



Verbum Incarnatum

An Academic Journal of Social Justice

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THEME ISSUE:

Peace
&
Social Justice



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RECASTING “UNITY-IN-DIVERSITY” FROM *LA FRONTERA* IN LIGHT OF THE AUGUSTINIAN ACCENT ON RADICAL PLURALITY

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Abstract

Protestant criticisms of Catholic social teaching have focused on the latter’s undue optimism and its insensitivity to the struggle and strife that characterizes life. This article traces the roots of this argument back to Augustine’s pessimistic political theory in *The City of God* and then as rearticulated by Reinhold Niebuhr in the twentieth century. As much as mid-twentieth century Thomists such as Yves Simon strive to counter this critique in their engagement of democracy, the Augustinian stress on radical plurality has resurfaced once again both in postmodernism and Samuel Huntington’s accent on the “clash between civilizations.” Therefore, this essay contends that Catholic social teaching by drawing upon the vibrant articulation of analogical spiritual imagination by David Tracy and the ethos of “crossing borders” stressed in U.S. Latino theology can illustrate how the disclosure of differences and the engagement between seemingly agonal alternatives can contribute to a greater universality.

Catholic social teaching, especially over the past century or so from *Rerum Novarum* (1891) to the present, has been a robust contributor to discourses on social justice and the pursuit of the common good. However there is a critical narrative that contends that the key principles and positions of Catholic social teaching manifest an undue optimism and insensitivity to the struggle and strife that characterizes life. The argument goes that Catholic social teaching, especially when it comes to the issue of difference, renders the social world in a very organic fashion: plurality is recognized, but in a way that every sector of society simply has its place in the overall community structure, along the lines of a medieval corporatism. Supposedly there is little appreciation seemingly of the ways plural groups both transform and are in contest with each other. Thus, the

optimism of Catholic theology and political theory overlooks how much ambiguity, difference, and conflict are intrinsic to the human condition.¹

This article will assess the merit of this critique and then suggest how aspects of this narrative rather than undermining Catholic social teaching can be recast, especially through the contributions of David Tracy’s theology and U.S. Latino theology, to provide a more dynamic articulation of “unity-in-diversity” that is steeped in the ontological communitarianism of Catholic thought. I contend that, within the Catholic tradition, especially U.S. Latino theology offers an engagement of plurality that moves in-between agonal renderings of plurality on the one hand and static renderings of community and order on the other.

In the initial section of my paper, I present the above-mentioned critique of Catholic social teaching. Then, in the second section, I show how it is very much rooted in the theology and political theory of Augustine, especially as conveyed in *The City of God* and then revitalized in the work of Reinhold Niebuhr in the twentieth century. In the third section, I review counter-examples within the Catholic tradition that suggest there is more sensitivity to plurality than maintained by the above Augustinian critique. Whereas in these three preceding sections the focus is on the shortcomings of excessive unity, the fourth section acknowledges the need to incorporate practical strategies for dealing with political conflict into Catholic social teaching yet also cautions against the relativist presuppositions of reducing the engagement of plurality just to conflict in both realist international relations theory and postmodern political theory. The fifth section will then suggest how the emerging narratives of the U.S. Latino theologians project a dynamic conception of plurality in a way that animates rather than denigrates a substantive sense of community.

... a more dynamic articulation of “unity-in-diversity” ... is steeped in the ontological communitarianism of Catholic thought.

The Critique of Catholic Organicism and Optimism

The critique of Catholic thought as organic and static in its engagement of pluralism comes from several sources. For instance, the document that initiates modern Catholic social teaching, *Rerum Novarum* (1891) draws upon the work of groups of socially conscious educated Catholics in the mid-to-late 19th century such as the Freiburg Union. The Freiburg Union, in view of rapacious capitalism on the one hand and the

¹ Jeanne Heffernan, “Acknowledging Ambiguity and Difference in Politics: A Christian Realist Challenge to Thomists,” in Timothy Fuller and John Hittinger (Eds.), *Reassessing the Liberal State: Reading Maritain’s Man and the State* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press), 2001, 87-98.

communist rejection of private property on the other, aspired for a return to a medieval corporatism in which various sectors of society worked in harmonious combination in terms of a larger good.² Furthermore, the clear enunciation of Leo XIII at the end of the document, that the Church will speak out on social justice issues, though well-intended, did nothing to calm the fears that such pronouncements were a return to the hierarchical entanglement of church and state in the medieval period.

Even sympathetic defenders of the Catholic tradition, such as Andrew Greeley, articulate that the Catholic vision has an organic character – one that, in my view, gives advocates of pluralism from the Protestant, liberal, or postmodern persuasion cause to shudder. In discussing *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), for instance, Greeley contends as opposed to “the efficient, rational, mechanized atomized society” of the twentieth century, “it looks backward to an organic, ‘corporative’ society in which the intermediate networks between the individuals and the mass society (or the state) were respected, honored, and invested not only with the informal power they always had, but also with formal political and social authority.”³ Instead of the stark separation of the mass collective from the individual in the modern period, Greeley accents that Catholic social teaching renders persons “as social actors in a dense, overlapping, interlocking, organic network of relationships in which the individual is integrated more or less painlessly into the social whole.”⁴ Indeed, due to this corporatist focus on intermediate associations between the individual on the one hand and the state or large collectivities on the other, Pius XI had to fend off criticisms that Catholic articulation of corporatism was a rational justification for fascism. Greeley, on a positive note, considers the “messy, confused, uncertain, and unpredictable network of relationships” in the Catholic vision nevertheless to be one of pluralism.⁵

In turn, as much as Catholic social teaching has accented the dignity of labor and the importance of labor unions, there is a general leanness in church documents about the right to strike. Rather than articulating solidarity as a confrontation with those who control capitalist economic forces, the institutional church tends to emphasize that labor and management sit around the same table and collaboratively work out their differences. Even when church documents call for redistribution of especially land in the developing world, the method accented is for

... the institutional church tends to emphasize that labor and management sit around the same table and collaboratively work out their differences.

² Marin Krier Mich, *Catholic Social Teaching and Movements* (Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1998), 5-17.

³ Greeley in Mich, *Catholic Social Teaching*, 85.

⁴ Greeley in Mich, *Catholic Social Teaching*, 85.

⁵ Greeley in Mich, *Catholic Social Teaching*, 85.

governments to do the redistributing, when in fact many of these governments are controlled by the economic elites who are responsible for the ill distribution of wealth in the first place. Finally, even though community based organizers have had great success in the United States organizing church congregations through invoking the principles of Catholic social teaching, the strategies and tactics employed are coming from social science studies whose connection to Catholicism is limited, if at all.

However, beyond just the fear that modern Catholic social thought remains a restoration of medieval Catholicism, critics contend that it does not come to grips with the tragic and ambiguous in life. For instance, the Protestant ethicist James Gustafson contends Cardinal Bernadin’s “consistent ethic of life” does not accent that “adhering resolutely to the consistent ethic of life can lead to the suffering of innocent persons and in some instances even to tragic outcomes for the sake of morality itself.”⁶ In the same vein, Edna McDonagh, in commenting on *Gaudium et Spes* (1965), contends the document engages the world as simply a matter for liberal development and insufficiently addresses social sin, the evil that inscribes many events in human history, and the degree to which the world needs liberation, not improvement:

... Catholic social thought has a tendency to render the world in a very orderly fashion ...

And this from a dominantly European-American gathering whose members had been through two world wars in this century and still have to live with the responsibility of the Holocaust. The sense of the tragic is largely missing from its world-view as the cross is from its theology.⁷

Robert McAfee Brown, in turn, similarly adds regarding *Gaudium et Spes* that it renders the Gospel as completing “the life of natural man” and insufficiently captures that this same Gospel is “a challenge to, and judgment upon, that life.”⁸ Clearly, from this standpoint, Catholic social thought has a tendency to render the world in a very orderly fashion and downplays how both sin and in turn conflicting codes of ethics inject a great deal of messiness, if not sadness into this order.

⁶ James M. Gustafson, “The Consistent Ethic of Life: A Protestant Perspective,” in Joseph Cardinal Bernardin and Thomas G. Fuechtmann, eds., *Consistent Ethic of Life* (Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1988), 208.

⁷ Edna McDonagh, “The Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et Spes*)” in Adrian Hastings, ed., *Modern Catholicism: Vatican II and After* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1991), 110

⁸ Brown in Mich, *Catholic Social Teaching*, 130.

The Impact of Augustine

The intellectual roots of this critique of the penchant for order and harmony in Catholic social thought lie especially in the thought of Augustine, most notably in *The City of God*, and its more contemporary recasting in the work of Reinhold Niebuhr. Writing at a time of political transition and chaos – the fall of the Roman Empire – Augustine articulates a political theory that challenges the classical association of politics with seeking justice and subordinates politics to the larger concern of seeking one’s salvation in the next life. Directly refuting Cicero’s claim that Rome had achieved a true commonwealth, oriented by virtuous citizens, Augustine underscores the degree to which conflict and discord nevertheless characterized Roman politics. Centuries prior to Machiavelli’s articulation of a realist vision of the political world, Augustine calls our attention to the degree that the desire for power, glory, honor, and material success animates not just politics, but human relationships.⁹

First, Augustine accents the sinful character of human existence. Even if we strive for just and righteous conduct in this life, he emphasizes such undertakings will more than likely be corrupted by our proclivity to sin unless redeemed by the grace of God. For Augustine, the City of Man, this life as we know it, stresses *cupiditas*, or the love of self. Therefore, it should not be surprising that earthly politics should be characterized by competition and conflict. The City of God, by contrast, he argues, stresses *caritas* – a giving of self – and is a place of grace whose full realization will ensue only in the next life. According to Augustine, although members of both cities share a common existence in the current life, those who devote themselves to a moral life and endure the many trials and tribulations in this life will realize the full amplitude of the City of God in the next.

In light of these “two cities,” Augustine maintains Rome never achieved a true commonwealth because it offered false gods and pursued earthly goods. Thus, the role of the state, he contends, is not to realize an ideal classical order as in Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero, but simply to sustain order among ambitious and rapacious human beings. The state, albeit rife with sinful inclinations, provides at best an approximation of justice. In other words, rather than trying to realize an ideal order, the

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⁹ My reflections on Augustine are very indebted to R.W. Dyson’s analysis in his *The Augustinian Imperative: A Reflection on the Politics of Morality* (New York, NY: Rowman and Littlefield 2001),

state for Augustine serves to keep the peace and to prevent the complete disintegration of human affairs into chaos. Long before James Madison in *The Federalist Papers*, Augustine, realizing that sinful inclinations cannot be eliminated in this life, seeks to temper and channel the self-interested inclinations of humans toward a minimum order.

Christian political obligation, for Augustine, therefore is to submit to the state. Although he suggests that Christians can resist the state when the latter’s actions run contrary to the Gospel, Augustine articulates a political quietism. Because God intends the state to provide a discipline on the chaos of the City of Man, it is likewise God’s intention that Christians obey the state. Put another way, although we may catch glimpses of true justice and righteousness in this life, they will only be realized fully in the City of God. For Augustine, preoccupation with forms of government or extensive deliberation on what constitutes justice is not crucial, as long as the state provides a relative sense of peace and order. Therefore, modern Catholic social teaching’s accent on the possibility of pursuing a higher standard of justice, with all the consequent institutional and policy changes, seemingly is a futile exercise, if not rather naive.

In the 20th century the Protestant theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr, updates and recasts Augustinian political theory. Reiterating Augustine’s caution regarding what government or other social institutions can achieve in terms of justice, Niebuhr specifically pinpoints the different threats posed by what he terms the “children of light” and the “children of darkness.” The latter, principally characterized by groups such as militant fascists, fully acknowledge the strife intrinsic to the City of Man, and therefore unreservedly engage in conquest as part of the “survival of the fittest.” The “children of darkness” make no pretensions about their aims nor are they seeking some higher ideal. On the other hand, the “children of light,” a play on the European philosophy that emerges with the Enlightenment, is too confident about the capacity of human beings to achieve schemes of rational perfection in this life. Be it anarchistic, socialist, communist, or even liberal politics, Niebuhr contends that the proponents of such perspectives are blithely unaware of how ambition and self-seeking can undermine these idealisms. The “high expectation” politics of the “children of light” is much more tragic, according to Niebuhr, for it does not come to grips with the political limitations of the City of Man. If the “children of darkness” are evil yet wise, the “children

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of light” are virtuous yet foolish.¹⁰

Niebuhr also amplifies Augustinian realism with his recognition that group life compounds the tendency of individuals toward ambition and willfulness. In larger terms, human beings almost inevitably seek to impose their order on the world instead of the one inscribed by God’s. Building upon this insight, Niebuhr articulates the need for balance of power schemes both between political groups within nations and between nation-states. To borrow James Madison’s language, since one cannot cure the causes of factions, one needs to design institutional schemes that control “its effects.”¹¹

As a consequence, Niebuhr contends that the natural law approach, which is the principal philosophy informing Catholic social teaching prior to Vatican II, is much too optimistic about the possibilities of realizing true justice in this life and insufficiently comes to grips with the impact of sin in human action and politics. As Jeanne Heffernan summarizes, Niebuhr’s critique of natural law has four points. First, that natural law has too optimistic an anthropology and does not have a “self-critical perspective.”¹² Second, that natural law absolutizes “relative historical judgments.”¹³ Third, natural law’s absolutist inclination leads it to be “incompatible with the compromise and contingency of political judgments in democratic politics.”¹⁴ Fourth, natural law historically has been connected to “absolutist regimes” and a “negative view of democratic institutions.”¹⁵ Clearly, Niebuhr’s critique provides an elaborate exposition of the contentions that Catholic thought is too preoccupied with organic order and insufficiently sensitive to the ambiguous and tragic character of ethics and politics.

Both Augustine and Niebuhr persistently remind us of the extensive differences, distances, and gaps both between individuals and between groups that defy cozy hopeful intersubjective interchanges. Seemingly, a fundamental “otherness” characterizes human relations that persistently defy cross-cultural attempts at understanding, let alone integration. Because of the ontological distances between people and peoples, the Augustinian perspective insists there will always be a propensity for strife

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¹⁰ Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Children of Light and The Children of Darkness* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1944), 9-12.

¹¹ Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison. *The Federalist Papers* (New York, NY: New American Library, 1961), #10, 78.

¹² Heffernan, “Acknowledging Ambiguity,” 93-94.

¹³ Heffernan, “Acknowledging Ambiguity,” 93.

¹⁴ Heffernan, “Acknowledging Ambiguity,” 94.

¹⁵ Heffernan, “Acknowledging Ambiguity,” 94.

and conflict in this life; therefore, there will be a need for a political order, no matter how sinful, to keep the peace.

Assessing the Critique

What should we make of this critique? Without a doubt Catholic social teaching is very indebted to a more Thomistic as opposed to Augustinian articulation of God’s relationship to the world and the type of order and justice that can be achieved. Writing at the highpoint of Catholic university life in the medieval period, Aquinas seeks to reconcile Aristotelian philosophy with Christian revelation and theology. More specifically, in terms of politics, Aquinas does discriminate between different types of regimes, both just and unjust, and seeks a common good that is more than just keeping the peace.

At the heart of this difference between Augustine and Aquinas is what both David Tracy and Andrew Greeley term respectively the dialectical and analogical/sacramental spiritualities. The dialectical spiritual imagination, closer to Augustine, envisions a God very powerful yet distant in a transcendent sense to the world; in turn the world is seen as corrupted by the negative propensities of human nature. Due to the conflict intrinsic to human undertakings, human beings need to be redeemed by this transcendent God who reveals his/her intentions in revelation and ultimately through Incarnation. Conversely, the sacramental imagination, closer to Aquinas, argues that there is an order intended by God for the world and that through use of our reason in conjunction with grace, we can come to some understanding of it. Therefore, through cultivating right relationships with each other and also with nature we can pursue, however imperfectly, God’s intended order. Consequently, the character of human networks and institutions are not simply sin-ridden, but are crucial to realizing a good, just order.¹⁶

But even taking the dialectical imagination on its own terms, there are ways Catholic thought manifests some sensitivity to the agonial critique. First, with regard to Thomism, Heffernan argues that Yves Simon’s articulation of natural law tempers “ontological optimism” with a “moral pessimism” that provides a substantive rejoinder to the heart of Niebuhr’s critique.¹⁷ Yves Simon, as she relates, does not employ a “catalogue of absolute principles” and contends that the ethical life entails “no easy

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¹⁶ Andrew M. Greeley, *The Catholic Myth: The Behavior and Beliefs of American Catholics* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1990), 45-48.

¹⁷ Yves Simon in Heffernan, “Acknowledging Ambiguity,” 94.

questions.”¹⁸ In terms of politics, Yves Simon, she continues, accents the people as the foundation of civil authority. On this foundation, the form of government can be variable, but which certainly provides a justification for democracy in the modern era. The key issue remains that the government must be oriented toward the common good. Ultimately, the people retain the right to choose their governors and in turn remain vibrant participants in different levels of government. Contrary to Niebuhr’s characterization of Catholic natural law as absolutist, as Heffernan captures, for Yves Simon, natural law stresses civil liberties, contests moral absolutism, and prefers persuasion to coercion. Heffernan concludes Yves Simon provides “an account of practical reasoning compatible with the challenges of democratic government in an age of pluralism.”¹⁹

Indeed, Yves Simon, along with Jacques Maritain and John Courtney Murray, are the principal Catholic thinkers in the 20th century who seek to reconcile natural law thinking with democracy; in turn, their general philosophical deliberations have a substantial impact on the discourses of Vatican II. Indeed, as James Bacik puts it, Murray challenges the “barbarians” that “replace dialogue with monologue, reason with passion, and civility with harsh rhetoric.”²⁰ Especially Maritain’s notion of “practical consensus” and Murray’s notion of the “growing end” are crucial to the task of confronting the challenges of pluralism in the modern era from the standpoint of natural law. Maritain, in the context of the discourse surrounding the 1948 *UN Declaration of Human Rights* and Murray, in his deliberations in *We Hold These Truths* (1960), contend that natural law provided a basis for civil discourse between diverse spiritual traditions.²¹

Second, in terms of U.S. political culture, U.S. Catholic groups have actually been able to pursue the aims of Catholic social teaching in the very diverse civil society. As opposed to a harmonious hierarchical and organic conception of the relationship of spirituality to politics, U.S. Catholics have formed a wide variety of publications and advocacy groups that have participated fully in the contest between interest groups

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¹⁸ Heffernan and Yves Simon in Heffernan, “Acknowledging Ambiguity,” 96.

¹⁹ Heffernan, “Acknowledging Ambiguity,” 97.

²⁰ James Bacik, *Contemporary Theologians* (Chicago, IL, Thomas More Press, 1989), 141.

²¹ Concerning Maritain’s articulation of a “practical consensus,” see his *Man and the State* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1951) and *The Range of Reason*, trans., Pierre Brodin, (New York, NY: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1952). Concerning Murray’s articulation of “the growing end,” see his *We Hold These Truths: Catholic Reflections on the American Proposition* (New York, NY: Sheed and Ward, 1960).

that is so characteristic of U.S. pluralism. Historically, in contrast to Europe and Latin America where the Christian Democratic Parties were the political vehicle for articulating Catholic concerns, Catholic groups, both ecclesiastical and lay, have been able to mobilize effectively through multiple access points, especially in the area of community organizing.²² Anyone who has organized faith based congregations at the grassroots level, especially through the assistance of the Industrial Areas Foundation and PICO organizations, knows how agonal the politics can be.

Third, with Vatican II, Catholic social teaching incorporates a more hermeneutical methodology that moves beyond a “manualist Thomism committed to certitude, not understanding, veering toward univocity, not unity-in-difference.”²³ In this vein, those pre-Vatican II, neo-Scholastic approaches that render plurality in deductive, status terms vitiates Aquinas’ insistence that there are ethical matters that entail a thorough deliberation “of differing and changeable circumstances.”²⁴

This hermeneutical shift with Vatican II has five components. First, by articulating the Church as “the People of God,” Christians assume an active role in discerning how to engage social problems.²⁵ Second, by accenting the “signs of the times,” Vatican II maintains that history is “the place of ongoing revelation,” not just a reality in which “binding principles” are put into effect in a deductive fashion.²⁶ Third, post-Vatican II theology shifts from “defined absolutes” to a holistic approach that searches for objectivity “through personal histories, observation, memory, and general societal history.”²⁷ Fourth, love comes to supersede, not replace, reason as basis for moral conduct and the pursuit of justice, as reflected in Benedict XVI’s *Deus Caritas Est* (2005). Finally, as opposed to a “Catholic idealism” that isolated Catholic social teaching from the real world, Vatican II emphasizes that reason needs to be in “dialogue with experience, commitment, and social action.”²⁸ In sum, this more grounded-in-experience rationality is more hermeneutically disposed toward engaging radical plurality. A deductive manualist articulation of

A deductive manualist articulation of Thomism gives way to a more inductive, rich articulation of the sacramental imagination.

²² Joseph M. Palacios. *The Catholic Social Imagination: Activism and the Just Society in Mexico and the U.S.* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 2007).

²³ David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (New York, NY: Crossroads, 1981), 413.

²⁴ Philip S. Land, *Catholic Social Teaching As I Have Lived, Loathed, and Loved It* (Chicago, IL: Loyola University Press, 1994), 208.

²⁵ Edward DeBerri, James Hug, Peter Henriot, and Michael Schultheis, *Catholic Social Teaching: Our Best Kept Secret* (4th ed.) (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003), 16.

²⁶ DeBerri et al., “Our Best Kept Secret,” 16.

²⁷ DeBerri et al., “Our Best Kept Secret,” 16.

²⁸ DeBerri et al., “Our Best Kept Secret,” 17.

Thomism gives way to a more inductive, rich articulation of the sacramental imagination.

In particular, the papal writings of Paul VI—*Populorum Progressio* (1967), *Octogesima Adveniens* (1971), *Justice in the World* (1971), and *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975)—offer a more cultural hermeneutical approach to issues of plurality and diversity. Substantively, these documents emphasize the preferential option for the poor and especially a decentralized pursuit of evangelization. As opposed to a static deductive abstract recitation of Catholic teaching, these encyclicals pay particular importance to the grasping of God’s purpose and order within the framework of the cultural bearings of particular places:

In the face of such widely varying situations it is difficult for us to utter a unified message and to put forward a solution that has universal validity. Such is not our ambition, nor is it our mission. It is up to Christian communities to analyze with objectivity the situation which is proper to their own country, to shed on it the light of the Gospel’s unalterable words and to draw reflection, norms of judgment and directives of action from the social teaching of the Church.²⁹

Aligned with this vision, over the past four decades subsequent to Vatican II a number of pastoral letters on social justice are written from various regional assemblies of bishops throughout the world, most notably the meetings of the Latin American bishops in Medellin (1968), Pueblo (1979), and Santa Domingo (1992) regarding liberation theology.

In turn, as much as Benedict XVI in *Deus Caritas Est* (2005) and *Caritas in Veritate* (2009), is more willing to speak of concepts such as the universal and transcendent truth, he renders his revision as fortifying, not vitiating, the elucidation of integral human development by Paul VI:

Benedict XVI... renders his revision as fortifying, not vitiating, the elucidation of integral human development by Paul VI.

The truth of development consists in its completeness: if it does not involve the whole man and every man, it is not true development. This is the central message of *Populorum Progressio*, valid for today and all time. Integral human development on the natural plane, as a response to a vocation from God the Creator, demands self-fulfillment in a ‘transcendent humanism which gives (to man) his greatest possible perfection: this is the highest school of personal

²⁹ Paul VI, *Octogesima Adveniens* (1971), #4

development’ [internal quote from *Populorum Progressio*, #16].³⁰

In terms of the pursuit of inductive cultural hermeneutical understandings, Benedict draws attention to the reality that cultural intersections are much more extensive than in the day of Paul VI and therefore offer the opportunity of an “intercultural dialogue” steeped in “the deep-seated knowledge of the specific identity of the various dialogue partners.”³¹

In summary, the Thomistic contributions of Maritain, Murray, and Yves Simon, the success of the contributions of U.S. Catholic groups and publications in a very pluralistic U.S. political landscape, and the more inductive, hermeneutical pursuit of theology and its implications for the political, socio-economic sphere brought about by Vatican II, suggest that the Catholic intellectual tradition and its social teachings provide a rich source of resources for dealing with contemporary pluralism. Contrary to the above-reviewed critics, Catholic social teaching can capably deal with the distances between persons and groups and the conflicts in human affairs.

Realist and Postmodernist Amplifications of the Augustinian Accent on Plurality

Still, the papal social teaching encyclicals largely make philosophical and theological moral appeals. By contrast, in Niebuhr’s work there is much greater recognition that power relationships at times entail conflict and at times coercion. Niebuhr actually organized auto workers as a young minister at the time of the Social Gospel movement and actually made systematic suggestions about how the African-American civil rights mobilization should proceed.³²

Indeed, Martin Luther King, in the course of his activism, came to realize that it was not enough to try to persuade the oppressor. King and the SCLC leadership came to realize, as made manifest in the protests at Birmingham (1963) and Selma (1965) that their nonviolent protest needed to provoke a violent response by segregationist law enforcement. This violent response on the part of police and state troopers toward nonviolent protestors would lead to media coverage that would incite people across

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³⁰ Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate* (2009), #18.

³¹ Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate* (2009), #26.

³² Thomas L. Schubeck, *Love That Does Justice* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), 145-46, 160-62.

the United States to put pressure on the President and Congress to pass legislation that would dismantle legal segregation practices.³³ This recognition of how conflict is an integral dimension of politics and that one needs to have strategies and tactics to deal with such conflict can be found in Niebuhr’s thought. This conflict dimension needs to be addressed much more deliberately in Catholic social teaching.

Conversely though, too exclusive a focus on conflict loses sight of the overarching Christian focus on how love and hope animates human relationships, not just in the next life, but in this one. As Benedict XVI accents in *Caritas in Veritate*, any pursuit of integral human development that is not animated by “the values of charity and truth” reduces politics in the era of global interdependence to a balance of power system dominated by the most powerful nations.³⁴ Indeed, two very different contemporary political theory perspectives reduce the dialectical spiritual imagination to just the agonal dimension of politics – realist international relations theory and postmodern political theory.

With regard to the former, Niebuhr had an intellectual impact on the realist school of international relations that emerges after World War II. In works such as *Scientific Man and Power Politics* (1946) and *Politics Among Nations* (1954), Hans Morgenthau builds upon Niebuhr’s checks and balances to articulate the following key principles of realist politics:

- free and peaceful societies are not just achieved through legal and moral norms;
- the pursuit of moral principles should be steeped in political reality;
- the complexity of international politics escapes a full scientific explanation;
- a perfect order in this life is not going to be established and one should not put too much stock in some inherent goodness of human beings;
- the pursuit of power and pride are frequently at the root of many conflicts;
- one should strive to achieve the lesser evil, not the absolute good;
- temporal peace and security should be the primary political and social ends;

... two very different contemporary political theory perspectives reduce the dialectical spiritual imagination to just the agonal dimension of politics ...

³³ David Garrow, *Protest at Selma: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Voting Rights Act of 1965* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1978).

³⁴ Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate* (2009), #67.

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- the aggressive pursuit of power can be met only by countervailing power;
 - one needs to pursue an approximate justice for this life and this entails using force;
 - the world is a contest between conflicting interests and therefore it is essential to employ balance of power schemes for both domestic and international politics.³⁵

Essentially, since power politics will always defy an ideal, just order never as being realized, by lessening one’s moral expectations the nations of the world can counter each other in such a way that a proximate peace and justice can be realized.

Against this intellectual backdrop, Samuel Huntington’s contention in *The Clash of Civilizations* that there are nine disparate civilizations in competitive contention in the contemporary world, yet Western civilization can sustain its advantage through bolstering its alliance with Latin America, among other options, is very indebted to Morgenthau, Niebuhr, and ultimately Augustine:

Cold peace, cold war, trade war, quasi war, uneasy peace, troubled relations, intense rivalry, competitive coexistence, arms races: these phrases are the most probable descriptions of relations between entities from different civilizations. Trust and friendship will be rare.³⁶

The emphasis on civilizations, nations, and cultures in contest with the need for balance of power schemes to sustain a relative order again recalls Niebuhr’s admonition that God is not necessarily on the side of any nation and again that the best one can hope for both within nations and between nations is a proximate, not ultimate justice. The distances and disjunctures between individuals, groups, and countries reveal a radical alterity that makes conflict intrinsic to life.

This radical alterity also is vivid in postmodern and postcolonial discourses. These discourses call into question whether there can be universal norms or genuine “metanarratives” that are not in fact a group, a discipline, a culture, or a civilization superimposing its norms on “others.” As Michel Foucault is very good at capturing, as opposed to elites

... the real threat to personal freedom is the degree to which we ingest unthinkingly the norms and values of a variety of power structures ...

³⁵ William Bluhm, *Theories of the Political System: Classics of Political Thought and Modern Political Analysis* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1978), 149-60.

³⁶ Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Touchstone, 1996).

manipulating the masses—an external imposition of power—the real threat to personal freedom is the degree to which we ingest unthinkingly the norms and values of a variety of power structures, whose proponents, if they can even be identified, themselves become likewise captive to these norms. In turn, as opposed to the claims by structuralists that there are identifiable universal structures that orient human conduct, postmodernism recognizes that there exists a plurality of structures and disciplinary norms that circumscribe our lives.³⁷

Therefore, for the postmodernist, freedom lies in resistance to these controlling structures without any aspiration to realize a set of norms or institutions that would cease this agonal contest. Accordingly, we are neither as free as a modernist individualism would contend nor are we as conditioned as a structuralist would contend.³⁸ The consequent accent on contest, resistance, and plurality is remarkably like the previously reviewed realist characterization of power politics, except that whereas realists look to balance of power arrangements as enabling a limited space of freedom to flourish, freedom for the postmodernist lies in resisting prevailing hegemonies. William Connally, for instance, following Friedrich Nietzsche and Foucault, articulates an ethical sensibility that accents “a contingent, incomplete, relational identity interdependent with differences it contests” as opposed to a realization of “a transcendental identity” or manifesting “obedience to a commanding/designing god.”³⁹ Once again, such emphasis upon ambiguity, plurality, and difference reflect Augustine’s agonal rendering of the City of Man.

In summary, both the realist and the postmodern renderings of ethics and politics cast a great deal of skepticism as to whether one can actually articulate a synthesizing perspective that is not a “mechanism of power.”⁴⁰ They respectively accent that a great deal of strife and contention characterize human relations and that underlying this reality is an ontological “otherness” that defies facile synthesis.

Still, what both the realist and postmodern perspectives miss (or choose to ignore) in Augustine, is the transcendent realm animated by a God of love. For instance, Connally seemingly thinks that Augustine was a more captivating figure before he became a Christian in so far as he wrestled with the leading Roman and Neoplatonic philosophies of his day.

³⁷ Leslie Paul Thiel, *Thinking Politics: Perspectives in Ancient, Modern, and Postmodern Theory* (Chatham, NJ: Chatham House Publishers, 1997), 80-86.

³⁸ Thiel, *Thinking Politics*, 95-98.

³⁹ William Connally, *The Augustinian Imperative: A Reflection on the Politics of Morality* (New York: Rowan and Littlefield, 1993), 145.

⁴⁰ Connally, *The Augustinian Imperative*, 87.

... freedom for the postmodernist lies in resisting prevailing hegemonies.

By this line of thought, Augustine perpetrates a metanarrative—Christianity—when he converts and becomes one of the leading intellectual figures of the church. Indeed, the stress Benedict XVI places upon a transcendent truth, both in his theological writings and papal encyclicals, is in direct response to those who espouse conflict and relativism in and of itself. Still, the merit of the realist and postmodern perspectives is that they challenge cozy, comfortable articulations of unity that do not sufficiently engage the challenge of the differences that lie between us.

Having acknowledged that conflict is an integral part of the human condition, I submit that one can recast the sacramental spiritual imagination which informs the Thomistic heritage and Catholic social teaching in a way that engages this agonal plurality in a way that neither reduces human action to sheer contest nor repudiates this dimension through an escape to an otherworldly order. In this way, one acknowledges Augustine’s articulation of plurality, yet projects hope for worldly affairs in a way that rejects the relativist conclusions of the realist and postmodern perspectives.

For instance, a genuine unity-in-diversity manifests, in Tracy’s description, an analogical spiritual imagination that discerns unity and harmony through the power of negation provided by differences. Rather than occluding differences, likenesses and harmony unfold by embracing the differences:

So too the theological emphasis, clarified by some manifested focal meaning, will focus upon the similarities-in-difference in the extraordinary variety of reality ... the interpreter must note that the likenesses discovered in variety, the emerging harmony discovered in order are produced by the presence of those moments of intensity, the necessary negations: similarity-in-difference, the negation of any univocity, the manifestation of sheer giftedness, the concealment in every disclosure, the absence in every presence, the incomprehensibility in every moment of genuine comprehensibility, the radical mystery empowering all intelligibility.⁴¹

*... unity-in-diversity
engages reality in a
way that culminates
neither in
complacent order
nor in utter strife ...*

Rather than running away from conflict, he continues, “the analogical imagination’s own internal demand for ever new negations of its always tentative order, its similarity-in difference” entails open conversation and

⁴¹ Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*, 413.

contest.⁴² But in contrast to the low-expectation politics of Huntington or the foundationless pursuit of ethics by Connally, the pursuit of a unity-in-diversity, as Tracy has depicted, ultimately leads to “the communal and historical struggle for the emergence of a humanity both finally global and ultimately humane.”⁴³ Again, as attractive as Tracy’s vision is, it too does not provide any consideration of power dynamics.

Nevertheless, remaining on the philosophical level, we can envision and pursue intersections of cultures and civilizations that neither subsume differences in a univocal “one-size-fits-all” solution nor reject this universal endeavor in the name of particular self-interest (realism) or liberating resistance (postmodernism). A genuine pursuit of unity-in-diversity engages reality in a way that culminates neither in complacent order nor in utter strife and in turn, grasps how the disclosure of differences contribute to a richer universality.

U.S. Latino Spirituality and Politics

In light of Catholic social teaching’s “hermeneutical turn” toward eliciting inductive, post-Eurocentric approaches to social justice issues, reinforced by Tracy’s theological elucidation of engaging reality through the lenses of “similarities-in-differences,” it becomes imperative to examine the contributions of U.S. Latino theologians. This growing literature, which is informed by a heritage that has been wrestling with both the European v. non-European and developed v. developing world dynamics for over five centuries, is indispensable for charting a hopeful course for Catholic social teaching that incorporates the merit of the Augustinian agonal articulation of politics yet does so in a way that is integral to a communitarian set of human relationships.

U.S. Latino theology is a descendent of liberation theology, insofar as it stresses the preferential option for the poor and marginalized, especially in light of the politics of conquest that stem from the European colonization of both what is now the United States and Latin America. But in distinction from the first generation of liberation theologians whose frameworks are quite indebted to European paradigms, especially the Hegelian-Marxist tradition, many U.S. Latino theologians in the United States also draw upon the postcolonial emphasis upon articulating non-European responses to the Eurocentrism of colonialism and neocolonialism. Given the extensive legacy of both indigenous (Native American) and African spiritual practices in Latin American spirituality,

U.S. Latino theology is a descendent of liberation theology, insofar as it stresses the preferential option for the poor and marginalized ...

⁴² Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*, 453.

⁴³ Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*, 453.

these theologians have a wealth of experiences to draw upon in articulating a *mestizaje* or mixing of African, European, and indigenous practices as a counterpoint to the Eurocentrism of prevailing Christian theology. This cultural hermeneutical disposition of this “native turn” by U.S. Latino theology furthers the decentralized evangelization espoused by Paul VI and the pursuit a global humanity ethic posed by Tracy.

In turn, U.S. Latino spirituality and theology, in contrast to its counterpart south of the Rio Grande, is forged not just by the legacy of the initial Spanish conquest of Latin America, but also by the nineteenth century U.S. conquest of Florida, the U.S. Southwest, and Puerto Rico. U.S. Latinos whether they are descendants of those who were conquered or are more recent migrants, are negotiating not just the intersection of Catholic and non-Christian spiritualities of Latin America, but the interface between this Catholic/indigenous spirituality of the Latin American world and the Protestant/Puritan spirituality which animates the ethos of the United States. The U.S. Latino experience is not only the frontline economically speaking between the developed and developing worlds in the Western Hemisphere, but is also a crucible between Catholic Latin America and the pervasive Puritan spiritual legacy in the United States.

In my judgment, the historical experiences of many Latinos with mixing cultures, be it the initial Indian-Spanish nexus or the subsequent Anglo-Latino nexus, has been conceptually rearticulated by the U.S. Latino theologians into an ethos of “crossing borders.” In other words, per Tracy, this ethos elicits a universal what?, very much through the intersection of differences.

First, in contrast to the conventional rejection of mixing cultures as leading to “half-breeds” and mongrelization, the Latino experience has been characterized by mixing and matching identities—what Fernando Segovia terms “a radical sense of mixture and otherness, *mescolanza* and *otredad*, both unsettling and liberating at the same time.”⁴⁴ “Barriers of exclusion” therefore are antithetical to a politics oriented by *mestizaje*.⁴⁵ Instead, welcoming the stranger, not just as a measure of hospitality, but also as essential to the mutual well-being of the political community and its members becomes crucial.

⁴⁴ Fernando Segovia, “Two Places and No Place to Which to Stand: Mixture and Otherness in Hispanic American Theology” in Arturo Bañuelas, ed., *Mestizo Christianity: Theology From the Latino Perspective* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Press, 1995), 31.

⁴⁵ Arturo Bañuelas, “U.S. Hispanic Theology: An Initial Assessment” in Bañuelas, *Mestizo Christianity*, 59.

... a mestizo spirituality and politics accents what Justo González, a Protestant theologian, terms a “border” rather than a “frontier” mentality.

Second, a *mestizo* spirituality and politics accents what Justo González, a Protestant theologian, terms a “border” rather than a “frontier” mentality. The latter is captured by the westward expansion of colonists across what becomes the United States. This perspective distinguishes between civilization and the uncivilized aliens that lie “beyond the pale.” As civilization extends its boundaries, the aliens need to be exterminated or assimilated—the plight of the U.S. indigenous tribes. By contrast, a border mentality accents the ebb and flow of cultures across boundaries with mutual enrichment rather than domination being the norm.⁴⁶ In philosophical terms, a border mentality moves beyond uniformity v. incommensurability.

Third, as Orlando Espín relates, Latino popular religion manifests a holistic “sacral world view” that synthesizes African (brought by slaves), medieval Spanish, and indigenous spiritual practices.⁴⁷ In turn, Espín provocatively claims that this medieval Spanish outlook precedes the Council of Trent and therefore is not characterized by the more rigid, doctrinaire Catholicism that emerges post-Trent.⁴⁸ Much like the conventional derogatory renderings of *mestizos* as “half-breeds” or “mongrels,” this popular religiosity has often been disparaged as unsophisticated and uncivilized, if not heretical. On the other hand, it provides a tangible heritage through which one can 1) counter the claim that there is a huge gap between indigenous and Christian spirituality,⁴⁹ 2) navigate the Catholic-Pentecostal divide within Latino spirituality, and 3) engage Islam and non-Western religions in a more inviting way. The latter point is especially crucial for providing an alternative to Huntington’s aforementioned “clash of civilizations.”

Fourth, in my judgment U.S. Latina/o theology evokes an affective, aesthetic rationality that in contrast to the Cartesian separation of the thinking ego from the world of experience, synthesizes rational reflection with the capacities of intuition, mystery, and myth. This aesthetic rationality is suspicious of modern objective standards and credentials. It is equally leery of the individualism, materialism, and hedonism of consumer culture, consonant with the heritage of Catholic social teaching and Thomistic ethics. Unlike modernism and postmodernism, this

⁴⁶ Justo González, *Santa Biblia: The Bible Through Hispanic Eyes* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1996), 85-86.

⁴⁷ Orlando Espín, *The Faith of the People: Theological Reflections on Popular Catholicism* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1997), 122 & 124.

⁴⁸ Espín, *The Faith of the People*, 127.

⁴⁹ Vine Deloria, Jr., *God is Red: A Native American View of Religion* (Golden, CO: Fulcrum, 1994).

... U.S. Latina/o theology evokes an affective, aesthetic rationality that in contrast to the Cartesian separation of the thinking ego from the world of experience, synthesizes rational reflection with the capacities of intuition, mystery, and myth.

rationality has a sensibility of the transcendent and unlike many premodern schemes, does not lead to hierarchical political, social, and economic schemes. Finally, in its affective countenance, it provides a realistic critique of the negative aspects of modernity while simultaneously sustaining the liberating aspects of the latter.

Fifth, as captured by Ismael Garcia, U.S. Latina/o spirituality accents a relational as opposed to a possessive rendering of morality and community. This relational ethics temper the emphasis on separation, achievement, and rights with a focus on care, responsibility and connectedness.⁵⁰ As opposed to the conventional separation of family life from the public arena, in Latino/a culture the network of relationships found in extended families can be a basis for a politics of mutuality, not domination, in the public sphere. In the pastoral arena, the *pastoral de conjunto*, manifests this relational ethics.⁵¹ In the political domain, church-based grassroots organizations, especially as cultivated by the Industrial Areas Foundation, have turned the Latino/a emphasis on extended networks into powerful political mobilizations.

Sixth, admittedly, a dwelling on aesthetic and affective sensibilities, be it Elizondo’s exegesis of Guadalupe or the heartfelt practices of popular religion, can lead to an “anesthetization” from politics. As opposed to an apolitical fascination with *flor y canto*—flower and song—the aesthetic, affective rationality elicited by U.S. Latino/a theologians focuses on engendering communities that overcome the hegemonic practices, especially of class, that presently thwart the capacity of the poor and the marginalized to participate fully in social, economic, and political decision-making forums. As put by Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz: “The coming of the *kin-dom* of God has to do with a coming together of peoples, with no one being excluded and at the expense of no one [emphasis added].”⁵² The preferential option for the poor entails relations of empowerment that seek an egalitarian synthesis of human liberty and rights with caring, personal relationships.

Seventh, U.S. Latina/o spirituality accents a sense of hope in the pursuit of empowerment and justice. As accented by Arturo Bañuelos, a fiesta is not just a party, but a festive anticipation of a new universalism in which all peoples can engage each other as equals.⁵³ This hopefulness

... U.S. Latina/o spirituality accents a sense of hope in the pursuit of empowerment and justice.

⁵⁰ Ismael Garcia, *Dignidad: Ethics Through Hispanic Eyes* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1997), 17.

⁵¹ Ana Maria Pineda, “*Pastoral de Conjunto*” in Bañuelos, *Mestizo Christianity*, 126-31.

⁵² Ada Maria Isasi-Díaz, *Mujerista Theology: A Theology for the Twenty-First Century* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996), 65-66.

⁵³ Bañuelos, “U.S. Hispanic Theology,” 77.

stresses not only the pursuit of equal representation in political forums and a narrowing of the gap in income and wealth between haves and have-nots, but also the belief that previously downtrodden people can discover their own power in civic participation.⁵⁴

The case of the mobilization of farm workers in California by Cesar Chavez provides a concrete illustration of how Latino spiritual sensibilities can be mobilized in a way that challenges dominant power structures so as to enable those on the economic margins to participate more effectively in these structures. In this fashion, practical protest and power politics à la Niebuhr and Martin Luther King is incorporated within a sacramental imagination.

As much as Chavez was trained as an organizer by the Community Services Organization, so much of Latino spirituality informs his conduct. First, Chavez prayed a great deal and particularly included liturgy as an integral, not ancillary part of this organizing life. Chavez deeply understood that the communion embodied in the Mass should lead us to transform the world with the love of Christ.⁵⁵ Second, he fasted, not just as form of protest, but as a way of centering the farm workers movement on the values of peace and justice. Third, and most importantly, his nonviolent march, especially from Delano to Sacramento in 1966, drew deeply from the practice of pilgrimage in Mexican Catholicism.

Pilgrimages are done regularly in Mexico to religious sites, especially those associated with the Virgin Mary—Our Lady of Guadalupe being the more prominent example. These pilgrimages usually take several days and involve a measure of personal sacrifice. In addition, even within the United States, many parishes comprised of Latinos on Good Friday stage a graphic reenactment of Christ’s procession to and crucifixion at Calvary. The sentient participation of those participating in these religious rituals is not to dwell upon suffering and death, but concretely captures that such great trauma will not have the last word, but rather a Christian hopefulness.⁵⁶

Chavez was able to take these spiritual traditions and weave them into the Delano to Sacramento procession. Banners of Our Lady of Guadalupe were at the forefront of the marches. Pursuing a pilgrimage was transformed into a multi-day march. The sense of overcoming suffering through the reenactment of the Via Dolorosa was captured by the literal

The sense of overcoming suffering through the reenactment of the Via Dolorosa was captured by the literal suffering of the farm workers that they were seeking to change through the march.

⁵⁴ Roberto Goizueta, *Caminemos con Jesús: Toward a Hispanic/Latino Theology of Accompaniment* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1995), 80-86.

⁵⁵ Daniel Groody, *Globalization, Spirituality, and Justice* (Maryknoll, NY, 2008), 220.

⁵⁶ Goizueta, *Caminemos con Jesús*.

suffering of the farm workers that they were seeking to change through the march. And not incidentally, the march takes place during Holy Week, culminating on the steps of the Capitol in Sacramento on Easter Sunday.

But like Martin Luther King, Chavez used protest to reform, not overthrow the prevailing, political, socio-economic structures. In contrast to passionate opposition to the dominant U.S. system by Reies Tijerina’s land grant rebellion, based upon rather a curious hybrid of fundamentalist Pentecostal and Catholic spirituality, Chavez drew upon the sensibilities of Latino Catholicism to forge a constructive protest movement that enabled the farm workers to work through their suffering to aspire for a more constructive future.⁵⁷ Chavez drew upon Latino spirituality much in the way Martin Luther King drew upon both Black Christian and mainstream Christian to overthrow de jure segregation, but not the U.S. political compact. In Chavez’ case, one sees how a politics of protest that engages strife, struggle, and contest can be weaved into a sacramental spiritual imagination without culminating in excessive organicism or insensitivity to the tragic.

Fundamentally, the narratives of U.S. Latino theology, steeped in the struggles of the past five centuries are still able to elicit an ontological sense of community that holds people together.

Roberto Goizueta in particular articulates how in the face of struggle, strife, and oppression, there is a deep intersubjective sense of community that can deal with differences and distances between people.⁵⁸ And although Goizueta’s frame of reference is the U.S. Latino experience, I submit that this unity-in-difference is very much akin to Tracy’s articulation of a genuine global humanity informed by the sacramental imagination.

Forged from the conquests of the U.S. Southwest by first Spain and then the United States, this ethos of “crossing borders” evoked by U.S. Latino theology acknowledges the agonal character of challenging and seeking to overcome the conqueror-conquered dynamic. As an outlook shaped in the crucible of imperialism, this mestizo spirituality and politics knows first-hand how political, social, and economic domination and discrimination characterizes cultural intersections. Moving beyond “either-ors” in terms of culture, language, race, religion, or other categories at times entails conflicts and contradictions. Indeed, this ethos’

... it is possible to have dynamic mixing of cultures that persistently challenges hegemonies that posit one culture over another.

⁵⁷ Rudiger V. Busto, ““In the Outer Boundaries””: Pentecostalism, Politics, and Reies López Tijerina’s Civic Activism” in Gastón Espinosa, Virgilio Elizono, and Jesse Miranda, eds., *Latino Religions and Civic Activism in the United States* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), 72.

⁵⁸ Goizueta, *Caminemos con Jesús*.

recognition of particular (as opposed to universal) perspectives, decentered (as opposed to Eurocentric) discourses, and the ambiguous quality of cultural intersections illustrates its grasp of radical plurality and the potential for “clashes between civilizations.” Yet given the Catholic propensity to stress unity and order over plurality and disorder, the recasting of the analogical spiritual imagination in U.S. Latino theology gives needed stress to plurality without culminating in realist fatalism or postmodern relativism.

Instead, this ethos contends that it is possible to have dynamic mixing of cultures that persistently challenges hegemonies that posit one culture over another. In this regard, “crossing borders” entails engaging ambiguity, difference, and pluralism in a way that embraces substantive interchange and mutual transformation between cultural and spiritual heritages. Such interaction, even if at times painful, can mutually expand the horizons of these intersecting groups and can engender a substantive unity that is distinct from, yet reflective of, the contribution of these groups, especially when the intersections ensue on an equal basis.⁵⁹ Both the mixing of African, European, and indigenous spiritualities in Latino popular religiosity and the present-day intersections of Catholic, Pentecostal, and Puritan spiritualities in the Latino sections of the United States, suggest the nexus of diverse cultures and civilization offers a richer collective life, not in spite of plurality, but through it.

Conclusion

Catholic social teaching according to both Protestant and Catholic critics has a tendency to be unduly optimistic about the possibility of realizing a right order in the political socio-economic world and insufficiently accents the tragic aspect of life and the centrality of the crucifixion to Christian theology. The intellectual roots of this critique lie in Augustine’s political theory, especially in *The City of God*, and have been given renewed relevance by both international relations realist and postmodernist perspectives. Still, acknowledging that there is “trouble with unity” when such schemes homogenize different persons and cultures and downplay how intrinsic conflict is to politics,⁶⁰ there is also trouble with disunity when scholarly narratives and political programs, in

⁵⁹ Virgil Elizondo terms this interaction “an anthropology of inclusive and progressive synthesis.” Elizondo, *Guadalupe: Mother of the New Creation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1997), 132.

⁶⁰ Cristina Beltrán, *The Trouble With Unity: Latino Politics and the Creation of Identity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

the name of contest and resistance, shroud the communitarian dimension of human relationships.

Consequently, the post-Vatican II cultural hermeneutical orientation of Catholic social teaching especially enables this teaching to be much more sensitive to the implications of this radical plurality without leading to fatalist or relativist outcomes. Indeed, the ethos of “crossing borders” I have derived from U.S. Latino theology provides a very incisive, concrete engagement of “unity-in-diversity” or what Tracy terms “similarities-in-differences.”

Specifically, as opposed to manual-like recitations of neo-Scholastic treatises or even the stodgy tone of some official Catholic documents, this ethos of “crossing borders” is fully aware of the ambiguity, agonal experience, and tragedy ensuing from the events of colonialism and neo-colonialism. At the same time, this ethos does not give in to the temptation of despair and projects the hope for realizing a unity through plural differences that justifies neither notions of ethnic, linguistic, or racial purity nor extensive class disparities. Given that the vibrancy of 21st century spirituality is increasingly coming from the growth of Catholicism, Islam, or Pentecostalism in the developing world, and that 21st century politics increasingly has to deal with the postcolonial world, Catholic social teaching has everything to gain by cultivating this gritty yet hopeful engagement of radical plurality that moves beyond both sterile uniformity and anarchic relativism.

LOOKING BACK AT SOLLICITUDO REI SOCIALIS: AN UNFULFILLED VISION STILL TIMELY TODAY

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At the end of 1987, to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of Paul VI's *Populorum Progressio*, Pope John Paul II issued *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* ("On Social Concern"). In the weeks following its publication, the encyclical stirred immediate and wide-ranging commentary.

While writers like William Safire dismissed John Paul's view of the world as simplistic, and expressed outrage at the pope's evenhanded criticism of both then-superpowers,ⁱ others, such as Peter Henriot, praised the pope, who "writes as apologist for neither East nor West, [and] is free to raise the necessary criticisms."ⁱⁱ

Before turning our attention to the encyclical itself, it might be well to delve a bit into the biblical roots for work on behalf of justice, as well the rich heritage of Catholic social teaching of which *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* is an important part.

It is interesting to note that the theological meaning of the word "economy" refers to God's activity in the world;ⁱⁱⁱ while one of the definitions in a standard dictionary describes economy as the management of the resources of a community.^{iv} By combining these two ideas, we arrive at the biblical vision of humanity's role as stewards of the earth and co-creators with God.

Work for economic and social justice must, therefore, be an integral part of any biblically-based religion. The three religions "of the book," Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, are all marked by a strong concern for the right of every person to live a fully human life, a concern which leads naturally to a special care for the poor, the homeless, and the oppressed. The roots of this concern lie in the Genesis creation accounts, where any biblical consideration of the place and purpose of women and men in God's plan for the world must begin. The creation accounts are a statement of our correct relationship with God, with one another, and with

ⁱ New York Times (February 22, 1988).

ⁱⁱ Peter Henriot, "Neither East nor West has panacea," *National Catholic Reporter* (May 27, 1988), 7.

ⁱⁱⁱ Joseph A. Komonchak et al, eds., *The New Dictionary of Theology* (Wilmington, DE: 1987) 316.

^{iv} Jess Stein, editor-in-chief, *The Random House College Dictionary Revised Edition* (New York, NY: 1984) 419.

the universe. It is important, then to understand the deeper meaning of the “dominion” which we humans are called to exercise in God’s world. It is not a dominion which is meant “to entitle [us] to have autonomous power and to rape nature in [our] own selfish interests;”^v rather, it is a “responsibility of stewardship over the earth and its creatures. A ruler does not devastate the land but nurtures it, seeks its welfare, and enhances its beauty—even while eating from it and using its resources.”^{vi} Men and women are meant to tend the earth, to care for it, to enrich it, to touch it lovingly.

John Pawlikowski, building on the work of Claus Westermann, in an article entitled, “Participation in Economic Life,”^{vii} adds an interesting consideration to the Genesis commission, one that is of particular interest for a technologically advanced society such as ours. Pawlikowski builds on the compound verb of Genesis 2:15: “The Lord God then took the man and settled him in the garden of Eden, *to cultivate* and *to care for* it.” This twofold directive, to cultivate and to care for, enjoins on humanity the co-equal duties of preservation and enhancement. The challenge is to find a way to balance protection of the environment with economic development.

Further, since this God of ours is loving and just, we have been given the ability to fulfill the tasks placed before us. The Genesis narratives do not give us a blueprint for economic decision-making; rather, they assure us that, just as we are responsible for events in the world, so we have the capacity to deal with the issues of life, to cope with natural and historic crises.^{viii} The Yahwist author of Genesis 2-3 makes it clear that, just as God gave us dominion and responsibility for the world, as well as freedom to act on our own, so that same God has given us the possibility of achieving happiness.^{ix}

The human community has not merely been “given” life; it has been mandated by divine blessing to “perpetuate” life to its fullest. This of necessity will involve its active participation in the process of adapting and improving those basic human institutions, including economic ones,

The Genesis narratives do not give us a blueprint for economic decision-making; rather, they assure us that, just as we are responsible for events in the world, so we have the capacity to deal with the issues of life, to cope with natural and historic crises.

^v Bernhard W. Anderson, *Understanding the Old Testament* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: 1975) 212.

^{vi} Foster R. McCurley, *Proclamation Commentaries: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers* (Philadelphia, 1979) 14.

^{vii} John T. Pawlikowski, “Participation in Economic Life,” *The Bible Today* 24 No. 6 (November 1986) 363.

^{viii} Walter Harrelson, “Famine in the Perspective of Biblical Judgments and Promises,” in George R. Lucas, Jr. and Thomas W. Ogletree, eds., *Lifeboat Ethics: The Moral Dilemmas of World Hunger* (New York, NY: 1976) 85.

^{ix} Laurence Boadt, *Reading the Old Testament* (New York, NY: 1984) 112.

which are critical for the preservation of this creational dynamism.^x

We cannot return to the garden. As social and economic conditions change and develop, however, we must continually reapply the creational commission of the Genesis narratives. We must never allow our choices to be governed by selfish interests, as do those who exploit and abuse, but by loving care and trusting stewardship, as do those who tend and nurture. This is the biblical rootage of the church's long-standing tradition of social teaching.

The first of the great social encyclicals was *Rerum Novarum* ("On the Condition of Labor"), issued by Leo XIII in 1891. *Rerum Novarum* laid the foundation on which subsequent documents continue to build. "Though the content of Leo's encyclical was important and remains important, what was perhaps even more important was the character of the document as a cry of protest against the exploitation of poor workers."^{xi} The church was taking a stand on the side of the poor.

More specifically, *Rerum Novarum* represented a stance against the prevailing order, Western capitalism, by placing the needs of the workers ahead of the law of supply and demand. With the publication of *Rerum Novarum*, work on behalf of the poor became an integral part of church teaching.

In 1931, on the 40th anniversary of Leo's letter, Pius XI issued the encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno* ("The Reconstruction of the Social Order"). *Quadragesimo Anno* "has the same sense of moral outrage at the suffering of the poor as one finds in Leo's encyclical; and the same kind of criticism of the economic liberalism which had caused the suffering."^{xii} And, as did Leo before him, Pius sought to find a middle way between the abuse of capitalism on the one hand, and socialism and communism on the other.

Pius went further than Leo in addressing the need for structural reform, in addition to an improvement in moral conduct. He looked beyond the condition of workers to the whole socio-economic order. Where Leo had seen stability as a prime virtue, Pius pointed more to a spirituality concerned with justice and marked by courage, prudence, and charity.

Quadragesimo Anno demonstrated how in a capitalist society wealth becomes concentrated in the hands of a minority; they in turn exercise

... we must continually reapply the creational commission of the Genesis narratives.

^x Pawlikowski, 365.

^{xi} Donal Dorr, *Option for the Poor: A Hundred Years of Vatican Social Teaching* (Maryknoll 1983) 11.

^{xii} Dorr, 57.

political power and control. This is an inevitable result of the free enterprise/free competition system, which will eventually eliminate all but the most powerful. So, while Pius endorsed free enterprise in the sense that he wanted people to be free to use and own land, and even to establish businesses, still he was opposed to the core belief of capitalism, namely, “that market forces should be the determining factor in the economic order.”^{xiii} “...it could no longer be assumed that the Catholic Church would, in the last analysis, provide support for the status quo rather than take the risk of being an agent of major socio-political change.”^{xiv}

Pius XII, pope during World War II and its aftermath, was more concerned with political matters than economic ones. In an address marking the 50th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, however, he did give precedence to an equitable distribution of goods over the GNP as a criterion of national economic health.

Because John XXIII possessed a basic sense of optimism about the modern world, his social teaching offered no radical challenge to the prevailing capitalist structures of the time. *Mater et Magister* (“Christianity and Social Progress”) was new, however, in its attempt to provide a corrective to the use of church social teaching to justify conservative social positions. The church traditionally favored and supported a system that allowed free enterprise, individual initiative, and private ownership. This was never meant as an endorsement of the more ruthless and unattractive practices of capitalism.

Gradually, however, the distinctions were blurred, and church documents were pressed into service to support the status quo, and to oppose “socialism” in any form. “The effect of all this was that almost by accident the Church came to be allied with certain interests. It seemed to be more concerned with the defense of the rights of private groups than with the needs of the poorer classes of society;”^{xv} John, in his encyclical, took a major step toward preventing such misguided application and recovering the church’s original intent.

On January 25, 1959, John stunned the world by announcing his intention to convoke an ecumenical council. The *aggiornamento* documents of that council stressed our creative capabilities. They focused on a just society and called for the development of all people.^{xvi} Since

The church traditionally favored and supported a system that allowed free enterprise, individual initiative, and private ownership.

^{xiii} Dorr, 63.

^{xiv} Dorr, 69.

^{xv} Dorr, 110.

^{xvi} Joseph Gremillion, *The Gospel of Peace and Justice: Catholic Social Teaching since Pope John* (Maryknoll 1976) 7.

Vatican II, Catholic social teaching has deepened the church’s awareness of itself and of all people as a single community sharing one global existence.

Paul VI’s encyclical, *Populorum Progressio* (“On the Development of Peoples”), did globally what *Rerum Novarum* had done nationally. Paul asked worldwide social questions, and looked at the relationship between rich nations and poor ones. *Populorum Progressio* made a notable advance in that it sought to discover the basic causes of poverty. It not only noted that grave imbalances existed; it asked why such imbalances could and should continue to exist.

Paul also challenged the Western thesis that developing countries have actually benefitted, in the long run, from their colonial experiences; he also called for a restructuring of international trade relations, so that the rich would not become richer at the expense of the poor. One commentator went so far as to observe that “Many of the ideas of [the United Nations’ New Economic International Order or NEIO] have such firm roots in *Populorum Progressio* that the Encyclical might almost have been its founding document.”^{xvii}

Paul’s economic vision, requiring as it did international cooperation, pointed up the need for a new type of truly effective world authority. Sixteen years later, the United States bishops, in their pastoral letter on peace, noted that “an important element missing from world order today is a properly constituted political authority with the capacity to shape our material interdependence in the direction of moral interdependence.”^{xviii} For Paul, this need for a new world authority flowed from the close connection he saw between economics and politics. The rich are those who have power. Individuals without power lack what is necessary to change their situation. So, to break the cycle of wealth and poverty, there must be a change in the distribution of political power.

In an important paragraph,^{xix} Paul implied the possibility of a justified use of violent means to overcome oppression. In so doing, he contributed to the strong stand on the central place of justice in the Christian commitment which would be enunciated by the Synod of Bishops four years later.

In 1971, to mark the 80th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, Paul issued his encyclical, *Octogesima Adveniens* (“A Call to Action”) in which he did something very important by moving away from development as a

^{xvii} Dorr, 141.

^{xviii} The Challenge of Peace, 31.

^{xix} *Populorum Progressio*, 31.

Paul’s economic vision, requiring as it did international cooperation, pointed up the need for a new type of truly effective world authority.

central theme and distinguishing between development and liberation. Development implies that the poor are those at the bottom of the ladder who have not yet been able to climb up; liberation sees the poor as those who have been prevented from climbing. Development patiently looks for gradual progress in the economic order; liberation shakes off oppression and belongs to the political order.

Octogesima Adveniens did not advocate liberation *per se*, with its overtones of violence and rebellion; it did, however, address issues connected with liberation, and so moved from purely economic to political considerations. “The novelty of *Octogesima Adveniens* lies largely in the extent to which it consciously addresses itself to some of the political problems involved in choosing and implementing an equitable order in society.”^{xx}

In that same year of 1971, the Synod of Bishops issued one of the most important statements on social justice ever to come out of Rome. *Justice in the World* was concrete and realistic; and it addressed specific situations, following Vatican II’s exhortation to read the “signs of the times”.

Justice in the World emphasized structural injustice, as well as the link between colonialism and unjust structures. It viewed liberation in a positive light, although the point was made that some areas of the world might still benefit from development that was more than simply another kind of exploitation.

“According to *Justice in the World*, there is one central issue which lies at the heart of the structural injustices of today’s world: lack of participation by people in determining their own destiny.”^{xxi} The marginalized are not merely economically disadvantaged; they also lack the political clout to change their situation. *Justice in the World* called for a strong option in favor of the poor and the powerless. The document also showed an important connection between our relationship to God and our relationship to our neighbors. It is a theology that seeks to link poverty with justice:

Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel, or, in other words, of

“... there is one central issue which lies at the heart of the structural injustices of today’s world: lack of participation by people in determining their own destiny.”

^{xx} Dorr, 165.

^{xxi} Dorr, 182.

the Church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation.^{xxii}

It should be obvious from all this that the concrete working out of the Genesis vision of stewardship requires constant reflection and periodic review of the contemporary situation. The past one hundred years which we have just surveyed most fleetingly, have been marked by a full and rich body of social documents. Nor was *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* John Paul II's first encyclical dealing with social justice.

In 1979, the year that also saw the Latin American bishops reaffirm at Puebla, Mexico, the commitment to justice spelled out over a decade earlier at the landmark meeting at Medellín, Colombia, John Paul issued *Redemptor Hominis* ("The Redeemer of Mankind [sic]"), in which he denounced the adverse effects of modern development, the squandering of valuable resources on the arms race, and the abuse, not just of the poor who lived in need, but of the middle class who lived in fear and insecurity. John Paul also called for planned economic growth, and demanded respect for the rights of every individual.

John Paul's 1981 encyclical, *Laborem Exercens* ("On Human Work"), issued to commemorate the 90th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, did more than just hand on traditional teachings; it went to the root of issues: labor's value does not lie in the work itself, but in the person who does the work. Capital is meant to serve the worker as the result of labor. That labor and capital are opposed is a mistaken development.

Laborem Exercens did not favor any one system over another. John Paul evenly evaluated all systems to show their structural inadequacies. He went on to make clear that, in many instances, the policies of organizations in the developed world are at least partly responsible for economic injustices suffered by people of developing nations. By so doing, he issued a challenge, in a most realistic sense, to citizens of the developed world to work at attaining a truly just international economic order, even at the risk of having to adopt a more modest lifestyle. Poverty is the result of human choices; therefore, an option for the poor involves an option against anything in society that contributes to the continuing impoverishment of the victims of injustice.

Solidarity, which would become a major theme of *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, and one that had been used by John Paul even before becoming pope, was used in *Laborem Exercens* to suggest a unity of effort on the part of all in a community to achieve the common good. Solidarity

... the policies of organizations in the developed world are at least partly responsible for economic injustices suffered by people of developing nations.

^{xxii} Justice in the World, 6.

implies the right to, and even the need for, confrontation and opposition, but always in the spirit of promoting the common good.

This call to solidarity was important because it filled the void in Catholic social teaching regarding the proper response by the oppressed when the call for reform remained unheeded by the oppressors. John Paul advocated neither violent rebellion nor silent submission; instead, he included in his call for economic and social conversion the concept that confrontation may be necessary and even acceptable.

This, then, is the background against which *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* was published. It is indeed a worthy descendant of all that went before.

Peter Hebblethwaite, then *National Catholic Reporter* writer on Vatican affairs, saw much that was new, challenging, and powerful in this social justice encyclical. Unlike previous documents, which cited biblical passages to validate statements, John Paul integrated scripture into the encyclical. “One text, Matthew 25:31-46, is the argument of the encyclical. The foundation for human solidarity, it proclaims, is that when we clothe the naked and feed the hungry, we are never dealing with strangers, but with Christ in disguise.”^{xxiii}

Most commentators pointed to paragraph 31, in which John Paul reminded the church most solemnly of its duty to bring relief to those who suffer, even if it must divest itself to do so:

Faced by cases of need, one cannot ignore them in favor of superfluous church ornaments and costly furnishings for divine worship; on the contrary it could be obligatory to sell these goods in order to provide food, drink, clothing and shelter for those who lack these things.^{xxiv}

In the television movie, “Choices of the Heart,” which deals with the life, work, and martyrdom of Jean Donovan, one scene depicts Jean asking Archbishop Oscar Romero when the construction work on the cathedral of San Salvador would be finished. Romero replies that the work would never be completed, because the poor needed the money more than God did. He described the scaffolding as a symbol, the poor person’s ladder to God.^{xxv} Romero’s words seem to foreshadow those of John Paul. In March of 1980, Romero gave one of his last homilies.

^{xxiii} Peter Hebblethwaite, “On Social Concern lofts a few new concerns,” *National Catholic Reporter* (May 27, 1988) 4.

^{xxiv} *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (henceforth SRS), ¶ 31.

^{xxv} Reported in the biography of Jean Donovan, Ana Carrigan, *Salvador Witness* (New York 1984).

I am simply a pastor, a brother, a friend of the Salvadoran people. One who knows their sufferings, their hunger, their anguish. It is in the name of these voices that I raise my voice to say: Do not idolize your wealth! Do not horde it to let the rest die of hunger! We must learn how to strip ourselves of our rings so that they won't be cut from our fingers.^{xxvi}

While such exhortations may go unheeded in a strict sense, still John Paul is echoing the demand of *Justice in the World* that, to be a credible force for justice, the church must first itself witness justice in its own lifestyle. "The Church ought not, in other words, to have a lower standard of justice in its internal life than it demands from others. 'Selling church treasures' is a reminder that self-reform is always on the agenda."^{xxvii}

In his commentary on the encyclical, Eugene Kennedy noted that the Latin word *sollicitudo* is rooted in the verb *sollicitare*, meaning to "move thoroughly" or "to disturb." Kennedy's commentary deftly juxtaposed the *sollicitudo* of John Paul, so deeply moved by the sufferings of men and women the world over, whether in developed or in developing countries, with the *sollicitudo* of the pope's readers, who were already starting to bristle at his unblinking look at the moral failures of both capitalism and communism.^{xxviii}

U. S. economist, John Kenneth Galbraith, described the encyclical as "a most important and compelling communication ... a powerful case for government action on behalf of the poor both at home and abroad."^{xxix}

In a survey of the contemporary scene, John Paul pointed out with dismay several factors which give a "rather negative impression" of the results of development: widespread and intolerable poverty; the growing gap between the developed North and the developing South; illiteracy and the lack of sufficient education; various forms of exploitation and oppression; increasing homelessness; the phenomena of un- and under-employment; and the question of international debt.^{xxx}

The very terminology then current, First World, Second World, Third World, and even Fourth World, was, according to the pope, significant as a

*... the Latin word **sollicitudo** is rooted in the verb **sollicitare**, meaning to "move thoroughly" or "to disturb."*

^{xxvi} This is widely available. See for example, Carrigan, 145.

^{xxvii} Hebblethwaite, 4.

^{xxviii} Eugene Kennedy, "Pope 'thoroughly moved,' aims to disturb us," *National Catholic Reporter* (May 27, 1988) 11.

^{xxix} John Kenneth Galbraith, "Encyclical a strong swipe at U. S. economic policies," *National Catholic Reporter* (May 27, 1988) 13.

^{xxx} SRS, 13-19

sign of the widespread sense that the *unity of the world*, that is, the *unity of the human race*, is seriously compromised. Such phraseology, beyond its more or less objective value, undoubtedly conceals a *moral content* before which the Church ... cannot remain indifferent.^{xxx1}

It was after this survey of crises and problems that the pope launched his critique of the two opposing blocs, the East and the West, which aroused so much commentary and stirred up so much controversy. In clear and precise language, John Paul spoke of the progression from ideological to political to geo-political to military opposition. And, even though there had been some positive steps taken, “the existence and opposition of the blocs continue to be a real and worrying fact which still colors the world picture.”^{xxxii}

Both liberal capitalism and Marxist collectivism are “imperfect and in need of radical correction.”^{xxxiii}

When the West gives the impression of abandoning itself to forms of growing and selfish isolation, and the East in its turn seems to ignore for questionable reasons its duty to cooperate in the task of alleviating human misery, then we are up against not only a betrayal of humanity’s legitimate expectations—a betrayal that is a harbinger of unforeseeable consequences—but also a real desertion of a moral obligation.^{xxxiv}

John Paul’s overview of the results of the state of opposition between the East and the West led to a reiteration of Paul VI’s observation that the arms race diverts money and resources which could be used to alleviate human suffering.^{xxxv} John Paul adds an even more severe judgment of the arms trade which flourishes, “a trade without frontiers...while economic aid and development plans meet with the obstacle of insuperable ideological barriers, and with tariff and trade barriers.”^{xxxvi} “This state of

^{xxx1} SRS, 14.

^{xxxii} SRS, 20.

^{xxxiii} SRS, 31.

^{xxxiv} SRS, 23.

^{xxxv} SRS 23. See also *Populorum Progressio*, 53. This is also a central theme in the two pastoral letters if the United States bishops, *The Challenge of Peace* and *Economic Justice for All*.

^{xxxvi} SRS, 24.

affairs leads in turn to the plight of millions of refugees on the one hand, and to increased terrorism on the other.”^{xxxvii}

John Paul concluded his survey of the contemporary scene with a commentary on some more positive aspects of our world. He cited the ever-increasing number of people actively concerned about human freedom and dignity; the influence of the United Nations’ “Declaration of Human Rights;” a growing conviction of our interdependence and common destiny; a concern for peace for all; and a greater ecological concern.^{xxxviii}

In an important section of the encyclical, John Paul discussed the true nature of development, and the tragic results of a misunderstanding of that nature. “What distinguishes John Paul’s encyclical is an awareness that development, as generally understood in the First World, is a false and ultimately dangerous concept.”^{xxxix}

The pope pointed out that the “haves,” those who reap the benefits of what he called “superdevelopment,” with material goods actually in excessive supply, are no less oppressed than the “have-nots,” who suffer material deprivation. Superdevelopment leads to a wasteful, consumerist mentality which in turn leads to chronic dissatisfaction, because “the more one possesses the more one wants, while deeper aspirations remain unsatisfied and perhaps even stifled.”^{xl}

John Paul underscored the fact that development is not merely an economic concept, but a moral issue as well. The biblical mandate of stewardship is echoed:

One of the great injustices in the contemporary world consists precisely in this: that the ones who possess much are relatively *few* and those who possess almost nothing are *many*. It is the injustice of poor distribution of the goods and services originally intended for all.^{xli}

Seen in this light, development becomes “the *modern expression* of an essential dimension of [our] vocation.”^{xlii}

Flowing from this conviction, John Paul discussed several

^{xxxvii} SRS, 24

^{xxxviii} SRS, 26.

^{xxxix} Penny Lernoux, “Technology not the answer, as Brazil shows,” *National Catholic Reporter* (May 27, 1987) 8.

^{xl} SRS, 28.

^{xli} SRS, 28.

^{xlii} SRS, 30.

Superdevelopment leads to a wasteful, consumerist mentality which in turn leads to chronic dissatisfaction, because “the more one possesses the more one wants, while deeper aspirations remain unsatisfied and perhaps even stifled.”

characteristics of an authentic Christian approach to development: the task is difficult but essential; the task makes us collaborators with Christ, who assures ultimate victory; the task, as part of the divine plan for all peoples, is a duty of the church; the task is one which falls to every person, and to all nations and societies; there is an intrinsic connection between true development and respect for human rights.^{xliii}

Having demonstrated the moral dimension of development, John Paul goes on to discuss obstacles to that development, obstacles which can likewise be overcome only by political decisions that are essentially moral decisions. He spoke of “structures of sin,” the result of innumerable human choices based on such attitudes as excessive desire for profit and a thirst for power.^{xliv}

To overcome such attitudes, the pope called on all people, including those without any particular faith, to take up the challenge of removing these obstacles to true development. The growing recognition of our mutual interdependence required a response which the pope referred to as “solidarity,” a concept, as noted earlier, that was not a new stance for him. He defined this solidarity as “a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the good of all and of each individual, because we are *all* really responsible for *all*.”^{xlv}

This solidarity was called for nationally, among members of each society and nation, and also internationally, with richer nations realizing their obligation to establish a just international order. Such a condition would enable the poor to begin to help themselves; and would enable poorer nations to maintain their individual cultures. It would also lead to the breakdown of oppression and violence, because the bonds uniting nations would become stronger than the ideological differences dividing them.

While characterizing the pope’s treatment of the political relationship between interdependence and solidarity as “ambiguous,” and “less than it might be,” nevertheless, Henriot stated that “solidarity...is...the new encyclical’s major contribution to the development of the church’s social teaching. His discussion of solidarity poses serious challenges to U. S. government stances and policies, not only toward Third World peoples but also toward our domestic population.”^{xlvi}

After recalling that the church’s social teaching is not itself an

... solidarity was called for nationally, among members of each society and nation, and also internationally, with richer nations realizing their obligation to establish a just international order.

^{xliii} SRS, 30-33.

^{xliv} SRS, 35-37.

^{xlv} SRS, 38.

^{xlvi} Henriot, 8.

ideological system, but a reflection of the “complex realities of human existence, in society and in the international order, in the light of faith and of the Church’s tradition,”^{xlvii} a reflection meant to guide human behavior, John Paul went on to list several results of such a reflection: a commitment to justice; an international outlook; a love of preference for the poor, which translates into concrete reforms on their behalf.

The pope called specifically for the reform of the international trade system; the reform of the world monetary and financial system; an examination of forms of technology and their use; and a review of existing organizations.^{xlviii}

In his conclusion, John Paul went even further than Paul VI, who had called development another name for peace. Development, according to John Paul, *is* liberation.^{xlix} Development and technological progress are intimately connected with liberation, and with religious empowerment. The task is enormous, but there is no room for cowardice. “We are *all* called, indeed *obliged*, to face the tremendous challenges”¹ that lie ahead. Those tremendous challenges are now ours; John Paul’s words are now addressed to us. Let us, in our time, realize the as-yet-unfinished vision of *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*.

^{xlvii} SRS, 36.

^{xlviii} SRS, 43.

^{xlix} SRS, 46.

¹ SRS, 47.

A BETTER WORLDLINESS: DISCIPLESHIP FOR THE COMMON GOOD

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Abstract

This paper explores specific episodes from the life of two contextually diverse Christian disciples—Abraham Kuyper and Dietrich Bonhoeffer—in order to make a unique contribution, first, to a notion of the common good, and second, to connecting that notion of the common good to concrete practices of just peacemaking. After introducing the concept of the common good, the paper follows a unique development and application of the concept of common grace in the Dutch Reformed theology and practice of Kuyper. Then, the paper traces Bonhoeffer’s involvement in advocating for and articulating the practice of confession of guilt for the renewal of society. A final section creatively interprets the life and thought of Kuyper and Bonhoeffer in order to define and apply with concreteness the notion of the common good, particularly as it relates to the contemporary practices of the Just Peacemaking Initiative.

Shared Stories, New Resources

We learn about discipleship from stories – the stories of Jesus, the disciples and apostles, and the great saints and sinners of the faith. Discipleship is, to say the least, about discerning how these stories engage our commitments and convictions in our own following-after Jesus Christ. Stories also help us to unpack abstract theological concepts in order to see how nuanced theology animates and shapes concrete action. The topic of this paper—how the common good informs practice norms of just peacemaking—runs the risk of remaining elevated and abstract. The concept of the common good in particular can be fraught with lofty (although important!) concepts of human nature and the purpose of societies. In an attempt to alleviate even my own tendency to remain ethereal, this paper employs the method of historical drama. The hope is that by encountering specific episodes from the life of two contextually diverse Christian disciples, a unique contribution might be made, first, to a notion of the common good, and second, to connecting that notion of the common good to concrete practices of just peacemaking. Specifically, the paper will begin by following a unique development and application of

the concept of common grace in the Dutch Reformed theology and practice of Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920). Kuyper was trained as a Calvinist pastor before becoming heavily involved in politics; he was Prime Minister of the Netherlands from 1901 to 1905. Then, the paper will trace Dietrich Bonhoeffer's involvement in advocating for and articulating the practice of confession of guilt for the renewal of society. Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) was a German Lutheran pastor and theologian that was one of the few voices to stand against the rise of National Socialism in the 1930s and 1940s. That these two figures represent dramatically diverse historical and theological contexts helps prove the point: there is much possibility within the diverse Christian tradition to define and apply with concreteness the notion of the common good. What is more, the continuity of conviction that arises despite Kuyper's and Bonhoeffer's contextual diversity demonstrates the powerful viability of the contemporary practices of the Just Peacemaking Initiative.

Now, a note about the common good. It is undoubtedly a grandiose concept; by its name, it seeks to affirm that the pluralistic and often divisive segments of society can somehow agree on a common purpose and, by implication, some shared solutions toward fulfilling that common purpose. Such an idea may sound naïve and idealistic, and such a practice seems ever fleeting within the increasingly partisan halls of our political institutions. But, what else is democracy if not the pursuit of the common good for society? Perhaps the disunity in our nation could begin to be repaired by the formation of a shared notion of the common good. Certainly some notable and promising headway is being made in this regard. David Hollenbach (2002), for example, provides a robust treatment of the rich tradition of the concept of the common good throughout human history, from Cicero to Aristotle and then through Augustine, Aquinas, and Ignatius. He demonstrates that the common good is not just a Christian or Catholic concept, but that, in its nature, it supports a practice of dialogic universalism by the pursuit of deep intellectual and cultural exchanges of practices and ideas. The common good is defined by the diversity of both local and global society, and as such one historical or intellectual tradition cannot hold the monopoly on its definition and practice.

There is thus an opening inherent within the very concept of the common good for further, and perhaps even creative, intellectual and practical contributions. The Catholic tradition has a particularly long and rich history of the common good. What is more, Evangelicals recently came together and produced a promising vision of the common good, and even mainstream media is contributing a steady stream of articles and editorials on the subject. This concept is re-emerging as a vital measure of

... the continuity of conviction that arises despite Kuyper's and Bonhoeffer's contextual diversity demonstrates the powerful viability of the contemporary practices of the Just Peacemaking Initiative.

our shared commitment to our common humanity. As our world becomes increasingly connected, it may be that there is a collective reawakening to our responsibility to care for each other and for the earth. If that is the case, we will need all of the resources we can muster in order to hear, understand, and respect each other.

Admittedly, Abraham Kuyper and Dietrich Bonhoeffer are not usually found around the table discussing the notion of the common good. Most often (and for good reason) when we look to history for guidance on this matter, we see the representatives that Hollenbach highlights – like Aristotle, Augustine, and Aquinas. These figures are vitally important and provide resources for a diversity of religious and intellectual traditions. Kuyper and Bonhoeffer, on the other hand, are specifically confessional figures with strong ties to their respective traditions – Kuyper was unabashedly Dutch Reformed and Bonhoeffer, even with his critiques and re-formulations, was thoroughly German Lutheran. Is it counterproductive to introduce such confessionally specific voices to a concept that is seeking to cast a wide net? On the contrary, Kuyper and Bonhoeffer both demonstrate that it is not only possible but also necessary for confessional theology to provide a holistic framework for participation and engagement in the pressing issues of society. Today, the question of the common good as it specifically relates to war and peace is just such a pressing issue. So, it is my contention that the historical drama surrounding the life and thought of Kuyper and Bonhoeffer provide compelling companionship in the life of contemporary discipleship. We can see the way forward because of the work they have already done.

... Kuyper and Bonhoeffer both demonstrate that it is not only possible but also necessary for confessional theology to provide a holistic framework for participation and engagement in the pressing issues of society.

Abraham Kuyper and the Theological Practice of Common Grace

Education was one of the central concerns of Kuyper's political and professional career. Reform of both the primary and higher education systems was a driving force behind Kuyper's involvement as a member of the Second Chamber in the Dutch parliament first in 1874, and then as Prime Minister from 1901 to 1905. In addition, Kuyper founded the Free University in Amsterdam in 1880 as the first higher education institution in the Netherlands to exist apart from state control. It is worth taking some time to set the stage for this education reform debate, as not only this issue in itself, but also Kuyper's method of engagement to effect change offers important components to our concerns with the common good and just peacemaking.

The catalyst for this debate dated back to the impact of the French Revolution on Dutch society. Prior to 1795, Dutch state schools incorporated the values of the Reformed tradition by teaching their pupils

the *Heidelberg Catechism*. In this way, the Reformed tradition was a central resource for the moral and spiritual development of Dutch citizens. As the Revolution spilled into the Netherlands, with its emphasis on secularism and individual *laissez-faire* liberty, state schools began to teach a form of Christianity deprived of confessional doctrine. While both public and private primary schools were allowed to exist during the era of Napoleonic rule, a law of 1806 withdrew state funds from private Christian schools and promoted a kind of civil religion in the public schools. Napoleon believed that civil religion was necessary for the moral formation of society, but his policies—and those of the Dutch government after Napoleon's defeat in 1813—favored the rise of secular ideology in education (McGoldrick, 2005, pp. 53-54).

Kuyper effectively began his political career in 1867. He had served in a pastorate in the small country village of Beesd after finishing his theological studies at the University of Leiden in 1863. In 1867, he took a pastorate in Utrecht and then found himself entering into the debate regarding the state school system. He published articles arguing that state schools, with their promotion of secularism, could not be neutral because of the intrinsic aggressive atheistic value system that they had inherited from the Revolution. Accordingly, he felt that Christians should be able to establish private, confessionally based schools that were independent of the state system. To his disdain, the conservative clergy in Utrecht refused to support him; and so when he received a call to serve a pastorate in Amsterdam in 1870, he quickly and gratefully accepted. Once in Amsterdam, Kuyper became chief editor of the weekly religious newspaper *De Heraut*. He soon founded the daily periodical *De Standaard* in order to give additional voice and leadership to the emerging cultural battle he saw ahead of him. Before long, Kuyper combined the two papers, making *De Heraut* a weekly supplement of *De Standaard*, and over his career he published hundreds of articles on the vast array of cultural, religious, and political issues of his day. Within a few short years of arriving in Amsterdam, Kuyper ran for election into the lower house of Parliament. He easily won a seat, and in 1874—by state law—he resigned his clerical orders to take up the life of politics. Kuyper, however, always saw himself as a religious leader even and especially in the political realm. Fittingly, he took up the school question in his first parliamentary address with as much Calvinist vigor as he had exuded previously from the pulpit (Wolterstorff, 2006, pp. 289-294).

At its base, the education question was about worldview. Kuyper argued that while the federal government indeed had the responsibility to set the standards for primary school education, it should not hold a monopoly on administering education because in doing so the state was

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institutionalizing the secular worldview. Kuyper believed that education was foundationally the responsibility of the family, and so he felt that parents had a right to send their children to schools that were in accord with their own worldviews—religious or not. He wanted the state to provide funding for both public and private schools so as not to penalize families financially for wanting to educate their children in private schools that taught with specific worldview values. The debate escalated in 1878 when the liberal ruling party introduced a wide-ranging education reform bill. The bill stipulated that the federal government would pay the cost of the reforms for the public schools but not for the independent schools. After the bill was passed by Parliament but before it came to King Willem III for his signature, Kuyper joined with Catholic leaders to organize a massive petition-signing campaign. In August, they presented their petition with 469,000 signatures urging the king to reject the bill – quite a feat considering at the time only 122,000 people were eligible to vote. Although the king did receive the petition, he signed the law in August 1878. Despite defeat, the petition-signing campaign provided Kuyper and his followers with a great sense of enthusiasm and momentum. In April 1879 they organized into the first mass political party in the Netherlands under the name the Anti-Revolutionary Party (making a clear distinction from the secular values of the French Revolution). One of their uniting causes was the formation of a national organization to aid in the establishment of independent Christian schools (Wolterstorff, 2006, pp. 294-95).

About this time Kuyper was also taking action in the area of university education. The 1848 Constitution had stipulated the principle of educational freedom for universities, and in 1876 the Parliament had passed a bill reaffirming the possibility for the establishment of independent institutions of higher education. Kuyper worked from 1878 toward the goal of establishing the first university apart from state control in the Netherlands (Wolterstorff, 2006, p. 295). His efforts were realized in 1880 with the opening of the Free University in Amsterdam, an institution that would bear the Reformed worldview within all subject matters, whether theology, law, medicine, or aesthetics. In his inaugural address, Kuyper proclaimed that the concept of “sphere sovereignty” was the hallmark of the Free University, and as such the University held a distinct place within the nation, in scholarship, and with its Reformed character. Sphere sovereignty affirmed the Lordship of Jesus Christ over all areas of life, and in doing so freed and encouraged the pursuit of revealed truth in all aspects of life and subject matters. In Kuyper’s (1998b) famous words, “no single piece of our mental world is to be hermetically sealed off from the rest, and there is not a square inch in the

whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is sovereign over *all*, does not cry: ‘Mine!’” (p. 488).

The founding of the Free University was certainly an important milestone for Kuyper’s education efforts, but the work of reform was just beginning. It soon became apparent that Kuyper’s minority Anti-Revolutionary Party (ARP) would have a difficult if not impossible time gaining enough influence in Parliament to enact their party platform. However, in 1880 the first Catholic clergyman, Herman Schaepman, was elected as a representative to the Second Chamber of Parliament. Kuyper and Schaepman gradually became friends and then they agreed to form an Anti-Revolutionary-Catholic political coalition. While their parties maintained distinct official platforms, they both wanted to see a pluralistic education system that would allow for the support of independent religious schools. Their parties also overlapped in commitments to causes such as workers’ rights and suffrage. Some within Kuyper’s ranks were furious that he would partner with the “papalists,” but this coalition would bring to power the first government from the confessional parties in 1888. This same coalition enabled Kuyper’s rise to Prime Minister in 1901, and continued to be major political force for a generation (Langley, 1984, pp. 32, 137; Wolterstorff, 1996, p. 296).

The Anti-Revolutionary-Catholic cabinet that was formed as a result of the 1888 elections quickly accomplished two major legislative reforms. Under the ARP Prime Minister Baron Aeneas Mackay, the government focused immediately on school reform and labor laws. The School Law of 1889 provided up to 30% government funding for primary private schools and was easily passed in a Parliament with a confessional-coalition majority. It was not the full-funding of private schools desired by Kuyper, but he felt it was a step in the right direction. Similarly, the Labor Law of 1889 made a modest beginning towards the protection of workers. It set a minimum age requirement of twelve years for workers, and it prevented women and those under sixteen from working more than eleven hours a day, while also forbidding night work. This was the first labor law in Dutch legislative history, and it was a signature achievement of the Anti-Revolutionary Party and its confessional coalition (Langley, 1984, pp. 39-41; Wolterstorff, 1996, p. 296).

Kuyper became Prime Minister when the Anti-Revolutionary-Catholic coalition once again gained the majority in the parliamentary elections of 1901. Not surprisingly, the reform of primary and higher education was one of the new cabinet’s legislative priorities. Through much turmoil – including a massive railroad strike in 1903—Kuyper’s cabinet was finally able to mediate a debate on higher education in 1904. Kuyper argued for the complete liberation of Christian higher education from the state

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monopoly on the granting of degrees. True, the present law allowed for the establishment of non-public universities, but students at those schools were still required to take state-administered exams in order to receive a degree. Thus, the students at the Free University—the only such private institution at the time—in effect had to earn passing marks not only from their school, but also from the state sponsored education program. Kuyper's bill would grant degree-granting status to all universities who met a certain set of state requirements, making the case-in-point that doctors, lawyers, and educators who were trained in a Reformed educational system were as qualified as those from a public school. Additionally, the bill provided some financial subsidies for non-public universities, and also established the provision for a technical university. Kuyper's bill argued for a pluralism that would place all universities on equal footing. In his arguments, he noted that important contributions were coming from non-public institutions throughout the world, like the Catholic University in Belgium, and Johns Hopkins and Harvard in the United States. As such, this was not just a particular concern for the Free University, but also would promote the creation of any number of religious or non-religious higher education institutions. As usual, the Catholics were a key ally in support of the bill, even though they would not open a university of their own in the Netherlands until 1923. But the debate over the bill was bitter. In March 1904 the Second Chamber succeeded in passing the bill, but it was rejected by the opposition-controlled First Chamber. Prime Minister Kuyper then made the unusual move of asking Queen Wilhelmina to dissolve the First Chamber and call for new elections. She obliged and new elections were held that summer. When the newly elected First Chamber convened, Kuyper reintroduced the bill and it passed on May 20, 1905. When the Queen signed the bill two days later, Kuyper had secured one of the crowning achievements of his life. He had helped to bring true justice and opportunity not only to Christian higher education, but also to all future private university institutions in the Netherlands (Langley, 1984, pp. 103-112).

Kuyper's Anti-Revolutionary Party suffered a narrow defeat in the elections of 1905. He had to step down as Prime Minister having not yet fulfilled all of his educational reform aspirations (not to mention his other political goals of expanding justice and pluralism). The confessional coalition won a decisive victory in 1909, however, and the ARP once again formed a cabinet – although this time without Kuyper. While he continued to be involved as an elder statesman in the Party, Kuyper would no longer hold elected office. In 1913, the ARP lost the elections and the new Prime Minister P. W. A. Cort van der Linden formed a Liberal coalition which ruled until 1918. This government sought to end the years

of political tension between the liberal and confessional-coalition parties and so introduced bills providing constitutional support of complete educational pluralism, including full state funding of private institutions. Additionally, a bill for electoral reform introduced proportional representation, where one percent of the national vote would elect one member to the Second Chamber of Parliament. Also as part of this bill, universal suffrage finally was granted for men. By 1917, Kuyper had lived to see the victory of his fifty year struggle for social pluralism and justice (Langley, 1984, p. 154). Although the work of equality and democracy would never be complete, Kuyper could find great satisfaction in seeing the tangible results of his hard-fought advocacy for his Christian principles.

Kuyper's involvement in politics had everything to do with his core beliefs and convictions, which stemmed from his commitment to the Reformed faith. Central to Kuyper's legislative goals was his understanding of God's sovereignty and grace. He fought so hard for pluralism in education not solely so he could have a Christian school, but also because his understanding of the Lordship of Jesus Christ meant that each sphere of society had a divine right to exist in its own form. Thus, the state could not hold captive the realm of education. The state certainly had a responsibility to support education, for the good of its citizens and for the good of society as a whole. But the state was not responsible for doing the educating. This should be left to the schools, and the schools should represent the pluralistic worldviews of the population. Kuyper articulated a unique concept of grace in order to support this understanding of pluralism from his Reformed perspective. It is here that Kuyper's notion of common grace can speak to the question of the common good.

Kuyper advocated for pluralism out of his Calvinist conviction that God's grace enabled the on-going cultivation of culture and society toward the ends of justice and liberation. Never one to be under-spoken about his Christian beliefs, Kuyper developed the notion of common grace over six years in the pages of *De Heraut*, beginning in 1895. He compiled these articles and published *De Gemeene Gratia* in three volumes, the first appearing simultaneously with his election as Prime Minister in 1901. His concept of common grace was not without controversy. Some of his fellow Calvinists accused him of inventing a new teaching. Kuyper insisted that he was only developing what had come before in Calvin. The result was a nuanced understanding of the relationship between the "saving" grace for the elect and the "common" grace which fell over the rest of creation. His comprehensive theological reasoning on these grounds provided, among other things, the framework

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for the ARP legislative platform, allowed for the cooperation with the Catholic and other confessional political parties, and also provided his own Calvinist constituency the means and encouragement to engage with the broader realms of society. Historian James Bratt (1998) writes: “Common grace was thus a theology of public responsibility, of Christians’ shared humanity with the rest of the world. It was also, in the words of one historian, ‘the valve through which Kuyper pumped fresh air into his people’” p. 165). Common grace built a bridge between Calvinists and the rest of the nation; it provided for the important contributions from the Calvinists in the areas, for example, of politics and scholarship, and it introduced the Calvinists to the wonders and beauty of the arts and sciences in the greater culture. To explain the existence of this bridge between Christians and the larger society, Kuyper, in part, presented his argument for common grace in two categories: creation and history, and church and culture.

Kuyper (1998a) looked first to the creation account in Genesis to deduce two manifestations of God’s grace. On the occasion of the first sin, he noted, “Death, in its full effect, did not set in on that day, and Reformed theologians have consistently pointed out how in this non-arrival of what was prophesied for ill we see the emergence of a saving and long-suffering grace” (p. 167). Both forms of grace worked for God’s glory. The first, a *saving* grace, in the end ultimately would overcome the effects of sin and its consequences of death and eternal separation from God. The second, a *common* grace, was a temporal restraining grace which held back the full effects of sin in the present world, and it was extended to the whole of human life (p. 168). Anticipating his detractors, who would argue in terms of the antithesis between the elect and non-elect, Kuyper explained that special grace must presuppose common grace if there was to be an appropriate focus on God’s glory. Such a focus emphasized the work of Jesus Christ not only as *Savior*, but also as *Creator* of the world. The Lordship of Jesus Christ thus demanded an inseparable connection between *grace* and *nature*. Kuyper explained:

You cannot see grace in all its riches if you do not perceive how its tiny roots and fibers everywhere penetrate into the joints and cracks of the life of nature. And you cannot validate that connectedness if, with respect to grace, you first look at the salvation of your own soul and not primarily on the *Christ of God*. (p. 173)

In keeping the concepts of nature and grace connected, Kuyper maintained that grace could then not function exclusively in the realm of

The second, a common grace, was a temporal restraining grace which held back the full effects of sin in the present world, and it was extended to the whole of human life.

the elect. In fact, all of history was a testimony to the sustaining work of grace for God's glory, which even for the elect remained a mystery. As he wrote:

[The work of common grace] encompasses the whole life of the world, the life of Kaffirs in Africa, of Mongols in China and Japan, and of the Indians south of the Himalayas. In all previous centuries there was nothing among Egyptians and Greeks, in Babylon and Rome, nor is there anything today among the peoples of whatever continent that was or is not necessary. All of it was an indispensable part of the great work that God is doing to consummate the world's development. And though a great deal in all this *we* cannot connect with the Kingdom or the content of our faith, nevertheless it all has meaning. None of it can be spared because it pleases God, despite Satan's devices and human sin, to actualize everything he had put into this world at the time of creation, to insist on its realization, to develop it so completely that the full sum of its vital energies may enter the light of day at the consummation of the world. (p. 176)

For Kuyper, common grace bore witness to the glorious and mysterious work of God's sovereignty over all creation and throughout all of history. And while some argued that the cross of Christ was "the center of world history," Kuyper wanted to keep an understanding of the creation and redemption of the world *together* in Jesus Christ (pp. 182-83). He sought to explain this tension by describing the church not as an *institution*, but as an *organism*.

Kuyper (1998a) felt it was important to make a distinction between the church as institution and the church as organism. As an *institute*, he explained, the church was an apparatus, "grounded in human choices, decisions, and acts of the will, consisting of members, officers, and useful supplies" (p. 187). However, the church in fact was an *organism*, "in its hidden unity as the mystical body of Christ existing partly in heaven, partly on earth, and partly unborn, having penetrated all peoples and nations, possessing Christ as its natural and glorious head, and living by the Holy Spirit who as a life-engendering and life-maintaining force animates both head and members" (p. 187). This is important for Kuyper because he understood that, more than anything, the church was social in nature. As such, the church accomplished two things in light of its witness both to special, saving grace and to common grace. The church certainly worked *directly* for the well-being of the elect, but it also worked *indirectly* for the well-being of the whole of civil society, constraining it

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to civic virtue” (p. 190). The church thus stood as a light shining on a hill in the very midst of society and culture. Kuyper felt that rather than fleeing from the world, the church needed to allow its light to shine ever brighter through its windows, illuminating all aspects of society and culture with the gracious reality of Jesus Christ, creator and savior of all.

At this juncture, two points are clear in relation to how Kuyper’s life and thought contribute to an understanding of the common good. Kuyper’s confessional commitment to the Lordship of Jesus Christ over both creation and salvation enabled an extremely robust engagement in the political structures of the Netherlands. It was his concept of common grace that allowed him to forge political partnerships through coalitions with the Catholics. While he was careful to maintain the dogmatic differences between other religious groups (Kuyper was ever an outspoken Calvinist), he recognized that the basis for their similar worldviews made them powerful allies against the rise of secularism in Dutch society. Further, Kuyper’s concept of common grace was the driving motivator for his efforts at pluralism in education reform. He saw God’s grace permeating all aspects of society and so felt it was the responsibility of Christians to help in the formation of and participation in culture. Creating the space for Christian education was not about isolating Christians from the influence of secularism; it was about affirming the rights of parents to educate their children in a diversity of worldviews and not allow the state to unquestionably advocate for just one particular ideology. This, at its base, was an issue of justice for Kuyper – which is why, although we focused almost exclusively on the education debate, Kuyper’s legislative program included (among other things) furthering the rights of the common people through expanded labor laws and voting rights. In short, for Kuyper common grace was the catalyst for a life-long career of promoting the common good for all people in the Netherlands. His policies were not for the exclusive benefit of the Calvinists, who were just one narrow segment of the population. Kuyper worked for the good of the nation, and he did so from a very clear theological conviction in the reality of God’s grace manifest in the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

... Kuyper’s concept of common grace was the driving motivator for his efforts at pluralism in education reform.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Confession of Guilt

1933 was the decisive year for Germany; January 30 marked the ascension of Adolf Hitler to power and the beginning of the National Socialist program of totalitarian rule. From the beginning, the young pastor and theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer had the foresight to resist the pseudo-pagan nationalistic haze settling in over the country. He urged the Evangelical Church in Germany to take a united stand against the encroachment of a nationalized Nazi-led Reich Church, and he

persistently attempted to make the Jewish question an essential aspect of the Evangelical Church response. By all accounts, however, Bonhoeffer was only marginally successful in his efforts at raising concern toward the Jewish plight; and 10 years later when he found himself in the throes of a conspiracy plot to assassinate Hitler, he recognized that the churches of Germany had utterly failed not only to speak out on behalf of the Jews, but also to proclaim faithfully the definitive Lordship of Jesus Christ. Bonhoeffer's is a story of hope as much as it is a story of tragedy. He had the faculties to make a powerful stand against the twisted ideology of National Socialism – and his stand was largely uncompromising and faithful throughout. And yet, in the midst of war, he realized that the churches had let down Germany, the Jews, and the world. As a longsuffering Christian in Germany, he knew that he bore the guilt of the nation. There are numerous possible episodes that could illustrate the complicity of the churches in Germany to the Nazi program, just as there are pages upon pages of Bonhoeffer's rich theology that could serve as a counter and prophetic voice to the churches. Nonetheless, for the present analysis of the common good, we will limit ourselves to two sources from Bonhoeffer's life: his efforts towards crafting the Bethel Confession in August 1933, and his *Ethics* manuscript "Guilt, Justification, Renewal" from 1941. Much would occur in Germany during these short eight years, but Bonhoeffer's commitment to the Lordship of Jesus Christ only strengthened his resolve to be ever with and for the world.

One of Hitler's first acts as Chancellor was the April 7, 1933 "Law for the restoration of the civil service." This law sought to ensure that public servants would be loyal to the Reich government and so called for the removal of all people of "non-Aryan" descent from public office, including churches. The law was specifically aimed at removing people of Jewish ancestry from legal participation in the state (Zorzin, 1997, p. 239). Bonhoeffer's immediate response was to write an article, entitled "The Church and the Jewish Question." Here is where Bonhoeffer (2009) famously argued that the church had a responsibility not only to aid the victims of state persecution, but also – if necessary – "to put a spoke in the wheel" of the state itself. This implies direct political action on behalf of the church, which, Bonhoeffer wrote, "[is] only possible and called for if the church sees the state to be failing in its function of creating law and order" (p. 366). More and more in the spring and summer of 1933, Bonhoeffer perceived that the state was failing in its mandate to create just law and order, particularly as it was depriving certain groups of citizens of their rights. He spent that season organizing opposition against the encroachment of the new Nazi policies on the church, including the leeching rise of the so-called German Christians to power in church

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government.

July was especially frantic, as the Reich government issued a decree ordering immediate church elections. The opposition had hardly a week to organize, and so the Reich-sponsored German Christians clearly had the advantage. The Gestapo even went so far as to raid the office of the Young Reformation movement—of which Bonhoeffer was a leader—to confiscate their election leaflets and hastily organized list of candidates. Bonhoeffer and his students had worked feverishly to prepare these materials for the election. After the confiscation, an indignant Bonhoeffer and his colleague Gerhard Jacobi made the bold move of visiting the office of the head of the Gestapo in Berlin. Bonhoeffer and Jacobi eventually recovered their documents, but were threatened with arrest if they libeled the German Christians. Their efforts were to no avail. The German Christians won the election and assumed administrative control of the German Evangelical Church; further, the soon-to-be Reich bishop Ludwig Müller called a national synod for September (Bethge, 2000, pp. 293-97).

In the midst of the church election crisis, Bonhoeffer was fielding offers for pastorates in London. He found himself torn between either moving to London for new opportunities in ministry and ecumenical work or devoting his time and energy to the emerging church struggle at home in Germany. After the loss of the July 23 church elections, Bonhoeffer was asked to take a retreat in Bethel to work on the first draft of a confession that the minority group could rally behind at the national synod. Before going to Bethel, Bonhoeffer visited interested congregations in London to try to discern whether he would stay in Germany or move abroad for a time. The events surrounding the drafting of the Bethel Confession would soon push him into a decision (Bethge, 2000, pp. 297-300).

During the month of August, Bonhoeffer worked closely with Hermann Sasse to draft what would become the Bethel Confession. Their intention was to confront the German Christians at the upcoming national synod with the question of truth. Church leader Martin Niemöller described the urgency of the situation:

Is there theologically a fundamental difference between the teachings of the Reformation and those proclaimed by German Christians? We fear: Yes! – They say: No! – This lack of clarity must be cleared up through a confession for our time. If this doesn't come from the other side – and there's no sign of it coming soon – then it has to come from us; and it has to come in

such a way that the others must say Yes or No to it. (Bethge, 2000, p. 301)

The drive toward establishing decisive church confessions during this time of turmoil was occurring throughout Germany. In May, a group in the Rhineland that included Karl Barth had published a “Theological Declaration on the Form of the Church,” and since June numerous groups in Westphalia had worked on similar projects. In addition, Bonhoeffer and his Jewish-Christian colleague Franz Hildebrandt had already produced an “Attempt at a Lutheran Catechism.” Bonhoeffer was energized and expectations were high for a clear and powerful statement to come out of Bethel (Bethge, 2000, pp. 300-01).

Bonhoeffer and Sasse were soon joined by others at Bethel to formulate a draft of the confession. They labored under measured anxiety, for they felt the pressure to address all of the issues that were emerging under the influence of the German Christians. For example, they felt that a statement on justification was needed “to unmask Ludwig Müller’s trite reduction of Christianity to trust in God and being good fellows” (Bethge, 2000, p. 302). Additionally, they needed to articulate a doctrine of the cross that would counter the Nazi nationalistic propaganda, and they needed a doctrine of the Holy Spirit, with a strong christological emphasis, that would counter the dangerous creation-based concept of revelation that Emanuel Hirsch and Paul Althaus used to justify racism against the Jews. For his part, Bonhoeffer was especially adamant that the confession include a response to the Jewish persecution. As such, he was delighted with the draft on this section produced by Wilhelm Vischer (Bethge, 2000, p. 302).

Vischer’s section on “The Church and the Jews” began by affirming the Jews as God’s chosen people and identified Jesus Christ as remaining true to Israel in his being of their flesh. Vischer then wrote that the mission of Christian church was to call the Jews to conversion and baptize them in the name of Jesus Christ, bringing them fully into the life and ministry of the church. For this reason, it was not acceptable—as the German Christians were demanding—to force Jewish Christians to form their own congregations. As Vischer explained:

What is special about Jewish Christians has nothing to do with their race or kind or their history, but rather with God’s faithfulness to Israel according to the flesh. In fact, so long as Jewish Christians are not set apart legally in any way within the church, they serve as a living monument to God’s faithfulness and a sign that the dividing wall between Jews and Gentiles has

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been broken down, and that faith in Jesus Christ must not be distorted in the direction of a national religion or a Christianity according to race (Rasmussen, 2009, pp. 420-21).

Vischer then ended this section with a clear understanding of the responsibility facing Christians in Germany:

The Christians who are of Gentile descent must be prepared to expose themselves to persecution before they are ready to betray in even a single case, voluntary or under compulsion, the church's fellowship with Jewish Christians that is instituted in Word and Sacrament. (p. 421)

It is notable that Vischer knew this section would be a difficult sell to the other twenty theologians who would read and make comments on the draft. He wrote to Barth on August 21, "I put together what I hear the Bible saying on [the church's position toward the Jews]. I am not surprised that the people who made this request (with the exception of Bonhoeffer) do not agree with what I have written" (pp. 416-17). Indeed, when the draft was circulated on August 25, it was quickly watered down—in many instances quite dramatically.

The changes were so disturbing that Bonhoeffer refused to work on the final version. Vischer's section on the Jewish question had been stripped, the section on the state had been revised to confess "joyful collaboration" with the state's aims, and perhaps most disturbing, "a statement about sharing responsibility for the country's guilt had been changed to express the church's part 'in the glory and guilt of her people'" (Bethge, 2000, p. 303). Bonhoeffer escaped to London in utter frustration. Niemöller was informed that Bonhoeffer "has declared himself wholly dissatisfied with the new version and [is] opposed to its publication in its present form" (Bethge, 2000, p. 303). In Bonhoeffer's mind, the German Evangelical Church had squandered a pivotal opportunity to stand firmly in opposition to the Reich Church. Instead of being "prepared to expose themselves to persecution" for the truth and reality of the Lordship of Jesus Christ, Bonhoeffer saw only cowardice and deception among too many of his colleagues. It is true that Bonhoeffer would return to the front lines of the German Church Struggle, becoming a leader in the Confessing Church, and his sensitivity to the Jewish question—even calling it an issue of *statu confessionis*—would remain steadfast (Bonhoeffer, 2009, p. 366). He would also remain committed to the necessity of the personal, corporate, and national confession of guilt for the shameful acts of the church.

In Bonhoeffer's mind, the German Evangelical Church had squandered a pivotal opportunity to stand firmly in opposition to the Reich Church.

Bonhoeffer's 1941 *Ethics* manuscript "Guilt, Justification, Renewal" was in many ways a culmination of his commitment to justice, peace, and solidarity – he recognized that these elements of God's gracious reign were not possible outside of confession and repentance. In addition, Bonhoeffer was able to formulate a concrete understanding and practice of confession due to his concept of God's sovereignty manifest in the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Earlier in *Ethics*, Bonhoeffer (2005a) described how the nature of reality was the very existence of Jesus Christ at the center of the world (p. 54). The implication in this manuscript, then, was that humanity found its identity in Jesus Christ, and so "falling away from Christ is at the same time falling away from one's own true nature" (Bonhoeffer, 2005b, p. 134). Bonhoeffer understood that the only way back to Christ was in acknowledgement of guilt toward Christ, an acknowledgment that was both personal and corporate. And it was the church that uniquely held the responsibility for the witness of confession and renewal for the world. Bonhoeffer declared that the church was where Jesus Christ made his form real in the midst of the world, and so it was the church community who, "grasped by the power of God's grace, acknowledge, confess, and take upon themselves not only their personal sins, but also the Western world's falling away from Jesus Christ as guilt toward Jesus Christ" (p. 135). Certainly, Bonhoeffer had in mind the atrocities of his own country, and the complicity not only of the Confessing Church, but also of the nation as a whole, in perpetuating violence, envy, and war. But these sins could not be denied even at the personal level. Bonhoeffer recognized the guilt and shame of his own acts as a human citizen of the world:

I cannot pacify myself by saying that my part in all this is slight and hardly noticeable. There is no calculating here. I must acknowledge that my sin is to blame for all of these things. I am guilty of inordinate desire; I am guilty of cowardly silence when I should have spoken; I am guilty of untruthfulness and hypocrisy in the face of threatening violence; I am guilty of disowning without mercy the poorest of my neighbors; I am guilty of disloyalty and falling away from Christ (p. 137).

Sin was first a personal matter, and so required personal admission and confession. It was as individuals that came together as community that the church then acknowledged its collective guilt.

The church, to be sure, had much to confess. With poised insight, Bonhoeffer (2005b) based the church's confession on the Ten Commandments, and he did not shield the church from the gravity of its

... it was the church that uniquely held the responsibility for the witness of confession and renewal for the world.

sin. The church, he wrote, confessed that it was mute when it should have cried out; it disavowed its duty to show compassion to the despised and rejected; it did not resist to the death the falling away from faith and so was guilty of the godlessness of the masses. The church confessed that it misused and was ashamed of the name of Christ; it shamefully looked on as injustice and violence were done under the cover of the very name of Jesus Christ. Further, the church was guilty of weak public worship. In doing so, it was guilty of not protecting its young and thus abandoning them to the fall away from Christ. What is more, the church refused to raise a voice against the oppression, hatred, and murder that it witnessed in body and soul of countless innocent people: “It has become guilty of the lives of the weakest and most defenseless brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ” (p. 139). The church also confessed that it had no message of purity and wholesomeness in the relationship of the sexes to each other; it did not know how to proclaim that individual bodies were members of the body of Christ. The church confessed that it was silent in the face of the exploitation of the poor, and it confessed its weakness in not condemning slander and defamation. Finally, the church confessed it had coveted security, tranquility, peace, property, and honor – all of to which it had no claim (pp. 138-40). “By falling silent,” Bonhoeffer concluded, “the church became guilty for the loss of responsible action in society, courageous intervention, and the readiness to suffer for what is acknowledged as right. It is guilty of the government’s falling away from Christ” (p. 141). Bonhoeffer’s confession was poignant, powerful, and offered no excuses.

He acknowledged that even though seemingly all worldly powers were against the church, “binding it up on all sides,” the church still needed to confess its guilt. To make excuses avoided the possibility of regaining the form of Jesus Christ—“who bore all the sins of the world” (p. 141). Yet, free confession of guilt made way for the inbreaking of Christ into the world, who alone justified both the church and the individual. Through the gift of forgiveness of sin, individuals and the church could finally break free from guilt, and the nations could begin the slow process of healing. Yes, even in the nations, who bore the heritage of their guilt, war could turn to peace, and the scar of shame and violence could begin to heal, by the gracious rule of God in and through history. Bonhoeffer was adamant that the “justification and renewal” of the West could only happen “in the restoration of justice, order, and peace, in one way or another” and then in the confession and forgiveness of past guilt (p. 144). It was through concrete confession that the individual and the church could experience the assurance and reality of Christ’s work on the cross. The guilt that Christ bears is for all of history, and his resurrection

... free confession of guilt made way for the inbreaking of Christ into the world, who alone justified both the church and the individual.

and ascension ushered in new life and hope that was always definitively in and for the world.

Bonhoeffer understood the power of the cross to bring healing, hope, and justice for the world because he saw in Jesus Christ a commitment to a better worldliness. In Jesus Christ, Bonhoeffer no longer viewed reality in terms of the traditional Lutheran doctrine of a two kingdoms split—where the sacred realm has no bearing on the secular realm. Such thinking too often encouraged Christians to separate their religious lives from their public lives, and at the extreme, enabled the Christian church to disassociate itself from the gross human rights violations perpetuated by the National Socialist regime. Bonhoeffer (2005a), however, insisted that Jesus Christ existed at the very center of life:

Just as the reality of God has entered into the reality of the world in Christ, what is Christian cannot be had otherwise than in what is worldly, the “supernatural” only in the natural, the holy only in the profane, the revelational only in the rational’ (p. 59)

In other words, what is commonly good in the world was so because God had entered into the world through Jesus Christ. To be sure, Bonhoeffer did not equate the sacred with the secular, but he held the two in unity because of the ultimate reality of Christ in the world. The cross, guilt, forgiveness, justification, and renewal all pointed to this reality. That Christ existed for the world—for its healing, hope, peace, and redemption—meant that Christianity must proclaim the reality of Christ against the worldly “in the name of a better worldliness” (p. 60). As the reality of Christ is understood to be with and for the world, the concrete practices of confession and working for renewal become vital avenues of truth and healing.

As the reality of Christ is understood to be with and for the world, the concrete practices of confession and working for renewal become vital avenues of truth and healing.

The Common Good and Just Peacemaking

The historical drama from episodes of the life and thought of Abraham Kuyper and Dietrich Bonhoeffer thus bring us to a crossroads. We can see how strong commitments to their most basic theological convictions guided each of them to specific and tangible practices for the promotion of the common good. Kuyper’s Reformed emphasis on the sovereignty of God energized his advocacy for educational pluralism, democracy, and human rights. Because Jesus Christ was Lord over *all* of life, Kuyper found in the concept of common grace the fortitude to work across political party boundaries in order to make real legislative changes in the Netherlands. Bonhoeffer, too, worked from a very strong commitment to the centrality of Jesus Christ to try to rally first the

German Evangelical Church and then, later, what became the Confessing Church to take a strong and definitive stance against National Socialism. Further, because of Bonhoeffer's uncompromising focus on Christ, he was able to speak and write in the most concrete of terms the necessity of confession of guilt and the subsequent reality of justification and renewal. What is notable about both Kuyper and Bonhoeffer, then, is how their vibrant Christian faith led quite naturally to—more so, indeed demanded—direct action for the cause of peace and justice in the wider society. Kuyper and Bonhoeffer, in their unique ways to be sure, both have dynamic theologies of the common good. Their Christian faith is not isolated within a sacred “realm” that is cut off from the rest of life. Rather, their faith compels the tireless action of working for “a better worldliness.”

I find it no coincidence that these conclusions from Kuyper and Bonhoeffer correlate so strongly to the new paradigm of Just Peacemaking. The Christian tradition – at its best – has always had a clear commitment to human rights; Kuyper and Bonhoeffer are not the exception. The Just Peacemaking Initiative is unique because it seeks to see beyond the traditional categories of Just War Theory, Pacifism, and Crusade in order to articulate a concrete and broadly collaborative effort at making real contributions to the development and experience of the common good among the nations. While originally conceived based on the transforming initiatives in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, Just Peacemaking now enjoys an international and even interfaith following. For example, the Interfaith Just Peacemaking project is an ongoing effort by 30 Muslim, Jewish, and Christian religious leaders and scholars who have worked together “to craft and refine a practical and inspiring interfaith model to address ongoing conflicts as well as build sustainable peace” (Thistlethwaite, 2011, p. 1). And the contributions of this initiative are effecting real change on the global stage. Susan Thistlethwaite (2011) has noted that “the prominence of the Just Peace paradigm and all ten practices of Just Peacemaking in President Barack Obama's Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech surprised many in the United States, but in fact Just Peace work has taken place over nearly three decades, and this consistency of effort is partly responsible for a foreign policy shift toward practices of Just Peacemaking” (p. 1). Indeed, the ten Practice Norms of Just Peacemaking provide specific and tangible guidance for working toward concrete solutions to the wide variety of conflict scenarios around the world. The specific insights that we have drawn from our narrow look at Kuyper and Bonhoeffer speak directly to two of Just Peacemaking's Practice Norms. Drawing these connections enable us to make a very concrete move from talking about the common good to seeing how it can

... the ten Practice Norms of Just Peacemaking provide specific and tangible guidance for working toward concrete solutions to the wide variety of conflict scenarios around the world.

work out in practice.

As we saw earlier, Kuyper worked from a commitment to God's sovereignty in the Lordship of Jesus Christ to advocate for democracy and human rights in the Netherlands, specifically in the area of pluralism in education, but also including suffrage and workers' rights. Just Peacemaking's Practice Norm 5 also seeks the Advance of Democracy, Human Rights, and Interdependence. This Practice Norm attests to the historical and socio-political reality that democracies with human rights simply wage less war. In fact, "no democracy with human rights fought a war against another democracy with human rights in all the twentieth century (although some funded or fomented wars by others)" (Thistlethwaite, 2011, p. 87). This Norm also recognizes that international institutions can help strengthen democracies while providing support for human rights organizations. And the concept of interdependence helps keep a check on the balance of power between countries and their mutual well-being. At the turn of the 20th century, Kuyper's Netherlands—along with England and the United States—was one of a very few emerging democracies. Kuyper was at the forefront of this commitment to justice, equality, and human rights. It thus seems fitting that The Hague—where Kuyper debated while a member of Dutch Parliament and served as Dutch Prime Minister—would today house so many of the world's international bodies for the promotion of peace and justice, including the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, and the Permanent Court of Arbitration (which was founded in 1899). Kuyper's commitment to the realities of common grace, inherent in the sovereignty and Lordship of Jesus Christ, continue to promote a legacy of the common good. Kuyper's Calvinism may not be the shared worldview of the Netherlands today, but certainly its influence in matters of justice and human rights remains deep within the fibers of democratic society.

Similarly, Bonhoeffer's conviction as to the necessity of confession of guilt is remarkably similar to Just Peacemaking's Practice Norm 4: Acknowledge Responsibility for Conflict and Injustice and Seek Repentance and Forgiveness. The definition for this Practice Norm identifies the capacity for empathy as vital when working toward peace. Just as empathy requires a putting aside of a person's own interests in order to understand the other side, "peacemaking also calls us to move beyond our desire for retaliation and revenge, and focus instead on the possibilities for future reconciliation" (Thistlethwaite, 2011, p. 69). Further, in the act of forgiving, we both acknowledge our past wrongs and complicity in injustice, and also "experience empathy, a capacity for forbearance from revenge, and a transformed sense of the future

... in the act of forgiving, we both acknowledge our past wrongs and complicity in injustice ...

possibilities for Just Peace” (p. 69). For Bonhoeffer, the work on the Bethel Confession ended in such a frustrating failure in part because it gutted statements designed to encourage empathy toward the Jews. By ignoring the grave injustices that were bearing down on the Jewish population in Germany, the Evangelical Church was only perpetuating the injustice toward the marginalized and persecuted. Bonhoeffer recognized the dire necessity of confessing this guilt. Without such a confession, the church could not bear faithful witness to the reality of Jesus Christ at the center of life. Not only did the cross of Christ demand an acknowledgment of injustice, it also provided for the reality of repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation. For Bonhoeffer, confession is ultimately about renewal—it is about a renewed vision of and participation in God’s gracious reality that is in and for the world. As such, Just Peacemaking provides a paradigm with concrete Practices that faithfully show the way toward a better world for the common good.

Conclusion

The stories of Abraham Kuyper and Dietrich Bonhoeffer focus our attention on a critical aspect of discipleship: Following-after Jesus Christ is not only about the inward journey. Instead, Bonhoeffer’s language of “a better worldliness” focuses our attention on the world. And Kuyper agrees. His understanding of common grace coupled with Bonhoeffer’s concern for worldliness provide a unique perspective into the notion of the common good. The point is, as Christian disciples, we are called to live, work, and witness radically in and for the world. Neither Kuyper nor Bonhoeffer are calling for an abandonment of Christian conviction or identity in order to be for the world. On the contrary, they engage in the pursuit of the common good because that keeps their focus ever on Jesus Christ, the Lord of all. We make the connections from discipleship to the common good to Just Peacemaking, then, to demonstrate the concreteness of discipleship that is for the reality of Jesus Christ in the world. Discipleship for the common good is a call to make real our most precious beliefs about the power and grace of God. Such a call extends the grace, peace, mercy, and justice of the God of ultimate redemption into the farthest reaches of the earth.

Discipleship for the common good is a call to make real our most precious beliefs about the power and grace of God.

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THE NONVIOLENCE OF JESUS: A HERMENEUTICAL APPROACH

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Abstract

From an interpretive standpoint, the nonviolence of Jesus of Nazareth is thought of by many as relatively unambiguous. Still, across the last two millennia a great many instances of “interpretive gymnastics” have distorted the nonviolent teachings of Jesus. These distortions have been invoked as justification for social oppression, geopolitical warfare, and interpersonal violence, among other things. This essay employs the hermeneutical methodology of Hans-Georg Gadamer and the Biblical criticism of Walter Wink in order to argue that such interpretations constitute erroneous violations of the New Testament texts containing Jesus’ words on nonviolence. The author suggests that any interpretive action with the words of Jesus that results in the admissibility of violence is not only flawed but is catalyzed by ulterior interpretive pre-commitments. Such pre-commitments, rather than the words of Jesus themselves, are what enable the “misinterpretation” of Jesus as a condoner of violence.

Opening Reflections

To think is to interpret. It may be argued that the human faculty of cognition is firmly rooted in the ability and propensity to make sense of the world. By and large, human beings are in a constant state of interpretation, of sense-making. We interpret the behavior of others, the importance or value of certain objects and experiences, and even the very meaning of our own existence. In essence, one’s cognitive encounter with the world is inextricably connected with the notion of interpretation in a way that is virtually inevitable. Beliefs, principles, religious convictions, and worldviews are all concepts that are in some way shaped by this interpretive tendency. With respect to particular Judeo-Christian expressions of such concepts, the Bible and its interpretation is of obvious and paramount importance. Bible believers must detect the meanings of Biblical texts as they pertain to their own conceptions of truth and God. This ventures into the realm of textual interpretation which is a task that falls under the umbrella of philosophical hermeneutics.

Overview

Perhaps no one was as keen in the analysis of textual hermeneutics as the German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer. Gadamer's magnum opus, *Truth and Method*, lays out a thorough and eloquent treatment of the exercise of textual interpretation. In spite of what may be assumed given the book's title, Gadamer does not actually offer a formal method with respect to interpreting texts. Instead, his work emphasizes a sort of observational commentary regarding his theory of what human beings tend to do when they read texts. That is, Gadamer is not concerned with recommending how people *ought* to interpret so much as he is with diagnosing the method by which they *do* interpret (Westphal, 2009, p. 70). In this sense, his work is more descriptive than prescriptive. There is a hermeneutical process that takes place when texts are read and Gadamer unpacks the philosophical components of that process. Still, his book is not entirely without at least some leanings toward caution and recommendation. He does, after all, have an agenda underlying his book and thus he provides some admonitions. To reiterate, however, Gadamer's larger emphasis and priority is to identify what occurs as people interpret text, rather than posit a system through which to interpret. Gadamer's book offers a magnificent overview of textual interpretation which can in turn be philosophically applied toward an examination of how certain Biblical principles and/or ethics are established.

... Gadamer is not concerned with recommending how people ought to interpret so much as he is with diagnosing the method by which they do interpret

The Principle

In this essay, I will examine through the lens of Gadamer's work the Biblical basis for an ethic of nonviolence. My discussion will revolve solely around New Testament conceptions of Jesus' teachings regarding the matter. I will begin with a short section on Jesus, nonviolence, and the Bible from a theoretical perspective. From there, I will explore important themes raised in Gadamer's book and subsequently place them in conversation with issues of neutrality and tradition (and culture) as they pertain to the issue of nonviolence. Moreover, the discussions will be interspersed with my reflections on the work of Walter Wink in his book, *Jesus and Nonviolence: A Third Way*. I will argue that nonviolence is the ethical approach that is most responsibly in line with Jesus' way. With use of Gadamer's framework and Wink's commentaries, I will suggest that those who adopt a worldview which allows for violence are engaging in a hermeneutical task of textual interpretation which is not in line with Jesus' teachings, but rather is born out of alternative interpretive commitments. While I will offer no singular or particular hermeneutical interpretation of Jesus' teachings on violence, I will suggest that the interpretive meanings of such texts have certain bounds which exclude

violence as a reasonably rendered ethic.

Jesus, Nonviolence, and The Bible

It may come as no surprise that Christians often disagree on certain areas of doctrine. Still, certain components of Christian faith and Christian living are not so much a matter of doctrine as they are a matter of principle and conviction. That is, certain fundamental beliefs stem not necessarily from a deep systematic theology but rather from a deep, personal sense of Biblical truth. Christians are often equipped with certain principles and convictions that are informed more by interpretations of Biblical texts and narratives than by general doctrine alone. The issue of nonviolence is one example of such principles and convictions. Nonviolence is rarely mentioned in churches' or institutions' statements of faith or systematic theological declarations. Perhaps this is because the issue is too complex. Statements such as "The Old Testament is riddled with violence," or "Jesus was peaceful, but he would have drawn the line somewhere," may become too complex to sift through and as a result people, churches, and institutions often drop the issue altogether and leave it to personal preference. Believers may conclude that the issue of nonviolence and where they stand on it is nonessential to the "overall package" of their Christian faith. Hence, the lack of attention to violence with respect to doctrine arises.

It seems that the issue of nonviolence escapes the doctrinal discussion and instead often gets placed into an infrequently visited realm of New Testament exegesis—especially with respect to the words of Jesus. Rather than challenge this paradigm, I intend to operate out of it. In other words, I will take aim at Jesus' words rather than doctrinal issues with respect to violence. By assuming Jesus as God incarnate and the peak of Biblical revelation who speaks God's will, the necessary task at hand becomes interpreting his words. What Jesus has to say regarding violence is of utmost importance because he speaks with and by the power and authority of God. Thus, I will not argue that a nonviolent ethic needs to find fruition by becoming systematically or doctrinally grounded, but rather that it may be gleaned through interpreting the teachings of Jesus himself. In order to further develop this I will, in the coming sections of this essay, explore Jesus' teachings on the matter of violence in conversation with Gadamer's hermeneutical reflections as well as Wink's Biblical commentaries.

Christians are often equipped with certain principles and convictions that are informed more by interpretations of Biblical texts and narratives than by general doctrine alone.

Hermeneutics and the Myth of Neutrality

In modern psychology, the debate of nature versus nurture takes form in various theoretical models. Are people born with certain characteristics and personality tendencies, or do they become conditioned to behave in

particular ways? In psychology, answers to this question are aplenty on both sides of the coin. Can the same be said, however, regarding textual interpretation? Are people ever simply encountering a text with an innate (as in natural) way of interpreting it, or are they susceptible to at least some level of external influence and subjectivity (as in nurture) whereby the interpretive task becomes slightly more subjective? Can we ever act as neutral readers who decipher textual meanings unbiasedly in a wholly objective manner?

E. D. Hirsch suggests that through “severe discipline” and “philological effort” readers may employ strategies which will render at least the *most accurate* reading of a text’s single meaning (Westphal, 2009, pp. 46-47). Thus, while Hirsch may not delve too directly into discussion about the infallibility or neutrality of the reader, he does seem to claim that there is *one* meaning which should be aimed at in the midst of textual analysis. However, Hirsch overlooks certain inevitabilities by making this assertion. He presumes that readers have both the consciousness of their own biases and the ability to employ “severe discipline” in order to diminish these biases when engaged with a text. Gadamer understands, though, that most readers are not capable of abandoning their traditional lenses of presupposition for the sake of extracting a “less subjective” interpretation (Westphal, 2009, p. 72). Moreover, Hirsch assumes that text by its very nature is complete upon its composition, leaving little to no room for the audience (reader) to enter into the meaning-making task. Hirsch’s own bias (namely, assuming that texts contain meaning only in themselves independent of readership and subsequent interpretation) is evident in the way that he implicitly calls for a neutrality on the part of the reader. This neutrality ultimately seems problematic at best and nonexistent at worst.

To return to the psychological language, there are no “natural” readers but only “nurtured” ones who arrive at texts with inextinguishable flames of interpretive subjectivity. It is for reasons like this that Hirsch is of little use with respect to the interpretation of texts because he actually calls for an absence of interpretation. Rather than interpretation, he calls for extraction. To put it another way, Hirsch is not interested in interpretative meaning since he prefers recognitory meaning. However, since human readers are not robots who merely *recognize* the meanings of texts, the hermeneutical philosophy of Gadamer is much more helpful and realistic to our task.

Gadamer acknowledges the subjectivity that each reader brings to the text. No matter how self-aware or disciplined readers may be, they always encounter texts with preconceptions that drive the interpretive task. There is always an element of subjectivity to the way in which someone

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interprets a particular text. But this, in spite of Hirsch's worrisome proclamations to the contrary (Westphal, 2009, pp. 48-49), does not open the door for just any interpretation to make its way in. In fact, Gadamer is far from admitting such a haphazard form of relativity. He insists that ideally a reader "will not resign himself (sic) from the start to relying on his own accidental fore-meanings, ignoring as consistently and stubbornly as possible the actual meaning of the text ... rather, a person trying to understand a text is prepared for it to tell him something" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 271). It is helpful here to appeal to the old adage of "jamming a circle into a square" or vice versa. In this sense, Gadamer is ardently refusing to affirm the interpretive method of readers who insist on jamming circles into texts whose meanings are clearly square-like by maintaining certain interpretive biases. Gadamer's position is one that recognizes and allows for subjectivity, but within reasonable means. Therefore, readers can never be neutral interpreters because of their inevitable subjectivity. They can, however, be wrong interpreters by steadfastly relying on "accidental fore-meanings" which prevent deeper (and more correct) meanings of texts from emerging.

... readers can never be neutral interpreters because of their inevitable subjectivity.

Hermeneutics and the Bible

With respect to Biblical interpretation of Jesus' teachings on nonviolence, Gadamer's analysis is quite useful. The Bible, after all, is read and interpreted by people (which renders Hirsch's "reader-phobic" method problematic). Often times though, Bible believers have a "my way or the highway" attitude with respect to Scriptural interpretation. Westphal points out how one-dimensional meaning-making with regard to the Bible can lead to arrogance on the part of certain interpreters as well as a castigation of alternative interpretations as mistaken or misguided (Westphal, 2009, p. 47). It is important here to strike a balance between Gadamer's warning against extreme subjectivity (which, again, is like the reader who insists on jamming a circle into a square-like text) and Westphal's reflection on interpretive behavior. The two bits of insight are not at odds with one another and together call for a healthy middle-ground. Faithful readers of the Bible must be careful not to become too complacent and prideful regarding their interpretations while also realizing that not just any Biblical takeaway is appropriate. Some readings of Scripture are just plain unfounded and biased by wrongheaded "accidental fore-meanings" while others line up more consistently with Christ-like virtues. The task of the Christian is to engage in Biblical interpretation in such a way that is both humble and fervently committed to the pursuit of truth. In other words, subjective readers of the Bible must understand through a posture of grace, respect, sensitivity, and openness,

that not just anything goes when it comes to interpretation of their Holy Book.

In order to achieve this balanced, Gadamerian-hermeneutical truth from Jesus' teachings regarding nonviolence, naturally one must turn to the Biblical texts which speak to the issue. Perhaps nowhere is Jesus speaking more directly to the issue of violence than in The Sermon on the Mount as portrayed in the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 5. Thus, the interpretive task must be taken toward these texts in order to pull away some level of meaning and substance.

The Hermeneutics of Walter Wink

In *Jesus and Nonviolence: A Third Way*, Walter Wink engages in biblical interpretation while also reflecting on what the Christian response to such reflections ought to be. Wink, a pacifist, outlines three potential reactions to the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament: 1) passivity, 2) violent opposition, and 3) militant, resistant nonviolence (Wink, 2003, p. 12). Wink emphasizes that the third way is what is most faithful to what Jesus teaches. He does this by delving directly into the New Testament stories and attempting to understand their contextual meaning. While Christian advocates for violence and just-war typically emphasize natural law, political science, and utilitarianism in their reasoning approaches, Wink emphasizes Jesus, proper exegesis, and appropriate subsequent action. This is Wink's hermeneutical frame.

Wink is aware, however, that detractors may invoke interpretive tactics that are at odds with this nonviolent approach. In particular, the Matthew 5:39 teaching where Jesus proclaims "do not resist evildoers" is discussed by Wink. Some non-pacifists have argued that Jesus' teaching to not *resist* evildoers is an invitation to not only *confront* them, but confront them violently. Instead of weighing in on this dichotomy, Wink instead questions the translation of the very passage itself. The Greek word used for "resist" in this passage is "antistenai." "Antistenai" is a word used to describe violent military revolts or strikes (Wink, 2003, p. 11). So, when Jesus says do not resist, he is actually saying do not "antistenai," or "do not violently strike back" (Wink, 2003, p. 11). This interpretation sheds light on the method that Jesus expects from his followers – nonviolence. Wink argues that this method of reasoning, while biblical, is nonetheless counterintuitive and unnatural with respect to human instincts (Wink, 2003, p. 88). However, he places a higher emphasis on Jesus' teachings than he does on natural law in his interpretive reasoning. Thus, his interpretive method is one that places aside "accidental fore-meanings" and looks at the Greek language carefully so as not to jam a circle into a square.

Some non-pacifists have argued that Jesus' teaching to not resist evildoers is an invitation to not only confront them, but confront them violently

Gadamer's warning against readers closing themselves off from the "actual meaning" of texts speaks volumes here. One may carefully and responsibly interpret (as seen in Wink's treatment of the passage) or one may force their preconceived agenda onto the text (as seen in claiming "do not resist" means to "violently confront"). Gadamer's method calls for the former route and thus renders a reading of Jesus' Sermon teaching which clearly calls for nonviolence.

Gadamer on Tradition and Culture

Gadamer argues for a hermeneutical method of textual analysis that is neither subjective nor objective in that it is grounded in and informed by common denominators that arise out of tradition (Gadamer, 2004, p. 293). This said, readers are never autonomous in their interpretations. Instead, they are embedded in a tradition or culture which guides the ways in which meanings may be derived from particular texts. Still, Gadamer is again careful not to venture too far into the realm of subjectivity so as to deem relativity admissible. He writes, "the hermeneutically trained mind will also include historical consciousness. It will make conscious the prejudices governing our own understanding, so that the text, as another's meaning, can be isolated and valued on its own" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 298). Gadamer acknowledges the prejudices that form individuals' hermeneutical lenses (tradition and culture) while also speaking against a type of conscious complacency which may perpetuate textual misinterpretation. Gadamer calls for readers, to the extent that it is possible, to become aware of the powers guiding their interpretive activity so that they may become more attuned to the text's meaning apart from (and within) the historical effects of such powers. That is, Gadamer calls for an awareness of historical, traditional, and cultural biases, but he does not presume that individuals may ever be fully divorced from them. Still, Gadamer claims that underneath this are certain interpretive behaviors that are out of bounds and others that are not.

Gadamer calls for readers, to the extent that it is possible, to become aware of the powers guiding their interpretive activity so that they may become more attuned to the text's meaning apart from (and within) the historical effects of such powers.

Wink's Hermeneutic: The Political Jesus

John Howard Yoder's groundbreaking book *The Politics of Jesus* contained this as its central thesis: To be a follower of Christ is to inherit a social-political-ethical stance of nonviolence (Yoder, 1972; 1994). If Yoder is right, interpreting Jesus as sociopolitically disengaged or passive is problematic. It is in this vein that we may return to the work of Wink which also illustrates the depth of Jesus' nonviolent sociopolitical lesson in Matthew 5:39 where followers are urged to "turn the other cheek." Too often, Wink argues, these words are misinterpreted as an act of passivity and not one of militant, nonviolent defiance (Wink, 2003, p. 16). Wink

describes how in the ancient near-East, being struck on the right cheek would have been seen as a method of humiliating the victim because the strike would have been a right-handed backhand to a victim's right cheek. Thus, when the victim turns the other cheek, the oppressor is forced to then strike with the right fist onto the left cheek instead of backhanding again. This exposes the oppressor for who they are (an assaultive bully) and shows that their method of humiliation has not proven effective (Wink, 2003, p. 16). This is a nonviolent confrontation that stands up to injustice as opposed to being passive toward it. It is also a sociopolitical tactic. Therefore, according to Wink, Jesus does not teach passivity but nonviolent confrontation. In this vein, war or violence would need to be averted in favor of exposing injustice through some other means.

The issue is, however, that misreading Jesus' words as passive is an act of interpretation that is likely formed entirely out of particular nationalistic, political, and cultural mentalities. In other words, passivity may get read into this passage of Scripture as a sort of fear-response in backing down to oppressors. Geopolitical powers that be (e.g., governments, militaries, etc.) serve as sources of power that may instill within persons a sense of powerlessness. The result may be a type of complacency that precludes the possibility of nonviolent defiance toward oppressors. Thus, readers of the Bible who are impacted by such prejudices may interpret this utterance by Jesus (Matthew 5:39) as being entirely too idealistic and apolitical. Turning the other cheek is altogether unacceptable from within such a mentality. But it is a mentality that informs such readings and subsequent interpretations in the first place. Under the influence of political and nationalistic powers, modern Christians may be predisposed toward reading and interpreting Jesus' words as "weak" or "passive." "If someone hits you, let them hit you again...be a doormat," such interpretations of Jesus' words would suggest. Would the socio-political circumstances that led to these sorts of readings make them correct? The answer is no. A more critical, contextualized, and historically oriented reading of Jesus' words (such as Wink's) renders an interpretation that is neither violent in its nature nor weak or passive.

Glen Stassen and David Gushee argue that nonviolence and pacifism was the stance that the church took for the first several centuries after Jesus' time (Stassen & Gushee, 2003, p. 165). Given this, it is peculiar to consider that subsequent, and more modern, interpretations of Jesus' teachings on violence have given rise to a more violent (or an altogether more "weak" or "passive") hermeneutical meaning. In accordance with Gadamer's method, the more traditionally grounded and culturally aware move is to interpret Jesus' words as calling for non-passive, unconditional nonviolence.

The issue is, however, that misreading Jesus' words as passive is an act of interpretation that is likely formed entirely out of particular nationalistic, political, and cultural mentalities.

Concluding Thoughts

In this essay, I have argued that the way of nonviolence is the most responsible and accurate interpretation of Jesus' words. By placing the hermeneutical method of Hans-Georg Gadamer over the reflections of Walter Wink, I have suggested that readings of Jesus' words which promote violence are misled and unnecessarily influenced by fore-meanings falling outside of the text. Through the use of Gadamer's intricate balance of subjectivity and objectivity, I have demonstrated that Scriptural interpretations of Jesus' teachings that allow for violence are either flatly ignorant of crucial language issues, culturally embedded products of distorted tradition, or are born out of alternative interpretive commitments altogether.

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WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP: HOW A WOMAN'S BACKGROUND AFFECTS HER LEADERSHIP STYLE

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Abstract

Stereotypes and beliefs about women have often kept them from equality with men. What is more striking is that women perpetuate the stereotypes and beliefs as much as men and society as a whole. This literature review focuses on three areas in a woman's background that influence her ability to lead: a) triggers that propel her into a leadership position, b) the "intersectionalities" or multiple identities and personalities a woman must have to be an effective leader, and c) how the context of where she leads affects her leadership behavior. It also addresses the need for more research to identify barriers and challenges for women leaders, and factors which may bring about cultural change within the United States, leading to an even more influential role for women leaders.

Introduction

In the past 75 years, the United States has come a long way in the area of women's rights. Women gained the right to vote, entered the work place, and for the most part are considered equal to men. However, when looking at the number of women holding leadership roles in the United States it is clear that more needs to be done to advance women in the work place. There are three key areas of a woman's background that affect her ability to hold positions of power in an organization: a) triggers that propel her into a leadership position, b) the "intersectionalities" or multiple identities and personalities a woman must have to be an effective leader, and c) how the context of where she leads affects her leadership behavior. In order for real change to occur, both men and women in the United States must commit to changing their own cultural stereotypes and beliefs through personal behavior modification. Only then will future generations of women experience equality and individuality without the influence of past stereotypes.

Background

Until recent years there has been relatively little study of women in

leadership. Of the few more recent studies, some contradict each other and/or point to weak areas. For example, Ayman and Korabik (2010) studied what other researchers have said over the years. They suggest that research in the area of culture and leadership as pertains to women is weak and suggest that a woman's culture affects her leadership style and ability to become a leader, especially for female minorities.

However, another study said that gender more than race affects a woman's ability to become a leader (Salas-Lopez, Deitrick, Mahandy, Gertner, & Sabino, 2011). In fact, the women in this study said that using race as the reason they could not move up into a leadership position was only an excuse. The researchers said that female leaders need to help other females who want to become leaders through mentorship and education. In other words, women must help other women become leaders in order for there to be more females in leadership positions.

Historically, very few women stand out as leaders—certainly far more men fill the history books. It is unclear why that is the case, but Mamiseishvili (2009) found that American born women culturally are more nurturing and have or behave in more traditional female roles than women from other cultures/countries. This suggests that a woman's behavior is cultural. Other countries, for example, have female presidents, but the United States has not had one yet. Statistics show that women are highly under-represented in major leadership roles (Northouse, 2013). No matter how far the United States has come to improve equality and opportunities for women, the historic female role seems to create an invisible boundary that holds women back.

One example of this is demonstrated by Mamiseishvili (2009). He compared the research and teaching habits of women from abroad and women from the United States. He noticed that the female, U.S. born professors spent more time on teaching related duties than on research, unlike their foreign-born colleagues. Women naturally and culturally in the United States take on the role of the more compassionate, nurturing sex.

Research reveals a challenging interplay between societal expectations and stereotypes, and women's own attitudes toward leadership. Women are increasingly more involved and successful in leadership roles, but face numerous challenges. Women represent less than 3% of Fortune 500 CEOs, less than 16% of the Fortune 500 board seats, and less than 15% of Fortune 500 executive officer positions. This suggests that women are highly underrepresented in major leadership roles (Northouse, 2013). This is in spite of the fact that women often have the kind of transformational leadership skills that the new global market requires (Hoyt, 2013). By

... female, U.S. born professors spent more time on teaching related duties than on research, unlike their foreign-born colleagues.

failing to take advantage of the leadership talents of women, organizations are depriving themselves of ongoing strategic advantage.

Review of the Literature

Salas-Lopez, Deitrick, Mahandy, Gertner, and Sabino (2011) discuss reasons why women aren't in more leadership positions, particularly in the medical and medical education fields. They cite a lack of female representation in the field, faculty's condescending attitude towards women, not enough time for women to become leaders, and that time overall will not be enough to change the gender inequities in leadership. The researchers suggest that more women leaders are needed to encourage and help other women become leaders themselves. That way more women will fill leadership positions—at least within the field of medicine and medicine education.

Generational differences also affect a woman's ability to become a leader and lead followers. Favero and Health (2012) compared how two groups thought about the workplace: baby boomers and generation X/Yers. This study focused on the differences of how each of these groups view work and the workplace/home balance. They found that the generation X/Yers value family time. However, the baby boomers perceive the generation X/Yers behavior associated with that value as an attitude of entitlement. In that study, researchers also discovered one possible reason why baby boomers think the generation X/Yers have that entitlement attitude. The generation X/Yers decision to value family time and a balance between home and work shows baby boomers what they had to give up for the pursuit of wealth and status. The researchers suggest that the generation X/Yers behavior may make the baby boomers think about what they gave up to work so hard. The researchers (as suggested by comments made by generation X/Y study participants) suggest that baby boomers may feel guilty or inadequate that they could have had wealth and status *with* family time, if they had pursued a balance like the Generation X/Yers. Generational gaps between older females and younger females may exist, but even more so are the tendencies for women—especially older women—to take on the caregiver role, which means they choose to stay at home with the children rather than pursue leadership opportunities at their workplace, if they even continue to work.

By failing to take advantage of the leadership talents of women, organizations are depriving themselves of ongoing strategic advantage.

Triggers That Propel Women into Leadership Positions

In studying the data, one reason women pursue leadership roles is that something in their background triggers them into a leadership positions. These triggers propel them up the leadership pole. Dahlvig and Longman

(2010) found three causes that illustrate adequate reasons that trigger women into leadership positions. One is someone spoke of their leadership potential, which led them into leadership positions. The second is an event that reframed their previously held understanding of leadership. The third is a situation arose where they became leaders in order to stand up for what they believed. All or any of these propelled women into taking a leadership role when they otherwise would not have done so.

Just as a woman's background can trigger her to become a leader it can also keep her away from leadership roles. Dahlvig and Longman's (2010) study suggests reasons why women are not represented in more leadership positions, such as CEOs, principals, business owners, and presidents. Participants were interviewed for this qualitative study. The female participants cited that they originally had no intention of becoming leaders. In fact, some stated that they didn't want to be leaders because of the leadership they had already experienced. However, most said the key reason they became leaders themselves is the need to stand up for something.

Some researchers found that despite a woman's desire to lead there exists a glass ceiling of sorts that prevents them from doing so. Haslam and Ryan (2008) analyzed students, both college and high school, in an attempt to find more evidence of the glass ceiling phenomenon. They were looking for a way to determine whether there was perceived suitability for men over women in leadership positions. They found that despite the fact that most employees prefer leaders with traits natural to women, when a company is performing well workers prefer male leaders. However, if a company is in a precarious situation, struggling, or thought to be doing poorly, they found that study participants preferred a woman's leadership style over a man's. Overall, Haslam and Ryan (2008) found that most prefer female leaders over male, but the public's perceived stereotypes prevent women from acquiring more leadership roles, hence, the glass ceiling effect.

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“Intersectionalities”—Multiple Identities and Personalities Needed to Be Effective

It seems that while women are propelled into leadership roles because of what they believe as opposed to their desire, the stereotypes associated with women make it difficult for them to acquire leadership positions, unless the company is in a desperate state. That is why a woman must have multiple identities and personalities to be an effective leader, otherwise known as “intersectionalities” (Walby, Armstrong, & Strid,

2012). Women have to behave like men, but not too much like them. They have to balance typical female home responsibilities with work roles common to men. In essence, for a woman to be a successful leader she has to be everything to everyone.

One way women do this is through the acquisition of education. Hoyt (2013) research demonstrates that women have become far more educated than men, but yet they still hold very few leadership positions when compared to them. She points out that there are social costs for women who are ambitious and become leaders, and that women must demonstrate both feminine qualities and male traits that typically make men good leaders. She says the key difference is that men ask for what they want where as women are less likely to do so.

Hoyt (2013) says it is unfortunate that women do not ask for what they want the way men do. Women have the kind of transformational leadership skills that the new global market requires. Finding a way to help women project what they want (e.g. a leadership role), balance feminine qualities with leadership traits, and accentuate their positive leadership skills will help women become great leaders – and encourage more of them to do so.

An earlier study by Hoyt (2005) shows how stereotypes and a women's self-efficacy affect women more than men. She said that race proved not to be a significant factor in a woman's ability to acquire a leadership position, and that gender alone was the cause for fewer leadership opportunities. In other words, being female affected a woman's ability to move into a leadership position rather than any other quality (e.g. race, history, education).

Hoyt (2005) also said that women's self-efficacy or beliefs about themselves and what they can do affect their ability to lead. She says that stereotypes affect women's view of themselves as they progress through life – and how previous stereotypes can affect their present life. This suggests that women are affected by what their culture says about them.

Kruse and Prettyman (2008, September) emphasize that point as well. They looked at gender stereotypes in the movie *The Wizard of Oz* and related those stereotypes to society for both the old and the new versions of the movie. When the two were compared, they found some interesting evidence of how culture is perceived through this movie as it relates to women. They found that the public's view of gender roles is affirmed by television and movies.

Interestingly, the movies put the female leader in a negative position, i.e. the witch. In both versions of the movie, there is both a good and bad witch, but in the end the male—the wizard—is the one with the real

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power. It emphasizes that women have leadership roles, but that men really have the power—that they are the true leaders.

The researchers point to society's labels of women and how women often succumb to those images and labels as the reason women are pushed down, remain inferior to men, and ultimately hold far fewer leadership roles as CEO, president, and so forth. In order to improve the image of females—to make them seen more in good leadership roles as opposed to negative ones (e.g. a witch), then the negative images of women presented and available to the public need to change.

However, stereotypes are difficult to change. Ryan, Haslam, and Hersby (2010) carried out three studies to learn more about women and their leadership roles within the workplace. The first study was designed to replicate (and extend) an earlier study (Schein). Specifically, this study focused on the stereotypical traits for both men and women. The second study was an extension of the first whereby researchers asked followers about his or her desired managerial behavior with regards to hiring decision and leadership evaluations. The third study was designed to learn how people think during a crisis. What they found through these three studies is that people's perceptions of leadership traits conflict with what people want from their leaders, but most especially during times of crisis. Interestingly, they found that what people really want in a leader is one with traits naturally found in women. Even though people want someone *like a woman*, stereotypes prevent people from choosing a woman to lead them.

Despite what some researchers say, that gender affects a person's ability to lead more than race, Sanchez-Hucles and Davis (2012, April) say the exact opposite. They suggest that not only does being a woman affect a person's ability to acquire a leadership role, but women of other races have more difficulty than white women. They also state women in those situations have been affected in the past and that their past will affect their future. Furthermore, these researchers discuss what they call "stereotype threat," meaning having more than one racial background is better than being only one, i.e. being a one-third black, Chinese, and white is better than being an only black/African American person. Essentially what they found is that women who are white have a greater advantage in acquiring leadership positions than someone of another race. And, of the non-Caucasian women, those who are of multiple racial backgrounds have an advantage over women who are solely one race. For example, a woman who is part Chinese, part African-American, and part Native American woman will have more access to leadership roles than a woman whose heritage is strictly only Chinese, or only African American, or only

... people's perceptions of leadership traits conflict with what people want from their leaders, but most especially during times of crisis.

Native American.

Besides ethnicity, a woman's generational identity also affects her ability to lead. Favero and Health (2012) found that female baby boomers and generation X/Yers question decisions made by each other. Baby boomers think the generation X/Yers are entitled when in turn those folks simply were choosing what was important to them, which was different than what baby boomers wanted (wealth and prestige). Generation X/Yers want more family time. The researchers found that baby boomers are offended because generation X/Yers make them "feel bad" and/or question their decisions to work as long, hard and often as they do. This is difficult for women, especially when it comes to childrearing. The decision to stay home or work away from home has great emotional, physical, and spiritual consequences for women. Some will forego leadership to stay at home with children, while others choose to take leadership roles and work late. Neither woman is right or wrong for her choices, but generational conflicts may arise within families, such as when a generation X/yer may be in conflict with her baby boomer mother's perceptions and opinions.

They really want a leader that demonstrates the traits typical to female leaders, but yet they will not choose them on their own.

How Context Affects Women's Leadership Behavior

Leadership for women is also affected by the context within which she leads. Eagly (2007) focuses primarily on how women have advanced and continue to do so in reference to equality of the sexes as pertains to leadership roles. According to her, women are currently earning more of the college degrees and have more of the desired skills to be effective leaders in today's global workforce. However, something still prevents women from moving up. She points to old stereotypes, but like many others she does not make an indication as to how we, as a society, can change those old images.

Ryan, Haslam, and Hersby (2010) found through their three studies that people's perceptions of leadership traits conflict with what people want from their leaders, but most especially during times of crisis. They really want a leader that demonstrates the traits typical to female leaders, but yet they will not choose them on their own. This means that if a woman works for an employer who does not value women and their contributions to the organization and instead reinforces typical stereotypes, the women within that organization will not have many leadership opportunities. This means that the context within the organization where a woman works affects her leadership behavior. If a woman works in an environment that has destroyed old stereotypes, then she and as well as other women working there will have many

opportunities for leadership.

Eagly (2007) suggests that old cultural stereotypes still prevent women from moving up. She points out that women, according to research, tend to possess more of the leadership skills necessary to be effective, good leaders. However, when asked, people still prefer men. Eagly critiques past research, but states that many of the impediments currently preventing women leaders can be removed. Interestingly, as a society we have difficulty removing them. Even though Eagly says we have the ability to do so, she makes no recommendations as to how to remove those impediments. She does suggest that current female leaders have a responsibility to stand up and lead other women into leadership positions.

Discussion

The literature illustrates an increase in leadership roles for women, but it also points out that there are still relatively few women in leadership positions. Women's backgrounds play a significant part in determining how women move into leadership roles, and how they perform in those roles. In addition, pervasive societal attitudes still impede women's ability to enter many leadership roles. Society's passive affirmation of stereotypes, biases, and discrimination make leadership opportunities out of reach for some women. The eradication of these ills in the psyche of men and women alike must occur for there to be real transformation and more efficiency to propel women into leadership positions and roles within organizations. America needs a transformative consciousness that transcends the formidable and pervasive barriers in a revolutionary manner.

This means people have to be open to the idea of thinking differently about gender, race, culture, and leadership. For a change of this magnitude to occur, women leaders must take a stand to help radically change policies against female discriminating practices and truly change themselves and their ways of thinking to keep themselves, society, and other women free from stereotype activation and reaction. The problem is one of positing and enacting new transformative ideas that may be on the minds of many but not in their practice. An example would be for corporations and other large entities and firms to change their internal and external hiring policies.

Conclusions

Women themselves must stop thinking and behaving in ways that enforce negative stereotypical female behaviors. That is not an easy feat.

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More research is needed to address how women can most efficiently and effectively avoid affirming negative stereotypes themselves, as well as identifying and addressing the challenges women face in the workplace – and society as a whole. American women must find a balance between being women and being true to their own personal identities, without feeling bound to societal norms based on past bias. It is then that others in American society – men, children, and other women – will begin to transform away from those typical female stereotypes. This is a difficult problem to solve as it requires change in both inward attitudes and outward behavior.

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BLESSED IS SHE WHO DANCES FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE

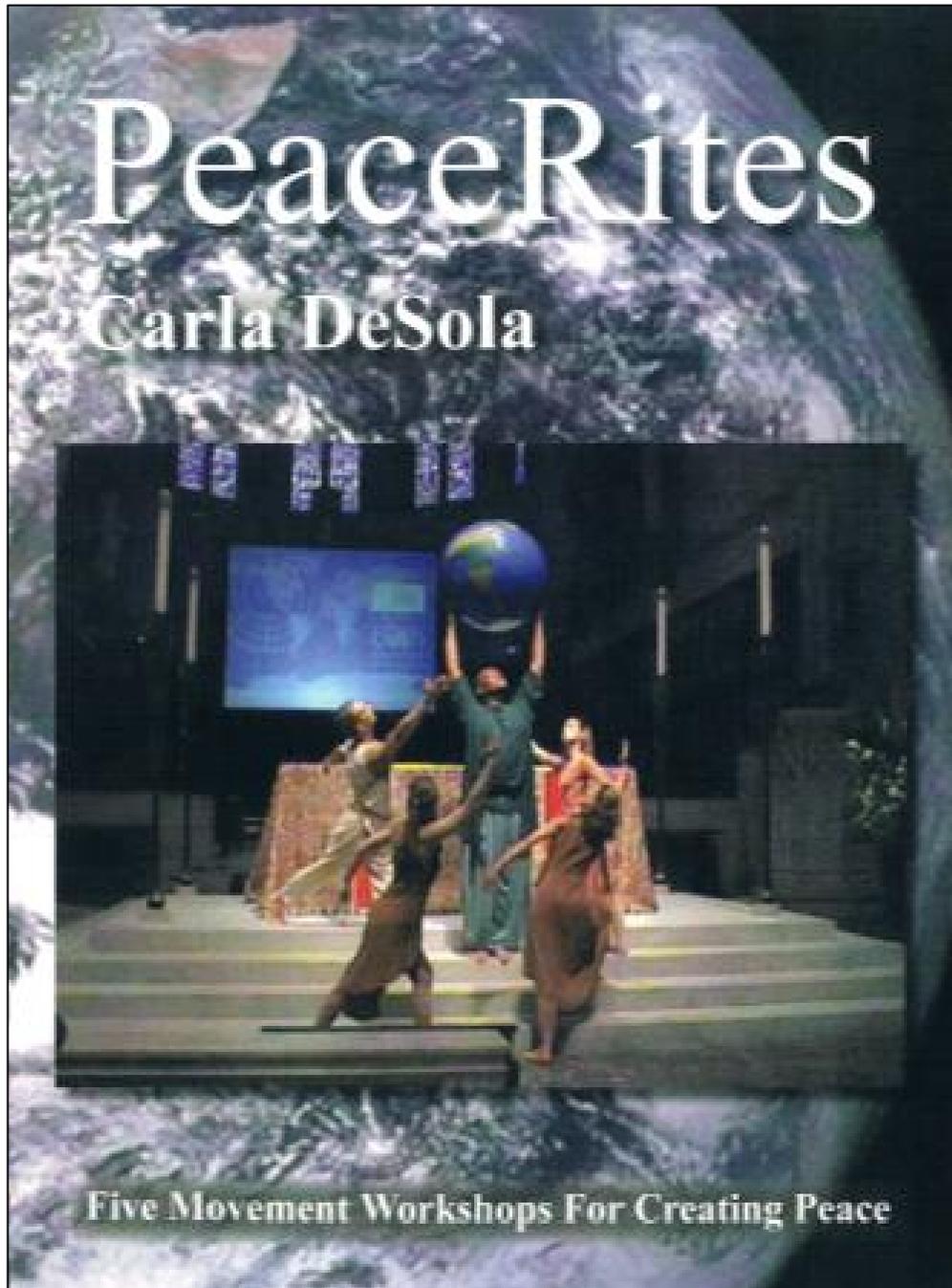
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Abstract

Carla De Sola, a Juilliard-educated dancer, choreographer, teacher, and author, has led sacred dance on issues of peace, the environment, and social justice. Dance and the arts can lead lamentation in the face of evil and nurture imagination and creativity. The fear that leads to violence is often irrational and prompted by emotions. Arts can help to illumine and to heal feelings. The ideas of Teilhard de Chardin, SJ, influenced De Sola and led to the name Omega Liturgical Dance Company. De Chardin's ideas underlie her extensive use of dance based on caring for creation including the annual St. Francis' day *Earth Mass* which annually draws about 5,000 to the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. It began in 1985 and continues to this day. Whether dancing for peace with the Soviets or the Irish or leading people in anti-nuclear demonstrations, De Sola's compassion and grace allure people to follow her lead.

“Soviet cosmonaut Gregory Grechko, who has been in outer space three times and for as long as ninety days, was overwhelmed by the experience. ‘It was the best night of my entire life. . . even outer space cannot top that’” (*Soviet-American News*). Here Grechko is talking about his participation in a night of citizen diplomacy, a major component of which was dance choreographed by Carla De Sola at St. John the Divine Cathedral in New York City, February 9, 1988. Was Carla De Sola's dance a small part of this experience, but also a significant part of peacebuilding? The Soviet Union formally ceased on December 26, 1991. The previous day Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev had resigned and given Russian President Boris Yeltsin the nuclear missile launching codes. This marked the end of the Cold War when ordinary people of both the U.S. and the Soviet Union lived in fear of nuclear conflagration.

While dance, drama, music, and visual art are only part of the human experience, they allure and educate. They can transform the human psyche and contribute significantly to opening hearts and minds for justice and peace. The fear that leads to violence is often irrational and prompted by emotions. The arts can help to illumine and to heal feelings.



Omega West Dance Company celebrating the 60th Anniversary of the United Nations is depicted on the cover of *PeaceRites, Five Movement Workshops for Creating Peace* by Carla De Sola. (Used with permission of Pastoral Press, now a part of OCP Publications)

Dance can leap over walls of misunderstanding and hatred. The arts can communicate more powerfully than words. Early followers of Christ used the term perichoresis, dancing around, to describe the activity of the Trinity. The mystery of the Creator, Christ, and the Holy Spirit being one

God was explained with the root words *peri*, meaning around and *chorea*, meaning dance. The three Persons of the Trinity live and move within each other. As dancers move and circle in relationships with each other, so the Divine Ones give and take, respond and initiate in ever new relationships. Humans are invited to live in relationships, to live for the common good. Humans are invited to live gracefully participating in the divine dance.

Carla De Sola, a Juilliard-educated modern dancer and convert to Christianity, has repeatedly been invited to create dance and ritual in the face of evil, violence, and injustice. De Sola is one of the foremost dancers, choreographers, teachers, and authors in the field of religious dance in the United States. This essay will consider her background, give examples and descriptions of her creations, and suggest that dance and other arts are vital components in encouraging justice and peace. Arts lead in the lamentation in the face of evil and they nurture imagination and creativity. Walter Burggeman, a biblical scholar, has emphasized the importance of “prophetic imagination” in creating a better future.

Carla De Sola grew up in New York City and studied dance at Juilliard School of Music for four years, and much of this time was with Jose Limón, whose works are deeply spiritual. De Sola came from a non-religious Jewish home. As she saw Limón’s *Missa Brevis*, she felt the sacramental nature of body joined with spirit. She earned a Diploma in Dance from Juilliard in 1960 and then danced professionally and taught in the New York City area. A few years after the Second Vatican Council, an exciting time in the Catholic Church, she learned of the religion, became a Catholic, and attended Masses daily, deepening her fervor.

Her godmother, Beatrice Bruteau, a philosopher and theologian, encouraged De Sola to attend worship with the Catholic Worker Community started by Dorothy Day. This significant social movement led De Sola to connect compassion for the vulnerable, justice, and faith, qualities at the heart of the gospel. Dorothy Day was a journalist who persistently wrote about the rights of workers, the plight of the poor, and reasons for pacifism in the face of wars. Day founded communities which welcomed the homeless and the hungry and also had educational programs about the roots of social evils. De Sola’s first dance in worship was at a Catholic Worker House in New York City. Her experiments with religious dance in the late 1960s opened the door to her lifetime vocation of sacred dance. As God’s love took bodily form in Jesus Christ, De Sola’s bodily prayer has invited compassion, justice, and peace. Through the years, De Sola’s dance has not been an elitist pursuit, but a work of service. Her dance incarnates many of the ideas of the Second Vatican

Arts lead in the lamentation in the face of evil and they nurture imagination and creativity.

Council: the universal call to holiness, reading the signs of the times, connecting ancient faith with the modern world, and engaging in the pursuit of justice and peace.

Father Robert McGuire, a Jesuit priest who was teaching the spirituality of Teilhard de Chardin, invited De Sola to assist him using dance. In 1974 De Sola started a dance group called Omega inspired by Teilhard de Chardin's concept of evolution towards the Omega point, a Christ center of energy. In 1975 this became the Omega Liturgical Dance Company at the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. The Dean of the Cathedral, James P. Morton, invited Carla and her husband Arthur Eaton to build a sacred dance studio in the crypt and to have Omega as a company-in-residence there. The company continued for over twenty-five years at St. John the Divine and is now at Middle Collegiate Church. From the favorable reviews in the *New York Times* and *Dance* magazine in the 1960s to her choreography for gatherings of the United Nations, the National Council of Churches, the Catholic Liturgical Conference, and myriad other groups, De Sola has had a profound impact.

This limited essay will follow threads of her passionate care for creation and her dance performances and workshops focusing on peace during hostility between the U.S. and the Soviet Union and conflicts in Northern Ireland.

In 1974 De Sola started a dance group called Omega inspired by Teilhard de Chardin's concept of evolution towards the Omega point, a Christ center of energy.

Compassion and Creativity during the 1970s

“The Passion According to Mary”

in the 41st International Eucharistic Congress

Carla De Sola has led the Omega Liturgical Dance Company and developed a prayerful process of reflection and exploration calling forth the gifts of all in the company. During the mid-1970s the group developed a dance that both deals with the story of Jesus and is a universal invitation to compassion in the face of suffering. “The Passion According to Mary” was choreographed by Christopher Reynolds with music by J.S. Bach and with De Sola as the principal dancer. During the U.S. Bi-Centennial year, 1976, the Catholic Church held the 41st International Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia, the place of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Pope Paul VI chose the theme “The Hungers of the Human Family.” Not only Mother Teresa of Calcutta and Dorothy Day who fed the physically hungry were invited to share but also was Carla De Sola who nurtured the spirit through dance. At the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul in Philadelphia De Sola danced “The Passion According to Mary.” Mary overwhelmed with grief remembers Jesus as a baby in her arms as she moves in and out of the horrors of crucifixion. De Sola’s

incarnated grief invited people to compassion as much or more than other stories, sermons, and pictures concerned with hunger and the human family at the Eucharistic Congress. *Dance*, the most prestigious magazine in that field in the U.S., in December 2001 had a cover picture of De Sola sharing that poignant dance and an article with more on the dance.

The following Laetare Sunday, March 20, 1977, the Omega Liturgical Dance company presented an Earth Day Performance which included the Dream Sequence and the Mother and Child parts of the “The Passion According to Mary.” The printed program began with the words of Teilhard De Chardin: “I have no ability to proclaim anything except the innumerable prolongations of your incarnate Being in the world of matter: I can preach only the mystery of your flesh, you the Soul shining forth through all that surrounds us.” Dance and readings from Teilhard’s *Hymn of the Universe* followed (Cathedral of St. John the Devine, 1977).



Christopher Reynolds and Carla De Sola dance “The Passion According to Mary.” (Photo by Beverly Hall)

De Sola was teaching dance to many different groups and that led her to write *Learning Through Dance* in 1974 which was published by Paulist Press. De Sola had often collaborated with a Paulist priest, Thomas A. Kane, CSP. Kane is an internationally respected theologian, videographer, and ritual maker who now teaches at Boston College School of Theology

and Ministry. His doctoral dissertation in anthropology had focused on De Sola's dance company. This collaboration also led to her publications by The Liturgical Conference based in Washington, DC. It has its roots in the 1940's when US Benedictine abbots began annual "liturgical weeks" for education and inspiration. In the years after the second Vatican council the Liturgical Conference brought together about 20,000 people for educational programs. A number of times De Sola was invited to give workshops for their gatherings and to dance in the liturgies. De Sola was invited to write a regular column for their magazine *Liturgy*. In June 1977 the Liturgical Conference published her book *The Spirit Moves: A Handbook of Dance and Prayer*.

"Having Fun with the Sun"

During the 1970s, De Sola was not only developing very creative modern dances, but also recovering the significant, but often forgotten history of dance and drama in the Abrahamic traditions. Not only does the Bible recount Mariam, the sister of Moses, leading a liberation ritual with dance after being freed from slavery in Egypt, but also European Christian history repeatedly mentions dances and drama inside and around churches to celebrate and to educate. De Sola knew of a Renaissance ceremony where a ball representing the sun had been passed around. In 1978, the Washington-based Solar Action, Inc. organized programs around the U.S. They were a group of activists who wanted to show "the world that the best energy source on earth may not be on earth at all but 93 million miles above it." (*Time*, 1978). They were urging the Carter administration to spend more money developing solar energy. The sun could theoretically provide a fourth of the energy needed in the U.S. by 2000. The article mentioned events in Boston, Washington, DC, Miami, Detroit, Los Angeles, and New York City. Carla De Sola's creativity was noted as part of this movement: "at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, the Omega Liturgical Dance Company re-enacted a Renaissance ceremony in which a ball symbolically representing the sun is passed between priests and dancers." (*Time* 1978).

De Sola's significant work had attracted the attention of the *New York Times* and on December 3, 1978, Mark Deitch had a feature article on her, "The New-Old Art of Liturgical Dance." The article also invited people to see the company perform in the new studio area in the crypt of St. John the Divine (Deitch, 1978).

Celebrating and Protecting Earth and People in the 1980s

In 1985 the Cathedral began an annual observance on or near October 4, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, patron of creation, with a celebration

... European Christian history repeatedly mentions dances and drama inside and around churches to celebrate and to educate.

of the *Earth Mass*, also called the *Missa Gaia*, with music by the Paul Winters Consort and movement by the Omega Liturgical Dance Company. De Sola described the Earth Mass:

Paul Winter supplied the music, along with the Cathedral Choir, and about 5,000 people and assorted animals packed the space. We streamed down the aisles to the Kyrie based on the wolf call, and leaped to the Sanctus, imitating the whales. We proclaimed in dance, with St. Francis, the brotherhood and sisterhood of all the creatures, and held back the crowds with our flags as a great, solemn elephant slowly processed down the aisle, followed by familiar and exotic creatures. All of life seemed to give praise, and was honored. (Wear, 2003)



Omega Liturgical Dance Company performing “Canticle to Brother Sun” during the Prelude to the Earth Mass at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York City. The Paul Winter consort is behind the dancers. (Photo from the De Sola Collection)

The Cathedral News describing the second annual Feast of St. Francis explained that at the end of the liturgy animals came in procession to the altar for a blessing. While usually animals would be frowned on in church, the congregation welcomed elephant, camel, pony, parrot, hedgehog, sheep, rabbit, eagle, fish, goose, tortoise, not to mention dogs and cats. Then there was food and fun all afternoon on the lawn surrounding the Cathedral.

**“Blessed Are You Who Mourn,
For You Shall Be Comforted.”**

In Northern Ireland over 3,500 people have been killed in what people there call “The Troubles,” a conflict which started in the late 1960s between persons who believed the area should be a part of Great Britain and those who believed it should be a part of the Republic of Ireland. Though the conflict has often been described as a fight between Protestants and Catholics, the conflict has basically been an ethno-nationalist struggle often connected with different economic opportunities. A courageous ecumenical group called Corrymeela Community in Ballycastle, County Antrim, Northern Ireland, has sponsored numerous educational programs to promote understanding and peace. In 1985 Corrymeela invited Rev. Thomas A. Kane, CSP, of Weston School of Theology, Cambridge, Carla De Sola, and four other dancers to lead a Summerfest, a workshop with people “from both sides.” Doug Baker, a leader in the community, wrote a letter dated March 19, 1985, which explained that one day’s theme was to be “Blessed are you who mourn, for you shall be comforted.” The Corrymeela Community thought that dance would be the best way to lead into this theme of remembering pain. They wanted to open up personal bereavement and then consider the political challenges that had led to violence in Northern Ireland. The Corrymeela leaders also wanted dance to the Beatitude “Blessed are those who are persecuted in the cause of right, for theirs is the kingdom of God.” This would lead into recognizing the people attending who tried to work for reconciliation and who spoke out against violence, and who were often mocked and put down for doing so. The Corrymeela Community requested dance workshops each day (“Letter to Fr. Thomas,” 1985). The closing ceremony with a large “circle of peace” had about 500 people participating. After the week, both newspapers and letters recounted amazement at how much the language of dance had brought healing and unity among these fearful families.

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A Soviet Cosmonaut’s “Best Night”

This essay began with the statement of a Soviet cosmonaut Gregory

Grechko speaking of an experience with the dance of De Sola's company as the best night of his life. De Sola, similar to the cosmonaut, speaks of the "February Fling" with Soviet people as one of the best times in her life. Many people of the U.S. lived in great fear of the Soviet Union during the Cold War. An announcement in the *New York Times* on February 9, 1988, invited people to St. John the Divine Cathedral: "An evening of music and dance, featuring Paul Winter, Paul Halley, the Omega Dance Company, the New York Russian Chorus and Tamir, a Russian actress, is planned tonight at 7:30 p.m. Sponsored by the Center for Soviet American Dialogue, the performance is part of a two-week series of cultural and social events. . . . The Temple of Understanding, an international organization based at the cathedral, will be the host for the evening." (New York Times, 1988).

A poster pictured the onion domes of St. Basil's Cathedral in Moscow and said, "Join Soviet poets, dancers, actors, cosmonauts, scientists, educators, athletes, politicians, physicians, religious leaders, publishers, military staff, journalists, media reps, television personalities." (Cathedral of St. John the Devine, 1988, Poster). These were people attending the Soviet-American Citizens Summit and all were invited to join them. The evening included a number of musical and dramatic parts including everyone holding candles. The printed program said, "Circle Dance for the Earth. . . . Delegates will dance around the globe. Everyone is invited to participate with gesture or dance." (Cathedral of St. John the Devine, 1988, Program).

After the event the Center for the Soviet-American Dialogue based in Bellevue, WA, sent De Sola a letter of appreciation dated May 20, 1988:

How can we thank you enough for your expertise, the long hours you gave and the true spirit of love you showed in being a citizen diplomat? The Center's staff is overwhelmed with follow-up to the Summit and the activity that has been created by the numerous joint projects. We recently returned from Moscow for joint project follow-up and are getting ready to go again. Our first edition of the "Soviet-American News" will include exciting reports on the Summit and your copy is enclosed. Future issues will cover in-depth articles on "perestroika" and "glasnost", with input from Soviet journalists. We always invite your input and suggestions and are looking forward to working together with you in our future endeavors. (Vernon & Hubbard, 1988)

The newspaper they enclosed had a picture of the dancers with the

earth ball on the first page and the title “Soviets Honored at St. John the Divine Cathedral. Special Edition Soviet-American Citizens’ Summit. A New Way of Thinking: Social Invention for the Third Millennium.” Then the article stated:

One evening, many of the Soviets met at the St. John the Divine Cathedral for an inter-religious service in Celebration of the Third Millennium. The Master of Ceremonies for the evening was the Very Reverend James Morton, Dean of the Cathedral of St. JD. Daniel Anderson of the Temple of Understanding organized the event. The evening was beautifully orchestrated, bringing tears to the eyes when 1,000 people including children and youth lit candles with the Soviets in a gesture of peace and friendship. The high point of the extravaganza was when the earth seemed to float above the heads of the gathering as it floated down the aisle, gracefully choreographed on a moving platform by the Omega Liturgical dance Company. Soviet cosmonaut Gregory Grechko, who has been in outer space three times and for as long as ninety days, was overwhelmed by the experience. “It was the best night of my entire life ... even outer space cannot top that.” (*Soviet-American News*)

Dancing for Peace in the 1990s

De Sola and her husband moved to California in 1990 and she began teaching dance at the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley. She earned an MA at the Pacific School of Religion in 1993. She founded Omega West Liturgical Dance Company in the San Francisco Bay area. The company frequently dances in concerts, retreats, churches, and interfaith services. With her extensive experience teaching and creating rituals, she wrote *PeaceRites: Dance and the Art of Making Peace* which was edited by Thomas A. Kane and published by the Pastoral Press in 1993.

De Sola has developed classes in dance and scripture, liturgical dance, sacred dance for healing, women’s spirituality, and PeaceRites. She continues teaching at the G.T.U. in the Center for the Arts, Religion, & Education and at P.S.R. Her workshops and performances have taken her throughout the continental U.S. and Hawaii, as well as to Ireland, Israel, France, Guam, Sweden, Canada, Australia, and Belize. She and Kane collaborated on a film, *Movement Meditations to the Songs of Taize*, which was published by Paulist Press in 1996.

Dr. Doug Adams, who was a professor at Pacific School of Religion, an author, and a major person promoting the revival of dance and the arts in worship and theological studies, wrote a memo on September 3, 1993,

... the earth seemed to float above the heads of the gathering as it floated down the aisle, gracefully choreographed on a moving platform by the Omega Liturgical dance Company

to the faculty, staff, and students of the Dominican School of Theology at the GTU:

With great pleasure, we learned this week that Carla De Sola who teaches at DSPT has been named “the most influential performing artist of the last 20 years” by a nationwide poll conducted by *Modern Liturgy*, the largest circulation magazine in the field of worship. A Juilliard graduate, founder of the Omega Liturgical Dance Company at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine for many years, Carla moved out here to Berkeley and now teaches courses. . . . Her new book (PEACERITES: explorations of how dance and social justice issues engage each other) has just been published by the Pastoral Press. (Adams, 1993)

Then Adams included the text of the award citation:

Modern Liturgy 20th Anniversary BENE Most Influential performing artist Carla De Sola: Carla De Sola is one of America’s pioneers in liturgical dance. She has performed throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe. She has encouraged the participation of the liturgical assembly through simple group movement, and she has insisted on quality training and discipline for the individual dancer. Carla De Sola has advanced the art of liturgical dance by encouraging her students to reach the highest standards of dancing while allowing a process of inner discovery for new movement patterns. Her books, articles, and workshops have influenced a whole generation of dancers and non-dancers to explore the spirituality of the body. With an eye not only on ecumenical, but interfaith dialogue, her art embraces peace and justice. She dances on holy ground, always seeking to awaken people to the needs of planet Earth. Such a caring artistry, combined with a deep concern for liturgy, makes Carla De Sola the most influential performing artist of the last 20 years. (Adams, 1993)

“She dances on holy ground, always seeking to awaken people to the needs of planet Earth.”

Assembly Mennonite Church in Goshen, IN, has continuously had a group of dancers. They hosted “Peacemaking in Relationships: A Sacred Dance Worship with Carla De Sola,” October 21-23, 1994. The invitation said that De Sola’s

key insight, that dancing is the opposite of war, is embodied in her long experience as a dancer and master teacher. In an atmosphere of prayer, we will explore our connections with others through movement. ... One does not have to be a 'dancer' to take part in this workshop (Peacemaking in Relationships, 1994).

The Mennonites are one of the historic peace churches like the Religious Society of Friends, called the Quakers, and the Church of the Brethren who hold that Jesus was nonviolent. These traditions suggest that all war is immoral, a failure of the human community. What does De Sola's idea that dancing is the opposite of war mean? Dance connects. Dance connects spirit and body. In dance the awareness of one's material self with its limits and potential connects one with the rest of material creation. Dance connects humans to each other, sometimes through touch, other times through empathy or an invisible union of energy. Dance both uses and generates energy. Dance and war both use energy, but in dance the bodies usually renew each other; in war the bodies often destroy each other. De Sola's book *PeaceRites: Dance and the Art of Making Peace*, came out of extensive teaching and experience. The book is a manual with physical and spiritual exercises leading people to explore inner and outer peacemaking.

Dance connects humans to each other, sometimes through touch, other times through empathy or an invisible union of energy.



Carla De Sola leading people to the Nevada Nuclear Test Site was pictured in *The Las Vegas Review-Journal*. (Photo by Clint Karisen/Review-Journal)

The front page of *The Las Vegas Review-Journal* August 7, 1995, depicted Carla De Sola with her arm raised holding an olive branch and leading people. The caption said, "Carla De Sola of Berkeley, Calif., leads a group of anti-nuclear protestors Sunday to the entrance of the Nevada Nuclear Test Site. The Activists marked the 50th Anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Japan." Below the picture, the article was titled "Anti-nuclear activists stage protest. Demonstrators converge peacefully at the Nevada Test Site to voice objections to the testing of weapons." Keith Rogers wrote:

More than 184 anti-nuclear activists crossed the Nevada Test Site border on Sunday to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Japan, and voice their objection to the worldwide nuclear weapons testing. Department of Energy spokesman Darwin Morgan said the 92 women and 92 men were cited for federal trespassing and released. Organizers of the civil disobedience action, hosted by the Nevada Desert Experience, said a group of 350 protesters who rallied after sunrise outside the Mercury entrance to the test site, 65 miles northwest of Las Vegas hailed from at least 26 states and several foreign countries.

Carla De Sola, of Berkeley, Calif., led a string of demonstrators to the cattleguard crossing at 9:40 a.m. The string approached the cattleguard in a serpentine fashion, with most of the demonstrators holding hands or linking arms. Then, after Western Shoshone spiritual leader Corbin Harney shook hands and chatted with Sgt. Wes Fleetwood of the Nye County Sheriff's Department, 184 demonstrators, in groups of mostly three to five people, walked on to the test site to the waiting arms of police who directed them to a fenced-off detainment area. "I told him we're here to do what we've been doing for many years, and we're going to do it peacefully," Harney said, clutching a fan of golden eagle feathers, a symbol of the Shoshone spirit. (Rogers, 1995)

Before this there had been an inter-faith service where Horney explained that the land has belonged to the Shoshone people. He spoke of how the test site was harming the environment. Before the police gave the demonstrators citations saying they had no right to be there, the Shoshones gave demonstrators permits from the Shoshone nation saying the people had a right to be there. The Shoshones are grateful that the demonstrators want to protect their land. The Franciscans, that is the

followers of St. Francis of Assisi, began the prayer vigils and protests at the test site. De Sola was invited by the Franciscans to dance as St. Francis often did. She sees these demonstrations as part of her call to protect God's precious creation.

Deepening Themes in the New Millennium



Struggling with the Minotaur, a symbol of the human shadow, in the dance "Wisdom's Way: A Passion Dance for the Earth" performed by David McCauley and Nona McCaleb. Costumes by McCauley and Minotaur created by Louise Todd Cope. (Photo by Susan Self)

In 2000, the Stewardship of Creation Environmental Ministry of Grace Cathedral and St. Gregory's Episcopal Church invited Carla De Sola to develop a prayer service. "Wisdom's Way: A Passion Dance for the Earth" was first shared June 2, 2000, at St. Gregory's. The program said:

The dance is inspired by the biblical figure of Wisdom, "who in every generation passes into holy souls and makes them friends of God and prophets" (Wisdom of Solomon 7:27). Wisdom, present with God from the beginning of time, is resplendent as the Spirit of the Earth. However, humankind, though created in God's image, has broken covenant with God and creation. Viewing the patterns of destruction on earth, Wisdom weeps with the celestial beings. To teach us to avoid further devastation and pillage, she re-imagines the Cretan labyrinth myth, revealing to her children the "tempers of wild animals, the powers of the spirits and the thoughts of human beings." She teaches us to look more closely at even the smallest part of our "shadow" so as not to project our own fears and "demons" onto other people or the Earth. Human survival may now depend on each individual's capacity to come to terms with the shadow so that it no longer be projected onto some other person, group, or nation." Joan Chodorow, *Dance Themes & Depth Psychology* ("Stewardship of Creation," 2000).

The choreography was conceived by Omega West Dance Company and directed by Carla De Sola. The costumes were designed by David McCauley who is not only a fine dancer, but also a sensitive visual artist.

"A Wounded Earth & A Crucified Christ"

Bishop Marc Handley Andrus of the Episcopal Diocese of California invited people to come to Grace Cathedral, April 22, 2011, in these words:

You are invited to a unique event of sacred expression — an interactive service of music, dance, and art exploring the rich meaning found in the conjunction of Good Friday and the observance of International Earth Day. Over the centuries, people of Christian faith have meditated on the life of Jesus and the scope of divine love — Jesus' simple and profoundly powerful acts of including all the dispossessed at the table. Christ is understood to embrace the whole earth within self-

giving love. The service is open to all people seeking to gain spiritual strength for the great work of environmental justice and to all people of faith who feel called to explore this profound moment. (Andrus, 2011)

Invitations explained that the service would include De Sola of Omega West, Sam Jackson's "Vibrant Stillness" Singing Bowls, and the artwork of Mel Ahlborn. Ahlborn is a visual artist and a member of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Orinda, CA. She is the former president of the Episcopal Church and Visual Arts organization. She has collaborated with Carla De Sola for the Earth Day service and also for the creative prayer of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in California in 2011.

Carla De Sola said,

the day began at Livermore Lab doing a dance protesting nuclear weaponry and that was six in the morning and this was an alternate service in the afternoon at Grace Cathedral. I was proud that I was involved in one way with the earth early in the morning. ... a wonderful artist [Mel Ahlborn] created a Jesus made of wires and coated with leaves and an earth ball covered with the same leaves. ... It started with this high image of this figure on a cross near the high altar with dancers lamenting. ... They take the crucifix to take Jesus off the cross and the procession began down the aisle. (De Sola, 2013)

She explained that the mood suggested both Jewish lamentation and Christian-Arabic-Byzantine prayer. Darkness was used to help lead to deep prayer. They moved towards the entrance of the Cathedral where the congregation was encircling the labyrinth. The service was described in *Pacific Church News*:

A contemporary millennial Passion play, *A Wounded Earth & A Crucified Christ* was celebrated at the conjunction of Good Friday and International Earth Day. It is particularly fitting that this service was held in Grace Cathedral. Earth Day was first proclaimed at the 1969 UNESCO Conference held in San Francisco. *A Wounded Earth & A Crucified Christ* was a solemn liturgy exploring the relationship between Christ's self-giving love and humanity's stewardship of the earth. This interactive service was held on the labyrinth of Grace Cathedral on Friday, April 22. Sacred dancers enacted the deposition of the corpus of

Christ from the cross and created a living Pietá in the center of the labyrinth. Scripture readings and prayers that recalled Christ crucified were interlaced with words of Hildegard of Bingen, Teilhard de Chardin, and others. An urgent call for participants to care for creation was especially present in the movements of the sacred dancers, the sound of the indigenous flute, and the tone of the singing bowls. Those gathered joined in singing the Taizé chorus and blessed the symbols of the “Wounded Earth” as sacred dancers passed it around the labyrinth. (Ahlborn, 2011)

Denouncing Weapons, Announcing Resurrection

In an interview about the Good Friday in 2011 when *A Wounded Earth & A Crucified Christ* was shared, De Sola mentioned being at a demonstration against Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. For many years she has designed movement for the annual early morning Good Friday nonviolent protest against Livermore’s role in creating weapons of mass destruction. The traditional Catholic prayer of the Stations of the Cross is the format for stories of persons suffering today. For thirty years Tri-Valley CAREs (Communities Against a Radioactive Environment), the Ecumenical Peace Institute and the Livermore Conversion Project have been educating and protesting. Like prophets of old, De Sola condemns what brings death and she announces what gives hope of new life. For the Holy Saturday Easter Vigil at Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Berkeley, De Sola has choreographed dances expressing resurrected life. Her dances have been important in drawing many people to pray there. Tradition has often poetically spoken of the resurrection of Christ as a leap to new life. Her choreographies celebrate the “Lord of the Dance” (Picclix, 2013; Sacred Dance, 2011).

A major professional organization, the Sacred Dance Guild, acclaimed Carla De Sola a “Living Legacy” in 2008 at the Golden Anniversary Festival, and the Pacific School of Religion gave her the “Distinguished Alumni Award” on January, 27, 2010. Whether her dances are based on biblical ideas, the Canticle of St. Francis, or texts from the mystical writings of the scientist Teilhard de Chardin, De Sola is a contemporary prophet in the current ecological crisis. Like John the Baptist she has been crying in the wilderness for almost half a century. This cry is more important than ever as rain forests burn and glaciers melt. Growing up in the midst of the Cold War, she also persistently dances for peace and invites all to join her. She helped people of Northern Ireland to mourn the violence and resolve to change. She teaches dance for inner peace and outer transformation.

*Like prophets of old,
De Sola condemns
what brings death
and she announces
what gives hope of
new life.*



Carla De Sola (center) leading movement for the Stations of the Cross, Good Friday prayer and protest against making nuclear weapons, outside of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Livermore, CA. (Photo by Amanda Scarr)

Incarnation means that the spiritual takes flesh. Religious arts participate in the work of incarnation. Theologians reflect on the divine as goodness, truth, and beauty. The arts explore beauty and can be a window to the divine. Pope Francis, in addressing the Brazilian bishops on July 27-28, 2013, said, “Only the beauty of God can attract. God’s way is through enticement, allure.” The Pope explained that God “reawakens in us a desire to call our neighbors in order to make known his beauty. Mission is born precisely from this divine allure, by this amazement born of encounter” (Winters, 2013). De Sola attracts people to the beauty of God. She entices and allures people to compassion, justice, and peace. She has encountered the Holy One and leads others to the divine dance. Blessed is she who dances for justice and peace!

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TO BUILD AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

(Review)

Racing to Justice: Transforming Our Conceptions of Self and Other

By John A. Powell

Indiana University Press, 2012

Books that deal with the issue of racism in the United States of America are not uncommon, but I have never read anything so comprehensive and so far-reaching as John A. Powell's *Racing to Justice: Transforming Our Conceptions of Self and Other*. The author, director of the Haas Diversity Research Center at the University of California-Berkeley, dissects the ongoing *racialization* process of contemporary America. He defines racialization as a set of practices, cultural norms, and institutional arrangements that mirror and perpetuate a race-based society. Racing involves both assigning and depriving people of their racial identity.

The author makes use of history, psychology – including the more recent psychology based on neural science, and spirituality in order to drive his message across. Here I shall summarize the major contentions of the author's monumental work. In arguing for the passage of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), federal judge Robert Carter already pointed out sharply: "Segregation is not the real evil. It was the symptom. The real evil is white supremacy" (p. 150). The maintenance of White supremacy is aided by the courts' *color-blindness* approach, the requirement that intent of discrimination be proven, their false universalism, and their overlooking of the impact of unconscious racism which guarantees the continuation of unearned privilege. A White needs not to be a bigot to benefit from racial privilege (p. 78). Negative racial associations are embedded socially and culturally. What we feel and believe consciously may contradict what we experience unconsciously. The GI Bill race-neutral approach became an affirmative action program for White men, closely controlled by Southern Congressmen (pp. 15, 230, 232).

It is wrong to assume that only non-Whites possess racial category or identity. Color blindness is mostly a disguise for Whiteness hiding behind the invisible norm of its power. It also denies the positive aspects of racial identification, including its rich cultural traditions. Language neutrality by the courts and other legal fictions actually imply that racial justice will hurt innocent Whites. It is this nation's history that has caused Whites and Blacks to be differently situated, so affirmative action proponents must treat them differently, not color-blindly. Not much progress in creating a true democracy will be made until we recognize that our major problem is

race, not the economy. In *McCleskey v. Kemp* (1987), strong evidence of systemic discrimination was dismissed for lack of proof of individual racist behavior. The Supreme Court should not focus merely on discrimination by individual “victims” or perpetrators (p. 78).

The multiplication of Jim Crow laws in the South after Reconstruction was greatly facilitated by the Supreme Court’s decision, five years after the 14th Amendment, to allow the States to decide to whom they would grant the basic immunities and privileges of citizenship. The Civil Rights movement succeeded in opening up public space, but power and privilege moved to private space. This is what happened with the suburban growth. Since Goldwater and Nixon, the Republican Party’s *Southern Strategy* got rid of explicit racism, but replaced it by disguised anti-Black and anti-civil rights policies (pp. 142-149).

Some argue that the election of Barack Obama to the presidency is proof that racism in America is a thing of the past. Not so! Prosecutors in Georgia have sought the death penalty 70% of the time for African Americans when both victim and defendant were Black, but only 15% for Whites under the same conditions. In Alabama, 34% of the African American men have been permanently disenfranchised by criminal records, including a felony. In New York City, during 2011, young Black men between the ages of 18 and 24 were stopped to the tune of 168,126 times, more than the entire city population of Black men. Only a few of these stops produced any evidence of unlawful activity (p. 128).

There are two areas of racialization that must be exposed:

(1) Processes, practices, and inter-institutional arrangements that keep on handing out racialized outcomes due to the fact that groups are differently situated; and

(2) Structural racialization, which carries an ambivalence that unconsciously affects meaning and practices, and an implicit bias often influenced by the unconscious. Most racists are not engaged in a conscious thought process. In our society, sameness/difference is based on White supremacy. The color-blind approach only reproduces domination in deeper, subtler levels. Yet, we have Justice Anthony Scalia saying that unconscious racism is “ineradicable” (pp. 21-23, 128).

Therefore, strategies to end racism must be both targeted and universal. A targeted strategy weighs the needs of both the dominant and the marginalized groups. For example, when offering housing opportunity for both low-income Whites and non-Whites, we must look into the different constraints of each group. Targeted universalism pays attention to the reality of how different groups are situated vis-à-vis the institutions/resources of society (p. 24).

Furthermore, the issue of racism should not be restricted to a

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discussion of race because it would leave untouched both the existing racial hierarchies and the socially-constructed forces that keep them in place. There must be an awareness that race is a social construction. America is torn apart racially not because of blood or color, but because it is mutually and continually defining and arranging society by how it includes and excludes the racial other. The primary function of social boundaries is to create racial identities and to regulate and place racial identities in a racialized space (p. 128).

We must have universal goals and outcomes, not just universal concepts, processes, and strategies. To believe that race-blind universal policies focused on a single area such as poverty will disproportionately benefit the marginalized group is a mistaken assumption. Poor Blacks and poor Whites are not similarly situated. Prior discrimination in housing, education, and health care must be considered. A racial caste system might be invisible in our courts, but it is still powerful in our psyches and social structures. The problem of race is not that it is socially constructed, but how it has been constructed. As Alfred North Whitehead remarked: "What people believe to be true is true in its consequences (pp. 15, 54, 135).

We also need to overcome our enslavement to absolutes, especially to absolute truth defined by quantitative analysis, a legacy of the Enlightenment. Reason and identity are not transcendental, but must be viewed in their historical context (p. 168). There is a difference between scientific truth (based on objective criteria and classification) and experiential truth, which is multiplicitous and relative. Truth is also subjective, and race is an inter-subjective phenomenon which acts in collective ways, not just through individual will. Race is not biology or phenotype, but a social and cultural location the effects of which can be passed on for generations. Because race and the self are socially constructed, the self maintains its attachment to Whiteness, even if there is not such a thing as "White culture." The question of Whiteness is ultimately a question of "humanness" (pp. 51, 155, 158, 233).

Powell insists that we must address how the common concept of race functions in order to dominate. He offers these practical approaches to end racialization in America:

- (1) Move beyond Black and White and also beyond human and non-human
- (2) Dethrone Whiteness as the universal norm
- (3) Reduce metropolitan segregation
- (4) Insist on looking at environmental concerns and the need for workable developmental practices in society; and

We also need to overcome our enslavement to absolutes, especially to absolute truth defined by quantitative analysis, a legacy of the Enlightenment.

(5) End the awarding of privilege (accepting what is not the result of good work, what has not been earned), which is distributed and mediated through structures, language, power and institutions. White privilege is written into our relationships, our language and our judicial system. In fact, privilege is an illegitimate benefit that injures others.

In America, race is also a top-down process set up by the more powerful group, namely, the white elites. These play a central role in the creation of effective boundaries, despite the rhetoric of poor whites having an alliance with poor blacks. The 21st century sense of loss by Whites has been essentially a loss to the elites and corporations, not to the advancement of blacks (p. 140). Consequently, we also need to distinguish between public and private space; our social domains include public, private, non-public/non-private and the corporate domain. Most of our media space is corporate, not public nor really private, although the 2010 United Citizens decision of the Supreme Court made it much easier for corporations to claim to be private “persons.” The recent economic recession has highlighted the fact that corporate greed has bred a social/structural imbalance which threatens true democracy at every turn.

Powell also believes that, in our efforts to end the racialization of America and create a true democracy, we must resort to our best spiritual fountains. The struggle for social justice must be based on a spirituality that recognizes the divine in the other, and the secular must not be separated from the spiritual (p. 200). However, Powell could have grounded his sense of spirituality much better had he availed himself of the intensely spiritual movement which, since the late 1960s, has been addressing the plight of the poor and the marginalized. I am referring to Liberation Theology, which draws its inspiration and strength from the Gospels and the example of Jesus of Nazareth and has led millions of Christians to take a “preferential option for the poor.”

In summarizing, the author asserts that we must:

- (1) Deepen our understanding of the interconnectedness and multiple nature of the self
- (2) Come to realize how mutable and illusory the qualities of race are
- (3) Account for the pervasiveness of implicit bias and unconscious racial anxiety
- (4) Note the mistaken/questionable tenets of the Enlightenment and of modernity about nature, the self, and the universal categories; and

The 21st century sense of loss by Whites has been essentially a loss to the elites and corporations, not to the advancement of blacks.

(5) Use all the preceding to change our government systems to achieve true democracy

Powell's work is a "must read" for all who care about the future of American democracy. It is solidly put together, making a most convincing argument for Americans to, once and for all, take the divisive reality of racism seriously and engage in a fruitful debate to end it. The recent presidential campaign once again exposed the ugly face of racism in America. Efforts to end racism will not be accomplished until we recognize how it makes the claim of democracy nothing but a sham.

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