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# **Church and People: Disjunctions in a Secular Age**

**Christian Philosophical Studies, I**

Edited by  
*Charles Taylor*  
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## INTRODUCTION

# DISJUNCTIONS IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

GEORGE F. McLEAN

## CHALLENGES FOR CHURCH LIFE TODAY

The phenomenon of secularization since the Reformation and the beginnings of modernity has been traced by Charles Taylor in *A Secular Age*. He sees this in three modes: (1) separation of public, especially political, spaces from a religious context; (2) lessening in ecclesial practice by the general populace, which the Pew Foundation Studies indicates as particularly strong among the younger generations of Catholics; and (3) deeper levels of human consciousness in which religious engagement and identity is no longer expected but instead has become a difficult choice or option. It is upon this last that C. Taylor focuses his attention, but undoubtedly the first two constitute its enabling political and social context.

This has been summarized by him for the present project under four existential disjunctions, namely, between:

1/ the “seekers” who wish to realize in their life new, more personally authentic, ways of being Christian and Catholic vs “the dwellers” who feel that in the Church all is already clear, well defined and simply to be followed assiduously;

2/ those who bring a modern sense of personal responsibility to Church teaching in search of critical convergence vs the Church as a jurisdictional authority to which is due obedience;

3/ ethical and moral praxis understood as a human, fallible and historical or existential achievement vs a natural law morality built on abstract, unchanging and universal essences; and

4/ a spirituality open to enrichment by the experiences and spiritualities of the many great religious cultures and civilizations, even the nonreligious, vs a stress on the completeness of the Christian spiritual tradition focused on the Second Person of the Trinity.

These four disjunctions could be read at a relatively surface level. In terms of today’s rampant individualism the loss of the social context of belief provided by Church may appear to be of little account. But to be trapped in oneself and lose the ability to transcend is to lose the essence of religion as liberation and to be condemned to a life of frustrated aspirations. Or understood as diverse personal psycho-social attitudes the disjunctions might simply constitute the well-noted division among Church members in the interpretation and implementation -- and

in some cases the effort to diminish the effects -- of Vatican II. In either case the response might be a return to the Church's earlier self-understanding.

However, two major factors indicate this to be thoroughly insufficient. The first is Taylor's long narrative of the last four centuries which shows the process of secularization not to be a process of subtraction constituted by modernity's progressive abandonment of religious factors. That would accord with the modernization theory of Weber *et al*, for whom modernity and religion are bound in a zero sum tension. Instead Taylor shows the process of secularization to be integral to the major search for human self-fulfillment. If that be the case then it calls into question the habitual Catholic response calibrated to the modernization theory, namely, its effort to defend itself by restoring what had been subtracted. That begins by attacking, e.g., nominalism and individualism, with the intent of restoring the *status quo ante*. While not erroneous, uncalled for or fruitless, such an effort has led to a characteristic Catholic attitude, namely, that those subtractions are the fault of "the other" for not listening to the Church. It tends to consider itself to have the truth not only on key issues of faith and morals, but in all the supporting "theology and philosophy (which for some is pretty much the whole *Summa Theologica*). Hence it cannot effectively engage the general disjunction of Church horizons from the contemporary socio-cultural context in the four specific "Catholic" variants which Taylor identifies.

Yet these, in turn, lay out the map for a restorative research effort. That began with the present conference held in Vienna and its effort to render the problematic as precise and perspicacious as possible. This laid the ground for the focused work of research teams on each of the four disjunctions.

That level of analysis and projected response, however, has now been radically shocked by the "scandals" emerging from the surge of repulsive actions of too many of the clergy in the late 60s and 70s. As these issues moved from the perpetrators to their episcopal overseers, and up the chain of responsibility to the Vatican itself, it became apparent that the broad overriding concern had been the reputation of a supposedly spotless Church even to the detriment of its own vulnerable young. Secular legal powers have now declared such actions of some chancery officials to have been so alien to contemporary secular norms as to call for criminal prosecution. Pope Benedict, in turn, bemoans the whole tragedy in the poignant words: "What went wrong ... in our entire way of living the Christian life to allow such a thing to happen?"

All of this is to say that we have here not only a legitimate matter for philosophical and theological research which will require all of the scientific competencies of those and related social sciences.

Moreover, this is no ordinary academic exercise, but rather an absolute and utter tragedy for the Church as witness to Christ and his salvific sacrifice on the Cross. Where before it was thought that the problem was that the world was not listening to the Church, it now becomes rather that the Church is in such disjunction from the legitimate modern aspirations of its members and the corresponding public structures that the teacher and shepherd has become traitor to the flock and criminal before the law as it reflects the public conscience. This is to be not merely bankrupt, but grotesque.

## **RESPONSE TO THE CHALLENGES**

What this so desperately bespeaks is, of course, the utter urgency of rethinking the entire nature of the Church and its public presence in quite different, indeed kenotic, terms. Moreover, beyond responding to the tragic urgency of the present crises, this can also help to orient present theological investigations toward the new discoveries needed for bearing witness to Gospel values in this secular age.

If the final culminating failure of these recent decades had been, as Pope Benedict acknowledged, to sacrifice the safety its young for the reputation of the Church as institution this calls for a redefinition of the Church in quite opposite terms from that of recent centuries. That is, not the Church as a perfect and imperial institution, unchanging through time and hence never to be questioned. Rather, Christ himself did not hold to his heavenly majesty but took on the form of our humanity which he exercised not as Lord and Sovereign, but through dying on the cross as Suffering Servant (Philippians). That death was the ultimate act of love as total self-emptying for the redemption of all humankind and indeed of all creatures; this is kenosis complete and entire. As response to the challenges presently facing the Church this directs efforts away from the older theologies of Church as spotless bride; it winds along the *via dolorosa* of the victim to the sacrificial service of the Cross itself. This is the point of rediscovery and potential reemergence of the Church from its present catastrophe.

The task then is to develop a kenotic theology of the Catholic Church. This is not without its roots in the early Church, but being of the nature of a reformation it was spoken to by the reformers, by Luther's meditation on the cross and perhaps especially by the renewed line of thought of his Protestant followers through Kierkegaard, Hegel, Moltman, *et al*, rather than the restorative efforts of neo-scholastic Catholic thought of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

For these many reasons the writing of a Catholic kenotic theology of Church is an enormous challenge. Who can be called to this task: "Whom shall I send, says the Lord?" Anyone absent from the

present catastrophe could not be sufficiently sensitive to the urgent anguish and the penetrating character of the issues it entails. Rather, hermeneutics directs us to seek the sets of Catholic theologians and others who presently are most conscious of the tragedy. This should be among people with a deep love of Christ and His Church, experienced in the recent progress of secularization, and sensitive to the devastating effect on Church participation by the younger generations, etc.

Those who would work on the development of such a kenotic theology must ask themselves at each step whether their exploration of the mystery of the Cross of Christ goes deeply enough. It must truly and adequately respond to the challenges raised by the scandals in the hearts and minds of the “people of God” living in their present disheartening, indeed catastrophic, circumstances. They must be urged to go ever deeper and thus be enabled to uncover more of the modalities of the love of God at work therein. This is theology that is concrete and creative, alive and responsive, providing understanding for pastoral leadership not only under the urgency of the present crisis, but in response to the penetrating longing and broader aspirations of modernity. It requires overcoming not only the reluctance to face these aspirations since the Enlightenment and the Reformation, but its focus on actively combating them in the last two centuries.

Turning to the four disjunctions then can take us into the field of creative theology and religiously based reflection. As focused upon stating the problem this volume can make important, though as yet only initial suggestions. Nevertheless, from the separate horizons of the four disjunctions these converge in their repeated suggestions of the need for a change to a kenotic theology of Church. This entails a shift from the evangelist John’s descent of the Logos into time, as top-down and tinged always with a sense of divine glory which has had as implications:

- (a) a focus upon the perfection of the Church as Mystical Body and “spotless bride of Christ,”
- (b) whose reputation is therefore ever to be protected,
- (c) which, in turn, has had the tragic consequence of calling above all for protecting the Church as institution over the welfare of its young.

Instead this volume of studies points to Philippians’ 2.5-11 with its account of Christ not holding to the form of God but emptying himself in order to take human form, indeed the form of a servant and to surrender even this on the Cross. This leads to a bottom-up approach, quite opposite to glory and perfection. It starts from the humanity of Christ and indeed his sacrificial death or even from creation as *ex nihilo*. This opens a sense of God less as uncompromisedly absolute and



immobile, and rather as able to share with a universe and science which have their own autonomy and laws, and at the level of humankind even their own freedom. This could include also a critique of our overreaching technological sense of power to do everything, which can lead to social and political conflict, and instead to open a metaphysics and ethics of the creativity of powerlessness and compromise of harmony and beauty.

#### **FOUR DISJUNCTIONS OF CHURCH AND SOCIETY TODAY**

Part I is on the disjunction between seekers and dwellers, which Charles Taylor articulated as follows:

There is a mode of spiritual seeking which is very widespread in the West today, but which the official church often seems to want to rebuff. Seekers ask questions, but the official church seems largely concerned with pushing certain already worked-out answers. It seems to have little capacity to listen.

The general phenomenon of progressive secularization over the last 400 years must be seen in the light of: first, the broad human processes of the Reformation reacting against hierarchy and the corresponding progressive affirmation of individual authenticity and equality; second, the Enlightenment's parallel emphasis upon the disjunction of human reason from the unitive influences of wisdom and faith; and third, democracy and human freedom over the evaluation and guidance of human action. All these have come together in the post-World War II under the development of the pervasive personal communication system which bypasses the communal parish church as the dominant context for the formation of one's personal outlook. Hence, it becomes especially common for young persons to set out on life with the attitude of seekers embarking on the exciting, if at times threatening, adventure of constructing their own life in their own terms. But as more threatening to their effort than the danger of occasional mistakes, they see the imposition of a predetermined pattern of life or culture which one is destined to follow.

Thus, in Chapter I, Charles Taylor begins his set of disjunctions with that between seekers and dwellers. In contrast to the more highly choreographed pattern of dwelling within the Church and its traditions, the enigmas of existence emphasized by contemporary theory and culture and the many and developing challenges to be faced in life tend to generate in the seeker a sense of the inadequacy of universal laws.

This leads ever more to increasingly to a search to build life with the new more individualistic coordinates of modernity mentioned above.

Here the seekers can be seen less as having left the people of God, than as struggling to live the deep inspiration of the Spirit in the face of multiple responsibilities in the Church and the world, internal and external. The cost of their search for authenticity can be very high as it takes one beyond the following of authorities and the cultural attitudes of neighbors and confreres. Their need is not for a Church as an ideal institution, but one that is no longer enchanted and in many ways a fallible, human and humane way of living the gospel values. This is a community marked not by power and control, but by acceptance and encouragement of those who look to it in the needs they experience in their search. Here Christ on the Cross is the kenotic model for the Church manifesting the endless extent of willingness to suffer in order to serve.

Yet these same challenges lead others to seek the constant guidance available in a Church tradition and the desire to have this articulated as amply as possible. This places Church leadership uncomfortably between two – and more – groups with quite different needs and expectations.

Chapter II by D. Hervieu-Léger, “Mapping the Contemporary Forms of Catholic Religiosity,” seeks to go beyond the initial disjunction of seeker and dweller with the help of the typology by J. M. Donegani. This directs attention not only to a Church-nonChurch dichotomy, but to the interior subjectivity of the actors in this interplay. In terms of interior self-consciousness this is in effect the formation of one’s very identity as described in Charles Taylor’s *Sources of the Self*. It brings out that the option between views built entirely either in Church or in secular terms is one of marginal extremes, whereas the truly challenging task is to relate the two in ways that are mutually complementary and enriching. For example, can the role of the Church be not an alternative to that of the secular state but, as John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas have come to seek, a helpful enablement of the human democratic endeavor. Or indeed can one go still further with Jürgen Habermas and Robert Bellah to recognize the presence of proto-religious modes of ritual and myth in the very origins of humanness itself in the emergence of ability to be conscious of and to express the unitive relation to others that founds and constitutes humane social life and behavior.

Hervieu-Léger does not follow that road, but rather retains a focus directly on the new modalities of living one’s Catholic identity. This may well no longer be as part of an institution that is superior and opposed to the efforts of the people to build their nation from the ground up, but rather in the supportive terms of leaven and narrative. This

entails a new theology of Church in the kenotic terms of suffering servant.

Chapter III by Paul Thibaud, “For a Civic Strategy of Catholicism,” sharpens this problematic further by noting a possible danger of this notion of serving the human community, its institutions and structures, if held to exclusively. Namely, the more this is developed the less significant can seem the religious contribution and even more thin and even banal its message, for does not every political ideology need to include the recognition of the other.

In response, Thibaud sees the religious difference in more practical terms as pointing once again to the conscious-spiritual dimension of life. He regrets that the nation has become more of a law enforcing than a political entity built on the will of the people. Similarly he regrets that the Church has come to be more of a moral than a spiritual institution. Together they leave “a world without forgiveness and without project.”

This points toward some surprising suggestions, e.g., that the Church needs to evoke lively debate among the laity in order for them to come to a consciousness of the living reality of the Holy Spirit at the core of their lives and that of their Church; that in the face of the rampant individualism which accompanies the contemporary sense of human autonomy and freedom the state is in need of the sense of human unity and community which religion articulates; that a renewed appreciation of humankind can restore the dynamic sense of history; and that in turn the heterogeneity of history needs the deeper sense of charity so that humanity can be not merely a sum, but a relation which while rooted in the particular opens towards the universal. The promise here is to escape a “direct and nostalgic marginality and regain some pride in addressing the deep concerns of others” at the more profound level proper to religion.

Part II is on the Second Disjunction: between the Mode of the Church’s Magisterium and the Contemporary Sense of Responsible Critical Engagement. This is stated by Charles Taylro as follows.

The disjunction is very evident in the model of authority to which the official Church seems to hold. In spite of the work of Vatican II, there seems to be a regression to a concentration of power and authority at the centre more reminiscent of the Age of Absolutism (when people accuse the Church of being “mediaeval,” one can be tempted to react: “if only this were so, there might be more input from the base”). This goes along with claims to have settled certain crucial questions once and for all,

so that even discussion of them is seen as a kind of disloyalty or disobedience: questions such as women priests and sexual morality.

This is treated here comprehensively in two particularly penetrating, detailed and complementary studies which trace the development of the issue from the earliest times to the present pontificate.

Chapter IV, "Obedience and the Church's Teaching Authority: The Burden of the Past," is by Francis Oakley, who has done some of the most penetrating historical studies on this theme. He traces the gradual development of the Church's understanding and the exercise of its teaching role from that based on the grace of especial ordination to a gradually more juridical concept.

Key steps in this were the Constantinian epoch when the Church moved from persecution to the assumption of imperial privilege; and the move of many from the Eastern Empire to Rome at the time of the Iconoclast controversy bringing with them forms of vestment and ritual redolent of Empire. This, in turn, was affirmed ever more firmly in the hard contests with kings and emperors over the primacy of the spiritual over earthly powers and authorities.

This narrative turns tragic with the cultural and civilizational inversion of the Reformation and Enlightenment when the pervasive socio-cultural dynamism shifted from a hierarchical to a democratic model. At that point for the Church to cling to the forms of a primacy of political power became countercultural and contrary to the central efforts of Western humanity. In that struggle any Church victory would in a larger sense be a defeat. Inexorably – as typified, but by no means exhausted, by the issues of the Papal States – the structures of hierarchy were crumbling. In a deadly dialectic the greater the threat the more strongly papal authority was asserted. This, in turn, increased the tension with the long project of human emancipation and the assumption of sovereign responsibility by the people.

Oakley recounts this story with deep penetration and detailed concrete documentation focusing upon the way the magisterium or teaching authority of the Church evolved from the external role of the Papacy vis a vis other powers to its internal role vis a vis the faithful, and in this role from its responsibility to guide as pastor founded in the grace of ordination to jurisdiction as the exercise of an unquestioned power to which obedience is due.

In Chapter V, by Daniel Deckers, "Subsidiarity: Does It Apply also to the Life of the Church?" follows with special attention to the 20<sup>th</sup> century focused on the internal issue of the relationship between the bishops and the Pope. Namely, how does the responsibility had by the

bishops from their sacramental ordination to pastor their flocks relate to that of the Pope as symbol of unity.

This issue came to be formulated in terms of a sociological principle of subsidiarity. Though this had become characteristic of the response of Catholic social teaching to the totalitarian excesses of the Fascist regimes in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, would it not apply within the Church to the role of Bishops vis a vis the Pope?

The Second Vatican Council did not take this up directly, but it did set about revising the sense of Church in terms of the grace of baptism of all the laity; this moved less from the Pope down than from the “people of God” upward. This current of thought was bound to continually push forward the responsibility of the Bishops as they united in national conferences.

In response the Papal center affirmed its unique authority ever more strongly in the synods of bishops of 1985 and 2001 and in the wording of the profession of faith in use since 1990. This trend appeared within the Church vis a vis the Bishops and even beyond in relation to other Churches and religions. In this a major concern has been to protect the Church not as a society, but as a mystery of grace from above. Is then subsidiarity to be conceived as operative in the Church only as a society, or also as a mystery of grace, or in neither – the latter of which would seem to have been the operative trend.

It is not hard to hear the poignant question of Pope Benedict here in relation to the scandals asking what went wrong. The two papers of Part II in relation to the disjunction in the mode of the magisterium show that the answer must lie not simply in the psycho-social aberrations of the perpetrators, but in the long struggle of the Church to understand its pastoral teaching role. The response requires the development of a theology of Church based not on the sense of the Church as majestic and spotless Bride of Christ descending from above and to be protected from any scandal, but in the image of Christ on the Cross as suffering servant and thereby able to reconceive in terms of the mystery of grace its moral leadership of a struggling and pilgrim people.

Part III concerns the disjunction on morality and historicity with particular attention to the issue of sexual morality. Charles Taylor states it thus:

The questions of sexual morality, and of gender, should be examined more closely. Sexual morality is defined by the magisterium in terms of an ahistorical notion of the “natural”. At the same time, the institutional Church has shown a lack of concern for issues of the dignity of the person, in its handling of many of the scandals

around pedophilia which has rightly shocked the consciousness of the contemporary world. In both this, and in the issues of Part II, serious questions need to be raised about the relation of dogma to history. It is an irony that, at the moment when John Henry Newman is being recognized as blessed, the Vatican seems to have slid back to the attitudes prevalent before Vatican II, whose decisions reflected Newman's spirit.

Here Chapter VI by William A Barbieri, "The Value of Experience for a Worldly Church," plunges the Church into time with its existential content, the lives of the people of God. In these terms it is no longer sufficient to codify the essences of things, including human nature, and to deduce therefrom a typography of unchanging modes of human action. Rather the dynamism of human self-development and of its struggles toward fulfillment would be the realities on which the life of the Church and of the Christian should be conceived and evaluated. The document, *The Declaration on Religious Liberty (Dignitatis Humanae)*, pushed this even further by asserting the importance of the human conscience even, or especially, on one's relation to God. The latter step may have been the more dramatic, because it was taken with the recognition that there did not as yet exist an adequate theology to undergird it. Nonetheless, reasoned John Courtney Murray, its major author, the experience of our times made manifest that the Church would be no longer credible without a recognition of the freedom of conscience.

The paper takes up the multiple senses of experience ranging from knowledge built on perception of one's personal surroundings to perceptions and evaluations of entire societies or cultures. He highlights the tension between experience itself and the "imaginative, linguistic, perceptual and fiduciary pre-dispositions it requires." For the Church this bespeaks the parallel tension between its respect for personal conscience and historicity and its burden of serving as witness to moral truth.

Barbieri cites the earlier work of John Noonan in tracing the development of moral insight along with the external historical development of socio-cultural life. But he goes deeper to cite Karl Rahner's articulation of a formal existential ethics in ways relevant to the seekers discussed above. This does not proceed by deduction from universal and abstract principles. Rather it looks internally to the non-reflective, non-propositional self-presence of the person and one's non-discursive experience of the transcendent horizon of human knowledge. There it searches for the coherence of a proposed course of action with God's intimate love and will. While this may carry dangers of subjectivism if not guided by a more objective morality, it adds to the

moral question attention to the uniqueness of the person as a characteristically contemporary human concern.

Thus, Barbieri takes special note of the work of Margaret Farley and her reference to Paul Ricoeur's insight that our evolving experience can challenge other sources of moral knowledge. Given our imagination, mind and heart, this source can be trusted when it "rings true to our capacity for knowing, to our moral sensibilities, and to our affective capability for the good. (M. Farley, "The Role of Experience in Moral Discernment," in L. Cahill and J. Childress, *Christian Ethics* (Cleveland, Pilgrim, 1996), 147).

Chapter VII by José Casanova, "The Contemporary Disjunction between Societal and Church Morality," notes the inversion since the 18<sup>th</sup> century in societal morality. Rather than coming from Church to society, it moves inversely on issues as crucial as slavery and ranging from human experience to moral and human rights imperatives. If overcoming the totalitarian and colonial regimes had been the major story of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, nuclear today is recognition of the freedom and equality of all persons.

J. Casanova cites in this regard the continuing significance of three issues: ordination of women, gender and sexual morality and the common moral outrage at the perceived concern of the Church to protect its own institutional reputation over the safety of its children. Once again and most shatteringly the disjunction between societal and Church morality makes it clear that the Church's pre-modern self-understanding predicated upon evoking a sense of transcendence, has become today a dangerous model leading even to criminal misbehavior of the most serious and destructive nature.

Above we saw how Part II on the magisterium led to the conclusion that the social structure of the Church needed to be reordered so as to adopt many of the modes of modern constitutional responsibilities that enable the flow of information and power upward through local leadership to more central authorities in a pattern of social subsidiarity. Here the conclusion of Part III leads yet more deeply to the model of the Church not merely as society, but in the image of the mystery of the cross, i.e., not holding to privilege but emptying self after the kenotic example of Christ on the Cross.

Chapter VIII by Ethna Regan is on "Natural Law as Conjunctive and Disjunctive: Through the Lens of Hiberno-Christendom." Coming from Ireland this chapter combines a number of most striking elements including an especially strong expression of earlier Christendom's top-down model of Church. Coming from the days when life in Ireland was effectively patterned less in terms of dioceses than of monasteries and their lands, this model had long been lived most rigorously by the people even up through the British occupation. Today to the shock of

secularization has been added very detailed government reports on the scandals of Church failure to protect its youngest and most vulnerable members.

No one is positioned to address this more sensitively than E. Regan, Chair of theology at Mater Dei Institute in Dublin. Yet she brings important moderating factors to any response. The paper hesitates simply to let go of the contributions of natural law, recognizing how it provides a common basis for dialogue between all cultures and hence its conjunctive value for the need of our global times for both universality and wholeness. But fundamentally, while pointing out the complexity of the causes and the pervasive character of the present catastrophe, this sends her not simply in myriad directions but more deeply to a recognition of the need to replace the top-down model of the Church as Christendom received from pre-modern times by one based rather on its opposite, namely, the cross of Christ.

Chapter IX by Herta Nagl-Docekal, “Issues of Gender in Catholicism: How the Current Debate Could Benefit from a Philosophical Approach.” This paper takes the issue of historicity and morality head on by showing the hermeneutical character of moral and religious truth. Far from Habermas’ notion of dogmatic truths being contrary or opaque to human reason, even mystery must be accompanied by an exploratory explanatory narrative or metaphoric imagery to avoid being devoid of meaning. In this sense the modern philosophy especially of Kant and Hegel leads along an interior track of human consciousness to the free Spirit.

The paper then turns to the theme of gender which Nagl would want to protect from being reduced to the material configuration of the body. She proceeds instead to develop the theme of personal dignity in terms of Spirit and thereby brings forward the theme of love as central to Christian understanding.

Part IV concerns the fourth disjunction, namely on plural spiritualities and the Christian sense of its own uniqueness. As stated by Charles Taylor:

We need to look at the issues of Church in a world of plural forms of spirituality. There are not only the other major religions, but also the spiritual lives of many who profess no religion, and even atheism. These are often very impressive, and invite us to modes of respectful exchange, from which we often have something important to learn. They can no longer simply be dismissed as erroneous, or deficient, or (in the case of



contemporary unbelief) be branded as “materialist” or “hedonist”.

Chapter X by Tomáš Halík, “The Disjunction between a Single and Plural Spiritualities,” picks up on themes opened by Chapter IX of H. Nagle, comparing the strong contemporary current of spirituality to a swift stream that erodes the banks which constrict and shape its flow. In this Halík sees Ernest Troeltsch’s sense of a universalist religious philosophy to be found within individual religions.

He sees here a spiritual radicalism which was expressed by the Desert Fathers, the monastic orders, and Luther’s democratization of the Church and subsequently of society. In this process much earlier liturgical and theological expression became psychologically inaccessible and was replaced by sentimental experience as the core of religion. However, this entailed the danger of making religion simply a matter of human solace or a fast track to success through some ideology.

After reviewing in like manner the new religious movements, Halík suggests the need to replace the paradigm of paradise and temple with the harsher paradigm of exodus and discipleship, the point of view of kings and priests with that of prophets and apostles, and that of the dweller with that of the seeker as a search not for comfort but for kenoses. Hence he concludes with the legend about St. Martin who, when Satan appeared in the guise of Jesus, asked: “where are your wounds?” echoing the biblical text instructing the doubting Thomas to touch the wounds and believe.

Chapter XI by Anthony Carroll, “The Church and the World: Disjunction and Conjunction” in a fitting conclusion to the volume wishes to protect the sense of a countercultural Church from being forced to fit in. This entails a delicate balance in which the Gospel is seen not as an extrinsic possession, but as a gift in which grace becomes intrinsic and even constitutive of human nature.

In this light he reviews the disjunctions with an emphasis upon the seekers as being on a spiritual path, and in a stance, if not of obedience, nevertheless of critical alterness to the teaching of the magisterium. There is recognition that the realization of human dignity is historical in nature, that this has decisive import for morality and is reflected in a plurality of spiritual modes. In this light the emphasis is perhaps, as with E. Regan, less on disjunction than on conjunction even with the non-religious.

In addition Carroll notes Habermas’ important distinction between a normative status which depends upon the cultural context and a truth claim which depends on its conceptual context. This enables real dialogue with other faiths in the hope of learning therefrom things even

about one's own tradition which are not likely to be perceived from within.

The paper emphasizes moving beyond the exclusivism of a disconnected religion. In this he cites Cantwell Smith's replacement of religion as an objective category by the subjective category of faith, the sense of a cumulative tradition, and the shared category of the transcendent which is the "object" of all faiths.

While this points to a pluralism, a Catholic concern is to unite this with a Christology of the unique and universal Savior. Here the road is opened by a theology of the Holy Spirit as expressed richly in the orthodox traditions of the East. This finds the Spirit present in "society and history, peoples, cultures and religions" (John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio*, 28). This could be reinforced by Benedict's stress on the solidarity of peoples with their common origin and destiny if related to a Christology, not of an imperial messiah, but of kenosis and cross leading to resurrection and new life.

*The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy*