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George F. McLean

Diversity and Unity

Edited by
George F. McLean
Godé Iwele
Angelli F. Tugado

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INTRODUCTION

THE PROBLEM

The 20th Century could be read as a dialectic of unity and diversity. It engaged the enthusiasm of peoples in major, indeed terrorizing, campaigns of unification. Totalitarian systems took hold from the Atlantic, across Europe and Asia, to the Pacific. Even through pogroms, death camps and mass deportations when deemed opportune, all was homogenized. In North America the melting pot approach to immigrants made differences an impediment and a personal shame. Over distant lands unifying nets of empire—political and commercial—were cast.

Unity came to reign so supreme and with so heavy a hand that the last 50 years have been preoccupied largely with breaking its stranglehold over the life of humankind. These have been the major markers of our memory: the war against Fascist totalitarianism; the breakup of the empires; the recognition of the rights of minorities, whether ethnic, national or gender; and the collapse from within a forced uniformism.

Where does this leave us as we proceed into the new millennium; has the 20th century been wasted in a difficult, indeed deadly and as yet unresolved, isometric of unity and diversity? In fact, the agenda of conflict at the present time: from the reactions against immigrants in Western Europe or against other races in America, to massive attacks upon whole peoples in the Balkans, the Caucasus, the Middle East, Africa, India, etc., etc., could lead one to despair of human harmony. The deadly dilemma of our day is that the assertion of one's own distinctiveness seems too easily to imply attacking others simply because they differ. This ignores and destroys all bonds of unity. Yet the effort to achieve unity is interpreted through the pretenses of a secular society as requiring the suppression of the access of peoples to the cultural and religious wellsprings of their identity and thereby the very roots of their sense of unity with others.

THE CHALLENGE

Must the 21st century be a replay of the last or, worse still, the perpetuation of our present quandary, marked by a collapse of mutual respect, the destruction of the roots of a person's values, virtues and goals, and a breakdown of civil cohesion? Or is it possible to see the very diversity of persons and peoples as the resource enabling us to relate more intimately, to cooperate more actively and to create more profusely what lies within the unfulfilled agenda of human hopes. If so

diversity must be turned into cooperation and unity into empowerment so that the lion might lie down with the lamb, swords be beaten into plowshares, and new horizons of human progress can beckon us beyond conflict to new levels of unity.

In our present condition this is not a formula but a destiny, not an ideology but a task, not a utopia but a direction. What is needed in order to take up our task and to move in the direction of our hopes is concentrated effort drawing upon both the experience and values of the many cultures and religions, and the scientific rigor of the empirical sciences. The two must be bonded through the development of theoretical interpretations which make it possible to see diversity as a key to unity and unity as enabling diversity. How can this be achieved?

THEMES

The Diversity of Persons and Peoples

In the aftermath of forced processes of assimilation and uniformity the value and importance of diversity has come vividly to the consciousness in our times. In Central Europe, in the afterglow of the revolutions which signaled the collapse of Communist universalism, people have begun to celebrate their uniqueness and diversity. In Western Europe the project of unity is being delayed until the reality of national and even regional differences can be taken into account. In North America the melting pot has been followed by a recognition that at bottom it is a nation of minorities whose history has ever lain primarily in the process of assimilating new and increasingly different immigrant groups. What had been the vast empire of the Soviet Union is now undergoing a process of redefinition and reorganization according to the differences of its peoples. The unifying pressures of globalization are now forcing all peoples to search out their identity.

With this celebration of freedom comes pride in the accomplishments of one's people, renewed commitment to the values they have shaped and new ways of exercising the virtues they have formed. But with the good comes also evil, and this process has unearthed ancient prejudices and even antipathies, memories of oppression and even of atrocities. Close upon the flush of new awareness of freedom there has followed the fear of new menaces. Defensive reactions, in turn, now lead to failure of the will to cooperate and even to a downward spiral into a pit of suspicion, rejection and mutual attack—even preemptive—which seems without bottom.

Hence, the eruption of human freedom in our day presents a double challenge. On the one hand, it means new recognition of the difference and distinctness of peoples. If peoples are to realize their

humanity this diversity must be not only tolerated but promoted. Progress will consist in the ability to harvest the results of the creativity this unleashes.

However, this project must be realized in such manner that diversity does not end in conflict. Differences must be channeled toward interchange of peoples with a view to cooperation and mutual promotion.

What are the ultimate cultural and religious principles for diversity which can promote such cooperation; what are its psychological and sociological mechanisms; how can these be protected and promoted in legal and political structures?

All this is the urgent task of our day.

The Unity of Cultures and Religions

Proceeding into the new millennium we face a twin dilemma. On the one hand, the contemporary resurgence of the sense of cultural identity calls for attention to, and promotion of, the diversity of peoples. But, as the senses of freedom, distinctiveness and diversity emerge ever more vividly in human consciousness, we experience the ways in which diversity can, and indeed has already begun to degenerate into conflict—into Hobbes' savage state in which man is wolf to man. On the other hand, the emergence of technology and the intensification of economic interchange call for ever greater unity and even uniformity. Indeed, we know that peace and harmony are the conditions of growth and development, whether of a child or of a people. But from the first half of this century we know how the call for unity can entail suppression of the freedom, identity and diversity of peoples.

Hence, the increase of the pressure of numbers, of the interdependence of workers and nations in industry and commerce, and of the penetration of the media of communication into the very households of the world, make it ever more urgent that progress in developing a more subtle sense of unity be kept in step with the development of the new sense of diversity.

Concretely, the challenges are multiple. What are the possibilities and requirements of peace and cooperation in families and neighborhoods? What are the conditions of just collaboration between the many groups and sectors of a complex, pluralistic enterprise of nation? Both nationally and internationally, what are the bases for reaching beyond self-centered interest in order to live in harmony with peoples of notably different cultures and traditions? More deeply still, are the philosophical and religious roots of the various cultures able not only to be compatible one with another, but to inspire peoples to reach

out beyond themselves with respect and concern for what others are and would make of their future?

We cannot suppose that these issues have ready answers, for the questions themselves are being raised in new manners and with ever greater scope and intensity. The sense of diversity is held with new passion, the range of diverse peoples and cultures has new extent, their interaction is more intense and pervasive. Hence, unity in diversity cannot be achieved merely by new techniques; it requires a more refined appreciation of psychological and social dynamisms, as well as a new and penetrating understanding through the humanities and religious sciences of the well springs of human meaning and aspirations.

The exploration of these challenges is reflected in pattern of the chapters of this work:

Part I, "Theoretical Relations of Unity and Diversity," marshals six theoretical papers from West and East, treating first unity, then diversity and finally the relation between the two.

Chapter I, by George F. McLean, "Unity," sets forth the Western history of the "human awareness of unity" from pre-philosophical times through the Greeks to the Christian "philosophy of existence." The chapter develops in detail the Thomistic treatment of unity ("numeric," "formal," and "metaphysical") and "participation" ("transcendental" and "predicamental"), proposing this structure as an eminently workable approach to the problematic of "diversity in unity." He attaches as an Appendix an extended excerpt from David J. De Leonardis' *The Ethical Implications of Unity and the Divine in Nicholas of Cusa* (Washington, D.C.: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1993).

Chapter II, by Sun Shangyang, "Pursuit of Harmony: Contribution of Chinese Philosophy," explores the Chinese notion of the Great Harmony and its contribution to the sense of unity,

Chapter III, by Robert P. Badillo, "Rielo's Genetic Conception of Unity: *Unum Geneticum* vs. *Unum Simpliciter*," examines the thought of a mystic poet on unity which he wishes to open to genetic sense inspired by the character of Trinitarian life.

Chapter IV, by Jun Hu, "Diversity," argues that unity and diversity are relative to each other, that each culture rests upon its own presuppositions (based on its own version of what is true), and here that a peaceful harmony among nations depends on a dialogue in which each culture has equal status. Hu in particular dissents from a "cultural monism" or what he calls a "West-centralism" which seems to confound "universal effect" in some areas [e.g., technology, free-market economics] and a "universal civilization."

Chapter V, by Miloslav Bednar, "The Philosophical Origins and the Topical Predicament of the Problem of Diversity in Unity," studies

the relationship between philosophy and *mythos*, proposing that the spirituality of mythic vision—as profoundly human—can be the only viable underpinning of “diversity in unity.” Drawing from the work of the Czech philosopher Jan Patočka, Bednar sets forth a history of social theory/practice, beginning with the pre-rational worldview, then moving from the Greeks and Medievals to the Enlightenment, the French Revolution and German Idealism, and then on to modern democracy, totalitarianism and the contemporary “post-modern.” Bednar argues that a mere increase of resources or even power for all people will not stop social conflict. Only a theory of justice based on “human nature” (in a quasi-Kantian sense) can supply a spirituality sufficient for both authentic nationalism and a true cosmopolitanism.

Chapter VI, by Angelli F. Tugado, “Non-Indifference within Difference: Emmanuel Levinas on the Sociality of the Face-to-Face Relation,” examines especially the thought of Emmanuel Levinas with regard to interpersonal relations interpreted in terms of face. On this basis she extends the vision beyond face to face relation to diversity in the larger social unity.

Part II, “Contemporary Challenges of Diversity in Unity,” presents the special contemporary challenges of diversity in unity.

Chapter VII, by Heinz Holley, “Durkheim’s Concept of Anomie in the Light of the Present Problems of Change in Developing Countries,” carries Durkheim’s analysis of Anomie to the stresses of the cold war as a vis the “second world” and to the subsequent issues of globalization for the “Third World”.

Chapter VIII, by Godé Iwele, “The Culture of Pluralism: The Dialectic of Unity and Diversity in Contemporary Christianity,” develops the notion that “there is no longer a center,”...There are “many centers.” The telling of truths is no longer a *grande histoire*, but an aggregation of *petits récits*. Iwele represents the more liberal reading of Vatican Council II documents, so the self-governance of local churches is much escalated and the pluralism of theologies much enhanced.

Chapter IX, by J.G. Donders, “Unity and Diversity: The Challenge of a Cross-cultural Ministry,” carries the discussion much further by setting it not only in term of survival but of the higher realization of human spirituality and the essential importance of cross-cultural comparisons in order to do this.

Chapter X, by Bhajan S. Badwal, “The Dynamics of the *Dunamis* in Collaborations, Associations, and Unions,” studies the dynamic element of change as it appeared first in the Greek analysis of the physical world and the extends this to American societies in order to assess the possibilities and tolerances for change in the relation between cultures.

Part III, “Cultural Forms of Unity and Diversity,” exemplifies the multiple forms of diversity and of diversity in unity in Africa, Thailand, and Latin America, and in the United States among Polish-Americans.

Chapter XI, by Jozef Pauer, “The Contemporary Mutual Contamination of Cultures, or Diversity in Unity,” proposes the principle of complementarity, especially in its modern scientific sense, as the mechanism for best understanding (and advancing) harmony in today’s world. As the “wave” characteristics and “corpuscular” characteristics of light complement each other in such a way that they cannot show up in one and the same experiment, nations must recognize that what seems to be contradictory in the other (because read in the same frame of reference) is really just different because operative in a different frame of reference.

Chapter XII, by Raphael J. Njoroge, “Diversity as a Problem of Practical Reason, with Some References to the African Experience,” discusses diversity on the levels of the individual, the community, and the wider “global community,” arguing that historically the larger social formation has oppressed the smaller; and that this has been especially the case in Africa from the colonial period onwards. Njoroge urges the principle of subsidiarity as a remedy, so that diversity and unity both receive their proper due.

Chapter XIII, by Kirti Bunchua, “Diversity and Unity in a Buddhist Cultural Context,” sets forth the equitable arrangement whereby five religions cooperate in the author’s native Thailand (where 95 per cent of the population is Buddhist). Bunchua argues that Buddha’s teaching of non-attachment to ideology would do much to heal religious dissension in the world, since ultimately dissension is due to competition and exclusivity (which Bunchua categorizes into four “Philosophical Paradigms”). He proposes a fifth “Religious Attitude” which affirms “all religions are good, but differently good.”

Chapter XIV, by James S. Pula, “Unity in Diversity: The Polish Immigrant Experience in America,” recounts the fascinating experience of Polish Americans from 1795 onwards. Pula explains that two Polish traditions, a more secular and religiously diverse model based on Poland’s old Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (15th century) and a more rightist conservative Catholic model. Both produced Polish-American movements which fought each other. Pula also recounts in detail the campaign of Waclaw Kruszkka for ethnic diversity *within* the Catholic Church in America, at a time when an Irish-dominated hierarchy consistently marginalized Polish-Americans.

Chapter XV, by Martha Gonzalez, “Latin American Identity in Relation to Unity and Diversity: A Social Work Reflection,” examines the factors of disaggregation in Latin American society, and how a common language-base, a shared religiosity, a cohesive popular culture

(art, music, dance, etc.), and a traditionally important family-life, can counter the threat of fragmentation. Gonzalez examines in particular the crisis in contemporary family-life, and urges appropriation of John Paul II's recent insights regarding strategies for preserving the family.

Chapter XVI, by José A. Rivera, "Puerto Rico, the One and the Many," drawing on classical philosophy and on the thought of R. Simon on freedom and authority in society. The work focuses on the strength of Puerto Rico for an appropriate modern identity vis a vis the United States. For this the chapter focuses on the thought of the founder of modern Puerto Rico, Luis Muñoz Marín.

Part IV, "Diversity and Unity in the Political Order," looks for practical realizations of diversity in unity in the political order ranging from the university to Hegelian liberalism.

Chapter XVII, by Charles R. Dechert, "Global Unity in Multiplicity: The University as Institutional Locus of an Emerging Ecumenical Culture," considers the role of the world's universities in the global information-age. It sees the new "interrelatedness" which no doubt brings benefits as also becoming as well a threatening homogenization. Dechert argues that universities should preserve multiple mediating structures, a system of checks and balances, and a dispassionate quest for "objective reality."

Chapter XVIII, by Miloslav Bednar, "Hegel and Liberalism," interprets Hegelian "liberalism" to mean an emphasis on social and political unity based on "a new foundation of politics in Ethical and Spiritual Life..." Bednar opposes Francis Fukuyama's reading of Hegelian liberalism, which identifies it with the "abstract and formal" stage of the Hegelian synthesis, that is, the stage emphasizing maximum individual and "subjective" choice. Bednar argues that in fact Hegel concluded that such relativism, neglecting "duty" as it does, is conducive to an irresponsible diversity.

Chapter XIX, by Jozef Pauer, "Strife and Harmony: Remarks on the Democratic Culture of the Present Times," is a reflective concluding chapter suggesting that perhaps key to the present anomie is a confusion of the sense of the good by the enlightenment ideal of clarity and system, whereas the good is not susceptible to these goals as is truth. Hence he suggests the need to abandon one-sided rationalism and one-sided empiricism with their instrumentalist desire for control and domination and with humility before the mystery of being to accept diversity in unity, unity in diversity. This he describes as "the fate of man as a being created and unfinished, open, as a keeper and protector of everything between heaven and earth."

George F. McLean

PART I

**THEORETICAL RELATIONS OF
UNITY AND DIVERSITY**

CHAPTER I

UNITY

GEORGE F. McLEAN

In beginning this study of unity and diversity there was a felt need for a clarification of terms. There was a sense that unity, for example, was being used in rather different ways in various cultural and historical contexts. Hence the first step would seem to be a consideration of unity and the second of diversity. This relates as well to a desire to proceed dialectically between conceptual and theoretical clarification, on the one hand, and concrete experience on the other.

Such an approach is not without its own difficulties and dangers, not least among which is the danger of taking positions at the beginning which delimit the range of vision, or prejudice the value framework within which the investigation is carried out. This would inhibit the new insight and discovery which can be hoped for from such an interdisciplinary and cross cultural cooperative investigation.

It is hoped that some steps can be taken to overcome or at least to attenuate the difficulties noted in the preceding paragraph. The first of these steps is, of course, precisely to identify them so that they—being conscious—can be guarded against. The second is to present the conceptual clarification not in a definitory manner, but in a historical mode in order to identify some of the main lines of thought in this regard, as well as some of the reasons behind their development. This might serve to provide not only clarification but justification, without thereby becoming closed or exclusive. A third is to divide the effort in such wise that the different chapters will emphasize different cultural traditions.

Hence, this paper will return to the sense of unity found in the early totemic and mythic societies and then follow some main steps of its development in Greek, medieval and Renaissance philosophy.

Aristotle's dictum held that there is nothing in the intellect which is not first in the senses. Not surprisingly, upon examination it appears that the actual evolution of the human awareness of unity follows this sequence of our capacities for knowledge. In all cases, intellectual knowledge is in play, but this is facilitated and articulated successively, first in terms of the external senses in the totemic stage, then in terms of the internal sense in the mythic period and, finally, in properly intellectual terms with the origin of philosophy or science. Indeed, one

might define philosophy and science precisely as knowledge of the various aspects of reality in terms proper to the human intellect.

UNITY IN PRE-PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT

Totemic Thought

To follow this evolution from its earliest totemic stage, it should be noted that, for life in any human society as a grouping of persons, a first and basic necessity is an understanding of oneself and of one's relation to others. It should not be thought that these are necessarily two questions rather than one. They will be diversely formalized in the history of philosophy, but prior to any such formalization, indeed, prior even to the capacity to formalize this as a speculative problem, some mode of lived empathy, rather than antipathy, must be possible. If, as Plato would later work out in detail, the unity of the multiple is possible only on the basis of something that is one, then the unity of social life will require that there be present in the awareness of the early peoples—and according to their mode of awareness—something 'one' in terms of which all are related.

In the earliest, totemic form of thought and society this understanding by people of themselves and their unity with others was carried out in terms of some natural reality, such as an animal or bird, able to be perceived by them through their external senses. These peoples spoke of themselves by simple identity with this one reality, which was the totem of their clan. Whereas other things might be predicated indirectly as something one possessed, the totem was the subject of predication by direct identity: one might say that he had a horse or other animal, but only of the totem would one say that he is, e.g., a horse or lion.

Levy-Bruhl expresses this in a law of participation, by which he expressed a discovery which his own positivist philosophy was unable to assimilate, namely, that for the primitive or foundational mode of thinking of the earliest peoples their root identity was that of the totem. It was not that such persons saw themselves as in some manner like, or as descendent from, their totem, e.g., lion; instead, they insisted upon predication: "I am lion." It was in these terms that they founded their identity and dignity.

Moreover, they considered themselves to be bound thereby to all others of that tribe inasmuch as they had the same totem. Still further, by analogy of their totem with that of other tribes they understood the

mutual relations between their two peoples for marriage, etc.¹ The totem was, of course, not simply one animal among others. It was in a sense limitless in that no matter how many persons were born to the tribe its potentialities were never exhausted. Further, it was shown special respect, such as not being sold, used for food or other utilitarian purposes which would make it subservient to the individual members of the tribe or clan. This was the sacred center of both individual and community life: only in terms of this did all else have meaning and cohesion. This made possible the sense of personal dignity and the interpersonal relations which were the most important aspects of human life. It did so with a sense of direct immediacy that would be echoed, but could never be repeated, in subsequent stages of thought.

Here then we find a first sketch of the meanings of unity which would be unfolded with progressive sophistication as the capacities of the human mind unfolded. First, there is a sense of uniqueness about the totem: there can be but one for any clan. Second, there is a sense of groundedness about each individual in the tribe, based upon identity with the totem. Third, there is a sense of unity or relatedness between all the members of the tribe inasmuch as they all share the same totem.

Mythic Thought

Though the totem was able to provide for unity and meaning while the life of all members of the tribe remained similar, its manner of expressing unity became insufficient as society became more specialized and differentiated. The bonds between members of the tribe then came to depend not merely upon similarity and sameness, but upon the differentiated capabilities of, e.g., hunters, fishers and, eventually, farmers. At that point, with the experience of looking upon others as both united and differentiated and distinct, or united in the complementarity of their differences, there emerged a richer appreciation of the distinctiveness of each.

With this came as well an appreciation that the unique principle of their mutual unity must be above or transcend the many individuals of which it was the principle and center. What in totemic thought previously had been stated simply by identity could now be appreciated as greater than and transcending the members of the tribe. This is reflected in the development of priesthoods, rituals and symbols to reflect what was no longer seen simply as one's deepest identity and

¹ L. Levy-Bruhl, *How Natives Think* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1966), ch. II.

hence predicated directly.² Such a reality could no longer be stated in terms immediately present to the external senses; rather it was figured by the imagination in terms drawn originally from the senses, but now redrawn in forms that expressed life that was above humans as the principle of their life. Such higher principles, as the more knowing and possessed of a greater power of will, would be personal. As transcendent persons they would be gods.

It would seem incorrect to consider this, as did Freud and Marx, to be simply a projection of human characteristics. On the contrary, the development of the ability to think in terms shaped by the imagination released the appreciation of the one principle of human life from the sensible limitations of animals, birds and other natural entities available to the external senses. This did not create transcendence, but allowed the real transcendence of the principle of unity to be expressed in a more effective manner.

In view of what has been said above, the *Theogony*, written by Hesiod (ca. 776 B.C.), is of special significance. Because the gods stated the reality of the various parts of nature, when Hesiod undertook to state the relationship which obtained between them he undertook in effect to articulate the theme of this study, namely, the unity and interrelation of all. His work has a number of important characteristics. First, it intends to state the highest possible type of knowledge. Thus, it begins with an invocation to the Muses to provide him with divine knowledge: "These things declare to me from the beginning, ye Muses who dwell in the house of Olympus."³ Secondly and correspondingly, it is concerned with the deepest issues, namely the origin and unity of all things. "Tell me which of them came first?" he asks, and then proceeds to a poetic treatment of issues ranging from the fact of evil to the justification of the reign of the gods; he includes all the problems to which the religious awareness of the period gave rise.⁴ Thirdly, because it was written as the period of purely mythic thought was drawing to a close—within two centuries of the initiation of philosophy in Greece—it manifests the extent to which mythic thought could understand basic issues.

² *Ibid.*, ch. XII. See also Werner Jaeger, *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967), ch. I; and G.S. Kirk and J.E. Raven, *The Pre-Socratic Philosophers* (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1960), pp. 26-32.

³ George F. McLean and Patrick Aspell, *Readings in Ancient Western Philosophy* (New York: Appleton, Century, Croft, 1971), p. 4. See also by the same authors, *Ancient Western Philosophy* (New York: Appleton, Century, Croft, 1972).

⁴ Werner Jaeger, *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 12-13.

Hesiod drew upon the full resources of the body of Greek mythology, weaving the entire panoply of the gods into the structure of his poem. He did not, however, simply collect and relate the gods externally in a topographical or chronological sequence; his organization of the material was ruled by an understanding of their inner meaning and real order of dependence. Thus, when in the *Theogony* he responds to the question: "How at the first did the gods and earth come to be?"⁵ His ordering of the gods weds theogony and cosmogony; it constitutes a unique manifestation of the degree of understanding regarding the unity and diversity of reality of which the mythic mind was capable.

The order which Hesiod states in the *Theogony* is the following. The first to appear was Chaos: "Verily at the first Chaos came to be." Then came earth: "But next wide-bosomed Earth the eversure foundation of all," and starry Heaven: "Earth first bore starry Heaven, equal to herself." From Earth, generally in unison with Heaven, were born Oceanus and the various races of Cyclopes and the gods. From them, in turn, were born still other gods such as Zeus and the races of men. In this manner, Hesiod pictures various modalities of Night and Day, Fate and Doom, as originating from Chaos.

If, then, we ask what is the understanding of the unity of reality expressed by this poem, it will be noted that Hesiod expresses the very opposite of a random gathering of totally disparate and equally original units. On the contrary, as indicated in the above quotes, the relation between the gods and between the parts of nature they bespeak is expressed in terms of procreation. As a result, every reality is related positively to all the others in a genetic sequence.

This relatedness does not depend upon a later and arbitrary decision; it is equally original with their very reality. Neither is it something which involves only certain aspects of the components of the universe; it is as extensive as their total actuality. This includes actions: Rhea, for example, appeals to her parents for protection from the acts of her husband, Cronos, against his children.

Indeed, unity is understood to be by nature prior to diversity. This is indicated by the genetic character of the structure in which each god proceeds from the union of an earlier pair of gods, while all such pairs are descendents of the one original pair, Earth and Heaven. Further, the procreation of the gods proceeds from each of these pairs precisely as united in love. Finally, this is done under the unitive power of Eros who is equally original with heaven and earth.

From what has been said we can conclude that unity precedes and pervades gods and men. All is traced back to Earth and Heaven as the original pair from whose union, under the impetus of Eros, all is

⁵ McLean and Aspell, p. 5.

generated. This means that in this perspective the question of the relation between Heaven and Earth is at the root of the issue of unity and can take us to a still deeper understanding if we return to the text and use the proper etymological tools.

The text states the following order: Chaos, Earth and Heaven. Unfortunately, since the time of the Stoics Chaos has come to mean disorder and mindless conflict or collision. Aristotle, however, in his *Physics* referred to chaos as empty space (*topos*).⁶ Etymologically, the term can be traced through the root of the Greek term “*casko*” to the common Indo-European stem, “gap.” Using this stem as a sonar signal, as it were, to sound out mythic thought throughout the broad range of Indo-European peoples, we find that the term is used to express a gaping abyss at the beginning of time as, e.g., the derivative “*ginungagap*” in Nordic mythology.⁷ Kirk and Raven confirm this analysis and conclude that “chaos” meant, not a state of confusion or conflict, but an open and perhaps windy space which is bounded.⁸

Returning to the text in this light, it will be noted that it does not say “In the beginning” or speak directly of a state prior to Chaos, but begins with Chaos: “At first Chaos came to be.” There is no suggestion that Chaos was the original reality; on the contrary, the text is explicit that chaos came to be: “He toi men prôtista Cháos genet.”⁹ Further, Chaos is a space to which boundaries are essential. These, it would seem, are the gods which the text states just after Chaos, namely, Earth and its equal, Heaven. They are not said to have existed prior to chaos and to have been brought into position in order to constitute the boundaries of the “gap”; rather, they are said somehow to follow upon chaos.

Thus, Kirk and Raven understand the opening verses of the body of the text, namely, “Verily at the first Chaos came to be, but next wide-bosomed Earth...and Earth first bare starry Heaven equal to herself,” to express the opening of a gap or space, which thereby gives rise to Heaven and Earth as its two boundaries.¹⁰ For its intelligibility, this requires: (a) that reality precedes the gap, (b) that it is by its opening or division that Heaven and Earth have been constituted and (c) that reality is originally undifferentiated or undivided (*in-divisium*) which, as we shall see below, is the root of our sense of one or unity. That is, on the

⁶ *Physics* IV, 1, 208b 31.

⁷ Jaeger, p. 13.

⁸ G.S. Kirk and J.E. Raven, *The Pre-Socratic Philosophers* (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1960), pp. 26-32.

⁹ Hesiod, *The Homeric Hymns* trans. by H.G. Evelyn-White (London: Heinemann, 1920), p. 86.

¹⁰ Kirk and Raven, *loc. cit.*

basis of the gap, one boundary, Heaven, is differentiated from the other boundary, Earth. It is by the gap that these first multiple realities are identically both constituted and differentiated as contraries. As all else are derivatives of Chaos, Earth and Heaven in the genetic manner noted above, it can be concluded that the entire differentiated universe is derivative of an original undifferentiated unity which preceded Chaos. It would be premature, however, to ask of the mythic mind whether this derivation took place by material or efficient causality; that question must await the development of philosophy.

The original reality itself is not differentiated; it is an undivided unity. As such it is without name, for the names we give reflect our sense perceptions which concern not what is constant and homogeneous, but the differentiated bases of the various stimuli. What is undifferentiated is not only unspoken in fact, but unspeakable in principle by the language of myth, which is characterized essentially by dependence upon the imagination.

Nonetheless, though this unity is unspeakable by the mythic mind itself, reflection can uncover or reveal something of that undifferentiated reality which the *Theogony* presupposes. We have, for instance, noted its reality and unity. Its lack of differentiation is not a deficiency, but a fullness of reality and meaning from which all particulars and contraries are derived. It is unspeakable because not bounded, limited and related to another after the fashion of one imaged contrary; it is the transcendent fullness of that which is seen and spoken in language based in the imagination, namely, as the Hindus would say, the world of names and forms.

In addition, it is the source, not only whence the differentiated realities are derived, but of the coming forth itself of these realities. This is reflected in two significant manners. First, Eros, which itself is said to come from chaos, is the power which joins together in procreative union the pairs of gods. This power reflects something of the dynamic character of the undifferentiated reality. In a negative manner this is also indicated by the acts which the *Theogony* describes as evil. For example, it says that "Heaven rejoiced in his evil doing," namely, hiding away his children in a secret place of Earth as soon as each was born, and not allowing them to come into the light. Cronos is termed "a wretch" for swallowing his children. In each case evil is described as impeding the procreative process by which new realities are brought into existence; its opposite, good, consists in or involves bringing forth the real. Whatever is most fundamental to this bringing forth must pertain particularly to that undifferentiated unity from which has come Chaos and Eros, and through which came Heaven and Earth, and all things. The undifferentiated unity is originative of differentiation; it is participative.

Finally, it can now be seen that all the progeny, that is, all parts of the universe and all men, are born into the unity of a family. This traces its origin, not only to a pair of distinct realities and certainly not to chaos as conflict, but to an undifferentiated reality. Just as there is no autogenesis, there is no unrelated reality or aspect of reality. It would seem, then, that verses 118-128 imply a reality that is undifferentiated, unspeakable, and productive of the multiple. For the Greek mythic mind, beings are more one than many, more related than divided, more complementary than contrasting.

As a transformation of the earlier totemic structure, mythic understanding continues the basic totemic insight regarding the related character of all things and this is predicated upon a unity and fullness of meaning. By thinking in terms of the gods, however, myth can add a number of important factors. First, quantitatively the myth can integrate, not only a certain tribe or number of tribes, but the entire universe. Second, qualitatively it can take account of such intentional realities as purpose and fidelity. Third, while implying the unitive principle expressed with the simple directness in totemic thought, it adds the connotation of its unspeakable, undifferentiated, and fruitful character.

But expression in terms of the forms available to the internal sense of imagination had its temptations, which limitations were pointed out by Xenophanes. He noted that by the time of Homer and Hesiod a perfervid imagination had gone from expressing the transcendence of the gods to attributing to them, as well, the many forms of evil found among men.¹¹ These principles of meaning and value thus pointed as well to their opposites. Thinking in terms of the imagination was no longer sufficient; the intellect needed to proceed in its own terms in order to enable the true sense of the gods, as well as of nature to be expressed and defended against confusion and corruption. As the intellect proceeded to operate in properly intellectual terms rather than in terms of the images of mythic thinking, science and philosophy emerged to replace myth as the basic mode of human understanding.

Paul Tillich points out that the mythic mode of thinking never completely disappeared and that its contribution of imagery and its evocation of responses from all dimensions of the human personality remain essential components of human awareness. No ethical treatise will ever equal the power and penetration of the *Iliad* or the plays of Sophocles in penetrating the human condition. But once the intellect was able to conceptualize things in their own terms, rather than in the anthropomorphic terms of the gods, mythic thinking would no longer be

¹¹ Xenophanes, fragments 11, 14-16 in George F. McLean and Patrick J. Aspell, *Readings in Ancient Western Philosophy* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 31

taken as the literal truth. It became what Tillich would call “broken myth,” in the sense that it helps and enriches human awareness and response without being the sole or basic mode in which all is appreciated.

Parmenides and Plato

At this point, the way opened for philosophy and science through the development of this ability of the intellect to understand in its own terms rather than in those of the external senses as in totemic thought, or of the internal senses as in mythic thought. Once this breakthrough occurred spectacularly rapid progress was made. Within but a few generations, the human intellect had worked out a structure of the physical world using basic categories of hot and cold, wet and dry available to the external senses, along with mechanisms of vortex motion.¹² Mathematical reason worked with the internal senses to lay down the basic theorems of geometry.¹³ By developing properly intellectual terms, the Greeks had revised and perfected the thought processes of the totemic and mythic ages, elaborating with new and hitherto unknown precision insights regarding physical reality.

But that had never been the root human issue. Totemic and mythic thought were not merely ways of understanding and working with nature, although they did that as well. The fundamental issue was rather what it meant to be, what life was based upon, and in what terms it should be lived. After the work of others in conceptualizing the physical and mathematical orders, Parmenides was able to take up these most basic questions of life and in the properly intellectual terms of being. This is the work of metaphysics.

Working out an adequate method for metaphysics took a millennium and a half; but from the beginning, beyond the notions of hot and cold, even and uneven, Parmenides recognized the issue to be that of reality itself, or what it meant to be, and undertook its investigation. How could this be understood? First, he bound the work of the intellect directly to being: “It is the same thing to think and to be” (fragment 3).¹⁴ Hence, the requirements of thinking would manifest those of being. Second, he contrasted being with its opposite nonbeing as the contrast of something to nothing at all (fragment 2): being is not non-being. This

¹² Anaximander, fragments, see McLean and Aspell, *Readings*, pp. 14-17; George F. McLean and Patrick J. Aspell, *Ancient Western Philosophy: The Hellenic Emergence* (New York: Appleton, Century, Crofts, 1971), pp. 22-28.

¹³ See McLean and Aspell, *Ancient Western Philosophy*, chap. III.

¹⁴ Parmenides, fragments, see McLean and Aspell, *Readings in Ancient Western Philosophy*, pp. 39-44.

principle of non-contradiction was a construct of the mind. Malinovski said of the totem that it was chosen, not because it was good to eat, but because it was good to think. Like *pi* in geometry, the principle of contradiction is good to think with, for it enabled the mind, in reflecting upon being, to identify its requirements and avoid anything that would undermine reality.

The *proemium* of Parmenides' famous poem described a scene in which he was awakened by the muses and sent in a chariot drawn by a faithful mare along the arching highway that spans all things. In this process he moved from obscurity to light, from opinion to truth. When at last he arrived at the summit, the gates were opened by the goddess justice, as guardian of true judgments or discriminations of truth from falsity. He was directed to examine all things in order to discern the truth.

Parmenides images himself as then proceeding along the highway¹⁵ until he comes to a fork in the road where one signpost points in a direction in which all at some point begins. Here, Parmenides must reason regarding the implications of such a route. "To begin" means to move from nonbeing or from nothingness to being. Hence, if "to be" meant essentially "to begin," being would include within its very nature nonbeing or nothingness. In that case, there would then be no difference between being and nothing; being would be without meaning, the real would be nothing at all.

Conversely, when nonbeing is removed from this notion, no sense of beginning remains and it becomes clear that at the fork in the road, the path of being is not that whose sign reads "beginning," but rather the other path which is that of the eternal. This, then, is a first requirement of being: having excluded at the fork the possibility of taking the path which led to all as essentially beginning, being is seen to be eternal and the chariot moves on along the highway of being.

The procedure is analogous at the two subsequent forks in the road where the signposts point to change or multiplicity. Each of these, Parmenides' reasons, would include nonbeing within being, thereby destroying being. Nonbeing is contained in the notion of change, inasmuch as a changing being is no longer what it had been and not yet what it will become. When, however, one removes nonbeing, being emerges as unchanging.

Similarly,—and for our interests most important—nonbeing is essential to the notion of multiplicity, inasmuch as this requires that one being not be the other. When, however, that nonbeing is removed what

¹⁵ Fragment 8; see Alexander P.D. Mourelatos, *The Route of Parmenides: A Study of Word, Images, and Argument in the Fragments* (New Haven: Yale, 1970).

emerges is one. These then are the characteristics of being: infinite and eternal, unchanging and one.

The issue then is not how the notion of an absolute One entered human thought; it has always been there. The real issue is how effectively to open this sense of the divine to the full range of reality, and how to implement the search for meaning in a way that enables a vigorous itinerary of the human heart to that source and goal which enlivens all temporal life. This is the issue of metaphysics.

Simplicius and others concluded from the first half of Parmenides' poem that there could be only the One absolute being. This, however, does not fit well with the second, longer half of the Parmenides' poem, which treats at great length the many changing beings of our universe. Hence, it would appear to be a more correct reading of Parmenides' mind to say that being requires the one, infinite unchanging and eternal Being, i.e., an Absolute transcending the world of multiple and changing beings; that there is as well a universe of changing reality; and that this latter depends for its reality upon the One. But the way in which this universe is related to the One is not worked out by Parmenides. It could be expected then that whoever did work out this relation of the many to the One would be the father of the Greek, and, hence, of the Western, philosophical tradition. This, in fact, proved to be Plato.

For this relation, Plato developed the notion of participation which will be elaborated upon below. This operates on all levels because it is the mode of being itself. In logic and mathematics, multiplicity requires that the many not be unrelated to each other, for then they could not be gathered in any set as multiple units. In nature, the multiple instances of any one type require the one supereminent reality of the perfection according to which the many instances are similar or one. On the metaphysical level, this same dynamic requires that, at the summit of all reality, there be the self-sufficient and infinite One or Good in which all things share or participate for their being, identity and goodness. This notion of participation according to which the many derive their being from the One, which they manifest and toward which they are oriented and directed would in time provide the basic model for "outer" transcendence and the relation of creatures to God.

From totemic, through mythic thought, to Greek philosophy, then, one finds with progressive degrees of clarity the same basic pattern: something that is one in the sense of being absolutely simple and unique, that is, one or undivided within and without. In this all multiple beings participate their meaning and dignity, and thereby possess derivatively their own degree of unity or identity. This comes from the One and is directed thereto.

Unity and Participation in the Christian Philosophy of Existence

The notion of an “outer” transcendent One, while traceable from Plato, Aristotle and Augustine (and, indeed, to the basic sense of the move from totemic to mythic thought described above), was developed classically in a systematic manner by Thomas Aquinas, using Plato’s notion of participation, in terms of participated and unparticipated being. It would be wrong, however, to think of medieval thought as a simple replication of Greek philosophy. While the insights of Greek philosophy continued, what changed was the very sense of being itself. This was vastly deepened from meaning form or kind of reality to meaning existence itself. In these terms the sense of unity as affirmation of the single person, as relatedness of persons, and as the one source and goal all were dramatically enriched.

Although Greek philosophy grew out of an intensive mythic sense of life in which all was a reflection of the will of the gods, nonetheless, it presupposed matter always to have existed. As a result, the focus of its attention and concerns was upon the forms by which matter was determined to be of one type rather than another. For Aristotle, physical or material things in the process of change from one form to another were the most manifest realities and his philosophizing began there. His approach to philosophy through sense encounters with physical beings corresponds especially to our human nature as mind and body and extended to the recognition of knowledge as the realization of unity, and hence of divine life as the preeminent unity of knowing on knowing. But the sense of reality needed considerable enrichment in order adequately to bring out the foundational significance for mankind of its grounding in a fully transcendent and infinite unity.

It was here that the development of the Christian context had an especially liberating effect upon philosophy. By applying to the Greek notion of matter the Judeo-Christian heritage regarding the complete dominion of God over all things, the Christian Church Fathers brought out that matter, too, depended for its reality upon God. Thus, before Plotinus, who was the first philosopher to do so, the Fathers already had noted that matter, even when considered eternal, stood also in need of an explanation of its existence.¹⁶

¹⁶ George F. McLean, *Plenitude and Participation: The Unity of Man in God* (Madras: The University of Madras, 1978), pp. 53-57. This was elaborated as well in the course of the Trinitarian debates. To understand Christ to be God Incarnate, it was necessary to understand Him to be Son sharing fully in the divine nature. This required that in the life of the Trinity the procession of the Son or Logos from the Father be understood to be in a unity of nature: The Son, like the Father, must be fully of the one and same divine nature. Through

This enabled philosophical questioning to push beyond the reality of form, nature or kind to issues of existence and, hence, radically to deepen its sense of reality. If what must be explained is no longer merely the particular forms or types, but the reality of matter as well, then the question becomes not only how things are of this or that kind, but how they exist rather than not exist. Man's awareness of being thus evolved beyond change or form;¹⁷ to be real could be seen to mean to exist and whatever is related thereto. Quite literally, "To be or not to be" had become the question.

By the same stroke, our self-awareness and will were deepened dramatically. They no longer were restricted to focusing upon either the choice of various external objects and modalities of life in a rudimentary circumstantial freedom¹⁸ of self-realization,...or even to choosing as one ought after the manner of the acquired freedom of self-perfection set within the context of being as nature or essence. Beyond these, the sense of freedom now opened by the conscious assumption and affirmation of one's own existence was the natural freedom of self-determination and responsibility for one's very being.

One might follow the progression of this deepening awareness of being by reflection upon the experience of being totally absorbed in the particularities of one's job, business, farm or studies with their costs, chemicals or bibliography, and then encountering the loss of a loved one or the birth of a child. At the moment of death as at the moment of birth, the entire atmosphere and range of preoccupations shifts dramatically. All is suddenly transformed from tactical adjustments for limited objectives to confronting existence in sorrow or in joy, and in terms that plunge one to the center of the whole range of meaning.

Such was the effect upon philosophy when it developed an awareness of being. From concern merely with the affirmation of this or that kind of reality, it opened to the act of existence (rather than non-existence), of human life in all its dimensions and, indeed, of life divine.

Cornelio Fabro goes further. He suggests that this deepened metaphysical sense of being in the early Christian ages not only opened the possibility for a deeper sense of freedom, but itself was catalyzed by

contrast to this procession of a divine person, it became possible to see more clearly the formal effect of God's act in creating limited and differentiated beings. They would not be in the same divine nature, for creation resulted, not in a coequal divine person, but in a creature radically dependent for its being.

¹⁷ Aristotle had taken the possibility of the coexistence of forms to be a sufficient response to the first scientific question, "whether it exists." See Joseph Owens, *The Doctrine of Being in the Aristotelian Metaphysics; A Study in the Greek Background of Medieval Thought* (Toronto: P.I.M.S., 1978).

¹⁸ George F. McLean, *Tradition, Harmony and Transcendence* (Washington, D.C.: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1994), chap. IV.

the new sense of freedom proclaimed in the Christian message. That message focused not upon Plato's imagery of the sun at the mouth of the cave from which external enlightenment might be derived, but upon the Son of God, the eternal Word or Logos, through and according to whom all things had received as gift their created existence.

As the first to rise to new life in victory over sin, his victory had to be accepted by each person in a radical act of freedom, opening oneself to, and affirming the transcending power of, the Creator and Redeemer in one's life. The sacramental symbol of this is not one of mere transformation or improvement, or even of dissolution and reformation, but of resurrection from the waters of death to radically new life.

This is the power of being bursting into time. It directs the mind beyond the ideological poles of species and individual interests, and beyond issues of place, time or any of the scientific categories. It centers, instead, upon the unique reality of the person as a participation in the creative power of God; as a self-conscious and responsible existent, bursting into time; as one who is and cannot be denied. It rejects being considered in any sense as nonbeing, or being treated as anything less than its full reality. It is a self, affirming its own unique actuality and irreducible to any specific group identity. It is an image of God for whom life is sacred and sanctifying, a child of God for whom to be is freely to dispose of the power of new life in brotherhood with Christ and with all mankind.¹⁹

It took a long time for the implications of this new appreciation of existence and its meaning to germinate and find its proper philosophic articulation. Over a period of many centuries the term 'form' was used to express the kind or nature and the new sense of being as existence. As the distinction between the two was gradually clarified, however, proper terminology arose in which that by which a being is of this or that kind came to be expressed by the term 'essence', while the act of existence by which a being simply is was expressed by 'existence' (*esse*).²⁰

Unity

Once the appreciation of being is deepened by this enriched sense of "existence," it is possible to look for further insight into unity. This can be examined fruitfully in the thought of Thomas Aquinas situated in

¹⁹ C. Fabro called the graded and related manner in which this is realized concretely, an intensive notion of being. Cornelio Fabro, *Participation et causalité selon S. Thomas d'Aquin* (Louvain: Pub. Univ. de Louvain, 1961).

²⁰ Cornelio Fabro, *La nozione metafisica de partecipazione secondo S. Tommaso d'Aquino* (Torino: Società Ed. Internazionale, 1950), pp. 75-122.

the 11th century when the Aristotelian texts became available to the Christian Platonists of Europe through the mediation of Islam. In the ferment of the intersection of cultures a new and systematic understanding was generated. To begin, if one tests the ways in which we can make statements about being itself as an open all-inclusive statement of all that is and in whatever way it is (a transcendental notion), one finds that such predication can be either positive, i.e., “something,” or negative, i.e., “not divided against itself” or “one.”

One or unity, as indivision, can be of a number of types: numeric, formal and metaphysical

(a) Numeric Unity. As this individual, it is not that individual for then it would no longer be this individual. Such numeric unities as treated in mathematics abstract from the differences or the distinctive character of the things to which they pertain. It makes no difference whether the single unit be a rock or a human; when added to another member of the same set, it makes two. Originally pertaining to quantity, this concerns physical things distinguished externally one from another, but simply interchangeable one with another.

(b) Formal Unity. As this kind it is not some other kind, for then it would no longer be this kind. Such formal unities abstract from the individuality of the concrete existent and concern the indivisibility of a specific type or form. This has its proper identity and stands in contrast to all other forms or specific types, for were such a form to be divided so as to lose one element, for example rational from “rational animal,” one would no longer have a human nature but merely that of a beast. Both rationality and animality must be had in order to constitute a human form, just as three units—not two—are required to constitute the number 3. Forms are essentially diverse one from another, but one or univocal in each of their instances.

These two types of unity can be very useful for some tasks, but extremely problematic when used in human affairs. Where freedom and creativity are concerned, if one attends only formal unities, then one can attend to the species and its welfare, but the person as a unique and creative self-assertion with self-responsibility is sacrificed thereto. If one uses only numeric unity one can identify individuals and their physical distinctiveness, but not take account of their particular dignity or meaning, e.g., as persons.

(c) Metaphysical Unity. It is necessary therefore to go further and to open the mind not only to all things, but to all aspects of things, omitting or abstracting from none. It is necessary further to take into account all the members of a species, both in what they share and in what is unique about them, including the very exercise of their freedom and creativity. It is necessary finally not only to take account of each individual, but also to see how their existence is a unique realization of a

specific kind which has its proper dignity, as well as its proper and appropriate relations to others. This is the unity of being both material or non material (and hence “metaphysical” in this inclusive sense).

Unity, as the indivision of each being in itself, is a transcendental property of being. It includes the reality of being in its formal notion, adding to it the negation of any division within itself and implying division from anything else (being, as undivided). Wherever there is being there must be this unity, although its modalities will differ according to the type of being involved. Metaphysical unity is indivision in being precisely as such, that is, as a relation to existence, and in this pervasive sense excludes negation, nonbeing or nothingness. While in form this statement of unity as indivision of being or “undivided being” is negative, this bespeaks the affirmative character of being in its transcendent or all inclusive sense.

This is reflected in the formation of the first principles of being. To form a statement regarding being simply by relocating the subject “being” as the predicate in order to form the statement: “Being is being” would be a tautology. Yet any other predicate for being, however, such as human or material (“Being is human”; “Being is material”) would limit being. Hence, the mind constructs the notion of “nonbeing” or nothingness by adjoining being and negation. This fact that this can be predicated of being only negatively in the form “Being is not nonbeing” brings the positive, irreducible and irrepressible character of being to mind. In this light the principle of identity “being is being” is no longer a tautology, but a positive statement of being as irreducible affirmation, the reality of existence (*esse*).

“The truth in turn presupposes the one, since...a thing is intelligible in so far as it is one; whoever does not understand a unity understands nothing, as the Philosopher says.”²¹ Indeed, unity is included in the very definition of truth: “the true is the undividedness of the act of existence from that which is.”²² Far from being a stranger to truth, as a transcendental property of being unity pertains to truth’s very nature for without that unity which bases integration there could be no intelligible reality or ontological truth.

There need be no fear then that a truth attained will be denied by itself, that it will lose its identity in relation to another, that the truths of the past will make no contribution to the present, or that truths are too changing to have a proper position according to which they are integrated into a whole. Rather, their unity will remain as long as being;

²¹ *Summa Theologica*, q. 21, a. 3.

²² *Ibid.*, q. 1, a. 1. This definition was used by St. Anselm of Canterbury, *De veritate*, II (P. L. 158:470), and by St. Bonaventure, *In I sent.*, d. 8, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1. Cf. *Truth*, I, 439, m. 16.

otherwise truth would not change but would simply cease to exist, for being would have been replaced by nothingness.

Participation

The problem: If the beings we experience are complex and multiple, we must ask whether they are sufficiently one both within and between themselves to form a cohesive and coherent whole: Is each being sufficiently undivided in itself to have its proper identity; is each sufficiently coherent with the others to form a whole? Does being have both the stability and the consistency to allow integration to be more than the arbitrary ordering of something which of itself is chaotic? To begin with the first part of this query, it is important to note that unity as the indivision of each being is an indispensable prerequisite for integration. It expresses the identity, the self-coherence, by which a thing claims its proper place in the relation to other parts. Only on the basis of its own identity can one raise the question of its relation to an integrated whole.

But if there be ontological unity as regards the individual beings there still remains the problem of integrating these units of truth. It must be asked whether unification is simply an expedient for manipulating the contents of what is in itself a chaotic mass, or whether there exists awaiting our discovery a determined relation between truth of the many beings?

Under the title of the problem of the one and the many philosophers have applied themselves to the solution of this question through the whole length of recorded philosophical history. Their response to the issue of unity has centered on the notion of participation and its implication of a hierarchy of being. Beginning with a fundamentally Platonic concept, but with Aristotelian and personal changes so pregnant as to make the result a thoroughgoing synthesis, St. Thomas arrived at a proper notion of participation the heart of which might be stated technically in the following manner.

For any limited and hence multiple being, its essence or nature by definition constitutes a limited and limiting capacity for existence, by which the being is capable of this much existence, but no more. Such an essence must then be distinct from the existence which, of itself, bespeaks affirmation, not negation and limitation. Such a being, whose nature or essence is not existence but only a capacity for existence, could not of itself or by its own nature justify its possession and exercise of existence. The Parmenidean principle of non-contradiction will not countenance existence coming from non-existence, for then being would be reducible to non-being or nothing.

Such beings, then, are dependent for their existence; that is, precisely as beings or existents. This dependence cannot be upon another

limited being similarly composed of a distinct essence and existence, for such a being would be equally dependent; the multiplication of such dependencies would multiply, rather than answer, the question of how a composite being with a limiting essence has existence. Hence, limited composite beings for their existence must depend upon, or participate in, uncomposite being whose essence or nature, rather than being distinct from and limiting its existence, is identically existence or being itself.

That uncomposite Being is simple or in no sense divided within itself, it is the One par excellence; all multiple and differentiated beings participate in this One for their existence. The One, however, does not itself participate; it is the unlimited, self-sufficient, eternal, unchanging unique Being which Parmenides had shown to be the sole requisite for being. In sum, “limited and composite beings are by nature relative to, participating in, and caused by the unique simple and uncomposite being which is Absolute, unparticipated and uncaused.”²³

Transcendental Participation

Transcendent participation regards being when considered as a relation to existence or to be. Beings do not form a chaotic mass. In the fully transcendent perspective there is a real distinction and dependence between a being which is of its very essence and beings which are by participation. Within each being in the latter category there is another real distinction and dependence between its essence and its existence. This twofold distinction can be seen by beginning with finite beings. As such they participate in or partially realize perfection without being its fullness.

Such a simultaneous affirmation of perfection, on the one hand, and limitation of perfection, on the other, is not a contradiction; it is the affirmation of a limited being of a determined nature. Nevertheless, the affirmation and the limitation of perfection could not be resolved to identical principles without restricting all perfection to the one being. Hence, the participation of being is had according to a limiting essence really distinct from the existence to which it is related as determining the nature of the being. This relationship in the structure of beings by participation was given its full systematization by St. Thomas who related existence to act as essence is to potency.²⁴

Of itself the recognition of this act-potency structure in the order of being is a statement of the transcendental structure of participation,

²³ Fabro, *La nozione metafisica di partecipazione*.

²⁴ Cf. Fabro, *op. cit.*, pp. 338-345; J.-D. Robert, “Le principe: actus non limitatur nisi per potentiam subjectivam realiter distinctam”, *Revue philosophique de Louvain*, XLVII (1949), 59-78.

and implies a corresponding dynamic participation. This manifests the insufficiency of these beings as beings, and hence points to a being which exists of its very essence. Such a being in which essence and existence are identified is the absolute, infinite, and self-sufficient being. In terms of being this is first; it is that being in which all finite beings must participate both efficiently and finally in order to be. The participation extends to all the principles of finite beings.

“From the very fact that being is ascribed to a quiddity, not only is the quiddity said to be but also to be created: since before it had being it was nothing, except perhaps in the intellect of the creator, where it is not a creature but the creating essence.”²⁵ Thus, the order of principles within each finite being leads to the transcendent order of dynamic participation, or causality. Participated beings, precisely as participated, are extrinsically dependent on God who is the One, indeed, the unique being of his very essence. This supplies two important elements for the order of being. First, it places the infinite as the supreme principle in relation to which all other beings form an order as profound and penetrating as their very being. Secondly, it roots the unity and distinction of all finite beings in the intrinsic principles of existence and essence by which such beings are realized.

Thus the very principles of being itself, as they give rise to the realm of being, connaturally induce the orders of transcendent static and dynamic participation. According to these participations: (a) all being is one by a unity of order; (b) by static participation there is established the fundamental relation between God and creatures; and (c) by the efficient and final dynamic participation this unity is intensified as creatures are manifested as the *discretio et resolutio divina*:

The divine wisdom itself is the efficient cause of all things in as much as it brings things into being and gives them, not only being, but being with order in as much as things unite with one another in an order toward an ultimate end; and furthermore, it is the cause of the indissolubility of this harmony and of this order.²⁶

Predicamental Participation.

The realm of the *discretio divina*, seen as ordered by the principles of transcendental participation in terms of existence, is further structured according to predicamental participation of forms. This introduces within the finite realm a most intricate order of genera and

²⁵ *De potentia*, q. 3, a. 5, ad 2.

²⁶ *In divinis nominibus*, c. 7, lect. 4, n. 733.

species, each with its own formal unity. Since forms, like numbers, are not susceptible of more or less,²⁷ the multiplication of these forms has its real foundation in their composition with matter.²⁸ However, it is important to note that the resultant participation is not simply a reduplication of the same identical form. This would group the many forms into a series of species, but within the species each individual would be a senseless reduplication, or at best merely a continuation of the corruptible nature.²⁹ Participation is not simply the restatement of the universal formality, but its expression according to a particular mode. In each case when the abstract is multiplied in the concrete, it is given its proper mode of being. Now “since whatever is participated is determined to the mode of that which is participated...(it) is thus possessed in a partial way and not according to every mode of perfection.”³⁰ This connotes an opposition of contrariety between the various species in the genus, for while each has a common subject, this is qualified in an exclusive fashion. Placed in relation to the above-mentioned principle according to which forms are like numbers, the exclusiveness implies that while a species is one with all others within the genus, as contrary it must stand in relation to the others as a privation or defect. This results in an order of more and less perfection among the species. “All genera are divided by contrary differences, and among contraries one is always perfect in relation to another which in this regard is imperfect.”³¹

In its own way this order is extended to the individuals within a species. Considered in the formal order the specific nature is found equally in each individual and the question of individuation is resolved by signed matter. In the order of real existence or transcendental perfection, however, their structure as individuals precludes this identity. In each case the form is received by matter predisposed according to forms previously had and still reflected. On this heading remarks of

²⁷ *Summa theologica*, I-II, q. 52, a. 1. “Species of things are like numbers, in which addition or subtraction changes the species. If, therefore, a form, or anything at all, receives its specific nature in respect of itself, or in respect of something belonging to it, it is necessary that, considered in itself, it be something of a definite nature, which can be neither more nor less.”

²⁸ *Ibid.*, I, q. 85, a. 1, ad 2. Cf. *In VII Metaphysica*, ed. M.R. Cathala, O. P. (Romae: Marietti, 1950), lect. 9, n. 1463; lect. 12, n. 1546. “As the composite from matter and determined form is a species, so the composite from matter and common form is a genus.”

²⁹ *In I sententiis*, d. 2, q. 2, a. 4, ad 3; d. 23, q. 1, a. 4; *Summa theologica*, I, q. 47, a. 2.

³⁰ *Summa contra gentiles*, I, c. 32:6; *In III sententiis*, d. 13, q. 1, a. 2.

³¹ *In XI metaphysica*, lect. 9, n. 2292; *In de causis*, de. C. Pera, O. P. (Romae: Marietti, 1955), IV, lect. 4, nn. 114-115.

Cornelio Fabro concerning dominant and recessive genes are most suggestive, particularly when developed on the principles of Peter Hoenen for the virtual presence of elements in compounds.³² The result is a difference between individuals which is more than merely material:

Seeing that a material form or nature is not its own being, it receives being through its reception into something else: wherefore according as it is received into a diversity of subjects it has a diversity of being: thus human nature in respect of being is not one in Socrates and Plato, although the essential notion of humanity is the same in both.³³

Individuals then are only partial fulfillments of the capabilities of the species; each realizes but one of the many modes which the species can have in reality. In this sense, each individual is imperfect in relation to the virtual infinity of the species and with its accidents the individual stands as contrary to the other members of its species.³⁴ As a result the species takes on the character of a hierarchy in which each individual has its proper place as more or less perfect. "It must be said that all animals are equally animals; they are not, however, equal animals, but one is more perfect than another."³⁵

When the order of genera is joined with that of the species within each genus and with that of the individuals within each species there appears a unity of order in the *discretio divina* which borders on that of contiguity. All beings participate in God in the sense of partially realizing the totality of perfection which is had in the infinite and eternal self-subsistent being. In doing this individual beings fall into a graded hierarchy within their species according to the degree of their participation in being. Their species, however, is itself hierarchically related to the other species in the genus in such a way that the most perfect individual in a species approaches the least perfect in the superior species. The same relationship holds between the genera:

³² Fabro, *op. cit.*, pp. 173-178; Peter Hoenen, S.J., *The Philosophica; Nature of Physical Bodies*, (West Baden Springs, Ind.: West Baden College, 1955), pp. 65-73.

³³ *De potentia*, q. 2, a. 1.

³⁴ *In I sentiis*, d. 35, q. 1, a. 4. "In all univocals the perfection of the nature is common, but not that of the 'to be'; hence the form of humanity is not in two men according to the same 'to be'. Therefore when the form signified by the name is the 'to be' itself, it cannot pertain univocally to all; and for this reason being cannot be univocally predicated."

³⁵ *Quaestiones disputatae de malo*, in *Quaestiones Disputatae*, ed. P. Bazzi *et al.*, vol. II (Romae: Marietti, 1949), q. 2, a. 9, ad 16.

The orders (of being), since they proceed from one first (principle), have a certain continuity among themselves: thus the order of bodies reaches to the order of intellects, which reaches as far as the divine order....Therefore, those who are the highest in the order of intellects or of intellectual beings more closely depend on God by a more perfect participation, and participate more in his goodness and his universal causality.³⁶

The cumulative effect of the various types of unity discussed above is a unity of order in which each being, in depending for its being on the absolute source of all perfection, takes on a proper relation to every other individual, species, and genus. The unity which pertains to individuals according to the structure of their very being includes the transcendental oneness of indivision or self-identity. Based upon this unity proper to each there is the whole series of relations by which being forms a hierarchy and a universe.³⁷

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³⁶ *In de causis*, XIX, lect. 19, n. 352-353; *Quaestione disputata de anima*, in *Quaestiones disputatae*, vol. II, q. un., a. 1.

³⁷ Cf. Joseph Legrand, S.J., *L'univers et l'homme dans la philosophie de saint Thomas*, 2 vols. (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1946).

APPENDIX

[From: David J. De Leonardis, *The Ethical Implications of Unity and the Divine in Nicholas of Cusa* (Washington, D.C.: CUA Ph.D., 1993), pp. 59-71.]

The Structure of Being

For Cusa each individual being relates to all being in that each is a contraction (*contractio*) of the whole. In *De Docta Ignorantia*, Cusa defines the term contraction as the restriction of Being itself to some particular thing. Thus the whole Being exists in a restricted fashion in each particular being.¹ In this sense, each existing creature reflects not merely every other creature, but also the entirety of being. Through contraction each being becomes ontologically linked to every other being since all entities derive their existence from a common source. It is important to note however, that this presence of all Being in each being is by no means an actual presence in which every individual contains the totality of being as that totality is in itself. By restricting itself Being becomes in each actually existing thing what that individual thing actually is.² No actual presence of anything other than the thing itself is possible because it would destroy the actual unity of potency and act in the individual entity by making it be something other than itself and thereby, make its existence impossible.³ In this manner Cusa retains the uniqueness and individuality of all existing entities.

These points are intimately related to Cusa's dynamic and unified conception of reality. This is because each individual is not a singular entity inherently isolated, but a contraction of the totality of being. Thus all beings are united in that each is a contraction of the same whole. However, because each contraction is unique each being is simultaneously distinct from every other. This allows for a dynamic interaction between beings.

The forms play a key role in understanding what it means to be. The forms for Cusa communicate being in that they actualize existence. They are also responsible for the distribution of being in that they account for the multiplicity of beings as well as the diversity which these beings express. Furthermore, the forms also have an indispensable role to play in terms of participation. The forms do not merely provide essences as had been the case for the ancient Greeks, but account also

¹ Nicholas of Cusa, *Of Learned Ignorance* (London: Routledge Kegan, Paul, 1954), p. 82.

² *Ibid.*, 83.

³ *Ibid.*, 84.

for the multiplicity of beings as well. This ontological multiplicity is distinctively Christian and allows for a true dynamism, not merely of interaction but of creation itself.

Matter also plays an indispensable role for being in that it determines the way in which each being is individuated from every other being. This is because by being equated with potency matter determines the possibilities which are open to each particular being. Therefore, the uniqueness of each individual being is established. Hence, though matter's potency resides in all being it is different in each being since each being can be only itself with its own possibilities.

It is this idea of being as contractible which gives Cusa's conception of reality a quality which is unique to his thought. For the Platonists, being meant possessing a certain form. With the Thomistic revolution the focus shifts from participating in one of a series of forms to participating in the existence of the absolute. Cusa's idea of contraction, however, takes this idea of participation a bit further and brings two fundamental principles of being into operation. The idea of contraction means that in order to be anything an entity must also be everything in a restricted (non-actual) manner. This relation of each being to the totality of being on an ontological level will be referred to as the principle of community. This principle is based upon the fact that each being is a contraction of being itself and, therefore, all beings are linked through their common source. It is imperative to note that the principle of community does not eliminate the uniqueness of the individual. For Cusa, each individual entity contracts being in a manner which no other being is capable of achieving. This uniqueness of these individual contractions is what makes each being itself and will be referred to as the principle of individuality. Thus, each entity has an inherent value which is unique to it alone (the principle of individuality) and yet simultaneously is just as inherently related to the totality of being and through it to every other existing being (the principle of community). Cusa thereby can establish a metaphysics which allows for a harmonious diversity that permits each individual being to remain distinct from the whole and possess a value which is uniquely its own, yet, also unites these separate beings on an ontological level in that each being is a contracted reflection of the whole.

The Implications of Formal Causality

Turning to the dynamic nature of reality which flows from Cusa's conception of being we will focus upon the interaction of being in reference to formal causality and some of the implications this has for efficient causality. The purpose here is to show how the structure of

being makes reality inherently interactive and dynamic, and that this dynamism is the product of the harmonious diversity of reality

Cusa cites formal, efficient, and final causality as the three types of causality whose operation has prime importance for being. In *De Possest*, Cusa claims that the divine is the formal, efficient, and final cause of all. This is derived from the fact that God is the form of all things.⁴ Because the divine is the source of the forms of all beings, it serves as their formal cause. Since the divine creates both the form and the matter of which all beings are made it also serves as the efficient cause. Finally, as the fulfillment of the potentiality of all beings the divine also serves as the final cause of reality. Though formal cause is relatively static, since it creates its effect merely by its presence, efficient and final causality play a far more dynamic role. Final causality actively diffuses goodness through its effect and efficient causality which communicates existence to its effect.⁵

Kenneth L. Schmitz points out in his work, entitled *The Gift: Creation*, that the condition for a dynamic plurality of beings to exist is that they receive from others.⁶ For Cusa, this dynamism is not solely the product of the divine but extends to all of being. In *De Docta Ignorantia*, Cusa asserts that by the mingling of elements new entities are constantly created.⁷ This recombination of elements is not solely the work of formal causality, since in creating new entities that combine elements in new ways efficient causality is also operative. The dynamism of reality, however, is hardly limited to a mere recombination of elements. Each entity has inherent in its being an activity which in functioning contributes to the perfection of the whole in that it actualizes possibilities which would not otherwise be brought into existence.⁸ As Jasper Hopkins points out, each existing thing in its functioning is of use to every other existing thing, even though it may not intentionally try to be so.⁹

An example of this can be seen in *De Dato Patris Luminium* where Cusa notes that the power of a seed to create a tree cannot be

⁴ Nicholas of Cusa, "Trialogus De Possest" in *A Concise Introduction to the Philosophy of Nicholas of Cusa*, 81.

⁵ Theodore J. Kondoleon, *Exemplary Causality in the Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Philosophical Studies, no. 229, 1967), 151.

⁶ Kenneth L. Schmitz, *The Gift: Creation* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1982), 80.

⁷ Nicholas of Cusa, *Of Learned Ignorance*, 119.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 111.

⁹ Hopkins, 80.

actualized without the light of the sun.¹⁰ This example expresses two of the most fundamental principles of Cusa's dynamic conception of reality. The first principle is the interaction between beings. The seed cannot actualize its potential without the sun's action. The second principle is the creative capacity of being. In fulfilling its potential, the seed brings a new being into existence, which is itself creative. Furthermore, in fulfilling its potential the seed has contributed to the perfection of the whole. In this manner, the tree which the seed produces is the effect of the final causality operative in the universe. Thus one can see that, for Cusa, individual beings continue both to communicate existence and to diffuse goodness.

It is the principle of individuality which is most closely related to efficient and formal causality. Formal causality can only operate in the presence of forms which in turn can exist only within individual beings. Efficient causality requires individual beings because it would be impossible for it to operate without an agent to initiate its action and a patient for it to act upon. Final causality, however, is more related to the principle of community in that it is produced by the potentiality within these beings and their ability to exist in a fashion other than they actually do.

The Unity of Being

In order for beings to interact with and reflect one another it is required that they, therefore, share some fundamental relationship. This section will examine the unity of reality which Cusa's conception of being makes possible as a response to the perennial philosophical problem of the one and the many. In order to elaborate upon Cusa's understanding of the harmonious diversity of reality, it will outline four interrelated types of unity which exist within Cusa's metaphysics. The first type of unity is the singular unity which exists between act and potency within the individual and allows it to exist. The second type of unity is based upon the contractibility of being which allows for the whole of being to exist within each individual entity. The third type of unity is that of the total being of the universe. The fourth type of unity is absolute unity of uncontracted being in which all distinctions coincide. The following will treat each type of unity in its turn and thereby illuminate as a central element of Cusa's metaphysical thought the significance of diversity within unity.

It is perhaps best to begin this examination by noting that not all of Cusa's interpreters see him as someone with a fundamentally unified

¹⁰ Nicholas of Cusa, "De Dato Patris Luminium" in *Nicholas of Cusa's Metaphysics of Contraction*, 116.

view of reality. Pauline Moffitt Watts, for example, concentrates upon some isolated elements within Cusa's thought and concludes that he finds the universe to be a place of fundamental discontinuity and estrangement in which man is a stranger condemned to exist in a state of metaphysical disjunctions.¹¹ Watts does not seem to take account of the fact that the disjunctive elements within Cusa's thought exist within an overarching framework of unity. Much of Cusa's philosophy is based upon the Neo-Platonic idea that unity is a fundamental characteristic of being. In fact, in *De Docta Ignorantia*, Cusa plainly states that being and unity are essentially convertible terms.¹²

The first type of unity which exists within Cusa's metaphysics is the individual unity of each particular existing being and is derived from the principle of identity. As Thomas McTighe points out, Cusa subscribes to the classical position that "A thing has being to the extent that it is one."¹³ For Cusa, in order to exist, every being must be itself and, thereby, exclude every other being. This inherent individual unity seems to create a fundamental opposition between the various entities within reality.

Cusa resolves this opposition with the second type of unity expressed in his metaphysics and referred to here as contracted unity. This type of unity is derived from the principle of community in which Cusa sees each individual being as a contraction of the totality of being. By the term contraction, Cusa means that each individual entity is a restricted image of the whole of being. Hence, Cusa creates a universal relationality between all entities in that by virtue of their ontological structure each entity is in itself a unique reflection of the same reality. Cusa thus forges an inherent existential bond between all entities and overcomes the opposition which the individual unity of each being seemingly created.

It is to this contracted unity that Cusa refers when he asserts that all beings exist within each thing.¹⁴ In fact, as noted above, Cusa is quick to point out that he is not referring to any actual presence, since this would destroy the individual unity which he sees as a necessary precondition for all being.¹⁵ Hence, individual unity does not inhibit the unity of the whole. In fact, since each individual is inherently structured

¹¹ Pauline Moffitt Watts, *Nicholas Cusanus: A Fifteenth Century Vision of Man* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1982), 25.

¹² Nicholas of Cusa, *Of Learned Ignorance*, 90.

¹³ Thomas P. McTighe, "The Meaning of the Couple, 'Complicatio-Explicatio' in the Philosophy of Nicholas of Cusa," *The Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* (1958): 32:209.

¹⁴ Nicholas of Cusa, *Of Learned Ignorance*, 88.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 84.

to contain the whole, the individual can only be itself by being, in a sense, all reality. Because of this, the individual does not exist in diametric opposition to the whole, but as its singular expression. In fact, through contracted unity the unity of the individual enhances the unity of the whole in that the former is structured in such a way as to express the latter. It is in this way that Cusa lays the groundwork for seeing unity as a harmonious expression of diversity.

The third type of unity is the unity of all being within the universe. It would be a grievous error to regard the unity of the universe as a whole to be nothing more than a simple aggregate with no internal relationship between its constituent elements as in the case of a pile of stones. In *De Docta Ignorantia*, Cusa asserts that the relationship between the universe and its parts is analogous to that of universal humanity to a particular person in that the actual existence of the universal can only exist as contracted in the individual.¹⁶ Likewise, the universe can only exist as it is contracted in its component parts. The universe for Cusa serves as something of a super-genus which cannot exist independently of its constituent elements, yet, through those elements obtains a real existence. It is not a randomly assembled conglomerate but a unified whole expressive of the reality of the absolute from which it derives its being.

For Cusa the unity of the absolute is and can be only absolute unity which is devoid of all distinction and all plurality. Cusa makes this point clearly in *De Docta Ignorantia* where he asserts that the nature of the absolute is such that it excludes all degrees of more or less.¹⁷ This is because the absolute is actually all that it can possibly be and, therefore, cannot have its being added to or diminished.¹⁸ Because the absolute is the source of all being in the finite world, the distinctions of the finite world do not apply within it. It is to this that Cusa is referring when he writes in *De Visione Dei* "Nothing exists outside of God but in God these things are not other than God."¹⁹ This is because for Cusa "...otherness in unit is without otherness because it is unity..."²⁰ Thus one can see that the nature of unity for the absolute is significantly different than that in the finite realm. Whereas unity in the finite world requires diversity in order more accurately to proclaim the whole, diversity in the realm of the absolute would be both superfluous and

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 88.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 15.

¹⁹ Nicholas of Cusa, *The Vision of God*, 66.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 61.

impossible.²¹ The unity of the absolute is pure and simple unity where all the distinctions of the finite world coincide.

For Cusa, the absolute oneness of the divine precedes all the opposition of finite being and, by doing so, unites them as the source from which each derives its existence. The absolute exists in a transcendent and undifferentiated manner and, thereby, unites all opposition ontologically by being the ultimate cause of their existence. The oppositions of finite being conflict only on the individual level.

In this fashion, Cusa resolves the tension between the inherent unity of individuals which provides the basis for the principle of individuality and the inherent unity of being as a whole which is the foundation of the principle of community. This resolution is possible because Cusa sees unity as being enhanced by diversity rather than destroyed by it. This derives from Cusa's understanding of the nature of being. For Cusa being is cohesive and unified, yet is made up of a diverse variety of distinct individuals. Each individual is a contraction of the whole and, though all are interrelated, each remains distinct by expressing the whole in its own unique fashion. Thus, a diverse variety of particular expressions more perfectly reflects the nature of the whole than could any single expression or uniform series of expressions, since variety is more comprehensive than uniformity.

²¹ Nicholas of Cusa, *Of Learned Ignorance*, 15.

CHAPTER II

PURSUIT OF HARMONY: CONTRIBUTION OF CHINESE PHILOSOPHY

SUN SHANGYANG

CLASH OR HARMONY?

The last decade of the millennium saw the end of the longstanding Cold War and its antagonism between ideological systems. This deserves to be viewed as one of the greatest achievements of humankind in the last century and will exert a deep influence on the future of mankind in the new century upon which we are embarked. There seems to be some direct resultants of this achievement. First, developing countries now have a precious opportunity to realize their modernization under relatively stable circumstances. Second, with the deconstruction of Eurocentric discourse by post-modernism and the withdrawal of ideological systems, distinct national cultures and a sense of national identity have been playing ever more important roles in the international political arena, just as national states had been doing before. The discourse of national culture will become the main means to express national interests, values and desires. In other words, the increase of national identity will enable us to live in a world of cultural diversity. Third, the pursuit of development will call for progress in the sense of unity, which cannot be confined to the field of technological and economic interchange. Fourth, therefore, we will face the philosophical tensions between unity and diversity, between the one and the many, and that among the many. The waywardness of each national culture on the international stage will give rise to conflict, as will the arbitrariness of the unity (or the one) since “for the relevant future, there will be no universal civilization, but instead a world of different civilizations.”¹

These multiple challenges deriving from cultural interaction have been met and treated by various attitudes and ways which include at least the following four.

First, some governments always emphasize the national particularity of their own cultures and advocate a pluralistic policy of culture on the international stage. This attitude can be defined as cultural parti-

¹ Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilization?” in *Foreign Affairs*, summer, 1993, p. 49.

cularism which has been used by them as a convenient and pragmatic means to reject any criticism on their monistic cultural policy or internal totalitarianism. In many disputes human rights between Western and developing countries we find that unity vanishes from sight due to the adherence of both sides to their own values.

Second, those who believe in the universality of their own culture often hope and even compel peoples in other cultural circles to accept their system of values as universal human norms. If the first one can be regarded as a passively defensive policy, then the second one can be considered as an actively offensive policy. It seems to me that even if the offensive side prevails, the diversity submerged by the resultant artificial unity will surely break out into conflict since it was not acquired by mutual respect and understanding. That the failure of this monistic cultural policy in the international arena is related to a certain self-centeredness has been shown by the fact that we have not yet found any universal civilization.

Third, being aware of the difficulty in developing a sense of unity, some have abjured the efforts to pursue unity and harmony. Starting from self-interests, they have tried to make and exploit conflict between different cultures and religions for the development of their self-interests. This attitude can be defined as a theory thriving on conflicts and is found in Huntington's article, "Clash of Civilization?" It is Huntington who foresaw that different civilizations will play ever more important roles on the stage of global politics and saw the failure of Eurocentrism. But it was also Huntington who tried to persuade American government "to exploit difference and conflicts among Confucian and Islamic states; to support in other civilizations groups sympathetic to Western values and interests,"² though he was "not to advocate the desirability of conflicts between civilizations."³ It is easy to see that Huntington's interest-determinism is contradicted by his assertion of the role of cultures, and that his starting point is still a Eurocentrism which naturally has produced a strong reaction from the Confucian states and regions.

Fourth, since we understand that peace and harmony are the absolute conditions of growth and development, perhaps the only correct way is to seek common ground or identify elements of commonality between different civilizations while reserving difference. That is, to seek to maintain harmony or balance between unity (or the one) and diversity (or the many), i.e., to develop a more subtle sense of unity in step with the development of the new sense of diversity. In the fourth

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

part of this paper, we will find Chinese philosophy or wisdom helpful and instructive to this urgent task.

Intellectuals from different civilizations and different academic fields must seek harmony and peace, not conflict between civilizations. It is their responsibility to surpass any discourse of self-interests or self-centeredness and try to develop as universal as possible a way for the peace and development of the whole world.

DIALOGUE: THE ROAD TO HARMONY

Cultural diversity does not necessarily lead to, or degenerate into conflict. It all depends on human efforts, as a Chinese proverb says. If the spokesman of each culture or civilization sticks to his own version or argument, believes in the universality of his own culture and firmly demands the acceptance and observance of his own values and beliefs by other peoples, then diversity will inevitably end in conflict—a savage state in which peoples are wolves to peoples and man a wolf to man. But if we resort to dialogue whenever we face a coming conflict, with mutual respect and patient listening to the other side in order to understand how they see the world and their interests, it will be possible for us to achieve agreements upon particular issues and avoid disputes between deaf persons, which easily lead to violence. In a word, only through dialogue can we promote mutual understanding and create a harmonious world where various cultures can co-exist peacefully

This point of view can be proven by the history of dialogue between Chinese and the Western culture. The first substantive dialogue between Western and Chinese culture occurred in the late Ming Dynasty (1582-1644 A.D.), this has been viewed as peaceful and equal with paradigmatic meaning. When the Jesuit missionaries, who firmly held the idea that Catholicism was the only universal religion, sailed to China, they found themselves stranded in a people who also firmly believed in the universality of their own culture; they found themselves in a “civilization pretending to be a state”. If they treated this strong civilization with neglect and tried to compel the Chinese, whether intellectuals or the common people, to convert to Catholicism, they would have been expelled from China soon after they arrived. However, fortunately Matteo Ricci, one of the most important missionaries in the dialogue, worked out a missionary method accommodating Chinese culture. With an excellent command of Chinese, he not only dressed in Confucian style with a square piece of cloth on his head and called himself a “Western Confucianist”, but also followed the etiquette of a Chinese scholar when meeting visitors. He did so based on an explanation of Confucianism in which the Chinese etiquette was defined as secular, rather than as heretical. More meaningful and praiseworthy,

he developed extensive knowledge of Chinese culture with a positive attitude towards its values and wrote many books in Chinese, through which he initiated active dialogue with Chinese intellectuals who played a crucial role in the society of China. In these popular books, Matteo Ricci defined God or the king of the upper region in Confucian classics as the Lord of the Heavens of Catholicism, linked the Confucian and Catholic theories of human nature and morality, identified elements of commonality between Confucianism and Catholicism and preached a Confucianized Catholicism to the Chinese literati. His acceptance of Chinese culture and persuasive preaching not only promoted mutual understanding between missionaries and Chinese intellectuals, but also made him very popular among the literati. He was respected as “the sage from the west”. Through dialogue with Matteo Ricci some influential Chinese scholars recognized that “Heaven Learning” shared important commonality with Chinese culture (“Sages appear in the Eastern Seas; they have the same mind, the same principle. Sages appear in the Eastern Seas; they have the same mind, the same principle”) and “could be helpful in establishing an ethical system more universal and practical than Confucianism in achieving the social ideal of Confucianism while meeting the individual’s ultimate concern.” It is through this dialogue initiated by Matteo Ricci that some open-minded scholars such as Xu Guangqi, Li Zhizhao and Yang Tingyun began to reflect on the shortcomings of traditional Confucianism and finally converted to Catholicism. This successful dialogue also led to a harmonious coexistence between Catholicism and Confucianism for at least 20 years.

After the death of Matteo Ricci, some more radical missionaries abjured Ricci’s missionary method. They refused to continue dialogue with Chinese scholars and prohibited Chinese Catholics from following Chinese etiquette. The radical idea that Catholicism is the sole universal religion and radical behavior of these missionaries naturally gave rise to a fierce reaction against Catholicism and “Western barbarians” from the literati and Buddhist monks. The latter greatly exaggerated the harm and threat of Catholicism against Confucian China by discerning the difference between Catholicism and Confucianism and even making deeper the gap between them. This led to a complete conflict and anti-foreign movement which blocked the road to further mutual understanding.

This historical fact shows that only peaceful dialogue can lead to harmonious coexistence between different cultures and benefit both sides. In the dialogue with Matteo Ricci, some outstanding and open-minded Chinese scholars developed extensive and deep knowledge of Western philosophy, religion and sciences (which was called “Heaven Learning” as a whole). They gave up Sino-centralism in which Chinese culture had been asserted as the universal one and peoples outside the

“central kingdom” had been despised as barbarians. A new and more progressive civilization was presented to China, and also to Europe. The fact that those who tried to identify elements of commonality in the dialogue contributed very much to both sides is also a strong evidence of the unity and intersubjectivity of human reason.

EXCHANGE: THE WAY TO DEVELOPMENT

Dialogue between different cultures can give rise to harmonious coexistence, whereas exchange can act as an important source of development for both sides. In the history of world civilization, we find that the exchange between Greece and Egypt, Rome and Greece, Arab and Europe, Renaissance Europe and the Byzantine Empire were milestones. Here I would like to elucidate this point of view through a brief study of Sino-Western cultural relations.

When the Jesuits introduced Chinese culture to Europe, the masters of the Enlightenment found that there were many significant ideas and values in this culture outside the Bible, such as a purely human religion (Voltaire) and a perfectly practical reason (Leibniz), etc., which they exploited as support for the Enlightenment. Although there was much misreading in their interpretation of Chinese ideas, these proved to be rather creative in the development of European civilization.⁴

It is more evident that the Sino-Western cultural exchange has benefited the development of Chinese culture and society. In the 19th century, when mighty waves of Western modernization beat upon the seashore of China, some open-minded Chinese intellectuals recognized the backwardness of China and advocated learning from Western civilization. In the first period, Chinese intellectuals tried to make China become modern without becoming Western, i.e. to get Western technology while preserving traditional Chinese social systems and values. But the humiliating failure in the Sino-Japan War (1894-1895) made some intellectuals clearly aware that Western technology was not enough to enable China to be strong and powerful. In the second period, Western social systems were introduced to China by the Constitutional Reform and Modernization (1898) and the Revolution of 1911. But the democratic revolution proved to be a failure because there was no root for Western democratic ideas, though it brought about the Republic of China. In the third period, Western values and ideas were introduced to China by new the Cultural Movement and the Whole-Westernization Movement. In this prolonged historical process, Chinese intellectuals had adhered to the idea that learning from the West was the source of the

⁴ On this subject see my monograph. “Misreading the Early Sino-Western Culture Exchange and Its Creativeness,” in *Yuan Xue*, Vol. I, (Beijing, 1994).

development of China. Actually, the establishment of communist China can be defined as a result of this idea if we do not deny the fact that Marxism as the dominant ideology is a kind of Western system of ideas used as an intellectual and spiritual source for the development of China.

This process of learning from the West not only made the history of modern China easily understood or grasped by Western people, but also made the role of traditional Chinese culture less significant in the modernization of China. In the 1980s, the elites of China attempted to carry forward the heritage of the May Fourth Movement (1919) and develop a radical criticism of traditional Chinese culture with the Western ideas of science and democracy. This “new Enlightenment” ended in students’ demonstrations which were defined as political chaos similar to Great Cultural Revolution by the government. In the present decade, some Chinese intellectuals have begun to pay attention to the preservation of traditional values. But even the most conservative scholars have used Western methodology and ideas in redefining the values and meaning of traditional Chinese culture in the modernization of China, while many other intellectuals have adhered to the universality of democracy and science, though they hold different definitions of these Western values and ideas. As far as the government is concerned, it also advocates learning from Western technology and administrative ways and regards them as an important intellectual source of development.

It is natural that China does not give up its national identity and particularity in the world of cultural diversity. To some extent, particularism has been developed by the government’s discourse on the international political stage and its encouragement of the study of traditional culture. But in virtue of the fact that Chinese intellectuals have focused their efforts on the fusion of Sino-Western culture for more than 150 years and the developments of China have been influenced greatly by non-Chinese culture, it can be asserted that Chinese culture or Confucianism will not act as a source of conflict because of its non-aggressive nature and broad coherence with the reason of humankind.

CONTRIBUTION OF CHINESE WISDOM

The history of world civilizations has shown that only through dialogue and exchange can we achieve peace and development. But this truth has been obscured by the deadly dilemma that, on the one hand, the assertion of one’s own distinctiveness seems too easily to imply attacking others simply because they differ, ignoring and destroying all bonds of unity; whereas, on the other hand, the effort to achieve unity is interpreted as requiring the suppression of the access of peoples to the cultural and religious wellspring of their own identity and thereby the very roots of their sense of unity with others. It seems rather difficult to

find a permanent solution for this quandary. But this task is so urgent that we should not hesitate to attempt solutions at least in order to pave the way for a more permanent one. Here, I would like to focus on seeking the ultimate cultural and philosophical principles. These must serve diversity which can promote cooperation between peoples with distinctive cultural and religious backgrounds. They must also serve a unity which will not entail suppression of the freedom, identity and diversity of peoples, but will enhance tolerance, penetrating understanding and respect for others. My source will be Chinese philosophy which promises to be able to make a great contribution to our purpose. It seems to me that there are at least three ideas and ways in Chinese philosophy which are rather instructive to our task and can be elucidated as below.

The Doctrine of the Mean (Chung Yung)

The Chinese peoples are known for their gentle and moderate disposition. In the history of her civilization, it is very difficult to find any brutal wars brought about by religious conflicts and refusal of opportunity to learn from other cultures, except when threatened with being conquered by force. The fundamental cause of this non-radical behavior lies in their following of doctrine of the mean which can be defined as a golden rule and has extended great influence upon the practical life of the Chinese people. The master Confucius (551-479 B.C.) considered a perfect man or sage to be one who “took hold of their (common people’s) two extremes, took the mean between them, and applied it in his dealing with the people.”⁵ Chu Xi’s (1130-1200 A.D.) interprets Chung Yung,” as follows, by Chung (central) is meant what is not onesided, and by Yung (ordinary) is meant what is unchangeable. Chung is the correct path of the world and Yung is the definite way of the world”.⁶ Under the guidance of the doctrine of the mean very few Chinese people go to extremes or carry something to its extremes in their practical life; very few Chinese philosophers develop a radical philosophical system. Although similar ideas (i.e., the doctrine of the mean) can be found in Aristotle’s philosophy, this principle has not been followed as much by Western as by Chinese people as is evidenced by religious wars and some radical philosophical systems in the history of Western civilization.

To date, many conflicts we are facing are rooted in radically pluralistic and monistic theories or beliefs on religion and culture. Those

⁵ *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 99, trans. by Wing-tsit Chan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963).

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

who believe in the sole legitimacy and universality of their own culture are radical monists, while those who adhere to the particularity of their own culture are radical pluralists. When they meet in the international political arena, the former do their best to compel the latter to accept an artificial unity established by a certain system of values, whereas the latter will attempt to refuse any such unity by emphasizing their own particularity. Hence these meetings end in conflict and even violence. According to the doctrine of the mean, however, whereas the former and the latter are two extremes, true wisdom and thereby harmony lies in taking the mean between these extremes. Here I mean that, on the one hand, we should admit the reason for the existence of “the many” (various cultures) and try to understand and respect other traditions of religions and cultures. On the other hand, we should accept the true unity based on reason and intersubjectivity of humankind, as we accept common rules in a football world cup game, and try to converge upon the objective “oneness” of the world. It is not impossible to achieve harmony and peace if we follow the doctrine of the mean.

The Great Harmony

In the system of Chinese values, harmony is the most important, precious and supreme ideal to be pursued. To Chinese philosophers, the great harmony is universal and embraces that between man and nature, man and society, man and man, peoples and peoples, state and state. Lao Tzu, the founder of the Taoist school, asserted that “man should follow the laws of earth, earth should follow the laws of heaven, heaven should follow the laws of Tao (*The Way*), Tao should follow the laws of nature,”⁷ because nature in his eyes is a harmonious, organic and spontaneous whole. Beginning with the master Confucius, Confucians have pursued the unity of Heaven and man, the unity of knowledge and action, and the supreme peace of the world. The metaphysical foundation of this ideal is the following belief and proposition: “myriad things are one body”. Chuang Tzu (399-295 B.C.), the greatest philosopher of Taoist school believed in the equality of myriad things which in his eyes are equal individuals that constitute a harmonious universe. Disputations and conflicts arise from the ignorance of the One (or Tao) or from the failure to see the equality of things and their harmonious relationships, so that the distinction between right and wrong is artificial and unnatural. Only the sage can know that myriad things are one body, “blend everything into a harmonious whole, and

⁷ Lao Tzu, *Tao-Te Ching*, chap. 25.

reject the confusion of distinctions”.⁸ Chang Tsai (1020-1077), one of the greatest Confucians, also set the great harmony as his supreme ideal. In his Western Inscription, he said: “All people are my brothers and sisters, and all things are my companions”⁹ Wang Yang Ming (1472-1529), another great Confucian philosopher, contributed to this idea. He said: “The great man regards the world as one family and the country as one person. As to those who make a cleavage between objects and distinguish between the self and others, they are small men. That the great man can regard Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things as one body is not because he deliberately wants to do so, but because it is natural to the human nature of his mind that he do so.”¹⁰ In virtue of this belief, to hurt others is to hurt oneself since each person and thing is a part of this harmonious and organic whole.

This theory of “myriad things being one body” not only has provided a metaphysical key for Chinese philosophers, but also has been the ultimate principle of their life. It sounds like so-called monistic music which can be heard in the Western philosophy, as an Indian sage said:

When man has seen himself as One with the infinite Being of the universe, when all separateness has ceased, when all men, all women, all angels, all animals, all plants, the whole universe has been melted into that oneness, then all fear disappears. Whom to fear? Can I hurt myself? Can I kill myself? Can I injure myself? Do you fear yourself? Then will all sorrow disappear. What can cause me sorrow? I am the One Existence of the universe. Then all jealousies will disappear; of whom to be jealous? Of myself? Then all bad feelings disappear. Against whom shall I have this bad feeling? Against myself? There is none in the universe but me. Kill this differentiation, kill this superstition that there are many, ‘He who, in this world of many, sees that One; he who, in this mass of insensibility, sees that One Sentient Being; he who in this world of shadow, catches that Reality, unto him belongs eternal peace, unto none else, unto none else.’¹¹

⁸ *Selected Readings from Famous Chinese Philosophers*, Vol. I, p. 143, ed. by Shi Jun (Beijing, 1988).

⁹ *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 497.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 659.

¹¹ Quoted in William James, *Pragmatism, A New Name for some Old Ways of Thinking* (London, 1907), pp.153-154.

This statement was rejected by William James as a radical monism. It is noticeable that in Chinese monism the equality of individuals and the right to follow human nature is preserved. In Guo Xiang's annotation on Chuang Tzu (one of the most important classics of Taoist school), he said: "Although the great is different from the small, yet if they all indulge themselves in the sphere of self-enjoyment, then all things are following their own nature and acting according to their own capacity; all are what they ought to be and equally happy."¹²

In a word, the pursuit of the harmonious One or unity in Chinese philosophy presupposes the recognition of existential reason or the right of the many or of individuals. While paying much attention to not hurting each individual, Chinese philosophers try to keep the harmony of the universe as a whole, which consists of myriad things and individuals. Although it is very difficult to find the actualization of this supreme ideal in the history of Chinese civilization, Chinese philosophers have continued its pursuit while realizing the difficulty in realizing this ideal.

The idea of great harmony is also instructive here. If we regard the world as an organic whole, we should not hurt any part of it in developing unity and should try to develop mutual understanding and respect between the many. If we view myriads of things and individuals as one body, we should regard the distinction between the so-called advanced and the backward, the barbarian and the civilized, as that between the eyes and ears of the one body. Who will hurt our eyes or ears simply because they are different? The only correct way is to let them "follow their own nature" and function properly according to their capacity in the naturally harmonious and organic whole. Perhaps this raises the old question whether nature is good or evil, to which I would answer that no one will doubt the goodness of the nature of eyes or ears.

One Principle and Many Manifestations

To Westerners, it is strange and incredible that an ancient Chinese often believed in two or three religions (Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism) simultaneously. This was true of Matteo Ricci when he was in China (1582-1610). In order to help Chinese people to reject the Religion of the Three in One, he wrote:

Formerly, in your esteemed country, each of its three religions had its own image. In recent times a monster has appeared from I know not where: it has one body and three heads and is called the Religion of the Three in One. The common people ought to have been frightened of it, and the

¹² *Selected Readings from Famous Chinese Philosophers*, Vol. I, p. 339.

lofty scholars should have attacked it with all speed; in fact, however, they have prostrated themselves in worship before it and made it their master. Will this not corrupt men's minds even further?¹³

This criticism which was in keeping with Western logic arose from ignorance of Chinese metaphysics. Many Chinese philosophers did insist that there be only one Tao (Way) as did Jesus. Meanwhile, they believed that manifestations of the Tao are many. Chu Xi called the Tao the principle or the Great Ultimate. When one of his students asked: "(You said,) 'the principle is a single, concrete entity, and the myriad things partake it as their substance. Hence each of the myriad things possesses in it a Great Ultimate.'" According to this theory, does the Great Ultimate not split up into parts?" Chu answered: "Fundamentally there is only one Great Ultimate, yet each of the myriad things has been endowed with it and each in itself possesses the Great Ultimate in its entirety. This is similar to the fact that there is only one moon in the sky, but when its light is scattered upon rivers and lakes, it can be seen everywhere. It cannot be said that the moon has been split."¹⁴ Chu's theory later exerted great influence upon Chinese philosophy and religion. In the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 A.D.) the Religion of the Three in One was so prevalent that Lin Zhaoen concocted a syncretic religion which fused Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism into one religion. Many important philosophers such as Li Zhi and JiaoHong, adhered to the idea that Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism are one simply because they all expect to know and manifest the sole Tao. Moreover, it should be mentioned that Li Zhi, who was a philosopher critical of official Confucianism and therefore was persecuted to death in prison, once helped Matteo Ricci in realizing his plan to preach in Beijing and in letting intellectuals know about Matteo Ricci and his religion.

The theory of one principle and many manifestations together with the idea of the great harmony enable Chinese culture to be magnanimous and open-minded to other cultures. All that benefits the spread and extension of the Tao are easily embraced in it.

What is the Tao for different cultures to date? It seems to me to be peace and development. If we follow the theory of one principle (Tao) and many manifestations, we should develop tolerance and deep understanding towards each civilization which is able to manifest the

¹³ *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven (Tien-Chu Shih-i)*, p. 401, trans. by Douglas Lancashire and Peter Hu Kuo-chen, S.J., Ricci Institute (Taipei-Paris-Hongkong, 1985).

¹⁴ *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 638.

Tao while developing the unity of the world in which each civilization can coexist harmoniously. By following this way, not only can we protect the world from being destroyed by cultural conflicts, but we can also make it possible to develop a global system of values which is similar to the Religion of the Three in One that we have seen in Chinese culture.

*Peking University
Beijing, P.R. China*

CHAPTER III

RIELO'S GENETIC CONCEPTION OF UNITY: *UNUM GENETICUM VS. UNUM SIMPLICITER*

ROBERT P. BADILLO

Czech President Vaclav Havel in an address, on receiving the Philadelphia Liberty Medal, in Independence Hall on July 4, 1994, gave expression to an urgent enterprise affecting the civilized world of the latter half of the twentieth century. With the disintegration of colonial hegemony and the demise of Communism, there is the need to find “the key to insure the survival of a civilization that is global and multicultural.”¹ With the advent of the third millennium Havel understands the central task as entailing “the creation of a *new model* of co-existence among the various cultures, peoples, races and religious spheres within a single interconnected civilization.”² The metaphysical dimension of the *key* or the *new model*, to which Havel refers, emerges from the requirement that such a conceptual frame embrace the Multicultural Age in a manner favoring the continued survival and co-existence of an integrated civilization. Yet for Havel “human rights and freedoms” are rooted in a “self-transcendence” grounded upon “a higher authority than man himself.”³ When speaking of the emancipatory potential of the human being, Havel said: “The Declaration of Independence, adopted 218 years ago in this building, states that the Creator gave man the right to liberty. It seems man can realize that liberty only if he does not forget the One who endowed him with it.”⁴

This brings to mind the opening words of the encyclical *Pacem in Terris* in which Pope John XXIII identifies the basis for humane co-existence: “Peace on earth, which all men of every era have most eagerly yearned for, can be firmly established only if the order laid down by God be dutifully observed.”⁵ In this encyclical, the first ever to be addressed to “All Men of Good Will,” the Roman Pontiff also reminds one that “Inasmuch as God is the first truth and the highest good, he alone is that deepest source from which human society can draw its

¹ Vaclav Havel, “The Measure of Man,” *The New York Times* (July 8, 1994), op. ed. (italics mine).

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris* (1963), #1.

vitality, if that society is to be well-ordered, beneficial, and in keeping with human dignity.”⁶

Thus both John XXIII and Havel indicate that the Absolute or God is the *key* for the proper realization of human freedom. This is not surprising for according to the Judeo-Christian Scriptures the human being is made in the image and likeness of God. The relevance of this assertion for this seminar will become clear after examining the text in Genesis 1:26-27, which reads:

God said, “Let us make man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild animals and all the creatures that creep along the ground.”

God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them.

The initial phrase of the passage—“God said, ‘Let us...’”—is profoundly revelatory, *mutatis mutandis*, for the insight which one may derive for understanding in what sense God is the *key* for the human being’s/community’s self-understanding. Whereas up until verse twenty-six Genesis has been referring to God as the Creator of all that is, in verse twenty-six, God is revealed more fully. First, God emerges as at the very least constituted by two persons such that God is constituted by a sociality, a plurality, i.e., by a diversity within a unity (*Communio Personarum*). Second, the persons constituting the Godhead are in a state of mutual relation; indeed the expression “Let us make man in our image,” indicates that the operation of the one is not without the other nor that of the other without the one. Third, God is dialogical, communicative, such that one person addresses the other. Fourth, the phrase “Let us make man in our own image,” indicates that God is freely deciding to create man in his own image. Fifth, given that God is the one who freely creates the human being, he is *love*, for he shares his existence with other beings. God’s nature is thus revealed as binary, social, dialogical, communicative, freely creative and loving.

Now, the phrase—“[Let us] make man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves”—is crucial for what it says of the human being, viz., that he is the replica of God, i.e., a subject created in the *imago Dei*; such that the human being is also binary, social, dialogical, communicative, freely creative, loving. Indeed the relational and dialogical nature of the human subject manifests itself in the loneliness experienced by Adam when he discovers that there is no one in his environment to

⁶ *Ibid.*, #38.

which he can relate as another person, as another being sharing—to the same extent—the divine image and likeness. The idyllic garden which serves as his habitat with its array of vegetative and sentient creatures by itself proves insufficient to provide Adam with the sort of companionship which his social and communicative nature demands. He therefore yearns for a suitable companion, viz., another person such as himself with whom he can maintain a convivial and dialogical relationship as is proper to the very Godhead in whose image and likeness he has been fashioned.

Thus, according to the Biblical account, the human being is foundationally related to God as not only his source, as occurs with other created beings, but as the *model* in terms of which he has been fashioned. The implication here is that the human subject proceeds well as a human subject when his manner of being is in accordance with the divine manner of being, for he has been made in the image and likeness of such a divine manner of being. God is, *sensu stricto*, the model of/for the human person rather than physical nature—whether inert or vital—or any other model which may be conceived.

The diversity in unity that is proper to the human person should be in accordance to the diversity in unity which is proper to God, for he has been made in the image and likeness of such diversity in unity. The phrase *diversity in unity* as predicated of God is taken here to signify God as a unity constituted by a diversity, in this case, by a diversity of persons, i.e., by at the very least two persons. This is to say that the very being of God is to be understood not as a unity which excludes relation, but rather as a unity constituted by a relation of persons. Without such a relation in unity there is no Biblical God. To emphasize unity without, at the same time, equally emphasizing relation is to end up with an empty unity, i.e., a unity devoid of relation. But, to emphasize diversity without at the same time equally emphasizing unity is to end up with a non-relational diversity devoid of unity. Both terms comply each other such that unity should not be absolutized at the cost of diversity, nor diversity at the cost of unity. Verily, the unity of God is as real as his diversity, and the diversity of God is as real as his unity, such that one should not be understood as subservient to the other.

In the light of these reflections on the human being as replica of the divine diversity in unity, it is important to see diversity primarily in terms of the relationship of one person to another. This is to say that before one comprehends the human person as a diversity in terms of ethnic, racial, social, political,...considerations, one needs to focus on the more primary or ontological sense of diversity. This is constituted by a plurality of human persons, of beings who, though many, are similar in that they have all been fashioned in the image and likeness of God—in the image and likeness of his own diversity in unity. This said, the

Biblical narrative provides an account of how the original relationship between God and the human being came to be ruptured. The nature of this rupture was brought about by Adam via Eve, who elected to listen to the voice of the serpent, which articulated a view of the human being as a god unto himself, as a being for oneself rather than for God. The consequences of conducting their lives in accordance to this pseudo-model of being human brought with it dire consequences for the original pair and their progeny, although not without the promise of redemption.

The question which this paper would like to raise is whether the Biblical account has metaphysical articulation, meaning whether God in his diversity in unity as model of the human subject has metaphysical endorsement. Fernando Rielo introduces a new metaphysical model—the *genetic conception of the principle of relation*—referring to an Absolute Subject constituted in the rational sphere by two persons—the *Binity*—in genetic relation. The genetic conception of the unity of these two is of a profoundly enriched sense of Oneness: the *unum geneticum*. For Rielo the various models proposed historically are informed by identical models that metaphysically present a notion of reality as a-relational and a-communicative and therefore of an impoverished sense of oneness, the *unum simpliciter*.⁷

This paper will endeavor to elucidate this position in three sections: (1) a presentation of Rielo's critique of the so-called principle of identity as a metaphysical principle and an application of his critique of the identitatical notions of unity implicit in Aristotle's notion of separate or divine substance, on the one hand, and Descartes' notion of the *cogito*, on the other; (2) a succinct examination of Jürgen Habermas' theory of communication in terms of his *ideal speech situation* as pointing toward a conception of Absolute Subject as permeated by a relational and communicative unity; and (3) an introduction to Fernando

⁷ Some sections of this paper, on the master lines of Rielo's genetic metaphysics, appear integrally or in modified form in other papers either published or in the process of being published: my "Complementarity in Rielo's Genetic Metaphysics and Poetry: The Annihilation of Nihilism," *Prajña Vihara: The Journal of Philosophy and Religion* vol. 3, no. 3 (Bangkok, Thailand: Assumption University, January-June 2003) (in press); "Rielo's Genetic Metaphysics Elevates Mysticism to Pure Ontology," *Proceedings of "Christian Mysticism," International Conference* (Beirut, Lebanon: Notre Dame University, 2003) (in press); "Beyond Parmenidean Monologue: Rielo's *Binity* as Ground for Mystical Experience," *Proceedings of Metaphysics for the Third Millennium*, World Meeting of University Professors in celebration of the Great Jubilee, Rome, Italy (September 5-8, 2000): 191-197. This, however, is the first time that the present paper is being published as a whole, albeit in a slightly updated version from that read in the 1994 Council for Research in Values and Philosophy seminar on *Diversity in Unity*, Washington, D.C.

Rielo's metaphysical principle—the *genetic conception of the principle of relation*—as providing a notion of genetic unity that has profound implications for comprehending the constitutive sense of communion that underlies the human person and human family in its multifarious dimensions, be it cultural, ethnic, racial, or social.

RIELO'S CRITIQUE OF THE SO-CALLED PRINCIPLE OF IDENTITY AND IDENTITATIONAL CONCEPTIONS OF UNITY: UNUM SIMPLICITER

For Rielo all metaphysical principles advanced within the history of philosophy have a common root: the incorporation by these—explicitly or implicitly—of the so-called principle of identity,⁸ whose metaphysical expression was first given by Parmenides of Elea in his formulation “being is being” and “nonbeing is nonbeing.” Rielo effects the rupture of this principle in its twofold articulation—pseudo-static and pseudo-dynamic⁹—by indicating the sense in which identity lacks syntactic, semantic and metaphysical meaning. Syntactically, the identitatical enunciates “being is being,” “entity is entity,” “substance is substance,” “flu is flu,”...“constitute pseudo-enunciates that add nothing to scientific knowing, given that the predicate is the same as the subject.”¹⁰ Logically, “being is being” and “nonbeing is nonbeing” have the “same metaphysical validity.” This is to say that the only exigency which the so-called principle of identity imposes is a succession of identitatical formulas that, if opposed, imply the same metaphysical validity.¹¹ Metaphysically, “the notions of “being,” “entity,” “substance” are “unattainable by identity,”¹² signifying that unable to get out of

⁸ Fernando Rielo, “Hacia una nueva concepción metafísica del ser” in *¿Existe una filosofía española?* (Madrid: E.F.R., 1988), p. 119-20 [English translations my own].

⁹ See José M. López Sevillano, “La nueva metafísica de Fernando Rielo” in *Aportaciones de filósofos españoles contemporáneos* (Seville: E.F.R., 1991), pp. 76-77, n. 11 [English translations my own]; and José M. López Sevillano, “Pure Metaphysics in Fernando Rielo,” trans. R.P. Badillo, in *Poet and Philosopher*, (Madrid: E.F.R, 1991), p. 203, n. 6.

¹⁰ By being constructed with monadic versus dyadic functors, the expressions “being is being,” “being as being,” “being in being,” “being inasmuch as it is being” lack syntactic, semantic and metaphysical meaning. Cf. López Sevillano, “La nueva metafísica de Fernando Rielo,” p. 75, n. 9; and “Pure Metaphysics in Fernando Rielo,” p. 202, n. 5.

¹¹ For a study that views identity as responsible for the classical dichotomies and modern antinomies, see Joseph J. Romano, “Beyond Identity: Rielo's New Approach to Being” in *Poet and Philosopher*, pp. 169-70.

¹² Rielo, “Hacia una nueva concepción metafísica del ser,” p. 119.

itself, identity cannot attain any other notion—"identity is identity" does not attain "being is being," "substance is substance"....; identity does not even attain its own "identity is identity," but, rather, incurs in the paradox of the reduplication of the subject and predicate.¹³ Moreover, for Rielo, every identitatical notion, regardless of the specific philosophical system in which it may emerge, elevated to absolute, converts itself into its own *petitio principii*, for to the question of what grounds such an absolute, the answer is that such an absolute grounds itself.

To illustrate Rielo's critique, it may be useful to consider in what sense the so-called principle of identity has been responsible for the classical monological paradigm present in ancient and modern philosophy, metaphysically circumscribing reality—whether, for instance, God or human being—to an extent that relations—whether metaphysical or ontological—are rendered untenable.¹⁴ Consider, for instance, both the notion of separate substance as formulated in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, and the conception of human being as developed in Descartes' *Meditations*.

When Aristotle states in Book Gamma that metaphysics is concerned with studying being *qua* being, i.e., substance as ground or cause of individual existence, he begins to move in hierarchical fashion from being as multiple and sensible to being as unity and intelligible. Accordingly, in Book Epsilon, Aristotle negates that primary being can be predicamental, i.e., secondary or accidental, being. In Book Zeta, he

¹³ For the critique of the pseudo-principle of contradiction and ~contradiction, see Fernando Rielo, "Concepción genética de lo que no es el sujeto absoluto" in *Raíces y valores históricos del pensamiento español* (Madrid: E.F.R., 1990), pp. 100-110 [English translations my own]. The absurdity entailed by the pseudo-principle of identity may be illustrated by the paradox of the reduplication of the subject and the predicate: if to the identitatical formula "A is A" [A = A] one applies the pseudo-principle of identity, the subject "A =" would yield [A = A], and the predicate "= A" would yield [A is A], from which one obtains [A = A] = [A = A]; moreover, each element of the subject "[A = A] =" would subdivide into (A =) (A = A) and into (= A) (A = A), and each element of the predicate "= [A = A]" would subdivide into (A =) (A = A) and into (= A) (A = A), from which one obtains: [(A = A) = (A = A)] = [(A = A) = (A = A)], and, accordingly an infinite succession [AAA...]. Cf. López Sevillano, "La nueva metafísica de Fernando Rielo," pp. 76-77, n. 11; and "Pure Metaphysics in Fernando Rielo," p. 203, n. 7.

¹⁴ Rielo effects the rupture of the so-called principle of identity as a metaphysical principle while conserving its more conventional sense where identity is understood as the recognition of someone or something, as in the example of an accrediting document, a flag, or as applied to a group as in the case of a cultural or national identity. Cf. López Sevillano, "Pure Metaphysics in Fernando Rielo," p. 205, n. 9.

further specifies that first being cannot be matter for, as indeterminate, it cannot answer the question of what a thing is; indeed by the end of this book, when considering the four causes generative of science, in this case concerning the nature of what it means to be in an unqualified sense, Aristotle fuses the formal, efficient and final causes into one formal principle, while setting aside the material cause. In Book Eta Aristotle moves to consider being not as a thing, but, rather, from the viewpoint of being as activity, the immanent force of attraction toward which being is drawn. In Book Theta Aristotle contends that actuality, identified with form, is prior to potentiality, identified with matter, given that what is merely potential is perishable and hence need not exist, such that, if something is, it necessarily implies actuality. This reasoning culminates in Book Lambda where Aristotle argues for a supersensible, i.e., immaterial substance: if sensible substance is subject to change, then it is perishable; if all substances are perishable, then everything is perishable; however, the process of change must be eternal, for if all were merely perishable, i.e., potential, nothing would be actual, such that there could be *no*-thing; thus, the sensible world of changing substances necessitates the existence of a separate substance, also known as divine being, i.e., “a principle whose very essence is actuality.”¹⁵

Yet an analysis of the Aristotelian notion of pure act discloses that it conforms to the Parmenidean identitatical notion of being. The attempt to articulate the nature of being effectively led Aristotle to the Parmenidean identitatical dichotomy between being and non-being. Indeed, once Aristotle identifies his identitatical notion of matter or potentiality with his identitatical notion of indeterminacy, when considering *simpliciter* what being *really* is, his conception of pure act emerges in terms of the Parmenidean predicates, in which being is understood identitatically as one, i.e., indivisible; and immutable, i.e., unchanging. Such a notion which identifies *real* being with pure intelligibility renders questionable the *being* of the multiple and the mutable, reintroducing the Parmenidean problem of the one and the many, the conundrum of ancient and medieval philosophy. Further, the activity of separate substance, conceived as an intelligible principle, is relegated to an act of self-contemplation, that is, a substance “thinking in itself,”¹⁶ whose “thinking is a thinking on thinking,”¹⁷ “so throughout eternity is the thought which has itself for its object.”¹⁸ The Aristotelian identification of thought and being advances a notion of divine being as

¹⁵ See *Metaphysics* 1071b17-22, *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon and trans. W.D. Ross (New York: Random House, 1941).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1072b20-23.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 1074b15ff.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1075a10.

a hermetically-isolated self-identity, radically disengaged from the rest of “reality.” Notwithstanding the very legitimate issue concerning the status of multiplicity and becoming within Aristotle’s account, his identitatical notion of divine being, a *solus ipse*, emerges as utterly monological, as a-relational, a-communicative and self-certifying, and hence the objective form of the *unum simpliciter*.

The classical monological notion of being rooted in Parmenidean identity surfaces again as the foundational centerpiece of modern philosophy in Descartes’ notion of *res cogitans*. Once Descartes proceeds to detach himself from the external world and to view knowledge as illusory, engaging in a repudiation of its underlying assumptions—the veracity of sense perception, the being of extended body, and the reliability of memory—he comes to view his *real* nature in terms of an identitatical notion of being as thought, i.e., as a thinking substance. He states, “I am, I exist, that is certain. But how often? Just when I think; for it might possibly be the case if I ceased entirely to think, that I should likewise cease altogether to exist...I am not more than a thing which thinks.”¹⁹ Setting aside as irrelevant the issue of the Cartesian methodical doubt as a heuristic device, the identification of thought and being, the “I am not more than a thing which thinks,” advances the identitatical notion of a hermetically-isolated *cogito*, a *solus ipse*, that monological, a-relational, a-communicative and self-certifying, the subjective form of the *unum simpliciter*, renders dubitable the existence of any other reality, be it sensible or supersensible, as expressed in the mind-body problem, the conundrum of modern philosophy.

Considered then either from the point of view of Aristotle’s notion of divine substance, including its medieval surrogates, or from that of Descartes’ notion of thinking substance, including its modern variations, the Parmenidean conception of being as identity emerges as the foundational principle responsible for a host of dichotomies, enigmas, paradoxes which are philosophically insoluble within the systems in which they originate. Indeed, the so-called-principle of identity is responsible for a monological paradigm pervasive in much of the history of philosophy. Falsifying reality, it renders relation and communication impossible, whether between divine being and the human person or even just between human persons. For Rielo the typical contradiction inherent to the so-called-principle of identity consists in absolutizing a self-same, i.e., identitatical, notion exclusive of elements of reality for which there is, at the same time, a concomitant attempt to

¹⁹ Meditations II, *Meditations on First Philosophy* in *The Essential Descartes*, trans. Elizabeth S. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross (New York: The New American Library, 1969), p. 173.

recover by means of spurious recourses. The fact that philosophical systems need to have recourse to an extra-philosophical supposition in order to make their various conceptions function indicates the inability of these systems to identify a constant that may render such notions genuinely adequate. For Rielo, "This is not a methodological problem; rather, one of principle."²⁰

HABERMAS' DIALOGICAL PARADIGM: AN INTERMEDIARY REFLECTION

In our own day, Habermas' pursuit of normative foundations for critical theory has led him from the monological, transcendentalist framework of the philosophy of the subject to the dialogical framework of the philosophy of communication.²¹ In this respect Habermas rejects the representationist epistemologies of modern philosophy—including Cartesian ideas, Lockean representations, Berkeleyan perceptions, Humean impressions, Kantian categories, Husserlian essences—that view the human subject as somehow monologically condemned within the theater of his own mind and its contents. Habermas' theory of communicative action, more specifically his theory of universal pragmatics, investigates the "universal and unavoidable presuppositions" that are operative in the successful employment of speech acts oriented to achieving understanding between dialogue partners.²² In contrast to theoretical linguistics, which abstracts from the pragmatic context of language so as to limit its sphere to sentential analysis and the generative ability of the speaker, universal pragmatics is concerned precisely with the structures and processes involved in communicative action. The move from a consideration of *langue* to that of *parole*,²³ then, as carried out in the work of Habermas, purports to lay bare the foundations of speech oriented to reaching understanding. This is viewed as the more fundamental mode of linguistic interaction given that before one can interact monologically with oneself, one would have interacted in a world of dialogue participants, receiving and transmitting sense. The relevance of this paradigm shift in Habermas for the present study consists in that it may be read as pointing in the direction of a commu-

²⁰ Rielo, *Filosofía de la Historia*, I. Cuestión Previa, Sección I, (unpublished manuscript).

²¹ See my *The Emancipative Theory of Jürgen Habermas and Metaphysics* (Washington, D.C.: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1991), p. 28f.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 55ff.

²³ Thomas McCarthy, Translator's Introduction, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, vol. 1, *Reason and the Rationalization of Society* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984), p. iv.

nitarian metaphysical principle, that according to the interpretation developed here, is encompassed by Rielo's genetic principle. This becomes more apparent when considering the role that Habermas' critical instrument—the *ideal speech situation*—plays in his attempt to provide normative foundations for social critique.

For Habermas, communicative competence involves the ability to produce and understand grammatical sentences, and to embed utterances in relation to certain realms of reality, those distinctive regions which speech discloses, i.e.: the external world of objects, the social life-world of shared norms, and the inner world of one's own experience. Yet the ability of a speaker to achieve an intended communicative relation with a hearer—this is to say, the binding force of a speech-act proposal—depends on the ability of dialogue participants to raise, recognize and redeem certain validity claims inherent to such proposals. Accordingly, utterances about the external world of objects implicitly raise a claim to *truth* which may itself be true or false; the social-life world of shared norms implicitly raises a claim to *rightness* which may be right or wrong; and utterances about the inner world of one's own experience implicitly raise a claim to *sincerity* of self-presentations which may be authentic or inauthentic. When challenges are issued to either the truth or rightness claim, the dialogue participants enter a discursive mode of interaction in which the contested claim is tested in function of formal norms as expressed in the ideal speech situation. The aim of the ideal speech situation is to allow the dialogue participants to reach a consensus with respect to the problematized claim in such a manner that the consensus be brought about solely by the force of argumentation. This entails, in turn, adherence to three formal rules of argumentative discourse: (1) that the discourse be opened to all participants capable of speech and action; (2) that each participant be allowed an equality of opportunities for assuming dialogue roles; and (3) that the consensus be motivated solely by the unforced force of the better argument.

These formal norms are intended to eliminate extra-argumentative constraints that in some way may steer the consensus from the unforced force of the better argument. In this sense the ideal speech situation includes communication-theoretic conceptualizations of the traditional ideas of freedom and justice: “the truth of statements is linked in the last analysis to the intention of the good and true life.”²⁴ The ideal speech

²⁴ Thomas McCarthy, *The Critical Theory of Jürgen Habermas* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1978), p. 307. It should be pointed out that although Habermas in his later works prefers the formulation “unavoidable presuppositions of argumentation” in lieu of the phrase “ideal speech situation,” this shift in terminology seems directed to appease his critics, who typically reject the notion as unrealistic. It does not appear that Habermas' more recent

situation functions then as a guidance model of undistorted communication wherein the approximation of theoretical truth and normative rightness demands a communicative transparency on the part of the dialogue participants. This is to say that the outcome of a critical discussion must be free from “force or threats of force from the outside, or by a differential distribution of privilege or authority within, or by consciously or unconsciously strategic motivations on the part of any of the participants, or by the inability of any of them to know or to speak their mind or to ‘listen to reason.’”²⁵ Although the “ideal” realization of this form of life is usually and typically counterfactual, nonetheless it is supposed in the very act of entering discourse with the hope of reaching a rational consensus, such that a violation of any of the formal elements of discourse radically throws the rationality of the consensus into doubt. Yet, if the ideal speech situation serves as the North Star orienting the possible vindication of discursive argumentation, it may be possible to ask whether there might not be a metaphysical principle that, non-identitically, fully realizes the “ideal” represented by the norms of discourse? By considering what the ideal speech situation is not, it may be possible to suggest such a metaphysical principle.

In this respect, the ideal speech situation does not meet the requirements of a Kantian regulative idea given that such ideas of reason serve to regulate thought and action, whereas the ideal speech situation is anticipated in every act of linguistic communication. Nor is the ideal speech situation a Hegelian concept, given that there is no existing society that embodies the ideal form of life connected with the conditions of discourse. But, neither can the ideal speech situation be identified with a mental construction inferred from experience, an empirical phenomena nor any arbitrary scheme.²⁶ Given that the ideal speech situation, as the prototype of undistorted communication, requires a transparency on the part of the dialogue participants, it may be useful to consider the model existentially, i.e., as an exemplar not in terms of an unrealized notion but as actually instantiated. It is in this sense that one may interpret Habermas' ideal model of discourse as pointing in the direction of a transcendent ground that is existential, personal, dialogical, communitary, complementary. This study will now turn to Riello's genetic metaphysics for the realization of what remains merely suggestive in Habermas.

preference affects the role that such a notion plays in either his logic of theoretical or that of practical discourse.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 309.

²⁶ John Thompson, *Critical Hermeneutics: A Study in the Thought of Paul Ricoeur and Jürgen Habermas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 93.

**RIELO'S GENETIC CONCEPTION OF UNITY:
UNUM GENITICUM**

What Rielo denies, quite categorically, is that there ever has been or ever can be an entity metaphysically constituted by the sterility of an identitatical understanding of being, or an understanding of reality in terms of the self-sameness of a thing with itself. He does this in favor of the fecundity of a *genetic conception of being*, or an understanding of being in terms of its relatedness and openness to that which ultimately constitutes and defines it. Accordingly, the metaphysical Absolute is not constituted by a single term, be it the 'absolute,' 'being,' 'existence,' but by two terms, viz., by *Being +*, i.e., *Being more* or *Being plus*. In this respect, Rielo rejects the formulation of the Absolute as "Absolute Being," which is an elevation of a single term, *being*, to absolute, in favor of "Absolute Subject," which is constituted on the intellectual level by at the very least two terms or beings, as expressed in the formula: [B₁ in immanent intrinsic complementarity to B₂],²⁷ or more simply [B₁ complementary to B₂].²⁸ There are not less than two beings because, in this case, one would regress to identity, and not more than two because a supposed third term [B₃] would present itself as a metaphysical surplus.

The formulation, however, of the genetic principle cannot be *simpliciter* given that as such it would incur in the meaninglessness of identity with the formula: "relation is relation." For Rielo metaphysics is defined as "transcience that has as its object the study of the *genetic conception of the principle of relation*,"²⁹ a rational axiom. The importance of his formulation consists in that it expresses a genetic—and not identitatical—structure, the significance of which resides in that being has *gene*, meaning every being is defined by a reality other than itself. Metaphysical and ontological definitions are meaningless if expressed in terms of a being in self-identity but should, instead, be understood as constituted by its (+), its *more*, for *no*-thing defines itself. The nature of this genetic content of being effects the substitution of absolute identity, *being is being*, with the absolute congenesis of two beings [B₁ complementary to B₂], maximum reductive expression of the

²⁷ The formula expressing the genetic conception of the principle of relation should be read as [B sub one in immanent intrinsic complementarity to B sub two]; the 'B' stands for 'Being.'

²⁸ Fernando Rielo, "Concepción genética del principio de relación," *III Congreso Mundial de Filosofía Cristiana* (Quito, July 9-14, 1989).

²⁹ Rielo, *Filosofía de la Historia*, II. Cuestión formal, Sección I. Metafísica.

Rielian principle of relation.³⁰ Thus the two personal beings that constitute sole Absolute Subject and sole absolute act are related in such a manner that it is not possible for one to be without the other; therefore, they define themselves mutually and never by any other notion, inferior or superior, to these two personal beings.³¹ Thus in the case of the Absolute Subject neither of the two persons constituting the genetic principle defines itself. Accordingly the genetic principle does not incur in the fallacy of the *petitio principii* given that the two personal beings that constitute sole Absolute Subject and act are related in such a manner that it is not possible for one to be without the other such that the genetic principle is not self-certifying since each of the two persons constituting the principle serves as the ground for the other.

Regarding the formula [B₁ in immanent intrinsic complementarity to B₂], the term *complementarity* refers to the two beings, [B₁] and [B₂], that, while being really distinct, nonetheless are wholly necessary one to the other, constituting thereby sole Absolute Subject and act. The term *immanent* indicates that the two personal beings define one another to such a degree that there is nothing that transcends them. The term *intrinsic* underscores the fact that there is nothing extrinsic between [B₁] and [B₂] such that the two personal beings are entirely open one to the other to such a degree that [B₁] is all in [B₂] and [B₂] is all in [B₁]. Moreover, the sub indices [1] and [2] indicate the metaphysical position that each term occupies with respect to the other, such that [B₁] represents the origin, agent action and the *definiens* with respect to an end or replica, of a receptive action and of a *definiendum* represented by

³⁰ Fernando Rielo, "Concepción genética del principio de relación," *III Congreso Mundial de Filosofía Cristiana* (Quito, July 9-14, 1989).

³¹ It should be indicated that B₁/P₁ as origin makes impossible a B₀/P₀ before a B₁/P₁ without incurring in the absurdity of a pseudo-infinite regression of B/P (B₀/P₀, B₀/P₀,...B_{0n}/P_{0n}) (Rielo, "Hacia...", p. 123; López Sevillano, "Nueva metafísica," p. 83-84). On the other hand, B₂/P₂ makes impossible, in its turn, a third engendered term without incurring in the absurdity of a pseudo-infinite progression of engendered beings. There is however a rational index in favor of the revealed datum of a third being/divine person [P₃] that, although a metaphysical surplus, has metaphysical *validity*, as a result of the functions that it fulfills (Rielo, "Hacia...", p. 123). With [P₃] the *Binity* [P₁ complementary to P₂] is elevated, by means of revelation, to *Trinity* [P₁ complementary to P₂ complementary to P₃] (*ibid.*). These three persons, Absolute Subject of the Rielian model, constitute among themselves "the metaphysical genetic key," that is, the constant that "gives vital form to their immanent intrinsic complementarity, codifying genetically, in this manner, their sole substance, nature, essence, divinity..." (*ibid.*). Moreover, by [P₃] satisfying the functions of [P₁ complementary to P₂], a [P₄] would result unnecessary because it would be devoid of any possible function.

[B₂]. Riello expresses by means of the term *Binity*³² the absolute *congenesis* or, *ad intra*, substantial unity of the two beings in genetic relation. The indwelling is such that, in mutual possession of each other, there is no self-same identity in either one of the beings constituting the terms of the relation. “If this were not the case, [B₁] and [B₂], emptied of this immanent intrinsic complementarity, would have degraded themselves into two absolute subjects that, without possible relation, would incur in an absurd dualism of contradictories; that is, in a Manicheism of a metaphysical sort.”³³

Further, so as not to refer to a merely theoretical entity, the genetic conception of the principle of relation, constituted by two beings [B₁ complementary to B₂], is also of two persons [P₁ complementary to P₂] because the person is the supreme expression of being.³⁴ The congenesis of these two personal beings consists in that [P₁] engenders [P₂]. “This generative act reveals, apart from all religious sentiment, [P₁] Father in relation with [P₂] and [P₂] Son in relation with [P₁].”³⁵ While transcending all specifically masculine connotations, since the Absolute Subject is without gender, the Father-Son relationship emerges as the positive actuality of the genetic principle.

For Christianity, Christ corroborates this absolute inhabitation or *pericoreosis*: “Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me is doing his works” (Jn 14:10). A certain notion of God as “Father” is also present, notwithstanding differences, in varied religions: Hinduism, for instance, provides a conception of God as supreme personal Father—Ishvara or Bbagavan—, i.e., God as personal, as parent, as friend, one who loves his human subjects.³⁶ Further, Buddha in speaking of “an Unborn,” may be understood as referring to the Father, conceived precisely as ungenerated; he indicates: “There is, O monks, an Unborn, neither become nor created nor formed....Were there not, there would be no deliverance from the formed, the made, the compounded.”³⁷ In China, during the Shang Dynasty (1523-1028 B.C.), there existed a belief in God as Sovereign, as most exalted ancestor—

³² Riello, “Concepción genética,” pp. 114-15.

³³ Riello, *Filosofía de la Historia*, II. Cuestión formal, Sección I. Metafísica.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Huston Smith, *The World Religions* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1991), p. 61.

³⁷ *Iti-vuttaka*, 43; *Udana* VIII, 3.

Shang Ti—who loves and disposes of everything for the good of human beings.³⁸

This said, Rielo argues that the question of the existence of this model does not pertain to rational *demonstration* but, rather, to a metaphysical *insight*, that Rielo terms *videncia*.³⁹ This intuitive aperture with respect to the model finds itself experientially supported within the realm of nature which presents itself in its multifarious manifestations in relation and in the case of living beings in function of an evidently genetic, and in no case identitatical, relation.⁴⁰

Now, regarding the possibility of creation, Rielo argues that outside of the Absolute there is “what is not the Absolute Subject.” To deny the existence of what is not the Absolute Subject signifies that all there is solely the Absolute, which leads to the absurdity of absolutism or pantheism. There is something then that is not absolute nothingness, say, the “void of being,”⁴¹ the *ad extra* of the Absolute Subject upon which the Absolute Subject acts. The Absolute Subject annihilates any possibility of an identitatical “void of being is void of being” with the same validity as “non-void of being is non-void of being.” This is achieved by means of the *genetic wave* by which the Absolute has *eternally* been present in the midst of the “void,” as it were, sweeping it, mathematizing it, objectifying it, designing it in all of its possibilities, thereby establishing the ground for the genetic possibility, *ex genetica possibilitate*, of a free creation of the universe with its beings and things. For there, then, to be an *ex nihilo* creation *a Deo*, where *ex nihilo* is understood genetically rather than identitatically, the Absolute must first be relational both *ad intra* and *ad extra*. In this sense an unipersonalist conception of the Absolute would be wholly unsuitable as agent of creation, given that, absolutely sealed in its own *perseity*, it would be

³⁸ Yi-pao Mei, *Motse, the Neglected Rival of Confucius*, 1929, reprint (Westport, CT: Hyperion Press, 1973), p. 89, 145.

³⁹ See López Sevillano, “La nueva metafísica de Fernando Rielo,” p. 80. The Absolute Subject is not the result of a proof; López-Sevillano explains Rielo's position in these words: “The Absolute Subject in metaphysics (God in theology) is not the product of a demonstration. It is absurd that God or the Absolute Subject may be the conclusion of a proof: in this case, one would have established an enigmatic principle that, introducing the element of proof, God would be the result and human reason would have invented the absurdity of a species of principle superior to God.” (*Ibid.*, pp. 80-81, n. 18).

⁴⁰ According to López Sevillano: “The genetic conception of the principle of relation...is obtainable with only elevating to absolute a fact of connatural observation, genetic, to the human being: its tendency that its ‘relation with someone’ be ‘well-formed.’ It is not proper of the human being that its relations be in any way whatever.” (*Ibid.*, p. 75, n. 8)

⁴¹ Rielo, “Concepción genética,” pp. 115-119.

without the necessary *ad intra* relational dimension to be relational *ad extra*.

With the genetic possibility of a free creation,⁴² the human person cannot be defined identitatively as a “human person is a human person” with the same validity as “non-human person is non-human person,” but genetically as “human person +,” the *more* referring to the term, i.e., the Absolute, which serves to define him. Since the person is the supreme expression of being, the human person cannot be defined by anything inferior to a person, such that he must be defined by another person. Whereas the divine persons mutually define each other, for Rielo the human person is defined by the *divine constitutive presence*, i.e., the *ad extra* indwelling of the *Binity* in the human subject. This indwelling presence renders the human being a reality composed of two elements: one referring to a *created* nature and the other referring to the divine constitutive presence, making the human person, as replica of the divinity, an ontological or mystical deity of the metaphysical Divinity. If this aperture of the human person to the Absolute Subject is denied, the human person would have reduced itself to an immanentism, related to itself as a *theos*, that is, as a being in oneself, by oneself, and for oneself, instead of a being in God, by God, and for God. For Rielo it is this mutual openness and relatedness which makes possible that the human person relate mystically to God, as well as to other human beings and the realm of nature. By virtue of the divine constitutive presence, the human person is called to act in conformity with the *ethical standard* constituted by the same Absolute Subject. For Rielo, then, it is the divine constitutive presence itself that serves as *the* ethical standard of the human being rather than by standards derived from natural law or deontological systems of ethics.

Christ confirms the reality of the divine constitutive presence in the human person: On the one hand he states, confirming Hebrew scriptures, “You are gods” (Jn 10:34); and, on the other, “On that day, you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me and I in you” (Jn 14:20). Hinduism, for its part, teaches that there is an infinite center in every life, Brahman the Godhead as Atman, as hidden self within. In Taoism the sage Chu Xi speaks of the Great Ultimate that is found in all things, as quoted by Sun Shangyang in his chapter: “Fundamentally

⁴² Rielo distinguishes between three forms of creation: (1) living *personal beings*, i.e., human beings, constituted *intrinsically* by the divine constitutive presence of the Absolute Subject; (2) living *impersonal beings* constituted *extrinsically* by the reverberative presence of the Absolute Subject; and (3) vestigial *things* constituted by the *actio in distans* of the Absolute Subject, and that refers to the phenomenological character of the physical, chemical...laws that structure inanimate things.

there is only one Great Ultimate, yet each of the myriad things has been endowed with it and each in itself possesses the Great Ultimate in its entirety."⁴³ Islamic Sufi mystic Al-Hallaj's version of the constitutive presence is as follows: "I saw my Lord with the eye of the Heart. I said: 'Who are you?' He answered: 'You.'"⁴⁴ Thus notwithstanding their mysticism of identification—rather than communion—and their respective conceptions of the divinity and of the human being, world religions conceive of the divine as constituting the very epicenter of human life.

CONCLUSION

In closing, the importance of the preceding presentation of the master lines of Rielo's genetic principle, i.e., the *Binity*, is twofold: first, it provides the *ratio* for categorically rejecting any identitatical manifestation—in theory, practice or art—as a falsification of reality; second, by articulating the structure of ultimate reality in terms of a genetic metaphysics, it also provides the theoretical foundation for comprehending God and the human being and the whole of nature in terms of a metaphysics and ontology of genetic complementarity. Thus, contrary to a so-called metaphysics/ontology of identity, where God and/or the human subject is comprehended as a hermetically-isolated entity without real or possible relation, within a genetic metaphysics God is understood as constituted by two persons—the *Binity*—in a genetic relation of unity, the *unum geneticum*. Within a genetic ontology the human person emerges as defined by the divine constitutive inhabitation of the Absolute Subject such that the human person is transcendently open to divine being, as well as to other human subjects and to nature.

This paper opened by quoting Vaclav Havel, who speaks of the need today for a "new model of co-existence among the various cultures, peoples, races and religious spheres within a single interconnected civilization."⁴⁵ This study would like to suggest that Rielo's model refers to a notion of Absolute Subject that is *new* in the sense that it no longer conceives of God in terms of an identitatical unity, i.e., as *unum simpliciter*, but rather in terms of a genetic unity, the *Binity*, as the *unum geneticum*. Thus Rielo's genetic model, in turn, provides the metaphysico-ontological ground for the unity of diverse cultures, societies, civilizations in the one Absolute, the *unum geneticum*. Finally,

⁴³ See Sun Shangyang's paper in this publication; quotation from *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, trans. Wing-tsit Chan (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 638.

⁴⁴ As quoted in Smith, *The World Religions*, p. 262.

⁴⁵ See n. 2 above.

the human being in fulfilling his social, dialogical, creative, and filial nature, as a subject fashioned in the *imago Dei*, approaches the genetic unity of Christ's priestly prayer: "*May they all be one, just as, Father, you are in me and I am in you*" (Jn 17:21).

Fordham University
New York, USA

CHAPTER IV

DIVERSITY

HU JUN

The saying, “As a man thinketh, so he is,” is really most profound. A human person is not simply the product of the nature around him; he is a thinking being, and he has a mind, an inner world. By thinking through, men can explain the external world, and therein change it at their will. That is what men really *are*. From the nature of men, we can conclude that men’s inner world determines their actions in the external world. Humans are apt to look at the external world and themselves through the thought they have *a priori* in their minds. Thus, men are naturally metaphysical beings.

We call the thoughts men have *a priori* absolute presuppositions. People have their presuppositions; they live more consistently on the basis of presuppositions than they themselves may realize. By presuppositions, we mean the basic ways people look at life, their basic world views, the grid through which they see the world around. Presuppositions rest upon what persons consider to be the truth of what exists. All absolute presuppositions are, by nature, *a priori*, by which I mean that we draw them from experience, which, however, can neither verify nor falsify them. From this, it can be concluded that presuppositions are not propositions. Propositions are either true or false, presuppositions are neither. So we cannot say that a certain set of presuppositions is right, another is wrong. What we have to admit is that, as a matter of fact, every cultural system has its own absolute presuppositions. People draw their presuppositions from the surrounding society. But people with more understanding realize that their presuppositions should be chosen after careful consideration of what world-view may be true. Presuppositions are definitely not the products of self-will, but products of a combination of subjective beings and objective reality.

Absolute presuppositions are not judged or verified by experience, but they are from experience; thus they have the content of experience within them. Due to the limitations of experience, the presuppositions that shape people are always, by nature, restricted to a specific cultural system. They provide people with the foundation of their value system. They provide the particularity of a certain culture system. So it can be said that absolute presuppositions lie at the core of individual cultures. They can be expressed in different forms and on different levels, such as religion, philosophy, literature, art, music, science, politics, and so on.

Presuppositions provide the foundation of the value system. These presuppositions are absolute in that they provide a culture's identity, but they are relative to other individual cultures. Unity and diversity have a dialectical relation so that we can speak neither of unity being prior to diversity nor of diversity being prior to unity. Rather, they are relative to each other.

The only basis for an existing individual culture is its own particularity or diversity. It is precisely this cultural particularity or diversity that becomes an integral part of human civilization. Cultural diversity is also the root and wellspring of the culture and religion of every individual culture. Culture is the way people live. To change by force the presuppositions of a certain culture is, in fact, to change the way in which people have lived for generations and to destroy or stifle the life roots of the culture. Particularity or diversity is the meaning or value of the existence of an individual culture: if there is no particularity or diversity, there is no meaning or value for existence.

Thus, a culture's vitality is deeply rooted in its particularity or diversity. It can be seen that cultural diversity makes up the rich and colorful contents of human culture. In human history, every cultural system, small or large, existing for a long or short period, has contributed more or less to the cultural treasure house of mankind. The great achievements created by human culture are the result of the full development of cultural diversity or particularity. In this sense, we can say that the more national a culture is, the more universality it possesses.

Furthermore, cultural particularity or diversity is the wellspring of creativity; it is also the basic value system by which every word and deed is judged within an individual culture. As the wellspring of creativity, cultural particularity has preserved an individual culture and enabled it to occupy an important position in human culture. In so doing, indirectly it has made great progress in human civilization. In this sense, it can be said that diversity is the motive power pushing human civilization forward and the principal explanation of why human civilization has had great vitality throughout history. Hence, to keep human civilization moving progressively, it is necessary to respect cultural diversity or particularity.

Cultural diversity can be used also to account for the basic connotation of a certain value system. Each special value system is not at all the product of pure speculation, nor is it a pure form. On the contrary, it is specific and actual, for we know that the absolute presuppositions which an individual culture possesses provide the metaphysical foundation for its value system. People living within this cultural system naturally evaluate everything happening both in and out of the culture by such special value system. We see now that it is exactly

cultural diversity which constitutes the actual contents of certain value system.

Within its own cultural system, cultural diversity may have absolute meaning, but not for any other culture system. So among different cultural system, the particularity of a certain culture has but relative meaning. In addition, cultural particularity can be fully and distinctly expressed only through comparison among different cultural systems. If we confine ourselves wholly to the limits of our own culture, it is quite impossible for us to find out the real particularity of our own culture. The reason we can say that the diversity or particularity of an individual culture constitutes its entire content is that we take a comparative stand between the cultures. However, for people who live within a special culture, cultural particularity is not manifested as particularity or diversity as can be seen from a comparative point of view, but is really the way in which they live and think. In short, any cultural particularity or diversity manifests itself only by comparison with other individual cultures.

Since cultural particularity or diversity can manifest itself only by comparison, the particularity of any culture system has only relative meaning for any other culture systems. Because of this, it is reasonable to say that what an individual culture holds is definitely not absolute truth, but only relative truth. Yet, in view of the fact that some elements of a certain cultural system, such as human rights, individualism, democracy, science, liberalism, constitutionalism, equality, liberty, free markets, and so on, are suitable to other cultures, some scholars have argued that some particular civilization is the “universal civilization” that “fits all men.”

In the light of above analysis, such an argument is very superficial and is still under the influence of culture centralism. Professor Huntington’s paper, “The Clash of Civilizations,” can serve as a good example of this genre. The paper has had negative effects in non-Western countries. For example, in China, some cultural conservatives have already made use of Huntington’s paper to alarm the Chinese government and people to resist Western culture and values, while trying to vindicate and revive traditional Chinese culture. Both sides seem to be wrong. Professor Huntington sees that some elements of Western culture have a universal effect, but he has neglected the obvious fact that a universal effect is not the same as an absolute truth. On the other hand, Chinese cultural conservatives have failed to see that cultural particularity or diversity necessarily leads to an interchange between different cultures,—to prevent the Chinese people from drawing the good ideas from Western culture is totally impossible in the world today. Considering the fact that the world is becoming a smaller place because of the rapid development of modern technology, the intensification of

economic interchange, and the penetration of media communication into the household, worldwide cultural interchange cannot be avoided. From the above analysis, we may be able to draw the following preliminary conclusion. Because every civilization has its own particularity or diversity, and because this has but relative meaning and truth, every country or culture should have its own equal position in the worldwide culture interchange. If we consider this same question from the point of view of social psychology, this conclusion becomes truer still. We know that, generally speaking, small and backward countries have stronger self-confidence and self-respect. And it follows naturally that they will have a more earnest desire for equal status in worldwide cultural interchange.

Since each particular culture has only relative meaning and truth, cultural monism or West-centralism, which had once widely spread and taken strong hold on peoples, has now totally disappeared from the world. Taking its place, culture pluralism is exerting more and more influence on the world. The real basis for cultural pluralism, in my opinion, is that every cultural system has but its own relative meaning or relative truth; no individual cultural system, in the world, has absolute truth. This theory makes it definitely impossible for any individual culture to force its own values and ideas on other cultures. At the same time it offers an actual foundation for dialogue and interchange between different cultures, between ideology and religion, and between religions. We have obtained this absolute truth at a great cost. We now know that that some cultural systems only mistakenly claimed to possess the exclusive absolute truth. We should and must carry on open-minded dialogue and interchange on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. The greatest obstacle to peaceful dialogue perhaps is the sense of cultural superiority. We know from history, especially modern history, that such a superior sense has actually produced many great catastrophes for the mankind. Is it possible for history to repeat itself? This depends wholly upon what we really think of differences in culture and upon how we deal with these differences. In this matter the hope exists that if we realize clearly that no culture has absolute truth, but just relative truth, we would immediately maintain peaceful and equal attitude toward other cultures, and possibly we could remove all kinds of conflicts from the world for ever.

Apart from the above mentioned basis for peaceful dialogue and interchange between different cultures, there is another which also is implied by the concept of particularity or diversity. We have known that this concept has only relative value and that every particular thing has its own insufficiency; the same is true for any particular cultural system. As a result, no particular thing or culture can sustain or survive for a long time in the world unless it is supplemented by other particular things or

cultures. This is the same situation with which all particular things must cope. So the realization of the insufficiency of particular things will create the possibility for their peaceful and harmonious co-existence. This possibility can be expressed by such statements of Chinese traditional philosophy as: all men are my compatriots, and all things are my companions. This implies an obligation to love everybody and everything.

After clarifying the meaning of particularity or diversity, we should turn our attention to the question whether differences or diversity in culture necessarily leads to, or degenerates into, conflict. In "The Clash of Civilizations," Huntington says: "differences do not necessarily mean conflict, and conflict does not necessarily mean violence." Clearly this idea is not wrong, but the problem is that the underlying basic idea of his paper is that differences in culture are one of the main sources of conflict. So he continues: "Over the centuries, however, differences among civilizations have generated the most prolonged and the most violent conflicts." This conclusion may need some correcting. Differences in cultures, in reality, have not had any direct relation with conflicts in human history. "The most prolonged and the most violent conflicts" were not generated directly by difference in culture, but by the attitudes, ideas, and ideologies people had regarding differences in culture. More deeply, such conflicts were generated almost always by the great differences in more practical interests, ideological, political and economic. In such circumstances, differences in culture were used as tools to rally support. In short, cultural diversity is actual but does not necessarily lead to conflicts. What truly leads to conflicts in history, are attitudes towards the diversity of culture. Diversity and particularity do not mean, or degenerate into, conflicts. On the contrary, what diversity or particularity of things or cultures really needs is, by its nature, the supplement from other particular things or cultures, rather than conflicts, in order to sustain people's life in a world which has been so full of conflicts that men now stand on the edge of total destruction.

Diversity or particularity of culture is, indeed, the prerequisite for interchange between cultures, for diversity provides the possibility and need for interchange. Without diversity, there is no need of carrying on cultural interchange. Yet, the purpose of cultural interchange is not to stick to each other's particularity, but rather to go beyond particularity and to seek unity. As noted above, diversity is relative and can be made clear only by comparison between particular cultures. The fact that cultural interchange can be carried on indicates that there must be a possibility of comparative studies between cultures. This possibility, theoretically, presupposes that there be some common points among cultures or some objective criteria of truth. The great aim of dialogue and interchange among cultures is to make emerge ever more vividly in

human consciousness the common points or criteria of truth which, till now, have been latent, and to nurture them by way of consensus. In my opinion, the common points or the objective criteria for truth are exactly the unity or the basis for unity.

Cultural interchange aims at transcending diversity or particularity and seeking unity. Nevertheless, the purpose of seeking truth is not to put an end to diversity, but rather to acknowledge and reconstruct diversity or particularity on a higher level. We must do so because cultural diversity is the main motivating force in the development of human society. Without diversity, there will be no progress or development. Moreover, if there is no diversity, there is certainly no unity. At the same time, the search for unity creates a peaceful and harmonious environment for the progress and development for mankind. This makes it possible for human beings to move stably and effectively toward a more beautiful ideal, and to reduce to the lowest point the waste of human intelligence and physical power in conflicts and wars between different nations or cultures. Now we can see that diversity or particularity is the main motive force of progress and development and that unity means to establish a durable balance between different cultures, nations and societies.

Unity must be based on diversity. Unity which abolishes or obliterates diversity is not a true unity, but an artificial unity whose by-product is anarchy,—total social disorder of which regional conflicts are the best example. Such conflicts do not directly arise from the differences in cultures, but rather from the artificial unity which simply wipes out the particularity or diversity of cultures. So the best way to end conflicts and fighting in the world today is to establish a true unity based upon diversity.

At the end of this brief discussion of the concept of diversity, it will be well to summarize here the basic ideas of this paper. Cultural diversity or particularity comes mainly from the presuppositions which people directly catch from the society in which they live. This is limited by various elements, internal and external. Particularity is the basic content of an individual culture, and is the meaning of the existence of individual cultures. Diversity, particularity, has relative meaning and truth, so that diversity or particularity also has its own insufficiency which needs to be supplemented from the content of others. This situation is the same for all particular things or cultures. It makes it possible for human beings to co-exist peacefully and harmoniously to carry on cultural dialogue and interchanges. Particularity or diversity itself does not mean conflicts; what truly leads to or degenerates into conflicts is people's ideas and attitudes towards the differences in culture. Unity and diversity are relative to each other: without diversity there is no unity, and vice versa. Unity which totally abolishes diversity

is an artificial unity whose by-product is anarchy. Hence, unity must be based upon diversity.

*Peking University
Beijing, P.R. China*

CHAPTER V

DIVERSITY IN UNITY: PHILOSOPHICAL ORIGINS AND TOPICAL PREDICAMENT

MILOSLAV BEDNAR

PHILOSOPHY AND MYTH: SPIRITUAL AND MORAL GROUNDS OF THE ORIENTAL QUESTION

There is a common view concerning the relation between the mythical and the post-mythical worlds which emphasizes a negative impact of the latter on the former, and a sheer incommensurability of both.¹ Apart from the various points of departure of such views, they all fail to take into account the fundamental ontological and moral dependence of philosophy, since its Greek origins, on *mythos*. This dependence creates tension. On the one hand, the mythological unity of cosmic cycles of time was questioned,—founding, and framing its diversity. Such a radical questioning attitude concentrates on the world of Myth, and in itself implies a key moral consequence: “An intrinsic coping with the sacred by its interiorization, i.e., that we do not comply with it on the outside, but we face intrinsically its essential ground, whose entrance has been opened by human confusedness, shaken to its very foundations, serving as a resort of our ‘life-routinism’ as well”.²

Consequently, the post-mythic world of spirit, history, and politics did not, originally, amount to a negative refusal of the life-insight of myth. However, its very core consisted in the elevation of the latter to an ultimately radical and risky human possibility of responsible life in ‘*unprovidedness*’.

By the same token, nonetheless, another, essentially derived approach to the prior questioned universe of myth was developed,—namely that of the *sophistics*. While philosophy put the mythic original harmony of the world: its life, death, and restoration, into question as a verifiable truth (e.g. in Anaximander or Heraclitus), the ‘Diversity in

¹ See, e.g., Karl Löwith, *Weltgeschichte und Heilsgeschehen*, Kohlhammer, Stuttgart (1953) 3rd edition; Mircea Eliade, *Kosmos und Geschichte*, Rowohlt, (Munich, 1966); Jacques Derrida, “White Mythology; Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy,” *New Literary History*, vol. 6, n. 1 (Autumn, 1974), pp. 5-74; Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1993).

² Jan Patočka, *Kacířské eseje o filosofii dejin* (*Heretical Essays on the Philosophy of History*) (Academia Praha, 1990), p. 111.

Unity' assumed a highly different status in the sophistic interpretation. Its core meaning is expressed in the statement of Protagoras: "Man is the measure of all things of use, of the existing ones how they are, of the non-existing ones how they are not".³ The universe and its diversity was thus understood in terms of things of human use (*Chrémata*). As a result, a limitation of human insight into the world of appearances due to the particularity of the *ego* presents itself as a legitimate point of view.⁴ Such a limitation is, as expressed in Heidegger, "only a limitation, and still keeps the basic position of Heraclitus and Parmenides".⁵ Nevertheless, the sophistic sort of limitation of philosophy, in its applied form of rhetoric as well, displayed an irresistible inclination towards replacing philosophy by itself. Since then, the authenticity of original philosophic questioning which both shakes and upholds the mythic insight of the movement of the universe and its diversity is followed by the limiting shadow of the sophistic egoism it casts. This is the key critical context of European, Occidental spirituality, whose manifold, enriched, and developed character creates the leading spiritual tenor of our present predicament as well.

The tension between philosophy and religion appears in this framework as fundamental. Its original feature consists in shaking and upholding mythical faith down to its roots in philosophic, self-responsible questioning. This is the context of the first philosophic conceptions of the unity of world and life, and their intrinsic diversity in the early Greek philosophers. Thus, these first philosophic projects clearly appear as a spiritual expression of a new human possibility, where the elements of religion and radical rationality are fundamentally inseparable in a unity of insight, attitude and action. This precarious harmony of human life is grounded in a cognition of being, not in the experience of all of reality, which is the original terrain of philosophic amazement (*Thaumadzein*). Such a spiritual position did not emerge alone. Its phenomenal moves are on the one hand, the public life of politics, in tension with the world of mere organization and household; and on the other hand, the rise of history as a risky step out of recurrent cycles of mythic time of world and life.

In its Greek origins, politics was understood as a community of autarchy whose end goal consisted in the more perfect realization of preceding forms of human coexistence (households and villages).⁶ The nature of this perfect human life consisted in the freedom and equality of

³ Cf. Plato, *Theaitetos* 152, trans., the author.

⁴ Cf. Plato, *ibid.*, 152 b.

⁵ Martin Heidegger, *Holzwege (Die Zeit das Weltbildes)*, P. Klostermann (Frankfurt/M., 1963), p. 97.

⁶ Cf. Aristotle, *Politics*, 1252 b.

citizens as regards their ability to appear in sight of others and to converse with others regarding the action of the whole of their polis. Philosophically, the life of politics presents the prime confrontation of humans with “the possibility of the whole of life, and of life in its whole; the philosophic life takes root from this trunk, and it develops that in it which is furled, closed”.⁷ Jan Patočka, inspired by Aristotle’s distinctions of the active life, provides a ground for deduction “of the very origin of history in the proper sense of this word!” Precisely: “History is there, where life becomes free and whole; where it consciously builds a space for a likewise *free* (and not exhausted) life”.⁸ Accordingly the appearance of politics is the seed of both philosophy and history.

Thus the triadic origin of Occidental civilization serves also as the precondition and ground for conscious articulations of the problem of Diversity in Unity. A principal tension in this respect derives from the sophistic limitation of philosophic insight. On the one hand, the philosophic, contemplative life⁹ comprehends the world and life as a whole. This entails seeing its conflicting nature (*Polemos, Eris*) as its common characteristic. This insight presents the original appearance of rationality,¹⁰ and consequently demands “words, which divide every one according to its being and says how they are like”.¹¹ On the other hand, a dividing activity of this original kind implies, as Patočka stressed, an ability to see the primordial *Polemos* as a light out of the night of world, “rendering everything individual to appear as that which it is”,¹² i.e., to see individual, distinct, diverse entities in their entering the open space of an intrinsically individuated universe.¹³ Thus, the primordial *Polemos* presents a primordial unity which is on principle more profound than any temporary inclination or co-existence because it is grounded in the commotion of given reality.¹⁴

The limitation of the sophistic derivation of philosophy consists in a self-restricted point of departure from the particular, diverse and individual, and so it is neglectful of the prime unity which enables any appearance of diversity and particularity at all. Thus a derivative attitude implies a limited stress on *Polemos* in its dividing aspect, and this regardless of its fundamentally unitive importance, and also a disregard

⁷ Jan Patočka, *ibid.*, p. 55.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Cf. Aristotle, *The Nichomachian Ethics*, 1095 b.

¹⁰ Cf. H. Diels, W. Kranz, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, Weidmann, Berlin 1951, Herakleitos, B 114, Anaximandros, B 113; Jan Patočka, *ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

¹¹ H. Diels, *ibid.*, Heraclitus B 1.

¹² Patočka, *ibid.*, p. 57; cf. Diels, Heraclitus, B 64.

¹³ Cf. Patočka, *ibid.*

¹⁴ Cf. Patočka, *ibid.*, pp. 57-58.

of the prime unity which is of basic significance not only for philosophy, but for politics as well.¹⁵

Conclusively, the preconditions of the human triadic possibility of politics, philosophy, and history, when interpreted on the bedrock of the world of myth, remains from the start not just a highly topical Oriental question but is a problem for the unity of Europe, and of the Occident with Asia and Africa. Thus, the dialectic of unity and diversity, so typical in our century, cannot be adequately understood without taking into account its challenging roots, its spiritual and moral grounds.

Philosophy, Christianity and Modernity

These, naturally, contain impressive resources for development, as the profound impact of Christianity attests to. Its religious emphasis on individual conscience, and its specific monotheism in terms of a triune God implies its essential spiritual and moral compatibility with the Greek philosophy, especially in the case of its Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy (in the whole context of the concept of care for one's soul). The original philosophic concept of human life *sub specie aeternitatis* assumes by its synthesis with Christianity a challenging religious significance. By the same token, the *question* of diversity in unity becomes a task to be solved by a committed religious life.

By comparison with Greek philosophy, Christianity is conspicuously different in its emphasis on individuality, the uniqueness of every human soul in its attitude towards the eternal person of God and the prospect of post-mortal life. Thus Christianity, in combination with Roman Law in which the person is the basic unit of legal responsibility, became in the course of the historical development of Occidental civilization an important source of the principles of fundamental human and civil rights. In this context, the Christian concept of human being as IMAGO DEI encapsulates an intrinsic drive towards permanent spiritual and moral reform grounded in the prime phenomenon of human plurality and diversity. On the other hand, this demand of a genuine human reform in the face of God stresses the importance of religiously grounded communities.¹⁶ In other words, a radical Christian emphasis on human diversity deepens the anchoring plurality of human beings and nations in their spiritual and moral unity in terms of the same spiritual insight, now religiously refined *mutatis mutandis*, as expressed in the context of a unity appearing out of *Polemos*.

This original tradition of conceiving the relationship of Diversity in Unity was in the 17th century gradually, but still totally, eclipsed by

¹⁵ Cf. Patocka, *ibid.*, p. 57.

¹⁶ Cf. Augustinus Aurelius, *De Civitate Dei*, III/3.

an intellectual fascination with mathematical natural history. The turn was based on a radical interpretation of experiment as a project of the human mind transforming, evaluating, and actually managing the world. Thus, philosophy as a verifiable precondition of every scientific discipline was replaced by the practice of experimentation generated by modern natural history.¹⁷ In the course of the 17th century, the newly established mathematical natural history, and the inspired modern philosophy of rational human subjectivity which emerged from it, launched an intellectual offensive against the founding of cognition in Christian-philosophic contemplative activity. A fascination by mathematical natural history anchored in experimental projects was so irresistible that theological and with it philosophical contemplation of eternity as a source of Diversity in Unity, considerably dimmed. Step by step, the belief in objective reality based on mathematically expressed experiments came to dominate as the only verifiable truth. Thus, its former philosophical and Christian conception began to be regarded as something illusory and false. Since the objective world was cognizable in terms of mathematically projected experiments, these became the leading measure of truth defined as the correspondence with a scientific concept. Consequently, the modern concept of exactness as ‘*calculability*’ emerged. The fact that the precondition of experimental and real calculability is “something,” which in principle makes such calculability possible, is therefore incalculable, and is, in consequence much truer and more exact, was by virtue of dazzling and revolutionary achievements of mathematical natural history shifted into comfortable oblivion.

In terms of philosophy, this radical shift is clearly discernable in Spinoza’s conceiving of the philosophic self-reliance of Descartes’ consciousness, and his transparent constructing as absolutely valid the world *More Geometrico*. For Spinoza, such a way of sovereign human self-verification was, by the same token, the supreme source and precondition of cognition of the existence of God. Thus, in Spinoza, the Cartesian clear and evident form of thinking, *eo ipso*, poses any content including the cognition of God. Moreover, the rationality of thinking originated from “the pure mind” is strictly separated from “contingent moves of body”.¹⁸ Hence, Spinoza arrives at the standpoint of an unequivocal subjectivization all reality. Conclusively, this entails a positing of an absolute dependence of reality upon a subjectivist rationality of putatively objective scientificity, which becomes, in this way, a sovereign, absolute will:—in fact the arbitrariness of a sovereign

¹⁷ Cf. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), Chap. 32; *passim*.

¹⁸ Cf. Spinoza, *Opera*, “Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione,” ed. C. Gebhard (Heidelberg 1924), p. 34.

master and possessor of everything, thus uniting *More Geometrico* every individuality, particularity, and diversity of the universe.

Nevertheless, the fact that the prevailing modern stance originates from the self-awareness of the subject indicates that, in the case of such a self-reflection, a sort of a reflex of philosophic insight of archetypes of reality, and of its truth, is still preserved.

In the sphere of political philosophy, the universal and uniting modern claim of rationality, identified with the will, and incorporated into a sovereign domination over individuals, found its most evident expression in Hobbes' and Rousseau's conceptions of the social contract based on the complete surrender of individual wills, and legal claims of citizens to a sovereign master, or a collective body incorporating a *general will*. The resultant sovereign will was regarded as always right and just¹⁹ because *rational in terms of self-preservation*. United with the natural historical, scientific Enlightenment of French encyclopedists, the conception of the social contract prevailed in the French revolution. Furthermore, it established its quasi-religious form of a cult of Reason, with a Supreme Being, which was by virtue of its claim of power oriented against existing particular forms of opinions and identifications.

The resulting quasi-religious phenomenon of the French revolution, and its political expression in Jacobinism, presented the first historic instalments of inherent totalizing claims of ideology as a principle of action. This assumed later its elaborated quasi-philosophic form in the circle of the Hegelian Left in its philosophical thought and, in religion, mistakenly associated with political absolutism. In that way arose the Marxist system of materialist, dialectical laws of nature and history, declared as a universally valid scientific rationality and proclaiming the earlier development of the Occidental civilization to be an alienation,—which now needed to be reversed.

Such an ideological turn presented a quasi-philosophic modern shift from the commitment to knowledge gained through experimentation, to an emphasis on process. In other words, the completeness of a process, its factual aim, becomes much less important than the process itself. The impact of this shift is significant, as it places labour as the exchange of matter between the human organism and nature higher on the scale of human activities, which sustains the life of the human species.²⁰ Thus, a dehumanized process of life-preservation appears as the prime human value, radically challenging traditional Occidental interpretations of the problem of Diversity in Unity.

A similar challenge develops out of the positivist view of reality as a non-interpretable realm of factual, individual, and diverse appear-

¹⁹ Cf. J.J. Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Book II, Chap. IV.

²⁰ Cf. Hannah Arendt, *ibid.*

ances. By analogy to extolling processuality as a privileged objectivity, the positivist, allegedly scientific objectivity also proclaims its superiority over putatively obsolete philosophic and religious insights. Thus both streams of quasi-philosophic reasoning compose a natural coalition. These two compatible modern visions of independent and supreme objectivity either in the form a permanent move of processuality or an autonomous sphere of factual and irreducible givens, which serves to confuse both diversity and unity into an indiscernible whole of objectivity and nature,—enlightened rationality. Moreover, this a twofold bias of modern thought is complemented by the Kantian notion of the freedom and autonomy of reason and intellect, independent from nature, conceived of as its own, independent lawmaker.²¹ Such a philosophic conception creates a hegemony of subjectivity. Consequently, the Kantian deontological vision of the human world powerfully proclaims, in Michael J. Sandel's words, "as the right is prior to the good, so the subject is prior to its ends".²² Thus a radical consequence of Kant's concept of the freedom of the intellect-reason-will is that its autonomy presents the subject as an all-determining, uniting principle of diversity.

The Occidental spiritual and moral tradition gave birth to an alternative concept of the modern Enlightenment, which on principle professed its adherence to its original spiritual and moral founding. This created a conscious synthesis of both with a characteristic modern emphasis on the intrinsic irreplaceability of spiritual subjectivity and the inviolability of individual civic rights and the liberties of the human being. These are obviously the democratic orientations of Comenius, Leibniz, Locke, Montesquieu, Herder, and Hegel. Regardless of their respective indisputable differences, they all evidently agree about their emphasis upon harmonizing the plurality and diversity of unique, morally anchored attitudes of both individuals and communities with uniting spiritual and moral foundations, which essentially exceed human beings, their communities, and their world.

Conclusively, the immanent tension of Occidental spirituality, as expressed on the one hand by its radically intensified conflicts between the various rationalist versions of one-sided subjectification with the allegedly scientific objectification of universe and life on the other hand, was the philosophic recognition of the determinative importance of the original founding of the Occidental spirit for modern problems as well, including the relation between Diversity and Unity. The clash between

²¹ Cf. Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, A 533, A 450; I. Kant, *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, Introduction.

²² Michael J. Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 7.

the two reached its culmination in the world conflicts of our century. Concerning this sinister development, a fatal spiritual, and by the same token political shift in Germany during the nineteenth century was of crucial significance.

The German Spiritual Kernel of the Contemporary World Predicament

The inward tension of modern, philosophically inspired nationalism was lucidly grasped by J.G. Fichte, under an obvious influence of J.G. Herder's philosophic concept of humanity.²³ Fichte is clear that the genuine philosophical foundation of nationalism is an immanently ambiguous twofold enterprise that, in any case, has to be put into practice. For Fichte, on the one hand, it is a natural instinct of human beings "to pursue and care for eternity in temporality—not only in an uncomprehending way, solely relating to Eternity as an abyss impenetrable to mortal eyes, but in a way visible for a mortal eye".²⁴ On the other hand, Fichte refers to "noble minded" persons who will and wish "to repeat life in an improved way once more through children, and to survive, cultivated and perfected, in their life also on this Earth, a long time after death".²⁵ For Fichte, it is evident that this specific human desire can be met by an order of things, recognizable by humans "as eternal, and capable of accepting the Eternal entity into itself".²⁶ The nature of this a particular, sought after and much needed order is for Fichte explicitly ambiguous:

However, such an order is not graspable in any concept; nevertheless, there is a genuinely factual, particular spiritual nature of the human environment, whence human being itself emerges with all its thought and action, and all its faith in Eternity, This is the nation which a human being comes from, in which it was educated, and grew to what he or she now is.²⁷

Fichte called this a twofold spiritual meaning (Nature-Spirit) of a nation, "a particular and special law of the development of the Divine

²³ Cf. Johann Gottfried Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, Book 15; Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Reden and die Deutsche Nation*, Speech 8.

²⁴ Fichte's *Reden and die deutsche Nation*, Deutsche Bibliothek in Berlin (Berlin 1912), p. 152.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

out of itself".²⁸ The Greek concept of nation is directly related to the notion of citizenship. In the case of the German nation, this was broadened into a world-citizenship in the general and spiritual sense.²⁹ For Fichte, the other nations, like the barbarians for the Greeks, are immersed in and fatally captured by a concept of eternal cyclical moves, i.e., prisoners of a backward philosophy of history, and in this way jeopardizing the only healthy spirit—the German spirit.³⁰ Moreover, the hopeful and genuinely spiritual German nation is open to all its members, its "volk," while other nations are exclusive and feudal in character.³¹

Thus, Fichte's intensive emphasis on spiritual-democratic uniqueness of the German nation, which arose due to the French occupation of German territory by Napoleon, in fact reinforced the natural, unconscious element of his originally harmonious, twofold philosophic concept of nation. In the course of the German history of the 19th century, this serious exaggeration proved fatal. The Hegelian Left philosophically transformed Fichte's Messianic nationalism into a powerful material criticism of Hegel's philosophy, which had originally synthesized the metaphysical tradition with the modern philosophy of subjectivity into a philosophy of history. The "new-Hegelian" refusal of this was grounded in labelling it as an apology of the unjust political order in Germany at the time. Instead, in the Marxist view, objective, materialist laws of nature and history should be adopted in order to reverse the hitherto alienated, non-genuine course of history. In this way, the first explicit demand of replacing philosophy by ideology was formulated as an intellectual precondition of the totalitarian mentality.

The crucial political and cultural disaster of German history in the last century seems to be a failure of efforts to unite Germany in 1848, based on a mixture of liberal idealism, reliance on central administration, and a nationalist chauvinism. The intellectual consequence of this event consisted in an intellectual and political reversal from a philosophically, idealistically inspired political conception to a clearly materialistic politics united with centralized institutional liberalism. This prevailing tendency created a convenient climate for the success of Bismarck's conception of German politics aimed at joining of both nationalist and liberal penchants in order to drive Austria from the German *Bund* and to simultaneously silence liberal criticism through world-power politics. The materialist basis of German European and world politics is encapsulated in Bismarck's notorious statement from

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

²⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, *The Seventh Speech*, pp. 137-138.

³⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, 139-140.

³¹ Cf. 139.

1862: “Great questions of the times are not resolved by speeches and decisions of the majority...but by iron and blood.” This amounted to an explicit, self-important German defiance of the basic spiritual, moral, and political values of European democratic civilization. Accordingly, following the earlier geopolitical efforts of a united Germany with an increasingly united Austria-Hungary appeared to be a deficient mode of Occidental spirituality: a materialist reversal of the genuine spiritual and moral responsibility of individuals and their communities in an extremely modern form. This consisted in a union between chauvinist-racial, military and economic imperial designs on a global scale, and a centralized liberalism of an unequivocally anti-democratic and anti-federalist orientation. In this way, the alliance of Germany with Austria-Hungary was conceived as a materialist and anti-democratic power-offensive against the dominant world-position of the British Empire with the final aim of controlling both Europe and the whole world. In other words, the German-Austrian alliance of World War I struggled for a final solution to the Oriental question in an unequivocally violent way. Thus, a materialist alternative to democratic civilization became for the first time in human history a global threat, vastly exceeding intellectual and parochial influence. Consequently, the traditional problem of Diversity in Unity was confronted with the serious challenge of a complex materialism striving for the annihilation of diversity through a violent principle of unity.

Problems, Resistance, and Offensives against the Democratic Spirit

A fatal spiritual and political expression of modern materialism in its German form was the synthesis of the French type of centralizing, administrative liberalism with a race-based national imperialism of the German kind. The resulting, extremely aggressive blend of opinions encountered a natural, twofold resistance. On the one hand, resistance mounted from the democratically founded and established part of the world, especially its Anglo-Saxon segment, with its own liberal tradition securely anchored in the spiritual, moral, and typically idealistic essence of Europeanism and democratic civilization.

On the other hand, a similar sort of resistance appeared right in the centre of the sphere of German cultural and political activity, in the territory of Austria, later Austria-Hungary. It was concentrated mostly among the intelligentsia and the political representatives of the Slav and Romance nations of the Austrian monarchy. Citizens, especially in the Czech lands, clearly accepted the Anglo-Saxon conception of liberalism also at the foundation of the American democracy. Such resistance explicitly renewed one’s own Occidental traditions, in the Czech case with a conspicuous stress both on the Hussite Reformation and the afore-

mentioned stream of the Enlightenment,—reaffirming the original spiritual and moral traditions of Europe. Along these lines, an original, and till now highly topical concept of philosophy of history was developed by František Palacký, with explicit emphasis on the problem of Diversity in Unity.

It consisted in distinguishing two basic trends within the history of humanity. On the one hand, Palacký discerned a growing centralization. In this context he stressed a move from an original innumerable plurality and diversity of individual and independent “powers, nations, states, languages, mores and habits, constitutions, etc.”,³² to a totalizing unity. In the course of history, this original state of a countless diversity of humanity is more and more reduced due to centralization: “everywhere are formed centres of gravitation, which themselves later again are included into the gravitational reach of a more powerful centre of gravity. In our times (written in 1846—MB) this issue has come so far, that all the existing central powers on Earth are easy to take in, and count, and everybody knows, and feels that the uniting and unifying progress among the earthly nations is by far not yet arrived at its end. This centralization with civilization go arm in arm, and they support each other; both are, in fact, a victory of spirit over matter, of the only and uniting intellect over the infinite diversity of things.³³ Politically, this trend of world centralization appears as a centralizing state power.”³⁴ However, this phenomenon, according to Palacký, has attained and passed its summit. Palacký’s judgement is based on the following: “The central state-power, intensified, as it seems, almost to immeasurability, has as already awakened into being, after the natural law of polarity, and become an even stronger opposite power, namely the power of public opinion”.³⁵ In this way Palacký identified the second trend of human history. The superiority of public opinion over central state-power was as proved for Palacký by two facts:

First of all, further improvements of civilization were obviously much more favoured by public opinion than by the central power. Secondly, according to the law of polarity, the national principle began to develop out of public opinion. This emerged as a new powerful agent of human history, as an effective counterbalance against the “uniforming power of centralization”.³⁶ In this context, Palacký stressed that the

³² F. Palacký, *Úvahy a projevy (Reflections and Speeches)* Melantrich, Praha 1977, pp. 87-88.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

³⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 91.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Cf. *ibid.*

national principle appears somewhat indifferent to central state power as well as public opinion.³⁷

In his later interpretation of two basic trends of world history in 1865, Palacký laid more emphasis on a positive aspect of world centralization, exemplified in the appearance of a world-wide intelligentsia. The scholarly strata of each society became like one audience. Moreover, an intensified progress in the means of communication implied that feelings and ideas that originated in one place were quickly conveyed, disseminated into diverse countries where “they find an instant reception and compassion, or are refused in all nations and social strata”.³⁸ Palacký came to the conclusion that the spiritual foundation of world-laws is characterized by an intrinsic balance of moves, clearly averting the dangers of one-sidedness. Consequently, the uniting move of congeniality and congruity induces a repulsive move of diversity. An apparent instance of it is evidenced in the tendency to unite nations. Meanwhile communication among particular nations intensifies awareness of differences as well, along with a resistance against unification (cf. *ibid.*). Consequently, “a uniform universe never was, and will never be a Commandment of God” (*ibid.*).

Politically, Palacký’s conception of the philosophy of history was oriented towards solving the problem of Diversity in Unity, in order to create an appropriate background for efforts to federalize the Austrian monarchy. Still, the prevailing, mostly German opposition against such a democratic reconstruction of an essentially pluralist, multinational territory of Austria in the centre of Europe, caused repeated failures of this design. This sinister development contributed decisively to the global cataclysm of World War I. This elucidates both its nature and its crucial importance for the history of the 20th century.

The initiation and unleashing of World War I by Germany and Austria-Hungary was in fact *a declaration of war on the principles of democratic civilization grounded in human and civic rights*. A deeper spiritual root of this conflict consisted in the determined endeavour of various streams of deficient materialism of Occidental spirituality to achieve world domination. In this way a final solution to the principal question of Diversity in Unity should take place on global scale.

Naturally, the intensive, violent effort of a complex anti-democratic answer to the Oriental question generated a highly strong response. Shortly after the beginning of World War I, a natural alliance against the German-Austrian menace to the democratic civilization was established between the invading democratic powers of the Entente

³⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 92.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 343.

(later including the U.S.) and the spiritually grounded, political, and military resistance of the oppressed nations in Austria-Hungary.

The immediate outcome of World War I was impressive and demanding in terms of the moral obligations made by the democratic victors. In view of Occidental and democratic civilization, the breakdown of the European autocratic powers as a political result of WWI presented an extremely difficult, but no less imperative challenge: a *complex, profoundly grounded, and resolute reconstruction of Europe along democratic lines*. In context, this spelled a conscious application of the spiritual and moral roots of Europeanism. In this way, a stable and crucial segment of democratic civilization would certainly appear.

Still, the democratic powers of the Entente did not reply properly to such a demanding challenge; consequently, they lost the peace. A considerable lack of moral resolve, unity, and courage on their part, not to mention a general misconception, resulted in the originally allied democracies failing to cope with the deep and global responsibility which followed from their victory in the World War.

Both the immediate consequences and the final results of this precarious attitude were fatal, and entailed grievous consequences, including our present predicament. On the global scale, the anti-democratic movements recognized and eagerly grasped their opportunities. Moreover, Russia and Germany underwent a radical transformation into totalitarian regimes offering an alternative mode of human existence, challenging the very foundations of the Occidental democratic civilization. Spiritually, this turn originated from an intensification of *deficient modes* of these foundations mentioned above. Its leading principle was, and still is, an annihilation of human moral responsibility. In such terms, the problem of Diversity in Unity is radically resolved in favour of an ideological unity founded on the precondition of diversity being no less radically moulded into a totally manageable conglomerate of fragmented and atomized units. The theoretical and pseudo-moral basis of totalitarian regimes is a complex and thorough materialist revisionism. Important differences between the Marxist 'class' and the Nazi racial conception consist only in relative depth of their respective elaborations. In a retrospect, the global conflagration of World War I appears both as presage and precondition of future conflicts between democracies and totalitarian regimes, where the spiritual problem of Diversity in Unity plays a dominant role.

After the defeat of Nazi Germany, the Cold War represents a continuation of the World War against totalitarianism. It is exaggeratedly optimistic to speak now about the end of the war on totalitarianism with the birth of democracy in central and Eastern Europe in and after 1989.

The victory of the democratic world in both former stages of conflict with totalitarian regimes was by no means a matter of course. It demanded time and the extreme strain of genuine moral determination and solidarity in the joint action of democratic politicians and ordinary citizens, committed to democratic values in the whole world. Such a key historic dedication implies dedication to a universal, although in every case specifically and traditionally modified, conception of Diversity in Unity. Nowadays, it would be a serious and fatal mistake to assume that the enduring global conflict of democracies with the challenge of totalitarian regimes and movements which was foreshadowed eighty years ago, and made possible by World War I, is a now *past*. In principle, the same illusion shaped public opinion in the democratic countries after the victorious end of World War I and in consequence contributed to a much worse repeat in the next world war. The same sort of appealing naivety of the democratic countries accounted for the dramatic fact that the Cold War with communist totalitarianism came to an end more than forty years after it began, thanks to President Reagan's resolve to exceed the policy of containment.

As a matter of general principle, the core of that problem is an extremely important spiritual, moral, and consequently political predicament of democratic civilization. This is rooted in its lasting confusion with regard to a synthesis of the spiritual and moral origins of the Occidental and democratic civilization with the political life of democratic states and their broader communities. The rigid separation of politics, as a rational public sphere, from the individual moral convictions of citizens as exclusively preoccupied with their private lives, appears as an impossible prejudice both of the originally continental type of Enlightenment and of the affiliated sort of liberalism. Its survival and further development is the primary source of historical and political confusion, and of the conceptual vagueness of the democratic world in its global conflict with radical materialist alternatives.

Particularly in this context, liberalism, including its post-modernist version, rejects any general principles in favour of so called stories or individual events. Hence, instead of a common core of knowledge, indispensable for any prudent action, emphasis is laid on an absolute diversity and the "need to give equal attention to every voice".³⁹

Moreover, such a thorough inversion, combined with its systematic vagueness and half-heartedness, proves radically anti-scientific and is tantamount to a systematic intellectual resignation at a highly precarious time "when the biological sciences make it possible to

³⁹ Cf. Roger D. Masters, *Beyond Relativism*, Dartmouth College (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1993), p. 148.

manipulate human behaviour and genetics for political purposes".⁴⁰ In other words, the exponential growth of hitherto undreamed of technologies intensifies the manipulability of entire societies,⁴¹ and underscores the overwhelming thrust of force unleashed as a sinister sign of our century.⁴² Global conflicts contribute to both the external and internal impoverishment of humans, removing their irreplaceability and identifying them with their appropriate roles.⁴³ This tempts peoples and nations to repeat the totalitarian efforts to establish radical alternatives for human existence.

Politically as well, a closer look at the world after the democratization of the Eastern Europe and Asia should be sufficient for discarding pacifist illusions. Totalitarian regimes, particularly in the case of China, present constant danger for the democratic world. While democracy in European countries which for decades were dominated by communist totalitarianism are often problematic. Communist totalitarianism is often transformed, in varying degrees, into nationalist forms. Many Islamic countries have fallen prey to a wave of totalitarian fundamentalism, which in some has become a hegemonic power declaring war on democratic civilization. The European détente after 1989 characteristically produced revisionist efforts with respect to the results of both World Wars, especially in Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Italy. In these cases, a revisionist *ressentiment* often turns into political action posing dangers for the recent democratic changes in Russian domestic and foreign politics.

It seems clear that both the European and world transformations initiated by World War I now accumulate and necessitate a full-fledged return of the contemporary democratic world to the fulfillment of its crucial historic obligation. This is to unite on a spiritual and moral basis, and to elaborate and to put into practice a globally conceived democratic conception of the Oriental question, a democratic reconstruction of 'Europa' and of the whole world. This is the historic mission of democratic civilization, which needs a decisive initiation.

Accordingly, the problem of Diversity in Unity appears precise and topical. An acute danger, confusing both concepts, assumed an intensified form after 1989. In terms of the prevailing "strategic interaction of the new geopolitics"⁴⁴ a sinister, almost spontaneous process is

⁴⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

⁴¹ Cf. *ibid.*

⁴² Cf. Patocka, *ibid.*, p. 123.

⁴³ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 125.

⁴⁴ Cf. Pierre Hassner, "An Overview of the Problem," in *War and Peace: European Conflict Prevention*, Chaillot Paper 11, Institute for Security Studies, Western European Union, Paris, October 1993 [pp. 4-16], p. 7.

developing which represents a deficient mode of the world historic trend grasped by Palacký as World Centralization.⁴⁵ Pierre Hassner defines it as follows:

...mechanisms of contagion and interaction which are beyond the control of states and involve financial flows and their manipulation, the trade in drugs and arms, the communications revolution, the broadcasting of images and the spread of corruption and violence in a world in which, whether they be democratic or totalitarian, developed or underdeveloped, are decreasingly in control of society. Increasingly, international relations are made up of the combination of at least three types of processes: the *interaction* of strategies (in particular diplomatic and military), the *interdependence* of interests (in particular economic) and the *inter-penetration* of societies (in particular from a demographic and cultural point of view). My thesis is that this third type of relationship, which is much more difficult to control, is assuming an increasing importance in comparison with the classic types and that it rebounds on them by giving rise to new economic turmoil and new risks of violence. What increasingly characterises the new geopolitics is that it can be less and less understood in the form of an interplay between rational actors. Neither the limits of the system, nor the stakes and rules of interaction, nor even the nature and identity of the actors appear to be defined once and for all. What seems to govern the interaction is an undefined, ambiguous and uncontrollable process.⁴⁶

Such an unrestrained, amoebic process effectively blurs the distinctions of good and bad and paralyses the human capacity “everywhere and always to choose the better from among those that are possible”.⁴⁷ In other words, this massive global tendency towards universal indifference in fact effectively liquidates the whole problem of Diversity in Unity, grounds similar to totalitarian systems. Nevertheless, a promising outcome of this global impasse does not seem to be impossible. In this context, and as a starting point of further investi-

⁴⁵ Cf. Palacký, *ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Plato, *Republic*, 618bc; ed. Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1968), p. 301.

gation, I would like to mention three ideas of different authors. The first is the contemporary position of Roger D. Masters:

The impossibility of a definite *conquest of nature* means that inevitably some social conflicts will be impossible to resolve by increasing the resources or power available to all. The facts of human existence ensure that there will be competing claims that someone has to adjudicate. This leads to the value of *natural justice*; we are obliged, insofar as is humanly possible, to seek the just or fair resolution according to nature. Plato saw justice as occurring in the individual when each part of the soul (or personality) fulfils its natural function; he defines justice in society as the condition in which each social class plays its proper role. In place of limitless claims on others in the name of natural or civic rights, morality asks of us self-imposed obligations to achieve justice.⁴⁸

Second, Masters' demand that natural justice be restored originated philosophically in Plato and Aristotle and should in our modern conditions be accompanied by self-imposed obligations. This is in accordance with Leibniz' conception of the human Self as a being in principle able to transcend itself because of its inherent Idea of Being.⁴⁹

Third is Jan Patočka's philosophic synthesis of the spiritual tradition with the contemporary modern predicament of a universal unleashing of force:

Yet the principal possibility emerging with our civilization is the opportunity—for the first time in history—to turn from an incidental rule to a rule of those who comprehend history. History is nothing but a shaken certainty. It has no other meaning or end. Still, this meaning and this end are sufficient for the false infinity of precarious human existence in the world, where it is complicated by the deception of the masses, who were already used to flattery and are now victims of a manipulating demagogy....A danger of contemporary times is that, with too much particular knowledge, people learn *not* to question....There is no civilization as such. At issue is whether the human beings of history are still willing to admit to history...*an entire freedom* from *all* interests of peace, life, day...this

⁴⁸ Masters, *ibid.*, p. 155.

⁴⁹ Cf. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Nouv. Ess. Livre I; Monad; Discours.*

absolute freedom which *is not* a means for something other, is no stage to..., but behind what and over what it could be nothing else. The summit is right here, in this laying oneself open, which the people were called to from their professions, talents, opportunities, future. To achieve this so that it seems to be an entirely reified and reifying source of energy, means *overcoming force* as well.⁵⁰

Accordingly, the current hopes and disappointments of the world after 1989 seem to demand the extreme human sacrifice described by Patocka in order to come to terms with Masters' and Leibniz' insights. Moreover, such an entire human exposure cannot remain a matter of only a temporally concentrated effort, but, by contrast, is its non-spectacular opposite, i.e. a view of life creating its style. Such a conception entails *a framework of human virtues as the backbone of human life*.

In terms of Diversity in Unity, the ability "to see questions and their basis" (Patocka) appears as a unifying factor making meaningful insight into and ordering of diversity possible. This ability presents a thoroughly reflected spiritual legacy of the Occidental civilization reconsidered in view of the spiritual and moral predicament of the twentieth century. In effect, it is the requirement that "progress in developing a more subtle sense of unity be kept in step with the development of the new sense of diversity".⁵¹ In other words, a new and more subtle sense of both Unity and Diversity is preconditioned by a clear insight of the instability of all given senses, i.e. of all reality. Thus, the precondition of a new, appropriate sense of Diversity in Unity is a new spirituality of human beings.

In fact, however, it is not entirely new, because it intensifies the founding insights of Occidental spirituality, which, *mutatis mutandis*, grew out of a courageous intensification of the shaking tendency of mythic spirituality. This mood of responsible spiritual and moral courage with regard to the truth of myth encapsulates and concentrates the legitimacy of a universal Unity sufficient to address the manifold and extremely demanding Diversity of the world after 1989. However, any universal application of general concepts without appropriate empirical knowledge of a particular situation frequently fails.⁵² Accordingly, a genuine and appropriate Diversity in Unity has to be anchored in verified empirical knowledge of individual organic wholes and parti-

⁵⁰ Jan Patocka, *ibid.*, pp. 125-6, 137.

⁵¹ George F. McLean, "Introduction," *Diversity in Unity* (Washington, D.C.: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2004).

⁵² Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1. 981 a 1-15.

culars. In consequence, an adequate Diversity in Unity of our times consists of individual diversities within unities, and by the same token to practice courageous and responsible harmonizing of spiritual centralization and personal autonomy.⁵³

Concerning the issue of tolerance, its philosophic foundation in Kant as common sense (*sensus communis*), i.e. in terms of “a judging ability which, in its reflection, takes account (*a priori*) of the mode of representation of all other men in thought...by comparing our judgment with the possible rather than with the actual judgments of others, and by putting ourselves in the place of any other man, by abstracting from the limitations which contingently attach to our own judgment”.⁵⁴ Interpreted on the inter-personal level of Aristotle’s emphasis on empirical knowledge, so urgent for an appropriate conception of Diversity in Unity, seems to meet the above demands. In the given context of a move of the adequate contemporary concept of Diversity in Unity from thinking to judging we return to the world of appearances in order to generate meaning for that world because “judging alone makes satisfactory provision for meaning and thereby allows us, potentially, to *affirm* our condition”.⁵⁵

By comprehending and accepting others this way, we can envisage the appearance of diversity in unity in our own time, in order to “make ourselves at home in the world”⁵⁶ and to reconcile our time with our worldliness.⁵⁷ This reconciliation cannot be equated with tranquillity or an end of history. Quite the contrary, such a reconciling of human existence in the contemporary world requires an intensified, spirituality-based activism of responsible joint effort.

The notorious problem of post-communist nationalisms seems to require the proposed attitude towards Diversity in Unity. In general, the sudden explosion of nationalism in almost the entire east-European and former Soviet territory following the changes in and after 1989 has in principle appalled the public of democratic countries. Where a typical reaction is a sheer rejection and refusal of such abominable conduct. Nevertheless, this reactive western behavior with regard to post-communist nationalism ignores a particular empirical character of these phenomena namely, the abuse of national problems, needs and tensions

⁵³ Cf. Palacký, *ibid.*

⁵⁴ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement*.

⁵⁵ Ronald Beiner, “Hannah Arendt on Judging,” in: Hannah Arendt, *Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy*, ed., and with an Interpretive Essay by Ronalds Beiner (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 154.

⁵⁶ Hannah Arendt, *Papers*, Library of Congress, Container 41, pp. 032288, 032295.

⁵⁷ Cf. Beiner, p. 155.

of respective countries by mighty networks of power and influence originated in, and closely connected with the preceding communist regimes. In fact, the communist rulers had successfully manipulated particular national issues during the whole era of their uncontested domination with a view to strengthening their totalitarian power. Now, they do the same under changed circumstances in order to maintain their influence, often by dividing existing states along national issues. In these cases again, the ex-communist networks frequently abuse characteristic and traditional overlappings of national and state borders, and the long history of tensions and conflicts due to this fact. This ex-communist tactic since 1989 has been successful in two respects. On the one hand, it largely promoted a preservation of ex-communist power and influence by an organic combination of both totalitarian and chauvinist elements. On the other hand, it no less effectively induced western public opinion to believe that the sudden nationalist turmoil in the post-communist area presents a backward atavism of history, while its communist manipulation is being accepted only selectively (e.g. in the case of Serbs). Thus, indirect ex-communist *propaganda* is highly influential in western democracies up to the present time.

However, this can perhaps be challenged by applying the spiritually anchored conception of Diversity in Unity developed above. Politically, such an approach would call for a cogent discrimination between legitimate national needs, illegitimate chauvinist demands, and the (ex-) communist abusive manipulation of both. Such a conception would discriminate between genuine type of diversity in unity in terms of a topical interpretation of the Occidental spiritual and moral tradition, and its manifold deficiencies and distortions, including its radical reversal as expressed in totalitarianism. From the basic point of view of such a concept of Diversity in Unity a substantiated insight into manifold versions of nationalism and its abuse can be obtained.

Accordingly, in addition to understanding and coming to terms with the totalitarian alternative of human existence, which thoroughly annihilates the moral responsibility of humans while atomizing them into totally disposable units, it also allows for the recognition of two basic sorts of nationalism. On the one hand, there is a chauvinist, i.e. negatively and aggressively defined version of a purely self-centered and entirely exclusive identity. On the other hand, there is a spiritually and morally-founded cosmopolitan version of nationalism, legitimizing the field of individual and national responsibilities in terms of the complex democratic unity of our common world. In effect, such insight into the contemporary nationalist predicament, as revealed after 1989, might be able to inspire an effective and virtuous political attitude of democratic states towards subsequent conflicts such as those currently taking place in Bosnia, Tadjikistan, etc. Precisely in this sensitive, challenging and

characteristically bewildering context, a seriously elaborated, cogent and persuasive conception of Diversity in Unity, whose spiritual and moral bases were outlined above, could perhaps fulfill its mission.

*Institute of Philosophy
Czech Academy of Social Sciences
Prague, the Czech Republic*

CHAPTER VI

NON-INDIFFERENCE WITHIN DIFFERENCE: EMMANUEL LEVINAS ON THE SOCIALITY OF THE FACE-TO-FACE RELATION

ANGELLI F. TUGADO

INTRODUCTION

This chapter attempts to confront the problem of diversity in unity by following the thought of Emmanuel Levinas on the concept of difference as found in the ethical face-to-face relation.¹ Using Levinas' phenomenology this paper outlines the link between the spheres of the face-to-face or person-to-person relation and of society. The assumption guiding this paper is that genuine unity within the larger societal and political context can be achieved through a reasoned respect for diversity within the experience of human sociality.

Today, diversity and unity can be seen as complementary. The concept of diversity usually regarded in apparently negative terms as tension, conflict and pluralism, can be understood more positively as a form of coexistence that is life-giving rather than life-threatening, creative rather than destructive, affirming rather than denying. The concept of unity has evolved from the danger of mere uniformity under totalitarian state authorities to that of harmonious coexistence. Furthermore, there seems to be a growing consensus that unity should ultimately be founded on metaphysical and transcendental principles. In its own way, this paper tries to dig into the "roots of our sense of unity with others" by reflecting on the fundamental, yet often underachieved, fraternity grounded on each person's ethical respect and responsibility for the Other in a face-to-face or person-to-person relation.² We will

¹ Among the works referred to in this study are *Totality and Infinity: An Essay in Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), (hereafter cited as *TI*); *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, trans. A. Lingis, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1978 (hereafter cited as *OBBE*). also helpful in introducing Levinas' main thought is *Ethics and Infinity: Conversations with Philippe Nemo*, trans. Richard Cohen (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1985).

² In this paper, the word Other (with a capital "O") is used to signify the other person in his irreducible otherness (*Autrui*) and other (with a lowercased "o") or *Autre*, to refer to the adjective qualifying a person as other but within

investigate how this forgotten respect for the face inspires the pre-institutional moment that creates the condition for the possibility of unity, despite diversity in a civil society.

The method of this study is Levinas' unique brand of phenomenology with regard to what for him is a fundamentally ethical experience.³ It undertakes a return to the lived experience of the face-to-face or person-to-person with all the ambiguities such experience entails. To a certain extent, the method moves out of a strictly phenomenological framework to draw out the ethical implications of such experience.

The reader is forewarned that many of the ambiguities are articulated by Levinas in oftentimes contradictory and hyperbolic terms. Many of the ideas presented by Levinas need to be performed rather than spoken, and thus are more elusive. This warning, however, is given, not as an apology for ambiguity, but as an explanation of the challenge posed by the very problematic theme of the paper.

The first part of the paper develops the notion of fundamental difference that emerges in face-to-face relations. The second part unfolds the various nuances of non-indifference that emerge as one responds to the approach of the other personality. Finally, the third part reveals implications arising from the first two parts for the very possibility of unity which extends beyond face-to-face relations to the larger context of civil society.

DIFFERENCE

In our daily dealings with fellowmen it is easy and sometimes even necessary to take the face for granted. It seems easier to get by in practical and routine circumstances without considering the singularity of each person with whom we deal. Most of the time we relate routinely to persons within a given social context: as businessman, colleague, customer or client. But we have not really related to other people personally or "in-the-face" as long as we deal with them in the "usual manner". When conflicts arise, whether or not intended, when a break in the usual routine occurs, or when a crisis unfolds we begin really to see the other person in-the-face. For better or for worse, we come to know persons with whom a break occurs, as we say, "in a different way," or again as if for the first time. Certain circumstances thus require that we bracket our usual understanding of other people; it is then that we

the categories of the same (*meme*), following Levinas' own linguistic distinctions.

³ Such phenomenology incorporates and criticizes a long tradition of phenomenology founded by Husserl and Heidegger, for which there is no space in this paper to explore.

experience other people as Other. This is the experience of what Levinas considers to be forgotten in usual face-to-face relations. Whether in commonplace circumstances or in critical situations, the other person is related to as face and as such as a presence. Yet something in the Other's face still remains "infinitely foreign" no matter how native and familiar to us. The Other is one who "breaks with the world that can be common to us."⁴

However, we do not need dramatically out-of-the-usual circumstances in order to encounter other people as faces. The fact that people are (and not only have) faces is fundamental, yet often this is missed. The strangeness that one now sees in the Other is easier to perceive in one who is already regarded a stranger; regarding as Other a person with whom we are thoroughly familiar is more challenging. Levinas' precise point is that for us to render even the familiar (or so we thought) radically strange, since the other as Other cannot simply be one's alter ego, an "appresented analogue of myself"; the other is "not one's equal nor a fellow citizen in an intelligible kingdom of ends."⁵ For Levinas the difference between one and the other is more radical and acute than mere difference in habit, interest, outlook, principles, even religion and other such matters that oftentimes and sometimes irreconcilably divide people.

The Other as other is separated absolutely from me such that I⁶ cannot think of the Other only with respect to what I am not. A concrete manifestation of this difference is the difficulty even in speaking of someone who is said to be very close (i.e., for the same reasons given above that sometimes "differentiate" people). There is something in the Other's face that resists being spoken of within and outside of the encounter, which perhaps makes it easier for one to talk about an-Other "in absentia". If only for this, there is some truth in the quip, "Do not bother to talk about yourself; others will do that when you leave." Thus, the Other as face is exterior to myself. All my attempts to speak of the Other, whether face-to-face or in presence or absence (as is often the case) of the face-to-face, fail to capture the "essence" of the Other. Something always escapes all the impressions I may gather of the Other in my contact with him/her.

⁴ TI, p. 194.

⁵ John Llewelyn, *Beyond Metaphysics?* (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1985), p. 154.

⁶ From hereon the shift to the first person pronoun becomes crucial. More recent scholars of Levinas' works find ethical significance in the ambiguity of this pronoun's antecedent (whether it refers to the author, Levinas, or a pseudonym for anyone) as we shall see in the later part of this paper.

Dealing with a face cannot therefore be reduced to dealing with someone only within the context of the totality of impressions left behind. Otherwise even one who is said to “exceed his reputation” may never be met in the face (i.e., in the area exceeding his reputation) as long as his reputation conditions the manner or even the very possibility of my relation with him/her. According to Levinas, the Other in his face is not a set of impressions, but more an expression. As such, the Other “presses out” of whatever impression or image I may have and in doing so presents himself to me. Although “I may turn toward the Other as toward an object,...the best way of encountering the Other is not even to notice the color of his eyes!”⁷ Further, while “the relation with the face can surely be dominated by perception,...what is specifically the face is what cannot be reduced to that.”⁸ Thus, the face as such is not merely a “plastic image”, a subject of caricature or even of icons, but the very presence of one who comes to pass, i.e., as an “epiphany.” As presence, the Other reveals him or herself ambiguously—by entering my world and yet remaining outside it, outside of my totalizing grasp. An aspect of the difference between the Other and me lies in the Other being given over and beyond my grasp. The Other faces me from a height which, however, does not really dominate or efface me.

This dimension of height also carries a depth. Even if the Other is beyond whatever I may perceive of him, still I am tempted to dominate him if only to bring him within my grasp. Levinas even goes as far as pointing out the temptation to kill born out of an “allergic intolerance” of the other. Yet the very epiphany of the face resists this temptation. The resistance is a show not of (physical) force, but of moral or ethical force, whose power lies in its very “defiance of my ability for power.” At the moment I think I can do or say anything I want to dominate or suppress the other, I am proven wrong by the face, by *that* gaze. Thus Levinas describes, in haunting terms, the ambiguity of the Other’s resistance as both a strength and a weakness:

The Other who can sovereignly say “no” to me is exposed to the point of the sword or the revolver’s bullet, and the whole unshakable firmness of his ‘for itself’ with the intransigent “no” he opposed can be obliterated because the sword or bullet has touched the ventricles or auricles of his heart. In the contexture of the world he is a quasi-nothing. But he can oppose to me a struggle, that is, oppose to the

⁷ Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity*, p. 86. Note, however, that the gaze in those eyes becomes ethically significant as will be seen in the second section of this paper.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 85-86.

force that strikes him not a force of resistance, but the very unforeseeableness of his reaction (TI, p. 199).

In the heart of the face's vulnerability is its moral strength and authority: it is the face that "forbids one to kill"⁹ and thereby commands respect and nonviolence. For this, Levinas notes that even during war when ethics is said to be suspended it is difficult to kill someone who looks one straight in the eye and that assassins usually attack their victims from behind.¹⁰ Further, the temptation to kill means not only taking someone's life by a gun or other means, but the mere doing nothing to keep him alive.¹¹

The foregoing, moreover, accentuates another aspect of difference; namely, the disproportion between one's own feeble powers of domination and control and the infinity of the force of the Other's resistance. In the face of such alterity, I may regard the Other as adversary, particularly if the Other is seen as a threat to my own survival. As long as this view is maintained, it is difficult to see how unity, at the very least with one's fellowman, can be achieved at all.

NON-INDIFFERENCE

Yet in its indescribable feebleness and resistance, the face commands my respect as it orders me not to kill. As the subject of my regard (*Il me regarde*), the Other is one I am called upon not merely to look at, but look after, at the very least by keeping him alive. It must be noted that the Other's face also looks at me and talks back.¹² I become more sensitive to this usually taken-for-granted experience of being looked at or faced in the presence of a different group of people in a foreign environment. In such circumstances I am called upon to transcend myself and to meet or face up to the Other who also transcends me, that is, who puts my autonomy into question and approaches me from a height and from the depth of his/her resistance to my grasp. Self-transcendence requires me to shift from the tendency to control, to the ability to welcome the Other with open arms but not with empty hands. Levinas sees this shift as the move to proximity, i.e., when I meet

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ 11. Wright, Tamra, et al., "The Paradox of Morality: An Interview with Emmanuel Levinas" in *The Revocation of Levinas: Rethinking the Other*, eds. Robert Bernasconi and David Woods (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 173.

¹² A point that Jill Robbins underscores and pursues in her article, *Visage, Figure: Reading Levinas' Totality and Infinity*, *Yale French Studies* 79 (1991): 138.

and respond to the Other who approaches and speaks to me. The Other's approach allows me to be deposed from my closed and hitherto sovereign position and to be disposed to the obligation to respond to the Other's appeal and approach.

Proximity therefore summons my responsibility for the Other. In further deepening this sense of responsibility, Levinas explains that the other who approaches me exposed (the nudity of the face as such) and in destitution, calls me to "bear the bankruptcy and wretchedness of the Other, to suffer for his suffering." This is the heart of intentionality, over and above its phenomenological significance: to "turn toward the other who remains separate even in proximity, by also bearing his suffering without light, without measure."¹³

Proximity, however, does not obliterate difference. The other who approaches never comes near enough to dissolve the distance between the Other and me. I do not lose myself in the relation that cannot be reduced to reciprocity. In this light, one wonders whether in the so-called neighborhood, people who are geographically close may really be in ethical proximity to each other. Ethical proximity, realized in one's bearing of responsibility for the Other cuts across geographical and even ideological barriers. Levinas' point here leaves us with the question of how genuine community can be lived, that is, even within organized (or urbanized) settings.

The nonreciprocity of my responsibility for the Other marks still another (and rather strange) feature of difference: the "asymmetry of the face-to-face relation". I am responsible for the Other, even for his responsibility, but I cannot expect the Other, in turn, to be responsible for me. Furthermore, my responsibility for the Other cannot be calculated beforehand nor can it be subjected to auditing or bookkeeping of services rendered in order to be recompensed.¹⁴

Levinas' concepts of 'obsession', 'substitution' and 'hostage' further stress the acuteness of this asymmetry and the ethical depth of responsibility. My obsession is triggered by the face: I am extremely affected as one who is caught up in an accusation for something I have not done. This responsibility is "an-ar-chic", in the sense that something that has been there prior to any debt incurred, prior to any contract entered into. The obligation of such responsibility is therefore "more passive than any passivity." I am summoned by the Other to answer for

¹³ Levinas, "Beyond Intentionality," in *Philosophy in France Today*, ed. Alan Montefiore, 1983).

¹⁴ Levinas, *L'au-delà du verset* (Paris, Minuit, 1982, 178 n. 6, 132), quoted by Fabio Ciaramelli, "Levinas" Ethical Discourse between Individuation and Universality" in *Rereading Levinas*, eds. Robert Bernasconi and Simon Critchley (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991), p. 88

him, to stand in his place in order to see to his needs. I myself, and no one else am called; no one can substitute for me. This establishes my identity as a subject. I am subpoenaed by the Other for a charge beyond any fault, before any freedom exercised and before any innocence claimed or any guilt confessed.

Given this rather extreme formulation of responsibility, apathy seems to be the more attractive response of one who is closed in upon oneself (the “practical” question: “Am I my brother’s keeper?). Even that being granted, the crucial question is whether I have any choice really before the gaze that singles me out; what becomes of my freedom? Here Levinas moves to an ethical concept of freedom as “the acceptance of a vocation to which I alone can respond or again, the power to respond to it when called. To be free is only to do what nobody else can do in my place.”¹⁵ Freedom comes from my whole-heartedly taking the initiative to respond (Here I am!), expecting no one else to do so in my place. My responsibility to the Other as other also remains infinite: the more I turn to myself the more I discover that I am responsible; the more just I consider myself the more guilty I find myself to be. The infinity of responsibility and the perpetual unrest that this brings is such that I cannot even have the satisfaction of knowing whether I have done enough.

Any skeptic or “practical-minded person” would find this outrageous. Is this not too much and unfair? And granting that I open myself to this responsibility to an Other, what about the other Others? In other words the personal pronoun “I” may not really be that personal. Given my own finitude, for all intents and purposes, I cannot respond myself single-handedly and totally to an Other, when there are other persons who also call upon me, for there are other persons who also share my world. In addressing this objection, Levinas brings in the concept of the third party (*le tiers*) which will be discussed in the next section. Another question that remains about me: Is not the Other also responsible for me? Levinas replies, “Perhaps, but that is his affair...”, again precisely to stress the difference, the non-reciprocatability and extreme individuation of the responsibility of one who goes out of himself in non-indifference to the Other.

A crucial problem remains: how can such a sense of obligation be universalized if it remains individuated? In other words, how is it possible for a plurality of individuals to come together in peace and compassion for one another, despite their difference from each other?

¹⁵ Levinas, *L’au-delà du verset* (Paris, Minuit, 1982, 178 n. 6, 132), quoted by Fabio Ciaramelli, “Levinas” Ethical Discourse between Individuation and Universality” in *Rereading Levinas*, eds. Robert Bernasconi and Simon Critchley (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991), p. 88.

This problem must be considered in treating the issue of unity as fraternity.

TOWARDS UNITY BEYOND THE FACE-TO-FACE

These questions present crucial aporiae to Levinas' conception of responsibility in the face-to-face relations, which must be overcome if the discussion is to move beyond the pre-institutionalized moment of face-to-face society. Levinas himself found problematic the fact that there are not only two people in the world (if there were, there would be no problem). The problem of justice or at the very least, justice-for-me also emerges. Furthermore, individuated, nonreciprocal responsibility of one for another, when stretched to its logical or even phenomenological consequences, threatens to rule out the possibility of universalization and therefore unity among a plurality of individuals. Ciaramelli asks the crucial question for philosophers:

How is it possible to express in philosophical language a situation [of the one-for-the-other] so strange that it takes place in the most extreme particularity, yet concerns the universal meaning of subjectivity?...If one were to be philosophical about Levinas' concept of responsibility for the other, can one posit that each and every subject will indeed take responsibility for an other?¹⁶

Possible answers to such questions can be found indirectly in the notion of the third party, which opens up to the ethico-metaphysical basis of social and political institutions, as well as in the idea of the ethical responsibility as prophetic witnessing.

According to Levinas, ethical responsibility of one for the Other becomes a problem when there are other Others that have to be considered. The undeniable fact to which Levinas points is that the Other's face (i.e., "that gaze") implicates other Others. This is manifested in certain enduring patterns of social interaction. It is interesting to note that in language used to address another person with respect I also allude to other Others. For instance, the French *autrui*, expressing both singularity and plurality, is addressed as *vous* (singular and respectful form for "you") rather than *tu* in the same way that the Filipino, *kayo* (the plural form for "you") is also used for individuals who are to be addressed politely with respect, as one of the ground rules of civility. I may not only have a student or a client but other students

¹⁶Ciaramelli, "Levinas' Ethical Discourse" in *Re-reading Levinas*, p. 86.

and clients as well who demand my availability (the examples are infinite). If it were only a question of one, then my responsibility would be unlimited, without any measure. But involving one more Other, and still more, turns my responsibility into a complicated administrative problem: to whom should I respond first? to what extent? Where is justice when I give in to one and in doing so am no longer able to respond to the others? The problem becomes more complicated knowing that this one should be incomparable from that other. The relation with a third Other thus forces me into a “comparison of the incomparable.”

Levinas admits that one cannot avoid comparison, weighing, and thus, calculation, even in situations of face-to-face negotiation of interests. This is where the significance of social and political institutions as part of the third party comes in. With the entrance of a third other, and the third party, “everything is together...out of representation is produced the order of justice moderating or measuring the substitution of me for the other,...and there is also justice for me.” The third party somewhat “corrects” the imbalance, the asymmetry of the face-to-face relation. For instance, the tragic and sometimes fatal consequences of domestic violence can be avoided with the timely intervention of genuinely compassionate and just social and legal institutions. Housing, mass transportation, water and electrical facilities are needed to help concretize responsibility for others’ needs on a grand scale. Economic measures such as tuition fees and taxation schemes can be “socialized.” However, the threat of institutional violence which sows hatred of others and even terrorism involving/instigated-by the third party remains possible. The tragedy of the Holocaust in the past half century serves as a constant reminder of this threat (and thus for Levinas is an event never to be forgotten).

It therefore seems that even the intervention of the third party, that which tries to render systematic justice to all, above and within the dyadic justice that is realized in the face-to-face, must be founded precisely on the spirit of compassion springing from one’s infinite responsibility for the Other approached straightforwardly and welcomed “in the face.” This echoes what Pope John Paul II once said in an address to the President of Nigeria in 1982: “Development projects must always have a human face. They cannot be reduced to a purely materialistic or economic endeavor.”¹⁷ The proximity engendered in one’s non-indifference to the Other in the face-to-face thus serves as a normative basis for the formulation of a development program that would hold together and nurture masses of people.

¹⁷ Address to President Alhaji Shehu Shagari in the State House, 12 February 1982, in John Paul II, *Africa: Land of Promise, Land of Hope* (Boston, M.A.: Daughters of St. Paul, 1982), p. 28.

What of the risk of losing the personal touch when societal relations and institutions become impersonal in the interest of efficiency? Levinas further argues that “justice remains justice only, in a society where there is no distinction between those close and those far off, but in which there also remains the impossibility of passing by the closest.”¹⁸ Again the absence of distinction here must be spelled out carefully: it is the non-indifference to difference, the non-indifference despite difference. Then again, he strongly reminds us that a just and egalitarian society can thrive only on the inequality in the face-to-face, so that “the equality of all is borne by my inequality, the surplus of my duties over my rights.” Justice is animated by the “forgetting of self” (not synonymous to the forgetting of the self) or dying to self. Levinas stresses that:

It is then not without importance to know if the egalitarian and just State in which man is fulfilled (and which is to be set up and especially to be maintained) proceeds from a war of all against all, or from the irreducible responsibility of the one for all, and if it can do without friendships and faces.¹⁹

Despite this, the problem of universalizing the attitude for ethical responsibility remains. The problem surfaces on two levels. First, on the institutional level; how can I argue for or “rally” the others to share in the infinite (and unequal) responsibility in order subsequently to even out the inequality? How can I be convinced myself that such magnanimity is not merely the stuff of which saints and heroes are made and therefore one that gives me the excuse that it is, given my human limitations, not easily manageable?

Ciarameili perceptively asks:

While preserving the diversity of attitudes, how do we argue for the faith in humanity (of the responsible subject) in every person and thereby promote authentic harmony and universal justice?²⁰

A way to address this problem, for Ciarameili, is found in Levinas’ own insight to the fulfillment of the ethical face-to-face relation as “prophetic”. This marks the singling out or “ordination” of each individual, that moment when the individual becomes individuated.

¹⁸ OB, p. 159.

¹⁹ OBBE, p. 159, italics mine.

²⁰ Ciarameili, “Levinas’ Ethical Discourse” in *Re-reading Levinas*, p. 86.

Ciaramelli reads Levinas as stressing that each individual as such is called to witness the glory of the Infinite (God) through the human vocation of his/her responsibility for the Other. The individuation of each “I” opens up to universality through my inevitable link with an other. It is within this idea that Levinas hints at the relevance of institutions. But the singularity of each person is preserved in that “It is only from the perspective of my own assignation and election that I can put it into words. My own particular situation remains nonreciprocal and my position cannot be generalized.”²¹

CONCLUSION

This chapter has attempted to highlight various aspects of difference between one and the Other in the ethical relation founded on the face. In so doing, it has tried also to show how difference is never obliterated even as one refrains from being indifferent to the other in one’s responsibility for the Other. Furthermore, it has shown, albeit sketchily, how responsibility for the Other, when assumed by each individual, who paradoxically cannot presuppose this of other individuals, opens up the very possibility of genuine unity. Genuine unity within society cannot be achieved till people become faces to each other.

The chapter has introduced insights on sociality that breeds non-indifference while respecting difference. Civil societies survive and flourish only as long as the people who belong in it do not lose sight of the face. Such insights, however, need further development. Perhaps all is prayer for a kind of fraternity that remains to be seen. However, one conclusion has surfaced: civil society can survive and flourish only so long as the people in it do not lose sight of the face.

Ateneo de Manila University
Manila, Philippines

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

PART II

**CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES OF
DIVERSITY IN UNITY**

CHAPTER VII

DIVERSITY IN UNITY, DURKHEIMS CONCEPT OF ANOMIE IN THE LIGHT OF THE PRESENT PROBLEMS OF CHANGE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

HEINZ HOLLEY

INTRODUCTION

The notion of anomie in sociological as well in philosophical literature is closely related to the French thinker, Emile Durkheim (1858-1912), along with Max Weber, Karl Marx and Vilfredo Pareto, one of the founding fathers of modern sociology. Together with Max Weber, Emile Durkheim not only influenced to a great extent American sociology, but contributed to the emergence of a functional understanding of society. The work of Talcott Parsons or Robert Merton, both leading representatives of the functionalist school of American sociology was inspired by Durkheim's approaches explaining social change.

To introduce the aim of this paper and focus our attention it should be stressed at the beginning that a critical appreciation of Durkheim's concept as a whole is not intended here. The reason for not doing so can be easily explained. Durkheim himself never discussed or described his concept of anomie in the context of the development or transformation processes in developing countries, as is intended in this paper. Nevertheless, Durkheim's concept of anomie may be used as a pattern to discuss present development problems. The following points sketch out how Durkheim's thought can enrich the present discussion for development theories.

It should be remembered that to a high extent Durkheim's work was dedicated to the investigation of social change. In his understanding, this was characterized by change from mechanical solidarity in traditional societies to a new type of organic solidarity in modern societies. In primitive societies, social solidarity is induced in a mechanical fashion; people are held in conformity by a kind of "community consciousness" of a repressive variety. Uniformity of beliefs and practices is insured by strict laws and threats of punishment. Social control, in other words is external to the individual, and in primitive tribes there is pressure for all individuals to conform to a common pattern. But with the increased size and density of population, characteristic of the more

complex societies, there has occurred simultaneously social interaction. The increase in the numbers of people for a given area, together with the increasing complexity of social interaction, intensifies the struggle for existence. The common way of life cannot persist under the new social pressures. Survival is possible only through the division of social labour. Already within that approach to the explanation of social change, Durkheim focused upon social phenomena which can lead to anomie.

The Concept of anomie itself was precisely formulated later in his work about "Suicide" and "The Division of Labour"; it is to this that the definition of anomie in this paper refers. The concept of anomie referred to a condition of relative normlessness in a society or a group. Robert Merton pointed out that "Durkheim made it clear that this concept referred to a property of the social and cultural structure, not to a property of individuals confronting that structure."¹

Durkheim already investigated the internalization of socio-cultural norms, since he interpreted anomic suicide as resulting from disorganization of the relations of the personality to its internalized moral culture.² In that sense anomie must be seen not only as a state of normlessness, but in particular as a social phenomenon which emerges when, as a result of social changes, traditional norms are no longer sufficiently efficient to respond adequately to the newly emerging situation. In that sense, anomie always describes situations "between", situations of social instability in a vacuum of generally accepted norms.³

With regard of the present growing division of labour on an international level, Durkheim's reflections on that issue may also be interesting. In his work, *The Division of Labour*, Durkheim discusses the difference between a real division of labour which contributes an advantage of everyone participating in that process and a process of mere differentiation of labour which happens to the detriment of others. Durkheim compares the anomic division of labour with cancer where by a different mode of how certain cells are growing there results not a new common function shared also by all others, but a dramatic process in the social organism where certain cells are expanding at the expenses of others.⁴

¹ Robert Merton. *Social Theory and Social Structure* (New York: The Free Press, 1967), p. 161.

² Talcott Parsons, Foreword to: *Fail/c Durkheim, Education and Sociology* (New York: The Free Press, 1956), p. 9.

³ See E.F. Borgatta and M.L. Borgatta (Editors), *Encyclopedia of Sociology*, "Durkheim on Anomie," p. 96.

⁴ E. Durkheim. *Uber Soziale Arbeitsteilung* (Frankfurt: Suhrkarnp, 1988), p. 421.

The German sociologist, Peter Atteslander, sees anomie as a gap between *Verfügungswissen* (the knowledge of how things can be produced better, more efficiently etc.) and *Orientierungswissen* (the knowledge of why or for what things are done or produced). What Atteslander intended by this is that the knowledge people have at their disposal (*Verfügungswissen*) is increased enormously in the processes of modernization by such new technologies as microelectronics, information networks and communication systems, etc., whereas the knowledge required for orientation which looks for qualitative standards and moral rules lags behind.⁵ This pattern of polarity is very similar to the concept of the “cultural lag” formulated by William Ogburn.⁶ Atteslander stresses that moral rules are social constructions and therefore have a specific cultural peculiarity. Wherever this specific cultural peculiarity is denied, anomic consequences are to be expected. Anomie in that understanding has a more negative meaning, but we have also to take into account the possibility, that the condition or state of anomie could also have a necessary and positive function in processes of transition. Lena Kolarsky-Bobinska, for example, points out that social anomie was one of the important features of Polish society during the Eighties: the centralised organisation of the socio-economic life in Poland was to be replaced by private entrepreneurial initiatives and a socialistic ethic was to be replaced by democracy. In the understanding of Kolarska-Bobinska, social anomie was an important condition for the breakdown of the socialist regime.⁷ It seems that the same argument is true in the South African context: the tremendous amount of social anomie, created by the apartheid regime contributed to its disappearance.⁸

In others words: if the old norms are too weak, too inadequate to regulate the present or future needs of a society, or if the old norms and orientations even collapse, anomie could be understood as an inevitable (mostly painful) social process on the way to a new order. In order to discuss the concept of anomie in the context of present transformation

⁵ P. Atteslander. “Kulturelle Eigenentwicklung als Kampf gegen Anomie,” in P. Atteslander (Editor), *Kulturelle Eigenentwicklung. Perspektiven einer neuen Entwicklungspolitik* (Frankfurt/New York: Campus, 1993), S. 6.

⁶ W.F. Ogburn, “Die Theorie der kulturellen Phasenverschiebung,” in W.F. Ogburn, *Kultur und sozialer Wandel* (Neuried-Berlin: Ausgewählte Schriften, 1969).

⁷ L. Kolarska-Bobinska, “Civil Society and Social Anomie in Poland,” *Acta Sociologica*, 33, 277-288.

⁸ H. Holley, “Chancen und Gefahren des südafrikanischen Transformationsprozesses,” in H. Holley and K. Zapotoczky, *Hoffnung am Kap. Chance und Gefahren des Transformationsprozesses in Südafrika*, Linzer Schriftenreihe für Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (Linz: Universitätsverlag Trauner, Band 2, 1995), pp. 115-126.

problems in developing countries it is essential to canvas some of the main present questions regarding global development problems and, combined with this, the concepts of development or development theories in the past. Such an approach seems adequate because it is assumed that development theories in the past, not directly but as transmitted by policy, effected the direction of the development process in the various developing regions of the world.

DEVELOPMENT THEORIES IN THE PAST

If we look back critically at almost four decades of development since the United Nations proclamation in 1961 we must concede that for the majority of the developing countries the situation has not improved at all. On the contrary, the previous development strategies have failed if we take into account that, according to the figures of the UN Human Development Program (UNDP), between 1960 and 1989 the gap between the rich and the poor countries has doubled.⁹ Klaus M. Leisinger commented upon the social inequality in the world-wide context as follows:

At the end of this century we witness the highest economic growth mankind has ever seen. There is a tremendous thrust of new knowledge and skill on this planet; more people than before barely survive in conditions of absolute poverty, in danger of losing even the prerequisites for physical survival. Enormous processes of migration caused by political instability and a biased economic conditions, especially along the borders between the rich and the poor countries, are indicators for the dramatic situation of a world on the way to its third millennium. Development has been taught and recommended in economics, politics or sociology textbooks for more than forty years, but has never really happened in reality.¹⁰

It must be remembered that in the past theoretical approaches for explaining and overcoming underdevelopment were influenced by the cold war paradigm. Analogous to the polarity of the super powers there

⁹ Cited in Noam Chomsky, *World Orders Old and New* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 129.

¹⁰ K.L. Leisinger, "Die gesellschaftspolitische Kontroverse um die Gentechnik für die Dritte Welt," in Peter Atteslander (Hrsg.) *Kulturelle Eigenentwicklung. Perspektiven einer neuen Entwicklungspolitik* (Frankfurt: Campus, 1993), pp. 101-102.

were two main streams of development theories. On the one hand, the modernizing theories created mainly in western capitalistic societies and, on the other hand the theories of imperialism, influenced by Marxist approaches,¹¹ along with the concept of dependency formulated by Latin American researchers in an attempt to react against the impact of capitalism on the development of local societies and cultures.¹²

The theories of modernisation had, and still have, a common pattern for explaining underdevelopment: developing societies (as late comers) lag behind the development of the industrialised nations because of internal social and cultural barriers, a lack of capital and technical knowledge. Therefore the development process is seen as a process of modernisation in order to lead the underdeveloped countries to the standards of industrialised countries. To put it pointedly: development in that understanding has the final goal of adjusting the underdeveloped countries to the culture, civilisation, norms and structures of the modern, developed societies. Modernity as it emerged in the western culture was declared the model for global development. For modernising theories development was an attempt to promote globalisation of modernity, rather than to assist poor countries to develop along the lines of their own cultural heritage.

In many analyses of the modernizing school, traditional values were identified as barriers for development. Many authors even suggested destroying traditional values and depriving traditional elites of their power in order to enable the spread of modern orientations and civilized patterns of society in politics, economy and administration. Samuel P. Huntington to whom there will be reference later in this paper, suggested already in 1968 in this book *Political Order in Changing Societies*¹³ that development can be reached only when it succeeds in mobilizing traditional societies. Important elements of this process are: broadening the mind of the people confined and fixed in a traditional system of reference, improving the adaptability of these people, integrating people into the formal organizations of the society, and lessening family control over individuals.

Parallel to this, modern political institutions must be created: political authority must be rationalized; political functions are to be differentiated, and the possibilities for political participation increased.

¹¹ P.L. Berger. *Welt der Reichen, Welt der Armen Politische Ethik und sozialer Wandel* (München: List, 1976).

¹² W. Geiger and H.C.F. Mansilla, *Unterentwicklung. Theorien und Strategien zu ihrer Überwindung* (Frankfurt/Berlin/München: Diederichsen, 1983).

¹³ S.P. Huntington. *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: 1968).

The process of political modernization, which in the understanding of Huntington is the key to development, is based on two elements, namely withdrawal of traditional groups and elites from positions of power and the parallel increase in the power to be shared among the emerging new social groups.

Huntington concedes, that such a process of transition causes rumour and instability. In other words, or expressed in the understanding of Durkheim, anomie is to be expected. Yet, Huntington does not reflect on the social and cultural costs of anomie, but in this regard stresses only the role of the army in different stages of the development process. Pointedly, already in the late sixties Huntington pleaded for the globalization of modernity even with assistance from the military.

Among the concepts of modernizing theories Huntington is not alone in such a standpoint. Lucian W. Pye¹⁴ focused upon the aspect of nation building in developing countries and identified two main problems in the process of the emergence of new states after the end of colonial power. One is the penetration crisis, that the newly born independent state has to be successful in projecting its authority upon the whole territory of the state. This process of penetration is accompanied by a great number of issues of possible conflict: official language versus local languages, state authority versus the authority of local traditional leaders, to mention but a few.

At the same time, the state faces a participation crises: the difficulty of integrating not only individuals but also social groups into the whole framework of the new state. In such a period of transition, for the government it is very important to find a balanced way. Pye also stresses the importance of the national army for that stage of development. As understood by Pye, the army is the only efficient modern organization existing in developing countries. In the army organization it is possible to separate individuals from their traditional environment, in the army they can become accustomed to handling modern technical equipment and have an opportunity to learn such modern standards as discipline, obedience or logistics. Pye follows a similar pattern as Huntington, and he also believes that development is possible only by destroying traditional influences. It must be underlined that such ideas not only had been theoretical approaches but that for Latin American 'desarollismo' of the sixties dictatorship was regarded as "the residue of a supposedly precapitalist past. That fallacy in this ingenious line of arguments has been made clear by the facts. Industrialization and modernization in the framework of this bourgeois plan have merely

¹⁴L.W. Pye, *Aspects of Political Development* (Boston: 1966).

produced 'modern dictatorship' and replaced the old oligarchical and patriarchal systems with an 'efficient and modern' fascist violence."¹⁵

Daniel Lerner, another representative of science acting within the paradigm of modernization, was not so concerned about the positive role of the army, but he too saw development as a process of expanding the influence of modernity. Lerner's approach had been concentrated on the issue of modernizing the lifestyles of the people in developing countries.¹⁶ Lerner suggested that only by a broad process of urbanization can underdevelopment be diminished and even defeated. Lerner discusses the issue of transforming underdeveloped regions in a pattern of polarity between the traditional village and the modern city. In the surroundings of the homogeneous social structure of the village, people are not confronted with the choice between different sensibilities or options. Their horizon is confined to the certainties of their traditions and other ways of living do not make sense for them. In such a situation, consciousness of a necessity for change cannot come into existence. Only the heterogeneous social structure of the town can meet the requirements for development. People living in cities are forced to acquire the ability of empathy, thinking in terms of the roles and expectations of others. In the new urban frame of reference the traditional face to face communication is replaced to a high extent by information provided by the mass media. Therefore, to be able to read and write becomes a question of vital interest for illiterate people who move from traditional villages to the town. Again, Lerner was deeply convinced that the underdeveloped countries still have to go the way of urbanization which the European countries have already reached. He did not care for the outcome of anomic situations which today are significant for cities in the Third World which became more a metropolis of poverty than places where development can be trained and experienced. For him too, development was understood as a process of adjustment to the (already developed) western culture.

The German political scientist Klaus Georg Riege¹⁷ was not so wrong when he argued against Lerner's concept as follows: If urbanization leads only to a life of nomads in cities, if literacy does not

¹⁵ Samir Amin, "Democracy in the Contemporary Third World," in B. Gills, Joel Rocamora and R. Wilson (Editors), *Low Intensity Democracy. Political Power in the New World Order* (London/Boulder, Colorado: Pluto Press, 1993), p. 66.

¹⁶ D. Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society. Modernizing the Middle East* (New York: 1958).

¹⁷ K.G. Riegel (1976), "Politische Soziologie unterindustrialisierter Gesellschaften: Entwicklungsländer," in G. Erb, A. Görlitz and Graf P. Kielmansegg, *Systematische Politikwissenschaft*, (Wiesbaden: Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft, Band 13, 1976).

lead to the intellectualization of individuals' lives, if participation in the mass media is manipulated by the propaganda of state, if empathy becomes a daily frustration, then it is very confusing that Lerner further insists on the truth of this concept.

Finally, the modernizing theories of W. Rostow and Rosenstein-Rodan should be mentioned. For Rostow¹⁸ development was seen as a linear process, and he stresses the necessary "take off" in the development process which can be caused by technical or political revolutions. Once this take off has occurred, then development runs without outside assistance. Rostow mentions three factors important for the success of the take off: an investment rate of more than 10 percent of the national income in which the increase of the domestic income must be greater than the increase of population growth, an extraordinary growth rate in some particular industrial sectors, and the establishment of an institutional framework to keep the process running. Rodan-Rosenstein¹⁹ argues similarly, that only if the "big push," that is, the transfer of capital and technology is big enough will a "trickle-down effect" occur by which the process of development will expand from centers of modernization to the whole country.

PRESENT ANOMIC SITUATIONS AND TRENDS IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

Both, the present situation and foreseeable tendencies can be summarized as follows:

On a macro-level we must observe world-wide processes of social destabilization. On the one hand, characteristic wars of the two super powers during the time of the cold war disappeared in some developing areas and made it possible to come to peace agreements as in the case of Namibia or Ethiopia. Some commentators suggest that the political change in South Africa was enabled by modified conditions in the international framework. There are some signs of hope for prosperous development in certain areas. But on the other hand, it must also be taken into account that the cold war rationality as a means of handling affairs which could not be tolerated by the super powers has disappeared and has not been replaced by a new set of diplomatic tools for responding adequately to critical situations. In other words, to put it pointedly: To the extent that the old international order disappeared and new problems emerged, there has been the urgent need for new direct-

¹⁸ W.W. Rostow. *The Stages of Economic Growth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966).

¹⁹ P.N. Rodan Rosenstein, *Notes on the Theory of the Big Push* (CIS: M.I.T., 1957).

ions and international regulations or agreements which have not yet occurred. The existing gap between growing areas of instability and efficient ways, new attitudes or a new set of diplomatic and economic mechanisms to respond to such challenges are not yet available; this contributes steadily to the generation of other problems. By this the already existing gap widens even more.

In some countries there are forgotten wars which began in the era of the cold war, but later gained their own dynamic. They seem to not be controlled or influenced by the international community. Angola and Afghanistan are two examples of this type of destabilized region.

The collapse of communism in the former Soviet Union and its satellite states did not, as expected or at least hoped for in the first euphoric weeks after the fall of the Berlin wall, contribute to the emergence of free, stable and democratic societies and a common world order, but resulted in a tremendous outbreak of internal and international problems. The Gulf war, the war in Bosnia and the dangerous instability on the Balkans as a whole, the rise of hostilities caused by the emergence of nationalistic ideologies and the spread of fundamentalist movements, are but a few catchwords for sketching the anomic situation on an international level.

FIRST WORLD ORDER OR AGAIN ORDER OF THE FIRST WORLD?

The breakdown of Communism in 1989 was an epochal event which affected not only the former communist states, but the world political system as a whole. The dramatic changes in east-west relations also effected radical changes in the north-south relations whose importance are not yet foreseeable. With the breakdown of communism, for some commentators the Second World ceased to exist and such arguments have been followed by statements stressing that it would no longer make sense to speak about Third World inasmuch as the Second World has just disappeared. Apart from the senselessness of dividing the world along categories which need still to be discussed, the problems in these developing areas continue to exist, perhaps within a new framework. For some areas, especially in Africa, it is safe to say under worsening conditions.

The world entering the third millennium is facing an anomic situation, where tremendous processes of change are happening. The new diversity which emerged after the collapse of communism is a very ambiguous one. The old notions are not sufficient to explain new realities. In view of the new realities and tremendous challenges, it is necessary to reflect upon a variety of models and notions used in the past. One of the key problems is our understanding of development. In

the past, development had a positive meaning only for certain issues: the development of new technologies for example was positively understood in the Western context, whereas the development of the underdeveloped was mainly associated with the idea of a never ending burden for industrialized countries. Very often indeed, development assistance contributed to the emergence of anomie and instability rather than to positive development enabling people to unfold their particular cultural heritage parallel with the integration of new insights received from modernity. Christopher Dawson and others have argued that the non-Westernism being asserted in Asia and Africa today is more than a revival of traditional ideas, since too much has changed over the last five hundred years to allow this.²⁰ As Puchalla suggests, there is an emergence of “a variety of cultural hybrids made up of traditional philosophical and religious elements and borrowings from the West”²¹ The notion of development as it was used in theories as well as in development strategies in the past has to be reformulated. A more adequate understanding of development should express and even stress the process of unfolding one’s own cultural heritage within a new global context. But diversity in unity can only be achieved if a new world order allows this to happen.

After the collapse of communism we face a Renaissance of modernizing theories—even though the experiences of the past decades of development have proved to be not only unsuccessful, but also counter-productive. With regard to the question of the global development of this planet, we have to point out that Western societies can no longer be used as a model for developing the whole world. If the Western way of life would expand all over the world, the earth’s biosphere would collapse. To give an example of this tremendously important issue one only must imagine the impact on the environment if in India people would have the same average number of cars as in the United States.

It is true that the collapse of communism was an event to be celebrated. Too many people suffered under totalitarian regimes in the former Soviet Union and its satellite states. But there is no reason to celebrate the survival of capitalism because capitalism did not contribute to the welfare of nations as Adam Smith and David Ricardo expected it. On the contrary, there is some truth in theories of imperialism or

²⁰ D.J. Puchalla, “The History of the Future of International Relations,” in *Ethics & International Affairs* (New York: Carnegie Council on Ethics and International Affairs, 1994), Volume 8, p. 197.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

dependency theories which complain about the impact of capitalism on the social and cultural structures of developing countries.²²

Despite all this, in international discussion on development theories and the new world order, a Renaissance of the old concepts of modernization can be noted. Francis Fukuyama in his best-seller *The End of History* merely interpreted in a new way the old misunderstanding of development as it was in Hegel's interpretation of the march of world history.²³ For Hegel, history is the product of the spirit (*Geist*) and the spirit arrived in the West. From Hegel's Eurocentric view; Asian or African cultures had been excluded. With regard to the Africans, he even doubted whether these primitive societies are ready at all for an arrival of the spirit.²⁴ Today we can realize some similar meanings, but less confrontationally formulated, when, for example, it is recommended that some developing countries be administered through trusteeship by international organizations.

Following that trend, "democratization" and "free market" today are catch-words in the international discussion. Obviously, there is a certain bias in the meaning of these notions. Samir Amin observes a "generalized offensive for the liberation of the 'market forces', aimed at the ideological rehabilitation of the absolute superiority of private property, legitimation of social inequalities and anti-statism of all kinds....The coincidence of these two trends makes ours an era of intense confusion....The 'market' a euphemism for capitalism—is regarded as the central axis of any 'development', and such development is seen as part of an 'ineluctable worldwide expansion'. Democratization is considered the necessary and natural product of submission to the rationality of the worldwide market."²⁵

In this context it is necessary to refer once again to Samuel P. Huntington but now to his article "The Clash of Civilizations?" where he wrote:

The West in effect is using international institutions, military power and economic resources to run the world in ways that will maintain Western predominance, protect

²² Compare H. Holley, "Vom Ende der Geschichte zum Fundamentalismus der Moderne. Eine kritische Reflexion zur Renaissance der Modernisierungskonzepte," in K. Zapotoczky and H. Griebel, *Kulturverständnis und Entwicklungen* (Frankfurt/Wein, Brandes & Apsel/Südwind, 1995).

²³ F. Fukuyama, *The End of history. The Last Alan* (New York: 1992).

²⁴ F. Hegel, *Die Vernunft in der Geschichte*, ed by J. Hoffmeister, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, 1 (Hamburg: Häfke, 1955).

²⁵ Samir Amin, "Democracy in the Contemporary Third World," in B. Gills, Joel Rocamora and R. Wilson (Editors), *Low Intensity Democracy. Political Power in the New World Order* (Colorado: Pluto Press, 1993), p. 66.

Western interest and promote Western political and economic values. That at least is the way in which non-Westerners see the new world, and there is a significant element of truth in their view.²⁶

Huntington is suggesting that the new world order is nothing else but the strengthening of the dominating role of the West. But such an “order” is only the order of the West, imposed upon the “rest” of the world which in reality is the majority of the world population. It would be only the “Order of the First World” being far away from a first World Order where also the claims of the other human cultures are taken into account. A “world order” as Huntington suggests only contributes to the emergence of further polarities between the non Western cultures and the West. Anomie at a global level and accompanied with tremendous turmoil will be the outcome of such an order because it is not to be expected that the West in the long run of history will be able to erect a “welfare wall”.

As expressed in “The Report of the South Commission,

the South’s goal is a world of equal opportunities in which crisscrossing lines of interaction—political, economic, cultural, scientific—may sustain global interdependence; in which nations in their variety would work together in pursuit of jointly agreed upon goals; in which peace, security, and dignity would be the birthright of all persons and all peoples; in which all can take advantage of the advances of science; and in which the world’s resources may be prudently used to satisfy the needs of all and not merely the narrow self-interest of a few.²⁷

The present structure of international bodies like the United Nations, the World Bank and the IMF still is an instrument to serve for the interests of the Culture of the West. We are facing today a new form of neo-colonialism if we consider that the so called “donor-countries” are in fact receiver-countries because there is, including development aid, already a net capital flow from the poor developing countries into the rich industrialized nations in the north. The policy of structural adjustment of World Bank and IMF still uses the western economic model as a goal for development, not considering the fact, that the

²⁶ Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations,” in *Foreign Affairs*, Volume 72. No. 3 p. 40.

²⁷ *The Challenge to the South. The Report of the South Commission* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 9-10.

majority of people in developing countries are not integrated in the formal economy. But, as the experience shows, it is impossible to develop the informal sector of the economy in developing countries using only the instruments of the formal modern economy. Rationalization of industries may be adequate for highly developed economies, but for developing countries the creation of job intensive manufacturing plants is the more appropriate way to provide the population with both, income and facilities for basis-consumption. There is an urgent need for economic growth, both for the formal and the informal sector in developing societies, but with less anomie and more international stability.

It must be emphasized that economic growth as measured by the gross national product (GNP) is not synonymous with development. "Not only the growth of the national product but what is produced, how and at what social and environmental cost, by whom and for whom—all this is relevant to people-centered development and should be taken into account in the formulation of policy."²⁸

There is a certain double game if the highly industrialised nations are pleading for a free world trade system. An analysis of the current Terms of Trade shows that the free market is not as free as expressed by the notion. Especially, the countries of in Eastern- and Central-Europe and even more the developing countries in the South are experiencing the restrictions which are imposed on them. These states attempt to prosper in a competitive global economy in which they face great disadvantages.²⁹

As the Report of the South Commission points out, the prominent feature of the last two decades has been the increasing globalization of the world economy. But culturally too the world is increasingly interlinked. The communications revolution is steadily enlarging the access to for information for the peoples all over the world. "Statements are made in the North about the effect on patterns of living of immigration from the South. But in the South cultural influences from the North are much stronger, more pervasive, and in some respects pernicious. They are transmitted through the media—whose impact has been intensified by the spread of television—through the advertising of consumer products associated with affluent life-styles, through education patterned on Northern models, and through tourism."³⁰

It is true that we can observe signs of an emerging world culture. But will such a world culture will be the American culture as Roy

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6

²⁹ J.N. Danziger. *The Political World: A Comparative Introduction to Political Science* (New York/London: Longman, 1994), p. 409.

³⁰ *The Challenge to the South*, p. 13.

Weatherford suggests. He argues that American culture is entirely eclectic and substantially derivative.

Americans narratives play almost no role in American culture. America is a nation of immigrants, and a new nation at that. Most of its best ideas came from elsewhere: the English created the language; the Greek invented democracy; the Dutch brought capitalism to the new world; Jewish immigrants played key roles in Hollywood, Wall Street, and Madison Avenue; German scientists built America's nuclear bombs and rockets; America's cuisine comes from everywhere; and even the Beatles were British!³¹

Weatherford believes that the coming world culture will indeed be like the American culture where much of local traditions will disappear, and some will remain as a regional variation in the world culture. What Weatherford completely ignores is the constant character of cultures which is much older than American civilisation. He neglects also the fact that whenever cultures are forced to change from outside, they develop strong attitudes of resistance.

There is no doubt that the diffusion of modernity is an irreversible process and in that context it should be emphasized also that many people living in developing countries have the hope that many goods which had been created by modernity will also become available for them. But they are not willing to pay with the loss of the own cultural identity as a price for it.

United Nations the "Charter for Economic Rights and Duties of the States" states that each state should have the sovereignty to choose its political, social and cultural system according to the will of its people. This goal stands in sharp contrast to the present policy to the World Bank, the IMF and also to ideas mentioned above.

Culture, viewed as the sum total values, beliefs, attitudes, customs, and pattern of behaviour in a given society, is a vital pillar of social and economic transformation. Capital formation and technical progress are essential elements of development, but the broad environment for their effectiveness is a society's culture; it is only by the affirmation and enrichment of cultural identities through mass participation that development can be given strong roots and made a

³¹ R. Weatherford, *World Peace and the Human Family* (London/New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 116.

sustained process. For only on secure cultural foundations can a society maintain its cohesion and security during the profound changes that are the concomitants of development and economic modernization. Development strategies which discount the importance of cultural factors have shown themselves liable to breed indifference, alienation, and social disaccord.³²

In processes of social change anomie is not to be avoided and in some cases even plays an important role in transforming a given society. What seems to be necessary in that context is to reduce the probability of the emergence of a situation of uncontrolled anomie as was the case for example in Rwanda. In order to succeed in that, it is necessary that the developing countries contribute themselves by a people centered policy of self-reliance. But it is also a necessity that the states belonging to Western culture will change their attitudes to developing countries. What is needed in that regard is a “modernisation of modernity“, which is necessary if modernity is not to end as Eurocentric fundamentalism. The vitality of modernity was highly influenced by the ability to learn from experiences and by the openness for critique. The critique which is constitutive for modernity should not end at that point where effects to others are to be observed. By a reflexive integration of problems in developing areas, modernity is also a chance to discover the limits of one’s own social system as it is now and in which increasingly problems of great impact are produced steadily. Probably also the change of modernity’s way of thinking in future will contribute to a global development with less anomie and more international stability. Perhaps under such new conditions, a first world order which really stands for diversity in unity, can emerge.

*Institute of Sociology
Department for Political Sociology and
Development Research
Johannes Kepler University
Austria*

³² *The Challenge to the South*, p. 45.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CULTURE OF PLURALISM: THE DIALECTIC OF UNITY AND DIVERSITY IN CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIANITY

GODÉ IWELE

There is a price to be paid for any genuine pluralism—that price many pluralists seem finally either unwilling or unable to see. It is that there is no longer a centre. There are many.—David Tracy, “On Naming the Present,” (*Concilium*)

It is an immense challenge that I am undertaking (taking up) here: that of trying to understand, from a theological standpoint, the inner language of an epoch that is still struggling to give itself a name, a proper name (1). This era, to which some (people) had, for want of something better, given the name “post”—“Postmodern”, “Postcolonial”, “postchristian”, “postcommunist”, and the like—has turned out to be essentially a time of cultural pluralism. It is a time when religion, culture and politics are engaging in a systematic, critical and ongoing conversation. Each of us, as thinker, philosopher, theologian, political leader, decision-maker or simply as citizen, finds oneself always-already in-conversation. In dialogue with the other. If, at least, one choses to remain an Adult fully and to the very end. Yes, for that is the challenge: a peculiar and odd age is claiming (its) maturity!

My foremost contention in this paper is that, in the pluralistic world of the late twentieth century, the interplay of unity and diversity has become the basic cultural and epistemological context of Christianity. Consequently, this epistemological framework is also the condition of possibility of any and every relevant theological endeavour today. Finally, that the relationship of unity to diversity within this framework can be patterned as a dialectical intercourse. It will thus be our task to attempt to both clarify and articulate, from a phenomenological viewpoint the landscape of such a cultural pluralism; then, from an anthropological standpoint, the advent of the new epistemological context. This will lead us to a point where it will become simply imperative to draw some concrete implications of this dialectic of unity and diversity for Christianity as a “religion” and for theology as a scholarly discipline. Because such an inquiry can easily turn to an overwhelming risky venture requiring the exploration of an encyclope-

dical scholarship, we will rather limit ourselves mostly, but not exclusively, to a theological examination of the subject, concentrating on the post-Vatican II period.

Searching for Meaning: Inclusive Language and Dialectical Harmonics

Let us enter this reflection by an analysis of the following excerpts of an interview that Mrs. Clinton released at the White House in Washington, DC, and published in *Newsweek* on the last day of October, 1994.

Interview entitled “I Believe in Prayer,” of Mrs. Hillary R. Clinton by Kenneth L. Woodward:

- [Woodward] The United Methodist Church is very strong on inclusive language for God as both He and She. Are you?

- [H. Clinton] I’m sort of agnostic when it comes to inclusive language. I’ve always thought that language was so inadequate to express the mystery and power of God. I mean, use He, use She,

- none of us are capable of really describing who God is.

- [Woodward] What about God as Mother as well as Father?

- [H. Clinton] I think God is both...I think God is omnipotent and omniscient. I think that because of the fact that I am a child of my tradition and have developed as I have over time, I think of God more in a Father sense. But that’s not exclusive to me. I don’t discount characteristics and virtues of the feminine by saying and thinking that. But that is the tradition I grew up in.

Inclusive language may well be the signal that some cultures or groups of peoples are launching as to request the end of the dominant paradigm of exclusion, the end of big stories that made the history of big names, nobilities, kingships. The new appeal could mean a courageous encounter with otherness, and the beginning of a new history taking seriously the partnership in this conversation of those peoples and cultures and groups forming what had been recently termed the “underside” of history. In Gustavo Gutiérrez terms, “Our days bear the mark of a vast historical event: the irruption of the poor. We refer to the new presence of those who had actually been absent in our society and in the church. By absent we mean of little or no significance, as well as being without the opportunity to manifest their sufferings, solidarities, projects, and hopes”.¹ In other words, the “vast historical event” which Gutiérrez is referring to is the presence of the absent. This event—as we

¹ “Option for the Poor”, in *Mysterium Liberationis* (Maryknoll, NY, Orbis Books & Collins Dove, 1993), p. 235.

will see—is also cultural, political and theological, and is of towering importance. For it signifies the move from the singular to the plural. The coming together of these new historical subjects and partners has a major ethical requirement: the abandonment of the uniform(ity). To abandon the “uniform” is synonymous with allowing and accepting a plurality of *Weltanschauungen*. But let us admit that if it were just a matter of allowing and accepting any and all kinds of cultures, world views, life styles, and vital paraxis, such a form of coexistence would surely be what David Tracy refers to as a “lazy pluralism.” Instead, genuine pluralism requires not entertainment but interrelation, and above all critical conversation, that is, an epistemological vigilance.

But how can the new emerging paradigm of inclusion and integration be worked out without oversimplifications if not by courageously articulating the question of unity and diversity as one of dialectic in nature? Why dialectic? If we take dialectic in the Hegelian sense where “dialectic moment” means the move from one concept to another which is antithetic to the former, and the impulse given to the spirit by the need to overcome that contradiction, we can understand the relationship between unity and diversity as an unceasing conversation with, questioning to and negotiation between Self and Other. It is conversing with the inmost self, questioning oneself, negotiating with one’s many selves. It is also conversing with the other, questioning otherness, and negotiating our common journey in history. Three possible models can and indeed have attempted to articulate these dialectical harmonics between unity and diversity. These three models constitute, in my opinion, the dialectical nature of the relationship of unity to diversity.

Unity of Diversities

If one poses unity as the thesis, and diversity as its antithesis, we may reach a synthesis in a unity of diversities. This model can operate as cross-cultural system. In a melting pot situation, the effort to unite diverse cultural or ethnic entities may proceed from an ideological affirmation of differences, while the prevalence is given to the unity of the social macro-entity as such. Or in a context where different social groups coexist, the policy of social welfare may put more emphasis on a Utopian common good that different groups have to serve. In one case and the other, such strategies of unity may result in a melting pot where nothing actually melts. The result is a unity of differences. Peoples and institutions cross from one social group to another, from one ethnic or cultural group to another, but they never come to meet, because no sufficient effort has been made to enter in-depth into a group or a culture.

According to this first pattern, what is granted is unity (at least as a goal), the role of societies and cultures is to make difference contribute to build unity, and prevent them from disrupting unity.

Diversity in Unity

If we pose diversity as the thesis, and unity as the antithesis, the synthesis may consist in a diversity-in-unity. Classic social theories have taught that when coming together in a social life and project, the meeting of cultures can result in three basic situations: assimilation, integration or segregation. What needs to be underlined at this regard is the fact that cultures and peoples are more sophisticated systems of realities and beliefs than what they might appear to be. It is a fact that peoples and cultures are equipped with a whole subtle apparatus and mechanisms, such as symbolic insubordination and ruse, which enable them, in case of strict necessity of cohabitation, to survive. While apparently all is in conformity, in docility: 'in docility' is precisely the name of this strategy. Then when an opportunity is granted them to express their inner selves, they explode in fractions: under an appearance of unity, unnegotiated differences had continued to coexist. This second pattern starts from diversity as primal reality from which unity needs to be built. It is a diversity seeking unified vision.

Unity-in-Diversity

Though each one of the previous models does have its own dialectic moment, the dialectic moment of the two previous models is constituted by the third pattern of unity-in-diversity. While in the first model, unity is taken as the basic reality; and whereas in the second pattern diversity is the primal reality of human condition, the third pattern takes both unity and diversity as given altogether, as the two faces of the same coin. This model would not try to refer to an original fictitious state of society, but it takes culture and society as one finds them today. The contention of this model is that every effort to unify people should take a serious account of the fact that neither unity nor diversity can actually exist without the other. It is diversity that makes unity possible, and vice versa. It is the circularity of such interchange that gives rise to genuine pluralism.

A PLURALISTIC LANDSCAPE

This articulation of the dialectical nature of the relationship between unity and diversity through the three models, was intended to suggest the complex, conflictual and dynamic reality of pluralism. Our

effort will now be that of highlighting some characteristics of this phenomenon of pluralism as one can retrieve them in a few areas. For undoubtedly, the reality of our world is plural.² Though we will concern ourselves more with the religious dimension and implications of pluralism, we nevertheless will say a few words regarding the stakes of the issue of pluralism for the society in general, philosophy and politics, for it is from the inter-action of these various fields that has emerged the complex reality we have been referring to as a culture of pluralism. I have neither the competence nor the intention of debating of pluralism in these various aspects,—just a few insights will suffice, by way of background, to introduce us to the core of the religious stakes of the problem of pluralism.

Pluralism in Culture and Society

Nowadays, pluralism is both a cultural and a social reality. Not only because social differentiation almost always implies cultural differentiation, and vice versa, but because pluralism simply ceases to be optional in every such context where several cultures coexist within the same society, or various subcultures within one dominant culture. In both cases pluralism expresses the need for society to be conceived, in such situations, as a *communitas communitatis*.³ The aim is to allow the free and self-expression, and the inter-action of the various cultures or subcultures and human groups or subgroups, while preventing them from clashing. Thus, the need for pluralism is an ethical one. For it is a demand of justice and equity for all, a choice for diversity, an expression of the respect for cultural and ideological differences, and it is as well the refusal, *in principio*, of any type of irresolute intention of totalitarianism or dogmatic supremacy. It is not an option for diversity against unity, but an attempt to build a one plural world. This seems to be the prevailing sense of pluralism as it was used for the first time in 1956 by American sociologist Horace Kallen; for Kallen, the whole question is that of “one world, but one world *in pluribus*”.⁴ While the central problem of cultural pluralism is the preservation of cultural identity (life styles, worldviews), social pluralism raises up the issue of discrimination: should anyone discriminate against another or should there be social differences within a society or exclusion, and on what

² Jon Sobrino, “Communion, Conflict, and Ecclesial Solidarity” in *Mysterium Liberationis*, p. 628.

³ Hervé Carrier, *Lexique de la culture* (Desclée, Tournai-Louvainla-Neuve, 1992), p. 257 *et seq.*

⁴ H.M. Kallen, *Cultural Pluralism and the American Idea: An Essay in Social Philosophy* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1956).

basis? If culture is believed to be the “place” where somebody really stands in life, that is, the basic context of every human existence, shouldn’t human dignity also and necessarily involve respect for cultural identity? Experience has shown, however, that whenever a society loses its “identity based on cultural difference, (it) give(s) primacy to some other principle for identity” (ethnic origin, religion, race, etc.).

Yet every plurality has its ambiguity due to hidden conflicts of interpretations and interests. Every context of pluralism implies a plurality of values orders. Where then should the need for unity and diversity as raised by the modern question of pluralism be grounded? Let us hold this central question for another while, as we explore now the issue of pluralism in philosophy and politics.

As a simple addition to the scholarly philosophical explorations of the issue of unity and diversity already attempted in this seminar, I would just want to recall two general uses of pluralism in philosophy. The first is a position regarding the nature of reality and is opposed to monism. The second is a phenomenon of philosophy itself, namely the fact that a plurality of philosophical systems has existed in the history of philosophy. If one had to name platonism, aristotelianism, stoicism, epicureanism, skepticism, neoplatonism for the sole Greek period, it is clear that what these philosophical systems display in our minds is not just a multiplicity of systems, but systems as multiple as diverse, as different as well as opposed to each other as aristotelianism to platonism, stoicism to epicureanism. If one considers thomism, scotism and nominalism, the three dominant philosophical schools during the Medieval scholastic period, one cannot but acknowledge open competition of these schools in the 16th century’s “second scholasticism.” Let’s take a step further. The 1918 Code of Canon Law for the Latin Church made it compulsory that in seminaries philosophy and theology be taught “ad Angelici Doctoris rationem, doctrinam et principia”.⁵ But even then, what is amazing and almost perturbing is the variety of systems within the thomistic philosophical and theological school. Developmental thomism of Mercier, Lonergan, Maréchal, or Rahner, who enriched thomism with modern science, can stand far away from the epistemology of the classical thomism of the commentators, as well as from the “second scholasticism” of Cajetan and Maritain, or the historical thomism of Etienne Gilson, to take a few examples.

The pursuit of truth in the history of philosophy can prove a perturbing and even disappointing venture to some extent. History of philosophy displays a succession of philosophers with multiple contentions, overcoming and contradicting each other....What had been referred to as the “aporias of history and truth” is surely a striking

⁵C. 1366, 2.

example of this state of matter, as the two antagonistic philosophical movements of skepticism and dogmatism illustrate it. If, for the dogmatist all is truth, for the skeptic there is no truth at all, in the long run. In between skepticism and dogmatism, the temptation of eclecticism to reconcile the contraries, history and truth, does not offer sufficient rational norm or safeguard. For the eclectics, all systems of thought could possibly teach the same thing, the same truth. Ricoeur sums up the entire problematic as follows: “On the one hand philosophers file past, contradict themselves, destroy each other and make truth look changing; history is thus a lesson of skepticism; on the other hand our aspiration is to some truth of which the agreement of the minds would be, if not the criteria, at least the sign; if all history develops a minimum skepticism, every pretension of truth develops a minimum dogmatism: at a pinch “history would just be a history of errors and the truth a suspension of history”.⁶ Though sooner or later these aporias find some outcome from an epistemological standpoint, nevertheless the history of philosophy is witnessing to a wide variety of systems of thought.

Pluralism in politics would perhaps be the most tangible form of the reality of pluralism in our time. Shortly put, political pluralism, whose main features are a decentralized administration, regionalism, functionalism, representation, freedom of association, multi-partyism, etc., could be presented with two main focuses: exaltation of the autonomy of voluntary association, and an effort to diminish the authority of the state by means of decentralization of public control of voluntary association. The idea of political pluralism originated as an attack directed towards the doctrine of absolute sovereignty.

The implication of this idea of political pluralism and its attack on the situation of no legal limitation imposed on the absolute sovereignty of the State, is essentially the liberalization of economy: the self-governance of the associations is intended to put private associations out of the direct control of the absolute State.

All this gives a general picture of the pluralistic landscape that makes up our societies and cultures. As one had hopefully noticed, with the idea of pluralism modern cultures have moved from a centralized model to a polycentric paradigm. There was once a center and a periphery; nowadays, the circle pattern should be turned into a square-like pattern because there is no longer a center (and a center cannot have many centers) which would constitute the ‘point of gravity’ for all social and cultural forces of our time. To say it the way David Tracy does, “There is a price to be paid for any genuine pluralism—that price many pluralists seem finally either unwilling to pay or unable to see. It is that there is no longer a centre. There are many....The others must become

⁶ P. Ricoeur, *Histoire et vérité* (Paris, Seuil, 1955).

genuine others for us—not projections of our fears and desires. The others are not marginal to our centres but centres of their own”.⁷

It may be important at this stage of our reflection to remember that pluralism and its consequent de-centering is not a plot against the unity or the universality of the world, as the means of social communications bring it to our closer perception. In effect, nothing of the prophetic prediction of the notorious Canadian sociologist M. McLuhan has been denied: this world is becoming more and more like a global village. And the mass media, this new “Aeropagus of modern times,” is helping the world inter-act in ways never ever possible before. But what the reality of pluralism teaches us is precisely what we have called in the earlier stages of this reflection the dialectic harmonics of unity and diversity. Before we move on to the last section of our study, one more step needs to be taken. Paul Ricoeur provides us with the epistemological framework for a deeper understanding of this movement of universalization and unity amid pluralism. Apart from a few vocabulary problems due to the old character of the text of our author (1955), it is a tremendous enrichment, after having dealt with the aspect of pluralism, to now follow Ricoeur in his articulation of the dialectic of “universal civilization and national cultures” as the second moment of our dialectic of unity-in-diversity, with special attention to the question of unity.

GLOBAL VILLAGE: FOUNDATIONS

In his *Histoire et Vérité (History and Truth)*, Paul Ricoeur has a short sharp section on “universal civilization and national cultures”,⁸ where he is laying the foundations of the event of globalization taking place in our time. Ricoeur formulates his problem as follows: the modern time is harassing us with a double burden: on the one hand, humanity is more and more becoming a planetary civilization, so that each individual person or people feels the need and urgency of adapting oneself to the emerging planetary civilization; but on the other hand, one find oneself in the imperative of protecting the patrimonies inherited from one’s own traditions. There is a problem, Ricoeur says, precisely because we find ourselves caught in two divergent yet pressing necessities. And this problem, he claims, is common to developed countries as well as to semi-developed and underdeveloped countries.

Ricoeur’s discussion of this issue proceeds in three steps. The first section is an attempt to characterize what he refers to as a “civilisation mondiale universale” (“world universal civilization”), and precisely such are its features; the second moment is a quest for the meaning of such a

⁷ D. Tracy, “On Naming the Present”, in *Concilium*, 1992, p. 67.

⁸ (Paris, Ed. du Seuil, 1955), pp. 286-300.

civilization; the last part articulates a general theory of culture and an essay on the conditions of possibility of an encounter of divergent cultures.

What would be the characteristics of the so-called universal civilization? Ricoeur underlines five main features which create the universal civilization, and therefore create the unification of humankind as unique global village.

The first one is a pure abstract notion: the scientific spirit. For many people, what we are now witnessing is a technical civilization, so it is technology that is creating the unification of the world. Ricoeur responds that the fundamental fact in the so-called “high tech” civilization is not so much technology as such but a “scientific spirit,” which realizes the unity of humankind on a purely abstract level. Science could be Greek in its origin, then European in its development, but it is as simply “human” that it operates the ‘unification’ of humanity. This scientific spirit is an abstract reality that everyone can appropriate when initiated into it, regardless of his/her origin. For Ricoeur, all the other manifestations of the modern civilization are a result of this scientific spirit.

In the second moment comes the development of techniques. Therefore as a second source of universality is technology as an application of the scientific spirit to the traditional and antique tools which belong as well to the “primitive cultural fund” of our common humanity. Thus, by means of technical inventions and discoveries, our humanity is being always more unified. And Ricoeur makes it clear that every invention “belongs *de jure* to humanity” as a whole insofar as “sooner or later, it creates a situation, irreversible, for all”.⁹ “Its diffusion may perhaps be delayed, but there is absolutely no way that it can be prevented. We are thus, he continues, in face of a *de facto* universality of humanity: whenever an invention has appeared in some place in the world, it is promised to a universal diffusion”.¹⁰ That is to say that technical revolutions are always additional, and therefore they escape from any kind of “cultural partitioning.” This creates a “planetary consciousness”.¹¹ In sum, modernisation is synonymous with universalization (*mondialisation*).

A third factor is what Ricoeur cautiously calls a “rational politics”: “the modern State, insofar as it is a State, has a universal discernible structure,” Ricoeur claims. Of course he may well be aware of the dangers of such a statement. But his point is that the modern State, with its public administration (“fonction publique”), represents some

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 287.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 288.

form of a “rationalization of power,” which is a determinant factor in the “rationalization of history.” Bureaucracy is just a “pathological form of this rational phenomenon.” As such, this rational aspect of politics and power concerns all the peoples of the earth, and constitutes today a decisive criterion of the international recognition or admission of any State.¹²

The fourth feature of universalization is somehow close to the third, and requires even more prudence: it is the existence of a “universal rational economy”.¹³ What Ricoeur is referring to here is not of course the so-called economic supersystems, such as capitalism or socialism, but his emphasis is on a set of economic techniques which are applicable in every working economy in the world today. Such techniques include: conjuncture calculus, market regulations, prevision and decision plannings, etc. These techniques are able to create a “phenomenon of convergence,” because human sciences—which *per se* have no party—are immensely at work in politics and economics today.

The fifth and last element is the emergence of a universal “life style” (*genre de vie*), as a result of their rationalization by the technologies of information, transportation, production, leisure, etc. Two banal but good examples of this can be found in such fields as housing and clothing.

The second section of Ricoeur’s investigation is an interpretation or a retrieval of the meaning of this phenomenon of a universal civilization. As every plurality, every unity has its ambiguities, namely here we are caught in the middle of the problem of “double sense.” The universal civilization we have been describing can be said to constitute a real progress. And any progress, Ricoeur says, is achieved when two basic conditions are realized: accumulation and improvement. By accumulation we should understand the “transformation of (ancient) means into new means”.¹⁴ The human experiences of the various peoples of the planet become tools or learning experiences for others, as a way of rationality. An example of this is that peoples can learn (therefore use as a rational tool or means) from the bad political experience of other peoples or countries. There is progress, on the other hand, whenever there is improvement, that is, a betterment of the human condition. This appears in its most significant way in the fact that our humanity is moving beyond a “procurator system”.¹⁵ For the first time in human history, more and more peoples now have access, by themselves, to basic elementary goods, to a sense of dignity and autonomy. “We see

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 289.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 290.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 291.

vast masses of peoples accede to the world scene, who have been up to now silenced and oppressed; one can say that an ever bigger number of peoples are actually aware of making their own history, of making history; one can speak in the case of those peoples of a real access to majority.”

But this phenomenon is accompanied by a process of destruction of traditional cultures and values, of what could be considered as the “ethical and mythical nucleus of humanity.” This new culture is creating many countercultures. Hence the dilemma: in order to enter the new culture of modernization, does one need to deny oneself, that is to reject “the old cultural past which has been the *raison d’être* of an (entire) people?”¹⁶ This is the paradox: “How to modernize oneself, while returning to the sources (of one’s own past)? How to reawake an old sleeping culture and yet enter the universal civilization?”¹⁷

An attempt to overcome this paradox is offered in the third section of Ricoeur’s exploration. Traditional institutions, stable or permanent images, symbols, root-metaphors, permanent dreams of a people,—these are the constituent elements of the structure of a people’s subconscious and unconscious, which are, for Ricoeur, the source and the enigma of human diversity.¹⁸ But this cultural tool or tradition remains alive only if it is in constant transformation and recreation. In order to survive, a culture needs to not simply repeat its own past, but rather be rooted in it yet reinvent it constantly. For Ricoeur, this reinvention occurs when a culture opens itself to scientific rationality, and when a given faith is able to integrate intelligence, desacralize nature while resacralizing the human being.¹⁹ Only a culture which reinvents constantly its arts, literature, philosophy and its spirituality can survive and revigorate itself.²⁰

Under what conditions then can there be a genuine encounter of cultures, that is, a non-mortal encounter between cultures? The response is paradoxical: “In order to have an Other in front of the Self, one needs to have a Self”.²¹ An authentic encounter with the other cannot consist in any form of syncretism. It is in the confrontation of the other, of other civilizations as other(s) that one finds oneself. Such an encounter, he concludes, is still a task. Especially for the Western civilization which has been so far very dominant. Such an encounter precludes all forms of dogmatisms.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 292.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 293.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 296.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 298.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 299.

²¹ *Ibid.*

PLURALISM IN CHRISTIAN RELIGION

This is a crucial section, to be yet developed. It will be based upon an investigation of:

- Pluralism in the Bible
- Pluralism in Christian Symbols (Trinity, creed)
- Pluralism in theology
- Vatican II as source of modern pluralism in theology: the idea of collegiality, the idea of local churches vs universal churches
- Plurality of theological methods
- Crucial principle: « *unitas veritatis, unitas caritatis* ».

The most important step taken in the development of our reflection up to this point has surely been the move from beyond the pure and simple affirmation of pluralism as a cultural and socio-political reality of our time, and the characterization of such a reality. The moment of exploration of the foundations of a genuine unity of our world by Paul Ricoeur had conducted us as far as to understand that not only is pluralism a cultural and socio-political reality, but that such a reality has become a culture, that is a fundamental perspective in life. For according to the excellent definition by Clifford Geertz, culture is “an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life”²² The time has now come when we should articulate the reality and implications of all of this for Christianity. One of the obligations to be fulfilled in this regard will be to demonstrate the validity of our central earlier contention that pluralism is a central concept in contemporary Christianity, and that the dialectic of unity and diversity is the condition of possibility of any genuine theological enterprise in the context of today’s world. It might be appropriate at this stage to start with a very brief account of the problem of unity and diversity in Religion in general. The accent will be put upon two concrete forms of the religious quest for unity amid diversity, namely inter-religious dialogue and the ecumenical movement. A second step will lead us straight to the heart of Christianity. A study of some foundational Christian symbols will help us verify the validity of the claim that the dialectic of unity and diversity is at the very heart of the Christian faith. Our last task will be to face the issue of pluralism in Christian theology, with a special emphasis on the contribution of the

²² C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Culture* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p. 89.

second Vatican Council in this regard. As described, this route is intended to provide us with the Christian spiritual, ethical and theological foundations for a legitimate pluralism.

Religious Pluralism

Conflict rooted in religious beliefs and experience are often hardly manageable. This may be because they are rooted deep in the region of the human being, which gives its meaning to someone's orientation in life, a region where negotiation is often not possible. And historical antagonisms can help ignite latent hostilities. Hence the various forms of religious fundamentalisms and fanaticisms which generally blow up into fratricidal wars to which human beings give some time the strange name of "holy" or just" war. Whether a war can be "holy" is another matter; nevertheless, the history of the Crusades (11-13 centuries) has remained a paradigmatic episode in the historical memory of many believers, and in the history of world religions.

A fundamental human right proclaimed by the Organization of the United Nations and the Second Vatican Council's *Dignitatis humanae* of December 7, 1965, religious freedom is inalienable. It is what opens the horizon of existence to transcendence. By means of this proclamation by the United Nations, modern society has institutionalized religious pluralism. But at the same time, through the idea of the Lay or Secular State, modern society has removed religious expression from the public arena. This has been a secular solution of a religious matter.

Fortunately, amid conflicts there is a growing sense of communion and respect and understanding among the world religions, though we cannot yet speak of a non-aggression pact. A variety of initiatives have been taken in this sense over the past years. Just to mention a few of them, the Constitution of the World Council of Churches; the Assisi October 27, 1986, Day of prayer; the Chicago Parliament of World Religions, etc., are—among others—initiatives to facilitate a pacific cohabitation of religions.

From the point of view of the theology of religions, two movements carry out this concern: the ecumenical movement and the inter-religious dialogue. Though there is no rigorous distinction in theological idiom today, the former concept is often used to designate the efforts to bring together different Christian denominations; while the latter would refer more to the dialogue between totally different religions, such as Islam and Christianity. The growing awareness in the ecumenical movement has led to renounce any form of idyllic reunion of all Christian churches as if we were to restore an "original" unity, which has actually never existed as such. What is being pursued and fostered instead is mutual understanding, common participation in the Eucharist,

common witness of the believers in Jesus to the common God, respect and collaboration. This is another form of the articulation of the dialectic of unity and diversity. On the level of principles, *Unitatis redintegratio*, the Second Vatican Council Decree on Ecumenism, recommends “unity in essentials”.²³ Speaking of the Oriental Churches, the same document reads: “What has already been said about legitimate variety we are pleased to apply to differences in theological expressions of doctrine”.²⁴

The situation is more problematic when it comes to the interaction and dialogue with non-Christian religions. No romantic attempt at reunification could be respectful of the diversities of faiths and beliefs. At Assisi, Pope John Paul reaffirmed that clearly and strongly: “The fact that we come here, he said to the leaders of the major world religions gathered around him, does not imply any intention of seeking a religious consensus among ourselves or of negotiating our faith convictions, neither does it mean that religions can be reconciled at the level of common commitment in an earthly project which would surpass them all. Nor is it a concession to relativism in religious beliefs, because every human being must sincerely follow his or her upright conscience with the intention of seeking and obeying the truth. Our meeting attests only—and this is its real significance for the people of our time—that in the great battle for peace, humanity, in its very diversity, must draw from its deepest and most vivifying sources where its conscience is formed and upon which is founded the moral action of all people”.²⁵

What appears from this quotation is a clear sense that it is only out of an authentic and sincere commitment to the difficult of being oneself while seeking honest conversation with the other, that religions can cease to be sources of conflict and work together for peace on earth.

But a big theological problem concerns the centrality of Jesus, the “unique mediator”; how to reconcile such a glamorous claim with the need for inter-religious dialogue? This is part of the dialectic of unity and diversity, when it comes to inter-religious conversation. What is sure, at least, is that in such dialogue, Christianity rediscover itself as a finitude.

Pluralism within Christianity

Pluralism is surely a pretty modern idea which has entered the Christian discourse only some twenty five years ago, mainly since the

²³ N^o 4.

²⁴ N^o 17.

²⁵ John Paul II, “Allocution on the World Day of Prayer for Peace,” Assisi, October 27, 1986, in *Information Service*, n^o 62, IV, (1986), Vatican City, The Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, # 2.

Second Vatican Council. To a certain extent, the diffusion of the democratic project in western liberal societies has contributed to this awakenedness. On May 14, 1969, Pope Paul VI became the very first to consecrate a whole reflection to the issue of pluralism during his catechetical teaching during a general Audience in the Vatican.²⁶ Of course there is no doubt that John XXIII, in his opening discourse at Vatican II, did have some insights on the subject (we will consider this point in more detail in the following section). In his catechetical teaching on pluralism, Pope Paul VI even thought that “civilization is measured by the capacity of the human being for pluralism”.²⁷ The pope also reminded us that the very idea of Catholicism is a call for pluralism insofar as ‘catholic’ means ‘universal’. The pope went on to confirm the legitimacy of theological and spiritual pluralism within the Catholic faith. With regard to the faith, however, the pope reminded us that there should not be pluralism within the doctrine of faith, which professes and teaches a unique truth revealed to humankind in Jesus of Nazareth; and the authentic interpretation of this revealed truth cannot be subjective, the pope concludes. What then does found this pluralism in the Christian faith?

The revealed God of Jesus-Christ is Three-in One. As the most fundamental Christian symbol, the holy Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) is already, in itself, an attestation of a plurality of persons in the unique nature of God, and a dialectic of diversity in unity: it is not possible to know the Christian God except as Three; and it is not possible to love the Christian God except as One.

If one comes to consider Christ, Christian tradition and faith believe that there are two natures, the divine and the human, in the one person of Christ. Once more, in the person of Christ, the Christian God reveals God’s selfhood as a dialectic of unity and diversity. Heresies such as monophysitism and arianism are good examples of how none of the dimensions of Christ’s reality can be negated without negating the entire reality of God.

We could also analyze at this point another central symbol: the Bible. But we will be examining it soon in the following section on theological pluralism. The same is the case with the “Symbol of the Apostles”: the Creed. One can already notice how the central reality of Christianity echoes the need for holding together unity and diversity, the one and the many, as seen through the previous reflections. Let’s take a step further.

²⁶ Cf. *Documentation Catholique*, n° 1541 (1969), pp. 507-508.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 507.

Pluralism in Theology

Since the Second Vatican Council, pluralism has become more and more evident in Christian theology. It would not be correct, however, to conclude that this is a really new reality in Christian theology. There has always been a *de facto* pluralism in Church and theology.²⁸

The Bible itself is the first witness to a theological pluralism: it comprises an Old and a New Testament, which represent two totally different types of theology. This is so much so, that Jesus' rereading and interpretation of the Old Testament did appear somehow heretical to many of his listeners. Furthermore, we come to realize that not only are there two Testaments in the Bible, but that each one of them is composed by a plurality of other books or documents, each of which represents a theology of its own. The Johannine gospel is a very different theology than that of Saint Paul's Epistles or of one of the Old Testament's prophetic literature. The Old Testament does not conceal the new or vice versa. On the contrary, Christian interpretation sees them in constant inter-action. And within the Bible itself, there is a plurality of genres, such as the prophetic literature, the poetic and sapiential literature, the apocalyptic genre, the legal discourse of Deuteronomy, etc. And within the same New Testament, the same gospel of Jesus receives four different interpretations: there is a gospel "according to" Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and still another one according to Paul. Each of these versions represents a specific type of theology. It is for this very reason that such an attempt as Marcion's *Evangelistary* had been rejected almost immediately.

As soon as we leave the universe of the Holy Book, we land in the city of its interpreters. Christian history witnesses to the existence of different theological schools, using different types of methods. This is the case of the two famous theological schools of Antioch and Alexandria in the early church. While in Antioch the prevailing exegetical method was based on literary interpretation, the theological school of Alexandria was using an allegorical exegesis, etc. Similar examples can be found in the medieval period with such figures as Aquinas and Bonaventure. In brief, as René Marlé put it, "the acknowledgement of a possible theological pluralism means, not the renouncement of the unity of faith, but the abandonment of a certain centralism about the thinking of the faith".²⁹

²⁸ We will follow pretty closely the excellent analysis of René Marlé, "La théologie admet-elle le pluralisme?", in *Etudes*, t. 371, n^o S, 371/6, (1989), pp. 675-688.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 680.

In any case, since the second Vatican council, divergent theologies such as Liberation theology and the theology of inculturation, make theological pluralism a living reality for they carry different epistemologies. At the opening of the council, while appealing for a “renewed” study of Christian doctrine of faith by means of modern methods of research, Pope John XXIII insisted that “the substance of the ancient doctrine of the deposit of faith is one thing, and the way in which it is presented is another.” At the time of the council, the papal formula became antiquated. Today, it is not sound to think that the formulation or the language of the faith is without effect on the doctrine professed. It is the very idea of a “*depositum*” *fidei* that is being questioned. “Ad Gentes,” the council’s Decree on the missionary activity of the church, recommended that, in order to implement theological research and intelligence of faith, local theological systems be built, according to the philosophy, genius, art and mentality of the people, so that the mystery of our salvation be more adequately articulated and reinterpreted in every great socio-cultural region of the church.³⁰

Thus an important insight of the council which has had a great impact on the idea of theological pluralism has been the rediscovery of the concept and reality of the local or particular church. This was a crucial innovation brought about by the ecclesiology of Vatican II. The idea of local church, particular churches, which later on would lead to the project of Basic Christian Communities, emphasizes the fact that particular churches are not just like the branches of the universal church: they are fully churches and churches of their own, yet exercise a collegial communion with the bishop of Rome and with the college of bishops. This makes it clear that there is no “universal” theology anymore; that the so-called universal theology was simply “generalization of one triumphant particular,” to speak in Hebga’s words.³¹ Thus the new concept of a world-church ought to be understood as a world-church rich with the variety of particular yet full churches.

With regard to this idea of a local church, one must admit that the “death” of Latin represented an important event. For it did not mean simply the replacement of one language by another, but the end of the epistemological colonization of a given culture, a particular worldview. It meant the end of the supremacy of the “*latinitas*” with its neoscholastic theology. Nowhere would people ‘buy’ this anymore since they had been granted the opportunity to elaborate their own theology. Rahner could write so accurately in regard to this situation: “Because of the Council and after it, theology of itself no longer presents the appearance of a monotonous neoscholasticism intended to be acceptable in the

³⁰ Cf. n^o 22.

³¹ *Concilium* 171 (1/1984), pp. 46 *et seq.*

whole world. Neither is it any longer the case that every more intelligent candidate for the priesthood and the episcopal office, coming from what have been known as the missionary countries, must study in Rome and there be initiated with all the others into one and the same neoscholasticism. Theology will be everywhere in the world church and it will inevitably have to deal with the more urgent questions in any particular cultural group and which are not now the same everywhere. And the resultant undeniable diversity will make its mark on the specific character of theology as a whole.³² These were prophetic words, the liberative turn of the post-Vatican theology confirms Rahner's assertion.

Thanks to the many developments of epistemological tools since Vatican II, we have learned that theological pluralism also means not only a plurality of life contexts, but a plurality of theological methods of interpretation as well: the approach of the historical critical method is not that of literary criticism, nor that of feminist theology, etc.

In any case, one last paradox should bring us back to the very beginning, but the beginning this time will serve as a provisional conclusion. The question is as follows: Have we acknowledged a legitimate pluralism of theologies within the Christian faith? What then is the role of the magisterium and the curia? How can there be many theologies, one magisterium? This question brings us back to the very beginning of the reflection because it raises the fundamental issue that we left suspended: that of the ultimate foundation of pluralism and the criteria for the cohabitation of diversities, which would prevent the differences from clashing.

CONCLUSION

The relationship of unity to diversity, and vice versa, has been characterized through this study as a dialectic. It consists of a whole set of goings and comings, which in a circular movement has to integrate contraries without becoming a vicious circle. It is an uninterrupted conversation and negotiation with the other, and through the other with the wholly Other, from our inner-self, from where we actually stand in life. In society and culture, it implies an opening of a living space to all the applicants to Humanity, i.e. all those who have never counted, all those who have been living on the margins. It also implies the acceptance of a necessary decentering, a holding-back in favour of the other. This cannot occur unless one accepts that there should no longer be

³² Rahner, *Theological Investigations*, p. 96; one can also refer to P. J. Rosato, "Perchè studiare teologia a Roma?" in AAVV, *Problemi e prospettive di Teologia Dogmatica*, a cura di K. H. Neufeld (Brescia, Queriniana, 1983), pp. 495-520.

a center. Not many either: there should be no center at all. For polycentrism is still a language of the self: there is a risk that the slave become a master, in turn. Pluralism therefore means simply the acceptance of a whole new *modus vivendi* which, in my opinion, could find its founding principle in the answer to our paradox in its religious component, as we found it in its last articulation with regard to the question of the magisterium. Christian tradition offers two principles for a peaceful cohabitation of the many theologies and one magisterium: *unitas veritatis, unitas caritatis*. To seek the unity of the truth, from the very truth of myself, as Ricoeur suggested; but in love. Love, says Saint Paul, is the link of all of it; love is the definition that Jesus gave of God; love therefore is what makes the three divine Persons subsist as One holy Trinity. Love, I believe, is the only place in this world, where all roads come together; love therefore may be the only place on earth where divergent peoples and cultures may come together, and meet sincerely without clashing. If it is true that there will possibly be a clash of civilizations, it is time to start working to transform the world major civilization into what Paul VI called a civilization of love; then civilizations can meet without clashing. For we have all seen two youngsters from different races meet, fall in love, and prosper and procreate; because love is what Saint Paul called the “builder of perfect links.” In sum, it is my belief that in Love, the plural is possible without annihilating the singular.

Oblate Scholasticate

Kinshasa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo

CHAPTER IX

UNITY AND DIVERSITY: THE CHALLENGE OF A CROSS-CULTURAL MINISTRY

JOSEPH G. DONDERS

“...a new vision of the unity of humankind...”—John Paul II, *On Social Concern*, # 40.

Discussing ‘cross-cultural spirituality’ is not only of academic interest. The issue is not a theoretical or hypothetical one. Cross-cultural spirituality is a fact of life. Something is happening to religious believers; it is happening to Christian believers; it is occurring among us mainly in two ways.

In our globalizing world many of our Christian communities lost their old homogeneity. Christians from all over the world are coming together. Though worshipping together they speak different languages; they are rooted in different cultures and histories. During a service in the University of Nairobi we once counted the ethnic groups sharing the Eucharist. There were more than 40 different groups present; all continents were represented. One might think this typical for that cosmopolitan African city, but it happens all over the world. About the same number of different peoples are worshipping together in Saint Camillus, a parish church in Silver Spring, Maryland, and in Saint Thomas the Apostle, a parish church in Nunhead, London.

There is in our parishes and communities a second development overlapping this ethnic cross-cultural diversity. It is an experience felt even in those parishes that remained up to now homogeneous as far as ethnicity is concerned. Our sons and daughters, grandsons and granddaughters are looking for something different from the institutionalized patterns of religion to which the older ones are still accustomed. The younger ones understand the new, they are born in it. Listen to them while they are discussing issues like friendship, religion, spirituality, race, peace, recycling, how to dispose of our garbage, or capital punishment. Sit in when they discuss their expectations and hopes, and even a theological issue like redemption. They express sentiments and insights the older generation is not totally unaware of. Insights that often divided them in the polarized groups we so frequently find within our parish communities. It is a diversity parishes often try to accommodate almost unwittingly by offering a variety of different liturgical services. The

early morning mass is celebrated in a different way than the later folk mass, while both masses attract their own public.

There are (1) those who are looking for the old traditional forms; (2) those who prefer a personalistic and charismatic approach; (3) those who expect a social peace and justice gospel, (4) those who are eager to share in an inclusive feminist and creational approach, and finally (5) those who are in favor of a more inter-religious 'New Age' celebration. Many believers no longer seem satisfied with the usual spiritual fare the denominational Christian churches offer. It is a fare that does not seem to serve a society that is as pluralistic and dynamic as ours.

Perhaps no societies in the history of humanity have been as pluralistic and dynamic as modern ones. Indeed, the terms 'pluralistic' and 'dynamic' have become not only descriptive of the way things are, but prescriptive of the way things ought to be.¹

An ever growing set of different theologies and spiritualities are developing within the heart of a church that has to respond to the ministerial needs created by its inter-ethnicity and its spiritual diversity. Our global contacts did not only open up a new religious world around us, but also within us. The interest in what others believe and experience is growing. Believers, and not only the religious ones seem to be looking for more. These two kinds of pluralism, our own growing diversity and of our greater inter-ethnicity, are interrelated in a way that the way we react ministerially to one might throw light on how to minister to the other.

OUR INTER-ETHNIC WORLD CHURCH AS SEARCH FOR MORE SPIRIT

Even before the Second Vatican Council a cross-cultural spirituality had been growing in the Church. The Vatican Council witnessed to that development. In his definitive evaluation of the Council Karl Rahner wrote in his article "Towards a Fundamental Interpretation of Vatican II"² fifteen years later, that Vatican II was the Catholic Church's first self-actualization as a world church. It was the first time in its 2000-year history that the Church had come together from all over the globe.

¹ Max L. Stackhouse, *Public Theology and Political Economy: Christian Stewardship in Modern Society*, Commission on Stewardship, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. (Grand Rapids MI.: B. Eerdmans, 1986), p.157.

² *Theological Studies* 40, #47 (Dec. 1979), pp. 716-727.

The Council included numerous indigenous bishops from Africa and Asia, many of them first or second generation Christians having their roots in their own traditional cultures. Hundreds of Western bishops represented non-Western communities. Both groups of bishops could not be but aware of what we now call the cross-cultural spirituality of the communities they were 'overseeing'.

This awareness led to documents that had not been foreseen at the beginning of the Council: "The Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions" and the "Declaration on Religious Liberty" Both documents speak in positive terms about "what is true and holy" in other religions, the former one mentioning explicitly Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Ten years after the Council and five years before Rahner's article Pope Paul VI drew an important conclusion from the Council's documents stressing the need of a new cross-cultural and inter-religious spirituality in his Apostolic Exhortation "Evangelii Nuntiandi":

Fidelity both to the message whose servants we are and to the people to whom we must transmit it safe and sound, is the central axis of Evangelization. (#4)

Pope Paul VI did not speak of two fidelities, both of which are important, but of one single fidelity to the message and to what moves the people we contact.³ A statement suggests not only how we should relate to others and their cultural, religious and spiritual heritage, but also how we should integrate their riches in our own lives for ourselves. The text is a call to a cross-cultural spirituality.

The need for this faithfulness to our own spiritual gifts and to the spiritual riches of the whole of humanity is felt not only by the church leadership, finding its expression in a series of further statements and declarations;⁴ it is an aspiration felt by the Christian people themselves. Rare are the ministers who have not been confronted with the "search for more spirit"⁵ by the faithful around them, a conviction that takes all kinds of forms, sometimes vaguely and confusingly grouped together

³ Cf. Parmananda R. Divarkar S.J., "How We Have Moved beyond Evangelical Nuntiandi," paper read to the US Catholic Missionaries Association, 1985.

⁴ E.g. 1974, *Guidelines on Religious Relations with the Jews*; 1984, *The Attitudes of the Church towards the Followers of Other Religions*; 1985, *Notes on the Correct Way to Present Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church*; 1991, *Missio Redemptoris; Dialogue and Proclamation*.

⁵ Cf. Dick Westley and Tad W. Guzie, "In Search of More Spirit," *In the Mean Time*, #10 (Chicago: Thomas More Association, 1993).

under the term “New Age”. It explains the interest in publications and TV-series like Joseph Campbell’s “The Power of Myth”,⁶ and in the life of Thomas Merton, the Cistercian, who went to Bangkok to contact Buddhist monks, and whose out-of-print works were recently reprinted. It explains the ever growing space dedicated to non-western religions in our book shops. Many Christians living Vatican II broke through the borders of their classical Christian tradition.

They do not buy into the narrow parts of the old dispensation with its narrow focusing on narrow questions and a limited set of experiences....So you’ve got people who are saying I do have a spirituality, but I can find better nourishment for it elsewhere.⁷

Jean-François Lyotard spoke about ‘the death of the great stories’. The visions and ideologies that seemed to give a final and total meaning to life became unbelievable, of whatever nature they were, scientific, philosophical, political or religious. Scientism, socialism but also catholicism shared the same “post-modern” fate. Life and society fragmented, coherence seems to be lost in the ‘little’ stories we live.

It is in these contexts that Cross-cultural spirituality became a pastoral problem. Why should we be interested in other religious experiences and expressions if we believe that Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life? The answer obviously is “we should not,” except in the case that Jesus himself would show that interest. The question then is how did Jesus relate to the religious experiences of people of other beliefs than his own?

JEWISH ROOTS

Recently we have begun to understand the person of Jesus better than ever before in modern times. Ironically this reconsideration of Jesus began in Germany at the beginning of the anti-Semitic Nazi era in 1933, in one of the 20th century’s most influential biblical reference works, the multi-volume *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, edited by Gerhard Kittel.⁸ That study proved that the teaching, the language and the person of Jesus cannot be understood apart from their Judaic setting.

⁶ Joseph Campbell with Bill Moyers, *The Power of Myth* (New York: Doubleday, 1988).

⁷ Westley, *ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

⁸ Gerhard Kittel, Ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, republished 1991), Vol. 1-10;

The new insight in to the significance of Jesus being a Jew was helped by the interreligious dialogue with the Jews that began immediately after Vatican II. The dialogue was an imperative after the horror of the holocaust, organized in Christian Europe. In the context of this continuing dialogue Pope John Paul II in 1982 made the important point that:

Our common spiritual heritage is considerable. Help in better understanding certain aspects of the Church's life can be gained by taking an inventory of that heritage, but also by taking into account the faith and religious life of the Jewish people as professed and lived now as well.⁹

To help Christians to understand ourselves better as followers of Jesus, they should not only delve into the treasure of the Jewish heritage, but also take into account the more recent developments in the faith and religious life of the Jewish people. Explaining our relation to the Jewish people this way goes beyond what the Vatican II "Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Other Religions" had stated regarding relations to the Jews, which made no mention of the post-biblical religious tradition of Judaism.¹⁰

In his new assertion the Pope suggests that in order to understand ourselves we should pursue a cross-cultural and inter-religious enrichment in our dialogue with the Jewish tradition as it is developing in our days. Stating this seems to suggest that an interreligious enrichment and a consequent cross-cultural spirituality belong to the essence and the outcome of our mission to each other.

Jesus himself invites us to walk that way. It was his Jewish mission and vocation to do so. Jesus was and remained a faithful Jew. Being aware of his mission, he expressed his amazement about the faith of a Roman Officer (Luke 7:9) and the spiritual life of a Syro-Phoenician woman (Mat 15:28). He said to the non-Jewish Samaritan woman: "We (Jews) worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews." He continued saying, "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers of God (which of course refers to both Gentiles, Samaritans and Jews) will worship the Father in Spirit and Truth (John 4: 22-23)." When some Greeks came to contact him in the gospel of

Cf. Robert P. Eriksen, *Theologians under Hitler: Gerhard Kittel, Paul Althaus, and Emmanuel Hirsch* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

⁹ Address in Rome March 6 1982, cf. Eugene J. Fisher, "Interpreting *Nostra Aetate* Through Postconciliar Teaching," in *International Bulletin of Mission Research*, Vol. 9, No. 4. Oct. 1985, pp. 158-165.

¹⁰ Fisher, *ibid.*, p. 161.

John, he enthusiastically declared, “Now the hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified” (John 12:20-23).¹¹

Particularity and universality are united in him and grounded in his person. Jesus Christ is “The One Who Belongs to the World”¹² Jesus experienced what so many of his followers, working at the mission he left them, have been experiencing since they themselves are enriched and transformed by the people they meet. Missionaries do not stop telling that they learned more than they taught when contacting the groups to whom they were sent.

To understand better Jesus’ cross-religious approach it might be a help to reconsider the mission of the Jewish people. It all began when Abram and Sarai got so upset about the godlessness and the restrictedness of their world that they left it to start anew. It was the beginning of a new covenant between YHWH¹³ and a group of people that walked together YHWH’s way. When they left their old Chaldean world YHWH blessed them, saying: ‘I will make of you a great nation..., and in you shall all families of the earth be blessed’ (Gen. 12, 2-3). From the beginning Abram and Sarai—later renamed Abraham and Sarah by YHWH—understood, that trying to walk YHWH’s way would not only mean blessing to them, but that it would be at the same time a blessing for all nations.

YHWH appears nine times to Abram and Sarai, and in all those instances there is a direct or indirect reference to all the nations. Looking at the stars, Abraham and Sarah traced YHWH’s path in this world, and walking it they began to see that they were on their way to “a City designed and built by YHWLI” (Ileb. 11:10-11). Walking this godly trail they would attract others in the direction of that same city, so that in the end all “the nations would flock in with their wealth and splendor” (Rev. 21:26).

Those nations were not expected to become Jewish. They were expected to be faithful to their covenant with God, just like the Jews had to be faithful to theirs.¹⁴ They were expected to join the Jewish nation on the way to the final heavenly City of God, shining as a common distant goal.

¹¹ John T. Pawlikowski, *Christ in the Light of the Christian-Jewish Dialogue* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982).

¹² “The Man Who belongs to the World,” cf. Jaroslav Pelikan, *Jesus through the Centuries, His Place in the History of Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

¹³ Using the tetragrammaton (i.e. the four letters) YHWH instead of our word God is important when speaking about Abraham and Sarah in order to respect their Judaic context and spirituality.

¹⁴ Cf. Harvey Falk, *Jesus the Pharisee, A New Look at the Jewishness of Jesus* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985).

Even in the darkest of times, when this vision seemed to be lost in the dust and turmoil of countless battlefields, prophets and others remained faithful to that dream, a group sometimes called the Remnant of Israel. About 2000 years ago the support group around Jesus' mother Mary—Elizabeth, Joseph, Zechariah, Simeon and Anna—lived this dream to the full. It is in this Hebrew tradition that Mary conceived her son Jesus. In Luke's gospel she refers to it, when she sings that "All the people who ever shall be will call me blessed" (Luke 1:48).¹⁵

She and her son were going walk the trail set out by Sarah and Abraham, sure to attract the others as promised from the beginning. Matthew tells a striking story about a first realization of their dream, when he describes how wise people came to Jerusalem after Jesus' birth. Looking in their 'own' stars they discover a star they decide to follow, the star that leads them together to the child Jesus, each bringing in their different gifts (Mat. 2:1-12). The bounty of the nations is beginning to be brought in.

Jesus lived out this story in his own life. He lived his Jewish vocation in a way that made not only his Jewish followers understand their call. It attracted at the same time people from all the nations around. His person and his story continued to do so, as we are told in the Pentecost story at the beginning of Luke's "Acts of the Apostles". That book by Luke has no real end; its story is not over and done with.

OUR CROSS-CULTURAL SPIRITUAL VOCATION

We, Christians of non-Jewish stock, attracted by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, will be attractive to others when living that life. Luke makes an interesting and rather ambiguous remark on that process:

No one else dared to join them, but the people were loud in their praise and the numbers of men and women who came to believe in the Lord increased steadily (Acts 5:13-14).

As foreseen by the prophets of old the nations joined YHWH's new initiative in our world. A response that brought together a variety of people from different cultures and religious backgrounds. It created in the new community a pluralistic contextuality. All were "baptized by the one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks" as Paul wrote to the

¹⁵ Translation from *The New Testament in Modern English*, J.B. Phillips (London: MacMillan Company, 1958).

Corinthians (1 Cor. 12:13), suggesting that within the one body those baptized did not cease to be Jews and Greeks.¹⁶

This fact from the beginning led to a variety of interpretations of the life and significance of Jesus of Nazareth. Pope John Paul II recently drew our attention to this variety when he noted in his encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* that,

The four Gospels therefore bear a witness to a certain pluralism within the fundamental unity of the same mission, a pluralism which reflects different experiences and situations in the first Christian communities. It is also the result of the driving force of the Spirit himself (sic); it encourages us to pay heed to the variety of missionary charisms and to the diversity of circumstances and peoples.¹⁷

The four gospels are different. We often did not pay attention to that fact. We had the tendency of putting the gospels and the letters of Saint Paul, in a kind of spiritual food blender, pressing the button and mixing everything indistinguishably into a mixture in which the gospel authors might have difficulties recognizing the specific intentions they had when writing their version. Pope John Paul II noted, that those gospels are different because they were written by different authors, with different intentions, and for different audiences. Take Luke's gospel. Luke begins by saying that he knows that many writers have undertaken to draw up an account of the events around Jesus. That is the reason that he wants to give the story from his point of view. The point of view of a gentile, someone with a non-Jewish world vision.

Mixing the four gospels with their different 'world visions' into something homogeneous leads only to a syncretistic confusion, nor is playing the four gospels and the earlier writings of Paul against each other—as so often happened. The differences we find in our earliest Christian authors are our first cross-cultural ministerial and pastoral challenge. At the root of their different approaches to the happenings around Jesus lies a difference that precedes their interpretation: it is the difference in culture and 'world vision'.

¹⁶ Richard J. Mouw and Sander Griffioen, *Pluralisms and Horizons* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1993), p. 168.

¹⁷ John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio*, #23; *Origins*, Vol. 20: no. 34, January 31, 1991, p. 548.

A Contemporary Journey

Philosophers, psychologists and psychiatrists have been studying the issue of the various world visions' that predetermine our response to the world in which we are living. A Dutch psychiatrist, Maarten S.H. Schlemper, reported in 1980 the case of a mathematical physicist, who lived exclusively in his mathematical world not only at work, but also during his leisure time.¹⁸ He contacted Schlemper because he suffered of insomnia and persistent bouts of migraine. Living in his scientific world he had expected to be able to be healed pharmaceutically. However, drugs had not helped. Schlemper suggested that instead of trying to control his body chemically, he would try to succor it by autogenic yoga exercises. The hopeless migraine disappeared as by magic; it was like a miracle. This new interest for the body of a human being led the patient to a greater interest in the human person and introduced him to a personalistic world-view. From there he traveled on to rediscover the mythical wisdom of myths and fairy tales. Finally he dared the ultimate plunge into the metaphysical depth of a (w)holistic religious experience, where he finally found firm ground under his feet. He remained the mathematical physicist he always had been, but his life had changed and meaning was found.

The story of this journey, or of a pilgrimage, is the type of story in which many of our contemporaries seem to recognize themselves. What our pilgrim did was not leave the world in which he lived—he remained the scientist he was—but allow that belief and world-vision to be enriched, complemented, and 'transcended'.

Many contemporaries tell the same kind of story, though in many different ways. In the final instance they all tell the same tale. Their belief, their world vision or 'Weltanschauung', became too narrow. They supplemented one vision with another, keeping and joining them all together in an ever growing wholeness. Those seekers have something of Nicodemus, who in the middle of the night knocked on the door of Jesus in search for 'more' spirit'.¹⁹ They ended up in the way Paul did, proud to be a Jew and happy to have found Jesus whose vision opened him up to a whole new world.

'Being Part of'

In 1919 Karl Jaspers, the existential philosopher, tried to explain the irreconcilability of different philosophical schools of thinking in his

¹⁸ Maarten S.H. Schlemper, *Psychotherapie en Wereldbeeld, Humanische Psychotherapie, Een Anthropologische Grondslag* (Leuven: Acco, 1980).

¹⁹ Cf. Dick Westley and Tad W. Guzie, *ibid.*

book, *Psychologie der Weltanschauung*.²⁰ He came to the conclusion that the root of the difficulty was not at the level of the different philosophical schools of thought themselves. The difficulty was seated deeper. Before we begin to philosophize our approach to reality or our 'world vision' is already set. Jaspers discerned in his study three different types of world visions, (1) an extrovert sense *weltanschauung*, (2) an introverted psychologically determined world vision, and (3) a self-transcending metaphysical one. The Dutch psychiatrist E. Carp applied Jaspers' idea to explain the difference between the various schools of psychotherapy. He, too, distinguished three main world visions, drawing the practical conclusion that a psychiatrist has not only to take into account the world vision of his patients, but also his own world vision. It would be no help to play one world-vision out against the other. Such an approach would cause one conflict after another. The psychiatrist has to engage the possibilities and the limits of the world vision of the person in question, integrating it in the healing process.²¹

The question is whether it is possible to do this. Is it possible to help others by clarifying and complementing their world-visions from within another world vision in such a way that they come to greater self-fulfillment? Can we ourselves break sufficiently out of the limits of our own world vision?

Schlemper, whom we mentioned above, refined Carp's categories. He recognized five main world visions, four empirical ones, and one metaphysical. The empirical ones are (1) genetic, in which one experiences oneself as part of a genetic group, a family, a race or a people; (2) personalistic, in which one experiences oneself as a partner in an I-Thou relationship; (3) social, in which one experiences oneself as a part of a social group; (4) naturalistic in which one experiences oneself as part of nature; and (5) metaphysical, in which one experiences oneself not as "part of," but as "one with" a transcendental reality. Though this classification might seem to be somewhat arbitrary, it is interesting to note that the indicated world visions correspond to the ideas that influenced the Western world during the 20th century. They influenced

²⁰ Karl Jaspers, *Psychologie der 'Weltanschauung'* (Berlin: Springer, 1919). The German word 'Weltanschauung' was according to the massive Compact Oxford Dictionary of 1991 (Micrographical Edition, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1991, p. 2295) first used in English by William James in 1886 to indicate a particular way of life. James wrote that he remembered someone saying that the characteristic of the Greek 'Weltanschauung' was its optimism. James used the word for a 'world-view'. The most recent use of the word quoted by the same dictionary is from 1978, when N. Jardine writes about 'speakers of different cultures having different 'Weltanschauungen'.

²¹ E.A.D.E Carp, *Psychotherapie op Grondslag van Wereldbeelden* (Lochem: De Tijdstroom, 1959).

in turn Western ideologies, policies, and theologies. This often led to the theological and spiritual polarizations we meet in our pastoral work, and that have been successively censured by the church's magisterium in their exclusiveness. This stance that might offer us a key to the cross-cultural issue under discussion.

Polarizations and Pluralism

The genetic world vision is a good example of what such a polarization can lead to. From 1933 Hitler forced this vision as the only valid one on the Germanic race. The 'Deutschen Christen' (German Christians) were won over to his vision, they proclaimed themselves to be a super race by divine ordinance especially gifted by God. A vision in which all else, person, family, and social group was subject to one's blood and race. It is the vision of a tribal approach to reality. God is not only 'with us', God is exclusively 'with us'.

During the Second World War the world fought this polarized genetic position—a protest that, once the victory was won, found further expression in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Another world vision began to prevail. Respect for the person, for one's own history and experience, for one's own conscience, for one's own talents and gifts and in the case of women regard for one's femininity—these became all important issues. The time of blind obedience to others seemed over, once and for all; existentialism became the reigning philosophy; and the I-Thou relation determined one's relationship to God. This change had direct consequences on the way Christians began to relate to themselves, to each other, to morality and to their churches.

This personalistic influence was so great, that it was able to challenge the older, classical, essentialist and in a sense 'tribal'—vision of the church during the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) which was called together by Pope John XXIII because of these changes in the world. None of the two approaches won. The Council decided on a pluralistic approach, often resulting in double, complementary definitions. In the Council documents the Church is described as a hierarchical institution and at the same time as 'the People of God'. The Council stated that all Christians are called to the same perfection, and dedicated at the same time a special document to Religious Life. The document on Mission among the 'gentes' is accompanied by the statements on religious freedom and the need to dialogue with other religionists.

Since the Second Vatican Council, the Church is no longer the closed monolithic 'genetic' giant it had become. It is a pluralistic organism that tries to find a way to do justice to at least two complementary visions of itself. It is at the heart of this renewed church that we find the new beginning of a 'cross-vision' and a 'cross-cultural' reality.

This development led to difficulties almost immediately. Instead of considering the two visions as complementary, they were too often played out against one another. When Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre opted to remain exclusively faithful to the old vision, he was in final instance condemned for his position. But when Rome perceived the American theologian, Charles Curran, as representing only the new personalistic vision, he, too, got into difficulties.

Though this pluralism split much of the Church into two polarized camps, it remains a blessing that none of the two tendencies prevailing during the Council out voted the other. The two visions belong together, each with its own possibilities and restrictions; they complement each other. This renewed pluralism opened the door to the greater diversity and complementarity that was going to come.

In 1968 and 1969 a new movement closed many universities and theological faculties. All over the Western world students occupied their faculty buildings. They reacted against the limits of both the classical and personalistic world visions, which according to the new trend, did not take into account that we are all part of the social and economic structures that prevent the majority of people in the world for living a decent life and to realizing their human dignity. A new social vision became predominant. It was the time of the birth of the liberation theologies. A trend that found its first academic form in the work of the American theologian, James Cone, in his book "Black Theology"²² and that spread all over the world. It led to the possibility of a third form of polarization, and when Leonardo Boff was perceived by the Vatican authorities as being an exclusively liberational theologian, the church's magisterium again intervened.

In March 28 1979 the world was confronted with the first nuclear reactor disaster at Harrisburg in Pennsylvania. Many became, suddenly and in a new way, aware of being part of nature. This led to a creational spirituality, based on a world vision different from the genetic, personalistic and liberation. There was the risk of a new polarization, and when Matthew Fox was perceived as being exclusively creational in his theology, the ecclesial authorities again intervened.

Complementarity

The developments described above did not only affect the church in general, they affect practically each existent Christian community. Pastors, facing this growing plurality and the 22 different polarized attitudes in the community to which they minister, are in a challenged and challenging position. What to do; how to cater to these different

²² (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1970).

visions and the consequently varied expectations? The church's official policy might hint at how to respond. Attentive reading of the latest magisterial documents shows that the church's magisterium censures any exclusively polarized position, whether it is classical, personalistic, liberational or creational. But those same documents—and especially the more recent ones—show at the same time that all those visions are taken into account, though not to the extent for which the exclusive adherents of the different visions would hope.

This pluralism is not a question of a balancing act, but has to do with how we know, and how we believe. We need different visions and approaches to understand who we are and what we are heading for. We are theologically in the epistemological position of the sciences. In physics we need to accept several—practically contradictory—theories to be able to explain all phenomena in and around us. Research in the causes of the AIDS pandemic is not restricted to medical research only, social and behavioral aspects have to be studied. The killings in our inner-cities are not merely a criminal issue that can be overcome by an ever growing police force or the strengthening of criminal law; all kinds of other circumstances, such as the lack of realistic educational opportunities, male absence in so many families, and so on have to be taken into consideration.

If it is impossible to 'understand' the physical side of our world except by several complementary views, how would we be able to fathom the width and depth, length and height of our spiritual dimension in another way? Our spiritual reality resembles a diamond that is turned in the light of the sun; it can be described only in an endless sequence of different frequencies and colors.

'BEING ONE WITH'

In the beginning of this contribution we drew attention to the fact that the four gospels differ from each other. They witness how people with different world visions and representing various cultures respond in different ways to one and the same person, Jesus, called by all of them "Christ," the anointed one. Their responses show a combination of "diversity" and "oneness". Reading only the gospel would hide not only the richness we find in the other gospels, it would also upset that 'oneness'. We are not only part of the human/divine mystery in a genetic, personalistic, social or creational way. We are at the same time "one with" the human/divine mystery present to us in Jesus Christ. If we want to be faithful to ourselves and to others it is in this "being one with" that we find the ground for our complementary diversity. Jesus himself prays that we may realize this oneness "That they all may be one" (John 17:2 1), but he adds: "In my Father's house are many

mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you” (John 14:2). “One family house with many rooms” is what Jesus envisions as our final destiny. It is the way to go in our ministry.

Example

In a family home the rooms are different because they are inhabited by different people. Any family house attests to that reality. It is the difference in personal talents and gifts that makes those rooms so different. It is this difference that enriches every family member, and the family as a whole. We should aim at that enhancement in our pastoral approach, avoiding any polarization in view of our deeply rooted oneness, and open to our complementary variety. A concrete cross-cultural pastoral example might help to understand this. Africans (and often also African-Americans) celebrating Jesus Christ in the usual and mandatory Western liturgical context often add almost spontaneously physical and societal ‘healing’ rituals. Roman authorities expressed several times their objection to these inter-liturgical healing practices, which was one of the reasons that Archbishop Milingo had to leave Africa. One of the reasons given was that the healing rites overdid the ‘horizontal’ human dimension at the cost of the ‘vertical’ God-oriented one. Censuring these African developments the Roman authorities never considered whether they themselves could not be too one-sided in their approach. Is their ‘vertical’ approach not at the cost of the more inter-human ‘horizontal’ dimension Africans spontaneously added. They did not try to find the roots for these African developments, though those roots could easily be traced.

According to African anthropology, sin and evil are believed to manifest themselves in the human attempt to destroy, to diminish and to threaten the life of others....Sin is thus understood more in terms of the breach of loving relationships between human beings. It is understood more in terms of the evil than people do or perpetuate against one another that in terms of the human transgression of the divine law against the God-self. Africans do not think of sin and evil in terms of an abstract legalistic structure through which human beings relate to God either by obeying or disobeying the Supreme Being outside and beyond the social life in which they live.²³

²³ Laurenti Magesa, “Pastoral Care of the Clergy,” *The African Synod*, Vol. 4 #4, May 1993 (Washington DC: Africa Faith and Justice Network), pp. 11-12.

A liturgy that considers sin as a vertical offense affecting God, and consequently stresses almost exclusively the expiation that has to be made to the Supreme Being, does not function well in an African context. It asks to be complemented by a 'healing' at the horizontal interhuman level—an enrichment that is not only understandable but desirable! Should not the two different approaches complement each other, and would this not enhance the Western way of worship?

Because sin is largely a matter of breach of fellowship, African anthropology has a unique role to play, one of helping the Church to make decisive paradigm shift in the accepted theological focus from a legal structure to a network of multiple relationships.²⁴

CHALLENGE AND CONCLUSION

Pastors ministering to a diverse and cross-cultural ministry should profit of that diversity as much as possible. They would do well to avoid any exclusive polarization in their own approach, taking care that the diversity in their community leads to the enrichment of all and everyone. An ideal that is described in one of the last verses of the Book of Revelation, when the Lamb, reigning from his throne, is surrounded by "the glory and the honor of the nations" (Rev, 21:26).

The words "as much as possible" are used, and that not without reason. Some years ago an Episcopalian and a Catholic parish, both catering for a dozen different ethnic groups in as many languages decided to celebrate their variety and oneness in Jesus Christ at the occasion of Pentecost. Half a year before a committee was formed to organize the celebration. Several obstacles had to be overcome. After many difficult meetings the ecumenical and cross-ethnic difficulties had been ironed out and they had decided what symbols to use, what hymns to sing and how to pray. Yet, the celebration never took place. At the last but one meeting one of the participants, an illegal immigrant underpaid and badly treated by her employers said that she could not see herself sitting at the same table at that Pentecost celebration with her employers, who happened to be active parish members in another ethnic group. She said: "Will they be treating me in their usual way the Monday after?"

The question took everybody by surprise. In the short time left it couldn't be answered. It would have asked for a much longer discussion and preparation. The issue made everyone understand that before being able to celebrate our diversity and oneness fully, we will have to begin

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

handling the justice question of how to break our bread in this world. It is in that breaking of the bread that the pilgrims on their way to Emmaus began to recognize the Lord.

It was a pity that those two parishes decided to postpone the celebration. The celebration should not have been put off, but should have been seen as the beginning of the home-coming of all the nations to that City of God to which Abraham and Sarah already looked forward on their pilgrimage: “the city with foundations, designed and built by God” (Heb 11:10). Our ministry should help us to go toward this city as far as is possible in the time given to us here on earth, together with the whole of creation.

*Program on Evangelization and Mission
White Fathers
Washington, D.C., USA*

CHAPTER X

THE DYNAMICS OF THE *DUNAMIS* IN COLLABORATIONS, ASSOCIATIONS, AND UNIONS

BHAJAN S. BADWAL

Collaborations, associations, and unions are social entities formed by human subjects in order to deal more effectively with varied life challenges. They enable one to pool personal resources with others in an attempt to solve problems too overwhelming for the individual person alone. Threats to the well-being of the individual inherent in a hostile environment are one example where the formation of collaborations, associations, and unions would be beneficial to the interests of the group as well as to the individual. Human groups have always naturally banded together in times of hardship, danger, or natural disaster. Additionally, the formation of a group or clan helped solve the need for sustenance by providing a source of food which could be shared by each of the members. Also, the forces of nature when out of control, posed a threat to the individual alone. Earthquakes, floods, forest fires, blizzards, tornadoes, hurricanes, droughts, and other natural disasters proved formidable opponents for one person alone. Safety was sought and found in numbers, thereby giving rise to the formation of human groups.

THE DUNAMIS: A DEFINITION

According to Paul Weiss, "Individuals exist apart from one another, each unique and irreducible. When they collaborate, they privately make use of their bodies to carry out conjoint activities under common conditions so as to meet common challenges successfully. Did they do no more than this, they would have their joint activities sanctioned and controlled, but they would have no direct appreciation of one another as having anything in common beyond their ability to act in consonance."¹ Therefore, primordial man, with the formation of groups of clans, managed to solve pressing problems; however, he had yet to learn of the advantages of affiliation, of human companionship, and association, as a natural consequence of his collaboration in groups or clans. In time, he became aware of the common ground shared with his

¹ Paul Weiss, *Toward a Perfected State* (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1986), p. 20; henceforth *Perfected State*.

fellow human beings, finding a solution to the deep longing in his soul—the longing which loneliness generates in a hostile world. As Weiss describes this phenomena,

People are together with whatever there is, by being related in a common space and time, in other ways, and through a common ground. All originate from and continue to be connected with one another, and eventually disappear into that ground. That ground has been referred to over the centuries and in different cultures in many different ways—'Tao,' 'The Receptacle,' 'The Collective Unconscious,' 'The Will,' the *elan vital*, and 'Creativity.' All are somewhat overlapped by what I have called the *Dunamis* to accentuate the fact that what is the ground of all is at once potential, powerful, and dynamic.²

Therefore, in order to better understand the concept of the *Dunamis* or the common ground, it would be well to provide a definition of a number of the concepts discussed above.

Bergson's Elan Vital

In *Creative Evolution*, Henri Bergson showed that the mechanistic interpretation of evolution is not justified by the facts. Viewing the data of evolution in the light of his intuition of duration, he described the evolutionary process as the forward thrust of a great spiritual force, the life impulse (*élan vital*), rushing through time into matter, and producing the various living forms culminating in man. Its movement is not predetermined but creative, ever generating novel and unpredictable forms.³ The whole nature is said to be the outcome of a force which thrusts itself forward into new and unforeseen forms of organized structure. These store and utilize energy, maintaining their power of growth and adaptive novelty up to a point, and then relapse into repetitive routine, and ultimately into the degradation of energy. The universe, according to Bergson, shows two tendencies: there is "a reality which is making itself in a reality which is unmaking itself." The laws of the tendency to repetition and the dissipation of energy are the laws of "matter"; the counter tendency is the thrust of "life."⁴

² *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

³ Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1911), pp. 236-271.

⁴ *Ibid.*

Bergson's philosophy is dualistic: the world, for him, is divided into two disparate portions: on the one hand, life, on the other, matter or rather that inert something which the intellect views as matter. The whole universe is the clash and conflict of two opposite motions: life, which climbs upward and matter, which falls downward. Life is one great force, one vast vital impulse, given once and for all from the beginning of the world, meeting the resistance of matter, struggling to break a way through matter, learning gradually to use matter by means of organization; divided by the obstacles it encounters the very adaptations which matter forces upon it; yet always retaining its capacity for free activity, struggling always to find new outlets, seeking always greater liberty of movement amid the opposing walls of matter.⁵ Life is thus seen to be the primordial reality, ever moving and growing, a ceaseless flux. It is essentially dynamic, qualitative, creative, and unpredictable. To know existing things as they really are is to grasp them intuitively by a direct contact or coincidence with things. To think intuitively is to think in duration, thereby experiencing the inner dynamism of being. An integral empiricism must admit not only the knowledge of matter, but also all that man knows through introspection, all the vague suggestions of consciousness, all that is revealed in the intuition of duration.⁶ It is this intuition of duration, when it is in the process of fathoming the *élan vital* that is comparable to making contact with the *Dunamis*.

Plato's Receptacle

The Receptacle is an illusorily defined term for the repository of Plato's hierarchy of the cosmological forms. "In addition to the eternal and temporal forms of the divine, the elements, the basic absolutes and the universal forms, another element in the scheme is the Receptacle, the material principle of creation, essentially the space-time matrix which receives, and is molded by the forms."⁷ In Plato's metaphysical dualism there are two radically different entities: the object of understanding is absolute reality, that of sense perception is relative phenomena. Universal concepts have an objective reference to transcendent Forms—unalterable, universal, intelligible realities. Since reality is rational only so far as it is unchanging, then immutable, suprasensible forms alone, e.g., Justice itself, are fully real and fully intelligible. In this realm of true reality, there is a hierarchy of beings culminating in the Form of

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.1-7.

⁷ Plato's *Timaeus*, trans. Francis M. Cornford (New York: The Bobs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1959), pp. 48-55.

Forms, the Good—the paramount principle of intelligibility, unity and order. The lesser pole of Plato’s ontological dualism is the empirical object of perception—relative phenomena. Because fluctuating phenomena are neither truly real nor fully knowable, the cosmologist cannot attain an exact and altogether self-consistent explanation of the physical world, but must be satisfied with a probable account. Yet Plato discerned the reality present in phenomena in terms of a rational order and uniformity, pointing to something fully real and implying its dominating presence. Sensible things are relatively real and intelligible only so far as they participate in absolutely real and intelligible Forms. For instance, a flower “can be beautiful only in so far as it partakes of absolute beauty,” the unparticipating in the ultimate *raison d’etre* of the participating. Participation or imitation, therefore, is the bridge by which Plato spanned the Parmenidean realm of being, unity, and permanence, and the Heraclitean realm of becoming and plurality.⁸

Between the realm of Forms and the purely sensible world there are mathematical objects, existing on an intermediate level. There is also Soul: the world-soul, celestial souls, and human souls. Souls share in both realms: in the ideal world insofar as they are immortal and closely related to the intelligible, and in the sensible world insofar as they are living and moving. The starting point in Plato’s reasoning to the existence of a world-soul is the orderly motion and harmony in the empirical world. Since the motionless exemplary Forms by themselves cannot explain their exemplification in things, Plato found it necessary to posit the existence of a superlatively intelligent agent—the Demiurge. This preeminent intelligence is called God and Father of the world. As the Creator of Soul, He must be ranked on the level of intelligible Being, which in Plato’s hierarchy, is placed directly under the One or the Good. The Divine Craftsman introduced harmony and symmetry into the primitive chaos of disorderly motion by fashioning the world according to the eternal exemplars. Modeling the world after the Ideal Living Creature, the Demiurge formed the cosmic body by conferring geometrical patterns on the primary qualities in the indefinite space-receptacle—earth, water, air, fire—after having first formed the cosmic soul for its function of animating, ruling, and unifying the vast bodily sphere. Together with the world-soul, the Demiurge created the stars and planets with their souls, and next the souls of men. Then, at his request, the “created gods” (i.e., the star-souls) created bodies for the human souls.⁹

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 70-81.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 25-35.

Whitehead's Creativity

Alfred North Whitehead judges that Plato had formulated the general notions necessary for metaphysics: ideas, physical elements, psyche, eros, harmony, mathematical relations, and the receptacle. In adapting these Platonic notions, Whitehead transformed the receptacle into "creativity." Creativity is the ultimate principle by which the many (the universe disjunctively) become the one actual entity (the universe conjunctively). Creativity is Whitehead's matrix for all becoming, whose essence is process in which connectedness is retained. The actual world, which is relative to each actual entity, so conditions creativity that each actual entity is a unique synthesis of the world. By limiting creativity, the past provides an element of continuity for each actual occasion. Both creativity and past actual occasions are real, but are nonbeing. Together they constitute the real potentiality for the process of self-creation. The many self-creating entities proceeding from the past into the future, make up the one world process.¹⁰

The Heraclitian Flux

Heraclitus, who flourished about 500 B.C., is chiefly recognized for his doctrine that everything is in a state of flux. "He rewarded fire as the fundamental substance; everything, like flame in a fire, is born by the death of something else. Mortal are immortals, and immortals are mortals, the one living the other's death and dying the other's life." There is unity in the world, but it is a unity formed by the combination of opposites. "All things come out of the one, and the one out of all things"; but the many have less reality than the one, which is God."¹¹ Believing in war and strife as emblematic conditions of flux, Heraclitus states, "War is the father of all and the king of all; and some he has made gods and some men, some bond, and some free."¹² He also stated, "Homer was wrong in saying: "Would that strife might perish from among gods and men." He did not see that he was praying for the destruction of the universe: for, if his prayer were heard, all things would pass away."¹³

¹⁰ Friedrich Rapp and Reiner Wiehl, eds., *Whitehead's Metaphysics of Creativity* (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1990), pp. 59-94 and pp 167-208.

¹¹ Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1945), pp. 40-41.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 41.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

Further, he states, “We must know that war is common-to-all and strife is justice, and that all things come into being and pass away through strife.”¹⁴ Heraclitus believed fire to be the primordial element out of which everything else had arisen: “This world, which is the same for all, no one of gods or men has made; but it was ever, is now, and ever shall be an ever-living fire, with measures kindling and measures going out.”¹⁵ In addition he believed that: “That transformations of Fire are, first of all, sea; and half of the sea is earth, half whirlwind.”¹⁶ In such a world, perpetual change was to be expected, and perpetual change was what Heraclitus believed in. His belief in universal change is commonly supposed to have been expressed in the phrase “All things are flowing.” Plato and Aristotle agree that Heraclitus taught that “Nothing ever is, everything is becoming” (Plato), and that “Nothing steadfastly is” (Aristotle).¹⁷

The Tao

Taoism reflects contemporary Indian teaching found in the Upanishads, but adapted to the Chinese movement of nonconformity in regard to traditional religion, convention, social life, and despotic rule. The philosophic Taoism of these texts is a naturalistic monism. In the beginning there is a single being—material, tenuous, unintelligent, immobile—called Principle (Tao), the source of everything. Then the Principle put its Power (*Te*) into a movement of concentration (*yin*) and expansion (*yang*), and produced heaven, earth, and the middle air, the non-intelligent producers of all other sensible beings, The Principle is in all, and all is in it. Sensible beings, man included, pass through endless cycles of birth, growth, decay, deaths and rebirth into a new form of existence, either animal, vegetable, or mineral. The sage attains longevity by temperance, peace of mind, inhibition of desires, or avoidance of effort. He ignores Good, evil, morality, sanction, rule, art, and rite as being unnatural.¹⁸

Jung’s Collective Unconscious

According to Jung, personality, or the psyche has three

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 43-45.

¹⁸ Richard H. Robinson and Willard L. Johnson, *The Buddhist Religion: A Historical Introduction*, 3rd ed. (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1982), pp. 184-187.

components: the ego, the personal unconscious, and the collective unconscious. The ego is the conscious mind, that part of the personality that represents “outer” manifestations of life. It consists of the memories, thoughts, and feelings that result from consciousness. Beneath the ego is the unconscious, which consists of a two root system. The personal unconscious is the part of personality unique to each individual; within it are repressed memories, dreams, fantasies, wishes, and other private experiences. The collective unconscious¹⁹ is neither personal nor private. It is the deep, primordial part of the psyche shaped by the history of mankind. This is the part of the unconscious that follows in the path traced over millions of ancestral years. Because the brains of all individuals are essentially alike, the memories stored in the collective unconscious of all people are basically the same. According to Jung, the collective unconscious sets up an inherited predisposition which causes individuals to perceive the world very much as past generations did. For example, early homo sapiens might have been afraid of the dark because of dangerous elements in the environment, but even through the danger is now essentially past, the tendency to be afraid of the dark is still with us, and it is not difficult to bring it to the fore. To Jung, the importance of the collective unconscious cannot be over-estimated, for upon it rests the whole structure of personality. The ego, the personal unconscious, and other traits of personality are strongly influenced by this ancient force:

The psyche is not of today; its ancestry goes back many millions of years. Individual consciousness is only the flower and the fruit of the season, sprung from the perennial rhizome beneath the earth; and it would find itself in better accord with the truth if it took the existence of the rhizome into its calculations. For the root matter is the mother of all things.²⁰

Central to the theme of the collective unconscious are universal ideas or images called, archetypes. Archetypes are emotional experiences handed down with the evolving brain; they make up the basis of the collective unconscious. There is a mother archetype, for example, common to every generation and culture since the dawn of man. She is warm, protecting, nourishing—symbol of all motherhood. The father archetype, on the other hand, also common throughout the ages, signifies

¹⁹ C.G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 2nd ed. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1968), pp. 42-53.

²⁰ Joseph Campbell, ed., *The Portable Jung* (New York, New York: Penguin Books, 1971), p. xxi.

strength, authority, and power. Depending on culture, the mother image has been associated with the flowering field, warming hearth, and pasturing herd, while the father image has been associated with lightning and thunder, the oceans and rivers, and violence. Other archetypes include the hero; God; a wise old man; birth, death, and rebirth; and an energy force.²¹

PAUL WEISS ON THE DUNAMIS

Weiss has distinguished the *Dunamis* as a third type of ultimate (in addition to conditions and individual privacies) and has maintained:

The Greek for 'power' is *dunamis*. *Dunamis* is also Greek for 'potentiality' and for 'dynamic'. The primal continuum is all these at once; '*dunamis*' therefore is an ideal technical name for it. The *dunamis* has the vitality of Plato's receptacle, but it needs no *Demiurgos* to divide it. One can identify it with Aristotle's prime matter, but only if, contrary to him, this is recognized to be insistent. Unlike Whitehead's Creativity, it does not make anything its creature. It is not more real but only more subterranean than individuals. The irreducible units which condense it are in turn to be understood in both Democritean and Leibnizian terms, the one emphasizing the bodily side of them, the other the private.²²

Further, Weiss states, "However it be designated, it is acknowledged by everyone to be internally indeterminate. Some take it to be radically unintelligible. But if it were this, it would be so below the level, where anything could be grasped, as to be undetectable. Always available, it is a flux where distinctions are being constantly made and unmade, without ever achieving the status of separation."²³ Weiss suggests some practical endeavors that encourage contact with the *Dunamis*:

A comparatively easy means for making a penetrating contact with the *dunamis*, and to realize that this has been done is to attain the state of being peaceably alone at the end of a fine musical performance, or by becoming invol-

²¹ Jung, *Archetypes*, pp. 3-41.

²² Paul Weiss, "The *Dunamis*," *Review of Metaphysics*, Vol. 40 (June 1987): 660-661.

²³ Weiss, *Perfected State*, p. 22.

ved in that or some other absorbing work of art. Sitting quietly in a great cathedral or in some other place of worship, on a lonely beach, in an open field, in a desert, a person has other opportunities for becoming aware of a vast reality whose boundaries are not discernible, and which seems to vanish when one tries to conceptualize it. In fact one always merges with it.²⁴

The *Dunamis* then can be distinguished, encountered, and probed; it can be spoken to without shock to one's logic, good sense, and need to communicate. It has a number of distinctive, indispensable roles in the constitution of various types of entity, and in the ways these function. Without it there would be no occurrences, no transitions, no contemporaries, and no causation. These are large claims, needing clarification and defense.²⁵ Weiss states that the *Dunamis* is encountered in at least nine different places:

- The *Dunamis* is immediately present in every emotion. Emotions exhibit the merger of privacy and body, each qualifying the other. The vibrant, turbulent, transitory nature of an emotion is due, not to the body or the mind, but to that which is distinct from both and enables them to modify one another. In other words, the *Dunamis* provides a permeable and elastic boundary between the body and the mind allowing them to effectively intrude on one another, thereby qualifying and limiting each other.

- The cohesiveness of groups exhibits the *Dunamis* in a confined area. Each member of a group encounters and shares in it as insistent, not controllable presence joining him to others, some of whom are quite distant, and neither encountered nor known. Cohesive groups require men to be both collaborative and associated, the one enabling them to work well together, the other enabling them to share a common spirit. The bonding of men in society, or in such smaller groups as families and clans, and such larger ones as a nation hold them together. Without such bonding within associations, groups could be effective but not cohesive, and could be expected to dissolve when some common enterprise has come to an end.

- To the degree that we make contact with the *Dunamis*, to that degree we are able to be together with all else. To the degree that we are subject to the *Dunamis*, to that degree are we able to be together with others. Acknowledgment has to be made of the *Dunamis* if one is to understand how these could be contemporaries, how these could be

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 389-390.

²⁵ Weiss, "Dunamis," pp. 661-662.

known, and how they could both be independent and pass into the next moment together.

- The acknowledgement of a supposed flux existing in contradistinction to the fixed takes account of one way in which the *Dunamis* can be encountered. To whatever degree and manner one acknowledges becoming, to that degree and manner one acknowledges the *Dunamis*. Since change is everywhere, the privacies, bodies, societies, states, and cosmos, and since it can be directly encountered in all, the *Dunamis* is always available.

- 'Coming to be' refers to a transition from what is not to what is, where 'what is not' refers not to a nothing, but to something that may be other in type from that which replaces it. Actualities are the products of fulgurations (flashes of the *Dunamis* fixated with the help of conditions and thereupon held away from these constituent powers. The coming to be of non-living, subhuman, and presumably human beings, can all be understood to be the result of nuances in the *Dunamis* being fixated by ultimate conditions, and then maintained by irreducible privacies.

- 'Passing away' reverses the direction exhibited in 'coming to be.' An absolute passing away involves the loss of privacy and its control over a body. The latter is the result of a return of a being into the *Dunamis*, where it can never be more than a moment in a single undivided though endlessly differentiated ongoing. To know that a human being is coming into existence is to know an actuality in its transition from the status of an unseparated part of the *Dunamis* to it as standing apart from it. To know that a human being is dying is to know him in the course of his merging into the *Dunamis*. At both times, the *Dunamis* is encountered but not attended to.

- The *Dunamis* is also an ingredient in every condition. To be acquainted with a condition is to be therefore acquainted with the *Dunamis*, since this insistently impresses itself on the condition, and thereby makes it internally differentiated. The *Dunamis* does not entirely penetrate the condition; it does not, it could not deprive the conditions of its independence and independent activity. Were it not for the operation of the *Dunamis* into the various ultimate conditions, there would be no tensional connection among their distinguishable units. The *Dunamis* enables these and other conditions to have distinguishable but not distinct, separated components and, as a consequence, makes possible 'synthetic' judgments, not only in arithmetic and geometry, but concerning justice, attraction and repulsion, structures, and excellence.

- Creative activity makes use of the *Dunamis*, for it is due to what is produced is distended, vibrant, nuanced, and unified. Conditions and individuals, in turn, intrude on the *Dunamis*, thereby making it both intelligible and accessible for use in limited endeavors. The use does not require a reaching to, or control of, the *Dunamis* as an ultimate reality

existing apart from other others, any more than one can reach or use conditions or privacies as they are in themselves, maintained against all else.

- Very few create. Almost everyone, though, seems to enjoy the sight of a sunset, a mountain top, the startled moves of a deer, the tingling glow of a brook. An increasing number have come to appreciate works of art. In different ways and degrees, that allow the *Dunamis* to set the pace, determine the relations and prove the emphases. These are at once passed through toward a vast, unbounded, unrecognized, irreducible, enriching, and sustaining *Dunamis* ground. For short periods, it is possible to be absorbed in an appreciated object, and to encounter the *Dunamis* primarily in rhythms, pulsations, and pulls into an horizonless immensity—but often enough, and often too soon, one loses the object and becomes involved in the *dunamis* itself.²⁶

In addition, the *Dunamis* can be characterized with six outstanding features:

- The *Dunamis* is evident in the distinctive grounding it provides particulars, privacies or conditions. Each, in turn, confines it, without limiting it; no matter how it functions there, it continues to be an act apart from any particularities it might vitalize or join together. To know what is confined and to be aware of it as not thereby limited is to know the *Dunamis* as an associating power. The *Dunamis* continues beyond what confines it, pulling at its confined form, not allowing this to interfere with it as unbounded, unlimited, without beginning or end.

- The *Dunamis* is fluid; nothing in it is separated from anything else. Endlessly nuanced, it allows for no distinct units.

- The *Dunamis* is oceanic, limitless both in depth and extent, self-maintained, pulsation, making and unmaking distinctions within it.

- The *Dunamis* insists on itself. Other ultimate interplay with it. Each enables a superficial portion of it to be operative without affecting its nature of activity as a single, irreducible, boundless ultimate.

- The *Dunamis* is internally self-fractionating, perpetually distinguishing and merging nuances. Allowing for no separations, it must be yielded to if it is to be apprehended as apart from the other ultimates.

- Each ultimate mediates the other two. Conditions mediate privacies and the *Dunamis*; privacies mediate conditions and the *Dunamis*; the *Dunamis* mediates conditions and privacies. All Three mediations occur in the actualities which they together constitute.²⁷

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 662-670.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 671-674.

Weiss emphasizes the importance of the *Dunamis* by stating:

In the absence of the *Dunamis*, conditions and individuals might conceivably come together, but the result would be nothing more than a fixed set of units set in a permanent frame. Were there no joining of conditions and individuals, there would be just a perpetual flux. Were there not individual actualities, there would be vitalized laws of nature, but no units to which they applied. Just as controlled bodily acts evidence the insistent presence of privacies, structures, and relations, so ongoings provide evidence of the *Dunamis*...While the evidenced conditions are more wide ranging than that which evidences them, and while privacies have a singularity and inwardness no expression every fully captures, the *Dunamis* is absorptive, turning what reaches into it into a nuance of itself. Truths about all the ultimates are at one objective, conformal, and embedded. Still, those that refer to conditions are primarily objective, and those that refer to privacies are primarily conformal. References to the *Dunamis*, in contrast, are primarily embedded....The need to refer to the *Dunamis* in ways which are distinct from those needed to refer to the other ultimates apparently is what repels those who deny its presence and attracts those who affirm it. But the *Dunamis*...is no less and no more difficult to refer to, encounter, and understand than any other ultimate.²⁸

THE DUNAMIS IN RELATION TO COLLABORATIONS, ASSOCIATIONS, AND UNIONS

Some distinctions in the *Dunamis* crop out in the form of separate, actual individuals, each with its own privacy. Weiss describes their association in the following manner: "The different irreducible beings, which exist and act apart in a common space, continue to be together through the agency of their common ground. A portion of this is shared by human beings, enabling them to join together in distinctive ways. While distanced from one another, as surely as they are from non-humans, they are more closely involved with one another than they are with anything else."²⁹ In other words, human beings, for example, are the result of nuances in the *Dunamis* which, for reasons of its ebb and flow, become fulgurations. The fulgurations, in turn, become fixated by

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 674.

²⁹ Weiss, *Perfected State*, p. 22.

ultimate conditions, and, further, maintained by irreducible privacies. Sharing the *Dunamis*, however, enables them to form associations and collaborations due to the fact of their common ground.

Weiss describes some conditions under which these collaboration and associations might more readily occur:

The grip all men have on a common ground is intensified, both when they attend to one another sympathetically and when they face the world as alien. At both times, they adopt a portion of the *dunamis* as common and connecting, and thereby take themselves both to belong together and to contrast with the rest of the world. Because a portion of the ground has been held away from the rest, the surrounding world is seen to be alien, independently of the discovery that it goes its own way and jeopardizes cherished values. The sympathies of people are not just feelings privately undergone and then brought to play in some accord with what is occurring elsewhere; they are the common ground joined to the relations connecting distinct beings. Members of a family sometimes take more account of the *dunamis* than strangers do, not because they have a more ready or greater access to it, but because when they turn toward one another they relax and thereby open themselves up more readily to the common ground. Whatever part of that ground a number of strangers share makes itself most manifest in crises and celebrations, when they form a single whole contrasting with all else.³⁰

These two truths were made manifest during two highly poignant moments which occurred in the performance of two personal religious rituals: the first during the baptism of my two sons; the second during the wedding ceremony of my daughter. At the exact moments of my sons' immersions into and out of the water, I, along with other family members and friends, experienced such a sensation of coming together, of utter elation, of warmth and well-being, and total togetherness, that it was overwhelming. The other occasion in which I experienced such an association was at the wedding of my daughter. She had a traditionally ethnic Indian Sikh ceremony with the attendance of her family and extended family, as well as friends and well-wishers. At one point in the ceremony, the father of the bride ties together the hands of the bride and groom with a bright pink or red silk chiffon scarf, symbolizing their matrimonial union. At the exact moment that I performed this patriarchal

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

duty, an incredible sensation of linkage occurred among the whole wedding party, almost like a fusion of hearts, minds, and souls, as it were, a fusion of beings. The thought instantly occurred to me that, “Wow, this is all really tribal: what we are experiencing here is a simultaneous upsurging of feeling and emotion that is very rare and indescribable!”

After the ceremony, I often found myself wondering what was the phenomenon that produced such an outpouring of oneness and unity? What conditions fostered such a fusion of being a purpose? How could I reproduce those conditions in order to experience such a communion with others more often? Why does this type of feeling occur so rarely in life? What can I do to be more receptive, perceptive, and aware in order to experience such phenomena more fully, more often, and more appreciatively? An understanding of the dynamics of the *Dunamis* can serve to answer these queries concerning the phenomenon of associations. As Weiss points out:

Whether they wish it or not, people share a portion of the *dunamis* and are thereby inescapably involved with one another. They can make use of it in different degrees and on different occasions, depending on the depth to which they penetrate and the degree to which they are accepting of what they reach. The deeper they reach into it, the richer the intimacy they sense; the more accepting they are of what they grasp of it, the closer they feel they are with others. An intimacy, not accompanied by the acceptance, has the quality of a blood-tie; an acceptance, not accompanied by the intimacy, yields nameless fears. The first is defied by antagonisms between those who are supposed to share the tie, and by bonds keeping them joined to others; the second is countered by reason and stable habits.³¹

Association: A Definition

When a group of people are able to identify their common ground in the *dunamis*, they are capable of forming associations. Weiss elaborates on this ability:

In the absence of the *dunamis*, nothing would natively belong together with anything else. By accepting the *dunamis* at a depth not reachable by other beings, humans become aware of themselves as belonging together and, so

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

far, to be so associated that they contrast with what is not human. When a number of them accept the objectively located and grounded contrast they separates them and the rest of the world, they form an association. Taking themselves to be able to express and make use of the common spirit better than others can, some among them may not only take the adoption of the contrast as their task, but will seek to alert others to the fact that they are associated. Those who do this are leaders.³²

Union: A Definition

When collaborations and associations are combined, unions may be formed. Weiss states what makes this possible:

Collaborations and associations are necessarily different. But they are not incompatible. Indeed, because they are not, they can be combined. When this is done by a number, a union may be formed. There, people are both intimately involved with one another and are able to work together, thereby producing an essential constituent of a commune, community, society, or state.³³

However, humans do not, and should not be expected to collaborate and associate to the same degree at all times. This produces a type of balancing act, or see-saw effect, as acknowledge by Weiss:

Because people are always collaborative and associative they are always together. Because the collaborations and association are produced by their making use of different determinants of their activities, the ways they are together will vary from time to time, fluctuating from the extreme where they are splendidly collaborative but with little common spirit, to the extreme where they have a strong sense of belonging together but do little to supplement one another's actions. In between these extremes, the two are more or less balanced. Nothing, so far, assures the achievement or continuance of this result. Only if people together are effectively conditioned can one count on them to act associately and collaboratively in steady ways. So far as

³² *Ibid.*, p. 28.

³³ *Ibid.*

conditions are joined to them as together, they form a union.³⁴

CONCLUSION

The *Dunamis* provides the common ground for individuals to form collaborations and associations. Since collaborations and associations are always co-existent, albeit to a greater or lesser degree by one of the components, they, together, always form a union.

Maryland, USA

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

PART III

CULTURAL FORMS OF UNITY AND DIVERSITY

CHAPTER XI

DIVERSITY IN UNITY, OR THE CONTEMPORARY MUTUAL INTRODUCTION OF CULTURES: SOME REMARKS FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF COMPLEMENTARITY

JOZEF PAUER

INTRODUCTORY REMARK

Looking at the difficulties besetting the life of contemporary society, whether the well-established democratic societies in the west, whether the democracies *in statu nascendi* in the middle and eastern parts of Europe, the insufficient capability to cope with the problems due to the individualist conception of morals, justice, market or other economic relations, and so on becomes increasingly apparent.

These problems of social reality in mass relations would require a consequent analysis I am not able to perform. A space of possibilities, however, is opening here, a place for the social to revive and gain fresh strength. The social reopens here as a ground for dialogue where possibilities are being founded to create laws and other written norms and rules of life in society, now that the hitherto more or less functioning laws, rules and norms are breaking down, not being able to keep pace or stimulate the positive activities of individuals or entire human communities.

The main difficulty is perhaps that we do not have any clearly defined structure of values at our disposal, which would be worthy of definite acceptance or rejection. Our situation is a state of expectation on one side and pluralism on the other side. It might be asked whether this state was more or less stable, or rather an evanescent transitory phenomenon lasting only until we shall begin to create an authentic system of values for our time. All those who have been writing about their conditions during past centuries did write about their time in a deprecatory manner; they did consider their own times as a mere transitory state of affairs, destined to be replaced by the big moment of change. This is in any given historical coordinate, perhaps unavoidable. In the period of a few years men evidently will for various reasons speak about diverse ephemeral facts.

Present democratic culture transfers the accent from truth to the good. But the question of the nature of the "good" perpetually returns upon our heads. In spite of the fact that, desperately seeking an answer

to this question, we more and more often tend towards deep European tradition and claim that the good lies in the harmonious life.

But how is the demand for harmony to be conceived?

ON HARMONY

Does harmony mean merely the end of strife? If so, would such abolition not necessarily prevent the process of life from continuing? Is harmony not, rather, preservation of strife (strife not being a genuine contradiction), preservation of diversity, variety in unity, unity of a mutual 'shell-game' variety? Certainly it is a mystery, impenetrable for us, which we can accept or reject.

The mythological *harmony* was a natural daughter of Aphrodite ("love") and Ares ("war", "struggle," "strife"). In Homer's epics harmony represents a bolt connecting two beams of a ship. Pythagoras meant by harmony an abstract unity of the opposites representing a determining cosmological principle. The principle had its re-concreted demonstration in the reality.

If the harmony is the unity of oppositions, and in the same time the world is a concretisation of diverse levels of the intelligible opposites, then on each level there originates a synthesizing, harmonizing result which forms a key to the Pythagorean cosmos. In the Pythagorean cosmos the horizontal forms a dichotomous oppositional relation on one phenomenal level. From a systematic reevaluation of that relation originates the supreme quality of harmony. The vertical reveals the parallelism of the strata, the interpretation of the world based upon the mutual correspondences of the individual levels of meaning. (Now, think about or compare with Heidegger's "Fourfold" [Geviert], or the image of the cross inscribed in the circle—hieroglyph of the city, and a number of other meanings it symbolizes).

ON MUTUAL CONTAMINATION OF CULTURES (OR HIDDEN HARMONY)

Culture is not once forever a finished, completed thing. It is not a static entity. It is not a neutral and unitary whole. Cultures are in the process of constant change wrought by external cultural, social, and economic forces. Culture consists of different groups with different interests. It is important to recognize and accept the distinctive "otherness" of other cultures but it is also important to focus on the transformation and interlinkage of cultures.

Cultural plurality is today not only a problem between nations, ethnic groups and regions; it is also, and above all, the problem inside the societies. The massive immigration stream of the non-European

ethnic groups or nations into the European states today pose the problem of cultural pluralism, putting cross-cultural contamination into a new position.

In the present times the process of cultural contamination is in full stream, and perhaps the only generalizing observations we can make is that the cultures of the little societies prefer to enrich their basal tradition with the elements from the most distant past of their clan (“reaching the roots”), while the megacultures are rather characterized by a spatial divergence the common denominator of which is unfathomable.

The only surety is that the whole process of the “scrambling” is in both—little and megacultures—irreversible. Any building up of a “Chinese wall” doesn’t lead to a preservation of an inherited tradition but to a degeneration and gradual extinction. Although the cultural phenomena seemingly arise as a manifestation of certain genetic specificity (identity) of a respective society, the only surviving appearances of culture are the ones adopted by other cultures. (That means they contain the adaptable and attractive values.)

Each autonomy of a traded appearance of culture is only seemingly homogenous. Ernst Gombrich introduced one of his lectures with the words: “Ladies and Gentlemen, the program in your hands is printed in type springing from Phoenicians and modified by Greeks, Romans, and Carolingian scribes; the writing of the figures springs from an ancient India and Arabia. The paper it is written on is the Chinese invention which penetrated into the West in the 8th century when Arabs learned to work out the paper from the Chinese prisoners....”

So, the problem of cultural hybridization is hardly new, “new” at most in the universality of its dimensions, and the speed of spatial dissemination of the individual crossbreed elements in our global world of mass media and new ways of communication. The new forms of cultural contamination inspire besides the other the fear of “lost identity” of smaller but also larger cultural wholes. Culture as a living organism is facing the task similar to the one of a cell: it has to provide the inner integrity of the self-regulating system, and at the same time to preserve a positive communication with its environment—it must fulfill the requirements of the inner integrity and the inevitable metabolism of information, and energy too. On this most elemental level of life the two tasks, contradictory and at the same time complementary, are enabled by so called half-permeability of the cell-cover. On the level of culture we hardly can find similar arrangement or mechanism. The cultural “cross-fertilization” can give rise to a higher synthetical quality or absorption of one culture through another or even to positive complementary symbiosis of the participating sides. The only possibility which can lead

to a real extinction of culture is the building up of the Chinese wall which shall provide an inner integrity.

However, it provides above all the loss of the metabolism of energy and information leading to the extinction of the cultural organism. Precisely only the explosiveness of the cultural contamination process in the 20th century stands in our way to realize that just this process represents the most constant evolutionary sign (and then, it is a direct determinant of the positive processes of life). And this process transforms not only the qualities of artistic media and their abilities to give messages; it also equally strongly modifies the life of society.

I close this remark with the metaphor of a "mirror." Looking at the mirror is the above-mentioned half-permeable cell-cover through which the culture preserves its own integrity and at the same time provides the preconditions for the metabolism of information and energy. (Perhaps if the Czechs could look at Slovaks in the same way that they, the Czechs, look at their own mirror, then Czecho-Slovakia would be preserved in an appropriate and intact shape. But, perhaps, Slovaks acted too transparently and therefore they remained invisible for Czechs as their own reflection. And, perhaps, someone who is a "third" held the mirror and made the reflections crooked. Perhaps....)

ON COMPLEMENTARITY (OR THE HARMONY REVISITED)

Only in intersubjective reciprocal recognition and acceptance can be found the basis for common life of the cultures.

Cultural identity can only be meaningful for today's people in the sense of a living tradition, as a transition of the desirable, as a presencing of the past. But as a model for future and cultivation of identity it is only an idol; it works ideologically and instinctively. This is visible in the cases of all nationalistic efforts which try to bring nations and ethnic groups *against* each other under the flag of identity.

When in a society only one cultural identity is decisive, then there is the recognition and acceptance of all others, and, finally, of all transcendent dimensions of individual life threatened by society as a closed system. But, as is readily provable, the closed systems are not (fully) true.

Pascual Jordan described the principle of complementarity as follows: "The characteristics of light connected with its wave character on the one side, and corpuscular one on the other side complement each other in such a way that they cannot show up in one and the same experiment, in one and the same moment, and so to come to an actual direct contradiction. Under the influence of this remarkable mechanism of complementing each other the nature connects in one and the same physical object the attributes and laws which oppose each other in such a

way that they never can exist directly and immediately in the same moment.”

The idea of complementarity is a fully present axial component of the European spiritual tradition, and the evolution of the very European thought can be raised also as an oscillation between the poles of the “principalistic” concepts eliminating each other, and the concepts fully representing a vivid picture of the principle of complementarity. Then, the specific sign of European thought was not an absence of complementarity and presence of only Aristotelian logic but rather the characteristic interconnection of the thought conceptions with the structures of power which can be called the ideologization of thought and which have just wrought oppression on one side, and adoration on the other side; legislative prohibitions, and making things a fetish; cut-and-dried uplifting, and excommunications of the concepts of ideas with undesirable attributes; indoctrination, and heresy.

Pythagoras, the contemporary of Buddha, stands in the beginning of the history of European thought due to the formulation of issues, methods and concepts the elaboration of which have become the contents of the whole European legacy of thought.

World before Pythagoras was above all nature (*physis*). Pythagoras postulated an idea of ordered nature and of this world incarnating the intelligible laws to which he gave the name “cosmos.” He created a rational matrix catching the attributes of world—cosmos and in the same time the attributes of thought. This postulate of intelligibility is until now the foundation for any cognitive activity. The basis for the Pythagorean cognitive matrix is a division of world into the strata situated in the describable relations of analogy, homology, equivalence, and correspondence. The division is made upon the basis of sensuously and rationally perceivable qualities of the world.

Then, the world-cosmos is a superior synthetic category—a sum product or mutual projection—connecting these qualitatively differentiated stratal attributes of reality into the supreme whole. The basis for creation of a given stratum is not only its perceivable quality but, above all, its ability to create the polarly opposite couples through the fusion of which the supreme synthetic quality originates—harmony. The harmony cannot be reduced to the sum of its determinants, because it is situated in the hierarchically higher level. Probably the simplest illustration of the Pythagorean cosmos represents the mutual equivalence of the synthetic qualities (number—music—harmony—soul, etc.), from which each one represents a synthesis of opposites of the given stratum and at the same time is in the relation of homology to the next synthetic value, while the very cosmos is a superior synthetic category integrating the individual strata of opposites and harmonies.

Then, the notion of cosmos is the category irreducible to its strata or the sum of them. Therefore it can be said that just this starting point of European reflection incarnates the idea of complementarity. It is its embodiment. If we realize that precisely the Pythagorean idea of cosmos penetrated into Plato's cosmology (*Timaeus*), and early Christianity substituted the notion of God for the notion of cosmos, then we can say that the principle of complementarity represented the axial element of European philosophical, cosmological, and theological tradition.

(There are various thought concepts where the principle of complementarity is present, e.g., in the reflection of time: the dialectics of endlessly flowing time, i.e., eternity as an existential medium of divinities, and arithmetizeable time as the medium of mortals, the irreversible, and cyclical (returning) time of the calendar; dialectics of time as undifferentiated totality, and time incarnating an idea of order; dialectics of a continuum of time, and an additive adjoining of periods; dialectics of an objectively flowing time, and subjectively experienced time. Or the example of the Greek concept of *episteme* where *aisthesis* and *noesis* complement each other, as well as in our concept of human knowledge where the empirical and rational complement each other. And so on.

The very evolution of man (as species) is the implementation of an ideal represented by the principle of complementarity. The history of humankind can be regarded as the history of wars. But, likewise, it can also be regarded as a growth of the principle of complementarity, mutual coexistence and symbiotic synthesis of the individual social groups.

The history of spiritual concepts of Europe is accompanied by collisions (accidents) the diagram of which has an analogous course: after an initial reciprocal confrontation which acquires a different degree of a mutual aggressivity follows creation of the synthetic configurations formatted by the common basal elements, refined contradictions, and levelled off variances.

As in the disagreement between the adherents of Plato and the adherents of Aristotle, the controversy of the nominalists and the realists in the Middle Ages soon led to the creation of a synthetic formation over-arching reciprocal controversy by invoking, instead, the principle of complementarity. The collision of ancient tradition with beginning Christian culture represented a far bigger issue. This collision led to a synthesis which was built upon the Neoplatonic-Christian basis restraining the elements of Aristotelianism on one side, and the elements of gnosis on the other side. Similarly a big collision arose in the late Middle Ages,—the encounter (clash) of the Scholastic tradition of the Middle Ages with the beginning Italian humanism. The clash led to a concept of synthesis implemented by thinkers such as Nicolaus of Cusa,

Marsilio Ficino, Picco della Mirandola, and Leonardo da Vinci. The collision of Platonic and Aristotelian traditions at the end of the “Cinquecento” led to the formation of a foundation for the modern sciences,—which postulated in accord with Plato the rationalistic basis for the model conceptions, and the experimental verification of ideas based upon Aristotelian empiricism.

Similarly also the development of theological thought brought the synthetic concepts of Thomas Aquinas, St. Bonaventure, and the Council of Trent,—bridging the gap between an ecclesiastic tradition and a succeeding humanism; Pierre Teilhard de Chardin’s teaching integrated previously contraposed attributes of world as matter and consciousness; a similar pattern can be found in contemporary ecumenism. These all are illustrations of the huge potency of the idea of complementarity, which concentrates a positive energy of antithetical points of departure and forms synthetic images ‘over-bridging’ on a higher level their own determinants without destroying them.

In the present time there is powerful pressure on the part of the adherents of liberalism and the designers of the so-called open society to let society be in fully limitless state, ruled only by the so-called free market. By the gross and abysmal division between liberal democracy and social or regulated democracy, neglect of the principle of complementarity can be clearly observed. Contrary notions of liberalism and socialism (or individualism and collectivism) are merely various forms of the democratic social ideal, which only apparently contradict each other. After all, both do correspond to natural components (personalisation and totalization) of the development of the human person. Once the pendulum of evolution concentrates upon the individual, and the next time on the social group. Nonetheless, there is no principal contradiction involved, but only a tension, a tender lack of harmony, a necessary condition for dynamic evolution—change and perpetual communication with the neighbors.

According to Claude Levi-Strauss, the cultures live in spaces defined by permeable limits enabling, in continuous dialogue, a formulation of their own identity which stands in complementary binding relationship with the identity of their neighbors’ cultures. And these binding relations have not only a spatial obligation but also the temporal one. Originality is a result of the dialogue, not its denial.

Complementarity is the basal principle for creation of human identity, and, at the same time, for the creation of a human mutuality of neighborly dwelling persons, groups, nations, societies in the world, the cosmos.

ON UNITY, OR RETURNING TO HARMONY

Nationalism, racism, xenophobia, various kinds of fundamentalism are common and returning factors of history. Only the commonly shared orientation towards the values transcending the “closed system,” the metaphysical dimension of recognition and acceptance of the others and the Other, can induce the starting point for getting away from these “companions” of a general crisis of humankind.

The preconditions for it lie in a relation of dynamic openness towards others. If it be so, then there can take place a possibility of a reciprocal encounter growing into the sharing and participative mutuality of ‘ek-static’ dwelling in the world where persons (groups, nations, cultures...) accomplish each other (the play of *Kenosis* and *Pleroma*). If there is the mutuality, then there is a place (space and time) for diversity in unity.

We experience manifold diversity in ourselves, in nature, and in the universe. But at the same time one experiences the fact that the diversified manifoldness forms a certain whole, that there is cosmos, i.e., diversity ‘ordered’ in some kind of order. We still search for the unity: the unity in ourselves,...the unity in being. In one’s thought he/she disintegrates the unity. But in a desire for harmony one still pertinaciously returns to the unity. This “conscious” unity is the goal of the movement of human knowledge (not only cognition).

The manifoldness is diversified into the various strata being in the dynamic relations of analogy, homology, equivalence and correspondence. The relation of the diversity and unity is not of a kind of sum but it is a supreme whole where the diversities are connected into the superior synthetic category. It is a complex dialectical relation. Then, the manifold diversity of the world is redeemed by the ontological unity, the unity of being. The manifold diversity of knowledge is redeemed by the encompassing unity of awareness, consciousness and wisdom. In this way the unity saves humankind from misunderstanding. The manifold diversity of heart, the inner discomposure and desire, are redeemed by the unity of moral order, inner calmness and outer peace.

The unity is the “nodal point” which makes the world habitable. Were this “bond” to be broken, the world would become a shapeless, uninhabitable dump. The unity is not only a given fact, a passive state of man,—it is also a *task*. And a *mission*.

And the very ultimate principle of all the phenomena of unity, the dynamic basis of the unceasing search and desire for unity, the basis for all those shocked in this world by the torn down bridges and ruins of temples, the basis for building them up anew, the foundations for new world and human community, the energy preventing the troubling of unity and enabling the principle of complementarity to take place,—this

creative power is *love*. Does it seem to be conservative, stale, bigoted...?
Oh, no. It only is eternally *true*. And then, always new, radically new.

*Institute of Philosophy
the Slovak Academy of Sciences
Bratislava, Slovakia*

CHAPTER XII

DIVERSITY AS A PROBLEM OF PRACTICAL REASON WITH SOME REFERENCES TO THE AFRICAN EXPERIENCE

RAPHAEL J. NJOROGE

The issue of diversity understood broadly firstly relates the individual such as Socrates to his society; secondly it relates the groups, e.g., ethnic communities, to the nation as a political entity; and thirdly it relates particular nations to the wider global community. As far as the individual is concerned his identity which is on the side of diversity may be swallowed by his society in such a manner that he is not permitted to develop his potentialities and possibly benefit that same society; with regard to ethnic communities in a nation such communities may be hindered by various national constraints to develop their collective identities and creative energies which might benefit the entire nation. Finally as far as individual nations are concerned, the behaviour of the international community may hinder the full development of such nations through the imposition of totalitarianism culminating in the emasculation of their inventive genius.

Hence, this paper will address itself to the issue of diversity as it relates to the levels of the individual, ethnic communities and nations and how common grounds can be sought to facilitate co-existence of each of these three levels with the rest of humanity. In this connection we will, in more specific terms, first, make a statement of the problem of diversity in unity; second, identify a few ways in which we can have diversity in unity with emphasis on quest for common grounds and appreciation of each other's points of view; and finally we will briefly consider the African situation as an example of one of the ways in which the issue of diversity and unity has been handled and mishandled.

THE PROBLEM OF DIVERSITY IN UNITY

The basic question is how it is possible to co-exist without antagonism when from "our" point of view we see we have the "truth" in the cognitive and axiological, and even religious sense, and at the same time we are convinced that others don't have that truth? Related to this basic question is the issue of whether accepting to co-exist with the other who seems to be in error waters down or compromises "our truth." A further connected issue is whether in the name of "our truth" we have to make

martyrs of others who are opposed to us, e.g., Socrates, Christians under Roman emperors, and many who have died in the interests of civil liberties, before we appreciate and perhaps tolerate their position.

This problem rears its ugly head quite prominently in national and international social contexts. Nationally, for instance in Kenya, we have different ethnic groups each with its "truth." There is the question of how they can be organized so that they live in harmony. Education has been used in a measure to try to make Kenyans appreciate the richness of the cultures of these ethnic groups but this educational effort, though commendable, has not grappled with the basic issue of equity, particularly in the distribution of the national cake. It has become apparent in Kenya that there would be obvious superficiality in our conception of national co-existence if the economic factor is not given its due emphasis. Of course there are other deeply embedded interests and attitudes, e.g., those pertaining to religious differences and varieties of religious fundamentalism which may seek security in the putative unchallengeability of their moral and religious visions. While issues relating to religious fundamentalism do not, in my view, challenge social harmony in any serious way today in Kenya, the spectre of what has been called "regionalism" is a threatening phenomenon. The word "regionalism" is an abstract noun from the word "region". "Regionalism" seeks to divide Kenya into regions based on ethnic affinities. This move has been condemned because the architects of "Regionalism" (in Swahili it is called Majimboism; the word "*jimbo*" means "region" and "*majimbo*" means "regions") are seen to be aiming at ethnic cleansing; in such ethnic cleansing members of a tribe that are not seen to be "indigenous" to the region are expelled from such a region and sometimes killed. Even though "Regionalism" has not yet been made constitutional, about one thousand people have already died in this ethnic cleansing. This cleansing has been condemned in the strongest possible terms by Kenyan bodies such as the Law Society of Kenya, the Opposition Political Parties, various Human Rights groups in the world and the Clergy. The Catholic Bishops of Kenya wrote a Circular that was read in all the churches in Kenya and which was given great publicity in the press. The Pope himself praised the Bishops for their courage in calling for constitutional change in Kenya to re-affirm the values of human rights and to thwart the direction towards unhealthy divisions among Kenyans. These considerations point to the fact that the problem of diversity in unity is real in Kenya and calls for urgent solution to prevent a civil war.

Internationally the issue of diversity in unity may be considered in a manner analogous to the differences in the religious, legal, political moral and economic orders of human life. There is the burning question of the possibility of peaceful co-existence among nations when there is

patent lack of equity in the distribution of the goods of earth, when the powerful nations plunder, exploit and economically colonize the weak ones. These observations point to the Pope's position that there cannot be peace without justice. Though the Pope as head of the Catholic Church is ideologically miles apart from Karl Marx we can appreciate the latter's identification of the economic factor as a vital variable in determining conflicts among groups.

The thrust of these considerations points to the conflicts and antagonisms in the struggle for survival among the disadvantaged and the privileged. The grouping of people with similar cultures as suggested by Samuel P. Huntington may not be the solution to the global problem of co-existence unless there are certain interventions to check the excesses arising from such grouping. Underlying such groupings there may be possibilities such that certain groupings may enjoy greater economic and even political power over others and hence accentuate divisions among nations along antagonistic lines. If one group emerges as the strongest politically and economically, it may seek to consolidate and perpetuate its position for greater enjoyment of global power and wealth. So what may appear to be an innocent merging of nations within close cultural affinities may culminate in the formulation of a new combative ideology dividing the ideologically strong group, which then refers to itself as the "we", and the rest who become "they", and we would be back to the terrain of conflicts based on quest for political and economic hegemony and supremacy.

However deeply we may abhor the phenomenon of grouping, there is discernible movement towards groupings in the national and international levels. Internationally we see various economic blocks arising, e.g., the European common market. The urge to form groups appears to be a functional characteristic of man as he struggles to survive. Man would not perhaps care about belonging to a group if he could get what he wants without being entangled in a group. It appears that quest for belongingness in a group—ethnic, religious, political, economic etc.—is functionally seen as an enabling environment for achieving what an individual or nation cannot achieve in isolation from others. Certain groups are formed nationally and internationally to have easier access to world resources and even to monopolise them so that they may maximize their enjoyment of their resources. This group behaviour pertains to the social psychology of group formations.

The problem is how to allow the formation of such groups and at the same time find ways of inhibiting the militant characteristics that may emerge in the course of time against those who don't belong to the mighty groups. While seeking the principles of harmonious co-existence among groups, there is need to give allegiance to the realism which grapples with the fact that humans tend to co-exist as long as there is

nothing which is as object of competition among them, i.e.,—as long as there are no conflicting desires and interests. The problem we confront pertains to how we can deal with conflicting interests which are not the sort of things that we can, by a simple fiat, obliterate from consciousness. The problem is how to have diversity without disunity, without severe conflicts and wars.

TOWARDS ATTAINMENT OF DIVERSITY IN UNITY

The attainment of diversity in unity is an ethical or moral task. It involves a commitment to the duality of diversity on the one hand and unity on the other in such a manner that the duality in question exhibits harmonious relationship as far as it is humanly possible. Such a commitment is not a mere given in human consciousness; it is a task to be achieved. And, from a philosophical standpoint it is not necessarily seen as an ultimate moral presupposition. Indeed moral presuppositions do not have the necessity that we attribute to true statements of logic and mathematics. If the commitment we refer to were based on what is perceived as “necessary” in the sense of logic and mathematics, then such a commitment would be indubitable and the likelihood is that there could not have been conflicts between Christianity and the Roman Empire during Emperor Nero’s rule, the religious wars between the Cross and the Crescent in the Middle Ages, the persecution of “heretics” by the Inquisition, the religious wars that sent some unorthodox believers to the “New World”, the internal struggle leading to the French revolution, the first and second wars, the conflicts between Africans and imperialistic rulers and the Cold War that is still fresh in our memories.

These conflicts in history are from a moral perspective deplorable but, paradoxically, they can be a basis for quest for harmonious future among different peoples. These painful historical experiences turn out to be the pillars of justification for the need for mankind to commit itself to at least the acceptance of diversity in unity. This is not absolute justification; it is based on a naturalistic theory of ethics which, given the plastic nature of the human person who in Sartrean language is condemned to be free, may not prevent man’s consciousness from repeating what may be perceived from a certain moral perspective as errors of the past. Nevertheless, despite the theoretical shortcomings of naturalistic ethics, we cannot overlook the empirically evident experience of many people who consider as morally reprehensible certain combative activities of human beings who violently try to deny the others the right to be different. And if a person’s moral conscience does not revolt at this phenomenon of man’s inhumanity to man, the events in Nazi Germany, the concentration camps in the Soviet Union, and the current, glaring reality of Rwanda in Africa, can enhance the realization of the need to

accept diversity in unity and avoid inculcating monolithic modes of thinking, speaking and acting.

So far, through an argument that is based on naturalistic theory of ethics we have arrived at a common ground on the basis of which we can permit the existence of diversity. There is need of seeking further common grounds on the basis of which we can base the legitimacy of diversity in unity, for not everybody would be disposed to promote diversity on account of fear of the sort of evils that we have mentioned above. An a priori rejection of the existence of common grounds that can be a basis for accepting diversity in unity would be irrational. Such a rejection would be, *inter alia*, an expression of social theories that have tended to consider human cultures in the abstract in such a manner that artificial cultural exclusiveness and cross-cultural incommunicability are superimposed upon social reality. In this approach to social study, communication is limited within social systems that are totally closed to others, impenetrable atoms of social reality that exist in a manner that is analogous to the existence of the unchangeable atoms of Democritus' cosmology.

However, fortunately, this a priorism has not been borne out by experience. Cross-cultural, comparative studies in the realms of religion, philosophy, politics, economics, languages, logic, physical science etc. have shown the capacity of persons in different cultural backgrounds to at least understand the positions of others, let alone to commit themselves to what was originally seen to be incapable of their intellectual assent and even moral allegiance.

In metaphysics, for instance, creationists have been able to at least understand immanentists and vice versa, and there has been noted mutual enrichment among these different conceptions of the Absolute. In morality, the precepts of the Decalogue have wide cross-cultural acceptance despite the differences in the derivatives of these general prescriptions. Derivatives may be used by certain social theorists to advance the thesis of cultural "closedness" but the reasons for supporting such a thesis would be superficial. Moral derivatives are based on more general principles which are of greater significance and point to the existence of certain common moral perceptions among humans. Derivatives in themselves do not nullify the existence of the principles. They point to the principle but can often be based on erroneous conceptions of man. For example, certain people mentioned by Frankena in his *Ethics* were found to have a custom of killing their parents before they were too old, and this appeared to be inconsistent with the moral principle of "Love and Honor of Parents", but on further investigation, it was found the "murderers" believed that it was their duty to kill their parents before they were too old to be able to enjoy the life beyond the grave, i.e., the after-life.

The love of their parents compelled them, on the basis of this religious metaphysical belief, to terminate the lives of their parents so that they might have a vigorous, happy life, in the world to come. Hence we note that a superficial study of persons in such a culture might tend to portray them as parents' haters. Incapacity or unwillingness to understand them might suggest the erroneous idea of the impossibility of communicating with them. Yet there is a common ground, that of respect and honor of parents, that can be the starting point of dialogue, leading to possible change of moral derivatives. It is well known in moral philosophy that though the "ought" need not depend on the "is," there is a sense in which the proper understanding of the "is" (reality) can create the moral feelings that change the "ought" (the moral imperative). In other words our understanding of fact (is) can change our moral predilection (ought), particularly, in this case, in the area of moral derivatives.

Within the sphere of religion we find the common failure to seek the principles that can bring people together even if, *prima facie*, their beliefs may appear to be radically opposed. We have the classic case of Socrates and men of his ilk who were convinced that the gods of the Greeks were non-existent. Instead of the Greeks seeking the area of common ground between them and Socrates, they saw a radical difference between them and the philosopher. They did not seek a preparation for further argumentation, e.g., the common belief between Socrates and the Greeks to the effect that there was a power above man, and then proceed to discuss this "power" whether it was conceived in material, polytheistic, monotheistic or metaphysical language. The Greeks are not alone in failing to seek points of convergence that would pave the way to religious dialogue. In certain cultures today a person's claim that he is an atheist may expose him to harsh censure and even death. In such cultures there is no attempt to find common ground in rationality. A person may, for instance, reject a certain definition of God, as Socrates did, and yet have a more sophisticated one. Or he may simply not have an alternative definition acceptable to him but be disposed to accept any one definition that may appear rational to him. The thrust of this argument is that the persons we call atheists are atheists relative to certain theistic concepts and that it may not be preposterous to claim that there are no absolute atheists. In fact it would appear that a person who would claim to be an absolute atheist would be irrational for he would deny a priori the possibility of giving intellectual assent to any conceivable definition of "God" before the definition is presented to him!

Now, if we were to argue that religion aims at truth it is not impossible to establish objective criteria for accepting a religious position as true or at least as rational even if it cannot be proved conclusively. Even what we call Faith is based on a certain "rationality"

in the sense that we must see our act of Faith as a “reasonable” act, although we may be unable to “prove” the doctrine of our faith in the mathematical or scientific sense of “proof”. Such Faith can be seen as a “reasonable” guide to life, a guide that calls for commitment. In a nutshell, whether we accept, for instance, the creationist or immanentist conceptions of God we must seek the common ground in the belief in BEING that is superior to man, and make this ground the basis of dialogue.

Perhaps because of our belief in the rationality of each one of us we may be in a position to listen to others and in the process learn something from them for mutual enrichment. However strange a belief may appear it may be worth stretching our imagination and seeing to what extent we can find an acceptable explicit or implicit element in it. The common ground here is the belief in the rationality and intellectual honesty of others. We may, at times, be compelled by the intellectual demands for understanding to demythologize the language of religion to make it fit into our conceptual schemes, e.g., in Hegel’s philosophy and in the work of certain Christian theologians and Christian analytic philosophers, although such an enterprise of demythologization may not be supported by the more “fundamentalist” or “conservative” believers. This same argument can be extended to the problem of diversity in philosophy itself, a diversity which can be a basis for cultural differences. Can the metaphysician and the empiricist be brought together? Are they totally opposed? Can they have a common ground? Is not their belief in human rationality their common ground? Can the metaphysician bring the logical positivist to accept that the concept of necessity is not limited to statements of logic and mathematics and that there is a sense in which the concept of necessity is applicable to metaphysical assertions such as “God necessarily exists” without these assertions being tautologous? Is it not possible to show that the statement “X exists” entails, metaphysically, an absolute, i.e., the necessary being as an absolute foundation for “X” and all other “Xs” of our experience in the spirit of the Thomistic notion of participation? Of course we are aware that the arguments against the ontological argument, which we revisit here briefly, have been well documented since Kant but this has not destroyed the belief of many philosophers in the validity of the ontological argument. Dialogue in this area is vital as the African philosopher, Kwasi Wiredu, points out in *Person and Community: Ghanaian Philosophical Studies*, where he supports dialogue among cultures:

Now suppose, only for the purposes of argument, that unbeknown to a certain culture, God does not exist and that it has been shown in another culture that this can be conclu-

sively proved. Then, for the first culture willfully to ignore the proof in the name of cultural self-identity would demonstrate nothing more glorious than a collective pigheadedness. It is obvious that this can be generalized for all our beliefs as to what is or is not the case. Therefore it can be asserted that religion and philosophy (as also other domains of thought in which truth is sought, such as science) are areas of human experience in which the effects of cultural differences could conceivably be eliminated through the peaceful give—and—take of dialogue among cultures. It is conceivable, consequently, that the time might come when only humanly contingent features will individuate cultures. Should there be any qualms on this point, they can be blamed on the fallacies of relativism.

One of the fallacies of relativism, which Wiredu does not mention, pertains to the assumption regarding the impossibility of grasping the conceptual systems of languages of certain cultures that may be different from ours. Indeed when we turn to language systems, as Benjamin Wolf notes, we may find that what we call nouns in the English language referring to static entities such as “houses” and “trees” may be conceived dynamically in the conceptual schemes of languages in other cultures. A “house” may be conceived in terms of “it is housing”, but the fact that translatability of the languages in question into English is possible nullifies the idea of the impossibility of certain cross-cultural communication. In anthropology, methods of observing participants, when coupled with language studies, have revealed the untenability of cultural, conceptual exclusiveness. Understanding the culture of others, whether conceived in terms of conceptually different language, religion, etc. depends, in a measure, on the use of appropriate methods of investigation and/or sound pedagogy.

With regard to pedagogical issues it is a well-known fact among the students of sentential calculus in formal logic that the “or” of a disjunction is understood in the inclusive sense but in many of our different languages it is used in the exclusive sense. Consequently, there is nothing strange in formal logic if after stating that “we will either take tea or coffee” we actually take both! Yet in many languages this kind of behaviour might appear strange, for the general expectation is that we would take only one of these stimulants! Teaching makes this general expectation null and void after we attain a common understanding of the “inclusive” and “exclusive” uses of “or”.

When we turn to the political order beginning with the national life, the quest for the common factors that unite us on this national level is vital for societal cohesion which should reflect an acceptable balance

between diversity and unity. It may appear paradoxical to assert that promotion of diversity within a nation can have the effect of enhancing unity in that nation. Proper reflection on this matter dissolves the paradox. The social and psychological fact that has been noted historically is that within each nation, promotion of the cultures of different ethnic groups, has tended to make these groups develop a sense of belonging and pride in being members of a nation that recognizes their identities. Their enjoyment of this recognition makes them feel wanted, supported, valued and esteemed, and because of this positive view of them they feel with greater intensity that they want to belong to the nation that accepts them in the full sense of acceptance,—which is accepting their unique distinctiveness. Indeed when a nation encourages the existence of the cultures of ethnic groups it acts in a manner that is analogous to the way a family encourages the development of the identity of a child who, because of this encouragement, feels all the more attached to that family that accepts him. The encouragement of the right kind of diversity, then, has the effect of unleashing the energies of various groups in a nation for the welfare of the whole. This position is consonant with Hu Jun’s paper¹ on diversity in which he discussed the contribution of diversity to creativity.

Those who have formulated Kenya’s policy have noted the contribution of diversity to creative development, and this is why one of Kenya’s educational policies states: “Education must promote Kenya’s rich and varied cultures.” Educationists have been challenged to find the ways and means of promoting these cultures of the country for the purpose of cementing Kenya’s unity: diversification of Kenya’s political and economic life must be based on the different kinds of genius inherent in various cultural groups in the country, and this program shall strengthen unity.

As far as the economic facet of life is concerned, the importance of diversity has to be borne in mind by national governments. The application of the principle of equity in the distribution of opportunities among different ethnic groups is vital. The application of the principle of distributive justice, however, is not enough for proper recognition of diversity. There is need, on the contrary, for governments to create enabling environments for the exercise of the creative energies of different ethnic groups for the enrichment and diversification of the economy.

In this connection we should especially note the effectiveness of the application of the principle of subsidiarity. This principle ensures that the responsibility for development within a nation is put at the levels appropriate for different types of responsibility; briefly, the principle

¹ Hu Jun, “Diversity,” chap. 4 in this volume.

insists that higher bodies should not do for the lower bodies what the latter can do for themselves. Communism flouts the principle of subsidiarity for it tries to do for individuals and groups what they can do for themselves and in the process the creative energies of individuals and groups tend not to be utilized for development. The principle of subsidiarity limits the activity of the higher authority, e.g., the government, to the roles that cannot be adequately catered on the lower levels of national life, e.g., national defence. In this way, balanced recognition of diversity is attained on the national level.

When we turn to the international level we note that there are certain common grounds that are agreed upon to make it possible for nations to exist in a situation of diversity while maintaining a certain degree of peaceful co-existence. One of these common grounds is the general recognition of the sovereignty of states as expressed in the Charter of the United Nations which, in addition, asserts the right of self-determination of these states. But in practice there have been cases when sovereignties of states have been misused by national leaders culminating in U.N. intervention. Diversity on this international level is, as it were, controlled by higher principles, such as the value of the respect for life in different nations, and this is why the U.N. may be said to have a certain degree of moral responsibility to bring about the right kind of diversity among national groups, e.g., in Somalia, Eastern Europe and Rwanda. It is worth noting that unilateral interventions by individual nations in the affairs of other nations without the involvement of the world community through the United Nations may lead to international conflicts. This appears to have been taken into consideration by U.S. in her efforts to intervene in Haiti. Whatever be the way we understand these social phenomena, in empirical terms at least one thing is clear, namely, that moral reasoning does not absolutise any form of diversity *a priori*. We are to enjoy diversity only to the extent that we do not flout principles that govern fair diversity, e.g., justice, respect for life and liberties of human beings as expressed in constitutions and other legal provisions. Where governments fail to reflect, through proper governance, their right to diversity they make themselves liable to military interventions or sanctions coupled with unfavorable global public opinion which may have deleterious economic and other effects.

With regard to the international economic order the demands of diversity call for diversification of the global economy in accordance with the economic ingenuity of each country and this means that different forms of economic organization are permissible and even desirable for the welfare of the entire human family. However, interaction among these economic systems may promote mutual enrichment. Some may have the merit of emphasizing individual freedom with its concomitant private enterprise tempered with taxation meant for the

enhancement of the common good while others may have a more centralized control with a reduced private enterprise. Perhaps a balance between extreme socialism and extreme capitalism may be the right policy in accordance with the Confucian and Aristotelian mean which is not easy to define in concrete terms.

While concluding this section of the paper it is worth noting that when considering the importance of diversity on individual, national and international levels it is vital to realize that no genuine diversity in unity may be possible when persons, groups and nations continue to suffer deprivations of basic human needs through abject poverty within nations and the existence of the haves and have-nots in our categorization of the rich and poor nations. Some of these basics have been treated by Abraham Maslow who discusses the hierarchy of human needs such as the physiological needs (needs for food, clothing, shelter etc.) and psychological needs, e.g., for esteem, belonging, security, knowledge, self-realization. The African philosopher N.K. Dzobo, discussing these needs and drives, asserts the following in an article on “The Image of Man in Africa”:

To a considerable degree human motivations can be said to be the same for people in all cultures with varying contextual modifications and emphasis. They can be divided into two major groups, namely, the physiologically determined (sometimes called survival) drives, comprising such master drives as hunger, thirst and sex and their derivatives such as money and what it can buy; and the transsurvival drives such as the need for security, peace, safety, love, recognition, status, honor, influence, happiness, solidarity, human creativity and productivity, motherhood, fatherhood, success and prosperity.²

Genuine diversity among nations would ensure that a reasonable degree of enjoyment of these human needs is rendered possible in each nation,—otherwise our diversity might turn out to be a vice instead of a virtue; it might end up being a basis for cut-throat competition among nations culminating in possible world conflagration.

A NOTE ON AFRICAN EXPERIENCE OF DIVERSITY

The Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 saw the European powers scramble for the colonization of Africa, which after nearly one hundred

² N.K. Dzobo, “The Image of Man in Africa,” in *Person and Community: Ghanaian Philosophical Studies I, op. cit.*, p. 124.

years of struggle has attained political independence that has been compromised in a number of ways due to the incursions of neo-colonial overtures and interventions. The actual historical events pertaining to this colonization are accessible in many libraries in the world. I have no intention of dealing with such details. My task is a philosophical reflection on the effect of this colonial and post-colonial experience on diversity as it pertains to the African's sense of dignity. It is worth noting that through colonial experience the African's autonomy in the deeper sense of personal and collective freedom has historically been rendered relatively inert.

Politically liberated Africa finds itself within a web of inherited political, economic and social structures which are at variance with African subjectivity. Exotic bases of the African's life such as Euro-centrism have tended to make the African seek outside his own subjectivity the criteria of worthwhile knowledge and even ethical and aesthetic judgements. Philosopher Kwasi Wiredu clearly shows that when the Africans were successfully subjected to European military might and eventual colonization it was assumed that even outside the military might the European's way of life was superior and could be made the standard for the African:

It is important at the outset to understand why colonialism was able to make such deep inroads in the psychology of our people in most parts of Africa. The basic reason is that, as remarked earlier on, the colonialist came with superior science and technology....I mean the superiority in science and technology as manifested in the techniques and products of the colonialists. But the question is not so clear-cut when it comes to religion, law, state-craft, moves, language etc., which came as part of the colonial package....Since the days of the anti-colonial struggle we have been witnessing a struggle to restore the sense of authenticity. But the problems have not only been many but also have frequently been buried beneath the surface of our experience.³

The colonial experience produced in the African a mental attitude that has found concrete expression in the perpetuation of negative attitudes towards African indigenous languages, conservation of legal systems which largely reflect a foreign culture, i.e., an *other* people's notion of "good", economic and political philosophies, notably capitalistic which, as many African writers have lamented, are a negation of

³ Kwasi Wiredu, *op.cit.*, p. 63.

Africa's cultural independence. As Leopold Senghor, that prominent defender of cultural liberation, said: "Cultural imperialism as we too often forget, is the most dangerous form of colonialism. It obscures awareness."⁴ "The awareness" that Senghor mentions is a central concept in any discussion of pre-conditions for any liberation whether political, economic or social. It is an awareness of the African's situation of cultural dependence. It is this awareness that a "master" hopes and prays would not awaken, for if it awakens, the master loses his grip on the "slave".⁵ Hegel describes this quite well in his book *Phenomenology of Spirit* where he analyses the liberation of slave consciousness. One becomes free in relation to the master when he is no longer prepared to obey the master despite the severity of the external conditions that he may have to endure. A liberated slave in this sense is genuinely "free" in his consciousness; he has transcended the situation at least in his consciousness even though he may suffer worse external conditions. "It is a tribute to the human spirit that in its allegiance to such values as personal dignity, freedom, respect and justice it is willing to allow the body to be subjected to great discomfiture, including the possible loss of life."⁶

We will, for the sake of illustration indicate some the important ways in which the African identity, subjectivity and freedom have been adversely affected by the forces that have tended to deny them the right to diversity.

As far as the religions of Africa were concerned missionaries were implicitly if not explicitly allowed by the colonial governments to destroy those religions and replace them with Christianity. There are a number of incidents pertaining to this in the history of Kenya and the writer of this article has a vivid account of how a missionary destroyed the paraphernalia of a traditional medicine man. Many missionaries did not study the function these religions played within the moral fabric of these societies, let alone the cognitive content of the religions. Simplistic description of these religions as "animistic"⁷ cannot withstand the criticism of the current research in comparative religious studies. The consequence of this colonial-missionary onslaught on our traditional religion is that the traditional places of worship, the big trees among the Kikuyu people, are no longer visited for worship. Traditional religion,

⁴ Ali A. Mazrui and Michael Tiny, *Nationalism and New States in Africa* (Nairobi, Ibadan, London: Heinemann, 1984), p. 298.

⁵ Raphael J. Njoroge, *Philosophy and Education for Liberation and Creativity* (Kenyatta University: 1990), p. 17,

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (London, Ibadan, Nairobi: Heinemann, 1969), p. 7.

however, remains deep in African people and indeed it has been noted that when the Christian doctrines appear to fail to give a satisfactory answer to a phenomenon, Africans resort to African traditional religion which is very much alive.

In the area of economics the African economic arrangements have been to the advantage of the former colonial powers. Authentic African economic institutions have hardly started to take shape. It is unfortunate that the African economy has not been able to recapture the traditional glory of communalism in which, for example among the Kikuyu of Kenya, the welfare of each member of the ethnic group was catered while each member was required to work diligently and productively for himself and others. Development of authentic diversity would require the restitution of those ideals that made it possible for African economies to be of service to all instead of being exclusive possessions of a few greedy leaders who live in affluence while the rest of the population wallows in squalor. It is indeed ironical that the Africans leaders' mismanagement of the economy has occasioned the interference of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in that economy and imposed what are called Structural Adjustment Programs that, in my view, are in the interests of the majority of African populations. This IMF and World Bank intervention might appear, *prima facie*, to compromise our right to "diversity", but on further reflection this is the prescription that many Africans want. To the extent that outside interference in consonant with democracy and human rights, then it is welcome and it should not be seen as interference. However, there are certain forms of "diversity" that we may, as an international community, try to destroy if they conflict with more basic values, for diversity is not an absolute value, at least in this context of economic organization of society.

In conclusion it is worth pointing out that our efforts to use practical reason to grapple with the problem of diversity has brought us to levels of concreteness such as individuals, particular ethnic groups, and nations, all of which seek authentic "diversity". We have seen that the neater definitions of the relationship between diversity and unity as reflected by pure reason become muddled when, as it were, handed over to practical reason which has the task of relating them in the concrete world. Practical reason reveals that the proper balance between diversity and unity is established in the course of the dialectical process between the two in a historical, concrete situation and that pure reason operating in isolation from the historical realities requires the feedback from the experiences of practical reason so that it may reformulate a properly transcendental definition of the appropriate balance between diversity and unity.

CHAPTER XIII

DIVERSITY AND UNITY IN A BUDDHIST CULTURAL CONTEXT

KIRTI BUNCHUA

INTRODUCTION

In a Buddhist cultural context such as Thailand, where the 57 million population is composed of about 95% Buddhists of the Theravada (otherwise Hinayana) tradition, about 4% Muslims and about 0.8% Christians of all denominations (half of them are Catholics), and where all the three religious faiths enjoy more or less equal prestige in society and hold equal rights side by side with the other two faiths, Hinduism and Sikhism. Only five religions are enrolled so far as the religions of the Thai people. This does not mean that other faiths have no right to exist in Thailand. No! They have the right to exist as humanitarian associations as long as they keep the law of the country and have not yet applied to get recognition from the government. Surely there is a certain set of regulations and conditions to comply with before the application is accepted for consideration. The reason given by the government for such control concerns the security of the country, and I think all the five recognized faiths are content with this restriction.

In such a context, henceforth called a 'Buddhist Cultural Context', the diversity is apparent. However, all these diverse faiths live together in a peaceful attitude, based on a kind of unanimous unity, the causes of which will be discussed in this paper.¹

We name it "Buddhist Cultural Context" because 95% of the population are Buddhists. It is by reason of honor, and also for some more objective reasons, as will be discussed later. It is "a" Buddhist Cultural Context, because there are in fact many Buddhist Cultural Contexts in the World. My intention is to concentrate my attention on the study of the Buddhist Context of Thailand, my own country, where I have been contextualized, natured and nurtured the whole of my life.

¹ See Kirti Bunchua, "The Catholic Minority in Thailand: an Example of Peaceful Coexistence," paper presented at the Conference of Buddhist Societies in Stability and Crisis, held in Kandy, Sri Lanka, July 1994.

CAUSES OF DIVERSITY

Geographical Cause

Geographical cause is reduced to a minimum, because Thailand is not a big country. Its territory is about half a million square kilometers, separated from Myanmar in the West and North-West by ranges of high mountains, from Malaysia in the South by mountainous and forestial area, from Laos and Kampuchea on the East and North East by the Mekhong River. In fact the Mekhong is the means of cultural unity rather than diversity. Generally speaking, Thailand geographically is a compact country that favours unity over diversity.

Historical Cause

Since the beginning of its historical time, the people in Thailand have been conscious of their unity in their endeavour of struggling for the survival of their nation and the independence of their country. They have learned how to join hands together to push away the invasion of the Khmer Empire of Angkor-wat, of the Burmese warrior kings and the colonising Powers during the Colonial Period of the World History, and finally the Japanese Expanding Empire during the Second World War. Here again the Historical Cause of diversity can be reduced to something next to zero.

Racial Cause

Thailand can be said to be a melting pot of races of East Asia. It is still a topic of hot discussion about the genuine originality of the Thai race. We know that there are people in Southern China (Yunan Province), in Eastern India (Assam Province), in Northern Myanmar (Shan-States), in Northern Vietnam (near Bien-Dien-Phu) speaking our language and having the same physiognomy as ours. We know also that the Filipinos and the Indonesians are easily mistaken as Thais, though they don't speak our language. There are several Hill-Tribes whose mother tongues are different from ours, but their physiognomy can be hardly distinguished from ours. The whole Laotian people speak our language though they don't think that they are Thais.

Among the actual citizens of Thailand, we can easily distinguish the Chinese racials and their immediate descendents, the Malay racials and their immediate descendents, the 'Farangs' or the Westerners and their immediate descendents, and the Black Americans' descendents resulting from the GIs stationed in Thailand during the Vietnam War. However, it is note-worthy to see that practically all these people feel

displeased if someone attributes to them a race other than Thai. This phenomenon is in contrast to what happens in Malaysia, for example, where the Malaysian citizens divide themselves sharply along the racial lines. By the above-mentioned “immediate descendants,” I mean that after several generations of racially mixed marriage, they can less and less be distinguished from other Thai racials. Here again we see that Racial Cause of diversity also can be reduced to minimum.

Political Cause

The causes in this domain also can be reduced to next to nil, at least at the present moment. It is true that Thailand has too many political parties and it is not important to know how many, because a new political party can be born easily and can die easier still. But all the parties are not really antagonistic, as all the Thai people agree upon the most fundamental points of the political game, and they have been the basis of all the Constitutions of the country since the First Constitution ratified in 1932. These fundamental points are: firstly, our regime is a Constitutional Monarchy; secondly, the King is the supreme head of the Kingdom, to be irreproachably respected, and exercises His power through the Assembly, the Government and the Court; thirdly, the King is a Buddhist and the Protector of all Religions of the Thai people. Though there had been many revolutions in the Thai History of the Constitutional Period, all the revolutions claimed to defend the Constitution and the King and ended with a new Constitution without changing the foundation.

Religious Cause

General Observation. Thailand has been always the land of free worship since the beginning of its history, at least officially. Some religious persecutions, recorded in the History of Thailand occurred by private policies or misunderstanding of legal applications. The Seven Thai [Catholic] Martyrs, beatified in 1990, are examples of the latter reason, while the first reason resulted in apostasies but no official report of casualties.

However the policy of free worship itself becomes the main cause of diversity in Thailand, though the royal worship plays always an important role in drawing attention of the people to adopt it. Let us have a glance at the Thai History to see what and how this happens.

Short History of Religiosity in Thailand. According to a legendary account, originated in Sri Lanka, Buddha in His life-time, had visited Thailand (called Suannabhumi according to Sri Lankan Legend) at least

once, when He visited a Brahmanist hermit named Saccabandhatapasa on the Saccabandhagiri Mountain. He taught the hermit the way to deliverance and gave him a token of his authentic enlightenment by leaving his miraculous footprint on that mountain in Saraburi Province, about 150 kilometers to the North of Bangkok.

The Mahavangsa Chronicle of Sri Lanka narrated that King Ashoka the Great of Sri Lanka organized the Third Council of Buddhism to distinguish Theravada Buddhism from other sects. The Chronicle goes on to tell how the Great King of Peace sent out in the year 303 of the Buddhist Era (240 B.C.) the Theravada monks with the mission of witnessing an authentic way of Buddhist life to nine states: Kashmir, Misor, South Bombay, North Bombay, Maharath, Persia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Suvannabhumi. The last name meant at that time all the territories of the Indochina Peninsula. All documents show that Nakornpathom of Thailand was at that time the most prosperous city state (“Nagara” means “city” and “Pathama” means “the first”). The big and the oldest pagoda of Thailand at Nakornpathom also proves that it must be a memorial of a great event. It can be thus assumed that the two Venerables sent by King Ashoka came to Nakornpathom, the first Capital of Suvannabhumi, around the year 240 before Christ. Their names were Sona Thera and Uttara Thera.

The two Venerables (Theras) realized that the people in this region were not devoid of religiosity, but they had already in their hearts the Primitive Beliefs mixed with Brahmanism, brought there by many Brahmins before them. They did not think of globally overthrowing the old culture, but of how to purify it and implant upon it the new vision of life according to the Dhamma discovered by Buddha. Thus they succeeded in establishing, for the first time, the Theravada tradition on the soil of Thailand.

We find an inscription saying a King of the Srivijai Empire of Indonesia constructed a Mahayana Temple, laying its foundation on 17 April A.D. 775. It was the time of King Sailendaravangsa who spread the Srivijai Kingdom far and wide. Southern Thailand also underwent strong influences of Mahayana Buddhism accordingly. However Theravada Buddhism survived side by side with its sister Mahayana Buddhism.

Since A.D. 1 many groups of the Thai race immigrated from the Southern Provinces of China and established themselves in the Northern part of Thailand. They brought with them the Theravada tradition mixed with elements of Mahayana as professed in their old homeland.

The Khmer Kingdom accepted Hinduism since the beginning of its history. It underwent the Mahayana influence from the Srivijai expansion around the year 800. Since then, both faiths—Brahmanism and Mahayana—shared their influences in the Khmer culture. Such

culture influenced all the Khmer Empire during A.D. 1000-1200 which marked the highlight of the Khmer expansion. The Center, the North and the East of Thailand were under their pressure with the principal feudal states at Lopburi, Sukhothai, Srithep, Phimai, Sakolnakorn. However, the Thai people still keep their own culture and religious background—Animism and Theravada traditions combined—alongside with the new faiths in Brahmanism and Mahayana. However the Sanskrit language was adopted as the ‘sacred language’ by both the Brahmins and the Buddhist Monks. This explains why the Sanskrit language has a wider influence than the Pali language upon the Thai ordinary language.

Around the year A.D. 1050, the Burmese King Anuruth the Great expanded his empire to Lanna, the most Northern part of Thailand. He imposed together with his power, his religious faith in Theravada Buddhism adapted to the Burmese Culture, called Bukam Buddhism, with Pali Language as the ‘sacred language’, which remains the case in Burma up to the present time. Around the year 1277, King Ramkhamhaeng the Great invited a monk from Nakornsriothammaraaj, the Southern Province of Thailand, who had been ordained according to the Sri Lankan Order (Sri Lankan Vangsa), to establish the Theravada Buddhism according to the Sri Lankan Order in all his Kingdom. Little by little, all the monks adapted themselves to the regulations of the new Order, but the previous beliefs and practices still went on side by side as the religious foundation of the Thai people. Since then the form of Thai Buddhism has remained more or less constant up to the present time. It may be called Syam Vangsa or the Thai order of the Theravada Buddhism on the World level.

Islam expanded to South-East Asia through the missionary activities of the Persian merchants. Before the Western colonisation began, Islam was already wide spread in the East Indies, except Philippines Islands. From Malacca, it spread up to win the conviction of all the Malaysian racial. When King Ramkhamhaeng expanded his Empire to the South, the four independent city-states in the South where the majority of the people belong to the Malay race also fell under his power. This opened the way for the Muslims to spread themselves all over Thailand, either by deportation or by immigration.

Catholic Christianity started to establish itself in Thailand through the activities of the Portuguese merchants and mercenaries. The merchants were only the pioneers, but those who remained and founded the Catholic Church in Thailand were the mercenaries who introduced the use of cannons to strengthen the royal army. During the reign of the Enlightened King, King Louis XIV of France, the French Missionaries replaced the Portuguese priests, but the Portuguese descendants still made up the most important part of the Catholic population of Thailand during the Patronado Policy.

During the religious persecution in Vietnam by King Tu-Duc, a number of Vietnamese took refuge in Thailand, whose descendents formed an important part of the Catholic population of the 19th Century. In consequence of the great famine in China at the beginning of the twentieth century, a great number of Chinese from Sua-Thao or Shan-Tow, one of the maritime counties of Canton, immigrated into Thailand. The French missionaries saved many of them from the abuses of all kinds which befall illegal immigrants, whose descendents now form a very significant part of the Catholic community of Thailand.

The Protestant Churches have been facilitated mostly through the diplomatic relation with the United States and through the good works of many missionaries who devoted their lives for the modernisation of Thailand. They gained most converts from the Chinese immigrants and the hill-tribals.

CAUSE OF DIVERSITY AMONG THE BUDDHISTS

The traditional Thai Buddhism is the Religion of the Thai people and the State Religion of Thailand. However it does not mean that other religions have not freedom to function. It is, in fact, one of the five Religions recognized by the Thai Authority: Buddhism, Islam, Christianity (only Catholic and Protestant Churches), Brahmanism (including Hinduism), and Sikhism. Such order is arranged according to the number of adherents. Constitutionally, all the five religions have equal rights and enjoy fair support from the Government.

To be recognized means to be protected by Laws which allow their members the freedom, protection and facilities of worship, practice, teaching, the privilege of exemption from taxes and military services for religious functionaries, reduction of railway fares, etc. A quota of permanent visas is also allotted to the missionaries of each religion. These are the important privileges enjoyed by the so-called Recognized Religions of Thailand. Many New Religious Movements have tried to apply for recognition, but the Thai Government is very careful about expanding further recognition. But recognition means also control. Frequent manipulations occurred to increase the privileges and/or lessen the controls. It is up to the Assembly to decide and the Government to rehearse and to adjust the regulations.

The Theravada Buddhism, besides being a Recognized Religion, enjoys also the title of 'State Religion', though this is not stated in the Constitution. This is to be balanced out in terms of more controls, the main ones being:

- 1) All main projects of religious activities and financial implementations are to be controlled by the Department of Religion,

which includes some dignitaries of the Buddhist Hierarchy on its consultant council.

2) Curricula and teaching methods of Buddhism are guided and controlled by the same Department.

By this token, the Mahayana Buddhism, under the denominations of Chinese Nikaya and Annamite Nikaya, is recognized, but is not State Religion. Mormonism, Children of God, Jehovah Witnesses, Unification Church, etc. are not recognized, because they cannot prove themselves to be either Catholic or Protestant. However, they can still function as Humanitarian Associations within the scope of the Laws of the Country.

All Recognized Religions being under the patronage of the Royalty of Thailand, means that His Majesty (and His Royal Family) may grant favour to preside over eminent religious ceremonies, and to grant official audience to religious bodies that belong to them. It is the practice that the Supreme Patriarch of the Buddhists in Thailand is appointed by the King. He also appoints the Chularajamontri or the Head of all the Muslims in Thailand. The Heads of other Recognized Religious Denominations are to get His Majesty's approval before the official nominations: for example, all the Catholic Bishops (including the Cardinal), the Chairpersons of the Church of Christ in Thailand, and so on.

The Buddhist Hierarchy was established in Thailand by King Ramkhamhaeng the Great in the twelfth century. Since then Kings of Thailand nominated all the dignitaries in the Buddhist Hierarchy by consulting the Administrative Officials (actually the Department of Religions). Before the introduction of Theravada Buddhism into Thailand by King Ramkhamhaeng the Great, the Thai people had run the course of accepting Spiritism, Brahmanism, and Mahayana Buddhism. All these beliefs, slowly but surely, intermingled to form the basis for the Thai culture and religiosity and philosophy up to the present.

Theravada Buddhism was introduced by King Ramkhamhaeng in its pure form. Once the hierarchy was established, it has been prone, like the hierarchies of all religions, to rituals and formalities. The popular monks do not have a sound knowledge of Buddhism. The popular beliefs which are a mixture of Spiritism, Brahmanism and Mahayana Buddhism, especially of the Tantric Tradition (Tantra is the Buddhist form of Atharvaveda which was adopted by some monks of Tibet, who expressed it in a Buddhist expression and spread it to other countries, including Thailand and her neighbors) have crept surreptitiously into the official Theravada Buddhism. Buddhism, in fact, since the life-time of the Lord Buddha Himself, has been a religion of adaptation. Buddha adopted and adapted the existing theories of Karma, Reincarnation, Methods of Meditation, etc. to give them new meanings through the light of His Enlightenment and within the scope of the Four Noble

Truths (The Four Noble Truths are the Manifesto of Buddhism, which are: Fact of Suffering, Cause of Suffering, Deliverance from Suffering, and Way of Deliverance from Suffering). He did it so well that a lot of Buddhists attribute them exclusively to him, including them as parts of His Enlightenment. In fact, it is his pedagogical attitude which seems most original: to give new meanings to the popular beliefs of one's time, and He did this with extraordinarily happy success.

Naturally the Thai intellectual monks, in the course of History, have seen such kinds of problems, but could not handle them as well as their Enlightened Master. Consequently a lot of superstitions crept in together with other beliefs. All are synthesized to form the popular Thai Buddhism of the Thai culture. This became the acknowledged State Religion of Thailand, which is typically the popular Buddhism of Thailand or of the Thai people.

From time to time, the intellectual monks tried within their capacity to purify the Buddhism of Thailand by conscientizing, first their confraternal monks, so that the well-conscientized monks may in turn, conscientize the people. They tried hard to establish Buddhist Monk Universities under the names of Mahachulalongkorn University and Mahamakut University. But the process of education took a long time and is not widespread enough to cope with the needs of the people. In the meantime, the superstitious monks who outnumber the intellectual ones, go on abusing Buddhism to protect their superstitions and profitable practices. Several movements of reformation run parallel but outside the two monastic Universities.

At present, these two Buddhist monastic Universities expand their campuses to many provinces, teaching the traditional Buddhist Doctrine to the traditional monks to prepare them for the responsibility in the Hierarchy and to purify the traditional form of Thai Buddhism. Those who are graduated from these Universities do not practice superstitions, but in general are not against the superstitious practices, considering them as necessary for the people of lower classes. Most of the rest of the monks more or less practice superstitions in some form or other, for example: telling fortunes, producing magic or propitious objects, rendering charms, consecrating holy objects, distributing lustrous water, etc.

Some among the progressive monks see that the two monastic Universities are not capable of reforming Thai Buddhism quickly enough. They are strongly against the traditional beliefs and practices, seeing that they are essentially superstitions disguised under the mantle of Buddhism, and that if Buddhism could not purify itself in time, it might come to an end. To correct such abuses, some launched a reformation by putting what they see as authentic beliefs into practice, as examples for other monks. Some among them have a number of

followers with common-sense who become Masters of the Reformation Movements. The common characters of these reforming Masters are:

1. Strict observance of regulations for the monks,
2. Regular practice of meditation and keeping a life of constant calm,
3. Renunciation of all properties and strict observance of poverty,
4. Indifference to dignities in the hierarchy.

More often than not, the devotees tend to abuse their Master's holiness by worshipping it superstitiously. Only those who launch the movements by way of systematic management can have disciples who understand the ideal and form authentic reformed communities. The prominent ones are:

1) Suan Mok (The Garden of Deliverance), founded by Ven. Buddhadasa (Buddha's slave). This movement emphasizes the right purpose of Buddhist life, that is to have conviction that there is no self. There is no self to enjoy pleasure. There is no self to bear suffering. There is no self to possess anything, even to possess merit. All events are accepted as *suchness*: it is such and has to be accepted as such and let pass away as such. Life is *such* and has to be accepted as *such*, without joy or regret. *Ta-tha-ta* or SUCHNESS is the motto of life for all situations.

2) Santiasok (School of Peace Without Sorrow), founded by Master Bodhirak (The Guardian of Wisdom). This movement emphasizes the strict observance of the monastic rules. Every Buddhist is obliged to observe the monastic rules as much as possible to ensure calm happiness. Everybody is obliged to be absolutely vegetarian for the rest of his life, allowing oneself no case of exception. Every monk must observe absolute poverty, that is owning nothing and having for his daily use only a small hut of 2 meters width by 3 meters long, 2 yellow robes, one bowl, and necessary sanitary materials. The other devotees are asked to spend money only for the necessity of life in one's situation, offering the rest to the common property which will be used for propagating the ideal and to help the needy people. No offering is accepted except from the recognized devotees.

3) Thammakaya (Mystic Body School), founded by Ven. Sod, but now is well managed by a group of the young monks formerly graduated from the various departments of the lay Universities. This School emphasizes the special method of meditation laid down by its Founder, but reorganizes it in an impressive and orderly way. It attracts especially university students and the people who love pompous ceremonies. The meditation is not a private practice any more, but is practiced together

under large umbrellas, lined up in order on a large and beautiful meadow, near a lake full of clear water.

4) Samnak Sacca (The Faithfulness School), founded by the devout lady Mien and continued by many disciples dispersed in hundreds of groups around the country, especially in the North-Eastern part. The School emphasizes the observation of only one regulation, that is, to be faithful to helping the needy people. Each group of monks should decide together what to observe and what to do in order to be most useful to the people in need of help. This School helps many people to improve their economic life, especially in curing a great number of them from drug addiction.

Surely with the rise of the new movements, there are sometimes hot discussions among the Buddhists about the rightfulness of the new movements. In short, the main cause of diversity in Buddhism is internal, within the policy itself of the Founder. Buddha did not delegate the administrative power to any one person to decide or give direction. In fact, He delegated it to Dhamma [the 'Teaching'] to guide the Buddhist Community, but Dhamma is not easy to penetrate: there may be opinions upon opinions about Dhamma. This is the internal and the main cause. All others are only accessory.

Cause of Diversity in Islam. The Muslims seem to have a good organization according to the Islamic Law that takes all aspects of human life into consideration. But as time went on in their history, there arose several Schools of interpretation of the Islamic Law in the Muslim World. As the Thai Muslims have no School of interpretation of their own, the Thai Muslim students go out to study the Muslim Law from various countries and when they come back to Thailand, they find among themselves several interpretations of the same 'case'. No one is to give the last word concerning the point of dissension. Chularajamontri, the Head of the Muslim Community appointed by the King, is considered as the liaison with the Government and the defender of benefits of the Thai Muslim Community rather than the doctrinal authority of Islam.

In such a context, the different factions may be easily prey to political intrigues that promise the major advantage. At present, the Alcom, a Messianistic Movement which has been eradicated from Malaysia, fixes its stronghold in Thailand close to the border of Malaysia. Scholars are studying with close attention if there be anything 'behind' this phenomenon. It is, however, a well-known fact that this part of the Southern part of Thailand is strongly influenced by several Muslim rich countries that have different political and cultural trends.

CAUSE OF DIVERSITY IN CHRISTIANITY

Most of the Thai Christians are diverse by birth and catechetical education. Only a few choose their own way. By this I mean most of the Thai Catholics are Catholics by birth and catechistic education in the Catholic Community that teaches them how they are different from other Christians and how to take care not to be lured into other Christian Denominations. The same thing happens to other Thai Christians of other Denominations.

Beside the general causes of diversity and the particular causes of each religion in Thailand as mentioned above, there is another cause, maybe the most important of all, that is situated as the common background of all religions, not only in Thailand, but everywhere in the human context. I call it Paradigmatic Cause or Philosophical Cause. It is “Paradigmatic,” because it controls the thought and the decision of each person. It is “Philosophical,” because it gives the rationale to each opinion and action.

The ‘Homo Sapiens’ race developed their Creative Capacity continuously from the start up to the present. We can divide roughly the development into four steps or Four Main Paradigms of Human Thought. I shall call them according to the time of their origin: Primitive Paradigm, Ancient Paradigm, Medieval Paradigm and Modern Paradigm. It is to be noted that in the World of Paradigms, while the new paradigms rise up, the old ones do not cease, but go on and play their usual roles side by side with the new ones. We can say, therefore, that at present we have all the Four Paradigms playing their role in Humanity as well as in the Thai Cultural Context. About this I shall expound later.

PARADIGM, CAUSE OF DIVERSITY

Buddha pointed out clearly more than 2500 years ago that the fundamental cause of dissension (therefore diversity) is the ATTACHMENT which was defined by Buddha’ words “ida meva saccang, mogha mannang” (“only this (my) opinion is true, all the others are false”). Without doubt, the cause of attachment cannot be other than the philosophical attitude, which from now on we shall call “Philosophical Paradigms” or PP, because whenever a man starts to philosophize, whether at the intellectual level or at the popular level, his PP starts to function automatically.

Regretfully innumerable schools of philosophy subscribe to the attitude of attachment. And more regretfully too many of those who hold the risks of Humanity in their hands also attach to it more strongly.

Primitive Paradigm

This PP occurred in the minds of the primitives as soon as humans appeared on Earth. It is as old as Humanity. We can, therefore, assume that this paradigm began to exert its role not less than 2,000,000 years ago and never dies away from the human mind since then.

The first humans who first lived on Earth, lived in pure Nature, at the mercy of Nature, often threatened by natural ‘over-power’, and sometimes succumbed as victims of natural disasters. Animals, when danger is at hand, are pushed by the instinct of fear to flee for life. Once the danger is gone, the fear goes away and the animals live unworried, because they don’t reflect. Humans are different. Though they have the fear-instinct like animals, and run for life in time of danger like animals, after several experiences of threatening dangers, among humans a thoughtful reflection about past experiences took place, sometimes, during peaceful leisure times. They would have wished safety for themselves and their families. For such a purpose, they posed such questions as: “Whence came the natural disasters and how could they be eliminated?” No sooner than the questions were determined than they tried to find out the answers. There might have been many possible answers, but the one that appeased the strains of those primitives was that natural disasters together with all natural events were the manipulations of the ‘mysterious powers’. There are opinions about their natures and roles, but they are unanimously believed to exist and manipulate capriciously behind all natural happenings. They were called by different names by different groups of peoples.

From such fundamental belief, the primitives concluded that they could avoid the natural disasters only by complying to the will of the mysterious powers and could gain advantages over other creatures by pleasing them. These mysterious powers may be called by any names they agreed upon. They are the ‘On-Highs’ above all mere ‘visibles’. The primitives tried hard, therefore, to know the will of the On-Highs and to know how to please them. Those who know these two techniques were considered as the knowers or “the seers” among the primitives. They enjoyed plenty of privileges. They were indeed benefactors of the primitives, because if no one could offer satisfactory answers to the fright-stricken primitives, they would have been in the status of unquenchable fear. Though physically they were still victims to disasters, at least psychologically they could be convinced that they were not destined to dooming destruction, thinking that they could survive because they knew how to please the On-Highs, unlike all the victims who did not know how to please the On-Highs.

Someone may ask why the primitives were easily satisfied with the above answer, and why they did not try to solve their problems

through the understanding of the Laws of Nature. We may answer that it is because they did not believe in any *law*. They experienced changing Nature and they saw the dissimilarities rather than the similarities, the *changes* rather than the laws. For them the Universe is a Chaos. This is their PP. Such a PP determines necessarily that for them the above answers are satisfactory. With such a satisfaction, a man hardly has interest to find the Laws of Nature,—which are believed to be non-existent. He bestows, on the contrary, all his efforts on inquiring as to what he is sure of: how to know and how to please the will of the On-Highs. This form of thought was the only trend of human thinking for more than two million years. Surely with such a PP, humanity can hardly make progress in knowledge, except for the rare and unintentional inventions by chance. However, the creative capacity of Man could not help advancing to the more advanced form called the Ancient PP about 3000 years ago.

The highest ideal for the devotees of this PP is: “If the will of the On-Highs is not actually expressed, do according to the customs,” because the customs are the expressive will of the On-Highs until further notified by some believable channels. “You can violate anything except the customs” is the universally accepted criterion of conduct. Even the new will of the On-High is accepted on the basis of some custom.

Ancient Paradigm

The people of this paradigm believe that the World has its own Law. It is the Cosmos, not the Chaos of the Primitives.

There might have been some geniuses before the Ancient time who believed that the World has its own Law, but as they did not transmit their belief to others, it disappeared at the time of their death without affecting any change in Humanity. If they did transmit, but no one believed it, they would have been denounced crazy unbelievers and might have been put to death as cursed persons. They, therefore, who first found out the Cosmos and could safely convince others of the truth of their beliefs are indeed great geniuses. We don't know who those in the history of Humanity were. The oldest document that shows this belief is the first page of the Bible. It is the written record of oral traditions among the Hebrew tribes even before Moses. It had been transmitted orally from generations to generations and was put into the written Bible just about 3000 years ago. The Bible told us how God put an order into the Universe, thus changing the status of the Universe from Chaos (the Universe without laws) to Cosmos (the Universe with Laws). Since then the Universe has evolved according to those given Laws. Though God, as the Law-Giver, has the right to change any law at will, He would not do it without necessity, because, generally speaking, it

would appear self-contradictory for God to first stress the importance of the Laws that He Himself has established and then for Him to disregard or reverse His own Laws.

In the Greek historical record, Thales (640-545 B.C.) was hailed to be the first who thought that the World (meaning the Universe) is a Cosmos. In the Indian culture, Buddha was the first to teach that the Universe and everything in it strictly follow the Law of Dhamma. In the Chinese culture we find Confucius presenting Tao as the Laws of conduct for private as well as social life, while Lao-Tzu presented it as Natural Law.

Since Man has believed that the Universe has fixed Laws, he always tries with great interest to find them out. While the Western people had to pass through the phase of interest in the Law of Nature before having interest in the Law of the Spirit in the Middle Ages, the Eastern people jumped over the interest of the Law of Nature to grasp immediately the Law of the Spirit since the time of Buddha and began to have interest in the Law of Nature only when they came into contact with Western Education just two centuries ago.

In other words, the pure philosophy of the First PP is the belief that the Universe has its own Law. Man must know it and use it as the basis for his happiness in this life. By this reason, the Greeks and the Romans constructed great palaces, great theaters, and great baths, but small temples. If they agreed to construct some great Temples, like the Panthenon in Athens, it was for the sake of their own glory and pleasure rather than for the benefits of their future life: this last purpose will belong to the Third PP starting in the Middle Ages.

During the Ancient Age, only the very progressive people had the Ancient PP in their hearts. Many others still clung to the Primitive PP, that is they still believed in the mysterious powers that controlled Nature according to their paradigm: they both hoped and feared at the same time. If they used the facilities offered them by the inventions of the more progressive ones, they used them then with the mentality of the Primitives; e.g. they might attend the theaters created by the Ancient writers which taught some Natural Laws, but the people of the Primitive PP would attend it with the hope of a Magic Act to gain favor of the Mysterious Powers.

The Supreme Standard of Conduct for this paradigm is "To follow the Laws". Kings have authority because they guarantee peaceful coexistence. Their words are Laws, not because they express the will of God, but because they express the Kings' will to guarantee the peaceful coexistence. By this token, you can transgress anything but Laws promulgated by the will of the Kings or the other leaders of societies

Medieval Paradigm

In Western culture, this PP started about 2,000 years ago, with the beginning of Christianity. In the East it started at the beginning of the Buddhist Era, about 500 years before the West. The Ancient PP of the East started about the same time by the School of Caravaka, but it did not develop so much and died out soon.

This PP believes that the Universe follows fixed Laws, but the Laws of this World cannot give Man a real happiness. The Medieval men who had this paradigm in their hearts devoted all their worldly resources to pave their ways for the happiness in the next life. They used to be very stingy for their own living, but very lavish in accumulating merits for the life-to-come. There were plenty of examples of those who were serious about it and lived a strictly mortified life. They constructed great and sumptuous cathedrals and religious objects, but only poor houses, just enough for their survival. Their ideal was different from those of the Ancient PP who constructed temples just big enough for their greatest profit; but for their own residences, nothing was spared to make them the most useful and luxurious as possible.

Meanwhile, there were some in their midst who lived by the Primitive or the Ancient PPs and were considered by them as gentiles (Uneducated) and unbelievers. Therefore, it is not surprising to see in all religions of that time the manifestations of all the three PPs.

The supreme criterion of goodness in this PP is the conscience, according to the teaching of each faith. You can transgress anything except the Rules laid down by religious authority.

Modern Paradigm

Since the beginning of Natural Science around the year 1500, scientific method stands up as a fixed and clear method for the advanced knowledge of the Universe. After establishing itself as an independent subject, the Natural Science invented and progressed so tremendously and rapidly that many people hope that it might solve all problems of Mankind: one day it might cure and prevent all diseases, eliminate death and old age. All men might remain young for eternity, fearing no sickness, old age nor death. The scientific method might be applied to social organization, so that men might share their happiness with equity and justice. Men would share their responsibility by working—each one of them—as little as possible. Most of their time would be spent in recreation and enjoyment, without any mixture of fear and worry of any kind. Our Earth would become “a Paradise on the Earth” without any need for a future life.

This PP believes that the Universe followed fixed Laws. By knowing enough Laws of the Universe, we may transform our Earth into a real Paradise. The believers of this PP devoted all resources to promote scientific research, so that the aimed-for result could become true as soon as possible. The fundamentalist ones set up policies to undermine all kinds of religious belief and all hopes for happiness in an after-life. Nevertheless, living along with them were those of the Primitive, Ancient and Medieval PPs. In all aspects of life, there were manifestations of the four PPs competing with each other. The same phenomenon can be said about the beliefs and the practices of the members of all religions.

The supreme criterion of goodness in this Paradigm is Reason. Reason is used to convince the people. It is the criterion of all kinds of judgement and evaluation. "Reasonableness is always right, and unreasonableness is always wrong".

Don't forget what I mentioned above, namely, that all of these PP are still living in Humanity. They are living in all peoples and races. They are living in all religions and sects. They exert their power by diversifying the members of the same religion. The Buddhists are diverse according to these four PP. The Christians and the Muslims are without exception, and so on with the members of all the other religions. They become the main Cause of Diversity within each religion. It is not surprising to see the members of different religions with the same PP more sympathetic to each other than to the other members of their own religion but with different PP.²

DIVERSITY WITHIN THE SAME RELIGION

There are 4 Religious Attitudes (from now on, RA) of religious people of the same religion. They correspond and derive from the four PPs. The RAs follow the PPs because Human Inquisitive Capacity follows naturally and automatically Human Creative Capacity.³

² The above section is adapted from Kirti Bunchua: "Man Develops without Intermission His Creative Capacity," in *Foundation for Professional Ethics* (Bangkok: Assumption University Press, 1994), pp. 9-13.

³ See Kirti Bunchua, *Foundation of Professional Ethics*, pp. 2-3, where the author states that Man progresses in PP by his innate Creative Ability, in solving more and more problems by his innate Adaptive Ability, in religious experiences by his innate Inquisitive Ability, in peaceful coexistence by his innate Collaborative Ability. For him the problem is only how to develop these abilities in the professional life of each person.

Primitive Religious Attitude

For those who have the Primitive PP in their heart, their Attitude towards worship is also Primitive. For them the will of the On-High (whom they may call by any name) is the standard of conduct, because the Faithful believe that those who do the Will of the On-High are His favorites. (Ven. Buddhadasa Bhikkhu thought that Dhamma is the God of the Buddhists. See his treatise *God of the Buddhists*. But very few Thai Buddhists agree with him. However it is the generally accepted fact that in popular worship, most of the worshippers ask help from Buddha as if He is a supreme Divinity. This is truer in Mahayana than in Theravada.) They have advantages over other creatures in this life and will continue to have it in the life-to-come. Being beautiful, handsome, rich and powerful during this life, means correctly pleasing the On-High. This will forever be in effect as long as one keeps on pleasing the On-High. The guideline for the people of the Primitive Attitude is “taking care of this life, and the life-to-come will take care of itself.” Those who commit themselves to such a belief will try their best to please the On-High, believing that it is the only way to profit most in this world and to guarantee the sure advantage in the next world. It is the attitude of profit-and-gain, give-and-take, emphasizing the profit of this world, being convinced that the life-to-come is just the continuation of this life, under the same condition.

Those who worship their religions with this attitude, may change sides easily. The side promising more benefits and more security is more attractive. Worship tends more to be Family Polytheism, that is, to have refuge in many deities related in a kind of family or friendship. By doing this, the worshippers feel more secure. In case the deities’ family have enemies, the worshippers must also hold hostilities toward them, hoping, in return, to gain more favors and protection from their party-taking deities.

Ancient Religious Attitude

This attitude derives from the Ancient PP, that is the Law of the World—the standard of Truth and Conduct. The certain way to success is to follow the Law of the World. We must, therefore, try to know the Law of the World as best as we can and follow it as strictly as possible. Though sometimes we don’t see the reason of the process, we still have to keep the Law for probable success.

In worship, the people of this RA believe that all the deities are under the Law and they themselves have to follow the Law for their survival. The worshipers must be conscious of this fact and collaborate with the deities according to this pattern. The deities, including the

highest deity, are not the creator of the World, but they themselves are also the products of the World like all other creatures. They know the Law of the World better than humans, so they can help humans by complying to the Law of the World that humans don't know yet. They are not the creators of the World, so they are not the Law-givers and they cannot change the Law nor transgress the Law without being punished themselves by the Law. Whoever fulfil the Law, will certainly be benefited by the Law, even the highest deity cannot avoid this rule. The writer of *Ramkien* (the Thai version of the *Ramayana*), describes Nonthuk as one who strictly kept all details of the Fire-worshipping. He got a magic finger as his reward from Isavara, the highest God of the Indian Mythology of the Saiva tradition. In spite of Nonthuk's bad intention of using his privilege for revenge, Isavara could not obstruct the result of the Fire-worship performed according to the rules and the Law.

The Jews are the first to believe that there is only one God (Monotheism), the Creator of the World and the Law-Giver. He has the power of changing or exempting the Law He gave to the World, but to keep His dignity as a good Law-Giver, He will not do it without a very serious reason. Therefore, in general, God will help Man according to the Law and Man can obtain results by complying the Law laid down once and for all.

In both cases, the RA is still characterized by the benefit in this World just as the Primitive RA is. No one is ready to sacrifice the benefit of this World, because in this World advantage means the favor of God, and the favor of God also means the advantage of the life-to-come. It is normal for the people of this RA to try their best to gain the most benefits of this life, hoping that the benefits of the life-to-come will automatically follow.

Medieval Religious Attitude

It is the common teaching of all the great Religious Founders that this World with all its Law can give us only imperfect and *never-lasting* happiness; the perfect and unending happiness can be found only in the life-beyond, of which we are assured by the Religious Masters to be able to acquire by sacrificing the short-lived happiness during this life time. Those who take this attitude seriously are willing to sacrifice the prima-facie happiness and even life, some by becoming Religious Persons observing the vows of Celibacy, Obedience and Poverty, etc. Some offer with generosity their money and time for religious constructions and other works. During the Middle Ages, when most of the people adhered to this third RA, in all Religions there were numerous celibate monks and nuns. Colossal Religious monuments were constructed by volunteers

who concealed their names for fear of losing merits in the next life. "What reward will you expect in the next life if you receive it already in this life?" Jesus asked His audience. We observe that the Medieval people constructed very poor houses for their own residence, even the kings built strong castles without much luxury; theaters and sports clubs were condemned as blameful and sinful. Compared with the Ancient RA, we see the Ancient RA did the opposite. The Ancient Greeks and Romans built their grand and luxurious palaces, houses, theaters and stadiums, but only small temples for their gods. They were thrifty for gods, but lavish for their own advantageous position before gods and men. They may become celibate for the position and rank involved, but not for mortification of this life nor for the better life-to-come.

The principal patrimony that we receive from our Medieval forefathers are the various forms of ascetical practices, a number of old Cathedrals in Europe, Buddhagaya in India, Burobudo in Indonesia, many Hindu temples, Angkor Wat in Cambodia, Phra Pathom Chedi in Thailand, etc.

Modern Religious Attitude

The modern PP believes that the World has its own Law and the Scientific method is the means for discovering the Law of the World,—hoping that when we know enough about the Law of the World, we shall be able to cope with all human problems. Therefore the best that humans can do is to promote Scientific Research.

The RA that derives from the Modern PP is to use the scientific reason for criticizing religious teaching. Some come to the conclusion that all religions are equally unreasonable, superstitious, and hindering the scientific progress. Others declare that all articles of religious faith can be reasonably proved or at least explained scientifically. Here we take the meaning of "scientifically" in the broad sense. The result from this fourth RA is that many modern intellectuals have no interest in Religion. They don't have even interest to discuss about Religion, considering it as the affair of the non-scholars. Some others intentionally nourish religious faith by this fourth RA. They try to prove all religious teachings and actions by reasons. This strategy creates rift far and wide among those who seriously take it: among the religionists of different faiths, among the different denominations of the same faith, among the different sects of the same denomination, and among the faithful of the same sect and the same community, etc., because each one thinks that his or her own understanding or party's opinion in right and all the others are simply wrong, as Buddha says: "Ida meva saccang."

The rift among the religious people who hold the fourth RA is still very perceptible nowadays.

CAUSE OF DIVERSITY AND UNITY

Attachment and Detachment

A Thai motto says: “Difficulty assures solution” and more often than not difficulty and solution come from the same source. When Aesop was ordered by his master to prepare the best foods to entertain his close friends, Aesop cooked all kinds of tongues he could find in his village market. Another day his master ordered him again to prepare a meal and he again cooked all kinds of tongues as in the previous cooking, but produced the worst results. Being asked to give the reasons for this discrepancy, Aesop explained that the human tongue gives rise to the best results and the worst results. It all depends on how you use your one and the same tongue.

This happens to be our state of affairs. We can say in the same way as Aesop, *mutatis mutandis*: philosophy can give the best and the worst results, depending on how you use it. If you use the Philosophy of Attachment (“*Idamevasaccang dassana*” = this view only) as your PP, you will be more and more diverse from your brothers; but if you use the Philosophy of Detachment (“*Idamannameva dassana*” = this view and others), you will be more and more unified with your brothers. If you follow the example of the New Testament Woman who shut the door in the face of a needy man saying: go in peace, I have no time for you, you will diverge from your brother; but if you follow the example of the Old Testament Woman who opened the door to welcome a needy stranger saying: I have only a handful of flour to bake for my last meal,—however, we shall share what I have, you will be united even with the stranger.

Attachment and Diversity

Concerning how Attachment Philosophy causes Diversity in Mankind, let us see what Kirti Bunchua concludes in his contextual philosophy:

The Primitive Way. “The primitive way of life and thought, the first that humanity knew, has survived through history alongside other ways. Even in our own day, not a few intellectuals continue to deal with their beliefs in this manner. They expect religion to provide them with worldly benefits, and are prepared to alter their beliefs and practices if such change would redound to their profit. In short, the primitive way remains as popular as ever today. But it hardly provides the right model

for mutual understanding.”⁴ That is, both Primitive PP and Primitive RA harden the habit of Attachment to one’s own interest so strongly that one can hardly open a door, even a window, to care about another’s views.

The Ancient Way. “This attitude that we have been calling the way of the ancients did not pass into oblivion, but has survived to the present. It is not hard to find those among contemporary religionists who still think in this way. But as they have been taught exclusivistic religions, they tend to restrict themselves to the laws and range of beliefs encompassed by their own tradition, which they consider sufficient to secure all the profit they seek. Indeed, relations with other religions would only weaken the efficacy of their own. Christians of this stamp hold that God created the world and fitted it out with laws. Those of the laws that God chose to reveal to the world are sacred and all sufficient. To have recourse to what lies outside of divine revelation is to risk displeasing God and incurring divine wrath. In like manner, Buddhists of this type consider Buddha to be the discoverer of the eternal laws. Though Buddha did not teach everything that he had discovered, what he did teach and what has been transmitted through history is sufficient for those seeking release from suffering and the accumulation of as much benefit as possible. All things considered, it is clear that there is little to hope for in mutual understanding and respect among those who live and think in the way of the ancients.”⁵ Here also the attachment is strong because of the pride of the ‘knowledge of laws’.

The Medieval Way. “Faced with this variety of competing religious ways, the medievals came to realize that what insured the survival of a religious tradition was strong cohesion among its adherents. And this in turn required that one’s own tradition be exalted as high as possible above all others. This is the form in which they have come down to our own day, and a form with which large numbers of people continue to be comfortable. Insofar as such attachment to one’s own tradition begets competition, and competition begets distrust, and distrust begets enmity, there is little hope for encounter among the people of this type.”⁶ Here attachment is nurtured more than ever because it is alimented by religious zeal. War because of religion is the most atrocious!

⁴ Kirti Bunchua, *Contextual Philosophy* (Bangkok: Assumption University Press, 1992), p.138.

⁵ *Loc.cit.*

⁶ Kirti Bunchua, *op.cit.*, p.139.

The Modern Way. “At present, most intellectuals belong to this modern way of thinking and acting. Each is sure of his or her own reasoning and its assumptions, tacit or articulated. Many give what they consider cogent reasons for not professing any religion at all, while those who profess a particular religious way, be it Buddhist or Christian or whatever, cling proudly to their own system and find security in the companionship of those who think in the same terms, or in the attempt to convert others to their way of thinking. And so the process goes on:

Division begets Competition
Competition begets Distrust
Distrust begets Annihilation

The modern way, no less than the other ways, does not hold out much hope as a way to true Mutual Understanding and Peace.”⁷

The fourth PP and RA or the Modern Way is not only the cause of diversity in its quest of rationality, backed up by the scientific conviction of success, but it draws along with it many dire consequences, such as:

1) The First World War took about 10 million human lives, because the warriors used scientific weapons to kill each other and destroy a lot of other valuables as well. The Second World War holocausted about 100 million more and incalculable treasures of humanity, because the Warring Nations used technology and nuclear energy to exterminate and annihilate. What if the Third World War should occur...?

2) The more Science and Technology advance, the poorer people become. The poor people now work harder than ever before, at least in Thailand, but they still don't have enough to eat. A small number of rich people become richer and richer, and they themselves do not know what is the benefit of becoming richer, because greater riches cannot add anything to their actual pleasure, but bring more worries and preoccupation. However they cannot resist their own instinctive desire of having more and more.

3) The progress of Science and Technology bring with them all kinds of pollutions of environments, the dilemma of which no one, so far, can find an effective way out. The dilemma is: if you want to solve the problem, you have to progress more in scientific invention, and if you invent more, you pollute more!

⁷ Kirti Bunchua, *op.cit.*, p.140.

Detachment as Solution for Division

Buddha gave a practical rule for problem-solving: solve at the cause, at the *root*. Now, by way of phenomenological analysis, we can find the cause of Divisive Diversity in this process:

Attachment begets Division
Division begets Competition
Competition begets Distrust
Distrust begets Annihilation
Annihilation begets Fight and War

Now, applying Buddha's rule to this case, we realize that we must solve the problem of Divisive Diversity by clearing away the Attachment. But from the above analysis, we have found out that Attachment is the innate nature of the four PPs and RAs. Therefore, to clear up the problem of Divisive Diversity in Mankind, there is no other way than to overthrow all kinds of Philosophy of Attachment and to replace them by the Philosophy of Detachment.

It is not surprising, then, that the whole course of the History of Mankind is full of wars and fighting. If we can eradicate Attachment from human minds, it will be like throwing the cause of wars into the flames to be burnt completely forever. Once Detachment replaces Attachment, we shall have the following equations:

Detachment begets Division of Responsibility

Division of Responsibility begets Collaboration
Collaboration begets Trust
Trust begets Mutual Understanding
Mutual Understanding begets Peace

We see, therefore, that Detachment does not erase or delete Diversity as such. What it deletes is Divisive Diversity and replaces it with Divisive Responsibility, for the latter is the one responsibility that admits diversity of accomplishment.

DIVERSITY-IN-UNITY IN PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Detachment that may serve as the way to "Diversity in Unity" must not be an Indifferentist Detachment or Indifferentism, as Buddha distinguishes *Upekkha* from *Thina* ('Toleration' from 'laziness'), because *Upekkha* is a virtue, but *Thina* is a vice.

The trend of Philosophy of authentic Detachment may be called the Fifth Philosophical Paradigm or the PP5, to distinguish it from its counterparts PPs 1-4 which are the four trends of Philosophy of Attachment. In consequence, the RA that results from the PP5 can be named RA5 to distinguish it from the RAs 1-4.

Regretfully not many people living today subscribe to the PP5 and RA5; those who hold to the previous PPs and previous RAs cut themselves off from it. But it is becoming more and more widespread among the more searching minds and spirits of our time, since Immanuel Kant who declared that the Noumena are unknowable, through Phenomenology and Existentialism to the latest Hermeneutics which analyse not for analysis' sake, but for all kinds of meaning related to Human Conditions. Authentic Detachment needs positive Phenomenology, Existentialism, and Hermeneutics, and not merely the negative side of them. Such positive process must consist of:

- 1) seeking clear statements of the questions;
- 2) seeing as many possible answers as possible and evaluating them;
- 3) selecting what is meaningful and applying them to/for the quality of life.

Therefore the process of Philosophy of Detachment is far from Indifferentism and Negativism, but it is full of life and creativity. Applying this new trend in education, humanity finds its sure way for the policy of Diversity in Unity, in which we can affirm that all ideals are good, but good in a different way from each other. There is no need to claim that all ideals are equal or even that they are all equally good. Nor have we to say in the realm of religion that all religions are the same, which we know is not the case. We do not judge one religion better than another, but we say that one religion is best for those who select it, while others are best for those who select them. By “selection” I mean consent with conviction. If we do not consider our religion to be the best, we should not adhere to it. But at the same time we respect the selection of others. Each one selects what one sees best for oneself and respects the choice of others. Only among the religionists of this stamp can proper, unbiased interchange and true sharing take place. There is no attachment to breed distrust in their hearts. Rather, in a spirit of detachment and trust, they can work together to search out the best, to share the experience of their searching, and to dialogue for the sake of improving the common quality of life. They do not mix all religious matters up confusedly, but use critical analysis to attain clarity of understanding about the foundations of their beliefs and about what can be learned from others. Finally, by evaluation they know how to be

grateful, both to their own tradition in nurturing their qualities of life and for what other traditions can add to what they aspire to.⁸

Diversity-and-Unity in Religious Education

By using phenomenological analysis, I realize that there are altogether 5 principal methods of teaching any religion. Each method comes out automatically from the PP and RA of the educators and teachers, resulting in a meaningfully efficacious imprinting in the minds of the students of the same category of PP and RA as the educators. The 5 methods are as follows:

Teaching only One Religion. This method was used exclusively in the old past days when each nation had its own national religion. Only one religion and one denomination of that religion was taught and needed to be known. No other faith was allowed to be taught and to be worshipped except the national religion, which was generally determined by the authority of the nation. This was generally practiced with the intention of guaranteeing peace within the nation.

This method of teaching is, without doubt, very good if there is only one religion without division into denominations or sects within that country; and granted there might appear, later, many religions, denominations and sects, there must be an effective way to prevent all the citizens from falling into contact with these other traditions.

Therefore, this method of teaching cannot satisfy our purpose.

Teaching Many Religions, by Exalting One at the Expense of All Others. This method became necessary in human history when the citizens of different nations came into more and more contact with each other and could learn the faith of each other. In such a context, there is a need to prevent the members of one's own religion from being fascinated by other religions. The Comparative Religion methodology in the past started to function for this purpose, because it is simple, convenient, easy to understand, attractive, and pleasing to the worshippers of the exalted religion. The result is that the students have negative or even hostile attitudes toward other religions. If a third hand interferes, the opposite parties may quarrel, hurt and kill each other and destroy the religious properties of each other. The third hand may have other intentions than the welfare of the religions involved. However, it is the easiest way to undermine all religions and religions have suffered already too much in the course of human history from the people of this

⁸ See more details in Kirti Bunchua, *Contextual Philosophy* (Bangkok: Assumption University Press, 1992).

type. Therefore, this method of teaching religions still cannot achieve or cooperate with our intention.

Teaching All Religions Unbiasedly. This method is a reaction against the bias of traditional Comparative Religion Methodology. The faiths of the teachers or of the writers generally gain the upper hand. To be surely unbiased, the teachers and the writers of religions should not belong to any faith: they should be 'areligionists', in order not to take side with any particular faith, because they have no faith to be biased towards.

The use of this method results in the loss of faith on the students' part. As the teachers have no faith, surely they don't have bias to exalt any religion, but their 'unbias' is now expressed principally by considering all religions as equally superstitious, (scientifically) illogical, and as obstructing the progress of human culture. The Cultural Revolution during the Mao Regime in China is an outstanding example.

This method, too, does not measure up to our intention of nurturing Diversity in Unity.

Teaching Many Religions by Exalting All Equally. This method is based on the assumption that all religions are equally good; all of them can bring their members to 'quality of life', which is the same purpose and 'end' of/for all humans. The results of this method is the tendency to unite all religions into one Religion, to unite all Scriptures into one Scripture, to combine all Founders into one Succession of Founders, to equalize all religious objects into one standard, and to adapt all religious faiths into one correlated Faith. This method seems to be good and many accept it as the most laudable method, because it gives a fair play to all religions; but in practice it tends to give birth to a new religion which is accepted only by a small number of worshippers. All the rest continue to cling to the separated traditions. Divisive Diversity continues to undermine Humanity, but with more complication. This method evidently doesn't reach our aim either.

Teaching All Religions in the Context of Each. This method may be called the Contextual Method and the religions considered under this method would be called accordingly Contextual Religions. This method is based on the assumption that all religions are good but differently good. So each religion is analyzed and evaluated according to the context of each religion, each denomination, each sect, and each particular unit. Each religious value is hopefully confirmed in each content of acceptance. We ask the students who study under this method to hold a Phenomenologico-Analytic Attitude of Creative Detachment

during the study time. After that each one should go back to his or her original faith.

The teachers and the students who agree to use this method and attitude, then, can make discussion and judgement on the same basis, regardless of their religious background, because during the time of study within this atmosphere, no personal faith, but only the faith to be considered in its context, is involved.

The result of this method is hopefully to bring mutual understanding and sincere well-wishing to one another and slowly but surely the diversity in unity will show up in Humanity.⁹

Diversity-in-Unity in the Scriptural Interpretation

When a passage of Religious Scripture of any religion is read or heard, it can be understood in one of the five ways of interpretation according to the PP and RA of the reader or hearer, or interpreter, in case the reader or the hearer doesn't interpret it for himself. It is not surprising to observe that more often than not, though the preacher or the expounder interprets in one way, the faithful automatically modify it to adapt it to their own way of understanding.

Literal Interpretation. The religionists of PP1 and RA1 would understand the Scriptures faithfully according to the meaning of the words and grammatical structure of the language.

“God created the Universe in 6 days” means really the six days of 24 hours each, with day-time and night-time, morning, noon, afternoon, and evening as we understand it today by the word “day”, though in the order of creation, the sun, the moon and the stars will be created on the fourth day.

“Buddha, at the moment of his birth, walked 7 steps upon 7 lotus flowers”, means that He really stood up and walked forward and under his feet there appeared the real 7 lotus flowers.

“Indra, in His Dusit Heaven, has 84,000 fairy-maidens as His consorts” means exactly that number of wives together with a supernatural kingdom for a man who had offered his pond for public use in India, to possess as a reward for his merit after his departure from this World.

This interpretation, as is evident, emphasizes on complying to the Will of the On-High. When it is known, it is attended to with the utmost respect. No seriousness is considered too much, and too much is always surer than too little.

⁹ See more details in Kirti Bunchua, *Contextual Religions* (Bangkok: Assumption University Press, 1994).

Symbolic Interpretation. The gifted among the people of PP2 and RA2 might hit upon a new understanding when they cannot find adequate words in their context to express it satisfactorily, so they have recourse to symbols as the better way of expression. “God created the World within 6 days” for them symbolically indicates that we humans have the right to work only six days per week, leaving the seventh day for God. “Sivalingam” symbolizes the Creative Power of the Universe. “Mara” tempting Buddha before the moment of His Enlightenment symbolizes egoistic desire that is hidden in human nature itself. Those who reach the level of PP2 and RA2 have the capacity to understand the symbols according to the level of their intelligence and learning.

Contextual Interpretation. When the Bible says “God created the World in 6 days,” we cannot take the word “day” literally as the period of 24 hours, with day and night, morning and evening, because the markers of day and night (Sun and Moon) were to be created only on the fourth day of creation. How could we measure the first 3 days? However, according to the context of the Jewish culture, “day” may mean also “duration,” so 1 day may last for millions and millions of years, as it is said in another place of the same Bible: “A thousand years are to you like a yesterday which has passed like a watch of the night.” By the same token, “Indra has 84,000 celestial consorts” means that, according to the Indian cultural context, he has to the full the satisfaction of celestial happiness. In the same way “for eternity” may mean a very long period, so long that we can neglect its eventual exhaustion, as it seems to have endless duration.

This interpretation derives from PP3 and RA3 which emphasize sacrificing the illusionary happiness of this World for the authentic and more advantageous happiness of the Life-to-come. Everything is adapted to conform to this pattern with the utmost attention.

Rational Interpretation. It conforms to PP4 and RA4 to give scientific reason to every statement. Scriptures also must be evaluated rationally, by always asking the question “why?”: “Why did God create the World?” “Why in 6 days?” “Why does God let humans suffer?” And so on. The more men reason, the more they dispute and the more their mentality is far away from religious virtues and from each other.

Literary-Form Interpretation. This interpretation derives from PP5 and RA5 with critical mind to analyze and to evaluate according to the attitude of Phenomenology. There is, therefore, no fixed form for this kind of interpretation; the only fixed rule is to take into consideration the context of the writer: his intention of writing and the literary form he chooses to express his intention. The contextuality of the writer

consists of the external contexts (social, political, economic and cultural), as well as the internal ones (psychological construction and philosophical paradigms). The interpreter must try to know all of these as much as possible, and to get the best interpretation out of it. Sometimes rational assumptions are required if facts are not available. Surely this method of interpretation is the most laborious, but also the most recompensatory. It is also the most satisfying for our purpose and the most challenging at the same time. It challenges the intellectuals to exert their effort and aspiration for something that is always better.

Using this method, a mythology must be interpreted as mythology and for seeking out the mythological values. The same thing is applied to epic, romantic, and poetic expressions and other literary forms, such as chronicles, letters, personal diaries, sermons, homilies, conversations, dialogues, monologues, essays, mystical experiences and supernatural phenomena. The two last items together form the category of "Religious Experiences," which we shall specify later. Some passages can be classified under several categories. The second chapter of Genesis of the Judeo-Christian Scriptures, for instance, is a good example to be classified at the same time under the genres of mythology, epic, poem and classics.

In short, the fifth mode of interpretation does not deny the technique of the four previous modes. Each of them, however, may be implemented in the context of each passage of the Scriptures.

We try our best to make acquaintance with the fifth mode of interpretation, to improve its technique, and to implement it in the spirit of the phenomenologists. Nevertheless, the most difficult literary form to interpret and also the most problematic passages are perhaps the expressions of the mystics, called also by the term 'religious experiences'. The scholars of Religions have to pay special attention to them and develop great interest in them. I shall develop this notion later.

From the above analysis, we can conclude that the fifth method of teaching religions is most relevant to our need. It is the application of the PP5 and RA5.

Diversity-in-Unity in Mystic Experiences

Many religious people have religious experiences and dare not express them in words for fear that the listeners might be misled. We can cite as examples the Pacceka Buddhas in the Buddhist context, and the Desert Hermits in the Christian Context.

It is a fact that all great World Religions declare they include a good number of mystics, but very few of these mystics commit their mystical experiences into positive writing, but keep on saying negatively that their experience is inexplicable or ineffable. The moderate ones,

while exposing something positively, take at the same time some precautions by saying that they can expose only a minimum part of the reality of their experiences. Buddha, for example, compares His teaching to a handful of leaves,—while all He knows is like leaves of the whole forest. Jesus Christ, before sending His disciples to preach His Gospel to the World, recommends them to receive the Holy Spirit first, because “I have many things to say to you, but you cannot understand them now. However, when the Spirit of Truth has come, He will guide you into all truth” (John 16:12-13).

Some parts of the Religious Scriptures are the words of mystics who tried to reveal their experiences in some way, so that the devotees may approach the supra-mundane by human means. We have to know the contexts and interpret them accordingly. The semantics of human language try to analyse and interpret the mystical language of the Religious Founders and Masters. I follow the Human-Dhammic Languages Theory, proposed by the late Ven. Buddhadasa in his Thompson’s Lectures at the Protestant Seminary in Thailand. In his spirit I distinguish 5 levels of understanding mystical language. In this way, I hope we may approach the intention of each mystic, and by comparing their intentions with each other, and possibly with our own experience if any, we may better and better approach the hidden reality of religious value.

Surface Meaning. It is the meaning at the level of the ordinary people, imbued with personal feeling and inclination. Oftentimes they quarrel with each other because of their differences in their feelings and inclinations, with the result of killing and wounding each other, leaving aside the smaller innumerable cases of hurting and displeasing the feelings of each other.

Deep Meaning. It is the meaning at the scientific level. The population of this level may have also feelings and experiences mixed up in their understanding and have, therefore, the surface meaning in their minds, but they know that it is only relative understanding at the popular level. They try, therefore, to get the scientific data and deduce a scientific knowledge independent of feeling and inclination. It is scientific and absolute knowledge for them, because it is based on scientific method.

The Deepest Meaning. It is the meaning in the minds of the mystical communicators, especially the Founders of Religions and Masters of the Religious Schools. These venerable persons understand something beyond ordinary human experiences. They cannot express it by ordinary languages which in fact are based on human experiences.

Humans invented languages to communicate what they experience or to explain their experiences. The common folk understand according to their experiences (surface meaning) or according to what they can deduce from their experiences (deep meaning). If they try to understand the words of the mystics they may understand at these two levels. They can never rise up to the understanding itself of the mystical communicators. Many mystics, e.g., the Phacceka Buddhas, so focus on this human defect that they decide not to communicate so as to avoid misunderstanding. Some, however, like Sammasam-Buddhas, hope that at least some disciples may reach the “deeper meaning,” so they communicate for these people.

We can imagine an allegory of a man climbing up and reaching the peak of a high mountain. He sees a beauty never experienced by his villagers before. However, he desires to share to his village fellows the beauty he perceives. He comes down to his village on the plain and tries to communicate to the villagers by making comparisons, in many ways, with what the villagers can understand in their experiences. But most of the villagers laugh at him because of their incredulity. But some suspect that there might be something behind and beyond their ordinary experiences. The latter climb up the same mountain. The more they climb up, the more extraordinary experiences they gain. They are making progress towards the “deeper meaning,” until they reach the peak of the mountain: then they experience the same beauty as the communicators. Now they have the same difficulty to explain what they see to the people on the plain. If they try to do so at all, they have to use the same methods as the previous communicators, that is to use the language of ordinary experiences to explain the extraordinary unknown experiences. Such a communication is called by Venerable Buddhadasa “Dhammic Language”, which means using human language (the language of ordinary experiences) to explain what is beyond. We have to look for the inner part beyond the cover to savor the core of religious reality.

Deeper Meaning. It is the meaning at the level of Religious Practitioners. They are not satisfied with the ordinary levels of human language, so they put the Religious Precepts into practice, though they don't clearly understand yet the what and the why, but they have confidence in the person of the communicator and believe in his words. By practising, they are sure to get deeper and deeper meaning of reality. The more they practise, the deeper meaning of reality they reach and the more they are happy. It is the happiness unexperienced by those who never practise it at all.

Critical Meaning. This level derives from PP5 and RA5. It is composed of analysis and evaluation with the unbiased attitude of a phenomenologist. At this level, we accept all levels for granted and consider all of them as data for our analysis and evaluation, so that we may choose the best at the moment and expect always for the better. It is the Contextual Method also that leads to the Critical Meaning.

Diversity-in-Unity in the Political World

I read Rawls' book *Political Liberalism* with interest and I follow his exposition with interest. I regret a little that his exposition is too indifferentist and might sooner or later fall into the real Religious Indifferentism in Politics. And that will automatically, little by little and insensibly, undermine the zeal of religious ideals. I should like to suggest that his Political Liberalism should take more positive responsibility to encourage with un-bias all comprehensive ideals that the majority agrees have the capacity of enhancing the quality of life. Moreover I should like to see the politicians of 'fair justice' to find ways through which all the Comprehensive 'Visioners' should effectively dialogue with each other in the spirit of the PP5 and RA5.

Diversity-in-Unity in the Business World

Our World is more and more reduced to Business. We are more and more businessmen to each other. While in my office, I am a businessman to my clients. After the office hour, I go shopping, becoming client to a lot of sellers in the shopping center. When my son enters a kindergarten, I become a client to those who run the kindergarten, who might be my clients in my business office an hour later. If we don't find some way to give an appropriate PP and RA to our youth from now on, the World in the near future will be shaped according to the PP and RA of the majority. Therefore, if possible, let them be shaped through our Business Ethics Education according to the desirable PP and RA.

I should like to suggest that at the basis of all professions, our generation should be conscientized about the good qualities of human nature and of the ways to develop them in the lines of Diversity-in-Unity. For this purpose, we try to analyse with phenomenological attitude the abilities of a man, thus:

- He has the ability of creativity
- He has the ability of adaptation
- He has the ability of inquiry
- He has the ability of collaboration

To have the Authentic Happiness According to Reality, he has to develop all these abilities to form in himself:

- a Man-for-Himself
- a Man-with-Others
- a Man-for-Others
- a Man-for-the-World. (See more details in Kirti Bunchua, *Foundation for Professional Ethics*, Bangkok: Assumption University Press, 1994.)

Then, for a Businessman, I would like to analyse in the same way the qualities inherent to the Nature of Business that assure our Businessmen the 'Authentic Happiness According to Reality', thus:

- Business is Business, not Charitable Enterprise,
- Businessman must clear of Ethical Dilemmas in his mind,
- Businessman must have fair gain,
- Businessman must have the chance to savor a life of quality.

However a Businessman can enjoy his above-mentioned privileges in each of the following levels and gain the authentic happiness appropriate to each level:

- Utilitarian level,
- Humanistic level,
- Religious level.

Ethics for other professions should be developed along these same lines.¹⁰

I close by thanking Professor McLean for his great endeavor of trying to 'conscientize' the study of 'philosophy and value'. I hope that my efforts might be of some use for his project.

*Assumption University
Bangkok, Thailand*

¹⁰ See more details in Kirti Bunchua, *Ethics for Businessman*, to be translated from the Thai edition (Bangkok: Assumption University Press, 1994).

CHAPTER XIV

UNITY IN DIVERSITY: THE POLISH IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE IN AMERICA

JAMES S. PULA

INTRODUCTION

Historians studying the immigrant experience in America frequently depict the values of “unity” and “diversity” as opposite end points on a continuum of human response to new socioeconomic conditions. Removed from their initial culture and thrust into an alien land with new values, traditions and culture, immigrants under this scenario faced the inevitable dilemma of choosing between the mutually exclusive models of “unity” and “diversity.” By choosing the former, the immigrants in effect adopt the culture and traditions of the new culture, in the process losing their original cultural traits to the extent that they become one with what sociologists refer to as the dominant society, the prevalent general culture of the host society. By choosing the latter, the immigrants adhere to their old culture and heritage with a resulting socioeconomic isolation from the mainstream of the dominant society that effectively limits their material advancement.

Every immigrant to America faced this seeming dichotomy of subcultural survival versus general societal unity. Discovering how to order their lives to make sense of their new world, cope with its often unfamiliar and conflicting demands, and co-exist with people from other cultural backgrounds was a crucial element in immigrant adjustment. While historians have generally portrayed immigrant response to this dilemma as a choice between the mutually exclusive models of unity and diversity, in practice immigrants often found an equilibrium that allowed them to retain elements of their own “diversity” while establishing a functional “unity” with the dominant society. This study focuses on the practical responses that illustrate how immigrants were able to balance these seemingly conflicting values within the reality of diversity in the context of a new cultural unity.

THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT

History is not just a series of names, dates and events. The essence of history is understanding: studying the past in search of meaning, questioning why events happen, what effect they have on the

course of history, and what might be different if some other decision or interpretation were adopted. One of the key elements in determining the meaning of history is “perspective.” Events cannot be understood in a vacuum, but must be studied and interpreted in the historical and cultural milieu in which they took place. In this sense, the Poles who chose to migrate to the United States during the period of mass migration between 1880 and 1920 were, at least to some extent, already prepared to cope with the unique experience of living in a society where they would be faced with the conflicting choices of unity and diversity.

Long before the beginning of the mass migration, Poland had developed a political philosophy of toleration of resident minorities that allowed it to retain the diversity of its varied peoples while at the same time creating a unified nation state. In the fifteenth century, at a time when religious dissenters were being burned as heretics and nations conspired to dominate each other in Western Europe, the Polish-Lithuania Commonwealth adopted a law in 1425 guaranteeing personal liberty to all citizens, and in 1430 another act provided that people could not be imprisoned without a lawful verdict of a court. So liberal were the policies of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth during the period of Jagiellonian rule that the nation became a haven for minorities including Ruthenians, Latvians, Germans, Moslem Tartars, Jews, Armenians, Greeks, Italians, Scots, and others who sought religious freedom and the right to enjoy their own native culture. In Poland, so long as the inhabitants remained loyal to the state they were generally free to practice their individual religious beliefs and retain their cultural traditions. During the sixteenth century, for example, while religious warfare swept Western Europe, the Polish king Zygmunt August was called upon by both belligerents to demand religious conformity within his realms. The king refused, stating “I am the king of the people, not the judge of their consciences.”¹

As a further protection for diversity within Polish realms, the “*Nihil Novi*” enacted in 1505 provided for *election* of the members of the Lower House at district councils. Later, under the *Pacta Conventa* of 1573, all Polish citizens were given *the legal right to withdraw their allegiance from the king* if he broke any law passed by parliament or the specific conditions of his election. All of these were, by sixteenth century standards, unique democratic reforms.²

¹ For specific information and citations on the development of Polish democratic philosophy see M.B. Biskupski & James S. Pula, eds., *Polish Democratic Thought from the Renaissance to the Great Emigration: Essays and Documents* (New York: East European Monographs, Columbia University Press, 1990), see especially chapters 1 and 2.

² Biskupski & Pula, chapter 2.

During the seventeenth century, the writings of Polish philosophers and political theorists began to appear in Western Europe. One of these was Wawrzyniec Goślicki, Bishop of Poznań, who published a brief book titled *De Optimo Senatore* in Venice in 1568. In this work, Goślicki espoused the limitation of royal authority, equality of opportunity based upon merit, and freedom of religious worship. At a time when the divine right of kings and religious intolerance were commonplace in Western Europe, this book was considered extremely radical. In fact, when it was translated into English as *The Counsellor* in 1598, Elizabeth Tudor ordered all copies destroyed. Despite this royal banishment, a second edition translated by William Oldisworth appeared in 1733. It was this volume that exerted a profound effect on political thinking throughout Europe and America. Read by such enlightened philosophers and political writers as Sydney, Locke, Rousseau and Montesquieu, there is evidence that Goślicki's work had a significant impact on the development of their own democratic and egalitarian thought.³

Thus, by the eighteenth century, Poland was a multinational state with a varied ethnic, religious and linguistic population containing large numbers of Ukrainians, Belorussians, Lithuanians and other ethnic minorities, as well as a variety of religions including, among others, Catholicism, Orthodoxy, Judaism, Protestantism, and the Uniates. Evolution of Polish political philosophy reached a culmination with the adoption of the Constitution of May 3, 1791, which, among other provisions, stated that "In as much as the holy faith bids us love our neighbors, we owe to all persons, of whatever persuasion, peace in their faith and the protection of the government, and therefore we guarantee freedom to all rites and religions in the Polish lands, in accordance with the laws of the land."⁴ Despite the partitions which dismembered Poland among its more powerful neighbors during the 1790s, it was this cultural and philosophical context that Polish immigrants brought with them to America. It was a perspective in which Poles had direct experience living in a multicultural land where diversity existed within the unity of the Polish nation state.

THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The beginnings of a permanent Polish migration to the United

³ For an English language reprint of this interesting text, see Wawrzyniec Grzymala Goslicki, *The Accomplished Senator* (Miami: The American Institute for Polish Culture, 1992), ed. with an introduction by Kenneth Thompson.

⁴ For an English language translation of this document see Biskupski & Pula, 168-177.

States can be traced to the year 1795 when Russia, Prussia, and Austria succeeded in eliminating Poland from the map of Europe, dividing her lands among themselves. The dismemberment of Poland among the partitioning powers provided a political motivation for Poles to emigrate. These refugees were followed by small groups of political exiles who fled from Europe after the failure of Polish revolutions in 1830-31, 1846, 1848, and 1863. Beginning in the 1870s the magnitude and composition of Polish immigration changed dramatically. The typical immigrant became the rural peasant seeking economic advancement. First hundreds, then thousands of agrarian laborers left the lands of partitioned Poland seeking jobs in industrial America. By 1890 their numbers reached into the tens of thousands annually, rising to a peak of approximately 100,000 in 1907.

The Poles who came to America in this massive economic migration were by many standards a simple people, yet they were motivated by very clearly defined purposes. They came primarily for economic reasons, to make a better life for themselves and their families through employment in America's expanding mines and factories. Yet, examination of their personal letters and memoirs reveals that they also sought freedom and respect in a nation whose fundamental laws were touted in Poland as providing individual equality and freedom. Given Poland's sad history of oppression under the partitioning powers, her sons and daughters came to the New World in search of a land that would provide opportunity for a better life while at the same time guaranteeing them the right to maintain their own culture, to speak their own language, to worship as they saw fit, to own property, and to participate in a democratic society.

The America that the immigrants found met many of their hopes and expectations, but it presented them with an unexpected cultural shock as well. The crowded, hectic, often inhospitable surroundings of urban America were inconceivably different from those of the quiet, unhurried lifestyle of rural Poland where most of the newcomers had previously lived. To survive in this urban environment, the Poles reacted much the same as other immigrant groups by forming ethnic communities within the various cities where they settled. The focal point of these communities was the local church which, in Poland, had served not only a religious function but also acted as a center of social life and a protector of Polish culture during foreign occupation. Thus, it is not surprising that the struggle to achieve "Unity in Diversity" is reflected most vividly in the immigrants' interaction with the Roman Catholic Church in America where competing ethnic groups sought acceptance of their cultural heritage while at the same time maintaining the unity of Catholicism.

The first battleground was internal to the group, developing with the rise of Polish American organizations seeking to provide social and economic support for people in their adaptation to American life. The initial ethnic organizations, whether religious or secular, focused both on concern for the homeland and local issues of everyday life. By the mid-1860s Chicago was already the largest Polish settlement in America. Because of this, and the large concentration of Poles in a small geographic area, there were several movements to unify Chicago Poles into a single umbrella organization. These efforts were largely fruitless because there was a deep division between nationalist and clerical factions.

Led by Ladislas Dyniewicz, publisher of Chicago's first Polish newspaper and head of the Gmina Polska [Polish Commune] society, the nationalists were a secular group who believed that, in the spirit of the old Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, *all* Poles should be organized into a central association to unite the diversity of the old Commonwealth to work for the freedom and independence of their homeland. They also supported the creation of lay councils to oversee the operations of the local parishes, thereby issuing an implicit challenge to clerical control of this vital community resource. The clerical faction, led by Peter Kiolbassa, also favored independence for the homeland, but they equated the concept of *Polskość* [Polishness] with Catholicism and objected to the inclusion of Socialists, Jews, schismatics and non-believers, thus presenting a challenge to the traditional Polish view of diversity.⁵

Bitter quarrels raged between the two groups as each attempted to gain control of Chicago Polonia, divisiveness that soon spread throughout all of Polonia. In the early years the nationalists predominated, but in 1871 the Resurrectionists, a Catholic religious order that included a strong Polish presence, negotiated an agreement with Bishop Thomas Foley to administer all non-diocesan Polish parishes for the succeeding ninety-nine years. They became strong allies of Kiolbassa's clerical faction, providing it with the authority and resources to displace the nationalists as the more influential group.⁶ However, the lack of any lay organizational structure beyond the parish level was a detriment to the solidification of religious influence over the immigrant community. To remedy this void and to spread clerical influence even further, Rev. Theodore Gieryk founded in 1873 an organization designed to promote *Polskość* on the national level. Gieryk initially envisioned this organiza-

⁵ Joseph Parot, *Polish Catholics in Chicago 1850-1920* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1981), *passim*; James S. Pula, *Polish Americans: An Ethnic Community* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995), 33.

⁶ *Ibid.*

tion, which adopted the name Zjednoczenie Polskie Rzymsko-Katolickie [Polish Roman Catholic Union; PRCU], as open to all. His primary supporters, Resurrectionist Father Wincenty Barzyński and his brother Jan, lay editor of the newspaper *Pielgrzym* [Pilgrim], insisted that membership be restricted to Poles loyal to Roman Catholicism. The Barzyńskis triumphed when the official constitution fused religion and nationalism as emphasized in its motto, “Bóg i Ojczyzna” [God and Fatherland]. The constitution called for maintenance of the faith, mutual aid and cultural improvement, requiring members to be loyal to their priests and bishops.⁷

Initially, the debate between exclusivity and inclusiveness continued within the PRCU, but in 1875, at its Third Congress, the PRCU formally voted to remain “Roman Catholic.” Because of this, the PRCU’s primary mission was the preservation of the immigrants for the Roman Catholic faith, thereby precluding the diversity required to maintain a truly national Polish American organization, while at the same time setting up a direct confrontation between the opposing values of unity and diversity.⁸

As the dominance of the clerical element in Chicago spread under the influence of the Resurrectionists and the Polish Roman Catholic Union, the nationalist faction became increasingly determined to regain its former position of hegemony. In 1879 its leaders appealed to Agaton Giller, a prestigious Polish exile then residing in Switzerland, to use his influence to establish an umbrella organization for all Polonia.⁹ Giller responded by publishing in the Polonia press “An Open Letter to the Poles in America” advocating a single, national, all-inclusive Polish American organization. Appealing to Polish patriotism, his letter read, in part, “Having become morally and patriotically uplifted by the fact that we have unified ourselves, the major task before a Polish organization must be to help our people attain a good standard of living in America. For, when the masses of Poles in America simply by their very presence in the country, reflect the good name of Poland to all whom they meet, they will be providing an enormously important service to Poland. In time this service to Poland will be even greater as Poles begin to exert

⁷ William J. Galush, “Both Polish and Catholic: Immigrant Clergy in the American Church,” *Catholic Historical Review*, Vol. 70, No. 3 (1984), 412.

⁸ Frank Renkiewicz, “An Economy of Self-Help: Fraternal Capitalism and the Evolution of Polish America,” in Charles A. Ward, Philip Shashko and Donald E. Pienkos, eds., *Studies in Ethnicity: The East European Experience in America* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1980), 74; Pula, 33.

⁹ Renkiewicz, 75; Pula, 33-34.

influence upon the political life of the United States.”¹⁰ His appeal was clearly for unification of Poland’s traditionally diverse elements.

Encouraged by Giller’s initiative, and growing discontent with exclusive clerical control of the PRCU, a meeting of nationalist leaders at the home of Juliusz Andrzejkowicz in Philadelphia in 1880 led to formation of the Związek Narodowy Polski [Polish National Alliance; PNA]. The fundamental question that divided the PRCU and PNA was the definition of *Polskość*. While the PRCU maintained that Polishness and Catholicism were inextricably linked, the PNA held, in the tradition of the Polish-Lituanian Commonwealth, that *anyone* born in Poland who supported the national cause should be admitted.¹¹ These differences were best described by Edward Kantowicz who explained that “The PNA was a nationalist organization, directed by political émigrés from Poland who worked as a sort of Polish ‘Zionist’ force for the liberation of the motherland from the partitioning powers. PNA leaders considered the American Polish colonies to be a ‘fourth province of Poland.’ The Alliance’s leaders were laymen, its policies at least mildly anticlerical, and its membership open to Polish Jews, schismatics, and nonbelievers as well as Catholics. The PRCU, as its name implied, was a religious organization, open only to Catholics, dominated by the clergy, and dedicated primarily to the strengthening of Catholicism among the immigrant Poles.”¹²

In short, the PRCU fought to preserve Roman Catholicism by resisting cultural assimilation into American society, while the primary goals of the PNA were to achieve the independence of the homeland and provide assistance to Polish immigrants in America. To achieve its goals the PNA “sought to encourage at least some assimilation so as to gain influence in the United States in order to help Poland.” Although the assimilating influence of each organization during this early period can

¹⁰ Donald Pienkos, *PNA: A Centennial History of the Polish National Alliance of North America* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1984), 52-53.

¹¹ Daniel Buczek, “The Polish-American Parish as an Americanizing Factor,” in Charles A. Ward, Philip Shashko and Donald E. Pienkos, eds., *Studies in Ethnicity: The East European Experience in America* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1980), 161; Pienkos, *PNA*, 50-51; Galush, “Polish and Catholic,” 413; Renkiewicz, “Self-Help,” 75; Pula, 34.

¹² Edward Kantowicz, “Polish Chicago: Survival through Solidarity,” in Melvin G. Holli and Peter d’A. Jones, eds., *The Ethnic Frontier: Essays in the History of Group Survival in Chicago and the Midwest* (New York: William B. Eerdmans, 1977), 190.

be questioned, there is no doubt that the goals of the two organizations conflicted on several levels.¹³

The struggle for dominance between the PNA and PRCU in the 1880s and 1890s was a bitter fight punctuated by vicious editorials, legal actions, and sometimes violence. The clerical forces, led by Rev. Wincenty Barzyński of Chicago and Rev. Jan Pitass of Buffalo, attacked the PNA repeatedly over its inclusive definition of *Polskość*, labeling it a godless organization and at one time threatening excommunication to any Catholic who joined its ranks. The PNA struck back in kind, arguing in its weekly organ, ironically named *Zgoda* [Harmony], that the PRCU was not really interested in supporting the Polish national cause, only in promoting Catholicism.¹⁴ The rapid development of the PNA, even in the face of threats of excommunication, clearly shows the general tendency of Polish immigrants to favor an inclusive diversity within a general theme of societal unity.

Yet, the central focus of the Roman Catholic Church within the immigrant community proved to be a source of yet another conflict over the relative merits of unity and diversity. In Poland, a century of occupation by foreign powers had taught the people to turn to the church and the Roman Catholic clergy as their link to Polish culture and heritage. With proscriptions against the teaching of Polish, the study of Polish history and culture, and the printing of Polish books, the local churches became the center of a massive social system that preserved Polish culture and actively promoted the ideals of Polish nationalism. It is thus not surprising that the immigrant in America, alone and overwhelmed by the enormity of the cities and their attendant differences from the immigrants' native rural culture, turned to the Church for support. Indeed, substantial amounts of money were spent on constructing and enlarging churches wherever Poles settled. The church was invariably one of the first "public" buildings to be erected. It provided a link of familiarity with the homeland, but more importantly it served as the focal point of the Polish community in America, providing cultural stability in a sea of instability, protection against outside influences, a source of education for both young and old, and a general group support system that allowed the immigrants to survive in their new surroundings. In partitioned Poland the influence of the Church as a transmitter of

¹³ David Januszewski, "Organizational Evolution in a Polish American Community," *Polish American Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (1985), 49; Thomas and Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1927), 1602-1611.

¹⁴ Renkiewicz, 75; Pula, 34.

culture, values, and nationality was pervasive; in the United States its position was identical within the immigrant communities.¹⁵

Yet, while the Church provided a link with the past and a source of stability in a foreign land, the Polish immigrant found that the Church in America was itself a foreign, non-Polish influence in the form of an American hierarchy dominated by Irish and German bishops. In Poland, religion and nationalism were inextricably interwoven; in America, the immigrant found that "Polish" parishes were often led by priests who did not speak the language of the parishioners or share their traditions. Most Irish and German bishops actively pursued a course of "Americanization" which reminded the Poles of the forced *kulturkampf* by which Bismarck's Germany attempted to denationalize the Poles in Europe. To the Polish immigrant of the 1880s, the predominant values were those of *Polskość* [Polishness] and *równouprawienie* [equality]. Immigrants came to America seeking equality of opportunity, a democratic participation in determining their own future, and the freedom to preserve their ethnic heritage. In America, the Church, as the single most important link with the Old Country and the focal point of the New World ethnic community, was also at once both the immigrants' succor and their antagonist.

In America, the Polish immigrant found a Church, already nervous about the growth of the Cahenslyist movement, that was often outspoken in its support for Americanization of the immigrant parishes. It actively opposed *Polskość* by objecting to the use of Polish, the teaching of Polish history and culture, and the immigrant's preoccupation with working for the eventual independence of the homeland. It ignored *równouprawienie* by mandating at the Plenary Council in 1884 that the bishops hold title to all parish property, by refusing to allow democratic participation in parish management, and by passing over Polish priests for appointments as bishops.¹⁶ Indeed, by 1900 there were nearly 900 Polish parishes in the United States, with Poles constituting about twelve percent of all Catholics in America. On a numerical basis, this should have resulted in eleven bishops and two archbishops of Polish background. There were none, and that fact, coupled with the obvious hostility of the Irish hierarchy to the appointment of Polish bishops, led to the lack of Polish bishops becoming the single most important symbolic issue in the struggle of the Polish immigrant with the Church.

Faced with a Church that they no longer considered sympathetic, many Poles became openly hostile to the established religious order in America, thereby jeopardizing the traditional ability of Poles to

¹⁵ Pula, 38-39.

¹⁶ Pula, 39-40.

accommodate diversity within a political unity. Given their own support for the ideals of *Polskość* and *równouprawienie*, many of the Polish American clergy found themselves in the difficult position of balancing their obligations to the ecclesiastical hierarchy's authority with their own affinity for the wishes of their parishioners. In the extremes, the Polish priests acted with uncompromising ardor. On the one hand, the extreme dissidents followed the lead of Rev. Francis Hodur in breaking with the American hierarchy to form the independent Polish National Catholic Church (PNCC), the only successful schismatic movement in American Catholic history. The development of the PNCC served to polarize the attitudes of those who remained loyal to the established Catholic order.

Rev. Wincenty Barzyński, a staunch supporter of the hierarchy, carried on a bitter and unremitting conflict against both the PNA and the infant PNCC, insisting on uncompromising obedience to ecclesiastical authority. In many respects, Barzyński was typical of Polish hardline clerical leadership during the era between 1880 and 1910: unyielding and uncompromising. He considered the Nationalists to be "a clique of unbelieving saloon-keepers," reserving a particular antipathy for the Hodurites.¹⁷

Between the extremes of Hodur and Barzyński lay a spectrum of individualized responses, but the most significant group, the one which found itself in the greatest quandary, was composed of Polish priests who chose to remain within the authority of the American Church but refused to abandon their efforts to obtain equality for the Polish faithful and their clergy within the Church. Chief among the priests in articulating an acceptable alternative for the large majority of Poles was Rev. Waław Kruszką.

Born on March 2, 1868, in the Prussian sector of partitioned Poland, Kruszką was exposed in his youth to the repressive Prussian *kulturkampf* that sought to eradicate all save the German language and culture. Under the constant tutelage of his father Jan, an ardent Nationalist, and his brother Szymon, a priest who was imprisoned for his opposition to the *kulturkampf*, Kruszką developed with equal intensity a deep religious faith and a vibrant nationalism that he retained throughout his adult life. Kruszką eventually left the school at Wągrowiec to enter the priesthood, graduating from the Gregorianum in Rome in 1893. During his studies he became subject to conscription into the German Army, a quandary he discussed at length with his brother. Together they determined that the only viable option was for Kruszką to leave Europe

¹⁷ Pula, 33, 36.

for America. He departed from Hamburg in 1893, settling in Milwaukee.¹⁸

Once in Wisconsin, Kruszka entered St. Francis Seminary where he became president of the Literary Society and a professor of Polish. He also took an immediate interest in the Polish American press, contributing patriotic articles under a pseudonym to his brother Michał's newspaper, *Kuryer Polski* [The Polish Courier]. He was ordained at St. Francis Seminary on June 16, 1895, whereupon he was assigned to St. Josaphat Parish in Milwaukee. Eight months later, on February 25, 1896, he was appointed assistant rector of the Polish parish in Ripon, Wisconsin. There he exerted every effort in the organization of St. Wenceslaus parish, an assignment that he would hold until 1909. During his long stay in Ripon, a period that he later referred to as his exile, Kruszka had an opportunity to immerse himself in the political squabbles which were at that moment tearing the infant American Polonia asunder.

Given his early internalization of the ideals of Polish nationalism and the Catholic faith, Kruszka was incapable of abandoning either. The one was as much an ingrained portion of his character as the other. To Kruszka, the question was one of reconciling the two ideals so that the Polish clergy and their flock in America could express their nationalism—their ethnic diversity—within the framework and unity of the Roman Catholic faith. In forming his own ideas he rapidly developed a concept of ethnic pluralism that was much in advance of his time. To Kruszka, the Church was indeed universal, but it did not logically follow that it was therefore monolithic. While it was unified in its faith and in spiritual matters, its existence throughout the world was proof that it need not be bound by a common language, a common culture, or a common nationality. The Church, he argued with all the force of his still youthful exuberance, should foster an ethnic pluralism that recognized the dignity and worth of all people, granting them an equality of opportunity to attain Church offices and to express their own ethnic identity.

Frequent contributions published in his brother's newspaper *Kuryer Polski* further expounded upon Kruszka's concept of pluralism to the point of advocating the proportional representation of Poles in the American hierarchy and arguing that the Roman Catholic Church in the United States could not itself become truly American until it ceased being Irish. Michał Kruszka, an even more outspoken critic of the American Catholic hierarchy, rapidly earned the antipathy of clergy

¹⁸ Waclaw Kruszka, *A History of Poles in America to 1908* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1993), ed. with an introduction by James S. Pula, transl. by Krystyna Jankowski, see Vol. 1, introduction.

throughout the Midwest, who labeled *Kuryer Polski* as leftist and anti-clerical.

In early 1901, Rev. Kruszka submitted an article enunciating his concept of pluralism to the editor of the *American Ecclesiastical Review*. To his chagrin, the manuscript was pointedly rejected. Taking personal offense, the uncompromising priest refused to alter a single phrase of what he had written and launched into a fierce war of words with the offending editor, H.J. Heuser. The irate Kruszka finally succeeded in publishing the full, unaltered text in the *New York Freeman's Journal* on July 29, 1901. Titled "Polyglot Bishops for Polyglot Dioceses," the article stressed ethnic pluralism, the familiar unity-in-diversity theme that he had developed during his stay in Ripon. In the article, Kruszka maintained that diversity of language and customs actually served to strengthen the Church. A bishop who did not understand the language and culture of his flock, he argued, could not fulfill his religious obligations to them. Consequently, likening the situation to the gift of languages bestowed upon the Apostles, Kruszka reasoned that if at least 20% of the Catholics in a diocese spoke a particular language, the bishop of that diocese should be conversant in that language.¹⁹ As Victor Greene explained, "At this early date Kruszka held an unusually advanced philosophical position on the relationship between Polishness and American Catholicism—a position which few of his colleagues could agree with or comprehend. In brief, he believed that both ethnic and religious sentiments could exist within Catholicism, and that the Church in America should be pluralistic."²⁰

The wide circulation of *Kuryer Polski* provided an appropriate vehicle for Kruszka's lucid, penetrating pen, propelling him into a position of prominence within the coterie of religious dissenters. Kruszka's feud with the Catholic hierarchy, set against the background of dissent prevalent at the turn of the century, was long and frequently acrimonious. The complexity of the issues included matters of faith, nationality, equality, democracy, and personal interest. Much in advance of his day, noted historian Victor Greene, Kruszka advocated "the notion of ethnic pluralism in America, positing the view that the Roman Catholic Church was a microcosm of the larger society, a universal faith recognizing many nationalities. Therefore, Kruszka believed, the objective of the American Catholic Church was to defend broadly accepted religious principles while maintaining ethnic variation within the universal faith. This policy was not contradictory; in fact, not to pursue it would either denationalize the Catholic elements, and thus de-

¹⁹ Victor Greene, *For God and Country* (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1975), 134.

²⁰ Greene, 133.

moralize them, or else help the dreaded independent movement. In either case confusion, personal misunderstanding, and factional misery would ensue. To...bind all its diverse groups to its principles, the Church had to give further recognition to ethnicity. For Kruszka this meant that the hierarchy must raise its Poles to the highest councils.”²¹

To Polish immigrants in America, the key questions of life were twofold. How could Poles reconcile allegiance to Poland and the United States without placing themselves in a marginal relationship to one or both? And, how could Poles reconcile themselves to life in a Church that was dramatically different than the one they left behind in Poland? In answering both of these questions the majority rose above the level of partisan political allegiance to a more abstract theoretical level of “democracy,” seeking to justify their dual allegiance in terms of consistency with a greater democratic ideal.²² Immigrants defined unity in diversity as the freedom to maintain their own religion, culture and historical traditions within the greater American polity and the Roman Catholic Church, not unlike their historical experience of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

In the Old Country, Polish philosophy and political theory were real and were transferred to the general population through the context of daily life and local politics, resulting in a kind of “proletarian philosophy” that provided each person with a cultural and intellectual context for the existence of diversity within a unified multicultural society. Given their origin within a multicultural state, and their own struggle to maintain their cultural heritage in the Old World, it is not surprising that Polish immigrants brought with them to America a perspective which valued ethnic community integrity but recognized the right of other such communities to exist within a greater society. Although most were not as articulate or persistent in their advocacy of “Unity in Diversity,” as was Kruszka, the predominant reaction of Poles to the North American socioeconomic context was to reject the repressive form of unity that stressed complete acculturation to American society, preferring to create instead a pragmatic response emphasizing the appropriateness of diversity within a greater societal unity, a concept they found to be in complete harmony with the ideals of democracy as they perceived them.

Metropolitan College
Washington, D.C., USA

²¹ Greene, 134.

²² Edward Kantowicz, *Polish American Politics in Chicago, 1888-1940* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 97.

CHAPTER XV

LATIN AMERICAN IDENTITY IN RELATION TO UNITY IN DIVERSITY: A SOCIAL WORK REFLECTION

MARTHA GONZALEZ

October 12, 1492, was a central date in history for it joined two worlds previously unknown one to another. Christopher Columbus, in hopes of finding a short route to the Indies, landed in America believing he had discovered a new world. Of course, it was new only for Europeans; various Asian peoples had discovered it 20,000 years earlier. In Columbus' time the discovery of America was considered to be the major achievement in the history of human kind since the creation of the world. It radically shifted the previous vision of the world to a planetary level and unveiled the reality of Copernicus' utopia.

When Europe found America it encountered different cultures at various levels of socio-cultural development. This had tragic consequences for populations and cultures, as happens always in wars of conquest and unruly colonial empires. Violence and resistance created a shock of civilizations which till this day is reflected in deep shadows and painful signs of the struggle which continues between a privileged elite and a great mass of people excluded from the material and cultural benefits of society:

The Latin American must keep hope. Since its early times as a people, frequently it has seemed tired, disillusioned and fatalist. There is a tendency to submission and resignation, a logical—if regrettable—result of colonization. We must struggle to overcome these attitudes and instead to become authors of our own history.¹

Like humanity, the Latin people encounter all sorts of problems: political, economic and technological, along with social problems which tend to render ineffective the economic and ideological advances. We are confronted by a world in which 80% of mankind lives in poverty, while 20% lays claim to the riches. One billion human beings live in absolute misery and 40,000 children die daily. Ours will be the decade in

¹ Germán Morquines, et al. *El hombre latino americano y sus valores* (Bogota: Editorial Nueva América, 1991), p. 152.

history with the highest level of new births. We live at a time of the general spread of democracy, of the imperative of private initiative and free market, and of the passing of the statist and protectionist models of life.

The debate concerning development in Latin America has been intense: it is a great preoccupation. The high social costs generated by its type of economy are reflected in the high indices of poverty and unemployment which generate in turn all sorts of problems and violence. Experts say that present economic development should be seen as an opportunity rather than a danger. Here there are two approaches: One is pessimistic and points to recession and increasing unemployment; the other is moderately optimistic and looks to an expansion of employment and growth in competition, along with other policies for promoting employment and general welfare. Here is a pertaining list of statistics:

The statistics show that Mexico City has 146,000 street vendors, almost all of which have stands. In Rio de Janeiro there are 200,000 and in Sao Paulo 160,000, five times more than the number of registered shops.²

The above points up a central issue for the new world order, that is, the mass of people without salaries who burst across frontiers and roam the world in search of more promising horizons in more developed countries.

Within each country considered first-world there is a third-world of disposed persons without means, of sick, elderly, drugged and unemployed, which constitutes the third-world of the first-world, just as there is in the third-world a first-world of privileged people with access to the culture who live at the rapid pace of modern times. This simple fact shelters artificial barriers and exports poverty to the North where it reproduces itself. Without effective development of the South, the North too will lose the hope of its own development.³

International cooperation then is not an act of philanthropy, but of mutual concern. On this I refer to Jose Vasconcelos, a distinguished Mexican intellectual, for whom the Indian culture which was the source

² Daniel Sampes Pizarro, "Lecturas Dominicales," *El Tiempo* (Jun. 12, 1994).

³ Carlos Fuentes (inauguración) "Coloquio de Invierno" (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma, 1992).

of Latin American culture can never regain its former identity in isolation from other cultural influences. In his opinion:

...races never return; each has its mission and when this is completed it passes away....The days of the pure white, the conquerors of today, are numbered, as were those of our ancestors. Upon fulfilling their constructive purpose, they form, without knowing it, the basis of the new period of merging and blending of all people. The Indian has no other gateway to the future, that is, to modern culture, nor is there any other road open for Latin civilization. Whites too will have to put aside their pride and seek progress and redemption in their brothers of other races, to perfect each of the varieties of the specie.⁴

For this Mexican philosopher, that does not imply renouncing one's own values, but being in harmony with the progress of modern culture.

The process of cultural self-knowledge enables people to avoid falling in pointless comparisons with the cultures of other peoples; it enables cultures to establish progressive analogies which make it possible to share understanding of common experiences and solutions to similar difficulties. Looking back on some structural characteristics of Latin Americans can shed some light open avenues to peaceful co-existence and establish the best conditions for the quality of life.

Language

The basic element of the unity of Latin America and the richest heritage of the encounter of America with Spain was language. Today this permits communication between 300 million people. In a period marked by communication this has become the most important resource for educating every major Hispanic population. Every study of those groups points to the major importance of basic technical and technological education.

The most important discovery in the theory of development in recent years is that of human capital; today this is as important as physical capital as a generator of growth with equity. We dream of media of communication which will be oriented toward human development and of the elaboration of a scheme of social health. Will it be possible for the media to recognize its social function? A great

⁴ J. Vasconcelos, "La raza C6smica" (M6xico: Ediciones Botas, 1940), p. 34.

educative effort will be required to bring technical development to the third-world to a unity of language enables cooperation by the media of communication in the search of a unified Latin America.

Religiosity

The people of Latin American are traditional and profoundly religious. As with all peoples, this pervades all levels of cultural life. Religious belief can be confused with the ancestral superstitions and with ideological presuppositions from other origins. All religions include a structural cosmic vision which blends intimately with the culture and social organization of the people constitute to finally the main support of the social system. On this basis it proceeds to relate to other expressions within the totality.⁵

Popular religiosity in the present life of the Latin American people is a sediment of the cultural synthesis produced in the XVI and XVII centuries. It guards carefully the variety and interconnection of the Indian, black and European strata of society. Popular Latin American religiosity can be considered a cultural synthesis which stretch across all epochs and covers the dimensions of work and production, human settlements and styles of life, language and artistic expression, political organization and everyday life.⁶

In the middle of this century, in the context of development, religion was considered an obstacle to progress. Many thought that by means of planned political enlightenment the mind could push back religious and archaic fetishes. Latin America is living through a process of secularization, if secularization be understood as "the normal tendency of a society to function in its own manner rather than on the basis of a religious scheme and structures; while secularism is conceived as the tendency to prescribe totally for religion."⁷ This process became general in the middle of this century and in some societies (Columbia)

⁵ Germán Morquines et al. *El hombre latino americano y sus valores* (Bogota: Editorial Nueva América, 1991), p. 193.

⁶ Pedro Morande, "Cultura y Modernización en América Latina," *Cuadernos del Instituto de Sociología* (Santiago de Chile: Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, 1985), p. 129.

⁷ D. Alberto Munera, "Secularización y Ética Cívica" *Colombia una casa para todos Programa por la paz*, Compañía de Jesús (Bogota: Ediciones Antropos, 1991), p. 37.

took on a religious, ideological and ethical twist closer to secularism and atheism.

The search for religion is included in the search for ethics, in much the same way as the moral vision that religion promulgates and sustains....To religion has been added an explosion of knowledge, of technology and of previously unknown possibilities that have placed in his hands instruments which permit him to manipulate ever more not only cosmic nature, but also his own humanity, from genetic even to social processes.⁸

A reassessment of popular religiosity has taken place in theology in the Latin American Catholic Church, especially since Vatican Council II, where there was at work a complex process of historical self-awareness. To reevaluate one's religiosity is to reevaluate one's past, as well as the historical continuity of the Latin American people.

The Church sees secularization as a phenomenon pointing to recognition of the autonomy of the human person. It recognizes this as a contemporary phenomenon that is valid, important, and necessary. A religious view sees human autonomy is a theological fact, for God created us as endowed with the capability for self-development and self-direction.⁹

Thus the church is not fearful of this autonomy, but accepts and defends it; it is clear in recognizing "that secular reality possesses its proper value. Would that the world of values were also as autonomous! Ethics is autonomous; it establishes society in its own right, society postulates a secular ethics. We encounter here light for a peaceful co-existence in which the church can contribute her proper values to an ethics of civil consensus.

Popular Culture

Latin American popular culture, characterized by a magical world, folklore, fantasy, superstition, passion, romanticism and archaism, was expressed marvelously in "One Hundred Years of Solitude" by Gabriel Garcia Márquez, a Columbian writer and Nobel prize winner in Literature. His many studies lead to the conclusion that this culture is a

⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 22-23.

⁹ *Ibid.*

result of the traumatic submission of American to European cultures by a terrorism that belittled the Indians and their idols in order to impose the European regime. Syncretism permits the co-existence of the American Indian deities with the Christian God. This is the most distinctive characteristic of the Latin American personality—particularly in comparison to such other regional cultures as those of Mediterranean and the Atlantic.

Another important aspect relates to what can be experienced empirically as a mode of solidarity or spontaneous brotherhood, a vehicle for communion that seems not to exist between the citizens of other regions. This is a pre-governmental social link similar to that between members of a clan or community. To understand this, two examples may help. Nothing brings people together more strongly in the Latin American than sports—football. It awakens continental pride with quasi-religious characteristics and generates a special catharsis. Many of us have grown up supporting in international matches the teams for Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, etc. This cultural solidarity is generated from within. The same could be said of some typical foods or music, this last of which reflects the continent's language, feelings, and world views. This bears the rhythms of distinct nations and races. The Salsa is a concrete case. In musical expression there is a fusion of the Caribbean rhythms which, as far away as New York, expresses South American unity in a particular available manner. These ordinary signs must be studied in order to discover the routes taken by the popular manifestations of culture as bases for a peaceful life based on a continental solidarity.

The same does not occur on the level of government and political leaders. On the international scene what should have been brotherhood has often been impregnated by distrust, egoism, and rivalry. Nevertheless, today regional organizations are making many efforts toward integration and alliances are being formed between the member nations of the continental organizations.

As Latin Americans, we are making an effort towards a vertical and continental self-help structure which implements Latin American unity. There must be more rapid consolidation of the networks of the new global system.

Family

“The family is the natural foundational element of society” (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art. 16, par. 3.) It is the major historical, cultural and religious power in the life and evolution of the villages. The Hispanic family is characterized as patriarchal, being led by a man of strong character. The family has the basic responsibility for

the education and socialization of children. Families manifest diverse modes as well as regional characteristics and functions. Such external factors as industrialization and urbanization bring internal changes to family life and as a result contribute to the dissolution of the family and the departure of young men in search of employment.

The patriarchal system has evolved in order to make room for greater equality. Men and the women share household chores and child-care. Women go to work and participate in public life, which before had been the exclusive domain of men. Thus the family continues to transform dynamically in response to external facts. In Latin America the nuclear family of a lesser size and greater longevity of the members is new. Social changes have entailed a loss of importance for formal marriage. Divorce is on the rise and single-parent families headed by women increase. The single mother, before accepted only in the lower classes, now begins to be accepted in middle and upper classes, though a full family structure remains predominant in the lower classes. New families are created from broken pairs of parents who unite for joint living without interest in procreation.

The extended family gives way to the nuclear family, which needs the extended family to help those in conjugal break-ups and to help single mothers; surrogate families are needed to help dysfunctional couples. The assumption of economic responsibility by a woman requires great strength and average age at marriage.

The Latin American family institution shows great adaptation and flexibility. New forms confront the problems of the modern world and continue as vital centers for the renewal of values. As the basic nucleus of society the family is the basis of international unity as well. In international institutions and between the member states of the United Nations there is respect and interest in this social structure. In the measure to which those entities have evolved a balance has been established between the promotion of human rights, respect for traditions, and the protection of the family as an institution.

Today a series of international agreements are related to the family: The Universal Declaration of the Human Rights of 1948, the International Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Pact of 1966, the International Civil and Political Rights Pact of 1966, the convention on the elimination of discrimination against the woman of 1979, the declaration on the elimination of religious intolerance and discrimination of 1981, the Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989, and others.

These documents describe the function of the family as the unit for reproduction and the nurturing of the child. They give special attention to the child and underline the educative function of the family which includes the transmission of traditional culture and religion. Despite the diversity of the actual world, there is need for international

cooperation based on understanding the existing relation between human rights and the family.

The educational function of the family merits special attention. In the family we learn the fundamental lessons for life. Thus, "by educating the child we can avoid having to punish the adult." Today, however, the young do not accept a simple transmission of the accepted attitudes and values for life; all human beings are under the influence of the culture, norms, and values encountered in interaction with the social and historical moment.

The family is charged with transmitting social and cultural values. These traditions are learned and enriched in the family; they are a great part of the patrimony handed down from generation to generation. At the same time, the family is a powerful agent of change. The regeneration and change of society must be the result of continued investigation and testing of the function of existing institutions. In this the family is the primary agent of change and of constructive development.

In modern societies, the family has a fundamental role in teaching. Although access to instruction is a fundamental right of all persons, parents play a central role in the determination of the duration and quality of the academic and non-academic formation of the child. These decisions are influenced by such factors as the economic situation of the parents, their social traditions, the degree of modernization and their level of schooling.

In cultures where academic formation is valued a stable family system is an important factor in enabling children to achieve academic formation. Correspondingly, a decrease in how well one does in school has been found to be related in part to weakness in the system of family support. Great social transformations are based on the family. The International Year of the Family, to be celebrated by the United Nations late in 1994, will provide an occasion to stimulate the reflection on family values and the family in the two civilizations: love and technology.

There are evident signs of a crisis in the family institution. A deterioration of family values has been observed. There has been inadequate and negative treatment of the family in the media of social communications. The state's attention has been very deficient. But also there are such new values as greater freedom of choice for the young in making marriage a life option, an increase in equality between men and women, a greater culture for both, a richer perception of conjugal spirituality and of the preponderant role of the family in society. The "Letter to the Families" by Pope John Paul II suggests themes and problems of enormous importance. People are the principal actors in the contemporary era and its great crises of truth, freedom, and love. A bifurcated

civilization obliges us to choose between love and things. In this radical choice lie risk and danger as well as a road to self-realization and peace.

In recent months Pope John Paul II has published an encyclical on the moral life, titled *The Splendor of Truth*. It shows how earlier concepts must be recuperated and enriched in order to build a civilization of love. His crucial question is,—why is truth important? This is the key issue also for understanding our question regarding the family. In fact the development of contemporary civilization is linked to scientific and technological progress, which often is presented as simply the result of purely positive or empirical investigation.

A theoretical result of positivism is agnosticism, where it is but a short step to an agnostic model of thought and life lacking the humanistic dimension, and hence a scale of values, that give primacy to the human, spiritual and ethical, over the utilitarian, pragmatic and material. A second result is the utilitarianism which today constitutes a civilization based on production and consumption in which persons treat themselves as things. From this point it is not difficult to arrive at the materialistic and consumer orientations of utilitarianism.

More specifically, in a technical civilization, we must face the danger of a loss of truth regarding the family, to which is adjoined the risk of a loss of freedom and, as a result, of love itself.

*Faculty of Social Work
School of Social Sciences
Pontifical Bolivariana University
Medellin, Columbia*

CHAPTER XVI

PUERTO RICO, THE ONE AND THE MANY

JOSÉ A. RIVERA

Puerto Rico, due to its political status, presents an interesting case of diversity within unity, a unique manifestation of the one and the many. According to Luis Muñoz Marín, The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico represents “the only time in which the United States receives in the honorable brotherhood of its citizenship, a people as such, a mature culture as such.”¹ For Muñoz Puerto Rico is a people both in the sense of “nation”, and in the sense of autonomous body politic.² The Commonwealth, constituting a people which are, in turn, part of another people, is, according to Muñoz, “a new kind of state, both in the sense of the U.S. Federal System and in the general sense of a people organized to govern themselves.”³ A non-federated state and a non-independent country, Puerto Rico, in becoming “part” of the United States, does not cease to be a “whole” in itself; in joining the United States as an “associated state,” does not cease to be a country with its own unity. This view which recognizes the “country” aspect of Puerto Rico even when the latter forms part of the American Union contrasts with the view held by some annexationists who see Puerto Rico as a mere “ethnic minority,” that is, a specific group of “American citizens,” like blacks and women, with particular interests.⁴ In this assimilationist perspective the “country” character of Puerto Rico is negated.

¹ Luis Muñoz Marín, Speech delivered at the *Congreso Interamericano de Municipalidades* on 3 December 1954, *Archivo Luis Muñoz Marín, Fundación Luis Muñoz Marín*, Río Piedras, Puerto Rico. My translation. Luis Muñoz Marín (1898-1980) led the peaceful revolution which transformed Puerto Rico from a poor, agrarian economy to a modern, industrial one, from an island beggared by adversity, to one of the most progressive countries in the world. He is also the creator of a new form of political association with the United States—the *Estado Libre Asociado* or Commonwealth—based on equal dignity, one that enriches not only American constitutional thought but also the principles of federalism and democracy in general.

² The term “nation” does not refer here to the nineteenth-century concept of the Sovereign State, but rather to a community of a common ethnic origin, with a common language, history, and tradition.

³ Luis Muñoz Marín, “An America to Serve the World,” Speech delivered on 7 April 1956, *Archivo Luis Muñoz Marín*.

⁴ Aarón Gamaliel Ramos, *Las ideas anexionistas en Puerto Rico bajo la dominación norteamericana* (Río Piedras: Ediciones Huracán, 1987), 46.

Puerto Rico, in constituting a whole which is, in turn, part of another whole, is no different from other peoples, since these are also wholes that form part of more comprehensive wholes—like continents and hemispheres—while subdividing themselves into smaller parts such as cities, villages, families, and individuals. In fact, in embodying a multiplicity within unity, the Commonwealth resembles everything that exists, since all things—not just societies—are made of parts and enter as parts into the makeup of other things.⁵ So, for example, the windshield forms part of the car, which is, in turn, part of an automobile production; and the hand, without ceasing to be a hand, forms part of the body, as the bee forms part of the beehive without ceasing to be a bee.

However, the way in which the windshield forms part of the car is very different from the way the hand is part of the body and the bee part of the beehive. To begin with, the relation that joins the windshield to the rest of the car is of a mechanical nature, while the union between the hand and the body is of an organic nature, and what joins the bee to the beehive is a gregarious biological instinct. Furthermore, between the hand and the body there is much more cohesion, much more unity than between the windshield and the car and then between the bee and the beehive. A windshield can be removed or put in place or substituted by another without harming the car, but to remove a hand from a body amounts to mutilating it. The hand and the body keep a closer union, they form a more united whole than the windshield and the car. Still, the hand is not confused with the body, but remains being a hand.

The union between the hand and the body, and that between the bee and the beehive resemble each other in that they both rest on natural relations, while the union between the car and its parts rests on artificial relations. However, between the bee and the beehive there is less unity than between the hand and the body and then—at least in a spatial, external sense⁶—between the windshield and the car. Individual bees, though part of the beehive, come and go, they can get lost momentarily; they can die without considerably affecting the beehive. The windshield, on the contrary, sticks to the car. If one were to give the same degree of unity a car has to a beehive, one would crush the beehive. Inversely, if one were to give the same degree of unity a beehive has to a car, one

⁵ “The things that are move back and forth between being simple and being articulated...” Robert Sokolowski, “Explaining,” in *Pictures, Quotations, and Distinctions: Fourteen Essays in Phenomenology* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), 94.

⁶ In comparing a vital and a mechanical whole, we cannot say that there is more unity in the latter without qualification, but only in a secondary and external sense, since the presence of life gives a greater ontological plenitude to the vital whole making it one in a deeper sense.

would dismantle the car. In descending order of degree of unity, the hand and the body exhibit a maximum unity, the windshield and the car show less unity, and the beehive even less unity. Mark, then, that although the dialectic of diversity within unity, of parts and wholes, or of the one and the many appears in all things, *each thing has its own appropriate kind and degree of unity according to its nature.*

Human associations also have their appropriate kind and degree of unity, different from those seen in animals or things. Animals, for example, exist, but they do not know that they exist. Deep in the sleep of semi-unconsciousness, animals merely fuse with the landscape and are subject to the blind forces of nature, with no liberty. Man, as animal, is also a mere “fragment of a species, a part of the universe, a unique point in the immense web of cosmic, ethnical, historical forces and influences—and bound by their laws.”⁷ But man is more than an animal. His reason raises him to the spiritual ambit of the person, who not only exists, but knows that he exists; he is aware of his being as existent and appropriates it, distinguishing it from other beings. This spiritual access to the being of things, which enables the person to discern the relations between beings and to identify those that benefit or harm him, together with the capacity to choose among them constitutes the liberty of man. The behavior of the person is not fixed by biological instincts or physical forces; he is not a mere link in the chain of causes and effects, and thus his existence is not automatic like that of animals or plants, but it remains up to him to take charge of his life so that it becomes a true unfolding of his rational essence. By virtue of reason man distances himself from nature and stands as a “center of initiative”⁸ and as his own vital project.

Man, synthesis of the two principles of matter and spirit, owner of reason and free will, acquires supra-temporal dignity. Pascal says that “Man is but a reed, the weakest in nature; but he is a thinking reed”:

To smash him, the universe need not marshal its whole power: a whiff of bad air, or a drop of water, suffices to kill him. But even if the universe smashed him, man would still be nobler than what kills him. For he knows that he dies, and the advantage that the universe has over him: the universe knows nothing of it. Thus all our dignity consists in thought. It is from this that we must expect greatness, not from space and duration, which we cannot fill. Let us

⁷ Jacques Maritain, *The Person and the Common Good*, trans. John J. Fitzgerald (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1948), 27.

⁸ Yves R. Simon, “The Problem of Transcendence and Proudhon's Challenge,” *Thought* 54 (1979): 184.

endeavor, then, to think well....It is not from space that I derive my dignity but from the ordering of my thought. I shall not have more by owning land: in space, the universe comprehends me and swallows me up like a speck; in thought, I comprehend it.⁹

According to Thomistic philosophy, the spirit, the only substance that has access to the being of things, tends by nature to expand in such a way that reason come to know all beings and the will conform itself to the requirements of the universal good.¹⁰ The mind does not rest satisfied with this or that truth, but aspires to know truth in general; the will is not satiated with this or that particular good, but desires to possess the good in general. In this way the spirit tries to comprehend the transcendent whole or the absolute. Aristotle said that the human soul, by virtue of its rationality and its consequent openness to being, “is, in a way, all things.”¹¹ Commenting on this passage by Aristotle, Aquinas explains:

What distinguishes things endowed with from things devoid of the power of knowing is that whereas the non-knowing things have but their own form, the knowing things are designed to have also the form of other beings; for the species of the thing known is in the knower. Thus, it is clear that the nature of the nonknowing thing is more restricted and limited, and the nature of things possessed of knowledge has greater amplitude.¹²

It is not speaking metaphorically, then, to assert that each person is a universe. Now a universe and totality in himself, man cannot become a mere “part” of anything, but enters into all relationships as a whole and end in himself, and requires to be treated accordingly. The person, whose social nature impels him to form part of groups, cannot become a mere instrument of the group, whether it be his family, village, or country; he cannot belong to any collectivity as the bee belongs to the beehive or the hand to the body. In forming “part” of a community his membership in the whole must not impair his own wholeness, lest he

⁹ Pascal, *Pensées* VI.347-348.

¹⁰ Yves R. Simon, *Freedom of Choice* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1969), 38; *A General Theory of Authority* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1980), 152-53; Jacques Maritain, *Du régime temporel et de la liberté* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer et Cie., 1933), 42.

¹¹ Aristotle *De Anima* 431b20.

¹² Aquinas *Summa Theologiae* I.14.1.

becomes dehumanized by violating his dignity. This applies not only to individual men, but to human societies, whether it be the family, the club, the village, or the country: “at all levels of human association the presence of the person causes the energies of totality, rationality and liberty to be present.”¹³ Human society acquires the personal character of its members, so that, unlike a beehive, a society of persons is a “whole composed of wholes.”¹⁴

Though a family, a village, and a state all manifest a multiplicity within unity of a personal nature, each has its own appropriate degree of unity. The family displays more unity than the village, and the village more than the country, and the country more than the world. If one were to give the same unity a family has to a village, one would destroy the village; inversely, if one were to give the same unity the village has to the family, the latter would dissolve. A village is not a family, no matter how well its members get along; hence the unity appropriate to a village is not the one that perfects the family. Similarly, it would be erroneous and violent to try to give to a city the same unity owned by an individual, since the individual is a “substantial unity,” while the city is a “unity of order,” namely, the unity of a multiplicity or plurality. The excessive unity would do violence to the nature of plurality and cause destruction. In an absolute communist state, like the one described by Socrates in the *Republic*, there are no private property or ends, no particular families or individual parents, since the State absorbs all initiatives making itself into the sole object of love, the sole family, and the sole parent. In building such a utopia Socrates presupposes that the supreme good of a city or a state is its absolute unity.¹⁵ However, Aristotle criticizes this Socratic premise:

Is it not obvious that a state may at length attain such a degree of unity as to be no longer a state?—since the nature of a state is to be a plurality, and in tending to greater unity, from being a state, it becomes a family, and from being a family, an individual; for the family may be said to be one more than the state, and the individual than the family. So that we ought not to attain this greatest unity even if we could, for it would be the destruction of the state.¹⁶

¹³ Yves R. Simon, “Common Good and Common Action,” *The Review of Politics* 22 (1960): 240.

¹⁴ Maritain, *The Person*, 40.

¹⁵ Plato *Republic* IV.423E; V.457C, 462-64.

¹⁶ Aristotle *Politics* 1261a17-23.

It is evident that a city is not by nature one in the sense which some persons affirm; and that what is said to be the greatest good in cities is in reality their destruction; but surely the good of things must be that which preserves them...this extreme unification of the state is clearly not good....¹⁷

The unity which [Socrates] commends would be like that of the lovers in the *Symposium*, who, as Aristophanes says, desire to grow together in the excess of their affection, and from being two to become one, in which case one or both would certainly perish.¹⁸

The error of Socrates must be attributed to the false notion of unity from which he starts. Unity there should be, both of the family and of the state, but in some respects only. For there is a point at which a state may attain such a degree of unity as to be no longer a state, or at which, without actually ceasing to exist, it will become an inferior state, like harmony passing into unison, or rhythm which has been reduced to a single foot.¹⁹

Let us go back to the relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States. Puerto Rico, like the federated states, is a personal whole within another personal whole. But the way in which Puerto Rico is a whole differs from the whole made up by a federated state. We have mentioned that Puerto Rico constitutes a country in itself, a nation, or a homeland (*patria*). The federated states, on the contrary, are not countries, but regions of a country. The federated states are not nations, but provinces of a nation. The federated states are not homelands (*patria*), but districts of a homeland. Thus the quality of wholeness disclosed by Puerto Rico has more breadth and plenitude than that of the federated states.

Corresponding to their distinct ways of being wholes, the way in which Puerto Rico forms “part” of the American Union also differs from that of the federated states. Aristotle distinguishes two ways in which a whole contains its parts so that they form a unity: (a) the unity results from the conjunction of the parts, or (b) the components parts are, in turn, unities.²⁰ Averroës distinguishes two kinds of union: one (a) in

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 1261b7-11.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1262b12-15.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 1263b31-36.

²⁰ Aristotle *Metaphysics* 1023b26-28.

which the parts merge to form the whole, and one (b) in which the parts do not merge in the whole, but remain face to face.²¹ The way in which Puerto Rico is part of the United States resembles the (b) variants, while that of the federated states resembles the (a) variants. The federated states, through their federation by means of the federal Constitution, become the United States. Puerto Rico, through its association with the United States as such by means of Public Law 600, also becomes one with the United States, but without ceasing to be a distinct people. With regard to the United States, the federated states have more of a “part” quality than does Puerto Rico, which, due to its peculiar cultural-political character, retains more of a “whole” quality in its union with the United States.

Muñoz explains that Puerto Rico “is not part of the United States in the domestic sense, although it is part of the United States in the international sense.”²² In contrast with Puerto Rico, the federated states:

are considered...as administrative entities liberally endowed with self-government in all areas except the complete control over taxes. Their citizens feel represented in the national government in a sense similar to the way citizens from regions of Puerto Rico feel represented in the government of the Commonwealth. A common tradition, a common language, a common history, and the common great lines of their development provide this unity.²³

Muñoz adds: “If Puerto Rico were to become nationalized in the United States to that extreme, it would have ceased being Puerto Rico.”²⁴ Considering that each nature has its own appropriate kind and degree of unity, it must be admitted that the unity with which the federated states form part of the American union would be inappropriate and excessive for Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico cannot be “part” of the Union in the same way as the federated states. Trying to give Puerto Rico the same unity with regard to the United States that the federated states have, would entail negating the country character of Puerto Rico and degrading it to a mere province, with the grave ethical, pragmatic, and aesthetic implications this involves.

²¹ Averroës *Commentary on Aristotle's De Anima III.5*.

²² Luis Muñoz Marín, “The Political Status of Puerto Rico,” English translation of a speech delivered on 12 November 1954, *Archivo Luis Muñoz Marín*.

²³ Luis Muñoz Marín, *Mensajes al pueblo puertorriqueño* (San Juan: Universidad Interamericana de Puerto Rico, 1980), 113.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

In view of the fact that the majority of the people of Puerto Rico favor permanent union with the United States, Muñoz asks which type of permanent union would be adequate for Puerto Rico:

Everything so far indicates that we Puerto Ricans who favor permanent union in one way or another form a substantial majority in the country. Therefore, I believe it most useful to consider which form of permanent union the people of Puerto Rico should prefer for themselves: Permanent union as a Commonwealth? Or permanent union as a federated state?...What is logically being discussed by the advocates of a permanent union cannot be the permanent union itself. What is under discussion is: For their economic and cultural welfare, how shall the people of Puerto Rico have more freedom and more opportunity within that union? Under the permanent union called Commonwealth, or under the permanent union called federated state?...Now, I wish to emphasize that...to become a federated state...would be ruinous for Puerto Rico's economy and internal freedom, and probably for the free and spontaneous preservation of its way of life—of its ability to continue being Puerto Rico.²⁵

To illustrate the special relationship called-for by Puerto Rico and the United States, Muñoz compares it to a Martini cocktail. In a speech delivered at a Press Club Luncheon in Washington, D.C. on 6 May 1952, Muñoz says that Puerto Rico cannot be the gin in a Martini, because a Martini takes too much gin. Neither can the island play the role of the Vermouth for identical reason. Puerto Rico can be either the drop of angostura or the olive. Now if it were the drop of angostura, it would be dissolved and lost. But as the olive, Muñoz concludes, Puerto Rico gives a touch of distinction to the drink, making it worthy to be served in the Western Hemisphere.

The union between Puerto Rico and the United States is between two peoples of equal dignity, of a country within another country. In this union both peoples retain their ontological validity and their vitality. The “part” is not disqualified as a “whole” in subordinating itself to the comprehensive whole. The country within the other country must expand spiritually to a maximum, and in so doing, and far from negatively affecting the comprehensive country, it must contribute to the latter's

²⁵ Luis Muñoz Marín, English translation of a message addressed to the people of Puerto Rico on the plebiscite, 14 August 1962, *Archivo Luis Muñoz Marín*.

progress as well. This dynamics is reflected in the principle of “maximum autonomy compatible with the association” relative to the development of the Commonwealth.²⁶ “Maximum autonomy” refers to the economic, political, and cultural self-affirmation of Puerto Rico. But this self-affirmation must be “compatible with the association,” for it would be absurd that the growth of the part would harm the whole of which it is a part. Regarding the Puerto Rican claims for greater autonomy, Andrés Sánchez Tarniella rightly observes:

First...we must communicate to the American authorities that our country requires greater powers...communicate that to the representatives of the American people....

Of course we need to tell them that these demands of ours—which at times surprise them, since more than once have they intimated that they would be happy if only they had the powers that we have—are based on the real fact that we are a distinct country, though associated...but as a distinct country we need certain powers that perhaps they do not need, for keep in mind that those so-called states are hardly regions or provinces of a single nation...²⁷

To the extent that Puerto Rico, as part of the United States, realizes its ends and is not asphyxiated by the whole, in that same measure the whole (the United States) gains in plenitude.²⁸ Muñoz understood that all citizens of the United States should coincide as regards certain attitudes such as loyalty to the values and defense of democracy. But he thought that, beyond the uniform adherence to such common values, there is a right and even a duty to preserve diversity for the sake of individual well-being and the plenitude of the whole:

²⁶ “All that restricts the authority of Puerto Rico in Puerto Rico without any appreciable advantage to the Union and without being essential to the principle of association through common citizenship, should be in some proper manner at some proper time removed from the compact.” Luis Muñoz Marín, Address delivered at the University of Kansas City on 23 April 1955, *Archivo Luis Muñoz Marín*.

²⁷ Andrés Sánchez Tarniella, *El plebiscito de los anexionistas* (Río Piedras: Ediciones Bayoán, 1993), 92-93.

²⁸ And vice versa: to the extent that the autonomy of Puerto Rico appears stagnant or reduced, the deep sense of the association is weakened and the United States becomes open to charges of imperialism.

Diversity within unity. It is to that image of creative diversity within the equally creative unity,...to that realization, that flowering and enrichment, that Puerto Rico wants to contribute in its association with the United States.²⁹

Muñoz believed that federated statehood for Puerto Rico, besides implying an inappropriate and excessive union, does not contribute any richness of cultural or political content to the American union. It would only add one more state to it. On the other hand, establishing an association in equally dignified but distinct terms adapted to the circumstance of Puerto Rico is of great service to, and enhances, the Union. Muñoz argued, for example, that while the good relations of a federated state with the Union do not say anything special to the world, the relationship of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico with the United States does carry a message to Latin America and the rest of the world. It is the message of “the understanding between two cultures under one same citizenship in voluntary association, based on sincere affection, clear understanding, and good will.”³⁰ According to Muñoz, the Commonwealth achieves the enhancement of the United States—which with Puerto Rico becomes the “United Peoples of America”³¹—through a deepening of the principle “E Pluribus Unum.” But if Puerto Rico were homogenized, as was attempted at the beginning of the colonization, this value would be lost, thought Muñoz.

Indeed if the part were to lose its identity or personality, not only would it suffer loss of life, but also the broader communities of which it forms part would be impoverished. Metaphysically and ethically speaking, plurality is the condition of plenitude: the more autonomous and unique each part is, the richer and the more perfect the whole becomes. The tragedy witnessed in totalitarian regimes is precisely that the economic, political, and cultural autonomy of the citizens and of subsidiary communities and institutions is absorbed by a crushing centralization of political power. Totalitarian states, instead of promoting the autonomy of minor social unities—whether they be churches, universities, or chess clubs—exterminates them through an excessive

²⁹ Luis Muñoz Marín, “The Deep Significance of United States Citizenship,” Address delivered on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the Commonwealth on 25 July 1956, *Archivo Luis Muñoz Marín*.

³⁰ Luis Muñoz Marín, Notes for a speech delivered at the Rotary Club of San Juan on 28 July 1953, *Archivo Luis Muñoz Marín*.

³¹ Luis Muñoz Marín, *Discursos oficiales: pensamiento político, económico, social y cultural (1949-1952)*, *Los gobernadores electos de Puerto Rico* (Río Piedras: Corporación de Servicios Bibliotecarios, 1973), 277. Emphasis added.

degree of unification, which extermination eventually undermines the efficiency of the whole.

On the contrary, the best administration distributes responsibilities in such a way that it retains for itself the management of only those over-all issues which do not admit of distribution. The principle of "maximum autonomy compatible with the association," which underlies the development of the Commonwealth, coincides with the democratic teaching on the decentralization of government, according to which the smaller, subsidiary community increases its jurisdiction over its own affairs, leaving to the federal sphere only those matters that properly belong to its jurisdiction. The progress of the autonomy of Puerto Rico, far from implying dissociation from the United States, means a deeper and stronger union. This is possible because the relationship in question is not a mechanical one. We are dealing with the political union of two personal wholes based on friendship born out of history and a communion in the values of religion, justice, and democracy. When their unity is of such a spiritual nature, men can establish an order in which the perfection and peace of the whole harmonize with the perfection and vitality of the parts. This is why Muñoz held that the more the economic, political, and cultural autonomy of Puerto Rico grows, the better will it serve and contribute to the Union, and the more willing and freely, since "loyalty to the political citizenship can be more sincere and deep if it implies the adhesion of man in the whole integrity of his cultural way of being."³²

³² Luis Muñoz Marín, Inaugural address delivered in San Juan on 2 January 1953, Archivo Luis Muñoz Marín.

PART IV

**DIVERSITY AND UNITY IN
THE POLITICAL ORDER**

CHAPTER XVII

GLOBAL UNITY IN MULTIPLICITY: THE UNIVERSITY AS INSTITUTIONAL LOCUS OF AN EMERGING ECUMENICAL CULTURE

CHARLES R. DECHERT

The emergence of an ecumenical culture in an “age of information” may imply a certain discontinuity in the global social system, a “change of phase” as a new set of norms comes to govern interaction at the global level. The physical barriers to human intercourse, the barriers created by space and time, become less and less as messages, images and ideas are conveyed at the speed of light by radio, telephone, facsimile and TV, while persons and goods may be conveyed routinely at the speed of sound. *Unity*, a global systemic “inter-relatedness,” is emerging from the multi-linearity of peoples, cultures and civilizations that have characterized the world as the primal genotype expanded out of Africa and expressed itself culturally in a multitude of languages, social patterns and modes of artistic and symbolic expression. A few languages, above all English, now dominate global communication and bear, inherent in vocabulary, grammar and syntax, certain preferred models of reality, patterns of association and expression. The substantive content of global culture is revealed in university curricula and course content, largely overlapping from country to country in the basic sciences, less so in the social sciences and humanistic studies yet still patterned on the structures, methodologies and critical outlook of the modern university that emerged from, and has clear historical continuity with, the universities of medieval, Christian Europe.

The scholar critic must view this development with mixed emotion. They form part of an emerging “noosphere,” Pierre Teilhard de Chardin’s terms for a world of knowledge, knowers and knowledge-/information-related institutions; and scientists, artists and engineers experience the joy of enhanced access to information and methods of inquiry, the excitement of discovery as new facts and relationships are revealed or suggested, the unprecedented sense of “togetherness” in a global intellectual enterprise that transcends geographic and cultural frontiers in a community of shared inquiry and shared perceptions of an ever more complex, systemically linked set of entities, perceptions, models, apprehensions, relationships—and, yes, also shared ambiguities, uncertainties and confusions in both knowing and doing.

At the same time, what are we losing in terms of the formedness, integrity, coherence and the satisfactions found in mature integrated communities that reflect a culture and civilization? As the media, both popular and elite, invade, intrude and even come to permeate such communities they tend to lose their identities. Concretely, French is replaced by Franglais; Russia's traditional wooden architecture or German Expressionism is replaced by an "international style," which globally and almost simultaneously gives way to the "postmodern." National and local costume and cuisine, style and taste, wit and humor, devotion and expression tend to become globally homogenized. Have we not become a world of Yuppies (young, especially mobile professionals) in blue jeans driving Toyotas and Fords, extending from Peking to London (in both directions) and from Vladivostock to Tierra del Fuego?

Vulgarization, simplification, "sound bites" and slogans replace coherent thought. There is the "new illiteracy" at one level of popular culture. Increasing refinement and specialization, virtually unlimited ability to store, recall and associate data in new and significant combinations exist at the higher levels of the elite culture. Yet there is a universal, contemporary ideological commitment to "democracy." Numbers count, votes count, people count; to what degree are "the people" succubi of the media elite, the "flattering nabobs of negativism" in the phrase of a discredited American politician. Are there two societies "separate and unequal," those who know and those who don't? The latter inevitably induced to pursue the goals and acts as instruments of knowledgeable "movers and shakers."

To what extent can even an elite, intellectual culture (or its protagonists) remain committed to "truth" for its own sake? When Nazi party leaders derided and sneered at Germany's intellectual elite, the state university professors, in 1933, the professors responded by asking about the new rules for research grants, tenure and promotion. Igor Gouzenko's *Fall of a Titan* illustrates the intellectuals' politicization and compromise under Marxism/Leninism. Contemporary American universities require "political correctness" as a condition of employment. The very rhetoric of intellectual and artistic freedom can become an instrument of obscurantism used by intelligent people with a political, ideological, social and moral agenda. To what extent can an anomic, even criminal underclass become the instrument of those having a personal, moral and ideological commitment to Nihilism? The dynamics of freedom in an intellectualized world without normative limits may have the potential to create game-like social interactive patterns having apocalyptic dimensions. It has been reported that for at least some Serbian/Yuqoslav nationalists a "permanent solution" to the problem of Croatia and Bosnia is "to destroy not just the dwellings and offices of

Croats and Muslims, but their memorials, shrines, churches and mosques—everything with religious and cultural importance.” (*Washington Post*, Anderson and Binstein, 23 July 92, D23)

The emerging global culture, we must be forewarned, could have its demonic dimension—and since global, such an affirmation might prove irreversible. We are encouraged by the global collapse of communism and socialism, destroyed by their internal contradictions, their dysfunctional conception of human nature and motivation, and ultimately, by their inability to cope realistically with domestic and global challenges. It is too easy to forget that anytime in the last forty years this challenge, brought to the issue by either protagonist in a bipolar system, could have convulsed the world and quickly destroyed perhaps 500 million persons.

In the institutionalization of the emerging global culture it behooves us to look to the constitution—building experience of the past several centuries, to build-in many centers of political and cultural “power,” a multiplicity of institutional structures (mediating institutions), a system of checks and balances, a conscious commitment and dedication to values of truth, human dignity and personal integrity.

Questions are already being raised about the functionality and desirability of any complete breakdown of barriers to flows of information, commodities, manufactured products and people. Political decision-makers worldwide have retained policies limiting emigration and immigration, exchanges of nuclear and military technologies, exchanges of agricultural products and some natural resources. Increasingly a multiplicity of community decision-makers at every level will question unlimited flows of information without regard to audience values, age, sex, religion, ethnicity, cultural level and commitments, community standards.

In the 1992 American presidential campaign, questions arose regarding public subsidies for pornography, Christianity-bashing, commercial television programs encouraging childbearing outside marriage, televised political party propaganda showing aborted and dismembered human fetuses, public and commercial propaganda encouraging use of contraceptives by secondary school students, etc. To what degree do less wealthy and less powerful communities and cultures have a right to defend their integrity and values? How can they be empowered to do so effectively? The technologies of increasingly mass and elite information transfers and exchanges may well require counterpart technologies that permit a decentralized capability to restrict and limit the reach of the media and their messages.

Implicit in the new technologies is a “change of phase” in human interaction patterns. The global communications and transportation link-up has created a single system that requires, and is creating in practice, a

new set of interaction rules. This is leading to a certain social discontinuity—a more “ethereal phase” of human association characterized by achieving results with less and less stuff. This was foreseen at the beginning of this century by Henry Adams in such works as “The Rule of Phase Applied to History” and “The Law of Acceleration.” Others, largely independently, arrived at similar conceptions. Spengler foresaw both the increasing replacement of matter with information and the “change of phase” reflecting social discontinuity. Toynbee and Sorokin develop similar concepts regarding civilizations and the cultural super-systems that appear to program civilizations at various stages of their existence. Buckminster Fuller became an early technological protagonist of “etherealization,” achieving the elegance of more with less that characterizes his “Tensegrity” and “Geodesic” structures and the “Dymaxion” designs for housing and transport. By the 1960’s and the 1970’s the exponential growth in energy consumption, population, knowledge, pollution, etc. had become a commonplace of social analysis. Discontinuity, even catastrophic breakdown of institutions was frequently foreseen. As the century ends the lineaments of a new, information-based, increasingly integrated global, social and cultural system begin to emerge—a new “phase” in the human experience.

Historically the major cultures and their attendant civilizations have largely been tied to the shared *Weltanschauung* and values provided by a shared religion. Some element of the transcendent, a reality beyond and giving meaning to sensory perception and experience, has been called upon to validate, authenticate and ultimately to sanction human institutions and human behavior (both individual and corporate). In more primitive societies the civic and religious cultures fuse; the gods of the vanquished are destroyed or incorporated into the victor pantheon. Defeated Israel’s continued devotion to a transcendent yet personal God, Yahweh, marked a universalization of the notion of deity and provided a basis for continued group identity in exile—and ultimately in diaspora while this universalized, transcendent yet personal God became the foundation of the societies emerging from Greco-Roman, Syrian and Irano-Arabic antecedents. The Indic-Buddhist, Sinic and pre-Columbian American societies developed identifiable civilizations whose integrity was assured for millennia by the relative physical, intellectual and spiritual isolation of these major cultural components of the human family.

Five hundred years ago, with maritime technology, industrial production, printing and the breakup of Western Christendom there emerged the forces leading to the ecumenical society, the “one world” coming into being in our lifetime. Sheer power, the ability effectively to assert directed will, emerged in Western Europe in new combinations that submerged the Western Hemisphere and over the centuries imposed

a colonial hegemony over Africa, the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific. The centralized, rationalized, bureaucratic state, disciplined military forces with a new weapons technology and logistic support, commerce, banking and credit combined to create the systemic interdependencies that would result in global unity. The products, technologies and institutions of Western society proved extremely attractive; they not only compelled, they seduced. Building upon the systematized knowledge of antiquity, Western Christendom institutionalized the preservation, extension and diffusion of learning in the cathedral schools, monastic and courtly libraries, and above all the universities with faculties dedicated to Medicine, Law Theology, the Liberal Arts and Natural Philosophy. Experimental methods took root, particularly in the knowledge-based craft guilds (including the fine arts), mining and civil engineering. These eventually also found a home in the modern university. Knowledge and skill complemented and enhanced the dynamism of modernity, and were made self-aware, systematized and taught in the universities. With the development of institutionalized research in the 19th century, the university became the nodal institution of modernity and has proved universally attractive. With such disciplines as Cultural Anthropology and the Sociology of Knowledge, culture, *Weltanschauungen*, values and science itself have now become objects of systematic knowledge; the medium has become the message (or part of the message) of the new ecumenical culture.

The curriculum and objects of knowledge and instruction vary little from country to country in modern universities. (See Appendix) They vary least in the physical sciences, life sciences and mathematics. They vary most in the social sciences and humanities where the values and political, ideological, cultural and religious commitments of nations and sponsoring groups receive expression and even sponsorship.

It is in these “soft” disciplines that the modern university plays a particular role as critic and sifter of orthodoxies. In Italy in the 1930s, courses were taught in *Mistica Fascista*—and laid aside in 1944-45, discredited. What has become of Dialectical Materialism in Eastern Europe? In American secular universities religious studies, once taught by professors profoundly committed to their faith, have become objects of study by “detached” scholars. The university itself becomes the meeting ground and fighting platform of religious, political, cultural and ideological currents—some of which make an exclusive, proprietary claim to legitimacy. This is the case with “political correctness” (PC) in the United States, reflecting a secular humanist orientation alert to minority claims, environmental issues, and characterized by moral relativism and an emphasis on the omni-competent welfare state.

A certain ethnocentricity may be expected and is appropriate to the various national universities and university systems while

institutions under private group and/or religious sponsorship may be expected to sustain or at least not overtly counter the commitments and institutional interests of their sponsors. The critical climate, openness to the historical success or failure of policies and institutions, and continuing dialogue between and among intellectuals and institutions globally provide the conditions for an emerging global debate and developing commitments (individual and institutional) to visions of the good and true.

Earlier in this essay I attempted to point out some of the vulnerabilities of this rather remarkable and potentially highly productive and satisfying emerging global system. There is no assurance of “*homionioia*”—a shared “mind” regarding the true and the good. It is quite likely (indeed we see its beginnings) that radically exclusive conceptions and practices may characterize alternative conceptions of the good life, and that, as increasingly organized groups or parties, these alternative communities and lifestyles will first attempt to dominate or suppress the other(s)—and failing this, many will attempt to raise impermeable barriers to social intercourse.

As Teilhard de Chardin foresaw in the *Future of Man*, and St. Augustine saw before him, men’s loves create two or more cities and each may affirm itself as increasingly separate products of the “Culture Wars” that could come to characterize the emerging global system.

At the same time the university as an institution will persist and many will flourish. Among the elements that can help assure a reasonably serene future to the emerging ecumenical culture: a) A concern for truth—in terms not only of the instrumental effectiveness and coherence of models of reality, but also their adequacy to the objective situation they would portray; b) Continued critical review and reassessment of the content, interpretation and evaluation of the body of human knowledge; c) A desire for and systematic expansion of the range of knowing and valuing; d) An atmosphere of civility in which both moral and physical violence are eschewed, where the *disinterested* pursuit of truth is encouraged by providing an assured tenor of life to those engaged in it. Perhaps the greatest threat to this and the use of force, fraud, moral coercion, blackmail and deprivation—all the forms of persecution—to assure intellectual and moral conformity to whatever is true and good this year in this place. It is an act of faith and of existential optimism that in the long run truth will prevail, that cosmos, good order in accord with the nature of things, possesses an ascendancy over forces of disaggregation, egotism, and a disordered will-to-power.

Department of Politics
Catholic University of America
Washington, DC, USA

CHAPTER XVIII

HEGEL AND LIBERALISM

MILOSLAV BEDNAR

Any examination of the problem concerned with the relationship of Hegel's philosophical achievement to liberalism necessitates an entire *understanding* of Hegel's philosophical orientation. This consists in the comprehensive attempt to elaborate a thorough spiritual synthesis of the ancient and the modern philosophical world-views encompassing all essential segments of human endeavours. Precisely, this means for Hegel to demonstrate convincingly an intrinsic compatibility, a possible organic harmony both of the insight of the ground of world and human life in Idea and of its modern shift towards individuality and subjectivity, where also liberalism takes its place. In Hegel's account, the characteristic move of human spirit, and by the same token the turn of the determinative world-spirit as well, towards subjectivity, is already discernable in Socrates. The till then unheard-of Socratic challenge to the substantive, unquestioned ethical unity of its native *polis*, with a distinctive emphasis laid on personal responsibility in terms of *logos*, is nonetheless a highly sincere attitude of a distinguished citizen of Athens trying to inspire a pervading, spiritually founded ethical reform of his civic fatherland. Thus, the original suggestion of the further developed, full-fledged and reasonably self-confident, individual subjectivity had arisen in a traditional realm of political freedom, equality of citizens and in a basic consensus of human and civic virtues, which had been taken as the necessary anchorage of a meaningful political life. The major Socratic, and further, Platonic and Aristotelian determinative problem in this context was that such a basis in virtues, which was remaining unquestioned as a received matter of course, was not likely to sustain the aggressive onslaught of both rhetorical and sophistical relativizing of all issues of moral and political life. In other words, this dangerously exaggerated, subjectively tainted arbitrariness was to be treated accordingly, i.e., by the prime and comprehensively applied basis of the responsible care for soul, *tes psyches epimelesthai*. For Hegel, the incapability of Athens to comply with the insights and projects of its outstanding philosophers revealed its irresistible historic doom. In Hegel's account, the only appropriate and genuinely responsible coming to terms with the dilemma of civic freedom versus arbitrariness is to deepen the *freedom* radically, i.e., in terms of a no less radical reformulation, and in this way intensification of virtues of the ethical human life. Hegel's position is therefore an apparent modern specimen

of classical philosophical attitude. Such is the prime philosophic view, *vis motrix* of Hegel's grappling with the till now highly topical and acute problem of modernity, including the issue of liberalism.

Prior to examination of Hegel's approach to liberalism, the phenomenon of the modern liberalism is to be clarified. It appears as theoretical background of emerging modern constitutional democracies out of an energetic bundle of dispute concerning influential conceptions of social contract. This happened, symptomatically, during the seventeenth century in Western Europe against the background of disastrous pan-European religious wars. Consequently, this deep experience of a profound earthquake of human security and well-being in the prior framework of social and political life, similar to the devastating Greek experience of the Peloponnesian war, incited reasonable Efforts in terms of the philosophy of politics. Its general problem was to find out a conception of political life, capable to establish the foundation of the State where human well-being and welfare of citizens will thrive. In this context, the original philosophic concept of *eudaimonia* was in the liberal thinking of the 17th century typically cast in terms of human individuals, their needs and Rights, which are to be exercised, and therefore basically guaranteed. Maybe it is precisely here that an important philosophical problem of the modern predicament emerges. A striking quandary, which the modern mind so often overlooks: blurring of distinction between rights and needs, between biological and economically-technical necessity on the one hand, and freedom and equality of citizens in political action on the other hand. An obvious liberal emphasis laid on the right to life and property along with the right to freedom and pursuit of happiness seems to be not very cautious philosophically. It is true that the religious and ethical background of both Hobbes and Locke is beyond dispute. But it is also true that it is often not comprehensively ingrained in their politically oriented philosophical projects. Thus, a fundamental con-fusion of liberal thinking had been created. An understandable liberal shunning of direct employment of spiritual matters in concepts of a profound political reform from Locke to Rawls in fact, *mutatis mutandis* corresponds with the determination of the scientific societies founded since the 17th century to exclude both religious and political issues from their scope of investigation. Hegel's philosophical treatment of both science and political life and order is in this respect apparently different.

Concerning liberalism, Hegel defines the core of its predicament as the problem of the imposed subjective will be identified with Reason and Right. Precisely, Hegel points out critically the conspicuous modern conception of the abstract will. Such a will is in fact a self-centered and a self-contained will. It is a conception of will, abstracting systematically from the changing flux of temporary applications of volition.

Identification of will with morality brings about a concept of autarchic and universal will, which in fact wills only itself.¹ Hegel is highly instructive in this context: while showing that such a typically modern concept of ‘Will to Will’ being identified with Reason, Right and Justice, originates in a peculiar materialist, abstract interpretation of the Protestant theological position. The fatal proceeding of this confusion creating the mainstream of the modern mind is demonstrated by Hegel as follows: “After a free investigation in open day, Luther had secured to mankind Spiritual Freedom and Reconciliation [of the subjective and objective] in the concrete: he triumphantly established the position that man’s eternal destiny [his spiritual and moral attitude] must be wrought out in himself [cannot be an *opus operatum*, a work performed for him]. But the import of what is to take place in him—what truth is to become vital in him, was taken for granted by Luther as something already given, something revealed by religion. Now, the principle was set up that this import must be capable of actual investigation—something of which I [in this modern time] can gain an inward conviction—and that to this basis of inward demonstration every dogma must be referred. This principle of thought makes its appearance in the first instance in a general and abstract form; and is based on the axiom of Contradiction and Identity. The results of thought are thus posited as finite, and the *eclairissement* utterly banished and extirpated all that was speculative from things human and divine. Although it is of incalculable importance that the multiform complex of things should be reduced to its simplest conditions, and brought into the form of Universality, yet this still abstract principle does not satisfy the living Spirit, the concrete human soul.”²

In Hegel’s account, this peculiarly sincere and abstract move of simplification is actually both the founding and stumbling block of modernity. It is necessary in a way, but highly questionable, and in need of a thorough reform. As for Hegel, this formally absolute principle brings us to “the last stage in history, our world.”³ Its fruit is the principle of freedom of the will being identified with justice, right and reason, promising and encompassing Freedom of Property and Freedom of Person.

Characteristically, the bulk of Hegel’s critique of liberalism in this context pitches its practical appearance in France by contrast to Germany, where it remained in the tranquil form of Kantian Philosophy. In the course of the French Revolution, the remodeling of the State in

¹ See G.W.F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, Dover Publications, New York, 1956, p. 442.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 441-2.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 442.

accordance with the Idea of Right in the given modern pattern of identification of will with one-sided, and therefore abstract rationality took place.

For Hegel, the predicament of such a genuine social engineering consisted in the atomistic principle insisting upon the sway of individual wills. It holds that government be an emanation from their explicit power, and sanctioned in them expressly. The logical consequence of such a radical liberal position is, that no political organization can exist in terms of stability. In Hegel's view, this is a natural result of the modern liberal simplification encapsulated in the demand "that the ideal general will should also be empirically general—i.e. that the units of the state in their individual capacity 'should rule or at any rate take part in the government.'"⁴ Such a liberal formalism in practice logically entailed a perpetuated unrest and agitation.⁵ This problem is in Hegel's account by no means particular. Quite in opposite, it spells the prime historic topicality of the modern era which is to be solved.⁶

In his context, Hegel is concerning in his *Philosophy of History* with the relation of Philosophy to reality, and is subscribing to the notion that the French Revolution resulted from Philosophy, because Philosophy, in his own words, "is not only Truth in and for itself, as the pure essence of things, but also Truth in its living form as exhibited in the affairs of the World."/*Ibid.*, p. 446/ Nevertheless, Hegel points out, that this philosophy of the French Revolution appears only as the first abstract thinking, not yet as the concrete comprehension of absolute Truth, which spells an unfathomable difference. The following Hegel's reflection, explicitly examining the problem of Liberalism was to my surprise omitted from three older translations of Hegel's *Philosophy of History* into English I had at my disposal, so that I am taking the license to present it thoroughly.

Hegel is here holding explicitly that while the abstract liberal philosophy of the French Revolution was concerned with reality, it was in fact violating it, and that this violence is revolution as such. The crucial problem in this context is, what concrete appearance and Form the Revolution assumes. The abstract liberal form of Revolution was, and Hegel puts stress on this matter of fact with a series of examples, put into its violent practice, conspicuously enough, in Catholic countries of Europe. On the other hand, the countries where the freedom in terms of Protestant Churches prevails, were significantly quiet. For Hegel, the ground of this difference is apparent: The Protestants had already accomplished their revolution by means of the Reformation. In other

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 452.

⁵ Cf. *ibid.*

⁶ Cf. *ibid.*

words, for Hegel the real modern revolution must be firmly anchored in the common turn of mind which in the first place means religion and its morality. Without this a vital precondition, any political revolution is on principle not able to achieve its sincere aims. At this point, Hegel's critique of liberalism assumes a particular acumen as follows:" There is a major appearance of these newer Revolutions: topple of thrones, till now successful, and then frustrated again. The principles of these revolutions are the principles of reason which, however, are held in their abstractions only. This is, why they became so fancy and polemical against all the Reality. The principles of reason have to be caught concretely; only then will the genuine freedom arrive at its chair. The orientation which persists in abstraction is liberalism, being always vanquished by the concrete, that makes it bankrupt wheresoever."⁷ Hegel was convinced that the existing solution of the impasse of the continental liberalism, whose principles are most present in Rousseau's thought, was afforded by the Protestant project and its political reality: here, Hegel maintains, "a share in the government may be attained by everyone who has a competent knowledge, experience, and a morally regulated will. Those who know ought to govern—*Hoi Aristoi*, not ignorance and the presumptuous conceit of "knowing better"...in the Protestant Church the Reconciliation of Religion with Legal Right has taken place. In the Protestant world there is no sacred, no religious conscience in a state of separation from, or perhaps even hostility to Secular Right."⁸

Exactly this state of separation is typical for major liberal concepts, and common liberal political doctrines till now. To Hegel's account in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, such a liberal separation is distinctive of the modern system, of the State. Hegel found out that modern states maintain the essential attributes of freedom and its whole system in a formal manner in disregard of subjective conviction, i.e. in Rawls outline, for example, by means of a veil of ignorance as to comprehensive doctrines. Regarding the constitution of the State, there is, as Hegel contends, nevertheless, another system," the system of subjective conviction represented in general by the Greek principle, developed in a special way in Plato. Given the account of political constitution, "a few orders constitute the foundation, while the State as a whole is based upon education, upon culture, which is to advance to science and philosophy. Philosophy is to be the ruling power, and by

⁷ G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte* (Felix Meiner, Hamburg 1968), translated by M.B.

⁸ Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, p. 456.

means of it man is to be led to morality: all orders are to be partakers of the sophrosyne.”⁹

For Hegel both subjective conviction and formal constitution of the essentials of freedom are inseparable. This is why both the modern and ancient system of the constitution of the State are one-sided. The modern liberal one-sidedness was already mentioned. Hegel defines it as on the one hand a concept of allegedly self-sustaining constitution. On the other hand, subjective dispositions for private convictions, religion and the whole field of conscience. In the liberal constitutional order, the latter appears as indifferent issues beyond the concern of the government as private individual convictions and form of religion. The obvious one-sidedness of the liberal order reveals itself, as Hegel point out, in the administration of Justice, which depends, indeed, upon to judges, i.e. upon their moral qualities and insight because the rule of law, willy-nilly, always means that they are in any case men who make it. A key activity of carrying the law into effect is never abstract, but fully concrete, characteristically shaped by individual, subjective convictions and intelligence of the judges. Thus, they are always individual human abilities and moral backgrounds what matters. Regardless all the comprehensiveness of civil laws, they are not capable to touch each particular case. With regard to the Greek constitutional pattern, its onesidedness pertains to the one-sided nature of subjective conviction itself. This is in Hegel’s account the weak point of the republic of Plato. Anyway, the modern times suffer much more from the prevailing ambivalence of the liberal one-sidedness. This modern predicament stems, as for Hegel, from the widespread inclination of men to refuse reliance upon intelligence, and to insist, instead, on a universal deduction in the framework of positive laws.¹⁰

As a striking instructive backlash of this, a modern liberal one-sidedness appeared, as Hegel reminds us, in the dialectic of the French revolutions. On the one hand, French revolutionaries actually exercised a sincere religious sentiment or conviction regarding the state as something illegitimate and devoid of rights. The same persons, just representing the French revolutionary government, behaved antagonistically towards all the established justice and morality. In other words, the revolutionary dictates of a religious conscience contradicted the constitution itself. Nonetheless, the established liberal constitution declared all the religions of individual citizens as unimportant. Thus, a harmonizing of both constitution and subjective conviction remained drastically unsolved. In this context, the reign of terror takes naturally

⁹ G.W.F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* (New York: Humanities Press Inc., 1968), p. 255.

¹⁰ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 256.

the upper hand, being directed against those who did not appear to hold the officially proclaimed sentiments of freedom, because they suspiciously held other individual convictions. This liberal game of unresolved one-sidedness repeated when the government of Charles X fell under the same sort of liberal suspicion. Hegel concludes that even in the formally well-elaborated constitution the last human resort still endures as the general sentiment of feeling being put on the side of the constitution, or as asserting itself in contempt of all forms. According to Hegel's insight, "it is from this contradiction, and from the prevailing insensibility to it, that our age is suffering."¹¹ The one-sidedness of the liberal constitutional pattern comes, as mentioned before, from the abstract modern conception of the rational will which, as has been shown, does not surpass the principle of the individual will. Against its modern conceptual one-sidedness Hegel posits in his philosophy of right the fundamental concept according to which the objective will is rational in itself, i.e., as a concept in Hegel's sense, after a thorough recognition and appropriate incorporation of the individual otherness. This objective will is by the same token overcoming temporary discretions of individuals. The subjective freedom appears, consequently, as only one moment of the idea of the rational will. Accordingly, Hegel's concept of the rational will reveals itself as rational solely because it has being both in itself and for itself ("elements of the philosophy of right").¹²

Hegel's permeating philosophical critique of the prevailing continental liberalism of his time nevertheless did not prevent Hegel from subscribing to another, more profoundly grounded tenor of liberal thought, which was not grounded in the comfortable one-sidedness of materialist dogmatism. In this respect, Hegel's appraisal of Montesquieu is highly instructive. Hegel explicitly extols Montesquieu with an implicit allusion to the modern liberal vogue since he presented, with regard to the positive law, "the true historical view," because his was in fact "the genuinely philosophical viewpoint," considering both legislation as such and its particular determination not isolated and as abstractions, but rather as a dependent moment within one totality, in the context of all the other determinations which constitute the character of a nation and age".¹³ In Hegel's account, only in such a genuinely reflected context, the projects of legislation can assume a true importance and their proper legitimacy. In Hegel's conclusion, Montesquieu consequently respected and outlined the philosophical view that the part

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

¹² Trans. by H.B. Nisbet, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1991, par. 258, p. 277.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

should be considered only with reference to the whole in terms of philosophy of politics.¹⁴

Hegel points out, and in this respect he is extremely topical till now, that the core of the modern quandary of political and social life lies in the sphere of moral life. This is in particular the problem of tension between the private and the public. In more exact terms, it is the relation between private welfare on the one hand, i.e., of the realms of the family and civil society, and on the other hand the sphere of state. As to the private domain, it depends at first upon the state as an external necessity and the higher power subordinating their particular laws and interests. Secondly, however, and in this regard the Aristotelian face of Hegel is decisive, the state is the immanent end of the private. Actually, its proper stamina is rooted in a uniting of its universal and ultimate end with particularities of individual interests. A focal ground of the state, its proper spilling-basin, is expressed in the relation between duties of individuals towards the state and individual rights. In this context, Hegel is stressing the fact that individuals “have duties towards the state to the same extent as they also have rights.”¹⁵ In Hegel’s account, the more decisive sphere is the ethical one. Precisely, right is a particular aspect of duty, for it is germane to particular individual freedom. Duty, by contrast to it, is first of all, “an attitude towards something which, for me, is substantial and universal in and for itself. In fact, duties towards the state reflect and express the common essence of morality, ethics, and the interest of the state which consists in distinct embodiments of right, precisely, in providing for determinate shape and existence to freedom. For that reason they can come into collision at all. And it is the concept of freedom, which in Hegel’s account is “the highest determinant of spirit, in relation to which everything else is without substance.”¹⁶ The concept of freedom is by Hegel the self-conscious freedom, which is concrete in the proper sense of this word, i.e., “richer within itself and more truly universal” than the abstract, i.e., one-sided formalism of rights, and also of duties, representing not yet fully developed stages of the concept of freedom.¹⁷ In the case of liberal abstractions, here being apparently alluded to, such a conception of rights and duties is the abstract self-consciousness of equality rendering all institutions incompatible with it.¹⁸

As to Hegel, the genuine modern ethical and political life is not compatible with the liberal notion of open civil society, encouraging

¹⁴ Cf. *Ibid.*, par. 261, p. 283.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, par. 261.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, par. 30, r, p. 59.

¹⁷ Cf. *Ibid.*, par. 30.

¹⁸ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

individuals to engage in all the possible experiments with their lives in the hope that by means of conjectures and refutations they might in the event find valuable patterns of behavior. Hegel's notion of an ethically grounded modern society of free citizens implies that their choices must take place in terms of recognized ways of life, providing concrete dignity and fulfillment of individuals, given by their conduct in particular segments of society. In the same vein, Hegel situated the real political power in the hands of an educated class of professional officials, responsible to representative bodies of ordinary citizens. Thus, the governmental body must represent the citizen majority. Hegel's project of constitutional monarchy is in fact most akin to the present parliamentary systems of constitutional monarchies.¹⁹

Hegel's philosophy of politics presents an outstanding philosophical advocacy and legitimacy of the liberal constitutional democracy. Still, his position is essentially different and critical with regard to the abstract and dogmatic sort of liberalism, which till now distributes both legitimizing interpretations, ideal projects and also, to some extent, real institutions of the liberal democracy. In this context, Allen W. Wood rightly remarks that Hegel's political philosophy is discontentingly subversive of the current liberal status quo by emphasising the real grounds of its alienating effects.²⁰

Concerning the ongoing debate between liberals and communitarians, Hegel seems to overcome its prevailing level of argumentation. By his liberal, and to a certain extent democratizing transformation of Aristotle's philosophy of politics in line with the path opened by Montesquieu, Hegel seems to be, to a certain extent, in agreement with the conservative strand of communitarianism. However, his stress on non-linear development with his characteristic emphasis on its spiritual and moral anchorage, e.g., regarding the conditioning of genuine revolution by reformation, clearly surpasses the strictly conservative position. With respect to the contemporary liberal arguments, much of the left spectrum of liberalism seems to coincide with the abstract and dogmatic liberal vein, which Hegel sharply criticized as a symptomatic disease of the modern age. Presumably, its present post-modern segment, now in vogue, would not exceed this pattern. The right, conservative wing of the contemporary liberals appears to coincide with the Hegelian notion of civil society, but its liberal laissez-faire concept with regard to the State reveals a lack of clarity concerning the ethical foundation of political life. Both the laissez-faire and the welfare-State liberalism clearly represent one-sided, abstract views in terms of Hegel's philosophical project. Nor could a combination of both approaches be in

¹⁹ Cf. *Ibid.*, editor's introduction, p. xxiv.

²⁰ Cf., *Ibid.*, pp. xxviii-xxix.

a position to overcome their respective limitations, including Rawls' projects, which evidently suffer by an emblematic lack of distinction between State, society and economy, in Hegel's words, between the civil society and the State.

Hegel's apparent recognition of Montesquieu obviously shows in what sense Hegel is a liberal thinker. This is the way of a viable current harmony between the originally Greek political project of politics and the modern development of subjectivity. It is not a sheer blend of both, which would be ridiculously preposterous. Hegel's provocatively topical intention was a higher level of synthesis, clearly overcoming both projects by their genuine recognition in a new foundation of Politics in the Ethical and Spiritual life of a diversified Humanity.

Recently, public attention has been attracted by the attempt of Francis Fukuyama to interpret Hegel's philosophy of history and politics in topical liberal terms. Fukuyama maintains in this context that in Hegel's view "liberal societies were...free from the 'contradictions' that characterized earlier forms of social organization and would therefore bring the historical dialectic to a close".²¹ In an attempt to prove the validity of his understanding of Hegel, Fukuyama accentuates that in Hegel's account, "the completion of the historical process required only a secularization of Christianity, that is, a translation of the Christian Idea of freedom into here-and-now. It also required one more bloody battle in which the slave liberates himself from the master".²²

Such a type of explanation of Hegel's concept of modernity strikingly neglects its true content. As to Hegel, the liberal concept established by the French revolution presented in fact only the first, i.e. notably abstract and formal stage of the political embodiment of synthesis between rational political constitution grounded in the free individual will, and a Religion that is not opposed to it. The common liberal demand to separate Religion from the laws and constitution of the State, which is of course not the same as the separation of Churches from the State, demonstrates lucidly how far from reality such a reasonable and reconciling synthesis in fact is. To Hegel, this deeply precarious state of affairs was obvious as well as the vicious liberal circle of identification of liberal free wills with the general will, having been proclaimed to become the real body of political decision-making. In other words, Fukuyama's interpretation of Hegel's examination of liberalism mostly ignores its substance. Hegel's "End of History" equated with Napoleon's conquest of Europe in fact means the Beginning, the First Stage of the End of the earthly separation of human laws

²¹ Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, The Free Press, New York 1992, p. 64.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 198.

and spirituality. Consequently, this by no means affirms its completion. For Hegel, the liberal constitution spells the very beginning of the final stage of human history. But this does not mean an end of the movement of historic events. In this context, the present, so often critical dynamics of our world do not demand any further comment. Thus, Fukuyama's coinage of Hegel's "liberalism" as 'rational recognition²³ on a universal and equal basis' is much more similar to the abstract continental liberalism, so cogently criticized by Hegel himself, than to Hegel's project of a profound synthesis of the ancient and the modern concepts of ethical and political life.

Actually, Fukuyama concedes that history in the strict sense of the word will continue. But in this case he is referring to the problems of liberal democracies like unemployment, pollution, drugs, crime, etc. No word of substantive spiritual and moral problems of liberal democracies and their ideologies, which were in the centre of Hegel's attention, and certainly provide the ground of the phenomena mentioned by Fukuyama.²⁴

In sum, Hegel's philosophical examination of liberalism provides us with a profound argument why the development of liberal democracy is mostly a work yet to be done, burdened as it is with abstract and formalist Ideas, and with institutional provisions in crying need of appropriate organic discharge.

*Institute of Philosophy
Academy of Social Sciences
Prague, the Czech Republic*

²³ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 200.

²⁴ Cf., *ibid.*, p. 288.

CHAPTER XIX

STRIFE AND HARMONY REMARKS ON THE DEMOCRATIC CULTURE OF THE PRESENT TIMES

JOZEF PAUER

THE EMANCIPATION OF MAN

Though it remains possible to speak about Europe as a continent of Christian nations, the fact of segregation of church and state, religion and politics makes Europe a secular continent. Till 1789 the laws governing the society came from God. After 1789 man began to be considered to be the law-giver and creator of justice. Religion ceased to be the source of law.

The other important factor is the emergency of human rights. Each individual is entitled to human rights and liberties merely as a human being and not as a member of some ethnic group, nation or community. Such is the basic character of abstract humanism, rooted in the fundament of modern European culture. However, all this does not mean that religion vanished from European culture, but that it ceased to be the source of law for Europe.

This shifting of the centre of gravity towards man is apparent in the sphere of art. Works of art [be it music, painting, sculpture, or literature], up to, and including the epoch of Mannerism and Baroque [it is, of course, impossible to draw a sharp limit anywhere here], created in principle certain microcosms, designed to incorporate the harmony of the universe. The work had a sacred meaning. The personality of the artist was considered unimportant—very frequently the artist remained anonymous. The work reflected the symbolic world, or it was a mere imitation of past works of art, and so on. From the 16th-17th centuries onward this ceases to hold for Europe; the work of art becomes an expression of the world of the artist. The artistic authorship of the work of art acquires importance. Man is author of law, and so is the author of the products of culture. Later on in modern times, in an extreme form, the artist is becoming even more important than the work, while our more sober ancestors regarded the message and the meaning of the work as prior to the author. The avant-garde's striving for innovation at whatever cost suggests that "Anything spit out by the artist is art!" [Kurt Schwitters].

This tendency to emancipate himself/herself from the traditional culture and society still lingers on in European culture. It is futile to evaluate this tendency as positive or negative. It is just a phase, a particular phase, having a characteristic course, destiny, and justification. However, from my point of view I should like to remark [in order to support a demand to shape a less exclusivist meaning of culture], that even if a man, according to his/her talents and creative dispositions, has borne values which are necessary or useful—just laws, civilian order, wealth, science, art and so on—it is not so much his/her abilities that we value most, but rather the goods he/she has provided for us, because we need not so much the politician or the lawyer, but rather a just law and wise policy. We do not desire the poet, but rather poetry. In my opinion, talent has a matter-of-fact character, as revealed by the fact that sometimes even men with grave personal or human shortcomings are lavishly endowed by it. In this respect the individualist conception of culture requires a certain correction and amendment. These could well be provided by traditional cultures, of course if we do not or at least stop consider them as a mere heap of rubbish to be borrowed for instant use and thrown away thereafter. Rather we ought to accept them as living.

Viewing the present according to those tendencies it appears as a place where the political [or secular] and the theological [or religious] dissolve into the social. Simplifying a little I would compare the character of the present transitory situation to a quote from the private correspondence of Gustave Flaubert: “In those days the gods have been no more and Christ was not yet. Whence the period between Cicero and Marcus Aurelius constitutes a singular moment where there was only man.”

Looking at the difficulties besetting the life of contemporary society—whether in the well-established democratic societies in the West, or the democracies in statu nascenti in the middle and eastern parts of Europe—an insufficient capability to cope with the problems due to the individualist conception of morals, justice, market or other economic relations, and so on, becomes increasingly apparent. These problems of social reality in mass relations would require a consequent analysis I am not able to perform. A space of possibilities, however, is opening here, a place [with deep temporal dimension] for the social to revive and gain fresh strength. It reopens as a ground for dialogue, where possibilities are being founded to create laws and other written norms and rules of life in society. The hitherto, more or less functioning laws, rules and norms are living out their time unable to keep pace or stimulate the positive activities of individuals or entire human communities.

The main difficulty is perhaps that we do not have any clearly defined structure of values at our disposal worth being definitely

accepted or rejected. Our situation is a state of expectation, on one side, and of pluralism, on the other side. It might be asked whether this state is more or less stable, or rather an evanescent transitory phenomenon lasting only until we shall have begun to create an authentic system of values for our time. All who have written about their conditions during past centuries wrote about their time in a deprecatory manner; they considered their own times as a mere transitory state of affairs, destined to be replaced a great change. At any given historical coordinates this is perhaps unavoidable. In the period of a few years men evidently will for various reasons speak about diverse ephemeral facts. The final ruin of the world predicted by the prophet of Apocalypses is imagined differently by each generation; but all believed that the end of the world was near. Many times in history the opinion has been voiced that the limits of science are within reach, and nothing remained, e.g. in research, to be done. Even in our century men have thought that the limits of knowledge had been reached, and with the end of the century approaching we more and more often hear about the apocalyptic years: 1998, 1999. Such expectations perhaps always existed.

On the other hand, there is the hope that all will be good, that things return to their natural place, and that certainty of knowledge and creative activity will be rediscovered again. We can hope, but I am not so sure. Starting with the general requirement of certainty, other problems are emerging, perhaps less compelling, but always demanding that one take a firm stance. One such problem now in Slovakia as well as in other post—communist countries is the sudden disappearance of “public domain”, of public interest and so on. Politicians, men of law, economists, artists, etc. are not able again to create “public domain”, public common interest, life, time and space appropriate for life, at least as long as there is no social demand for these things. It might be that one of our primary tasks at present is to revive the public consciousness in the society. In such situations the public is often being offered unwanted solutions.

Nevertheless this approach can be justified, provided it is directed toward the creation of justified, substantial and positive needs and values, the desire of which are perhaps always latently present in the somewhat apathetic, listless ‘consumers’. However, this approach is also Utopian and visionary, just were certain other approaches of the modernism, be it fascism, national socialism, or communism, with their desire to step out of history, with their conviction that thousands of years of history had finally come to an end and in the history of mankind the post-historical era was opening.

But in our present time a different movement in a different direction begins to show. This present approach, perhaps in a certain sense no less Utopian, looks not only towards the future “paradise,” but

also into the past and the “purgatory” of the present. This constitutes another challenge which will be judged by history. Let us hope that our “Utopias” will be less violent and will not cause such horrible damage as was the case with the visions which emerged in the course of the last century.

FREEDOM

All revolutions from the Declaration of Human and Citizen Rights, beginning with the triad *Liberté-Egalité-Fraternité*, have been dreams of democracy and freedom. “Live free, or die!” Even the term “Democracy” sounds emotional.

Is not the assumption that the need for freedom was more important than the need for emotional security one of the fundamental errors of the modern era? Freedom reduced to the myth of mobility, power and possessiveness dislocates man from his roots and drives him/her to one dimension—that of homoviator. Man shall become a pilgrim in the world, he/she shall give up his/her own home and ramble through the huge “house” of the world. Forecasts emerge of an “age of gypsies” when the European man is supposed “to linger around Europe”. Indeed, man is on the road, on his/her way, but is it on the way towards home, towards other men? Man without roots, without home, without connection to a particular place, here and now, is quickly blown hither and thither. The earth was not given to man to ramble around and to exploit, but to take care; man should foster the earth, protect it, keep it in proper shape, and cultivate it. And on the earth, under the heavens, he/she ought to cultivate himself/herself and his/her relations to others and to the Other.

Is freedom—rather than mobility or the power to manipulate and licentiousness—not a possibility or a challenge for any man and woman to “humanize” and to proceed to the limits of himself/herself. And equality: is it not the right of any man to enter into the satisfaction of needs and requirements of human solidarity and reciprocity according to his/her capabilities and dispositions, rather than an apathetic egalitarianism? Brotherhood too does not mean some shapeless, powerless mass, but a dynamic, oriented mutual connection of man, designed to represent human evolutionary effort in the world.

DEMOCRACY

In the interpretation of the notion of “democracy” in the last century diverse visions of the world played a central and polarizing role. They can be divided into four empirical visions of the world and one that is metaphysical.

- a “genetic” vision, where man is considered a mere part of family, clan, race, or nation;
- a “personalist” vision in which man experiences himself/herself as a moment in the relation of I and You;
- a “social” vision which man is a member of a social group or class;
- a “metaphysical” vision in which man experiences himself/herself not as a part of anything, but rather as being “together” with someone or something—a united experience of a totality, a unity in diversity. These visions are not quite independent from each other. They can be traced in the normal development of a human person beginning with the bonds of the child to the parents and ending with the consciousness of mature man or woman concerning his/her “metaphysical” personality.

I shall not dwell upon this psychological level here, however, but do want to point out the visions’ connection with conceptions of democracy in certain epochs of the century.

- the ideology of race adopted by NSDAP of Adolf Hitler, based on the ideas of “Blut und Boden”, grew on the base of the genetic vision of the world. It was a notoriously antagonistic ideology, hostile to any other, trying to destroy any rival;
- the ideology of Marx and Lenin, the ideology of “the party” of the working class, is based on the social vision, generalizing the particulars in a social vision that gives them a deceptive appearance of universality;
- liberalism and especially the unrest of the 1968 struggle to realize human rights and liberties for all without distinction of sex, race, religion, etc., are movements based on a “personalist” vision; and
- the ecological movement growing in the last decades after the breakdowns of nuclear plants evidently grows on the base of the naturalist vision of the world.

The main problem consists in the fact that whenever the particular character of a certain vision is forgotten and the vision begins to be considered universally valid, the threat of totalitarianism emerges. All these empirical visions of the world should, therefore, be regarded in their complementarity. The claim of universality originates on the ground of the metaphysical vision of the world only. There man is not considered as a mere part of a limited whole, isolated from particular historical and local bonds and relations and given a deceptive appearance of absoluteness in a kind of particularist infatuation. Rather man is seen in community with something, with other beings, in dialo-

gue with others and the Other. From the dialogue with this Other come the time and place to dwell in the universe of human experience and history with their significant directedness and meaning.

Also by the gross and abysmal division between liberal democracy and social or regulated democracy the effects of neglect of the principle of complementarity can be clearly observed. Contrary notions of liberalism and dirigisme, or of individualism and collectivism or socialism, etc., are merely various forms of the democratic social ideal, which only apparently contradict each other. Both correspond to natural components [personalization and totalization] of the development of human person. At one time the pendulum of evolution concentrates upon the individual, then later on the social group. None the less, in principal no contradiction is involved, but only a tension or tender lack of harmony, which is a necessary condition for dynamic evolution—change and continued communication with one's surroundings. In a real democracy those factor do not appear on their pure state, but become rather combined into a more or less balanced unity of opposites.

VALUES

Here I shall return to the question of the absence of a structure of values worthy of being adopted and which could direct our path through history. Present democratic culture transfers the accent from truth to the good. But the question of the nature of the "good" perpetually returns despite desperately seeking an answer to this question, we more and more often tend towards the deep European tradition and claim that the good life is the harmonious life. But how is the demand for harmony to be conceived? Is harmony merely the end of strife; if so, would such an abolition not necessarily prevent the process of life from continuing? Is harmony then rather the preservation of strife [strife not being a genuine contradiction], or of diversity—variety in unity, unity in a mutual shell-game with variety? Certainly, it is a mystery, impenetrable for us, which we can reject, but need to accept humbly, grateful for the possibility it provides for a decent life.

Would it be not far easier for us if we stopped to mix up this ideal of an harmonious life—ever present in the deep currents of the European tradition and ever again articulated with fresh vitality in the persistent longing of people in times of deep existential shock—with the enlightenment ideals of salvation of man through man, with demands for certain knowledge of the absolute, with desire for power, for mastery over others, for consumption without limits? We are confronted with the choice of leaving behind the raging of the two—one-sided rationalism and one-sided empiricism—of stepping back from the instrumentalist

desire for control and domination, of resisting our former intoxication by the glitter of an everlasting day, and of joining existence with gratitude and humbleness in face of the mystery of being, of being together, in the unity of variety, or diversity in unity? We ought to say yes to that mystery and humble confess the sinful nature of man and the destiny of his/her history. This means not the end of history, with no new “calendars”, no exclusive reign of either reason or heart, but confession of both, admitting their eternal strife with each other and taking up the burden of appeasing and harmonizing that strife in the name of life with others and the Other in an open stream of being. This choice does not exclude a leap into nothingness, into oblivion, but accepts that risk as a challenge of life and to life. That choice accepts the fate of man as a being created and unfinished, open, as a keeper and protector of everything between heaven and earth.

In this necessary human dimension of life as a creative human activity emerging from the condition of man ever subject to open possibilities, hope finds her way between the Charybdis of individualism and the Scylla of totalitarianism.

It leads us out of our seemingly insoluble situation of meaninglessness or the loss of the eternal meaning of life into the stream of significant, comprehensive satisfaction of human evolution. Human evolution happens only in history, and the pendulum of history may temporarily assume one of the extreme positions: the extreme of an atomistic individual or the opposite extreme of a social group or class. But it cannot stop there for there is ever lasting change between disharmony, harmony....

*Philosophy Institute
Slovak Academy of Science
Bratislava, Slovakia*

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The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy

PURPOSE

Today there is urgent need to attend to the nature and dignity of the person, to the quality of human life, to the purpose and goal of the physical transformation of our environment, and to the relation of all this to the development of social and political life. This, in turn, requires philosophic clarification of the base upon which freedom is exercised, that is, of the values which provide stability and guidance to one's decisions.

Such studies must be able to reach deeply into one's culture and that of other parts of the world as mutually reinforcing and enriching in order to uncover the roots of the dignity of persons and of their societies. They must be able to identify the conceptual forms in terms of which modern industrial and technological developments are structured and how these impact upon human self-understanding. Above all, they must be able to bring these elements together in the creative understanding essential for setting our goals and determining our modes of interaction. In the present complex global circumstances this is a condition for growing together with trust and justice, honest dedication and mutual concern.

The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP) unites scholars who share these concerns and are interested in the application thereto of existing capabilities in the field of philosophy and other disciplines. Its work is to identify areas in which study is needed, the intellectual resources which can be brought to bear thereupon, and the means for publication and interchange of the work from the various regions of the world. In bringing these together its goal is scientific discovery and publication which contributes to the present promotion of humankind.

In sum, our times present both the need and the opportunity for deeper and ever more progressive understanding of the person and of the foundations of social life. The development of such understanding is the goal of the RVP.

PROJECTS

A set of related research efforts is currently in process:

1. *Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change: Philosophical Foundations for Social Life*. Focused, mutually coordinated research teams in university centers prepare volumes as part of an integrated philosophic search for self-understanding differentiated by culture and civilization. These evolve more adequate understandings of the person in society and

look to the cultural heritage of each for the resources to respond to the challenges of its own specific contemporary transformation.

2. *Seminars on Culture and Contemporary Issues*. This series of 10 week crosscultural and interdisciplinary seminars is coordinated by the RVP in Washington.

3. *Joint-Colloquia* with Institutes of Philosophy of the National Academies of Science, university philosophy departments, and societies. Underway since 1976 in Eastern Europe and, since 1987, in China, these concern the person in contemporary society.

4. *Foundations of Moral Education and Character Development*. A study in values and education which unites philosophers, psychologists, social scientists and scholars in education in the elaboration of ways of enriching the moral content of education and character development. This work has been underway since 1980.

The personnel for these projects consists of established scholars willing to contribute their time and research as part of their professional commitment to life in contemporary society. For resources to implement this work the Council, as 501 C3 a non-profit organization incorporated in the District of Columbia, looks to various private foundations, public programs and enterprises.

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