontext der israelitischen und altorientalischen Religionsgeschichte*, OBO 139 [Freiburg: Universitätsverlag / Göttingen: Vandehoeck & Ruprecht, 1994], 77–96; B. Lang, "The Yahweh-Alone Movement and the Making of Jewish Monotheism," *Monotheism and the Prophetic Minority: An Essay in Biblical History and Sociology* [Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993], 13–59).

[28]There are many Deuteronomistic and Priestly injunctions (e.g., prohibition of images, centralization of worship in Jerusalem, observance of the Sabbath

similarities of ideas. One must also establish dependence in order to determine their relative chronology; thus, if Hosea's ideas are similar to the Deuteronomist's, one should ask further: who depended on whom? There are four possibilities in this regard: a) the Deuteronomist inserted his material into Hosea's work;[29] b) Hosea's ideas influenced the Deuteronomist; c) both Hosea and the Deuteronomist got their ideas from a common source, a tradition that antedates both; and d) Hosea and the Deuteronomist, working independently of each other, produced similar ideas by sheer coincidence, and hence there was no dependence at all.

Let us thus look into the examples and try to establish the nature of the dependence between the following statements:

> By a prophet [Moses] the Lord brought up Israel from Egypt,
> and by a prophet he was preserved. (Hos. 12:14)

> The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me [Moses]
> from among you …. (Deut. 18:15, also v. 18)

> And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom
> the Lord knew face to face, none like him for all the signs and wonders
> which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt …. (Deut. 34:10–12)

There are similarities, no doubt: a) Both Hosea and Deuteronomy emphasize the role of a prophet as God's instrument. Hos. 12:14 underscores this by the double use of בנביא (note also the *bêth instrumentalis* in 12:11 ביד הנביאים and בנביאים in 6:5), while Deut. 35:11

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rest, clean-unclean animals, etc.) that are now found in the early narratives (see W. G. Dever, "Ancient Israelite Religion: How to Reconcile the Differing Textual and Artifactual Portraits?" in W. Dietrich & M. A. Klopfenstein, hrsg., *Ein Gott allein? JHWH-Verehrung und biblischer Monotheismus im Kontext der israelitischen und altorientalischen Religionsgeschichte*, OBO 139 [Freiburg: Universitätsverlag / Göttingen: Vandehoeck & Ruprecht, 1994], 105–125).

[29]D. Stuart's opinion that Hosea incorporated materials from Deuteronomy (which he holds to be Mosaic in origin!) would fall under this category (*Hosea-Jonah*, WBC 31 [Waco, Texas: Word Books Publisher, 1987], 15).

conveys the same idea by the commission "the Lord sent him to do."[30] b) Both Hosea and Deuteronomy speak of other prophets whom the Lord will send to Israel. In Hosea we can deduce this from his other statement in 12:11 ("I spoke to the prophets … through the prophets I gave parables"),[31] while in Deut. 18:15–18 the Lord is said to have promised the Israelites that he would raise another prophet like Moses, and Deut. 35:10–12 assumes that there were in fact other prophets in Israel.

The crucial differences, however, between Hosea and Deuteronomy—ones that show a real advance in the theological thinking of the latter over the former—are the following: a) The Deuteronomist, on the one hand, presents Moses as a model of all later prophets of Israel (note the stress on "like Moses" [35:10 כמשׁה; 18:15 כמני; 18:18 כמוך]).[32] Hosea, on the other hand, never suggests that the figure of Moses defines the role of prophets in Israel.[33] Hos. 12:11 ("I spoke to prophets … through the prophets I gave parables") describes prophecy in its own terms and not in relation to Moses. b) The statement in Deut. 35:10f ("there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses …") represents a further development in the theology of prophecy. It seems to preempt later prophets from claiming equal status with Moses on the basis of Deut. 18:15–18. As J. Blenkinsopp notes, it "denies parity between the mode of revelation proper to Moses ('face to face') and prophetic mediation …."[34] By defining the limits of prophetic authority, the Deuteronomic historian seems to want to

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[30]Also Deut. 18:18–19: "I will put my words into his mouth, and he shall speak to them …."

[31]Also Hos. 6:5: "I have hewn them by the prophets …."

[32]Cf. 2 Kgs. 17:13–14.

[33]See H. Mowvley, who assumes that Hosea regarded Moses as first in the line of prophets (*The Books of Amos and Hosea*, Epworth Commentaries [London: Epworth Press, 1991], 160).

[34]J. Blenkinsopp, *A History of Prophecy in Israel* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983), 189–190.

bring prophecy within an institutional grid.[35] This is a perspective of someone who has seen through the period of prophecy. In contrast, Hosea probably never thought of Moses as somehow more privileged than the other prophets. He was just *a prophet* (note the indefinite article in 12:14) like other intermediaries mentioned in 12:11. By not mentioning Moses by name, Hosea seems to be emphasizing more the office rather than the person.

Therefore, between Hos. 12:14 and Deut. 18:15–18; 34:10–12, the latter appears to be the more developed statement on the subject of prophecy and its relation to Moses.[36] It is thus more likely that Hosea's identification of Moses as a prophet may have influenced the Deuteronomist rather than the other way around, or else both of them reflect the theology of their support group (proto-Deuteronomists?). The latter, in fact, is the opinion of more recent scholars.[37]

Now, with regard to the assertion that the Exodus motif in v. 14 reflects an exilic concern, the following points militate against such an interpretation: a) Hosea 12 still looks forward to the punishment of Ephraim. The Judah gloss in v. 3a may presuppose the end of the northern kingdom, but it has not changed the future orientation of

[35]Blenkinsopp, *History of Prophecy*, 190.

[36]The same conclusion can be drawn from the comparison of the traditions concerning the destroyed cities—Hos. 11:8 mentions only "Admah and Zeboi'im," while Deut. 29:22, representing a more developed tradition, has "Sodom and Gomor'rah, Admah and Zeboi'im." It is thought that Deuteronomy combined the northern tradition ("Admah and Zeboi'im") with the southern tradition ("Sodom and Gomor'rah") of Gen. 19:24; Isa. 1:9; Jer. 49:18; and Zeph. 2:9.

[37]C. L. Seow, *s.v.* "Hosea," *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 3 (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 296. H. W. Wolff attributed the similarities between Hosea and Deuteronomy to "forerunners of the Deuteronomic movement" (*Hosea*, Hermeneia, trans. G. Stansell [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974], xxxi). E. W. Nicholson argues that Hosea drew from the core of the Deuteronomic teachings that had been preserved in the north (*Deuteronomy and Tradition* [Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967], 188). Cf. H. L. Ginsberg, *s.v.* "Hosea," in C. Roth, ed., *Encyclopedia Judaica* Vol. 8 (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1971), 1024.

the prophecy: it is basically still a prediction of the destruction of Ephraim and a warning to Judah. There is no clue whatsoever that it is now addressed to the exiles. b) The Exodus is a recurring and a well-integrated theme in Hosea's writings.[38] The prophet uses the Egyptian bondage as a grim reminder of the impending Assyrian captivity (7:16; 8:13; 9:3–6; 11:5).[39] He gives the flight from Egypt a far-reaching significance when he applies it to Israel's future restoration (2:17; 11:11).[40] He introduces judgment oracles by recalling this past saving event (12:10; 13:4). Moreover, for Hosea, the days of the Exodus and the desert wandering symbolize the idyllic period of God's relationship with his people (2:17; 11:1).[41] There is thus no reason to deny Hosean authorship to 12:14.

6. *The other pre-exilic writings are curiously silent about the patriarchs.* Some exegetes deduce from this that the patriarchal narratives as we know them in Genesis are the product of late Judean history.[42]

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[38]S. L. McKenzie, "The Exodus Typology in Hosea," *Restoration Quarterly* 22 (1979): 100–108; R. Vuilleumier, "Les traditions d'Israël et la liberté du prophète Osée," *RHPR* 59 (1979): 491–498.

[39]T. E. McComiskey, "Hosea," in T. E. McComiskey, ed., *The Minor Prophets—An Exegetical and Expository Commentary* Vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Publishing House, 1992), 184, also 117.

[40]One possible exception is Hos. 11:11 which may presuppose the collapse of 587 BCE and the exile (C. Westermann, *Prophetic Oracle of Salvation in the Old Testament*, trans. K. Crim [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1991], 105f; H. Simian-Yofre, *El desierto de los dioses: Teología e historia en el libro de Oseas* [Córdoba: Ediciones El Almendro, 1993], 149, 152). Other scholars, however, think that even this may be original (J. L. Mays, *Hosea*, OTL [London: SCM Press, 1969], 159; Wolff, *Hosea*, 197; Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah*, 177; McComiskey, "Hosea," 184, 195).

[41]Hosea may have had an influence on Jer. 2:2: "I remember the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride, how you have followed me in the wilderness …." Cf. W. Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 83–84; J. Bright, *Jeremiah*, AB 21 (New York: Doubleday, 1965), 14; R. P. Caroll, *Jeremiah*, OTL (London: SCM Press, 1986), 119.

[42]Mic. 7:20 and Isa. 29:22, both of which contain references to the patriarchs,

Consequently, the patriarchal references in Hosea are considered to be a late insertion,[43] or else they reflect a tradition very different from those of Genesis.[44] Even more radically, B. Peckham thinks that the whole Book of Hosea is the work of a seventh century BCE author who wrote his interpretation of the destruction of the northern kingdom many decades after it happened,[45] but whose editor made him prophesy in the eighth century![46]

Not only is this an argument from supposed silence, it is also an imposition of a more stringent demand on the rule of evidence: it requires that the testimony of Hosea be corroborated by another testimony! But really, one valid witness suffices. The burden of proof now lies on those who would want to disqualify the evidence.

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belong to materials inserted by later editors in the writings of these two eighth century prophets. In late Judean history, we find Jeremiah perhaps alluding to Jacob by the use of the verb עקב in Jer. 9:3—"… put no trust in any of your kin; for all your kin are supplanters (*'āqōb ya'qob*) …," and he explicitly refers to the patriarchs in Jer. 33:26—"would I reject the offspring of Jacob and of my servant David and not choose any of his descendants as rulers over the offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." The exilic prophets Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah refer to the patriarchs in Ezk. 28:25; 29:22; 37:25; Isa. 41:8f; 51:2.

[43]According to R. E. Wolfe, Hos. 12:4–6 and 13–14, among others, were inserted into the Book of Hosea by early scribes who wanted to make cross references to the Pentateuch ("The Editing of the Book of the Twelve," *ZAW* 53 [1935]: 115–116).

[44]Whybray, *Making of the Pentateuch*, 48–49, 103.

[45]Peckham, *History and Prophecy*, 1–18, esp. 5.

[46]Peckham says that "it was [the] editor who made him a contemporary of Isaiah and Amos in the eighth century" (*History and Prophecy*, 14). "The editor also added oblique references to other earlier incidents recounted in the Deuteronomistic history, and these, on the assumption that prophecy is a reflex of its occasion, have been used to establish an eighth century date for Hosea" (*History and Prophecy*, 27, fn. 24). See also B. Peckham, "The Composition of Hosea," *HAR* 11 (1987): 344f.

B. A Case for an Eighth Century BCE Date

Although the Pentateuch reached its final form only after the exile, many of the traditions on which it is based are certainly ancient.[47] How ancient? It would be impossible to fix a date. But the following consideration makes it more likely that the Jacob stories already circulated during Hosea's time.[48]

1. The interchangeable use of the national names Israel=Jacob in the eighth century prophetic writings would make sense only if there was already at that time a national legend pertaining to the origin and linkage of the two names.[49]

The equation of the two names, as far as evidence goes, is found only in the Bible. Archaeological findings from neighboring countries, while giving ample references to Israel, Judah, and *bit humria*,[50] provide

[47]W. D. Whitt, "The Jacob Traditions in Hosea and Their Relation to Genesis," *ZAW* 103 (1991): 18–43. Whitt wrongly assumes that previous scholars, except for F. Foresti ("Hos. 12: A Prophetical Polemic against the Proto-Elohistic Patriarchal Tradition," *EphCarm* 30 [1979]: 179–200), were not aware of the priority of the Hosean tradition over that of Genesis ("Jacob Traditions," 18). If these scholars have tended to see Hosea's references to Jacob in the light of Genesis it is because there is no other access to the early sources except through Genesis.

[48]In addition to our arguments, see S. Ausín, "La tradición de Jacob en Oseas 12," *EstBib* 49 (1991): 5–23.

[49]*Ya'ăqob* as a name for the nation occurs six times in Amos, three times in Hosea, fifteen times in First-Isaiah, and eleven times in Micah. Although some of these may come from a later hand, Amos 3:13; 6:8; 7:2–5; 8:7; 9:8; Hos. 10:11; 12:13; Mic. 3:1–8, 9; Isa. 8:17; and 9:7 appear to be original.

[50]Also *bêth dawîḏ*? A stone fragment from Tel Dan is alleged to contain the first known reference outside the Bible to the "house of David." The language of the inscription is early Aramaic and is dated to the middle of the ninth century BCE. It appears, according to A. Biran and J. Naveh, that the monument is celebrating a victory in battle, possibly by a king of Aram over a king of Israel ("An Aramaic Stele Fragment from Tel Dan," *IEJ* 43/2–3 [1993]: 81–98; H. Shanks, "'David' Found at Dan," *BAR* 20/2 [March/April 1994]: 26–39.

no attestation for the national name Jacob. Apparently, the latter was not known to foreigners, but only to Israelites who were steeped in the religious history of their nation.

Even in the Bible, the ordinary "secular" way of referring to the nation is Israel,[51] with the national name Jacob confined for the most part to writings that are religious in character, such as the Psalms and the prophetic oracles.[52] This would imply that Jacob had meaning only within the context of Israel's sacred traditions.

The increasing use of the national name Jacob in the later prophetic writings probably attests to the growing popularity and canonical status of the Jacob stories.[53]

2. The same may be said of the national names Isaac (Amos 7:9–16)[54]

See also S. Ahituv, "Suzerain or Vassal? Notes on the Aramaic Inscription from Tel Dan," *IEJ* 43/4 [1993]: 246–247; Z. Kallai, "The King of Israel and the House of David," *IEJ* 43/4 [1993]: 248; F. H. Cryer, "'House of David' Inscription," *SJOT* 8/1 [1994]: 3–19). The reading, however, is rejected by P. R. Davies ("House of David Built on Sand," *BAR* 20/4 [July/August 1984]: 54–55; P. R. Davies, "*Bytdwd* and *Swkt Dwyd:* A Comparison," *JSOT* 64 [1964]: 23–24; see also N. P. Lemche & T. L. Thompson, "Did Biran Kill David? The Bible in the Light of Archaeology," *JSOT* 64 [1994]: 3–22; and E. Ben Zvi, "On the Reading *bytdwd* in the Aramaic Stele from Tel Dan," *JSOT* 19/64 [1994]: 25–32).

[51]The Books of Samuel and Kings, which may have been culled from non-religious archival sources, refer to the nation as *yiśrā'ēl* six hundred and thirty-five times but as *ya'ăqob* only five times!

[52]*Ya'ăqob* as a name for the nation occurs one hundred and forty-four times in the Bible, most of which are in the prophetic writings (ninety times) and the Psalms (thirty-two times).

[53]In Amos, six times; Hosea, three times; First Isaiah, fifteen times; Micah, eleven times; Jeremiah, sixteen times; Ezekiel, four times; Second Isaiah, twenty-seven times.

[54]The parallelism between *Isaac* and *Israel*, occurring only in Amos, has not yet been satisfactorily explained, and it is all the more unusual since Isaac has been identified mostly with Beersheba in the south. Could it be a reflection of the eighth century theology of Bethel since Amos 7:6 quotes the high priest Amaziah? These passages are thought to be the work of early

and Joseph (Amos 5:6, 15; 6:6)[55] that were used for Israel by Amos or his early disciples. They are not the regular designations of the northern kingdom, but are merely substituted for its real name in order to evoke the common ancestry, ethnicity, and history of its people. Their use presumes a tradition like Gen. 48:1–22 that traces the origin of the two major Israelite tribes Ephraim and Manasseh to a common father, and a story like Gen. 25:19ff that links Jacob to Isaac.

Although we cannot determine the exact shape of the traditions that lie behind Amos' reference to Isaac and Joseph (whether or not they are the same as those found in Genesis), the use of the symbolic names demands a context known to the eighth century BCE audience. In the case of Hosea's allusion to Jacob, we are in a better position to discern the contours of the tradition he used—they are astonishingly similar to the ones in Genesis. This is the reason why modern scholars in the first place are able to recognize them as allusions—because of their knowledge of the stories in Genesis.[56] Likewise, the contemporaries

disciples of Amos (H. W. Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, Hermeneia, trans. W. Janzen, S. D. McBride, & C. A. Muenchow [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977], 295, also 108–110; J. L. Mays, *Amos*, OTL [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969], 13; cf. I. Willi-Plein, *Vorformen der Schriftexegese innerhalb des Alten Testaments*, BZAW 123 [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1971], 46ff). For various explanations on the reference to Isaac, see A. van Selms, "Isaac in Amos," *Studies in the Book of Amos*, OTWSA 8 (Potchefstroom: Pro Rege-Pers Beperk, 1964), 157–165, esp. 158; Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 301–302.

[55]For the authenticity of these passages, see S. M. Paul, *Amos*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 165–166, 178, 209; Mays, *Amos*, 102. Although Wolff considers them to be the work of a disciple, he nevertheless regards the expressions "remnant of Joseph" (5:15) and "ruin of Joseph" (6:6) as allusions to Israel's condition between 738–733 BCE (*Joel and Amos*, 240, 251, 277; cf. J. A. Soggin, *The Prophet Amos*, trans. J. Bowden [London: SCM Press, 1987], 87–88, 105).

[56]Although Hosea and Genesis have a number of words in common, there are not enough of them to be able to reconstruct a common source (*pace* Foresti, Fishbane), and even less to be able to tell whether that source is written or oral (*pace* Neef, Whitt). Hence, all that can be affirmed are the similarities in the general features, not details, of the Jacob story.

of Hosea would know the significance of the interchangeable names Israel=Jacob only if there existed already at that time a story of how Jacob got the new name Israel, perhaps a legend like the one found in Gen. 32:22–32 to which Hos. 12:4b–5a alludes.

3. Hosea alludes to one incident not found in Genesis: v. 5b "Jacob wept and pleaded for [God's] grace." This in itself may indicate the antiquity of the stories used by the prophet relative to the fixing of the patriarchal traditions in Genesis or even the so-called "Jacob cycle" of late Judean history.

Summary

The one and only evidence we have that some of the stories of Jacob and Moses already existed in the second half of the eighth century BCE is Hosea 12. Various attempts to invalidate this evidence on the basis of poetic structure, vocabulary, grammar, typology of ideas, etc. prove to be unsatisfactory. On the contrary, the use of the binomial *Israel/Jacob* in eighth century prophetic writings as well as the gentilics *Isaac* and *Joseph* in Amos presumes the existence of patriarchal stories that explain the connection of these names to the northern kingdom. Moreover, Hosea's allusion to an incident not found in Genesis may attest to an early period before the fixing of the patriarchal traditions in late Judean history.

Hosea's allusions to both patriarchal and Mosaic traditions may thus give us a good indication that the epic legend of Israel's salvation history narrated in Genesis-Exodus was already beginning to take shape during his prophetic ministry in the eighth century.

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