

The Kalinga Peace-Pact Institution, *Bodong*: Forging Relationships, Resolving Conflicts, and Fostering Peaceful Co-existence

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Abstract: This study attempts to shed light on Kalinga society's practice of *Bodong* (peace-pact) and its relevance to conflict resolution and the promotion of peace. It presents a cultural heritage in the hope of engendering discussion on missionary approaches among indigenous peoples. *Bodong*'s relevance to conflict resolution and the promotion of peace is laid out through an extensive study of its nature or characteristic and then verified through the local culture bearers and within their own state of affairs.

Keywords: *Kalinga, Bodong, sin-ilian*, peace-pact, conflict resolution

One of the approaches to doing mission in a particular setting is that of understanding the culture that enlivens and gives identity to people. This must be joined by a sincere desire to learn from the people themselves about their own beliefs, rituals, practices, and social organizations. Hopefully, this enables the missionary to avoid viewing traditions or cultural practices as ways inimical to mainstream religion or incompatible with modernity and, thus, unacceptable. Hence, this article hopes to present *Bodong* (peace-pact) as a relevant resource despite its local provenance and

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rootedness in the Kalinga society and culture.

The rugged mountainous terrain of the Kalinga region and the resolute resistance of the different *sin-ilians* (various autonomous tribes) thwarted Spanish colonizing efforts. On the one hand, the Spanish colonizers who ventured into these uncharted territories to set up military outposts and make the inhabitants subjects of the King of Spain encountered harassment from the intrepid warriors who were unafraid of colonizers.¹ On the other hand, Spanish missionaries built a few settlements in the region but failed to establish a permanent Christian mission with an extant Spanish structure in any of the Kalinga *sin-ilians*.

For more than three hundred years, the Philippines had been under Spanish governance until it was ceded by Spain to the United States of America

This paper was presented at the International Conference on Philippine Studies (ICOPHIL) which was held at the Silliman University in Dumaguete City from 6-8 July 2016.

¹William Henry Scott pointed out, "It is a strange thing that the history textbooks commonly in use in the public and private schools of the Republic of the Philippines never mention the fact that the Igorot peoples of Northern Luzon fought for their liberty against foreign aggressions all during the 350 years that their lowland brethren were being ruled over by Spanish invaders. One history book says we can never know the history of the Filipino people during the Spanish period because they were slaves to the Spaniards or at least forced to play the role of slaves. Certainly this is not true of the Igorots. They were never slaves of the Spaniards nor did they play the role of slaves. Quite the contrary, Spanish records make it clear that they fought for their independence with every means at their disposal for three centuries, and that this resistance to invasion was deliberate, self-conscious and continuous. That it was largely successful is indicated by the fact that at the end of the Spanish regime, when the Cordillera Central had been carved up into a dozen military districts, the last Spanish census listed one-third of the estimated mountain population as completely independent." See William Henry Scott, *Of Igorots and Independence* (Baguio City: A-Seven Publishing, 1993), 1-2.

under the Treaty of Paris on 10 December 1898. After the civil government was constituted, schools were founded, trails and roads built, and the American colonizer's peace and order was promoted in the region.² Among the Kalinga, there were *sin-ilians* who still posed some problems to the foreigner's design of peace and order.

The Americans, however, did something that brought a modicum of concord in the region. They disciplined recalcitrant *sin-ilians* by 1) the enforcement of *Bodong*, the peace-pact institution, as a means of resolving conflicts and 2) the appointment of Kalinga headmen to police their people. This is a familiar divide-and-rule tactic which, nevertheless, inaugurated a government that ensured mobility among Kalingas with the guarantee of a safe passage.

Nowadays, the *Bodong* does not only concern itself with the adjudication and arbitration of disputes but it also promotes interregional co-existence; hence, it fosters peace in the region. More importantly, the *Bodong* serves as a security measure not only for the safety of the individual but also for the welfare of the

²When Walter F. Hale was appointed governor of Kalinga, he "immediately resumed the construction of trails. Each region was assigned to finish a section of the trail every year, and all able-bodied men had to contribute their labor for two or three weeks. Old trails were repaired and new ones constructed from Lubuwagan to Abbut over Limos, Taga, and Pinokpok; from Lubuwagan to Balbalan; from Lubuwagan to Patiking, joining the old Spanish trail across Kalinga there; and from Lubuwagan to Sumadel." See Jules Deraedt, "Some Notes on Buwaya Society," *Saint Louis Quarterly*, vol. 7, no. 1 (March 1969): 19. Deraedt further wrote, "Whenever a killing was brought to Hale's attention, he sent out his soldiers, mostly Kalinga of other regions, to arrest the culprit and bring him to Lubuwagan for trial. The prospect of being imprisoned for a year or so for murder struck much fear in the Buwaya and other Kalinga. The soldiers were not soft on those who would not admit guilt." Deraedt, 19.

whole *sin-ilian* in relation to other *binodngan* (those *sin-ilians* which concluded peace-pacts with one another). Through the *Bodong*, two tribes enter into mutual agreement of providing safe passage to the members of each *sin-ilian* with their security guaranteed. Once the *Bodong* is instituted between two *sin-ilians*, the *pagta* (by-laws of the *Bodong*) are binding and members of both *sin-ilians* have to observe them to the letter.³ The *Bodong* emerges as the traditional mechanism to prevent the commission of crime and bloody retribution on either side. If the *Bodong* has not been *nadimok* (literally: dirtied or violated) over the years, the custody of the *Bodong* is passed on within the family of the peace-pact holder.

Bodong's relevance to conflict resolution and the promotion of peace even outside its locale is something that must be laid out. This can only be done through an extensive study of its nature or characteristic which can only be verified through the perspective of the culture bearers and within their own state of affairs. Any attempt to bring the message of the Good News of the Reign of God to people demands this respectful approach.

The Kalinga *Sin-ilian*⁴

Before the charting of the political territorial

³The by-laws of the *Bodong* or *pagta* are unwritten laws which are enacted and ratified during the celebration of the *inom*. Memory is an essential component of the oral tradition among the Kalingas. With many Kalingas who have undergone formal education, however, the proceedings of the *inom* as well as the drafting of the *pagta* are now written down.

⁴For further understanding on the concept of the Kalinga *Sin-ilian*, see Michael Layugan, "The Concept and the Operation of the Kalinga *Sin-ilian*," *Missio Inter Gentes*, vol. 1, no. 1 (January 2015): 81-99.

boundaries of what is now known as the Province of Kalinga, the region had been the abode of a free people who formed autonomous tribes known as *sin-ilians*. Within these tribes was a network of cultural elements that also maintain community equilibrium and tribal relations.

Sin-ilian is a term and a concept which is derived from the *ili* denoting a territorial space and the *umili* designating the inhabitants of the *ili*. The prefix *sin* denotes that it is a singular entity and is distinct from other tribes. These words constitute *sin-umilian*; although, *sin-ilian* is more appropriate. Unlike the Ilocano *ili* which ordinarily refers to the town, the Kalinga *ili* comprises the land which covers the entire reaches of the *ili* as set by the *kais/bugis/kigad* (territorial boundary).⁵ The Kalingas have a high regard for their land since it is the source of their daily sustenance, the location of their residence, and the space for their work and recreation.

The *umili* (people) include the inhabitants whose modes of speaking, custom laws, cultural practices and beliefs are similar. The relation between the *ili* and the *umili* presents no problem to the Kalingas. The two concepts are intimately interconnected. This researcher wrote,

⁵The territorial jurisdiction of the Talocloc *Sin-ilian* as stipulated in the *Pagta* between Talocloc and Tanglag covers the following: "From Liyang goes up to Awok (Tagodtod), goes down to Kabikkalangan Creek and goes up to Tomapoy Mountain then to Salangag goes down to Ambotangan Creek then goes up to Pasang and down to Maubol Creek to Tanudan River, crossing Tanudan River goes up to Pappa-it Saddle up to Manokotok Ridge to Tollok Saddle down to Dagawadao at Sawele Mountian, goes up to Mount Atip to Buyayao Mountain to Kabulusan Creek to Inoman to Papatoy Ridge goes up to Poya-ao Ridge downward to Apay Ridge crossing Tanudan River to Liyang." See *Pagta* of the Bodong Between Talocloc and Tanglag.

This Kalinga *sin-ilian* is kinship-based. The *sin-ilian* manifests a cohesive pattern of relationships among members with the *sin-ilian* as the center of their allegiance. The Kalinga *kanayun* (kindred) is an essential factor in the making of a *sin-ilian*. Every member is related either by blood or by marriage. The members of a *kanayun* exhibit strong familial bonds. In contrast to those who belong to the *sin-ilian*, the *dayu* are those who come from other tribes.⁶

Sin-ilian refers to a people who have lived and worked together long enough to get themselves organized within a well-defined territory (*bugis*). When one says, “*Italoktokak*” (I am from Taloctoc), it means that his/her identity is closely associated with the Taloctoc *sin-ilian*. The self embodies the *sin-ilian*. When the Kalingas say, “*sin-iliankani* (we are a community), identification with the *sin-ilian* is over and above the self, and one’s affinity with a particular *sin-ilian* is clearly manifest in relation to other tribes.

The affairs of the *sin-ilian* are governed by a council of elders (*angkamalong-ag*) and headmen (*pangats*). As Roy Franklin Barton pointed out:

Pangats are powerful individuals who have been selected by a long informal process whereby they grow in popular influence and recognition and are elevated to the rank in which the domestic aspect of the Kalinga state is lodged.... People go to them for advice and

⁶Layugan, 84.

assistance in all kinds of matters. Every pangat holds at least one or two peace pacts and helps to determine the regional policy when emergencies arise.⁷

Barton further mentioned that “Wealth, lineage, family connections with other pangats, personality, cooperativeness, fairness (meaning supraprimacy vision), oratorical ability, a record of having settled cases of controversy between kinship groups, and above all a reputation as a dangerous man were formerly the principal factors entering into selection.”⁸

Patoy (Manslaughter), Kayaw (War) and Balus (Revenge)

The Kalingas have gained the distinctive appellation of head-hunters by local as well as foreign authors.⁹ In bygone days, widowed Kalinga men (*mapangis*) let their hair grow signifying a period of *domdom* (grieving).¹⁰ For these widowers, they can only do away with widowhood if they venture to another tribe to kill somebody and end their grief so they can cut their hair. Nonetheless, the repercussion of this action is retaliation against the transgressor from the other tribe. As a consequence, a vicious cycle of reprisals takes place. Francis Billiet and Francis Lambrecht have this to say:

⁷Barton, 147.

⁸*Ibid.*, 148.

⁹While any part of the body of the victim may be taken as a *siwat* (trophy), the head is preferred. The lower jaw is used as a part of the handle of the *gangsa* (gong). Secondary participants or accomplices of the slaying may take one or the other part of the body.

¹⁰Kalinga males who let their hair grow without having a haircut can also signify their intention of avenging (*balus*) the death of a kin.

Inasmuch as headhunting raids not only created retaliation and counter-retaliation, revenge and counter-revenge expeditions, but also caused alliances among weak groups against strong groups and promoted expeditions for the sake of recreation and pastime, gratification and satisfaction, warfare became the normal condition among the Kalinga people, and headhunting became a custom law.¹¹

They further claimed, “This typical bellicose spirit of the Kalinga, generated by the urge for self-conservation, gave rise to the custom law definitely approving headhunting and killings.”¹² Dean Conant Worcester had this experience in this account:

Accompanied only by another American and a former insurgent officer, he [Dean Worcester] entered a Kalinga village in northern Luzon and found assembled there more than a hundred fighting men armed with shields and head axes. One of the several chiefs present – fortunately in command of these men – was friendly; the others after a whispered

¹¹Francis Billiet and Francis Lambrecht, *The Kalinga Ullalim* (Baguio City: Catholic School Press, 1970), 6. The claim of the two Belgian priests that headhunting raids form alliances among Kalingas lacks supporting evidence. Alliances are formed between two *sin-ilians* by forging a peace-pact and that bond holds true for both communities that entered into such agreement. It does not follow that the alliance between the two *sin-ilians* form a union against another *sin-ilian* with which one of either two is in conflict. The provisions of the *pagta* cover only the relationship between the two *binodngan*.

¹²Billiet and Lambrecht, 7.

conversation among themselves suddenly run away. The friendly chief explained that they had urged him to kill the Americans at once and so discourage the further intrusion of white men. Now they have gone to collect their own people and prepare an ambush. The friendly chief and a few of his men got the visitors safely past the ambushade, but then the mob that had been assembled followed and surrounded a village where Worcester and his companions took refuge for the night. In spite of the intervention of the friendly chief, the savages shouted that they would have their heads.¹³

Kalingas were known in the past for the raids they conducted and for waging wars (*kayaw*) with other *sin-ilians* to exact revenge. These skirmishes were face-to-face confrontations with another tribe using spears and shields and head axes.¹⁴ The battles involved

¹³Arthur Pier, *American Apostles to the Philippines* (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1950), 76-77.

¹⁴Billiet and Lambrecht, however, claimed that "their headhunts were characteristically ambush operations. Hidden in the midst of the vegetation at a short distance from the enemy village, the warriors lay in wait until one, two or a small group of villagers, unaware of the danger, approached the place where they were hiding; as soon as the leader had given the signal of attack, they hurled their spears, cut off with their head-axes the heads of those who had been wounded or were already killed, and ran away homeward as quickly as they could." Cf. Francisco Billiet and Francis Lambrecht, *The Kalinga Ullalim II* (Baguio City: Igorot Culture Research Studies, 1974), 19. *Kayaw* connotes a face to face confrontation between two tribes. In fact, a testimony to this claim is a name given to a place in Taloctoc called *papatoy* where the battle took place. On this site, the people from Tongrayan waged a war with the inhabitants of Taloctoc. The battle took place within the

seasoned warriors whose killing adventures were for gaining influence, renown and the right to show off such acts of valor in tattoos known as *dakag*¹⁵ that decorated men's chests, arms or shoulders.

Patoy (manslaughter) is also a form of vengeance known as *balus*.¹⁶ “Nu adika bumalus, papandika amameson” (if you do not retaliate, you will always be abused) is used as an argument to justify retribution. Vengeance is *lex talionis* and a swift and equitable means to put into execution what they understand as justice. Even a slight wound inflicted by another is not taken slightly. For as long as blood is drawn, there is a need to seek the intervention of a disinterested tribe to negotiate for a settlement to avert a possible war. In Kalinga, taking another's life is a means to even the score. “Because of blood relationships, revenge as a form of retribution is tolerated and is even justified.”¹⁷ *Balus*, which in its literal sense is the taking of another's life to avenge an injury or killing, can also mean to exact material reparation known as *wergild* (The value set in

vicinity of a high mountain in Buyayaw and was later on named *papatoy* which literally means killing. While we do not discount the incidence of ambushes, we also maintain that there were head-on clashes between tribes. An innovation in the conduct of war includes instruments of engagement like high powered guns instead of spears and head axes.

¹⁵The tattoos on men's bodies depend on three categories of warriors: *maalmot* (tattoos on the chest) – one who has killed a few; *mengol* (tattoos on the chest and arms) – one who has killed many and *gangad* (tattoos on the chest, arms and back) – one who has killed many and is also wealthy.

¹⁶*Balus* can mean to kill somebody to even the score. It can also mean one who suffers from having done something that is considered as a taboo. For example, if a Kalinga male gets a *dakag* (tattoo) but did not kill anybody, he will be *mabalus*. In this instance *mabalus* means to suffer physical or psychological ailment. A male Kalinga should not have tattoos if he did not kill or participate in the killing of a person.

¹⁷Layugan, 84.

the *pagta* of the *Bodong* upon the life of a person in accordance with a fixed scale and paid as a compensation to the kindred of the slain person or as a fine for some serious crime). This indemnification, however, can leave the offender's family penniless.

Although the practice of head-taking is no longer popular, Kalingas still wage wars as a means of retaliation or of carrying out a personal vendetta to avenge the death of a kin. In this instance, it may be difficult to settle disputes between two *sin-ilians* without an existing peace-pact between them. In the case of two *sin-ilians* with existing peace-pacts, the matter is brought to the attention of the *nangdon si Bodong* (peace-pact holder) who initiates the negotiations through an intermediary known as *mansakusak* to resolve the transgression.¹⁸ In the event that a member of a *sin-ilian* kills another from a *binodngan*, however, the peace-pact holder of the one who murdered may kill the culprit or one of the transgressor's relatives (*ibutu* meaning to avenge)¹⁹ to carry out justice. Since the *Bodong* was *nabug-uy* (severed) because of the death of the victim, the peace-pact between the two *sin-ilians* is terminated (*gopas*), for the death or injury of a person may lead to the severance of the peace-pact between two tribes. Tribal war ensues. This is known as *papatoy* or *kinabagaang*.²⁰

¹⁸The *mansakusak* (negotiator or intermediary) comes from a neutral tribe. The culprit's *sin-ilian* looks for somebody from another neutral tribe to initiate the talks for the resolution of the problem.

¹⁹If the peace-pact holder does not avenge the death of a member of his *binodngan* (counterpart), he will be *mabutot* (his stomach will be enlarged).

²⁰*Kinabagaang*, that is to wage war with another *sin-ilian* or to kill somebody from another tribe, is also known as *kayaw*. To kill within a *sin-ilian* is known as *binoboloy*. It is usually a feud between two clans.

Barton in his research on the Kalingas wrote, “The Kalinga region has a political organization that is rather feeble so far as domestic affairs go but has a hard crustacean shell with respect to foreign affairs.”²¹

While some Kalingas today resort to the jurisdiction of the courts to resolve their disputes, others within the *pidlis* (peace-pact jurisdiction) still follow the procedures of arbitration and adjudication by settling their differences between themselves through the mechanism of the *Bodong*. Crimes which are not blood-related like stealing, property disputes, and the like are arbitrated through the peace-pact institution. This action finds a solution to the problem, and the prospect of future reprisals can be avoided. If it should happen that a person from the other tribe lodges a complaint (*sukun*) before the peace-pact holder, the latter, being the competent authority, can resolve the problem. If he cannot bring it to a successful issue then he informs his counterpart, so both of them can work out a compromise agreement that will end the dispute and then in such case, it becomes a *sin-ilian* affair. In this instance, the peace-pact is not severed (*bug-uy*). The peace-pact holders convene the *among* (assembly) to discuss the issue in order to arrive at an amicable settlement. They invoke the by-laws of the *pagta* which both parties ratified during the celebration of the *inom* (literally it means to drink; it is a celebration which concludes the *Bodong*) of the peace-pact. Crimes such as stealing, property disputes are settled by exacting fines known as *dusa* which is an indemnification in the form of payment that includes land, animals, precious beads, rice fields, cash or in any form to which both *sin-ilians* agree.

²¹Barton, 138. Domestic affairs involve activities within the *sin-ilian* while foreign affairs refer to outside interactions.

Collective Guilt

Every member of the *sin-ilian* embodies the whole community. Hence, any untoward incident involving one of the members of the community may affect the rest of the tribe. Such being the case, an individual who commits a crime puts other members of his/her community at the risk of being the object of any reprisal from the aggrieved *sin-ilian*. Since the guilt is shared, the *sin-ilian* also shoulders the indemnification which has been agreed upon during the settlement. As pointed out by the researcher, “Since the *sin-ilian* is the subject of the *Bodong*, wrongs are also imputable to the *sin-ilian*. For example, if individual X killed another person from another *sin-ilian*, X’s *sin-ilian* is bound to answer for the crime. Revenge becomes a duty for every member of the aggrieved *sin-ilian*. Thus, life taken away is repaid by another life.”²²

This author further maintained, “While the *sin-ilian* evolved for the protection and preservation of the individual, the individual ultimately found to his discomfort that the *sin-ilian* often destroyed the very security it was created to impart. Since the whole *sin-ilian* is responsible for the wrongs committed by a member, the other members are also bound to answer for the crime they never committed.... As a consequence, innocent members can become victims of revenge from the aggrieved *sin-ilian*.”²³

Forging Relationships

The headmen of Kalinga functioned in maintaining peaceful extra-*sin-ilian* alliances by acting as *lumilintog* (arbiters), as *tukunan* (advisors) and as

²²Layugan, 86.

²³Ibid., 97.

nangdon si Bodong (peace-pact holders). Since the *sin-ilian* was composed of different kindreds, various headmen emerging from these kinship groups convened as a council. Such association of headmen was spontaneously formed, and the basic operatives were economic and defense needs, in conjunction with smooth *sin-ilian* relations as well as extra-*sin-ilian* interactions. The Kalinga headmen exercised least governance; notwithstanding, there was harmony and order within the *sin-ilian*. The headmen were classified as *maalmot* or *mengol* (fierce warriors), *lumilintog* (judges/arbiters) or *nangdon si Bodong* (peace-pact holders).

The Kalinga *Bodong*

The *Bodong* is a *sin-ilian* affair. It is also interchangeably called *Pudon* which means a tight grip or bond between the two peace-pact holders. In the forging of the *Bodong* between two *sin-ilians*, the following are the different stages:

Patigammo/Pagikna (to make known)

If two tribes that do not have peace-pacts with each other have been engaging in bloody confrontation and have decided to end the conflict, either one of the tribes will explore peace feelers and initiate its desire to forge a *Bodong* (“*bumdongkani*”). The message is transmitted through an uninvolved member of a different *sin-ilian* who is chosen by the tribe that took the initiative. Upon the reception of the message, the *papangat* (headmen) convene to discuss the proposal of the other tribe. If that tribe decides to accept the offer, it will send its favorable response. After both *sin-ilians* have made known their willingness to forge the *Bodong*, the *Allasiw* (exchange of spears) takes place.

Allasiw/Sipat

The *Angkamalong-ag* (elders) and *papangat* (headmen) of both tribes, after having decided to forge the *Bodong*, will convene and choose among themselves a *mangdon si Bodong* (peace-pact holder), one for each tribe. The headmen look for somebody who belongs to a large *singkapuun* (kindred). The prospective candidate has to be *maalmot/maasngaan* (fierce warrior),²⁴ *masingnan* (respected by the tribe) and *baknang* (rich) since the peace-pact holder is the protector of the lives of his counterpart.

Then the *Allasiw* takes places. It involves the exchange of the *say-ang* (spear). *Sin-ilian* X will send representatives to bring the spear to *sin-ilian* Y. After consulting the *idaw* (a bird that portends good or bad luck), they either set out or postpone their journey depending on the outcome of the *idaw*. If the omen is auspicious, the representatives will proceed towards *sin-ilian* Y. The spear is given to the one who was chosen by *sin-ilian* Y to be the candidate for the position of peace-pact holder. Then the one who received the spear makes the announcement to his community that the *Allasiw* has already taken place. When the ones who were sent to bring the spear return to *sin-ilian* X, they also broadcast to their tribe that the other *sin-ilian* has already accepted the spear. *Sin-ilian* Y in turn sends representatives who bring the spear to *sin-ilian* X. Once both *sin-ilians* have accepted the spears from the other, the *Allasiw* has been executed successfully. This preliminary phase of the institution of the peace-pact is also known as *sipat*.

Simsim/Silgip/Singlip

Silgip which also takes the form of *simsim* (to

²⁴This qualification of a *pangat* no longer holds today.

taste) means to make known that both *sin-ilians* have accepted to forge the *Bodong* and to determine, by butchering a pig, whether the one who was chosen by either *sin-ilian* to hold the peace-pact during the *allasiw*, has been destined to assume the responsibility. The *Silgip* is celebrated to consummate the *Allasiw* (exchange). *Sin-ilian* X sends a message (*bogga*) that a delegation, which is composed of a few select men together with the one who was chosen as peace-pact holder, will depart for *sin-ilian* Y for the *silgip*. If *sin-ilian* Y sends a favorable response, *sin-ilian* X embarks on a journey to *sin-ilian* Y after observing the sound and flight of a bird known as *idaw*. A runner precedes the delegation to announce (*bogga*) the arrival of the group. The host, the one who was chosen as the prospective peace-pact holder, butchers a pig to honor (*mangiliun*) the guests. The elders read (*abig*) the liver of the pig to determine whether it is a good omen for the one who was chosen to hold the peace-pact to receive the *say-ang* (spear). If the examination of the liver is favorable, they discuss past grievances and partake of the meal after which the intention to forge the *Bodong* between the two *sin-ilians* is publicly announced and the delegation of *sin-ilian* X returns to their tribe. If the reading of the liver portends an unfavorable augury, the elders and headmen of *sin-ilian* Y gather to choose another person of the same kindred to receive the spear. Another pig is butchered and the reading of its liver takes place. If the signs are propitious, the person receives the spear. On this occasion, past grievances are put forward and then they partake of the meal to conclude the reception of the spear by *sin-ilian* Y. Then in the *sin-ilian*, the elders make the announcement that the *Allasiw* (exchange) which took place in the past has already been *naisilgip* (concluded) and then warn their constituents not to commit any crime that may harm any member of the

other *sin-ilian* for someone has already been chosen to hold the peace-pact. The returning delegation also makes the announcement to the members of *sin-ilian* X that the *silgip* has been consummated, and the elders make public the corresponding warnings to the members of their *sin-ilian*. *Sin-ilian* Y in turn sets off to *sin-ilian* X to perform the prescribed *silgip*.

Inom/Lonok

The *inom* which literally means to drink is the culmination of the celebration of the *Bodong*. *Sin-ilian* X sends a messenger to inform the peace-pact holder of *sin-ilian* Y of the former's intention to conclude the *Bodong* through the celebration of the *inom*. If *sin-ilian* Y agrees, a date is set for the festivities. *Sin-ilian* Y prepares the things needed for the upcoming event. While a part of the expenses is shouldered by the peace-pact holder, the rest of the community also contribute their share (*dagup/uyup*).

Since it is a *sin-ilian* affair, every member takes the initiative to give his/her contribution. They practice the *dagup* system in which members give their contribution in the form of cash or in kind. During the celebration the men are usually assigned to do the physical preparations and to butcher the animals. Women do the cooking, washing of utensils and the like. The children do their part as *alluwagi* (servers). After the celebration, everybody helps in putting things in order. These things are spontaneously done.²⁵

²⁵ Layugan, 95.

As soon as the day of the festivities approaches, the members of *sin-ilian* X depart for *sin-ilian* Y. A large contingent is composed of all those who are able to travel to attend the occasion. Even children can be present at the celebration. Upon the arrival of the delegation from *sin-ilian* X, the peace-pact holder of the host *sin-ilian* makes the announcement of their coming and gathers his constituents. The entrance of the participants into the *sin-ilian* is also known as *lonok* (to enter). During the celebration of the *inom*, the constant beating of the gongs reverberates in the assembly interspersed with dances, the *Ullalim* (chanting of the Kalinga epic), *Sogsogna* (spontaneous chants), *palpaliwat* (speeches made to boast of something) and the community meals.

Pagta

The highlight of the *inom* is the enactment of the *pagta* [by-laws of the *Bodong*] in which the peace-pact holder declares “*botak de mangmangwa atte lawweng adta anna e kabodongko*”(death to anyone who does any harm to anybody of my counterpart). The gathered elders and headmen of both *sin-ilians* enact laws that will govern the relationship between the two tribes. Pact holders usually do not participate in the discussions. These laws are then ratified and will be binding for both *sin-ilians*. Transgressors are severely punished. Such provisions of the *pagta* are seldom written down.²⁶ Examples of such regulations include the following: *Komkom/potot* involves the damages to be given to the companion of the victim who was harmed because s/he was present when the crime took place; *Daladac* refers to a compensation that a *binodngan* claims when members of another tribe pass through their *sin-ilian* on

²⁶Today the provisions of the *pagta* are put down in black and white.

their way to wage war with another *sin-ilian*; *Wakwak* is a claim by the owner of a house where a victim ate and afterwards was slain (Among the Kalingas, it is a taboo to kill somebody when s/he has drunk or eaten something in the *sin-ilian* which s/he is passing through or is there temporarily. Once a person drinks or eats the food, s/he can be assured that nobody will harm him/her)²⁷; *Mammac* refers to a peace-pact holder who kills his counterpart (*kabodong/kasupang*).

Tumangad (to raise one's head) which is a part of the festivities involves drinking wine from a large antique ceramic bowl known as *payawyaw*. In the assembly there are two *payawyaws*, one for *sin-ilian* X and another vessel for *sin-ilian* Y. Both vessels are filled with sugarcane wine known as *basi*. Each person takes his turn in drinking from the bowl. Placing both hands behind his back, he gulps down the wine from the vessel, and it is followed by a satisfied lift of his head.²⁸ This action is known as *tumangad* which is also a contest in which the *sin-ilian* that consumes the wine first wins.

Palpaliwat is a form of entertainment. It is an occasion to boast for those who have displayed physical strength and bravery, those who have killed other people and brought home head trophies, those who have

²⁷During the American period, the Secretary of the Interior made an inspection in Kalinga and was nearly killed. What saved him was when he ate the food during his sojourn in the village. Deraedt wrote, "It was only after the Secretary had tasted some food that the Kalinga took their hands off their axes, and the members of the party could put back their revolvers." See Deraedt, 18.

²⁸Billiet and Lambrecht wrote that the *mampaliwat* (one who makes the boasting speech) "holds in one of his hands a cup filled with sugarcane wine." Cf. Billiet and Lambrecht, *Ullalim II*, 26. The authors however contradicted themselves when they wrote on page 25 that "two tattooed warriors of old proceed to the table and drink sugarcane wine directly from the *payawyaw*." Cf. Billiet and Lambrecht, *The Kalinga Ullalim II*, 25.

mistresses or those who in their lifetime have accumulated wealth. After drinking from the vessel, one may boast of something. During the celebration of the *Bodong* between Taloctoc *sin-ilian* and Danac *sin-ilian*, Macaiba from Taloctoc chanted this *palpaliwat*:

Sin long nid Mandamaan
Ummoyko nangkaanan
Bayuyung kun kundiman
Dawawan Inawagan

We raided Mandamaan (an old settlement in Pangol, Tanudan)

To do away with (by killing)
 My red hand woven G-string
 Handed to me by Inawagan²⁹

After the culmination of the *inom* in *sin-ilian* Y, *sin-ilian* X will in turn host the celebration of the *inom* with *sin-ilian* Y. *Sin-ilian* Y sends a message to *sin-ilian* X about its intention and a date is determined. Once both tribes have concluded the celebration of the *inom*, the *Bodong* between *sin-ilian* X and *sin-ilian* Y has been officially established. The relationship between members of these two different tribes is *sunud* (the other is now considered a brother or a sister). It is more than just friendship. The relationship is *naolot e sunud* (tight brother/sister bond), and the peace-pact holder is bound to protect that alliance.³⁰ He swears (*sapata*) to

²⁹In the past, mistresses were common in Kalinga. Inawagan was the mistress of Macaiba. She gave Macaiba a red handwoven G-string. Macaiba, however, was still married to Wanay. In those days, if a mistress gives something like a handwoven G-string to a man, he had to venture to another *sin-ilian* in order to kill somebody and return with a *siwat* (trophy) which is usually a head.

³⁰Section 2 of the By-laws regulating the relationship between Taloctoc and Tanglag states that “the Bodong holder shall discharge the functions and duties, which include but not limited to:

kill anybody who destroys the pact. If one of his constituents kills somebody from a *binodgan*, he or one of his relatives has the obligation to kill the culprit to avenge the death of the other.

Dolnat

The *Dolnat* (warming) is the renewal of the peace-pact and is celebrated if the provisions of the *pagta* have been violated or after many years have elapsed and both parties want to warm the relationship or when the pact is transferred to another custodian because of the death of the keeper of the peace-pact or because the other wants to relieve himself of the responsibility or if there is a dispute and the case has not been resolved for a long time. Either one of the peace-pact holders informs the other to make preparations for the *dolnat* (warm/reheat) so as to tighten once more the relationship between the two *sin-ilians* as well as to remind their respective constituents about the consequences of the violations of the *pagta*.

The *Bodong* is an instrument of forging relationships between tribes. Upon the conclusion of the peace-pact, both *sin-ilians* guarantee that no harm will be inflicted on any member of the other *sin-ilian*; that they will respect territorial boundaries in case these *sin-ilians* are neighbors; that shelter and security will be

a) He is the eyes, ears and mouth of the Bodong; b) He shall faithfully enforce and execute the provisions of the Pagta and all decisions in cases brought before it; c) He shall prosecute with dispatch cases brought to his attention until the same shall have been settled to the satisfaction of both parties; d) He shall not allow the severance of the Bodong; e) He must consult the Umili [inhabitants] and the elders in making decisions; f) He shall arrest or cause the arrest of the bumug-oy (violator).” See Taloctoc-Tanglag Bodong Celebration, April 8-9, 2007, Tabuk, Kalinga. One of the peace-pact holders, Mr. Ireneo Balais of the Taloctoc Sin-ilian furnished us a copy of the aforementioned By-laws.

provided for anyone of either *sin-ilian* when they enter the territorial jurisdiction of the other or in the abode of a *binodngan* who resides in Tabuk City or in any other province and that they will regard the other as a *sunud* (brother or sister).

Kulligong

Kulligong refers to the domicile and properties of a *sin-ilian* of both *binodngan* outside of their *bugis* (the original settlement). These locations are designated as *mataguan* (places where killing or avenging the death of a kin is forbidden). When the *Bodong* between two *sin-ilians* is terminated, all places where members of both *sin-ilians* work and live outside the *bugis* (boundary of the tribe) are regarded as *mataguan* which includes schools, offices, other provinces and cities. It is called *mataguan* because no member of either tribe is allowed to kill or avenge an injury in these aforementioned locations.

In the peace-pact between Taloctoc and Butbut, the *kulligong* “includes residence outside the tribe like Tabuk and other places determined by both tribes – residential lots, houses, rice fields and sub-barangay is considered *kulligong din Bodong*.”³¹

Bogga/Ba-ngungon

*Bogga*³², which literally means to shout, connotes the announcement of the death of somebody in the *sin-ilian*. If a father, a mother or the peace-pact holder dies,

³¹Pagta din Bodong, Taloctoc–Butbut, December 27-29, 1990. The copy of the *Pagta* is handwritten and is signed by Mr. Ireneo Balais, the peace-pact holder of Taloctoc and Mr. Ewad Paclay, the peace-pact holder of Butbut and some elders and headmen of both tribes.

³²Some *sin-ilians* announce the *bogga* even when the person, who is sick, is still alive. Others relay the message when the person is really dead.

the *sin-ilian* sends one or two of its members to inform the peace-pact holder of the other tribe about the news. The ones who are sent as messengers are known as *bummogga* and as they approach the village, they shout (*bogga/pakoy*) to alert the villagers of their arrival. As they cross the threshold of the village, a member of the community summons them with a Chinese porcelain plate (*palakdag de lumnokandat te boloy*). Upon receiving the news, the peace-pact holder informs his constituents about the death and butchers a big pig for his guests. A part (*longos*) of the pig is not consumed but is given to the messengers. There are objects that are given by the *sin-ilian* to those who have been sent (*bummogga*) and those (*binogga*) who will attend the wake (*bangunon*). Such tokens are known as *Gamigam*. For those who were sent to notify the other tribe, they receive the *attod* which is composed of a *baal* (hand-woven G-string) known as *padun*, *gaman* (bolo) known as *pasiwat* and *ulos* (blanket) or *kain* or *ginamat* (hand-woven wraparound) known as *akbong*. They also receive a porcelain plate (*panay*) and the *longos* (a part of the animal). People also give them all sorts of things like tobacco, coffee, vegetables, coconut, etc. The *sin-ilian* also contributes a carabao or money for the bereaved family. This offer is known as *adang*.

When the *binodngan* arrive near the house of the bereaved, they do not enter immediately but they have to wait for the summons. An old man or woman chants welcoming the *binodngane binogga* (counterpart of the peace-pact who attend the wake) with a porcelain plate (*panay*), and the path they tread on (*allatoy*) is covered with unpolished rice with stalks (*nabotok e pagoy*). A jar (*ammoto*) that is covered with *ginamat* (hand-woven wraparound) with money on top of it is found in the center of the *among* (assembly). A moderator calls one of the *angkamalong-ag* (elder) or *pangat* (headman) of the

other tribe to remove the cover of the jar in order to take a sip of the wine. The elder or *pangat* then takes with him the cover (usually a hand-woven fabric) and the money. After he drinks, the wine is distributed to those who are assembled.

To honor the *binodngnan* who attend the wake, a *pasiwat* which is a carabao covered with a hand-woven wraparound is shown to them. The moderator calls the strongest member of the delegation to strike the animal. The person who hits the beast gets the hand-woven wraparound (*kinagoy*). The leg portion (*bolobol*) of the beast is set aside to be brought home by those who came for the wake and the other parts of the animal are cooked for the assembly. When those who attended the wake leave, the members of the community present them with different objects (*gamigam*) as gifts.

During the wake, the chanting of the *dandanag* (chant for the dead) between the two tribes gives color to the event. *Sussulay*, a kind of chanting, is an occasion to match a man or a woman from either tribe. Both *sin-ilians* bring about a betrothal on that occasion. If the man and the woman agree to the matchmaking, an animal is butchered (*palanos*) after the wake to seal the marriage proposal made by the two tribes.

Nangdon si Bodong (peace-pact holder)

During the celebration of the *inom*, there are roles to be played by both peace-pact holders. Edward Dozier sums up their responsibilities:

Pact-holders do not ordinarily take part in these discussions [it refers to the enactment and ratification of the provisions of the *pagtal*], although they may listen occasionally in the role of neutral observers. The visiting pact-holder has the responsibility to watch the

behaviour of his compatriots to see that they do not do anything to break the good relations between the two groups. The host pact-holder's responsibilities are considerably more involved; he not only has the job of keeping his coregionists in check, which is much more difficult since there are many people from his region attending the event, but he is also responsible for seeing that everything runs smoothly. He must see that there is plenty of wine and food, that important guests receive the special attention they deserve, and most important of all, that his coregionists behave themselves. To neglect any one of these duties will deflate his reputation as a pact-holder and will lower the status of his kinship group and region.³³

Barton wrote, "The pact-holder has a dual office: (1) he is spokesman of his own region in its relations with another and (2) he is the agent of that other town in its dealings with his own and the righter, often the avenger, of wrongs against it."³⁴ Barton further observed, "The pact-holder supervises the relations of his home region with the folk of the region with which he holds the pact. These, on visiting his region, will usually proceed at once to his house and will eat and sleep there unless they have trading partners or friends in the town with whom they prefer to stay."³⁵

A *nangdon si Bodong* (peace-pact holder) has the

³³Edward Dozier, *The Kalinga of Northern Luzon, Philippines* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), 88.

³⁴Barton, 170.

³⁵Ibid., 194.

obligation to protect a guest from the other tribe and may avenge the wounding or slaying of the victim, more so if the person has already drunk or eaten something.³⁶ This is the reason why, a person from the *binodngan* who visits a village goes to the house of the custodian of the *Bodong* and stays there until such time that s/he returns to his/her community. If the person is in the village to sell an antique jar, agate beads, antique porcelain plates or anything of commercial value, the peace-pact holder is the one who conducts the business of selling the merchandize or asks some people to trade the goods.

The holding of the peace-pact is inherited within the family, from parents to either one of the children and in some cases, it is given to somebody within the same kinship group. Dozier wrote, "Once a pact has been established and then broken, the new pact-holder (should the original pact-holder have died or resigned, voluntarily or through pressure from regional leaders) is drawn from the descent group of the original holder. Thus, the initial holder of the pact becomes the head of a descent group since all subsequent holders of the pact must be drawn from his bilateral descendants."³⁷

Resolving Conflicts

Bug-uy

Once the *Bodong* between two *sin-ilians* is established, members are compelled to observe the regulations that were agreed upon during the

³⁶Drinking or eating something while in another village protects a foreign guest from any harm that may be inflicted by the people from the community. The host, who also serves as protector of his visitor, has the obligation to avenge any injury that is inflicted on him/her.

³⁷Dozier, 91.

celebration of the *inom*. In case a member of *binodngan sin-ilian* X kills or injures a member of *binodngan sin-ilian* Y, this action constitutes *bug-uy* (severance of the pact) because the *Bodong* was violated.³⁸ *Sin-ilian* Y gives vent to its grievance and sends a message to the peace-pact holder of *sin-ilian* X to avenge the injury by dispatching the *busdung di butu* (cloth to wrap the testicles). Even if the peace-pact holder of *sin-ilian* X has avenged the death of the other or the *sin-ilian* has paid the *dusa*, the *Bodong* between the two *sin-ilians* will be terminated because of death or because there is blood as a result of the injury.³⁹ This termination of the *Bodong* is known as *gopas*. Tribal war is inevitable. Reprisals follow until such time that the elders and the *pangats* take the initiative to negotiate with the other tribe for the cessation of the war and for the re-establishment of the *Bodong*. The responsibility as overseer of the peace-pact, however, will be transferred to another member of the *kanayun* (kindred) or it may be given to the perpetrator of the crime, and his

³⁸There have been changes recently. During the enactment and ratification of the *Bodong* between Taloctoc and Tanglag tribes from 8-9 April 2007, both *sin-ilians* agreed that the following instances do not constitute *bug-uy*: “i) When [a person] acted to defend his person, honor, relative and companion; ii) When the act of the Binodngan was in fulfilment of a duty or a lawful performance of his right or office; iii) When the act of the Binodngan was in obedience to a lawful order for some lawful purpose.” Section 8 stipulates that “There shall [be] no retaliation where injuries or killing results from an accident. Should there be a retaliation, it shall constitute pot-ak/patoy [killing].” See Taloctoc-Tanglag Bodong Celebration, April 8-9, 2007, Tabuk, Kalinga.

³⁹*Patoy* (manslaughter) may be committed under the following circumstances: *ba -ug* (killing a pact holder or a member by his counterpart or his companions), *ngos-ngos* (crime committed by the pact holder himself), *sanob* (ambush), *lomong* (crime done along a path, inside a forest by culprits), *lipot*, *aladas* (to follow and kill an enemy for the purpose of revenge), *wakwak* (the act of wounding or killing a guest), *kodot* (to poison), and *anud* (to drown).

counterpart will be one of the relatives of the victim.

In the event that problems arise, the aggrieved *sin-ilian* prepares the *dekot* (cooked glutinous rice) to be brought to the *Bodong* holder (*kasupang*) of the offender's tribe in order to lodge a formal allegation (*sukun*). This action is known as *mamnong*. The peace-pact holder who welcomes the arrival of the delegation announces to his constituents that the other tribe has come to *mamnong*. He butchers a carabao for that occasion.

While some people resort to the jurisdiction of the courts to resolve disputes, others still follow the procedures of arbitration and adjudication by settling their differences between themselves through the mechanism of the *Bodong*.⁴⁰ In this instance it may be difficult to put an end to hostilities between two *sin-ilians* without an existing peace-pact between them. In the situation of two *sin-ilians* with extant peace-pacts, the matter is brought to the attention of the peace-pact holder who initiates the negotiations through an intermediary known as *mansakusak* for the resolution of the case. If a member of a *sin-ilian* kills another from a *binodngan*, the peace-pact holder of the culprit may kill him or any of his relatives to even the score and in so doing settles the case. Since the peace-pact is *nabug-uy* (severed), tribal war arises until such time that the *Bodong* is once again restored. Crimes involving

⁴⁰Court cases can be very expensive and court decisions are usually very slow. Sometimes the courts do not give a just verdict which can cause discontent on either of those involved. Deraedt puts it, "Since the court decision usually means defeat for one of the parties, it causes lingering resentment. On the other hand, settlements through the peace pact, as much as through the local mechanism of adjudication, aim at and result into an amicable settlement. The deliberation is held on the basis of local values and concepts, and it arrives at a consensus among the leaders and spokesmen of both parties." See Deraedt, 22.

stealing, property disputes and the like are settled through the mechanism of the *Bodong*. The peace-pact holder convenes the *among* (assembly) and starts the *man-uugudan* (discussions) on how to resolve the cause of an imminent tribal war. Both *sin-ilians* invoke the provisions of the *pagta* which they ratified during the celebration of the *inom* of the peace-pact. In most instances, the resolution of the case is done through amicable settlement by exacting fines known as *dusa* which is an indemnification in the form of payment which includes, land, animals, precious beads, monetary or in any form which both parties have agreed upon. “Amicable settlement through the indemnification of damages is done to preserve the *Bodong* between two *sin-ilians*. The prompt resolution of the case is given priority to avoid serious *sin-ilian* feuds.”⁴¹ Hence, the cessation of tribal conflicts is realized only when indemnities and reparations are fulfilled.

Fostering Peaceful Co-Existence

This researcher pointed out that “The Kalinga *Bodong* does not only concern itself with the adjudication and arbitration of inter-sin-ilian disputes but it also fosters interregional peaceful co-existence. Through the *Bodong*, *sin-ilians* convene to settle disputes and to restore friendly relations.”⁴² The immediate settlement of a discord is necessary so as to prevent any retaliation on the part of the aggrieved party. “If conflicts arise between two *sin-ilians*, the members are affected even if they reside in another province. Hence, Kalingas seldom reveal their true identity, especially if there is an ongoing tribal war.”⁴³

⁴¹Layugan, 97.

⁴²Ibid., 87.

⁴³Ibid., 97.

When *sin-ilians* forge peace-pacts with different tribes, peace is guaranteed. Nonetheless, this assurance happens only when the peace-pact is once in a while renewed through the celebration of *Dolnat*. Through this ritual, members of both tribes tighten the grip of the relationship and strengthen that bond through the observance of the provisions of the *Pagta*. The *Bodong* becomes a deterrent against crime which may cause the severance of the relationship that leads to a series of reprisals on either side. Bloody vendetta between *sin-ilians* that threatens their existence can be avoided. The *Bodong* attempts

to elicit a prescribed behavior from the members of the *sin-ilian*. The members of the *sin-ilian* are prohibited to kill or to injure and to commit other crimes against a *binodngan* for this transgression may lead to a serious conflict. Each member knows pretty well that once s/he violates the *pagta* (provisions) or does something wrong to a member of a *binodngan*, the whole *sin-ilian* takes the responsibility.⁴⁴

This writer also remarked:

Cordial relations with their surrounding neighbors prevail. Through the peace-pact, neighboring tribes enter into mutual agreement of providing accommodations for the members of each *sin-ilian* with their security guaranteed. Nonetheless, once established, the *Bodong* including all its *pagta* (provisions) has to be respected and observed.⁴⁵

⁴⁴Ibid., 88.

⁴⁵Ibid., 87.

Every *binodngan* has the right to seek redress under the *Bodong*. In one of the provisions of the *Pagta* between Taloctoc and Butbut, it is stipulated that “taking other forms of redress, of the *pot-ak* [killing] under the impulse of passion and obfuscation, such revenge is strictly prohibited.”⁴⁶ In another provision, it is mentioned that “when the *Bodong* ruptures by wounding either tribe, they should wait for the peace-pact holder to act upon [and] to declare the formal cutting [off] of the *Bodong*. Both tribes must strictly wait for any action to be taken.”⁴⁷

Conclusion

Much has changed in the way of life and the state of affairs of the Kalingas today. One of the features of Kalinga life that is gradually being superseded by mainstream institutions is the *Bodong*. While there are still extant peace-pacts between tribes, the functions of the *Bodong* have been taken over by government institutions. For law and order, the police and the military have been given that responsibility. For disputes, there are civil courts to settle them. Some, however, still have recourse to the *Bodong* in resolving their differences with other tribes.

While the peace-pact institution has relatively slowed down the incidence of hostilities between *sin-ilians*, it has not completely eradicated vendettas, which have taken their toll on innocent victims. Some prefer to get even by personally avenging the loss of their kin. The *Bodong* may be an instrument to adjudicate certain cases but it may not be the perfect solution to the phenomenon of tribal war and the drive for vengeance.

⁴⁶Pagtan di *Bodong*, Taloctoc-Butbut, 27-29 December 1990.

⁴⁷Pagtan di *Bodong*, Taloctoc-Butbut, 27-29 December 1990.

Peace between *sin-ilians*, according to the precepts of the *Bodong*, becomes possible only when the indemnities are fulfilled and everyone partakes of the meal to seal the concord. The meal is a sign that peace between the two *sin-ilians* has been restored. Goodwill is established. Restitution may appear to be reasonable but a closer scrutiny of this practice reveals that it is a form of revenge in that the aggrieved *sin-ilian* may demand a material compensation far exceeding the injury inflicted on the victim. While material compensation resolves the conflict, forgiveness, in this instance, does not come from a sincere act of the will to pardon the other.

As the features of the *Bodong* evolve over the years, and since it is a pact that is drawn by two tribes, changes can be made to the provisions of the *pagta* to make the peace-pact a viable instrument to promote peace. Another consideration is the rationale and consequence of entering into a pact with the other tribe. The concept of the *sunud* (the other becoming a brother or sister) needs to be given the central aim of the pact. Hence, the members of the other tribe becoming the *sunud* of the other now form a family. In so doing, the other, being a brother or a sister, guarantees peaceful co-existence.

One important approach to doing mission is to become aware that people are different and that they too have fundamental ways of doing things. It is a task of the missionary to strive to know them by learning their culture. Hopefully, this current study of the peace-pact institution does not just serve as an attempt to give a better insight into the cultural heritage of the Kalingas; it is also a gesture and a sign of serious appreciation of their unique ways and identity.

**From Vatican II to PCP II to BEC Too:
Progressive Localization of a New State of Mind
to a New State of Affairs¹**

Ferdinand D. Dagmang*

Abstract: This study deals with various creative appropriations of some relevant Vatican II teachings for the renewal of the churches in the Philippines. It presents Vatican II's influence on PCP II and how this is made concrete through the Basic Christian Communities. It looks into PCP II's influence on parish life (with the latter's traditional rituals and activities, its newly-organized ministries, programs, projects, and other practices) towards community organization, lay participation, and BEC formation.

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¹ This article was published in *Revisiting Vatican II: 50 Years of Renewal*, Vol. II, ed. Shaji George Kochuthara (Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 2015), 308-326; reprinted here with kind permission from the publisher.

A shorter version forms part of the Report on a Research Project on PCP II made possible through the generous support of missio-Munich: Ferdinand D. Dagmang, *Basic Ecclesial Communities: An Evaluation of the Implementation of the Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines in Ten Parishes in the Philippines* (Manila: missio-Munich, 2016), 1-13.

Keywords: Vatican II, PCP II, Basic Ecclesial Communities, Church of the Poor, culture, community organization

The Second Vatican Council produced 16 documents, two of which (*Gaudium et spes* and *Apostolicam actuositatem*) could be considered as the immediate great grandparents/precursors of offspring-documents born in America, Africa, and Asia.

Latin America, a frontrunner in localizing Vatican II, produced its path-breaking Medellin documents; Africa with its Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) documents,² and; Asia with the Federation of Asian Bishops Conference document *Evangelization in Modern Day Asia*.³ These continental documents embodied

² See, <http://secam-sceam.org/index.php?pg=documents#UaF74ZxfaSo>.

³ *Evangelization in Modern Day Asia: The First Plenary Assembly of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC): Statement and Recommendations of the Assembly*, Taipei, Taiwan, 22-27 April 1974 (Hong Kong: Office of the Secretary-General, FABC, 1974).

The following are compilations of the FABC documents from 1970-2006:

- 1) Gaudencio Rosales and C.G. Arevalo, eds. *For All the Peoples of Asia, FABC Documents from 1970-1991*, volume 1 (Manila: Claretian Publications, 1997);
- 2) Franz-Josef Eilers, ed., *For All the Peoples of Asia, FABC Documents from 1992-1996*, volume 2, (Manila: Claretian Publications, 1997);
- 3) Franz-Josef Eilers, ed., *For All the Peoples of Asia, FABC Documents from 1997 to 2001*, volume 3, (Manila: Claretian Publications, 2002);
- 4) Franz-Josef Eilers, ed., *For All the Peoples of Asia, FABC Documents from 2002 to 2006*, volume 4, (Manila: Claretian Publications, 2007).

FABC has nineteen (19) Bishops' Conferences from the following countries: Bangladesh, East Timor, India – CBCI, India - Syro-Malabar, India - Syro-Malankara, India - Latin Rite, Indonesia,

Vatican II's pastoral spirit of "updating" and went so far as producing hybrid texts from the local ecclesial grounds of former European and American colonies. Such texts show not only signs of post-colonial struggle but also the quality of sensitivity to local socio-cultural contexts—a hallmark of pastorally-oriented post-Vatican II documents. Thus, whether coming from Latin America, Africa, or Asia, pastoral documents are shaped to address issues relevant to local provenance—producing, in the process, the grounded nature of their message.

The Church (or churches) in the Philippines came out with its own pertinent document—one of the youngest of the family of pastorally-oriented documents—formed at the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines in 1991. The document is now known as *The Acts and Decrees of PCP II*.

The PCP II document is a product of discussions among representatives from the church hierarchy, religious congregations, the academe, pastoral councils, community organizers, women, and other actively involved members of the local churches. They gathered together in 1991, twenty-six years after the last session of the Second Vatican Council. This gathering gave birth to a document that reflected not only the initial impetus of the Council but also its *new state of mind* which extended itself worldwide and engendered the conception, birth, and growth of *new state of ecclesial affairs* in various Christian parts of the world.

Japan, Kazakhstan, Korea, Laos-Cambodia, Malaysia-Singapore-Brunei, Myanmar, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, ROC, Thailand, Vietnam.

FABC has nine (9) associate members, namely: Hong Kong, Macau, Mongolia, Nepal, Novosibirsk (Russia), Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan ; <http://www.fabc.org/mem.html> / accessed 26 May 2013.

PCP II Documents and the 'Church of the Poor' Theme

On January 20 1991, the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines was formally convened. January 21st signaled the start of the enormous work, from presentation of drafts and position papers to a series of clarifications, discussions and deliberations. The succeeding days that followed were devoted to longer debates, deliberations, amendments, approval of amendments, resolutions, drafting of revised documents. Finally, on Feb. 15th, the votation on and approval of the whole document ensued. On February 17th, after 29 days, PCP II was formally closed.

The Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council (PCP II) was completed 21 years ago at the San Carlos Lay Formation Center. Among the delegates were 96 Bishops, 180 Vicar Generals and Episcopal Vicars, 21 Major Superiors of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, 12 Rectors/Presidents of Catholic Universities and 24 Rectors of Ecclesiastical Faculties and Major Seminaries and Deans of Theology and Canon Law, and 156 lay delegates. That totals to 489 participants. Lay representation was about 33% of the delegates. There were 71 women delegates (12 nuns; 59 lay).

The Council was presided by Archbishop Leonardo Z. Legaspi OP, and actual sessions lasted for 26 days (excluding Jan. 20 opening ceremonies, Feb. 16th, Recognition Day, and Feb. 17, closing ceremonies). The final Conciliar document consisted of 671 paragraphs and 132 decrees (prepared by the ad hoc committee for the final drafting led by Bishops Quevedo, Bacani and Claver). It was overwhelmingly approved by the delegates: 313 consultative votes and 85 deliberative votes.

In the homily delivered on the closing day of PCP II, Bishop Legaspi has these lines:

It can then, be said that the first converts of the Council are its members themselves; that the first to be evangelized by the Council were its very own participants. In this way did Christ prepare and shape us to become the first evangelizers of the message of the Council to our people. (p.lxxxiii)

Further down his text he continued:

...the Council not only offers the Filipino a vision—but also a Church renewed.

The Church has firmly entered the path of renewal because her hierarchy has stressed its role of service rather than of dominance. The Church is serious about renewal because she has invited the laity for greater participation in Christ's mission. The Church bears the marks of renewal in her body, because she has taken upon herself the sufferings of victims. Above all, the Church has become the sign of renewal in electing to be a Church of the poor. (p.lxxxv)

Bishop Teodoro Bacani, a prominent figure in the Council, wrote:

The Church of the Poor became in PCP-II one of the three key themes: Community of Christ's Disciples, Church of the Poor, and Renewed Integral Evangelization.

This is very clear from the Vision-Mission Statement for the Philippine Church formulated by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, and from the National Pastoral Plan to implement PCP-II. According to PCP-II, we come to true communion, to being a community of Christ's disciples, by becoming a Church of the Poor. Unless we become a Church of the Poor, communion, the innermost reality of the Church according to Vatican II will not be achieved by us Filipinos in the way the Lord desires. That is why Renewed Integral Evangelization must be geared towards human, temporal liberation, and seek social transformation. Evangelization in the Philippines must be a service of and for the Church of the Poor. The Church of the Poor is the centerpiece of the PCP-II vision for the Church in the Philippines.⁴

The following is a concise statement about its vision of Church renewal concretized through the Basic Ecclesial Communities:

Our vision of the Church as communion, participation, and mission, about the Church as priestly, prophetic and kingly people, and as a Church of the Poor – a Church that is renewed – is today finding expression in one ecclesial movement. This is the movement to foster Basic

⁴ Teodoro C. Bacani, Jr. " 'Church of the Poor': The Church in the Philippines' Reception of Vatican II," *East Asian Pastoral Review*, 42/1-2 (2005).

Ecclesial Communities. (PCP II 137)

Those texts vibrate with joy and hope because the delegates have enshrined in the PCP II documents their convictions that give witness to the BECs as concrete expression of the Church of the Poor.

Layers of Discourses in PCP II Documents

The whole PCP II document (composed of Acts, Conciliar Document, and Decrees) is a product of consultations, deliberations, and consensus. However, we do not usually regard this as composed of various layers of ideas that gave it its final shape. It is not also easy to identify the various processes and stages of discussions that would produce a one-whole package known later on as the PCP II documents.

The PCP II documents are statements loaded with multiple layers of other statements coming from various sources. It has initiated and formalized the process of document formation. This reminds us about the fact that the 489 Council participants educated one another and thus came up with a condensed patchwork-like formulation based on discussion and consensus—showing the multiplicity of sources and interests. Incidentally, even before the Council was convened, preparatory documents were already drafted by the various commissions composed of CBCP member-bishops. These were sent to some ten thousand respondents who gave their comments and ideas for the commissions to collate. Five successive drafts were prepared after the consultations, until the Position Papers were ready for the Council. In this light, the PCP II documents reflect a broader consultation than what the actual PCP II Council proceedings would suggest.

Knowing this background information (that assumes the background worlds of respondents) could help reconstruct traces of experiences and traditions that composed the PCP II statements. It is not unlike looking into the history of PCP II ideas. In this way, the background check of resources would help track down some of its central ideas, its link to heterogeneous or hybrid lifeworlds and practices, and its relevance to and impact on parish life. Discovering these sources may further foster awareness about the historical, variegated, and progressively developing nature of documents or doctrines.

A central idea that gives the PCP II documents its distinguishing stamp is that of the Church of the Poor. It is its key idea but it has a long history and is based on multiple sources and platforms: the Sacred Scriptures, Conciliar/Episcopal documents, Papal teaching, discussion groups, and local ecclesial knowledge/praxis. Eventually, the vision of the Church of the Poor found its localization in the Basic Ecclesial Communities in the Philippines; it is in the BEC where Church teachings are translated into reality.

Church of the Poor

The 'Church of the Poor' became part of PCP II because of some foundational sources. Behind this central idea is a whole universe of texts/contexts dealing with poverty, the poor, and the poor Christ.

Few expected that the 'Church of the Poor' theme would become the centerpiece of PCP II because mainly, the delegates did not come from the poorer sectors of Philippine society. The theme did come out, but only towards the second half of the 26-day sessions. One could say that the image of the Church of the Poor did arise because many delegates were already informed by

several Church proceedings and documents that have touched the themes of option for the poor and poverty. (PCP II's exact source is not clear; it could have come from the drafts prepared by Bishop Quevedo, or Bishop Claver, or Bishop Bacani)

This theme of the Church and the poor was very much in the mind of Pope John XXIII. In his radio message of 11 September 1962, just a month before the opening of Vatican II, Pope John XXIII said, 'Confronted with the underdeveloped countries, the church presents itself as it is and wishes to be, as the church of all, and particularly as the Church of the Poor.' These words became the inspiration of a group, which came to be known as 'The Group of the Church of the Poor,' or 'the Belgian College Group' after the place where they usually met. Their meetings were under the patronage of Cardinals Giacomo Lercaro (Bologna) and Gerlier (Lyons) as well as of Patriarch Maximos IV. One of their spokesmen was Archbishop Helder Camara of Brazil. They sought to conscientize the Council fathers about the need to pay special attention to the needs of the poor and the developing countries.⁵

Despite the efforts of the Group of the Church of the Poor, no provisions about the Church of the Poor came out of Vatican II documents. However, themes revolving around poverty and the poor Christ abound,

⁵ Ibid.

although not as highlighted as in PCP II. A very important paragraph is found in *Lumen gentium*, which clearly expresses the influence of the Group of the Church of the Poor:

Just as Christ carried out the work of redemption in poverty and oppression, so the Church is called to follow the same path if she is to communicate the fruits of salvation to men. Christ Jesus, “though he was by nature God... emptied himself, taking the nature of a slave” (Phil 2:6-7), and “being rich, became poor” (2 Cor 8:9) for our sake. Likewise the Church, although she needs human resources to carry out her mission, is not set up to seek earthly glory, but to proclaim, and this by her own example, humility and self-denial. Christ was sent by the Father “to bring good news to the poor... to heal the contrite of heart” (Lk 4:18), “to seek and to save what was lost” (Lk 19:10). Similarly, the Church encompasses with her love all those who are afflicted by human misery and she recognizes in those who are poor and who suffer, the image of her poor and suffering founder. She does all in her power to relieve their need and in them she strives to serve Christ. Christ, “holy, innocent and undefiled” (Heb 7:2) knew nothing of sin (2 Cor 5:21), but came only to expiate the sins of the people (cf. Heb 2:17). The Church, however, clasping sinners to her bosom, at once holy and always in need of purification, follows constantly the path of

penance and renewal. (*Lumen gentium*, no. 8)

There are other Vatican II documents that appropriate the themes of poverty and the poor: *Gaudium et spes* 1, 63-86, *Ad gentes* 12 (Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity), *Gravissimum educationis* 9 (Declaration on Christian Education), *Apostolicam actuositatem* 8 (Decree on the Lay Apostolate), *Perfectae caritatis* 13 (Decree on the Appropriate Renewal of Religious Life), *Optatam totius* 8 (Decree on the Training of Priests), *Christus dominus* 13 (Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church). These documents, however, lacks the prominence of a liberationist praxis and a sense of urgency that one could feel in the post-Vatican II documents produced by Latin America's Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano (CELAM).

After the Vatican II Council, CELAM did its own version of *aggiornamento* or updating. The Latin American documents (CELAM's Medellin [1968] and Puebla [1979] documents) responded to the Latin American Continent's context of conflict, oppression, and poverty. As we all know, those documents dealt with the central issues of poverty and option for the poor. On such themes, CELAM documents proved to be more progressive (or aggressive) than Vatican II even if they have been inspired by the Vatican II documents especially by *LG*, *GS*, and *AG*. It is no secret that the CELAM documents further inspired other regional churches to produce their own versions of Vatican II. This was the time when the Latin American liberation theology's influence had already spread across continents. Yet that time, the Church of the Poor theme is no longer new in the Asian region. The document

issued by the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) in 1970 already called for the Church to be a Church of the Poor and has been consistent in working towards this vision (in its triple points of evangelization of cultures, religions, and the poor). In the Philippines, the Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference spearheaded the thrust towards the building of progressive churches whose rallying cry was "preferential option for the poor". It was in Mindanao where the first BECs were organized by foreign missionaries.

In the late 1960s, immediately after Vatican II, foreign missionaries in the frontier mission areas in Mindanao and Negros formed the first BECs. The Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference (MSPC) which was first held in 1971 and since then meets every 3 years was instrumental in propagating these BECs all over Mindanao with the local clergy and lay pastoral workers continuing what the foreign missionaries started. Some dioceses and parishes in Visayas and Luzon would soon adopt the formation of BECs as their pastoral thrust. The first wave of BECs that emerged were formed under the martial law regime of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos.⁶

Let us not forget that the Catholic Social Teachings corpus (from *Rerum novarum* to *Sollicitudo*

⁶ Amado L. Picardal, "The Basic Ecclesial Communities in the Philippines: Recent Developments and Trends," <http://cbcpbec.com/?p=397> / accessed 22 April 2012.

See R.J. May and Francisco Nemenzo, eds. *The Philippines after Marcos* (Beckenham, Kent: Croom Helm Ltd., 1985), 81ff.

rei socialis) has called attention to the plight of the poor, especially the working class and this whole body of teachings has been a very important influence on the workings of the minds of the PCP II delegates.⁷

The whole Church of the Poor theme, originally expressed by John XXIII, has become a very important key to the Catholic Church's tradition which traces its very origin from Jesus himself who ministered to the *anawim* (those who were put down by institutionalized religion/culture as well as by influential, powerful, and moneyed people) of his time. He called his disciples to serve the neglected and the marginalized and proclaimed the news that the Reign of God is in their midst. Today, the BECs witness to that good news that the Reign of God is indeed among us.

We thus have the foregoing instances reminding us that when we are appropriating the more global forms of discourse like the Vatican II documents or the Compendium of the Catholic Social Teachings, there is a duty to adapt them to local situations. Latin America did it in the face of their own challenges; the FABC bishops localized their statements and came up with the triple points of evangelization; and most important is that the PCP II delegates helped to bring focus on the call—to be the Church of the poor. We are thus, called to become creative readers full of insights and innovations for our local listeners.

The more successful implementation of PCP II documents depended so much on those who were able to profit from the inspiration of the theme of the Church of the Poor, muster courage and determination in facing

⁷ Leo XIII wrote: "God Himself seems to incline rather to those who suffer misfortune; for Jesus Christ calls the poor "blessed"; He lovingly invites those in labor and grief to come to Him for solace; and He displays the tenderest charity toward the lowly and the oppressed." (*Rerum novarum*, 24)

innumerable challenges and difficulties, recognize the creative potential of internal and external resources and pathways, welcome collaborations from all sides of the local ecclesial grounds, and pursue the Basic Ecclesial Communities thrust as the concrete expression of the Church of the Poor.

Thus, if we see local BECs promoted and organized as Churches of the Poor in Boac, Marinduque, or in other local parishes, from Aparri to Jolo, let us remember that many of these did not start because of PCP II. Nevertheless, PCP II, being rooted in the words and deeds of Jesus of Nazareth who struggled to fight for the well-being of the poor and has helped set priorities and directions to many dioceses/parishes in the Philippines.

Implementation: PCP II-imbued Church Life

PCP II was approved by Pope John Paul II on April 11, 1992 and promulgated on April 25, 1992, through a Decree issued by Bernardin Cardinal Gantin, Prefect, Congregation for Bishops of the Vatican. Interestingly, the text of the promulgation was punctuated by the following lines:

With this promulgation, the Council decrees become *obligatory* in all the dioceses of the Philippines in accordance with Canon 8 # 2 of the Code of Canon Law.⁸ (italics supplied)

After this, a more concerted effort to implement its directives is reflected in the waves of initiatives by the several Bishops. They spearheaded a more centralized crusade to make PCP II direct their vision

⁸*Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines* (Pasay City: St Paul Publications, 1992), lxxxix-xc.

for Church renewal. Nothing short of a nationwide campaign was felt by parish priests and lay leaders to make PCP II shape pastoral plans and activities in all the churches in the Philippines. It is clear, however, that successful implementation does not just depend on the initiatives of ecclesiastical leaders. As this study would show, various factors contributed to success; like a rural environment, an antecedent community life (its cohesiveness based on kinship or barangay relations and imbued with centuries-old cultural traditions), availability of community members, presence of committed lay leaders, easier transmission of traditions, and the like. Clearly, ecclesiastical initiative is not the only condition for successful implementation. But even if it is more difficult to apply PCP II (through BEC organizing) in highly urbanized settings (where traditions and cohesive community relations cannot be assumed and private citizens are made un-available by everyday life defined by waged-work and commerce), an institutional push would make a difference.

The formulation of Archdiocesan and Diocesan directives/guidelines/norms based on PCP II Acts and Decrees marks the presence of an institutional guide or official directive for ecclesial organization, administration, direction and general operations and activities. The Bishop's role as leader, animator, and overseer is so crucial especially in setting the tone of ecclesial life (cf. Bishop Evangelista of Boac, Marinduque [he is now the Bishop of the Diocese of Imus]); that is, if he is imbued with PCP II principles, ecclesial life will stand on a solid PCP II platform and stamped with clear PCP II direction. Nevertheless, the vision and mission of the Archdiocesan Center cannot really move forward without an organized clergy who will have to embody the spirit of PCP II and translate this into programs/projects to be implemented with the

indispensable participation and cooperation of lay leaders/members of the churches as well as the presence of various socio-cultural conditions that make implementation more feasible.

PCP II and the Parish and Basic Ecclesial Communities

The new state of ecclesial affairs (with its PCP II-inspired vision-mission of building the Church of the Poor through the BECs) has become evident at the level of the parish. This is not a reference to the filled churches on Sundays which do not necessarily represent a living parish, but would rather show mass-going individuals who, full of religious intentions/sentiments, are habituated to the Sunday mass—a case of “believing and ritualizing without belonging to a living community”. On the other hand, the new state of ecclesial affairs would refer to a mobilized community of faithful Christians who would not only go to mass but are also actively involved in organized activities and other non-pietistic practices of the parish, like those identified with the social ministry, education, and community organizing.

In the Philippines, the standard picture of a *living parish* consists of (1) a well-organized Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) which is composed of the Parish priest(s), lay leaders, and other pastoral workers who may be lay or those dedicated to the vowed religious life; (2) an effective pastoral plan, with its viable community projects and programs, that involves a greater participation among the laity—exemplified in the formation of Basic Ecclesial Communities; and 3) people’s belongingness—where people find themselves as friends, consociates, or fellows in a world imbued with habits of solidarity and mutuality.

This is not to say that before PCP II there were no living parishes or BECs in the Philippines. There were already BECs before 1991, but these were not part of a more vigorous and systematic promotion based on an official endorsement (mandated) coming from the highest ecclesiastical office. We may thus say that the *new state of ecclesial affairs* also depends on a ground-up/down-top case (not top-down) of ecclesial development, that is, from the grassroots clusters of the BECs up to the level of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines. This new state of affairs has been in the mold since the first wave of BEC formation in some parts of Mindanao and Visayas in the late 1960s.

When the PCP II of 1991 endorsed the building of BECs as the concrete expression of the Church of the Poor, it had in mind this stock of experience and knowledge engendered by the earlier generations of BECs. This is one of the reasons why it is more difficult for church leaders who lack pastoral experience with or exposure to BECs to adopt the PCP II view of the Church of the Poor. The BEC could not just be learned through seminary training or expertise in theological sciences as formally taught in theological schools through books. Active involvement in communities is the only way of promoting and building the BECs.

Concrete Implementation in Boac, Marinduque

Not all BECs in the Philippines are created equal. Some are “more equal” than others. The figure below shows Boac Diocese registering an exemplary number of BEC units and members per baptized Catholic population. Boac BEC experience may be considered a benchmark in BEC building but this does not mean that Boac is superior to all other Philippine BECs; to highlight Boac’s success in community-

building does not say that its BEC program has successfully mobilized and organized all the total 193,585 baptized Catholics, representing 89 percent of all 216,815 people in the territory. As a benchmark, it is not the “gold-standard” but merely serves as a reference point in terms of success relative to other Philippine parishes.

Total Number of BEC Units in the diocese	223 units (169 old areas and 54 new)
Total Number of BEC Families	5,256 Families
Total Number of Individual Members	26,280 Individuals

The Diocese of Boac is composed of the whole island province of Marinduque—a 959.2 square kilometers island province located 160 kilometers southeast of Manila.⁹ Marinduque is located between the Bondoc Peninsula at the southeastern portion of Luzon, and Mindoro Island. The province is surrounded by four bodies of water: Tayabas Bay to the north, Mompog Pass to the northeast, Tablas Strait to the west and southwest, and the Sibuyan Sea to the south. The highest peak in Marinduque is Mount Malindig (formerly, Mount Marlanga), a potentially active volcano with an elevation of 1157 meters. Its mountainous covering occupies approximately half of the total land area. Coastal plain is found along the seacoast of the municipalities of Boac, Gasan and Buenavista on the western side of the province with alluvial plains on the western part of Mogpog to Buenavista and eastern portion of Sta. Cruz. To reach

⁹ Based on UCANEWS data: <http://directory.ucanews.com/dioceses/philippines-boac/397> / accessed 14 May 2013.

Marinduque, sea and air travel options are available.

The common people's rootedness and dependence on the plains, hills, mountains, and seas of Boac (the physical world) account for the predominantly agrarian and maritime labor and the other forms of everyday life that saturate society. People deal with nature, reap its bounty, and are constrained by human limitations; nature, on the other hand, opens up to human needs as people are driven to work for their survival and provisions for security or comfort.

The people's shared beliefs, rituals, social organization, and habitual practices represent and reflect the world that generated them. Thus, Boac's ecology, the people's economic pursuits and their traditional barrio/village/barangay interactions have become the progenitor of a rural-provincial culture that actually pre-dated the Spanish colonizers.

Bishop Rafael Montiano Lim (Jan. 26, 1978 to Sept. 10, 1998) is credited for starting the BEC program of Boac, which used to follow the BCC-CO model of community organizing.¹⁰ On May 7, 2012, it celebrated its 30th BEC anniversary of the formation and growth of BECs – locally referred to as Batayang Pamayanang Kristiano (BPK).¹¹ BEC building, however, is not just a

¹⁰ "The BCC-CO is a network of BCC members and workers which provides education, research and publication and alliance work on the building of BCCs. Chaired by Bishop Rafael Lim of Boac, it works independently of, but coordinates with, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP)." "Basic Christian Communities Say PCP II is Great Impetus," http://www.ucanews.com/story-archive/?post_name=/1993/05/03/basic-christian-communities-say-pcp-ii-is-great-impetus&post_id=43258 / accessed 18 April 2012.

¹¹ <http://cbcpbec.com/?p=494> / accessed 18 May 2013.

In July 2004, Bishop Jose F. Oliveros delivered a report before the First National Congress for Clergy.

"The Diocese of Boac started its BEC program through organizing activities in 1982, using the BCC-CO methodology/

result of episcopal choice, leadership, and commitment to service. Bishop Rafael Lim's efforts and the contributions of his successors (José Francisco Oliveros [Feb. 2, 2000 to May 14, 2004]; Bishop Reynaldo G. Evangelista [February 22, 2005-present]), with the assistance of the clergy and lay leaders, may have gained tremendous help from Marinduque's island-provincial-agricultural character. In other words, the geographical location and culture of Marinduque has provided the local church a huge backdrop/background support for all its efforts in building PCP II's Church of the Poor.

Marinduque's "isolation" from the urban and secularized centers of the National Capital Region (Metro Manila¹²) may not be too favorable to economic progress and development; but its island-agricultural character provides an environment that assists Basic Ecclesial Community-building.

To date, Marinduque has no existing shopping

approach. This approach has three stages, namely: Awakening, Empowerment and Re-structuring. Every stage has corresponding activities.

After twenty (20) years of organizing, the BCC program has resulted in the formation of one hundred forty one (141) organized BCC units in 100 barrios/barangays throughout the province with 10-15 member families per unit. It has a total membership of 5,000 family units as of the year 2002. To date, about 20% of the BCC units are considered as self-sufficient/governing while 40% is in the sustaining level. On the other hand, 25% is in the initiating stage and remaining 15% has died down. For the integral faith formation of the member families, the BCC has initiated six development programs, namely, economic, health, agricultural, political, ecological and religious-cultural." "Thee Filipino Clergy in a State of Mission: Inculturation / Integral Faith Formation," <http://clergycongress2.org/?p=146>

¹² Composed of the Cities of Manila, Quezon, Caloocan, Pasay, Pasig, Makati, Mandaluyong, Marikina, Valenzuela, Muntinlupa, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Malabon, Navotas, Taguig, San Juan, and the Municipality of Pateros.

malls but there are some buildings devoted to commerce. Trans-national companies do not hold offices in the province hence the ratio of unemployment here is high since majority of the establishments employ only one (1) to four (4) personnel.¹³

The two major economic activities of the island-province are farming and fishing.

Coconut and rice are its primary crops. Agriculture remains the biggest sector-employer of the province providing 48.0% of employment. Of the total land area of 95,925 hectares, 58% or 53,587.05 hectares are devoted to crops; 66.06% of this area (or 35,399.61 hectares) are coconut plantations. Palay paddies or rice farms follow with some 10,056 hectares or 18% of the total cultivated area of the province. Of the 10,056 hectares devoted to palay, irrigated ricelands constitute about 18.5%, 58.3% are rainfed, and remaining 23.2% use the upland (non-irrigated) method.¹⁴

Other agricultural products are corn, vegetables, rootcrops, banana, coffee, cacao, legumes, like mongo and peanut, are planted to the remaining 29% of the total cultivated area of the island.

Poultry and livestock raising serve as a secondary source of farm-family income. Chicken, hogs, cattle, goats and carabaos are traditionally raised. Other supplemental sources of family income come from charcoal-making, honey culture or honey-gathering, and renting-out of local banca or small boats to tourists. Other minor cottage industries include fish sauce production, cloth-weaving and crafts from bamboo, palm trees, and other local wooden materials.

Since there are neither Makati City businesses

¹³ www.marinduque.gov.ph/economicprof.html / accessed 16 May 2013.

¹⁴ <http://www.darfu4b.da.gov.ph/marinduque.html> / accessed 15 May 2013.

nor SM malls, there are no peak-hour traffic congestions, no stiff competitions for bus or train rides, and public space is not swarmed by buy-and-sell or market transactions. Everyday-life, among the poor farmers and fishers, is still defined by a laid-back 4-8 hr. work, one that is mostly determined by small- and medium-scale farming and fishing activities (not the mechanized mass production types) that bring modest income to families. Thus, majority of the people of the Diocese, including the townsfolk of the town of Boac, do not belong to the middle-class income groups whose *capacities enable pursuit of resources and goals* that typically move towards sufficiency and autonomy, or towards affluence and power.

Consequently, the poorer people, the majority of the Diocese, do not have the resources and capacities to automatically become capable pursuers of careers in Metro Manila. Some of them may possess a future-oriented mentality characteristic of individuals raised in modern urbanized and secularized modern cities; but due to the island-provincial culture (one that is hundreds of years older than modern business culture), people are still predominantly enlivened by the shared island-provincial social disposition constantly shaped by years of dealing with the land and the sea. Most people of Marinduque belong to this farming and fishing lifeworld characterized by an island-provincial ecology.

This is what we mean by the BEC being assisted by the culture of the island-province: that even before Christianity has touched the shores of Marinduque, people are already imbued with the island-provincial culture of hospitality, reciprocity, solidarity, informal camaraderies, inter-personal trust, and simplicity supported by a material life which is neither considered destitute nor affluent—probably poor (but not entirely miserable) and simple (neither complicated nor disposed

to sophistication and consumerist behavior). Moreover, most of the poor are not preoccupied with commodities which capture/captivate the middle class and the moneyed.

With regard to the notion of poverty/simplicity, it is interesting to cite a study that uses non-BEC orientated measurements of poverty. Schreiner, a Westerner academician, concludes in his paper that one of every three Filipinos is poor.¹⁵ He utilized some indicators of what he considered as standard non-poor lifestyles: like eating meat, dining in a restaurant, owning items such as a TV set, cellphone, car, having a medical insurance, bank deposits, investments, etc.—all items preferred and regularly consumed by the middle class or the affluent. This is an obvious middle/affluent classist skewer to fix notions of poverty in terms of absence of middle class material amenities/values. Besides, the search, pursuit, consumption, and accumulation of such amenities may actually be a cause of social fragmentation, disintegration of the island-provincial values of simplicity and the loss of shared practices of gratuitous mutual-help and solidarity that usually characterize the lives of the poor in Marinduque.

The case of fenced houses in middle-class subdivisions is one illustration of how the more successful citizens fence themselves inside their private properties, which effectively keep off neighbors from intruding into their lives—impoverishing themselves of the richness of intimate neighborliness. In this sense, middle-class success could also mean keeping a middle-class kind of neighborhood—where good neighbors are minding their own businesses. Neighborhood is thus a

¹⁵Mark Schreiner, "A Simple Poverty Scorecard for the Philippines," *Philippine Journal of Development* vol. 34/2 (2007): 43-70.

neighborhood of fenced, self-sufficient, and isolated neighbors who, ironically, would inadvertently constrict the facilitation of concourse, the most basic activity in a neighborhood. Inside their homes are found children who play by themselves—sitting in front of their electronic gadgets that keep their eyes, ears, and fingers constantly occupied—impoverishing themselves of the physical games with playmates in real playgrounds or fields. They are kept busy by the television where they explore the world by sitting down; they browse the internet that keep them active without sweating it out; they interact with their friends through the so-called social networking sites and keep themselves undisturbed by their neighbors' preoccupations or nature's forces. They keep their bodies animated through the use of technologies available in the market and built environments, like gyms or play rooms. By enclosing themselves inside their private or privatized lairs, middle-class citizens exercise their rights, affirm their autonomy, and maximize their independence. They secure themselves inside their gated homes, they hold on to their own resources, they guard their comfort zones against intruders or unlawful trespassers. Thus, by keeping themselves tuned to individualized or privatized activities, they place themselves in a comfortable distance far from the bigger group and from the ways of the poor and simple people who would belong to a lifeworld defined by the shared social dispositions of the folks who regularly negotiate the greeneries, traverse the various contours of the land, breathe through the briny air of the sea, and find belongingness among themselves.

Poor farmers and fishers who consume sufficient amount of food (which may be more backyard-grown vegetables than meat or smaller varieties of fish with minimal mercury content), who spend time with their

friends watching a shared “neighborhood” TV set or visit the local healer for a free *hilot*/indigenous massage and counseling, or ride on a *habal-habal*¹⁶ motorcycle are really poor according to Schreiner’s standards. However, by setting the middle-class lifestyle as defining the non-poor parameter, he clearly missed the point that poverty is also relative to a society’s ways of pursuing what is contextually humane or a culture’s perspective regarding what counts as human flourishing. Middle class standards of non-poverty/sufficiency may refer to the presence of abundant material indicators which are appropriated and enjoyed by sovereign individuals—a result of privatistic accumulation and individualistic consumption of goods and services. On the other hand, the poor of Marinduque may clearly multiply the benefits derived from the otherwise limited supply of things through their sharing and creativity in apportioning goods, thereby accumulating more cultural health/capital than economic capital.

It is interesting to note that in urban settings, the poor are also known for their resilience coupled with their creative use or consumption of discarded items: *pagpag* (verb: *ipagpag*, to shake off)—a practice of trash collectors (or those who collect trash from fastfood chains like KFC or McDonalds) who “shake-off” dirt from the food that they find in trash; street foods—barbecued pig and chicken entrails; old tires—recycled or reused to create garden pots or weights to keep roofs from being blown away; spoiled/discarded food—boiled

¹⁶ The verb *habal* means “to mount on top of a partner in an animal copulation”. *Habal-habal* motorcycle is a single commercial motorcycle-transport with several mounted passengers taking a “linked” riding position—a transportation practice that multiplies the number of passengers in a single motorcycle (3-8 and sometimes 10 passengers in motorcycles with side-seats extensions). This is commonly practiced in less-developed/underdeveloped or poor places in the Philippines.

for feeding pigs; *ukay-ukay*—rummaging in second-hand stores; repair practices of third-degree-damaged items—repair of even the “unusable” umbrella, shoes, appliances, and the like.

For BEC building, the poor people’s socio-cultural dispositions may fit the requirements of community formation. The people’s pre-given moral¹⁷ dispositions may dovetail with the expectations of community living or neighborliness. In other words, in Boac diocese, some socio-cultural sediments that promote belongingness and support community may already be in place. These refer to some of the shared *practices* of the poor.

For example, among the poorer members of a community, the practice of sharing of limited resources (like fish catch shared to neighbors or the *kakanin* or native delicacies/food shared during meetings or BEC gatherings) or sharing of adequate resources (time shared for a *Bayanihan*¹⁸ project or the attention given

¹⁷ The concept of morals may refer to socio-cultural standards or culturally-normative practices. It refers 1) to the demands for uprightness or good conduct of one’s life and focuses on the concrete imperatives of a given moment or 2) to people’s practices insofar as these practices are fountainheads of righteous living. In such a case, practices, as emancipatory or liberating practices, are constitutive of an *ethos* (shared convictions, customs, social standards of behavior, etc. [cf. Latin term for custom: *mos-moris* from where morals is derived]), the reference of an ethical theory. Morals is rooted in its context—living community or group of persons from where an *ethos* may spring. José Luis L. Aranguren speaks of *êthos* (ἦθος) as “el suelo firme, el fundamento de la *práxis*, la raíz de la que brotan todos los actos humanos” (“the firm ground, the foundation of praxis, the root from which spring all human acts”). He distinguished ἦθος from ἔθος, the former having a wider social character from where ἔθος is derived as individual custom or habit. The proper etymology of *ethics*, he says, is from the term ἦθος. *Ética* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1986), 21ff.

¹⁸ *Bayanihan* is a combination of two words, *bayan* (nation or town) and *anihan* (harvest)—it means neighbourhood work or

to a sick neighbor) or the multiplication of number of beneficiaries in the sharing of a limited resource (cf. hand-me-down clothes from the eldest to the youngest, *habal-habal*, or extending a small piece of meat or fish with plenty of soup and other extenders) are a common occurrence. One does not have to search for or to bring about the habits of reciprocity, sharing, and redistribution—these are not only *habits of necessity* inside the poor's hut, but have become *habits of the poor's heart*. Some of them who become well-to-do's do not easily forget such habits, as they are also expected by custom to become the local benefactors.

Thus, gift-giving (*especially* the gift of one's time or services), which is also an enduring practice among traditional cultures,¹⁹ has proven to be a native ingredient that contributes to BEC success in Boac. This claim does not mean, however, that Marinduque culture is perfect or thoroughly "anonymous-Christian" in character. What we are saying is that Marinduque island-province society and culture has the moral-practical resource for any community-building program. Tapping this resource for BEC is one major task for the present—the past and the island-provincial milieu have handed-down that huge cultural resource which has become available for today's BEC building as localization of Vatican II.

Conclusion

Vatican II's influence is made concrete through the Basic Christian Communities whose formation has become the standard approach to Church renewal in

community work done voluntarily and without monetary compensation.

¹⁹ See Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, New York: Norton, 1967.

many parishes in the Philippines. The centralized guidelines based on the PCP II documents have pushed parish life, with all its traditional rituals and activities, its newly-organized ministries, programs, projects, and other practices, towards community organization, lay participation and BEC formation.

Various generations of lay leaders and descendants in the more successful BEC-run parishes have become living witnesses to the gradual transformation of their ecclesial communities and personalities towards greater cohesion and solidarity.

The formation of BECs also characterizes the formation and identity of the Clergy in general, inasmuch as they have to be prepared, trained, and disposed towards the realization of PCP II's decrees.

The ideals/values of subsidiarity, decentralization, lay participation, solidarity with the poor, care for the environment, respect for women, and the like, have become more manifest standards because of the BEC structures that saturate and interlock Church institutions. Negative life-experiences and other critical issues (lack of support system, presence of abusive husbands, threat of illegal logging, and the like) have been addressed with far-reaching effects or deeper psychological impact because of the BEC.

Adults in BEC contexts would help bring up generations of BEC-sensitive children (from children who learn about the BECs to children who are part of the BECs) since BECs provide the most appropriate settings for learning, for acquiring new skills especially in socialization, for better emotional education, and for acquiring orientation and capacities. In other words, the BECs are themselves veritable "primary classrooms" where primary catechesis and religious education must start. What we have in our classrooms are mere secondary educations (we call it *schooling*) because

these are often detached from our students' life-settings and life-experiences. One might say, "But we always connect our lessons with real life situations." That's precisely the point; that's exactly the problem—we connect our lessons to real life situations. In the BECs, there is no need for that effort *to connect* because a BEC is not separate from the life-world of people. The activities, the organizational procedures, the celebrations, the meetings that deal with crises, etc.—these in themselves directly deal with life and these teach people, especially children, the mechanics of life. Besides, most BECs are giving formal lessons to children about the basics of our religion. What is working to the advantage of formal learning in a BEC setting is that it is practiced in the context of a living community (not in the context of a college or university) with its language, meanings, and activities meant for community living and not to prepare people for work in business or employment in offices or institutions that must subordinate life-world principles to commerce or legalities.

The basic and stable community that is the BEC becomes the life-platform for the dynamic creation of culture of shared dispositions and activities with shared meanings. When one is immersed within BEC context and in the presence of significant others, one learns all the time about how to be part of BEC culture on many levels. Meals are special meals because these are shared by fellows; celebrations get extraordinary fraternal orientations; issue-based collaborations are imbued with a prophetic spirit that go beyond the tactics of survival; and discussions are animated by Gospel values that further enrich a sharing community. Of course, not everyone would derive uniform meanings from one's context. We have to realize though that when a context is formed, such contexts, in turn, form their own

constructors. Those who find themselves in a BEC which is a tightly-knit group with community-constructed grids of traditional values (not modern/nuclear family values), cannot help but be woven into the groups' integrated network of interactional frames and scenarios for communion such as prayer meetings, monthly bible studies, social work, and the like. In turn, such interactional frames and scenarios would make up the indispensable conditions for the further development of successful BECs.

Research Notes

Multiple Contextual Perspectives of *Amoris Laetitia*

Jojo M. Fung[♦]

Not a few of us in Asia view the promulgation of this Apostolic Exhortation as a “*release from*” and “*removal of*” the “magisterial hermeneutical power” from the curial descateries that pride themselves on relentlessly defending an erstwhile euro-centric orthodoxy that is untenably indefensible in a globalized church. Particular contexts and communities with their cultures have to be attended to, as *Amoris laetitia* (AL) emphatically asserts, “each country or region, moreover, can seek solutions better suited to its culture and sensitive to its traditions and local needs. For ‘cultures are in fact quite diverse and every general principle... needs to be inculturated, if it is to be respected and applied’” (AL, 3). The document further emphasizes, “different communities will have to devise more practical and effective initiatives that respect both the Church’s teaching and local problems and needs” (AL, 199).

Representing the critical perspective of the married within the church, Clifford Longley opines, “*Amoris laetitia* speaks the truth of intimate human

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relationships like no other Catholic document I have ever come across. It hands back to people the right to exercise their own moral judgments, asking their pastors for help when appropriate. It does not leave those pastors in the seat of judgment: they are no longer gatekeepers of the Sacraments, checking the passports of those who apply.”¹ Of the Church of Indonesia, Mgr. Ignatius Suharyo, the archbishop of Jakarta, succinctly adds his perspective that bespeaks of the heart of the document, “the foundational attitude is accompaniment, integration, certainly near to whoever is suffering because her/his heart of love is wounded.”²

Modern Families: a Hermeneutical Lens

The portrait of the situation of the modern family below is shored up as a hermeneutical lens to understand the pastoral concern undergirding the Apostolic Exhortation:

The responses given in the two pre-synodal consultations spoke of a great variety of situations and the new challenges that they pose. In many cases, parents come home exhausted, not wanting to talk, and many families no longer even share a common meal. Distractions abound, including an addiction to television. This makes it all the more difficult for parents to hand on the faith to their children. Other responds pointed to the effects

¹ For more details, see <http://www.thetablet.co.uk/blogs/1/919/0/amoris-laetitia-pope-francis-has-created-confusion-where-we-needed-clarity> / accessed May 1, 2016.

² His statement in the Indonesian language is “*sikap dasarnya adalah menemani, menintegrasikan, tetap dekat siapapun yang menderita karena cinta yang terluka.*”

of severe stress on families, who often seem more caught up with securing their future than with enjoying the present. This is a broader cultural problem, aggravated by fears about steady employment, finances and the future of children. (AL, 50)

Modern families, as the document alerts us, are subjected to immense multiple pressures: extreme individualism (AL, 33), a culture of the ephemeral, narcissism, a kind of marital “independence” depriving of the opportunities to grow old gracefully together (AL, 39), hasty confrontation of marital problems leading to failures (AL, 41), alarming decline in population (AL, 42), a culture of loneliness and sense of powerlessness (AL, 43), economic constraints (AL, 44), scandalous sexual exploitation of children and phenomenon of street children (AL, 45), forced mass migration, involving unaccompanied women and children, extreme poverty that coerces the sale of children for prostitution and organ trafficking, assisted suicide and euthanasia (AL, 48), alcoholism, drug use, gambling and other addictions (AL, 51), violation of women’s rights... use of surrogate mothers and the exploitative commercialization of the female body in the current media culture (AL, 54), the technological revolution that usurps the place of God (AL, 57). The concern of AL is how to make families function again so that the families regain their rightly role as the sacrament of love.

In the face of the seemingly insurmountable vicissitudes, the document regards the families as the “nearest hospital” (AL, 321) whence both the family and conjugal spirituality requires a “shepherding” in mercy (AL, 322). This “shepherding” calls for tender personal care, guidance and encouragement that makes an indelible mark on the couples and family members who

felt lovingly cherished and truly appreciated in their inviolable dignity. Notwithstanding such tender shepherding, the familial and conjugal bond has been shaken and even torn asunder by the raging tempest of our modern and digital world. In the meantime, the number of families in “irregular situations” in all their complexities has increased, posing new pastoral challenges to the church. This emerging challenge calls for a process of pastoral accompaniment and discernment.

Accompaniment with Pastoral Discernment

AL has justifiably reinstated that which has been “immorally usurped” by the ordained within the church hierarchy: the place and role of conscience and the activities of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the baptized and particularly the couples (AL, 37).³ Conscience is “the most secret core and sanctuary of a person” whence “one is alone with God, whose voice echoes in the depths of the heart’ (*Gaudium et spes*, 16)”, enabling the couple to listen discerningly “to God and his commandments (cf. *Rom* 2:15)” during the pastoral accompaniment so that they arrive at decisions “profoundly free of subjective caprice and accommodation to prevailing social mores” (AL, 222; cf. see AL, 42, 265, 298, 303). Conscience remains the sacred sanctuary where God encounter the couples, motivate and lead them forward amidst the joys and sorrows of modern life.

³ I am most delighted and I am sure many of us in the ordained ministry around the world finds this dose of “self-criticism” (AL, 36) healthily reflected in this stark admission: “We also find it hard to make room for the consciences of the faithful, who very often respond as best they can to the Gospel amid their limitations, and are capable of carrying out their own discernment in complex situations. We have been called to form consciences, not to replace them.” (AL, 37)

In lieu of this sacred sanctuary of conscience, AL calls for a process of accompaniment that is responsible, personal and pastoral/practical discernment (AL, 293, 300 & 304) “to help each family to discover the best way to overcome any obstacles it encounters” (AL, 300) even whence “no easy recipes” exist (AL, 298). Recognizing the role of the Holy Spirit in the innermost sanctuary of conscience, this pastoral practice needs to operate within a “mystago-pneumatological framework” comprising four interrelated theological guidelines:

- (a) Exercise the logic of the Gospel of mercy for “no one is condemned for ever” (AL, 296 & 298) or presumed excommunicated (AL, 243, 246, 299);
- (b) Discern and “understand the divine pedagogy of grace in their lives and offering them assistance so they can reach the fullness of God’s plan for them”, something which is always possible by the power of the Holy Spirit” (AL, 297);
- (c) Be “attentive to the goodness which the Holy Spirit sows in the midst of human weakness, a Mother who, while clearly expressing her objective teaching, “always does what good she can, even if in the process, her shoes get soiled by the mud of the street” (AL, 308);
- (d) Recourse to the law of gradualness by which the free subjects prudentially integrate in her/his total personal and social life the objective demands of the law as God’s gift of definitive and selfless love (AL, 300, cf.295).

The interiorization of this “mystago-pneumatological framework” is indispensable to the practice that manifests the following pastoral etiquette/criteria:

- (a) Welcome and guide the couples with patience

- and discreetness like Jesus and the Samaritan woman (cf. Jn 4:1-26) (AL, 294);
- (b) Suspend any harsh judgments so as to be truly attentive to the complexity and empathize with the distress of the couples' situation (AL, 296);
 - (c) Reach out to all and assist them to integrate and participate in the ecclesial community and thus experience being touched by the unmerited, unconditional and gratuitous mercy of God for "no one can be condemned forever" (AL, 297);
 - (d) Distinguish/identify elements/signs of love that lead the couples to fuller/greater openness to the Gospel of marriage (AL, 293) and "respect those signs of love which in some way reflect God's own love" (AL, 294);
 - (e) Recognize the root causes in incidences of civil marriage and simply co-habitation such as a general aversion to anything institutional or definitive, lack of security in life, marriage celebration is costly (AL, 294);
 - (f) Ascertain what is genuinely irreparable in the first union: admission of a sincere effort to save the first marriage, unjust abandonment by the first spouse, a subjective certainty in conscience that the first irreparably broken marriage had never been valid (AL, 298);
 - (g) Discern the **objective values** that sustains the second union: "proven fidelity, generous self giving, Christian commitment, a consciousness of its irregularity and of the great difficulty of going back without feeling in conscience that one would fall into new sins, enter a second union for the sake of

upbringing the children (AL, 298), “humility, discretion and love for the Church and her teaching, in a sincere search for God’s will and a desire to make a more perfect response to it” (AL, 300);

- (h) Engage critically the use of the three mitigating factors (AL, 301-303) and three cardinal rules in the process of discernment (AL, 304-306);
- (i) Recourse to the pastoral logic of integration (AL, 311) and the logic of pastoral mercy (AL, 307-312).

Henceforth the role of the ordained, the consecrated and baptized leaders is one of accompanying and discerning God’s Spirit at work in the lives/hearts of the couples. Pastoral leaders need to give space and time to allow God to be God in the lives of the couples, to lead the couples to make their own informed decisions in the light of the Gospel, the Church’s teaching and the guidelines laid down by the bishops (AL, 244) of the local Churches.

An Organic Development of Doctrine

At a Vatican press conference to present Pope Francis’ new exhortation on the family, Cardinal Christoph Schönborn spoke of the “the organic development of doctrine,” with continuity in teaching here, but there is also something really new... There’s a real development [of doctrine], not a rupture.”⁴ Schönborn was quick to add, “this new development was in some way “implicit” in no. 84 of “*Familiaris*

⁴ For more details see <http://americamagazine.org/content/dispatches/pope-francis-exhortation-family-organic-development-doctrine> / accessed June 2, 2016.

consortio".⁵ In the same vein, Cardinal Walter Kasper opined that "Pope Francis has initiated a process the development of the doctrines or the Church teachings [the magisterium]".⁶

Doctrinal development calls for a felt sense of *sentire cum ecclesia* on the part of all who participated in the last two synods. The two synods resembled a *kairos*, a graced moment whence the cardinals, bishops, experts and observers enjoyed a lived ecclesial sense of collegiality and synodality as a constitutive assembly of the Church's magisterium in union with the Roman Pontiff. Pope Francis's pontifical presence at the synods and the subsequent citations in *Amoris laetitia* of the *Relatio Synodi* and *Synodi Finalis* are in actuality tantamount to a papal endorsement of the magisterial deliberations at the synods. Can we then posit that this synodal magisterium shares a magisterial affinity with the collegial and synodal deliberations at Vatican II, an ecumenical assembly of cardinals, bishops, experts and observers in union with Pope John XXIII and Pope Paul VI?⁷ Mindful of this affinity, it is no surprise that Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri, in his intervention, has painstakingly demonstrated the doctrinal continuity of *Amoris laetitia*, calling attention to its 52 citations from the *Synod Report (Relatio Synodi)* 2014 and 84 from

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ For more details, see <http://www.lastampa.it/2016/04/14/vaticaninsider/eng/the-vatican/kasper-says-popes-synod-document-changes-everything-C0q1cP9NUt42mjMIRxiNHL/pagina.html> / accessed June 4, 2016.

⁷ Ibid. Worth noting are the expressions of endorsement used by Pope Francis acknowledge the relevance of the work undertaken during two years by the Bishops of the whole world with their Churches. These endorsing remarks are "I support" (*AL*, 297), "I am in agreement with" (*AL*, 299), "I consider very fitting" (*AL*, 302). Pope Francis refers explicitly to the Synod or to the Synod Fathers about 20 times.

the *Final Report (Relatio Finalis)* 2015.⁸ The real doctrinal continuity is evident from AL's deliberate engagement with the corpus of the teachings of the Fathers, the medieval and modern theologians, the previous popes and few regional episcopal conferences.⁹

Given the discourse on continuity or rupture, it is noteworthy to mention that what makes possible the doctrinal exploration and apostolic explanation in *Amoris laetitia* has been the use of the “hermeneutics of mercy” that increasingly permeates all levels of the church universal, regional and local. This “hermeneutics of mercy” is key to the papacy of Pope Francis, his teachings and the interpretation of the corpus of magisterial and theological teachings. Suffice to offer three illustrations. First, *Amoris laetitia* cited the International Theological Commission (AL, 305) which explains: “Because of forms of conditioning and mitigating factors, it is possible that in an objective situation of sin – which may not be subjectively culpable, or fully such – a person can be living in God’s

⁸ For more details see <https://zenit.org/articles/cardinal-baldisserris-intervention-at-presentation-of-amoris-laetitia/> / accessed June 1, 2016.

⁹ The Fathers of the Church are St. Leo the Great and St. Augustine, medieval and modern theologians such as St. Thomas, cited 19 times; St. Dominic, Blessed Jordan of Saxony; Alexander of Hales; St. Ignatius of Loyola, 3 times; St. Robert Bellarmine; St. John of the Cross; papal documents, *Casti connubii* of Pius XI; *Mystici Corpori Christi* of Pius XII; *Humanae vitae* of Blessed Paul VI (twice directly plus 4 times in other documents cited in the text); the *Catechesis on Human Love* (23 times) and *Familiaris consortio* (21 times + 6) of St. John Paul II; *Deus Caritas Est* of Benedict XVI (9 times + 1). The Second Vatican Council is well cited (22 times + 6), as is *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* (13 times + 2). Moreover, in addition to the citations of *Evangelii gaudium* (16 + 1), there are 50 citations from Pope Francis’ catecheses on the family at general audiences. Finally, other documents of the Holy See are cited 12 times and documents of Episcopal Conferences 10 times.

grace, can love and can also grow in the life of grace and charity, while receiving the Church's help to this end." Second, AL 305 is reinforced by Footnote 345, in its reference to the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts entitled *Declaration Concerning the Admission to Holy Communion of Faithful Who are Divorced and Remarried* (24 June 2000), no. 2 which reads, "...a negative judgment about an objective situation does not imply a judgment about the imputability or culpability of the person." In other words, St. Thomas Aquinas reminded the pastors that they must be clear of norms and the person's state for reasons that not everyone is living in a state of sin."

On the basis of this "hermeneutics of mercy", it can be argued that the exposition of the notions of 'discernment' and 'integration' in *Amoris laetitia* represents an organic doctrinal development for the Church's magisterium under Pope Francis as it was a "developed doctrine" in *Familiaris consortio* under John Paul II.¹⁰ *Familiaris consortio*, in no. 84 strongly urged, "Pastors must know that, for the sake of truth, they are obliged to exercise careful discernment of situations" and stressed the importance of the "logic of integration" (see AL, 299). But it stopped short of a further doctrinal exploration and apostolic explanation of the possibility of couples in "irregular situations" to regularize their marriage.

However, no. 78 of *Amoris laetitia* nevertheless attempts a doctrinal exploration and apostolic explanation: "a couple in an irregular union [who] attains a noteworthy stability through a public bond – and is characterized by deep affection, responsibility towards the children and the ability to overcome trials –

¹⁰ See <http://americamagazine.org/content/dispatches/pope-francis-exhortation-family-organic-development-doctrine> / accessed June 2, 2016.

this can be seen as an opportunity where possible, to lead them to celebrate the sacrament of Matrimony". This entails celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation and the Eucharist. The doctrinal "way forward" is further explained in Footnote 351 which states, "In certain cases, this can include the help of the sacraments. Hence, "I want to remind priests that the confessional must not be a torture chamber, but rather an encounter with the Lord's mercy (Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium* [24 November 2013], 44: AAS 105 [2013], 1038). I would also point out that the Eucharist "is not a prize for the perfect, but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak" (Ibid., 47: 1039).]

Third, *Amoris laetitia* offers an additional doctrinal "way forward" in Footnote 329. This footnote cites John Paul II's Apostolic Exhortation, *Familiaris consortio* (22 November 1981), 84: AAS 74 (1982), 186, which categorically posits, "This means, in practice, that when for serious reasons, for example, for the children's upbringing, a man and a woman cannot satisfy the obligation to separate, they 'take on themselves the duty to live in complete continence, that is, by abstinence from the acts proper to married couples'."¹¹ As a matter of fact, Footnote 329 states: "In such situations, many people, knowing and accepting the possibility of living "as brothers and sisters" which the Church offers them, point out that if certain expressions of intimacy are lacking, "it often happens that faithfulness is

¹¹ For more details, see the document of the Congregation For the Doctrine Of The Faith, Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church Concerning the Reception of Holy Communion by the Divorced and Remarried Members of the Faithful, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfait_h_doc_14091994_rec-holy-comm-by-divorced_en.html / accessed June 4, 2016.

endangered and the good of the children suffers.”¹² This contextual knowledge of conjugal impairment averred in this same footnote provides the Church an opportunity for further doctrinal development beyond the “brother and sister” predicament.

A Contextual Perspective of Pope Francis

Pope Francis released *Amoris laetitia* on March 19, 2016. Almost a month later, he gave a press conference on the plane from Greece to Rome on April 6, 2016. When asked if the document contained a “change in discipline that governs access to the sacraments” for Catholics who are divorced and remarried, the Pope replied, “I can say yes, period.”¹³ Many commentators and experts would think that uppermost in the Pope’s mind and heart would be the particular issue of the admission of those in new union to the sacraments, particularly to Holy Communion. But the contrary proves to be true: he was not. In fact Pope Francis has a concern that is bigger than all our concerns as commentators of *Amoris laetitia*. Many if not all realized how far off the mark we are by what he said:

Don’t you realize that instead the family throughout the world is in crisis? Don’t we realize that the falling birth rate in Europe is enough to make one cry? And the family is the basis of society. Do you not realize that the youth don’t want to marry? Don’t you realize that the fall of the birth rate in Europe is to

¹² In matters concerning conjugal union, *Amoris laetitia* adds, “the experience of the broad oriental tradition of a married clergy could also be drawn” (AL, 202).

¹³ For more details, see <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/pope-says-schonborn-interpretation-on-communion-for-remarried-is-the-final/> accessed May 31, 2016.

cry about? Don't you realize that the lack of work or the little work (available) means that a mother has to get two jobs and the children grow up alone? These are the big problems. (Ibid.)

Indeed Pope Francis' contextual concern informs us that his context is arguably different from the rest of the Church and the world. We have to consider the contextual perspective of the "bigger problem" that Pope Francis is personally concerned with as the Bishop of Rome, the head of the Catholic Church and one of the leading religious and moral leaders of religions in the world.

Conclusion

Reading the Apostolic Exhortation from the contextual perspective of the modern families is as important as interpreting the document in the light of the "hermeneutics of mercy" and the personal perspective of Pope Francis regarding the bigger concern of the modern families in crises that affect the contemporary generations of youth throughout the world. Reinstating the role of conscience and the activities of God's Spirit is indispensable to a Church that becomes a field hospital that calls for a personal and practical process of accompaniment and discernment, leading to greater pastoral integration of every family and every baptized member of the Church. The pastoral practice of accompaniment, discernment and integration has become a new way of being Church that enables a global family of graced yet wounded families to become a sacrament of God's love and mercy in a paradoxical world of being disenchanted yet still enchanted with God.

Book Review

Lane, Dermot A. *Stepping Stones to Other Religions: A Christian Theology of Inter-Religious Dialogue*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011.

The underlying theme – the universality of God’s salvation and the particularity and uniqueness of salvation by Christ – was probed through historical and theological articulation.

The author made a plea for the development of a theology of the Holy Spirit as a foundation for dialogue. This Rahnerian language assuages the sometimes too much inflated Christological claims that do not give justice to Christ himself, to His followers and Christian religion, and to followers of other religions. Indeed the spirit of God has dawned in human history even before the advent of Christianity as a reform movement from Judaism. It is this same spirit that steered the spirited persons in the past (prophets, leaders, judges, kings) and apostles to denounce injustices and announce the reign of God. The work of this spirit finds fulfillment (this does not in any way supersede, substitute or replace the covenant of God with Israel, a continuing vocation of the Jews) in the person of Christ who reveals to us God as compassion for all, especially the poor.

Incidentally, pneumatology as a point of departure for inter-religious dialogue leads to Christological confession whose mission is essentially Trinitarian, point of arrival. Again the reversal in the cognitive order in the doctrine of trinity does not mean introducing a new doctrine of reducing the significance of Christ; rather, it highlights the activity of the Spirit within space and time, and whose categorical expression is objectified in the person of Christ. Spirit and Word

are not separate, yet distinct.

Dermot Lane weaved a historical and theological tapestry that set the background for establishing a theology of the Holy Spirit as foundation for inter-religious dialogue; this background also re-orientes the place of Christology that have become, in the past, a stumbling block for reaching toward other religions. The author, at once, put aside the language of supersessionism, replacement and substitute, and consequently brought to the center stage the language of pneumatology as a point of departure. Before everything comes into being and continuously in the process, of becoming as revealed by Christ dead, risen and who will come again.

Nonetheless, even without explicitly stating, the author seems to be cautious and delicate enough in considering other religions as “participated mediation” of the universal salvation of Christ. Stated differently, other religions are possible means of salvation only in view of the salvation won definitively by Christ. This is the language used in Vatican II in particular *Nostra aetate* and consolidated by the document *Dominus Iesus* issued by the Congregation of the Doctrine of Faith. Other religions, in view of the council’s document, do not possess autonomous function in history (Peter Phan takes the opposite view in his book “Being Religious Inter-religiously: Asian Perspective on Interfaith Dialogue”, 2000). They are related to the church explicitly or implicitly in view of Christ’s universal salvation.

Lane listed three criteria for discerning the Spirit within the church and other religions, yet these are not all inclusive. Other things may be added to the criteria, but who sets the criteria? How do we judge the criteria with regard to validity and content (as Spirit-inspired)?

Also the phrase “other religions” seems to suggest only the major world religions and various religious traditions in Asia. It does not include in the equation sects and various forms of folk religiosities, local church movements that arose as a response against political persecution and historical injustices, tribal religions that developed out of the cultural, geographical and political discourses and beliefs of the people, and new ways of being a church (like the BEC) with its various forms. Interestingly, these little voices and those that belong to the underside of history need to be brought to the center of theological conversation if dialogue is truly inclusive and extensive in its approach. These little voices within the church, at the peripheries of life are often neglected. They are the ones who should be invited in the table of theological conversation.

Furthermore, inter-religious dialogue should also include inter-cultural and liberational perspectives. In Asia where the individual, rushing body, corpus is an important mediation of faith, dialogue should consider bodily symbols and non-verbal elements in communication (against the Western/European intellectualist approach). Dialogue is both verbal / non-verbal in the Asian way of dialoguing. Buddhism and Hinduism for example employ various forms of rituals and bodily expressions to emancipate oneself from suffering and communicate with the Other.

Outside visible institutional church, we find religious extremists whose use of religion to wage war cannot be justified. Yet their struggle is not only religious in nature. Most of them fight to live and to be respected in a world dominated by the voices of big religions, political opportunists, capitalists with their profit maximization, cultural elitists, etc...dialogue plays a vital role in these contexts.

O'Collins, Gerald. *The Second Vatican Council on Other Religions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

The book tried to tread the historical and theological development of the church's perspective on other religions starting with New Testament sources and culminating in the five documents of the council as reviewed by the author. It painstakingly presented the continuity of its teachings (in skeletal format) and the tinges of discontinuity as adopted by Vatican II against this backdrop. Looking at the contemporary context—characterized by religious plurality—the author rightly asked, “Are other religions considered ways of salvation and revelation?”

With regard to the unity of God's plan or salvation, does God have one or several plans of salvation—one for Christians and others for adherents of other faiths? Would the truth that Jesus died for all and is savior of all be jeopardized by this hypothesis? However, granted that God has only one plan of salvation for the whole humanity, how does God's Trinitarian reality affect the unity of this plan salvation? Is this carried out only in one way, the way of Christianity and hence all must join the boat of Peter if adherents of other religions would like to be saved?

Or stated differently, is there not a plurality of ways in the unity of God's single plan? Can one not speak of several covenants, distinct but related, not parallel but complementary as Irenaeus did referring to four covenants with Adam, with Noah, with Moses, and with Jesus? Can we not consider this with the other figures of the great religions in Asia—with Muhammad, Confucius, Buddha, etc? Are they (other religious traditions) not other ways, aside from the way of Christianity, in which salvation is to be reached? Care

must be observed that the book was cautious enough not to relegate Christ's salvific event into lesser degree or in the same horizontal significance with the other religions.

With regard to the salvific significance of the Christ-event, did Jesus proclaim that he himself is the definitive savior for all of humanity, if such concept been part of Jesus' and his culture's worldview? Dupuis rather used the word 'decisive' rather than 'definite' because of its inflammatory connotation. How do we really understand this uniqueness? Does it exclude any other form of mediatorship distinct but participating in and dependent upon Jesus mediation? How this universality be understood in reference to the particularity and the temporal and spatial limitations of the incarnation?

The council documents as presented by the author referred to the other religions as 'participated mediation' in the unique and universal salvation won by Christ. Not only is there glimpse of theological arrogance, denotatively and connotatively, in the council's usage of language of domination, but also the imposing and pontification authority of the council is pervasively sweeping as presented by the author.

Even if Jesus be identified with the Word, how is this understood in the wider and more universal salvific significance vis-à-vis divergent religions? In this context, is it theologically acceptable to regard the Buddha (he lived before Jesus of Nazareth) and the other founders of non-Christian religions as salvation figures mediating salvation to their adherents? The incarnation as understood by the council (presented by the author) was still microscopic. There is a need to develop the cosmic dimension of incarnation without resource to the Greek way of theologizing (dualistic) that brought about theological (in particular

christological) controversies.

With regard to the church as a necessary instrument of salvation, Vatican II teaches the even non-Christians can be saved. How do we re-interpret the premise that the church as a sacrament is a necessary instrument for salvation? Are non-Christians saved despite or in and through their religions? Following the line of thinking of the five (5) Vatican II documents, are these religions, aside from Christianity, not channels or ways of salvation? Are these religions in their own way sacraments of God's salvation?

These questions pose a great challenge to the church in its attempt to craft pathways of dialogue with other religions. Observably, the council documents consider the church as the one, holy, catholic, apostolic universal church without differentiating them according to their particularities within the multi-faceted cultural reality. Consequently, therefore, the council documents as presented by the author were operating under the Western/European ecclesiological paradigm. When do churches in Asia, Africa, Latin America, begin to emplot their own narratives along with the other narratives of the great religions of the world so that the church can truly be called church of and not church in?

These corollary questions to the underlying theme of the book must also be asked especially in the context of religious pluralism. How do we do theology in the context of Religious Pluralism? Is Interreligious dialogue possible practically beyond words?

Religion is an important component of culture and as such religious pluralism is one differentiated aspect of cultural diversity. The emphasis on inclusive pluralism – using the language of Dupuis – as elaborated in the book did not consider the cultural context and the recipients of interreligious dialogue, the adherents of various religions themselves. Or better yet,

the connections of culture, religion and people were not fully explicated in the book. Dialogue is not only interreligious (the main focus of the book), it is also intercultural and liberational. These three are constitutive dimension of the mission to dialogue with other religions.

The theological and religious conditioning of the book is very European. The context of Asia is very different. In particular, there is a need to have a different ecclesiology that is adaptive to Asian context. With the revival of religious fundamentalism (ISIS, Boko Haram, Abu Sayaf, etc.) and cultural exclusivism, the church needs to revisit its approach and make necessary adjustments to dialogue with them. In the midst of animosity and indifference, the church must respond with greater love and respect; create a space and structure that foster understanding and fraternal correction without being imposing and moralizing.

The existence of various religions aside from Christianity is intrinsic to the multidimensionality of human experience, by which a variety of viewpoints, explanations or perspectives are offered to account for the same reality. This is exactly what the book says about inclusive pluralism—a category expounded by Dupuis. Yet, the book is not only conditioned by its idea about the other religions and how to go about interreligious dialogue.

In the context of Asia, however, the presence of these various religions is not in themselves evil. Nonetheless, to enter into dialogue with them the Christian missionaries need to share in the people's struggles (especially the poor) to create a just and more humane world, immerse in various cultures and to understand the dynamics and ambivalence of diversity, and listen to the wisdom of other religions considered ways of salvation (and revelation); more so, he or she

will begin to theorize and theologize new principles and ideas that would contribute to the deposits of faith and knowledge.

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