La Virgen del Pilar: "Defamiliarizing Mary" in the Aftermath of the Zamboanga Siege

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ON SEPTEMBER 8, 2013, residents of the southern Philippine city of Zamboanga awoke to a bloody attack by armed forces of a faction of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). This catastrophic and traumatic event, which lasted for three weeks, has been variously named a "crisis," a "standoff," or a "siege." I will not attempt to narrate the story of this event; there are sufficient resources both on the Web and in print that set out the chronology of the conflict and spell out its devastating effects, some of which continue to be felt today.[1] Suffice it to say that, for the first time in a rather long period, Zamboanga City[2] became the theater of armed violence that destroyed homes and structures, traumatized its citizens, and gave rise to suspicion and distrust between its Christian and Muslim communities. Today, the city continues to struggle to recover its instinct for interreligious peace and social harmony.[3]

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1 Cf. http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/654190/3-zamboanga-city-siege-suspects-cry-torture, the electronic version of the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*.

2 For a map of the city's location, cf. http://24timezones.com/onlinemap/philippines_zamboanga_city.php or https://www.google.com.ph/maps/place/Zamboanga/@7.1643667,122. 1453622,7z/data=!4m2!3m1!1s0x32506a09d96fc175: 0x35526ebbce01e7a2?hl=en; still under construction, the official website of the city is found here: http://www.zamboanga.gov.ph.

3 Since that event, other related political issues have come to the fore. As of this writing, the principal issue is Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) recently passed by the Philippine Congress. The law aims to set up a reconfigured autonomous Moro political entity in Mindanao, a sensitive issue for the people of Zamboanga known for their fierce and consistent resistance to incorporation into such an entity. Read, for example, the following news reports inhttp://newsinfo.inquirer.net/691321/zamboanga-city-shall-never-be-under-bangsamoro-mayor-climaco and http://www.rappler.com/move-ph/issues/mindanao/93243-zamboanga-officials-bangsamoro.

The theme of this gathering, "Theology, Conflict, and Peacebuilding: An Intercontinental Conversation," is therefore timely given the Zamboanga Siege.[4] It provides a good reason to go ten years back (1995) to an article I wrote on one of the most important landmarks in the city, the Shrine of Nuestra Señora del Pilar (Our Lady of the Pillar) published in *Landas*, the journal of the Loyola School of Theology.[5] Originally delivered as a talk, the article aimed to pull various strands of the reality of the Pilar Shrine[6] into a coherent account. Its principal aim was to mark out the symbolic significance and strategic importance of the shrine for purposes of interreligious dialogue, solidarity, and cooperation given the context of violence and war in a region often described as endemically subject to religious tension and social conflict. Among other things, the article lamented the relatively recent transformation of this Marian shrine from an open space to a closed one;[7] a transformation through the years that, in my view, aggressively "Catholicized" its physical layout and thereby

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[4] This chapter is based on a paper read at this symposium which took place on December 12–13, 2014, at the St. Vincent School of Theology (Quezon City) and Adamson University (Manila). The concept paper states: "This symposium explores to what extent religious traditions/public theologies reinforce conflicts on the one hand and/or foster peacebuilding initiatives on the other. To stress the heterogeneity of religious traditions, some of the papers in this conference shall examine as well public theologies and their link to political violence and peacebuilding efforts. Public theologies are the "'indicators' or 'observable manifestations of religion' and are more able to capture the subtleties which religion as an analytical concept cannot. The papers shall also investigate the ambivalent role of religions and religious affiliations in the promotion of peace."

[5] Antonio F. B. de Castro, S.J., "La Virgen del Pilar: Defamiliarizing Mary and the Challenge of Interreligious Dialogue," in *Landas: Journal of Loyola School of Theology* 19, no. 1 (2005): 57–91. The "Zamboanga Siege" took place eight years after the publication of this article.

[6] A useful source of information about the shrine is Max Rodriguez, CMF, *Our Lady of Pilar: Heritage of Zamboanga*. For pictures of the shrine and its location adjacent to Fort Pilar, which today is also a museum, visit https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Fort_Pilar and also http://www.zamboanga.com/fun_in_the_sun/Fort_Pilar1.htm.

[7] The Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar originally occupied the open space fronting the north wall of the fortress that carries the same name (Fort Pilar), with an image of Our Lady embossed high on this wall. The shrine was bare of any other fixtures except for this image. A fence encircling its space was then built. Through the years, the following Catholic features have been added: statues on the fence posts, statues of Mary in a small gallery, the stations of the Way of the Cross in niches of the fence posts, a small Blessed Sacrament chapel, a tall cross, and a set of quasi-carillon bells, the most recent addition. Needless to say, these Catholic elements in their totality make it easy for adherents of other religions to sense that they have been excluded from the shrine.

produced the ironic, if perhaps unintended, effect of changing what used to be a radically hospitable open place into a problematically exclusionary closed space. The article assiduously refrained from apportioning blame and assigning guilt; it rather sought to describe a situation that for better or for worse could seemingly no longer be reversed, with the fatal consequence not only of squandering an opportunity for interreligious harmony, but also of rendering an existing rationale for bonding and coming together now more difficult if not downright impossible.[8] It did recommend possible ways of saving the situation through the setting up of a shared interreligious space adjacent to the shrine, where Mary could be venerated and celebrated by Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, and others. Drawing on both Christian and Islamic Mariology in order to claim common ground for an alternative open space where Christians and Muslims could express their veneration of Mary, the article traded on the hope that such a space could serve as a site for people to address conflict and promote peace in the city and the region.

My aim in this chapter then is to revisit this Marian devotional phenomenon about which that article was initially concerned; but to do so, first, by taking for granted that the Zamboanga Siege has in fact signaled a deterioration in the city's communal relationships, and, second, by more forcefully putting in sharper relief the politics of exclusion that has changed the shrine and that, in my view, may have contributed to a city environment that engenders suspicion and distrust. This chapter, moreover, consequently asks under what conditions the local Church of Zamboanga may still meaningfully celebrate the Eucharist given the theo-politically warranted exclusionary nature of the shrine.

I am not claiming any direct cause and effect relationship here between the Zamboanga Siege and the progressive transformation of the shrine into what it is today. The MNLF armed group did

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[8] In times past, Muslims, particularly women and young people, had no qualms about visiting the shrine and lighting candles to Mary. That is no longer a common occurrence. Muslim religious leaders reportedly have banned Muslims from entering the shrine because of its now overly and overtly Catholicized environment, because doing so was deemed an act of "apostasy," the most serious crime for a Muslim to commit.

not attack the city to protest the progressive Catholicization of the shrine; it did so for political reasons tied to the decades-long armed conflict between the national state and Muslim segments of the Philippine population in the southern island of Mindanao. Nevertheless, this political and armed conflict does exhibit religious motivational undertones with their social consequences.

Revisiting the Past and Reconfiguring the Present

In the *Landas* article, I wanted to be clear about where I was coming from; I therefore put forth several sets of presuppositions which I termed "anthropological," "ecclesiological," and "mariological" in order to approach the phenomenon of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar in Zamboanga City.[9]

The "anthropological presuppositions" focused on three elements of the shrine: the fact that it is dedicated to a "holy person," that its space is considered "holy ground," and that the feast that celebrates it (October 12) is a "community building" event. All three elements served to bring people of different faiths together; these shared "anthropological presuppositions" constitute the Shrine's special character.

The "ecclesiological presuppositions" made use of three core ideas contained in an article entitled, "The Church's Mission to Minorities,"[10] by Luis Antonio "Chito" Tagle, currently the cardinal archbishop of Manila and professor of theology in various institutions. Though this article was intended to describe what it means to be Church vis-a-vis the indigenous cultural communities, I have extended its application to the Church vis-a-vis Muslim communities. The three core ideas which I have highlighted were Tagle's call for the Church to extend its mission of "solidarity and communion," "mutuality and complementarity," and "prophetic witness to eschatological hope"

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[9] These are carefully chosen presuppositions. Other categories linked to doctrines such as revelation, Jesus Christ, God/Trinity, sin, and grace are more controversial, contested, and necessarily division-causing between Christians and Muslims.

[10] Luis Antonio Tagle, "The Church's Mission to Minorities," in *Landas: Journal of the Loyola School of Theology* 14 (2000): 129–39.

beyond its visible borders to include other communities, including those whose members are Muslim. Note that this highlighting of these core ideas was intended to contribute to understanding what it meant for the Church *to be Church* in a multireligious, multi-ethnic, and multicultural-linguistic setting in Mindanao in general and in Zamboanga City in particular.

The "mariological presuppositions" appropriated certain themes found in Hans Urs von Balthasar's Marian theology and applied them to Nuestra Señora del Pilar. These themes centered on Mary as a scripturally warranted dramatic character and iconic theological person the veneration of whom crosses religious borders and invites interreligious imitation. The article traded on the fruitful potential of Christian and Muslim Marian devotion in a shared physical space such as that of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar for the promotion of interreligious peace and social harmony.

In the aftermath of the Zamboanga Siege, I have become more and more convinced that the neuralgic point in the continuing drama in which the people of Zamboanga find themselves implicated remains the second set of presuppositions I have just outlined. The anthropological and mariological bases for the fruitful potential of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar to serve as privileged place to promote interreligious peace and social harmony have not been totally eradicated. The ecclesiological presuppositions are the ones that invite questioning and problematizing. In brief, one may make a reasonable case for saying, given the current configuration of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar, that the lack of any urgent and systematic concern on the part of the Church of Zamboanga—in this case to promote solidarity and communion, to encourage mutuality and complementarity, and to stand as prophetic witness to eschatological hope beyond its own visible borders in a multi-ethnic, multireligious, and multicultural-linguistic direction— has, if not directly contributed to the current precarious situation, certainly allowed the slow but sure erosion of trust and confidence among its citizens. However, what this brings to light is the whole question of the kind of politics the Church seems to have consciously or unconsciously employed, and I use the word advisedly, in the "sectarianization" of the shrine. In this the Church has colluded

with the state institutions of the city in the reduction of the Shrine from an open interreligious space to an exclusive and exclusionary Catholic one.

Revisiting these "ecclesiological presuppositions" in the aftermath of the Zamboanga Siege demands therefore a consideration of the relations between the local Church of Zamboanga and the local city government. This means paying close attention to the realms of both "the theological" and "the political" and how they have defined church-state relations in the context of Zamboanga City. I contend that the ecclesiological "sectarianization" to which the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pilar had been subjected was complicit with a "politics of exclusion" with disturbing consequences for today and the future.

A growing number of theologians has been paying attention to just this network of relations between the Church and state, between religion and politics in recent years. Though there is much to learn from these theologians, it is nevertheless true that they work out of preoccupations that characterize North Atlantic and Western contexts. The themes that occupy their reflections spring from concerns about secularization/secularism,[11] ideological extremism and religious violence,[12] as well as the so-called postmodern/ultramodern cultural contexts, with dominant academic and theoretical interests informing them. Just to enumerate some of these themes addressed in a relatively recent publication, one comes across section headings, such as "Revolution and Theological Difference," "Ontology, Capital, and Kingdom," "Infinite Desire and the Political Subject," "Reenchanting the Political beyond Ontotheology," and "Theological Materialism."[13] The task of relating the insights of these "theologians of the political" to the Philippine and local landscape, if we assume the relevance

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[11] Perhaps the most read and commented book to appear in recent years has been *A Secular Age*, by Charles Taylor.

[12] I have been drawn particularly to the works of Rene Girard and the theological appropriation by theologians as diverse as Raymund Schwager and James Alison. Cf., for example, Girard's *The One by Whom Scandal Comes (Studies in Violence, Mimesis, and Culture).*

[13] Creston Davis et al., eds., *Theology and the Political: The New Debate*, with an introduction by Rowan Williams and contributions from a wide variety of authors that include Terry Eagleton, Conor Cunningham, Regina Maria Shwartz, William Desmond, Daniel M. Bell Jr., Antonio Negri, Kenneth Surin, Catherine Pickstock, Graham Ward, Mary-Jane Rubinstein, Eleanor Kaufman, Hent de Vries, and Phillip Blond.

and usefulness of this enterprise, will certainly require much research and work.[14] There are, to be sure, other publications that should prove useful as well.[15] But for the purposes of this chapter, which has a more practical-theological end in view, I would like to turn to the thought of one theologian, William T. Cavanaugh, who stands out among the theologians who have paid serious, profound, and consistent attention to this area of the Church and the state, of the religious and the political.[16] While we need to be mindful of critical voices raised against his work[17] and must clearly acknowledge the need to bring in other voices, especially those that deepen and fill out and perhaps even contextually reframe his own ideas, we are nevertheless encouraged by his assertion that "the church's job is to try to discern in each concrete circumstance how best to embody the politics of the cross in a suffering world."[18] This chapter wishes, therefore,

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[14] Assumed here is the variety of contexts in which Christianity has taken shape in the world today. Cf. Frans Wijsen and Robert Schreiter, eds., *Global Christianity: Contested Claims*. Schreiter's concluding "Epilogue" is particularly lucid in setting the current situation of "global Christianity."

[15] Two examples come to mind: (1) Dennis M. Doyle, Timothy J. Furry, and Pascal D. Bazzell, eds., *Ecclesiology and Exclusion: Boundaries of Being and Belonging in Postmodern Times*, with a foreword by Richard R. Gaillardetz; (2) Graham Ward and Michael Hoelzl, eds., *The New Visibility of Religion: Studies in Religion and Cultural Hermeneutics*, with contributions from Rowan Williams, Terry Eagleton, René Girard, and Peter Weibel.

[16] Among his many publications, I would like to highlight the following: (1) *Torture and the Eucharist: Theology, Politics, and the Body of Christ*; (2) *Theopolitical Imagination: Christian Practices of Space and Time*; (3) *Being Consumed: Economics and Christian Desire*; (4) *The Myth of Religious Violence: Secular Ideology and the Roots of Modern Conflict*; and (5) *Migrations of the Holy: God, State and the Political Meaning of the Church*.

[17] See, for example, Aristotle Papanikolaou, *The Mystical as Political: Democracy and Non-Radical Orthodoxy*. Papanikolaou is wrong when he says that Cavanaugh does not pay enough attention to "how Christians do not live up to being Christians," 85; the charge does not hold water. Papanikolau seems committed and indebted to American "liberal democracy, minus the anthropological baggage of modern liberalism," 86.

[18] William T. Cavanaugh, "The Church as Political," in *Migrations of the Holy: God, State and the Political Meaning of the Church*, 140. It was as a student of church history that I first came to his article, "'A Fire Strong Enough to Consume the House': The Wars of Religion and the Rise of the State," in *Modern Theology* 11, no. 4 (October 1995): 397–420. The first lesson I learned from him was his questioning of the conventional reading of the so-called religious/confessional wars in Europe that ended with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 through a complex consideration of the rise of the modern nation-state and its instrumentalities. In effect, he has surfaced the need to pay much closer attention to subtexts that underlie much of what passes as conventional readings of various situations, particularly those that implicate the religious. He certainly belongs to that group of theologians whose scholarly work keeps them grounded in historical reality. Here, I confess to impatience with those who immediately rise to the grandeur of theories too easily abstracted or divorced from their particular contexts.

to respond to his invitation through a consideration of one such "concrete circumstance:" the transformation of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar from a shared site to a closed space, the politics of marginalization and exclusion that has made possible such a transformation, and the conditions under which the Eucharist may continue to be celebrated in such an exclusionary space. Some concluding remarks will be made, relating this consideration of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar to the theme of the conference on "Theology, Conflict and Peace-building" that provided the immediate occasion for this work.

Concentrating on themes surfaced from his book, *Migrations of the Holy: God, State and the Political Meaning of the Church*, this chapter aims to see in what ways these themes enable us to deepen our understanding of the connection between the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar and the constellation of events that led to the Zamboanga Siege and its aftermath. This chapter likewise attempts to put on the lens of this connection and read Cavanaugh's text from its angle in a preliminary and tentative manner; thus allowing us to engage him on his own terms and to see what questions could be posed to his theology considered in its more general applicability and universal import and therefore beyond its North American and European contexts. A kind of hermeneutical circle then is in place: using his ideas to read/counter read and understand/counter understand a "concrete circumstance," and using this same "concrete circumstance" to tweak his ideas, to test their applicability to this particular context, and to prod him to consider their universal adequacy given different contexts.[19]

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[19] The approach of this chapter has some affinity with that found in Andrew Kim, "Aquinas and Hauerwas on the Religious and the Secular," in *New Blackfriars* 96, no. 1063 (May 2016):311–25. Both Kim and I affirm Cavanaugh's theological position regarding the arbitrariness of binary constructions regarding the "religious" and the "secular" (Kim's focus) and the "religious" and the "political" (my concern). The difference is perhaps dictated by the contexts out of which Kim and I write (his is North American; mine is southern Philippine) and by the methods we use in pursuing our aims (his is textual, mine is more historical-empirical). I think a problem with Kim's article is its lack of attention to the different historical context of Aquinas and, therefore, of the changed circumstances surrounding the reality of the "secular" in Aquinas (medieval society) and in Hauerwas (contemporary North American society).

Introductory Elements

Contexts

Cavanaugh opens *Migrations of the Holy* with an "introduction" that states that the essays

> explore some underlying problems with the way the state has colonized the political imagination of Christians. We have too often assumed that the nation-state defines the boundaries of a unitary common space and promotes the common good within that space. We have allowed those borders to define identity and belonging, and have turned those attachments into a kind of ersatz religion with its own ersatz liturgy. We have expected salvation from those identities and resorted to violence to defend them. And we have thereby obscured our identities as members of a different body, the body of Christ.[20]

It should be pointed out at the outset that the canvas on which Cavanaugh applies his theo-political brush is that of the relationship between the Church and the modern nation-state or, perhaps better and more accurately, between the religious and the political broadly considered. This work has a much more *restricted* focus: the Church, yes, but a local one (the local church of Zamboanga); the state, yes, but a local one (the "local government unit" of Zamboanga City). The Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar is the public stage that brings these two collective "characters" together. This stage is dramatic space, but one that has been processed both theologically and politically to be reconfigured into a sectarian enclosure that is exclusionary in its reconstitution. The crucial point is this: Where the shrine is concerned, there seems no overt design to convert the state into an "ersatz religion" with its own "ersatz liturgy." The city government is happy to have the local Church have the run of the place and to conduct its liturgical celebrations in it. And

[20] Cavanaugh, *Migrations,* 3.

the Church seems happy to do so, occupying an exaggeratedly Catholicized space but blissfully unconcerned about its exclusive and exclusionary environment. Given this setting, therefore, one must recognize that the context which has given rise to Cavanaugh's essays on church and state (or religion and politics) differs on various levels from the context of that of a shrine that is theo-politically compromised.

What remains relevant to consider is his concern with "the way the state has colonized the political imagination of Christians." The Catholics of Zamboanga are clear about their Filipino national identity; the city is part of the Filipino national community. Indeed, an interesting feature of Zamboangueño Filipino nationalism is the lack of any identification with its own regional location; its status as a chartered city enables it to identify directly and almost exclusively with the national community and therefore to bypass and circumvent its location in the peninsula that bears its name and on the big island of Mindanao. In this, the contemporary "enclave" consciousness of Zamboangueño Catholics has exhibited a remarkable historical continuity both with its Spanish and American colonial past and with its inclusion in the political formation of the Philippine nation-state in the years after the Second World War.

But we should perhaps also be concerned, given the context of the local Church and local city state of Zamboanga, as embodied in the radically changed circumstances of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar, with the way the Church has colonized the theological imagination of the officials and citizens of Zamboanga City. The political enclave is *also* a religious one. Zamboanga City has been a Catholic enclave that traces its roots to the regime of Spanish military troops and their Christianized indio subalterns sent to the tip of the similarly named peninsula to blunt and neutralize Moro raids that devastated many northern communities in the Visayas and Luzon. This was a complex phenomenon that brought into play various motivations: political, economic, military, and religious. The symbol of this joint Spanish-indio presence was the military fortress now simply known as Fort Pilar; the Christian

community clustered around this military fortress and expanded from its walls.

Nevertheless, the enclave was not a totally enclosed community; ordinary life meant relations with those who inhabited the surrounding area, including the Muslim communities (Tausug, Sama, Yakan) and Chinese traders and commercial agents. In short, the history of the city cannot be reduced to its military and political dimensions; the Christianized Filipinos coexisted with members of other communities, chief among whom were the Muslims themselves. Whatever differences there might have been on the religious and political planes, there were shared social and cultural traits that enabled Christians, Muslims, and adherents of traditional religions to coexist peacefully with each other and to engage in trade and commercial activities. This coexistence even had a religious dimension in the shared devotion to Mary in the shrine that fronted Fort Pilar itself. Today, however, this shared devotion no longer has this common open space in which to express itself.

It would seem then that there is a kind of convergence of the colonizing directions here, one from local city state to local Church, the other from local Church to local city state. This convergence could be explained by the fact that the people who make decisions in both city and Church have always been a clearly defined group that by its constitution is restricted to political leaders who identify themselves as Catholic.

This means that involved here is a two-way street: first, the local state colonizing the political imagination of Christians and, second, the local Church colonizing the theological imagination of citizens. What brings these two actions together is a common instrumentality to achieve a (covert?) political goal and an (overt?) church goal. The common instrument is the theo-politically sectarian transformation of the shrine itself.

The local state's colonization of the political imagination of Zamboangueño Catholics is meant to promote a restrictive identity of the city that willfully refuses to acknowledge its increasingly multi-ethnic, multireligious, and multicultural-linguistic complexity.

Today, the local government has taken to promoting Zamboanga as "the Latin City of Asia,"[21] and the shrine's transformation from its previously open space to its current closed space obviously serves this political goal. In this there is much to learn from Cavanaugh who has much to say about the political instrumentalization of the Church in modernity.

It is perhaps less obvious how Cavanaugh is helpful when one considers the second (ecclesiastical) goal, so that some concern is expressed with the relative lack of attention paid to the collusion of the Church with state agencies to gain and promote narrow ecclesiastical ends, even at the risk of its own political instrumentalization by the state.[22] In effect, one must ask what kind of church is needed to correct an ecclesiastical colonizing of the theological imagination of citizens that serves interests that are themselves theologically questionable. And that is the problem. The ecclesiological assumptions that underlie the transformation of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar diverge from Catholic theological principles and commitments. In short, these assumptions continue to hew closely to a Christendom or New Christendom[23] view of the relationship between church and state, between religion and politics, but in a constitutionally dictated separation of the two spheres. The

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[21] Cf. http://www.zamboanga.com/news/latin_zamboanga.htm. This designation is anchored on a dialect called "Chavacano," a Spanish Creole language. It should be noted, however, that this is a spoken language, not a literary one. This does not negate the fact that the city is nevertheless multilinguistic; other languages spoken are Visayan, Taosug, Sama, and Subanen. As a spoken language, Chavacano is in constant evolution, prompting some to make a distinction between classical Chavacano and contemporary Chavacano. On the Chavacano dialect, cf. http://www.personal.psu.edu/faculty/j/m/jml34/chabacano.pdf.

[22] One can, of course, read Cavanaugh's book, *Torture and Eucharist: Theology, Politics, and the Body of Christ* (cf. n. 16 above) as precisely providing a historical narrative of the Church in collusion with the state in Chile. A comparative analysis of the history of the relations between Church and state (or the religious and the political) in Chile and in the Philippines would be very interesting indeed, given their shared colonial history under Spain and the similarity of the Pinochet and Marcos dictatorial regimes.

[23] "Too often the modern Christian theological imagination has got lost in the stories that sustain modern politics. The Christendom model assumed the legitimacy of the nation-state and tried to preserve the established position of the church in guiding it. The New Christendom model assumed the legitimacy of the autonomy of the temporal, and tried to influence the political order through the Christian as an individual. 'Political theology' and 'public theology' have assumed the legitimacy of the separation of the state from civil society, and tried to

American constitutional provision of the non-establishment of religion in public life of the state is the inspiration for the Philippine constitutional provision as well; but the social, cultural, and religious contexts differ, and it is interesting to note the particular configuration of the church and state (or religion and politics) in the Philippine context in general and, with the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar as a concrete locus, in Zamboanga City in particular.

Purpose

Cavanaugh then sets out the purpose of the book: it is

> to help Christians and others to be realistic about what we can expect from the "powers and principalities" of our own age, and to urge them not to invest the entirety of their political presence in these powers. In these chapters I try to unthink the inevitability of the nation-state, and to show that it is not simply natural but one contingent and relatively recent way of organizing bodies in space. The way it organizes bodies into one unitary "society," policed by a sovereign authority, is also not inevitable. Despite claims of liberal nation-states to embrace pluralism, I argue that any unitary society will always regard pluralism as a threat. Therefore, I argue for a more radical pluralism, one that does not oscillate between individuals and the state, but allows for a plurality of societies, a plurality of common goods that do not simply feed into a unitary whole. This complex political space would privilege local forms of community, but it would also connect them in translocal networks of connectivity.[24]

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situate the church as one more interest group within civil society. None of these models has fundamentally called into question the theological legitimacy of the imagination of modern politics." William T. Cavanaugh, *Theopolitical Imagination: Discovering the Liturgy as a Political Act in an Age of Global Consumerism*, 3. No civil society group is recorded to have raised any objection to the transformation of the shrine. This is not to say that "civil society" does not exist in Zamboanga City; it does, but it seems even civil society groups like NGOs (nongovernmental organizations) and schools are themselves varied and subject to all sorts of theopolitical orientations.

[24] Cavanaugh, *Migrations*,3–4.

One can endorse everything Cavanaugh has set as the purpose of his book and he succeeds admirably in pursuing that goal in the collection's essays. Nevertheless, in considering the local Church and the local state in Zamboanga City as well as their mutual implication in the changed physical setting of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar, it seems to me that there has been, in fact, a more or less conscious marginalization of the "radical plurality" he envisages above through the pursuit of an exclusionary politics, but to the perceived mutual benefit of local Church and local city government. Indeed, "pluralism" is viewed as a threat. Any hint of a "plurality of societies" or a "plurality of common goods" is deemed theo-politically inconceivable. Broadly, it seems that church-state relations in Zamboanga City may be characterized as residually neo-Constantinian. There is no opposition between local Church and local state but collusion, despite the lack of detailed data and information on the concrete historical evolution of the shrine from a politically tolerated shared religious space into a politically approved exclusive and exaggeratedly Catholicized and therefore exclusionary precinct. While one may take it for granted that the city state apparatus would seek its own interest, what requires our attention here is the fact of Church collusion with state officials in a politics of exclusion. Exactly who is this Church? Who speaks and decides for it? What theology in general and ecclesiology in particular inform its discourse and decisions? These questions lead us to a consideration of themes drawn from the penultimate three chapters of Cavanaugh's book.[25]

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[25] "The final four chapters address the church as a public, political space. Chapter 6 contrasts the liturgy of the nation-state with the liturgy of the church, arguing that the Christian liturgy needs to break out of its confinement to a private, sacred space. Chapter 7 argues for the church as a political body. Chapter 8 addresses the sinfulness of the church, arguing that the true visibility of the church as a political body can be found only in repentance for its sin. Chapter 9 deals with Stanley Hauerwas's theological engagements with democratic theorists in an attempt to articulate more precisely how the church can imagine its own political presence in ways that make tangible the receptive generosity of Christ on the cross" (Cavanaugh, *Migrations,* 6). I leave out chapter 9 here because it returns in a way to the American religious-political context. The other chapters he characterizes in the following manner: "The first three chapters of this book examine pathologies of the modern state. Chapter 1 examines the history of the modern state and modern nation-state, arguing that neither state nor nation is natural or essential for the promotion of the common good. Chapter 2 examines the dynamics

"The Liturgies of Church and State"

What does it mean to celebrate the Christian liturgy in a shrine whose spatial configuration has been subjected to a theo-politics of exclusion? Cavanaugh states in unequivocal terms that "Christian liturgy knows no distinction between sacred and secular, spiritual and material."[26] From an anthropological perspective, the Shrine occupies "holy ground." From the point of view of liturgical theology and practice, however, its location is irrelevant; the liturgy can be celebrated anywhere. Cavanaugh, of course, frames his reflections on Christian liturgy by reference to the secular liturgies of the modern nation-state. The context of a shared and common multireligious space does not, and understandably so. The point, then, is to ask what happens when one brings to bear on his reflections a particular context such as that of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar. Let me then lift a few quotes from his essay to serve as a springboard for a critical consideration.

Space and Time

Contrasting Christian and national liturgies, Cavanaugh describes them by referring to their conceptions of space and time:

> The Christian liturgy . . . transgresses the borders of the nation-state and of the world through the participation of the worshiper in the transnational body of Christ both on earth and in heaven. In the liturgy, the imagined community exempts no one in principle, and stretches even to our fellow citizens in heaven (Phil. 3:20).[27]

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of unity and pluralism in the modern nation-state, and argues, on the basis of the 'two cities' concept of Saint Augustine, for a more radical political pluralism. Chapter 3 analyzes how mobility and identity are regulated by the state in a globalized world, confronting the figures of migrant and tourist with those of pilgrim and monk in an attempt to suggest a positive Christian response to globalization" (ibid., 5–6). Cavanaugh's next two chapters then address "the particular context of the United States of America, showing how a liberal social order can create its own secular gods." Chapter 4 shows how Enlightenment and Christian themes have been combined in the United States to create a messianic nation, which displaces the church. Chapter 5 briefly discusses torture in the War on Terror and how the myth of the Inquisition can be used to justify disciplinary power by the liberal state" (ibid., 6).

[26] Ibid., 119.

[27] Ibid., 121.

> In contrast, the Christian liturgy is not merely cyclical but points forward to the eschatological consummation of history in which violence and division are overcome. The Eucharist is the representation of Christ's foundational sacrifice, but it does not resacrifice Christ, nor is new blood sacrifice demanded of us, for as Hebrews makes plain, Christ died "once and for all" (Heb.7:27; 9:12; 10:10). Furthermore, there is no gap between ritual and reality, because Christ is really and fully present in the Eucharist.[28]

The question then arises, from within a consideration of a Christian theology of the liturgy and its understanding of space and time, whether its meaning can be distorted and made to express a logic of exclusion and exclusivity, and whether it can fail indeed to witness to the overcoming of violence and division. I suspect that Cavanaugh would have no difficulty acknowledging this possibility of distortion. Historically, it is difficult to deny that such distortions have taken place, even as one admits that nascent nation-states have exploited these same distortions to promote themselves. Shrines have been particularly susceptible to being used for ideological purposes,[29] including those that inform sectarianism and a neo-Constantinian view of the relationship among Church, state, and society.

The meaning of the Christian liturgy is tied to two elements: the assembly that gathers before the altar celebrates the liturgy "here and now;" it is always local. But the assembly celebrates it at the

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[28] Ibid.

[29] Contemporary examples of shrines as sites of religious violence may be found in Islamic contexts (e.g., Iraq) that exhibit conflict between Sunni and Shiite communities. Cf. http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/02/22/AR2006022200454.html and also http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/iraqi-shrine-bombing-spurs-wave-of-sectarian-reprisals-1.575444. Having lived in Sri Lanka for six months as a Jesuit in the last stage of formation, I am familiar with examples in Sri Lanka where the setting up of Sinhalese Buddhist shrines in Tamil-populated areas was an instrument of Sinhalese colonization and Tamil deterritorialization. Cf. David Rampton, "Colonisation, Securitised Development and the Crisis of Civic Identity in Sri Lanka," in Ana Pararajasingham, ed., *Sri Lanka: 60 Years of 'Independence' and Beyond*. An online copy may be accessed at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/274386673_Colonisation_Securitised_Development_and_the_Crisis_of_Civic_Identity_in_Sri_Lanka.

same time as transcending this "here" and this "now." There is some kind of paradox involved in its celebration therefore: it can only be local, and yet it cannot be tied and reduced to the local. Ordinarily, the liturgy is celebrated in space that is owned by the Church; but what if its celebration is undertaken in space that has been subjected to a politics of exclusion? How can one still celebrate the Eucharist in a local setting that seems now to restrict its meaning to the political demands of Zamboanga's "here and now?" Does not this celebration, in fact, distort the very meaning of the Eucharist, rendering it, therefore, the sign and symbol of that very same exclusion? The very assembly that gathers at the shrine to celebrate the liturgy would seem then, by that very act of gathering/celebrating, to engage in and confirm a continuing exclusionary action, that is, to deny that "the imagined community exempts no one in principle." Therefore, in this instance a gap must necessarily exist "between ritual and reality," indeed between religious practice and the ethical demand that it exhibits vis-a-vis the larger community itself. How can Christ be present in such a "here and now" and celebrated by an assembly that has distorted its meaning by a location rendered exclusionary? Could this be taken to mean then, extending Paul's warning beyond correct personal dispositions, that the liturgy is being communally celebrated "unworthily?"[30]

"The Church as Political"

Cavanaugh contends that "a full theological understanding of the church requires us to refuse (the) political marginalization of the church." He further states that, "Any adequate ecclesiology must acknowledge the political implications of two crucial theological data: (1) there is no separate history of politics apart from the history of salvation;[31] and (2) the church is indispensable to the history of salvation." I find myself in full agreement with these presuppositions.

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[30] Cf. 1 Cor. 11:27–30.
[31] Cavanaugh, *Migrations,* 123–24.

Cavanaugh then leads us through a consideration of the thought of various theologians to help us reflect on the relationship between Church and state, between the religious and the political.[32] The question I would pose, however, has to do with the possibility of a local Church acting in a sectarian manner. What if the Church itself becomes a tool for the theo-political marginalization of religious others? Noting once again the context of his theology, we can understand his point when he writes:

> The most common objection to the suggestion that the church itself embodies a politics is that such a politics is sectarian. Such an objection depends on a relatively novel sociological use of the term "sect." In theological parlance, a sect was a group that put itself outside the authority of the church. The difference between the Waldensians and the Franciscans lay not in their attitudes toward "culture" or the "world," but in their relationship to church authority. In the twentieth century, however, "sect" came to indicate a group whose practices put it at odds with the dominant culture and political elites of the nation-state. The underlying assumption is that it is not the church but the nation-state that is "catholic"; the church, insofar as it is a political actor, is a particular association of civil society that is encompassed by the larger political sphere of the nation-state. Theologically speaking, this is a grave error.[33]

Cavanaugh then states that "political theology cannot be done without an account of the directly political nature of the church and its role in salvation history."[34]

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[32] He brings to view the reflections of Gerhard Lohfink on "Israel and the Body of Christ"; Oliver O'Donovan on "Christendom and Church"; Jacques Maritain, et al. on "Politically Indirect Ecclesiology"; and finally, Stanley Hauerwas on the "Church as Polity." He then ends the essay with questions and critical remarks. Cf. Cavanaugh, *Migrations,* 124–38.

[33] Ibid., 139.

[34] Ibid.

These quoted passages continue to be framed by the church/nation-state binary. Yet when one looks at the transformed Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar, we find the local Church and the local city government in collusion over the practical marginalization and exclusion of religious others. The Church, therefore, acts in a sectarian manner when it forgets, in Cavanaugh's eloquent words, that it "has more to contribute precisely because it is the bearer of God's politics, and because it is catholic, transnational, transcending the parochial borders of the nation-state." In Zamboanga City, the tendency exists because of the historical baggage it carries as a kind of Christian armed outpost and social enclave facing a threatening Muslim horde from the south and east, for church and city to be conflated with each other. There is, in the minds of many, something apt in a Catholicized shrine that is after all attached to what used to be a colonial military fort. But this is to freeze Zamboanga City in a time warp, one that has in fact had repercussions in other dimensions of city life.[35]

Cavanaugh then brings up the question of where the boundaries of the church lie:

> "Church" and "world" are often more prescriptive than descriptive terms; in practice, the church is full of the world. This is as it should be: the dialectical drama of sin and salvation implies a dialogical relationship between the church and its others, which include the world and God. Indeed, the Holy Spirit blows where she wills, and the activity of the Spirit is not limited to the church. The church is therefore a relational body, not a closed system. The church is not a *polis*; *ekklesia* names something closer to a universal "culture" that is assembled from out of the particular cultures of the world.[36]

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[35] For instance, other Mindanao cities have outstripped Zamboanga in economic development; many keen observers have attributed this to the essentially conservative stance of business leaders of the city, their lack of entrepreneurial vision for the city and the region, and the general aversion to anything that might put their political hold on the city and their social position at risk.

[36] For this and subsequent quotes in this section, see Cavanaugh, *Migrations,* 139–40.

If this is the case, and I believe it is, how are we then to look at the current Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar? In Zamboanga City, a multi-ethnic, multicultural-linguistic, multireligious polity, Muslims form perhaps the major religious "other" with whom the church is called to forge a dialogal relationship. What the shrine in its current configuration sends as its message is the denial, marginalization, and exclusion of this religious other. This is part of what it means for the local church to be "full of the world." How this is supposed to help the people of Zamboanga City promote harmony and build peace among them is not a question that many Christians seem eager to ask.

The reference to culture is particularly helpful; the church presents itself as a universal culture forged from the particular cultures of the world. Unfortunately, culture is a moving target and hard to pin down. In Zamboanga City, this has become more complex given the migration of people from other parts of the region, people coming from Christianized cultures therefore who do not have any sense of the particularity of Zamboanga City and its history. It seems that Catholics coming from Visayan communities in the north—particularly ordained ministers—are in fact responsible for the radical transformation of the shrine from an open site to a closed space. One explanation points to these relatively recent Catholic migrants' dissatisfaction over the relatively bare state of the shrine; obscured from their view is that the shrine's relative bareness is precisely what makes it effective as an interreligious common space (even though it needs to be said that there has been tacit agreement over the transformation of the shrine from a broad range of Zamboangueño Catholics). The current configuration of the shrine makes it difficult to consider the local Church of Zamboanga as a universal "relational body" and not a "closed system." Indeed, what this transformation tells us is the forgetting of that "universal culture" that the Church is supposed to exemplify and its substitution by a narrow and conventional "particular culture." More disturbing is the unavoidable impression that the shrine now projects an image of a local Church incapable of seeing itself as a *corpus permixtum*, subject to influences and motivations that may be characterized not only as "unchristian" but also and more alarmingly as "anti-Christian." This blithe lack

of awareness of the ethical demands of the Christian faith in the political field as exposed in the transformation of the shrine poses an internal threat to what it means for the local Church of Zamboanga City to be precisely *Church* today.

Cavanaugh ends this essay by saying that "the eschatological 'not yet' means that the history of the drama (of salvation) so far needs to be told hopefully but penitentially, with room for marginal voices and conflicts." This leads us to the next essay.

"The Sinfulness and Visibility of the Church: A Christological Exploration"

It is perhaps this ecclesiological chapter[37] of Cavanaugh's book that contains material most germane to our consideration of the future of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar. He asks: "Is there a way to integrate the visibility of the church with its sinfulness, without simply seeing them as two countervailing tendencies in a perpetual tug-of-war?"[38]

The statement that most directly addresses the question of how we are to consider the celebration of the Eucharist in a space that has become exclusionary is the following: "The holiness of the church is visible in its very repentance for its sin." This is grounded in the ecclesiological extension of the Christological reality of Jesus Christ "made sin" in order to bring salvation to the world:

> What is visible when we look at the church? We see Christ, but Christ as the stage for the entire drama of sin and salvation. Christ in the Church does not simply obliterate

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[37] Ibid., 141–69.

[38] Ibid.,143. Cavanaugh proceeds in three steps. First, he examines "Gerhard Lohfink's argument that the church as exemplary community is demanded by the very logic of the drama of creation and salvation found in Scriptures." Second, he then attempts "to give an account of the church's visibility that fully recognizes its sinfulness" through an examination of two post-Chalcedon Christologies (those of Maximus the Confessor and his modern interpreter, Hans Urs von Balthasar). And third, he explores "some ecclesiological consequences of the idea that Christ became sin," finally suggesting "that the church's visibility lies in its repentance for its sin."

> sin (Monophysitism), nor is the divinity of Christ kept separate from sinful humanity (Nestorianism). What the church makes visible to the world is the whole dynamic drama of sin and salvation, not only the end result of a humanity purified and unified. In the drama, the church plays the part of sinful humanity.[39]

Cavanaugh then goes on to explicate the relationship between the Church and the cross. As the "body of Christ," the Church is, on the one hand, co-crucified with Christ. But as the representative of sinful humanity, the Church is "itself the cross on which Christ is crucified." Developing this second point further, Cavanaugh states:

> The sin of humanity puts Jesus to death. But that sin is not just something that obscures the true nature of the church, any more than the cross was just an unfortunate thing that happened to Jesus in the course of his salvation of the world. Sin is an inescapable part of the church *in via*, just as the cross is an essential part of the drama of salvation. The existence of the sinful humanity in the church does not simply impede the redemption that Christ works in human history, but is itself part of the story of that redemption told over and over in the life of the church. As the fruit of the cross, however, the story can only be told in a *penitential key*.[40]

The Church on pilgrimage in the world is necessarily penitential. "The holiness of the church is visible in its very repentance for its sin." Repentance, it would seem to follow then, forms part of the proper disposition with which the Church celebrates meaningfully the Eucharist. This gains added weight when we consider the Eucharist then celebrated in the particular precinct of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar, given its exclusive and exclusionary state.

Repentance, also known as interior contrition and expressed as sorrow for sins, is just one element in the whole complex of the

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[39] Ibid., 162.
[40] Ibid., Italics mine.

sacrament of penance and reconciliation. Repentance issues in confession and demands reparation, and there is the rub. The celebration of the Eucharist usually begins with a penitential acknowledgment of personal and communal sinfulness and a cry for mercy and forgiveness. But it does not seem evident that, whenever the Eucharist is celebrated within the precincts of the shrine, there has been, in fact, a sense of repentance on the part of the local Church of Zamboanga, for having colonized the shrine to the exclusion of religious others and having restricted its meaning to its own creedal and devotional performances. It should not surprise us, therefore, to note the absence of public confession of this exclusion and therefore the inconceivability of any talk of reparation. Does this not then put into question the very holiness of the Church, a holiness that is precisely marked and articulated as a lack, an absence, and therefore as something that can only be penitentially performed in a liturgical setting?

This lack of repentance is premised, therefore, on the lack of contrition for *this sin of exclusion*, and therefore we can understand why there has been no public confession of it and no call for reparation. Cavanaugh, whose reflection in this chapter is, as we have seen, heavily theological, would be helped by the reflections of Rowan Williams on what exactly is involved in "remorse."[41] Williams here supplements and fills out Cavanaugh's reference to the need of the Church to repent by saying that

> [r]emorse involves thinking and imagining my identity through the ways in which I have become a part of the self-representation of others, groups or individuals; and so learning to see my (or our) present style of self-representation as open to question. It is in some degree to make internal to myself what I have been in the eyes of another. At the corporate level, this is, of course, a highly charged matter.[42]

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[41] Cf. Rowan Williams, *Lost Icons: Reflections on Cultural Bereavement*, 95–138.

[42] Ibid., 110. Williams says that, "what is most fundamentally required (. . .) is the relinquishing of an identity placed beyond challenge or judgement, and the moving into a sense of identity that admits not simple guilt but the manifold ways in which we are real in the language and narrative of others rather than in the privately scripted and controlled story. This admission

This statement, coming from a theologian concerned to articulate the need to mourn culturally the fading of "icons" of childhood, charity and remorse characteristic of the "lost souls" of contemporary North Atlantic and Western society, transcends this location and may be taken to describe with similar force the context of an exclusionary shrine on an island located on the other side of the globe. The local Church of Zamboanga City seems incapable of "finding (itself) in the other," and therefore of understanding its own reality "in the language and narrative of others" and not just in its own "scripted and controlled story." In short, it refuses "unavoidably and painfully (any) loss of power." Applying Balthasar's view here on the relationship between "tragedy" and "Christian faith"[43] to the phenomenon of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar, one could say that it is *this* blindness to its own sin, or *this* refusal to own up to *this* sin, that lies at the root of the absence of repentance and remorse. It is, in other words, to

> [R]un, blindly, head over heels, from the cross that God intended for her—only to run with equal blindness into a cross that was not intended for her in this form and which she now rightly draws down upon herself: a cross that is dislocated and perverse as a result of her own guilt, a cross with hooks (swastika) on which she is entangled and remains hanging.[44]

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is unavoidably and painfully a loss of power; but what I have been suggesting here is that to try and conserve power in such a context is to lose moral substance and to refuse the work of historical thought. Putting it slightly differently, you could say that remorse has to do with finding the self in the other; refusing remorse amounts to defining 'real' selfhood out of both time and conversation. And such a refusal stops me from understanding that what I now am has been made; that is, it is not fixed or obvious, not the result of a neutral, natural process, but is the deposit of choices, accidents and risks. If I am not capable of understanding this, I shall see myself as a bundle of 'natural' phenomena—instincts, desires, affinities—not open to critique, not capable of being thought through or articulated in recognizable speech. In political terms, this is the seedbed of fascism and violent xenophobia" (111).

[43] "And most deeply: the Church is tragic in her innermost being, to the extent that she understands herself *to be redeemed once and for all*, something that is caused when the Church confuses herself with her archetype, Mary without original sin, the pure Mother of the pure Lord . . . ." Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Explorations in Theology III: Creator Spirit*, 409.

[44] von Balthasar, *Explorations,* 409. Obviously, Balthasar here refers to the situation of the church in Germany during the Nazi regime.

This reference by Balthasar to the "swastika" cross and by Williams to "fascism" and "xenophobia," though this may seem exaggerated when applied to the case of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar, is not accidental; it points both to the nature of the Church as "sinful humanity" and to its various verifiable instantiations in its history. Still, this reference is meant to serve as an invitation to the local Church of Zamboanga to humble itself, to examine its conscience, to confess its guilt, and to open itself to the reality of those religious others whose practical expulsion from the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar it has been complicit. Only in this way could her mea culpa, in the penitential rite of the Eucharist celebrated in the precinct of the exclusionary space of the shrine, then could make sense. And only in this *anamnetic* manner of making visible its sinfulness does its holiness then shine through, a holiness that comes from the mercy and compassion of the one who suffered and died on the cross. Otherwise, the local Church of Zamboanga, which seems more prone than ever in the current situation of the city to forget what it really is, contradicts and therefore condemns itself.

Concluding Remarks

In looking at the Shrine of Nuestra Señora del Pilar of Zamboanga City and its transformation from an open hospitable site to a closed exclusionary space, this chapter has brought to the fore dimensions of social life that straddle Church and state and the kind of politics obtaining between them. Considerations of the relationship between that of Church and state or of the religious and the political in this concrete example of the Pilar Shrine allow us to make the following remarks:

First, Zamboanga City as a multi-ethnic, multireligious, and multicultural-linguistic community introduces elements in the relationship between church and state that put the accent not so much on the religious-secular binary, but on the religious-political. Secularity does not seem to figure much in our consideration of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar. It is collusion between church and state that characterizes the problem.

Second, this chapter has sought to throw further light on this problem of collusion not by appealing to some supposedly neutral ground that would allow adjudication in matters that implicate both Church and state. Now Cavanaugh has contributed much to shedding light on this problem in North Atlantic and Western modern secular contexts. But the multi-ethnic, multireligious, and multicultural-linguistic character of Zamboanga City denied by the reduction of the shrine to an exclusive and exclusionary Catholic site is a problem better resolved by the Church taking a long and hard look at the kind of politics it has employed in allowing itself to participate in this exclusionary venture. The Church has promoted a narrow view of its own interests in the matter of the Pilar Shrine, a view that in fact negates ecclesiological principles regarding what the Church should be, particularly in a social context like that of Zamboanga City.

Third, it seems that our approach in this chapter resonates much with that pursued by Cavanaugh, although the contexts differ. Perhaps one way of viewing the commonality would be by appeal to Daniel Izuzquiza who, after surveying the sacraments considered as "communal practices" and stressing their importance "as signs and instruments of the formation of a new social reality," Izuzquiza puts the accent on how they do "involve a true social, cultural, economic and political transformation."[45] The sacraments may be taken as examples of "practices of social groups that affect the social order, whether by reproducing it, modifying it, legitimizing it, or even subverting it." Following Izuzquiza, it would seem difficult to escape the conclusion that the celebration of the Eucharist within the precincts of the exaggeratedly Catholicized space of the Pilar Shrine today serves rather to reproduce and to legitimize the regnant social order of exclusion rather than to modify or to subvert it.[46] Lacking any true penitential spirit that goes beyond the "merely

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[45] Daniel Izuzquiza, *Rooted in Christ: Toward a Radical Ecclesiology*, 201.

[46] Citing Saint Augustine as authority on the Eucharist, Izuzquiza says: "Love of one's enemies offers an especially significant example of how the Eucharist announces, incarnates, and testifies to the transformed reality, for such love reveals the new reality precisely in the most conflictive aspect of our social relations…Love anticipates reality: it makes into a brother one who is (still) an enemy. That is, when we receive God's love, it transforms us personally and propels us to love to transform our social reality. That is, not only are we transformed passively, but the transformation changes the reality. The Eucharistic anticipation has revolutionary consequences, as long as it is embodied in a particular and historic community…." ibid., 181–82.

individual" and the "narrowly Catholic" to encompass all of Zamboanga and all differences that constitute it as a community, the local Church denies its own being by clinging to a sectarian identity.

Finally, exclusion seems to be the great temptation of the Church today, whether on the world stage or in the local scene. Exclusion carries within itself the seeds of religious violence. And religious exclusion makes every other exclusion conceivable and perhaps inevitable. Surely it is part of theology's task to expose any act of exclusion by the community that calls itself Christian and Catholic (!) and to point out how this negates this same community's own raison d'être. The Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar in Zamboanga City has become exclusionary space, no longer hospitable to religious others who cannot help but consider themselves excluded by the extreme Catholicization of the shrine's precincts. The sad thing is that this exclusion reveals the only kind of politics the local Church seems able to imagine and exhibit for itself in the concrete circumstance of the city; it shows the failure of the Church to demonstrate in this instance the politics of the cross and its vulnerability; it manifests rather the politics that is exactly the opposite, the politics of worldly power, the politics of a bogus peace. Unless and until the Church, local or universal, strives against every theo-politically motivated exclusion, then it cannot be the theo-political instrument of that true peace for which the Lord was crucified and raised to new life.

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Inay Malinandang, Talaandig: Charting a Path Toward Peace Education

GERALDINE DELOS CIENTOS VILLALUZ

OUR NOTIONS OF PEACE in the world today have become closely associated with conflict settlement, peace negotiation, sexual harassment, violence, ceasefire, and wars. In fact, sexual violence as a military tactic in war zones has mobilized the United Nations' (UN) Security Council to rally for the protection and rehabilitation of women and children (against sexual violence), as provided for in Security Council Resolutions UNSCR 1325, 1820, 1888, and 1889.[1]

In the Philippines, concepts in peace education such as human rights, disarmament, conflict resolution, interfaith education, gender-fair education, multicultural and international understanding are global concerns as well. While all of these concepts are based on or address political realities seen and experienced in different sectors of our society, there is a dearth of literature on peace concepts, strategies, and terms from the perspective of numerous women's indigenous groups that have been actively negotiating and settling conflicts as well as sustaining peace in the countryside.

The former Philippine Education Secretary Armin Luistro, FSC, offers a hopeful view of the concept of peace in his message in *Nalandangan* (2014): "Our world must have been different if decisions were made by mothers; women gifted with the charism to reconcile misunderstandings and settle conflicts from their fair and just

[1] UNIFEM, "10th Anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325."

framework of peace. Would there be wars as [there are] today or would peace reign in our lands?"[2]

Secretary Luistro lauds the work of mothers among many ethnolinguistic groups in the Philippines who struggle to preserve traditional peace processes that are connected to sustainable life forces in the community. Their stories are documented in *The Role of Women in Philippine Peace Efforts* in the Southeast Asian conflict-settling conferences, edited by Madelene Santa Maria, among whom are the Tinguian Mothers of Abra[3] and the Sama DiLaut of Iligan.[4] However, literature on peace efforts of women and communities among indigenous groups is either negligible or seldom published and almost never found in reference materials of peace educators in the country.

My aim, therefore, is to empower the discourse of indigenous peace processes from the ways of women, and the concepts of peace and terminologies they use so that these may find a place in the memories of our youth today and future generations through the production and circulation of written and published media.

For this purpose, the peace efforts of the Talaandig women of Sungko, Lantapan, Bukidnon, are highlighted because of their active peacemaking traditions among the seven ethnolinguistic groups in Bukidnon, namely, the Higaonon, Manobo, Matigsalog, Umayamnon, Tigwahanon, Bukidnon, and Talaandig.[5]

The Talaandig Inay Malinandang

The land of the Talaandig, the original inhabitants of Bukidnon, nestles in a plateau between Mount Dulang-dulang and Mount Kalatungan of the north-central Kitanglad Mountain Range of Mindanao, Philippines.[6] The *tulugan* or home in Barangay Songco, Lantapan, Bukidnon, is the center of the Talaandig ancestral domain

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2 Villaluz, *Nalandangan*, iii.
3 Madriaga, "The Role of Tinguian Women," 23–32.
4 Nanaman, "The Role of IP Women," 40.
5 V. Saway, interview by Geraldine Villaluz, June 2, 2010, Kasapaan sa Sungko.
6 Nguyen-De Mesa-Rola, Vegetable Agroforestry System, 6.

and culture. There are more or less three hundred Talaandig families living in the Tulugan of Songco, nurtured by mothers called Inay Malinandang, mothers actively working for peace.[7] A forty-five-minute jeepney ride from the Malaybalay bus station across a vista of pineapple and sugarcane plantations will bring any peace-searcher to the center of Talaandig culture at the foot of Mount Dulang-dulang and to the welcoming spirits of the Inay Malinandang community of Songco.

Kalinandang, from the root word *landang*, is the Talaandig term for peace in the Binukid language. Mothers who are actively involved in peacemaking efforts,therefore, are traditionally called Inay Malinandang [*inay* is the term for mother in many Philippine languages]. However, the words "peace" and "peacemaking" do not only refer to situations of conflict. For the Talaandig, the concepts and ways to peace embrace broader meanings and responsibilities.

Kalinandang, or peace from a Talaandig mother's perspective is the maintenance and sustainability of nature, health, home, food culture, and education. Thus, peace work for a Talaandig mother is teaching the Binukid language to children in the School of Living Tradition, or celebrating rituals in the daily rhythm of community life, or raising a youth leader for the community.[8] From the lived traditions of respected women in the community, there were and are mothers whose lives continue to serve as role models to the young. They are Bai Ginamayung (Bai Gawahanen), Bai Kinulintang (Pilar Linsahay Saway), Bai Kinulintang (Maxima Sinto Saway), Bai Tinangkil (Herminia Signucan Saway), Bai Nanapnay (Liza Llesis Saway), Bai Nangunladay (Lourdes Saway Llesis), Bai Balagnau (Adelfa Saway Kinuyog), and Bai Panlibay (Amalia Garciano), whose labors for peace illustrate both personal and social responsibilities.

A mother conflict-settler shared this reflection on her role and responsibility: "There was *rido* (or clan feud) in the community in 2004. Hate and violence could be felt growing and reaching our own sitio. One day, I heard Datu Vic singing a *sala*, or chanted reflection,

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7 Villaluz, *Nalandangan,* 16–18.

8 Nangunladay, interview by Geraldine Villaluz, September 2009, *Kalinandang Peace Concept*.

of the solidarity between the nipa and the rattan trees that generously give of themselves to provide shelter to us humans. Having heard that I asked myself, "Am I content with my role as mother and woman in our community at this time?"[9]

Another woman respected as a mother of the Talaandig is Bai Ginamayung. According to the *Batbatanen* or Talaandig oral history, a smart Talaandig woman named Bai Ginamayung gathered fruit-bearing seeds and placed them in a *kalatong*, a large conical drum. During one of the big floods in Mindanao, the *kalatong* served as her raft. Throughout the flood, she floated with it until the waters subsided and she realized she had been brought to the top of the mountain. This was where Apo Agbibilin, the father of the Talaandig, met her. The mountain is now popularly called Mount Kalatungan. Today the *ulaging* or epic continues to chant of Bai Ginamayung and Apo Agbibilin as parents of the Manobo, Maranao, Maguindanaoan, and Talaandig. To each Talaandig today, these same seeds planted by Bai Ginamayung serve as life-giving sources where the spirits of water, plants, soil, and air dwell. These seeds planted by Bai Ginamayung on Mount Kitanglad have become the source of healing and spirituality for today's Talaandig. To some mothers, "Bai Ginamayung is the mother of food security who initiated food sustainability during those times of crisis"[10]

Bai Gawahanen, famous in the community for her conflict-settling skills, was instrumental to the peace pact among the warring Maranao, Maguindanaoan, Manobo, and Talaandig in Bukidnon. She was a leader known for her wisdom as a community conflict-settler at a very young age. In the first war between the Maguindanao, Maranaw, Manobo, and Talaandig tribes, peace was achieved because Bai Kamayungan or Bai Gawahanen and the rest of the chosen women agreed to marry the Maranaw sultan, Datu Bangunsalibu, to end the conflict in their

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[9] "*Pagkadungog nako sa sala ni Datu Vic, nakapanghuna-huna ko sa akong papel isip babaye sa komunidad. Kuntento na ba lang ko sa akong pagka-inahan ug pagkababaye karon?*" Garciano, interview by Geraldine Villaluz, September 20, 2009, *Women Peace Efforts.*

[10] "*Si Apo Ginamayung ang unang nagpuyo sa gitawag nato karon ug* food security initiative *kay nasulbad niya ang krisis sa pagkaon adtung higayuna.*" Kinuyog and Garciano, interview by Geraldine Villaluz, May 2005, *Bai* Ginamayung.

communities. Bai Mayebag agreed to marry Datu Kuyaguwa, sultan of Maguindanaw. These marriages between the warring communities served as the foundation of *walu ha pasagi*, the eight members of the Council of Elders representing the four tribes.[11]

Marriage, however, is not the only way to achieve peace. Community concepts, tools, and strategies for *kalinandang* surfaced in June 2010, during a painting workshop in which thirty Talaandig mothers participated. Two of those illustrated tools for peace discussed in this chapter are the *tultulanen* or narratives and *timbangan* or weighing scale.

Tultulanen

Tultulanen are stories of an individual's or community's experience, feelings, aspirations, knowledge, or advice shared to communicate information in order to strengthen kinship relations. From *tultulanen* or narrative, *tultul* is the act of narrating.[12] *Tultulanen*, or telling one's story, is a structure within the Talaandig's customary laws that strengthens and binds the spirit of kinship relations. The five customary laws are (1) *Kilalaha ha Batasan,* the customary law on mutual recognition; (2) *Sayuda ha Batasan,* the customary law on mutual sharing of information; (3) *Buliga ha Batasan,* the customary law on cooperation; (4) *Uyaga ha Batasan,* the customary law on mutual protection of life; and (5) *Pabatubatuna ha Batasan,* the customary law on mutual assistance and help.[13] *Tultulanen* is a lived tradition that strengthens Sayuda ha Batasan, the customary law on mutual sharing of information in community.

A *Tultulanen* on *Kalinandang*

In May and June 2010, a soil painting event was held to gather images of peace from mothers actively working for peace. Talaandig

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[11] A. Saway, "The First War," 25.
[12] V. Saway, interview by Geraldine Villaluz, October 16, 2011, *Tultulanen*.
[13] L. Saway, "Customary Laws," 17.

youth artists, sons and daughters of Inay Malinandang, facilitated the workshop. On the third day of the workshop, visual representations of peace were shared in a happy event of community *tultulanen* in which not only members of the Inay Malinandang participated, but also fathers, mothers, grandmothers, and children. Four *tultulanen* and their images are presented here from which a perspective for a way of life could be drawn for peace education.

A community ritualist, Inay Narda (Bai Magagaw Leonarda Saway Colipano), explains: "Respect towards the spirit-keeper of earth draws us to constant relationship through prayer in rituals. It keeps us conscious of the needs of earth and its importance to life. Rituals are our way of relating to the spirit who gives life or Diwa nga Wagas, and to the spirit who destroys life or Diwa nga Busaw. A balanced relationship with both brings peace"[14]

For Bai Nanapnay Liza Saway, "Peace is the presence of balance in a community. Balance because it is a community where man and woman, old and young, are recognized and respected. Each one has a role to give to the community."[15]

Datu Victorino Migketay Saway highlights food security as an important component of peace: "Peace is food on the table for our children. Our river used to provide for us abundant fish. We seldom get a good catch these days because we have lost some parts of the river due to the cutting of the *balite* (ficus trees) giving way to plantations. We want to revive the trees and the fishes in this river."[16]

Bai Balagnau (Inay Adelfa Saway Kinuyog) is a storyteller, matweaver, soil painter, and teacher of the Talaandig School of

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[14] "*Ang pagritwal maoy among pahinungod kang Apo Talabugta isip pakigrelasyon ug pasalamat sa iyang pagpahulam kanamo sa yuta. Ang ritwal nagpahinumdom kana nga angayan kitang makigrelasyon sa diwa nga Wagas ug sa diwa nga Busaw tungod kay kini maghatag ug kalinandang.*" L. Colipano, interview by Geraldine Villaluz, May 28, 2010, Apo Talabugta.

[15] "*Ang Kalinandang mao ang* balance. *Balanse, kay diha sa komunidad naa ang babaye, lalaki, naa ang bata ug tigulang. Ang kada usa adunay importanteng papel sa komunidad.*" L. Saway, interview by Geraldine Villaluz, September 15–18, 2008, Kalinandang.

[16] "*Pagkaon sa kabataan ang kalinaw. Dunay daghang isda sa among sapa kaniadto apan gamay na lang sila karon tungod sa paghubas sa ubang parte sa sapa dala sa pagputol sa mga balite kilid sa sapa. Buot namong ibalik ang mga balite ug mga isda dinhi.*" V. Saway, interview by Geraldine Villaluz, June 2, 2010. Ang Kasapaan sa Sungko.

Living Tradition, who defines peace in terms of one's identity: "When the Talaandig tradition of peacekeeping, symbolized by this oil jar in the lady's hand, is kept and lived out in community, there is peace."[17]

Images of *Kalinandang*

Among the images represented, four soil paintings depict the *tultulanen* of mothers' peace concepts. Inay Leonarda Colipano Saway, or Bai Magagaw, illustrated the Talaandig's respect for the earth by painting the image of soil and its spirit-keeper; Inay Tessie Garciano painted the abundance of fish in a nearby river as the community's desire for food sustainability; Inay Narita Romero, or Bai Manunulam, illustrated peace through the image of a weighing scale with the spirit-keeper of balance above it, signifying the Talaandig symbol for balance in listening and discernment; and Inay Adelfa Kinuyog Saway illustrated a Talaandig lady holding a *tibud,* an oil jar signifying the tradition of peacekeeping that is the responsibility of every Talaandig.

Timbangan

The second tool is the Talaandig framework of justice and peace as symbolized in three images: (1) the *agpangan,* model; (2) *timbangan*, weighing scale; and (3) the *gantangan,* measuring cup. As narrated in the *tultulanen* of Bai Manunulam (Inay Narita Romero) and Bai Nanapnay (Liza Saway), the *timbangan* symbol stands as a reminder of the equal roles of man and woman in the home and community: "Community is complete when there is balance, which means that the roles of man, woman, the elderly, and the youth are recognized as important."[18] According to a young mother-painter Salima Saway, "Fairness in one's judgment and careful listening is signified by the *timbangan* in our life."[19] Leadership is equal in the community; "man

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[17] "*Kung ipadayon sa kabataan ang pag-ila ug pagpuyo sa tradisyon sa kalinandang nga gisimbolo aning tibud sa lana, para nako adunay kalinaw*." Adelfa K. Saway, Interview by Geraldine Villaluz, June 3, 2010. *Kultura*.

[18] Liza Saway, interview by Geraldine Villaluz, September 9, 2009, *Talaandig Justice Framework*.

[19] S. Agraan, interview by Geraldine Villaluz, October 13, 2011, *Timbangan*.

or woman can be a datu or chief in the community as long as he/she acquires the skill, knowledge, talent, and capacities needed of a Talaandig leader."[20]

Governance in the Talaandig community is concretized within a council of elders called *pasagi*. In the olden days, according to Datu Vic Migketay Saway, there were only eight members of the *pasagi*—called *walu ha pasagi*—representing the eight children of Apo Agbibilin and Bai Ginamayung. A Council of Elders made up of four men and four women was a tradition adhered to religiously by datus in the past. However, this practice has developed into a new view of leadership. Datu Victorino Migketay Saway, who sees leadership as a voluntary service to community, believes that anyone who has skills, talent, or knowledge and is willing to serve for the growth of the community can volunteer to be a member of the *pasagi*. Thus, in a presentation of the *pasagi* during the Reaffirmation of Kinship of the Seven Tribes in Mindanao in March 2012, the Talaandig *pasagi* membership consisted of Inay Malinandang, male and female active conflict settlers, Talaandig midwives, youth soil painters, musicians, cultural masters, healers, epic chanters, and the datu.[21]

On the other hand, the *timbangan* as a symbol of the justice framework does not only stand for leadership and governance, but also serves as "a reminder for us to make fair and careful decisions."[22] "The *timbangan* calls for active listening to the events in one's environment, sensitivity to personal and communal needs, and a call for careful judgment."[23]

Thus, the ways to peace from the Talaandig perspective draw out the following processes close to our experiences as a people:

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[20] Victorino Saway, interview by Geraldine Villaluz, October 10, 2010, *Leadership in the Talaandig Community*.

[21] Villaluz, "Membership of Pasagi," 53.

[22] Nanapnay Liza Sawayclaims that the *timbangan* is"*[s]imbolo sa panahon nga kita maghimo ug disisyon nga makaangayon*." Saway, Liza, interview by Geraldine Villaluz, September 9, 2009, *Talaandig Justice Framework*.

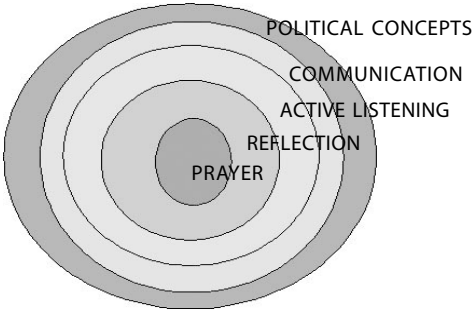
[23] "*Nagpahinumdom kini siyang timbangan nga sa atong pagdesisyon, gikinahanglan tang maminaw, maghunahuna, kinahanglan* careful, *dili dalidali haron husto ang atong disisyon*." S. Agraan, Interview by Geraldine Villaluz, October 13, 2011, *Timbangan*.

(1) living out of community values and traditions; (2) prioritizing communication or sharing of information as signified by the *tultulanen*; (3) maintaining a constant relationship with the spirit-keepers of the environment; (4) observing partnership in leadership; and (5) listening and reflecting to make fair judgment.

Framework for Peace Education

The *tultulanen* and images painted by the Inay Malinandang in this study open up contextualized concepts for peace education that can serve as guide towards a discerning way of life. Education for a culture of peace in the home, school, community, and environment calls for a conscious daily process. It is a way of life that asks of us a conscious effort to listen and to weigh things and events because peace work is sought for the well-being of community.

Following is a diagram illustrating the significant concepts drawn from the Inay Malinandang Talaandig peace tradition.



The outermost layer acknowledges the importance of the present literature on peace education, such as gender-fair education, human rights education, conflict resolution, and environmental education. The next layer represents a call to communication that brings together a relationship with self, community, and with environment. It is a process whereby stories are shared and valued—stories that recall the works of model peacekeepers in the family, community, and the nation so that a sense of his/her story finds a place in the

younger generation's memories. The third, fourth, and fifth inner circles are calls for listening, reflection, and prayer. It is in these three inner circles that one exercises the act of discernment. In Cebuano, this is often referred to as *pagtimbang-timbang*, to weigh or evaluate matters and events in order to become highly conscious of the other who is most in need. Part of the process of *pagtimbang-timbang* is listening—*paminaw,* in Cebuano, and *pakikinig,* in Filipino. *Paminaw,* to listen, as one goes through *pagtimbang-timbang*, to weigh or evaluate, does not only mean to listen with one's ears, but also to listen with one's heart and mind. This leads to the innermost circle that is the core of the process, which is prayer, the source of strength and the strongest shield for every Filipino in all moments of crisis. It is in prayer that the dynamism of *pagtimbang-timbang springs* forth into action, because it implies surrender in the Cebuano term *pag-ampo,* and risk in the Tagalog word, *pananampalataya*. To pray, therefore, is to come to the center of one's faith in the spirit of risk and of surrender.

This framework for peace education that is drawn out from the Inay Malinandang of Talaandig's peace processes highlights a way of life that prioritizes four movements very close to the experience of Filipino families: *paminaw*, to listen; *pagtimbang-timbang*, to weigh, observe, reflect, contemplate; *pag-ampo*, to pray; and *pakigsagabay*, to accompany.

Conclusion

Knowledge, according to Michel Foucault, has no power unless it is produced and circulated in a collection of discourses. In a book of interviews, entitled *Power/Knowledge 1972–1977,* Foucault argues: "... there are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterize, and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated, nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation, and functioning of a discourse."[24]

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[24] Foucault, "Truth and Power," 132–33.

This study has been inspired by the silent voices of indigenous women's peace concepts and strategies, which do not reach the level of written and published literature for peace education in the country. Popular discourse on indigenous wisdom expressed in the popular terminologies on peace is an endeavor that struggles against dominant concepts in print and published materials. Two significant tools and peace concepts aim to empower the discourse of indigenous women and place them in the forefront of discussion and study. The framework for peace education underlines a process of discernment that is drawn from the words "*tultulanen*" or sharing one's stories and "*timbangan*" or weighing scale, processes that involve the act of discernment and prayer. All of these words seem complicated, but when expressed in the language of *paminaw,* to listen; *pagtimbang-timbang,* to discern; *pag-ampo,* to pray; and *pakikisabay,* to accompany, they produce a series of steps for action, such as listen-evaluate-pray-accompany.

To educators of peace education, the framework presented here offers challenging roles, namely, to be educator-researcher-historiographer-writer of local knowledge in one's community in order to contribute to indigenous women's power of discourse and wisdom in peacemaking.

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