

ECUMENICAL ASSOCIATION OF THIRD WORLD THEOLOGIANS
ASOCIACIÓN ECUMÉNICA DE TEÓLOGOS/AS DEL TERCER MUNDO

VOICES

DOSSIER:

ECOLOGICAL VISION IN A GROANING WORLD **VISION ECOLÓGICA EN UN MUNDO QUE GRITA**



ALSO:

A POSCOLONIAL-MISSION-TERRITORIAL HERMENEUTICS FOR A LIBERATIVE SHAMANIC PNEUMATOLOGY
HACIA UNA PNEUMATOLOGÍA CHAMÁNICA DE LA LIBERACIÓN: HERMENÉUTICA POSCOLONIAL POSMISIONAL

VOLUME XXXVI N° 2013/2-3 NEW SERIES APRIL-SEPTEMBER 2013

ECOLOGICAL VISION IN A GROANING WORLD

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VOICES

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ASOCIACION ECUMÉNICA DE TEÓLOGOS/AS DEL TERCER MUNDO
ASSOCIATION OECUMENIQUE DES THEOLOGIENS DU TIERS MONDE**



VOICES

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Presentation

It is with great pleasure that this time the digital pages of VOICES are hosting the African voices, that continue their traditional presentation of the African perspective in this theological journal of EATWOT. This journal has seen more than 30 years of service, obviously with some ups and downs, but always with the clear desire to serve the Causes of Theologians of the Third World. Today they are the very real causes of the faces of poverty, now so diversified, in that very same 'Third World' of the 70s of the last century, when EATWOT was founded.

Several decades have passed; faces have changed, numbers have fluctuated greatly, the context seems radically different ... but our fidelity to the Gospel Causes, of the ever greater Utopia, remains firm, and likewise continues with a constant vigilant attention to new signs of the times, new focalizations, new epistemologies, new subjects, new approaches, all intriguingly surprising.

Nothing is impossible nor insurmountable for those with open minds willing to receive surprises. EATWOT and its theological journal VOICES continues in the forefront.

Adam Arap Chepkwony, from Kericho, Kenya, has contributed in a very special way to this issue, with the task of soliciting, and then rounding-up the original contributions needed for this "African dossier." A variety of difficulties have delayed the receipt of the manuscripts for this issue, but the magazine has met the challenge, humbly, unperturbed, and as always faithful.

A striking reflection on shamanic pneumatology completes the contents of this issue of VOICES – rounding-out perspectives and dialoguing with science, opening up paths that are apparently new ...

We continue to look forward in a following issue to being able to offer some theological contributions out of Asia that have been promised several times.

In the next issue, that of the end of the year -- as has become a tradition for several years – the pages of VOICES will host the “3rdMINGA” of Latin American Journals of Theology” -- that of 2013. The “4thMINGA” -- that of 2014 -- is presently being drafted by the authors, and brought together by the theological journals of the Latin American continent. We eagerly look forward to this year’s “3rdMINGA”, that is drawing to a close with 2013.

So read and enjoy these theological and ecological contributions that come from “Mother Africa” and summon us to reflect upon and come up with a new relationship with “Mother Earth”.

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Presentación

Es un inmenso placer acoger esta vez en las páginas telemáticas de VOICES voces africanas que continúan la tradicional presencia del punto de vista africano en la revista teológica de la EATWOT. Son ya más de 30 años de servicio los de la revista –con algunos altibajos, es cierto–, y es evidente su voluntad de servicio a las Causas de los Teólogos y Teólogas del llamado Tercer Mundo, que hoy día se concretan en las Causas de los muy diferentes rostros de pobreza en que se ha diversificado aquel «Tercer Mundo» de los años 70 del pasado siglo, cuando la EATWOT fue fundada.

Han pasado varias décadas, y los rostros han cambiado, las cifras han variado enormemente, el contexto parece radicalmente diverso... pero nuestra fidelidad a las Causas del Evangelio, de la Utopía siempre mayor, permanece firme, y continúa también permanentemente vigilante nuestra atención a los nuevos signos de los tiempos, los nuevos enfoques, las nuevas epistemologías, los nuevos sujetos, los nuevos planteamientos, siempre sorprendentes.

Nada es imposible ni insuperable para quien está abierto a la novedad y disponible para la sorpresa. EATWOT y su revista teológica VOICES continúa en la brecha.

Contribución especial de servicio ha prestado a este número Adam Arap Chepkwony, desde Kericho, Kenya, en la tarea de solicitar, recoger y enviar los originales necesarios para este «dossier africano». Dificultades de diverso tipo han atrasado la recepción de los manuscritos de este número, pero la revista acude a la cita, humilde e imperturbablemente, siempre fiel.

Completa el contenido de este número de VOICES una llamativa reflexión de neumatología chamánica, completando perspectivas, dialogando con la ciencia, y abriendo caminos al parecer nuevos...

Continuamos a la espera de poder ofrecer en algún próximo número las colaboraciones teológicas que nos han sido prometidas ya varias veces desde Asia.

El próximo número, el de final de año –como ya viene siendo una tradición desde hace varios años–, VOICES acogerá en sus páginas la IIIª MINGA de Revistas Latinoamericanas de Teología, la de 2013. La IVª MINGA, la de 2014, está ya en marcha en estos momentos, siendo redactada por los autores, y siendo adherida por las revistas de teología del Continente Latinoamericano. Esperamos con ilusión la IIIª MINGA, de este año que se acerca a su fin, 2013.

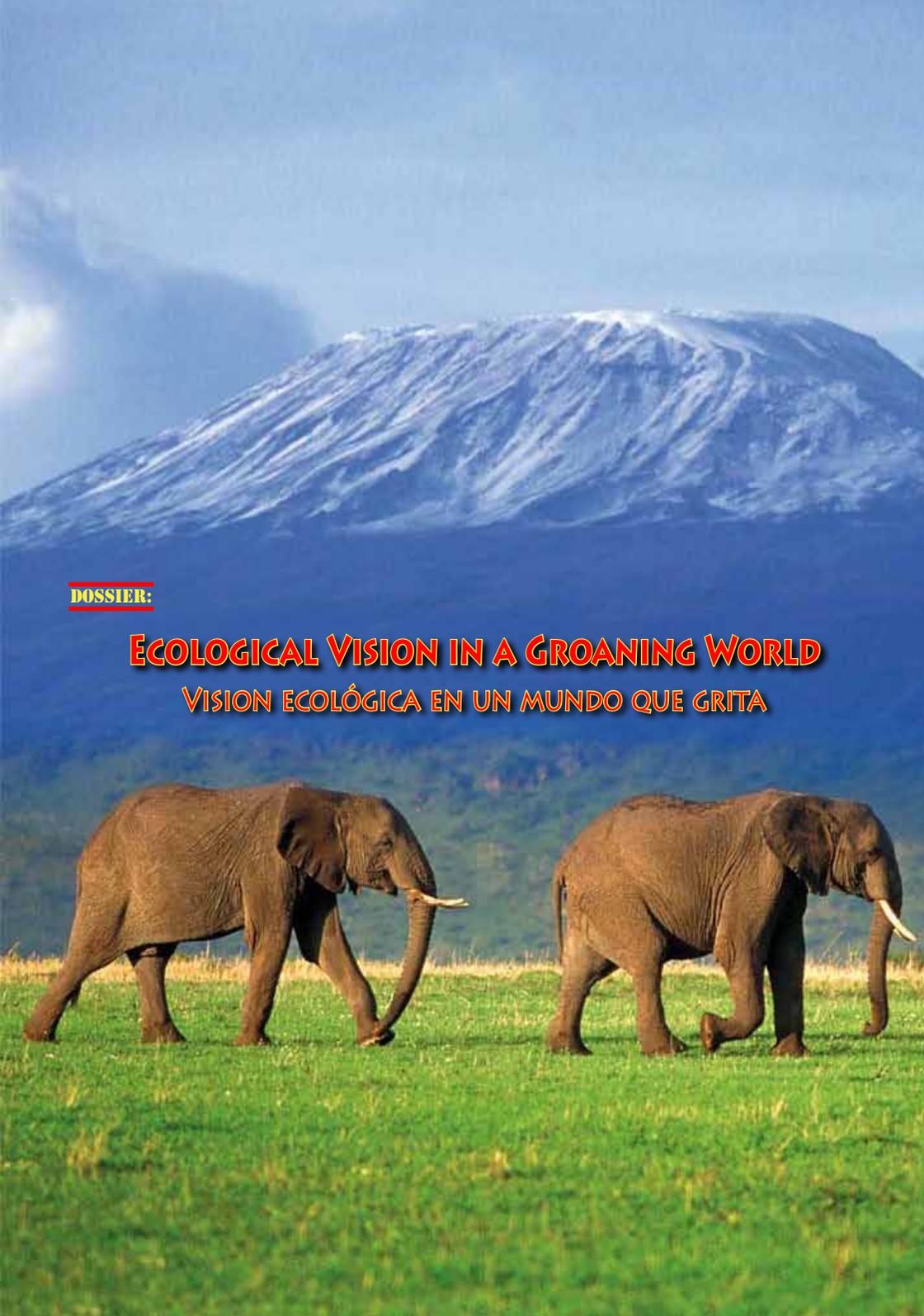
Lean, pues, y disfruten de estas aportaciones teológicas y ecológicas que nos vienen de la África Madre, y nos convocan a la reflexión y a una nueva relación con la Madre Tierra.

Comisión Teológica Internacional de la EATWOT

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A photograph of two elephants walking across a green savanna. In the background, a large mountain with a snow-capped peak is visible under a blue sky with some clouds. The text is overlaid on the image.

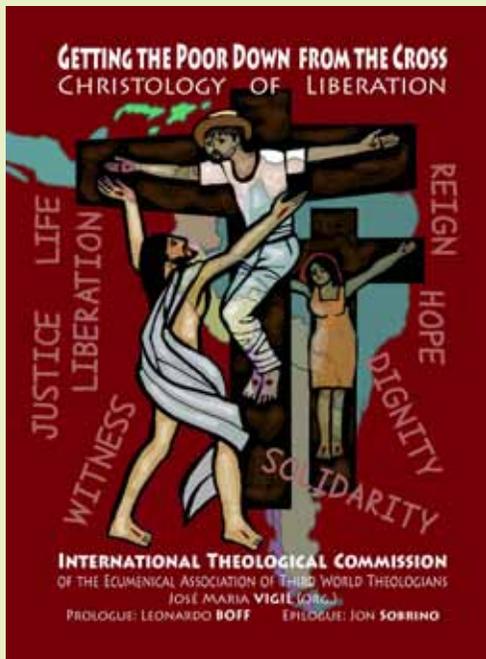
DOSSIER:

ECOLOGICAL VISION IN A GROANING WORLD
VISION ECOLÓGICA EN UN MUNDO QUE GRITA

Getting the Poor Down From the Cross

Cristology of Liberation

A classical work of EATWOT's International Theological Commission



In 30 days after the «Notification» against Jon Sobrino, the EATWOT's International Theological Commission requested and collected the contributions of more than 40 theologians, from all over the world, to reflect and testify about their theological work, as «getting the poor down from the cross».

As a result, there is this digital book, which in its first week -40 days after the «Notification- registered more than three thousand downloads.

It continues to be on line for downloading in several languages (English, Spanish, Italian) and in paper (English, Spanish, Portuguese).

Printable originals with full resolution can still be requested for local editions without profit purposes.

Getting the Poor Down from the Cross: still on line digital edition, which was printed on paper in many places, 314 pp

Bajar de la cruz a los pobres: edición digital en línea, y también una edición en papel, por Dabar, México 293 pp.

Descer da Cruz os Pobres: edição só em papel, pela Paulinas, São Paulo, 357 pp

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DOSSIER:

The Role of Leadership in the Achievement of Ecological Vision in the Context of Diminishing Environment in the 21st Century Uganda

**Catherine JENDIA & Therese TINKASIIMIRE,
Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda**

Abstract

The study addresses the research topic, the Role of Leadership in the Achievement of Ecological Vision in the Context of Diminishing Environment in the 21st Century Uganda. The main objective of the study was to explore the role of leadership in the achievement of ecological vision in Uganda. The organization of the paper is as follows introduction, understanding the concept of ecology, the place of ecology in the universe: a religious perspective, theoretical framework of the study, factors that influence achievement of ecological vision in Uganda, the role of leadership in the achievement in the context of shrinking environment in the Uganda, in the 21st century, and conclusion and recommendation.

The research utilized desktop methodology. Desktop approach involves data collection and analysis from a desktop. The study reviewed books, journals, and internet sources as primary means of collecting raw data. The main finding of the study was that leadership plays a critical role in the achievement of ecological vision in Uganda.

The study concludes that leadership, as a divine institution, is central in the achievement of ecological vision in Uganda. Leaders derive legitimate authority from God to lead and govern the Ugandan public. Further, the research revealed that leaders are drivers of socio-economic transformation. The critical ecological issues of great concern which the Uganda leadership has to play an important role in addressing among other things include: (1) meeting human needs, (2) greed for wealth, (3) government public policy on agriculture modernization, (4) population increase, (5) deforestation. The theoretical frame work informs leaders of how they can promote social transformation and facilitate economic growth while ensuring sustainable development practices. The study makes two recommendations in the way forward.

Introduction

The reality of a groaning world is being seen, felt and heard by Ugandans of all calibers. Recent media reports show that in some parts of Uganda especially Karamoja, people are starving and dying to famine resulting from extended drought lasting over four months. In Soroti and other eastern areas maturing crops were scotched by intensive heat causing serious food scarcity. In areas like Kasese and Busia, lives and property worth millions of shillings were lost due to torrential rains causing severe flooding. As a result of massive displacement of the population abject poverty is compounded. ¹

The prevailing extended dry weather demonstrates that reliability of tropical rains which supported agriculture all year round is no more. The issues raised in this paper suggest that human activities such as deforestation, farming, population increase, meeting human needs are derived from lack of sustainable utilization of the environment. The study asks the question, what is the role of leadership in the achievement of ecological vision? Before discussing the place of ecology in the universe, it is important to provide a brief definition of key variables: Universe, environment and ecology.

Understanding the Concept of Ecology

From the English Dictionary, the universe: space and everything existing in it including the Earth and all the other planets. According to the Encarta Webster's Dictionary, the earth and humanity refers to the Earth along with the human race and the totality of human experience. Ecology in the context of academics pertains to the study of the relationships between living organisms and their interactions with their natural or developed environment. Ecological research is expected to address life processes, interactions and adaptation, movement of materials and energy through living communities, succession development of ecosystems, and abundance and distribution of organisms and biodiversity in the context of the environment. ²

Ecology is as much a biological science as it is a human science commonly known as human ecology. ³ Human ecology is defined as: (1) from a bio-ecological standpoint as the study of man as the ecological dominant in plant and animal communities and systems; (2) from a bio-ecological standpoint as simply another animal affecting and affected by his physical environment; and (3) as a human being, somehow different from animal life in general, interacting with physical and modified environments in a distinctive and creative way. ⁴ This paper focuses on definition three where human beings as higher animal species interact

with the natural and in some cases modify the natural environment creatively thus impacting the social world positively or negatively. The study reveals that the ecosystems of the earth are critical to human ecology because they provide basic needs ranging from food, medicine, water, and the capacity for trade exchanges. Therefore, it can be argued that ecosystems relate greatly to human ecology because of their foundational significance to socio-economic and the potential for business exchange in the market place.

The concept of natural environment, that is, natural surroundings in which living things grow and interact on earth. Where human interference is minimal, complete ecological units operate as natural system including animals, plants, rocks and natural phenomena as well as air, water, and climate among others.⁵ The concern of this paper is that environment which refers to the natural world is at great risk largely as result of the harmful influences of human activities. Therefore, this paper focuses on the impact of human activities that put the environment at a high risk, that is, the threat of extinction of the natural world which the essence of God's created universe.

The Place of Ecology in the Universe: A Religious Perspective

The human race has a God-given mandate over the utilization of the natural environment. There is clearly an authorization for humanity to rule over the three spheres of the universe: Firstly, the solar system populated by the moon, stars, and other planets in the solar system as well as the birds that traverse between the skies and the earth. Secondly, the sea world inhabited by various fish species and thirdly, planet earth occupied by both animals and plants.⁶ This mandate further underscores the importance of human beings in the whole universe. The human race is the epic of God's creation resembling God so closely as his own image and likeness. Significance of human beings to God is emphasized. God created human beings a little lower than the heavenly beings such as Angels etc.⁷ Humans exercise and occupy a fundamental leadership position in the entire universe. The leadership of human beings of the God created environment is divinely legitimated. Thus, leadership and authority is approved by God for development of humanity.

However, the importance of human beings in God's creation comes with great responsibility of overseeing the universe which is God's own creation comprising flocks, herds, wild life, birds that largely live in space and all manner of fish and aquatic organization in bottom of seas and oceans.⁸ As stewards of environment, human beings are expected to 'work and take care of the earth which is God's garden commonly referred to as Eden. While it is right of human beings to utilize the

available resources in the ecological system for their sustenance, sustainability of the ecosystem is extremely necessary. Therefore, humanity is essentially custodian of natural resources in the natural environment. The discussion of the place of ecology in the Universe leads to theoretical framework of the study.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

As mentioned before, responsible stewardship has to be guided by a theoretical framework. In this study, two theories namely sustainable development and transformational theories were used. Sustainable development is defined as development which meets the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development concerns the socio-economic and environment development.⁹ Sustainable theory informs the study that all levels of local leadership need to recognize their significant role in achievement of development which resonates with realization of ecological vision. Leadership at national level is responsible for formulating public policies and legislating laws for purposes of regulating human activities. Good leadership practices at local level can ensure compliance of citizens to regulations concerning sustainable utilization of the natural environment in an effort to promote development.

Transformational leadership theory supports sustainable development theory. According to James Burns (1978) transformational leadership is a process where leaders and followers engage in mutual process of raising one another to higher levels of morality and motivation. Transformational leaders raise the bar by appealing to higher ideals and values of followers. In doing so, they may model themselves and use charismatic methods to attract people to the values and to the leader.¹⁰ In relation to Burn's transformational theory, Goli (2012); Bass and Riggio (2006), argue that transformational leadership is based on four constituents including: (i) inspirational motivation, (ii) idealized influence, (iii) intellectual stimulation, (iv) individualized consideration.¹¹

(i) Inspirational motivation: Transformational leaders are those who have capability to inspire and motivate followers. In so doing, the culture of team work is inculcated as well as optimism and enthusiasm.

(ii) Idealized influence: The leaders lead by example and become role model for their followers. They develop common vision which is shared by followers. The shared vision serves as common goal for people to identify with and cultivate a sense of commitment.

(iii) Individualized consideration. The transformational leaders demonstrate empathy and sympathy to the needs and emotional concerns

of the followers. The leaders recognize individual differences and needs. The leaders engage in dialogue with the individuals and use effective communication maximally.

(iv) Intellectual stimulation: The transformational leader encourages followers to be creative and innovative in solving problems encountered.

Therefore, it is clear that sustainable development theory supported by transformational leadership theory are relevant in integrating environmental issues into leadership practices aimed at achievement of ecological vision for Uganda in the 21st century. The discussion of theoretical framework leads to analysis of factors that influence achievement of ecological vision.

Factors Affecting Achievement of Ecological Vision in Uganda

The research recognizes that there are numerous factors that affect achievement of an ecological vision in Uganda. For this reason, five factors were been identified: (1) human needs, (2) Greed for wealth, (3) Population increase, (4) deforestation and (5) and public policy on agriculture modernization.

1. Human Needs Theory: According to theory human being are driven by needs. These human needs are categorized into five groups as illustrated below:



Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1954)

This hierarchical representation in simple terms suggests the basic human needs which are fundamental for survival such as food and drink, warmth, shelter, and air are core to human beings. An individual is motivated by an inner drive to satisfy these fundamental needs which basically concern the survival of the human species.¹² From the interpretation of Maslow's hierarchy of human needs, it can be argued that in Uganda, majority (about 90%) of the people are largely concerned with survival. To meet their survival needs many rural communities (80 %) engage in tree cutting to clear the way for agriculture to grow food or burn charcoal to generate income to feed their families, pay feeds, buy clothing etc, but all in the short term.

From Maslow's theory of needs, the study reveals that human beings are by nature need to be satisfied. If basic human needs remain unsatisfied, the likelihood of criminal behavior in the community and society looms and in fact threaten to national security of the Ugandan public. The reality of ecological woes have documented by NEMA in a recent report on the ecological state of the country. The report reveals that Uganda:

*Faces severe environmental problems including: soil erosion and declining soil fertility, deforestation, pollution of land, water and air resources, loss of biodiversity and over-harvesting of forests, fisheries and water resources. This continued liquidation of the country's natural capital undermines long-term economic progress and will aggravate poverty. To spur the contribution of environmental resources to national economic development therefore, it will be necessary to improve environmental governance with specific focus on information provision, compliance and enforcement as well as the participation of all stakeholders.*¹³

As a matter of fact, most Ugandans are completely reliant on natural resources to survive. Forests provide firewood and cleared land frees arable soil for agriculture. Uganda loses about 6,000 hectares of forests every 30 days according to NEMA, if no action is registered by 2050, Uganda's per capita forest cover will be zero. Already 28 districts have lost their entire forest ecosystem while another 19 districts have forest cover lower than 1%.¹⁴

The category of Ugandans who are concerned with meeting basic human needs thus have no time to even think of the other four categories of needs. Many lack knowledge of the utility of the environment as significant but finite natural resource due to high prevalence of illiteracy. These are the people who need to be sensitized on the sustainable use of the environment. Even, then the public awareness effort is often undermined by lack of alternative means for livelihood, making realization of ecological vision in a groaning world difficult to achieve. Over preoccupa-

tion with livelihood in the short term continues to be counter productive to long term goal of sustainable use of the environment as perceived in God's divine plan for an ongoing process of creation through sustainability. ¹⁵

2. Greed for Wealth: Mahatma Gandhi observed that the Earth has enough to satisfy the needs but not everybody's greed. In the context of Uganda, once dubbed the pearl of Africa, the natural resources available could meet the needs of Ugandans if used within the context of an ecological vision. However, statistics show that "the per capita income in Uganda in 2012 is approximately US\$490 annually. An estimated 25% (8,750,000 out of 35,000,000) Ugandans live on less than US\$1.00 per day. ¹⁶ The figures mentioned above reveal that many Ugandans are poor.

However, those who deplete and pollute the natural environment are not the poor rural communities but those who are rich, in power and knowledgeable of the repercussions of human activities. The rapid disappearance of the tropical rainforests in Uganda is the result of few people who over exploitation natural resources to acquire more and more wealth. The tools and equipment and even the methods used do not ensure sustainability. Forests cover in Mabira and Budongo among others which make up the Lake Victoria basin and the Masindi area evergreen, productive agricultural region and providing rich biodiversity as well as medicinal benefits are on the verge of depletion. Sadly, trees which have taken over 50 year to mature are being harvested without replanting in view of replenishing and regenerating the ecological system.

It should be pointed out that majority (80 %) of rural communities are heavily dependent on ecological biodiversity supported by forest cover. Bodeker (1999) and World Health Organization (WHO, 1990) underscored the medicinal benefits derived from the ecosystem in Uganda saying that:

The Majority of rural populations of developing countries have difficulty in affording western forms of health care. In cases of medical need, rural people may have to travel for a day or more to reach a modern medical clinic or pharmacy. This results in loss of wages which is compounded by cost of transport and the relatively high cost of the medicines themselves. Traditional health systems in developing countries are typically the principal resort of the poorest levels of society when in need of health care. From the perspective of international health policy, they are relevant since they are: (1) locally available (2) sustainable (3) inexpensive and (iv) potential as a means of prevention, early intervention and self medication and a potential source of cost reduction. ¹⁷

3. **Population Increase** is another factor that has influenced the achievement of ecological vision in Uganda. Recent population report by Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS, 2011) show that there is rapid growth population increase. Wairagala (2006) observed that the birth rate being 3.4 % per annum in 2011.¹⁸ The population has increased from 31.8 million in 2011 to 33.4 million.¹⁹ In just over a decade, the population is expected to hit 51.9 million. Muyambi, Elady (2009) argued that massive population expansion is escalating poverty. With rising poverty levels and a population growing rapidly at over 3 % being one of the highest rates in the world, Uganda is caught between a president who advocates a bigger national population and planners' who are concerned with looking after ballooning numbers of poor people.²⁰ Whereas the school of thought shared by President Museveni equates big population to high consumerism, growing increase in population also increases people's demand to satisfy their basic needs. This results in increase human activities which not only disrupt but also increases ecological degradation. Natural increase in population is compounded by refugee influx from the DRC and neighboring countries causing injury to the dwindling natural environment. According to Musa Eweru, Minister for Disaster preparedness, over 20, 000 new refugees have fled into Uganda seeking refuge which in effect increases pressure on arable land and forests.

4. **Deforestation is a serious challenge.** A recent National Forestry Authority (NFA) report indicates that over 90 percent of the population in Uganda uses charcoal and firewood for cooking, which has a heavy toll on the state of the nation's forests. The report maintains that in several villages in eastern Uganda, households are finding it difficult to find firewood, forcing women to walk long distances in search of this cooking fuel. In Palisa as in Nebbi districts women have to walk distances of about seven to eight kilometers to find firewood. In Kampala and Mbale districts, many households, even those in towns where electricity is available, use charcoal for cooking since electricity tariffs are high. In addition, wood is used for baking Bricks by brick manufacturers. The loss of forest over is most serious in districts of Nakasongola and Kibaale.²¹ As people cut down trees without replanting in order to replenish forest cover, this causes increase demand for cooking fuel. Although there could be alternative fuel in form of gas and kerosene, the annual national increases of tax by government on fuel renders the alternative fuel unaffordable to majority of Ugandan public. The impact of deforestation on the environment is land slides. In 2010, landslides in the hilly Bududa district killed over 300 people and displaced over 5,000 people.²² Investigation into the cause of the landslide disaster was found to be human activity on the hills which depleted the tree cover thereby weakening the soils which in effect resulted into a man made disaster triggered by heavy rainfall in the

eastern sub region. Although the landslide remnants were relocated into camps in Kiryandongo district in the Bunyoro subregion, the need for firewood for cooking increased pressure to wood cover.

5. Public Policy On Agricultural Modernization. According to Joseph Obua, Jacob G. Agea and Joseph Jones Ogwal (2010), the political leadership views Agricultural modernization as means of achieving economic growth and social transformation. They maintain that the policy promotes fast economic growth and rural transformation which is agriculture based. They contend that:

*The majority of industries are agro-based and some like tea processing, sugar production, tobacco curing, bakeries and fish processing require huge quantities of firewood. Although all these indicate the economic importance of forests to Uganda, they at the same time show the detrimental effects of social and economic activities on Uganda's forest and tree cover. The need for agricultural modernization is compounded by expansion in construction industrial sector. The drive for a modern economy has also been coupled with a significant increase in construction of residential, commercial and institutional buildings that use millions of bricks burnt with thousands of tones of firewood. Timber for construction is also on high demand and much of it comes from the natural forest.*²³

Therefore, the need for economic development has greatly influenced public policy in the creation of forest reserves and the leasing of public land for agricultural modernization and increased production and industrial development. Ecological vision should be futuristic in nature and denotes sustainable utilization of the existing resources. Sustainability calls for conservation and replacement of what have been used up so that future generations might benefit. The discussion of the factors affecting achievement of ecological vision in Uganda now leads to an analysis of the role of leadership in achievement of ecological vision.

The Role of Leadership in Achievement of Ecological Vision in the context of Diminishing Environment in the 21st Uganda

The Concept of Leadership: Leadership is the process of social influence in which one person can enlist the aid and peer support of others in the accomplishment of a common task. Leadership is organizing a group of people to achieve a common goal. The leader may or may not have any formal authority. Studies of leadership have produced theories involving traits, situational interaction, function, behavior, power, vision and values, charisma and intelligence, among others. A leader is somebody whom people follow, and one who provides guidance or direction to others.²⁴

Leaders are so central to any major development process that can be concluded that transformation equals to leadership. Certainly without strong and capable leadership, reform, turnarounds, and shift in cultural practices do not take place at all. Leadership determines the direction to the future, aligns people with that vision, and inspires them to make it happen despite the obstacles.²⁵ As mentioned earlier, the important role played by leadership in the realization of ecological vision is derived from God, the creator of the universe.²⁶ Therefore, it can be argued beyond reasonable doubt that God gave mankind the authority of preside over the whole of creation to subdue, innovate, and transform the universe. Thus, human beings have God given authority to lead, to govern, to reward, and to punish non compliant citizens. Where governing leadership denotes superior authorities who are civil leaders, but not Angels. That is, leaders are human beings having both strengths and weaknesses.

The study reveals that, Paul encourages citizens to give government its due right. This is because a governing authority has a special role under God. Hence a government has a duty to respect this role and accept its God given authorization to govern. It needs to be pointed out that since it is God who sets up leaders, he also overthrows them. So, from this study it is understood that no power exists without God's endorsement. Even the functionality of the leadership of Roman Empire was under divine authority although it was a vicious dictatorship and fundamentally gentile in nature.²⁷

Under God, a government functions as God's agent to promote sustainable development through provision of socio-economic services, namely, peace and security, to encourage social interaction, to curb selfish excesses, and to serve justice. This means governments can be expected to promote peace and give freedom of religion to the citizens. The leadership rightly exercises power through its three arms, that is, legislature, executive and judiciary. Therefore, believers must subject themselves to government authority, not just out of fear of punishment, but out of knowing that the state, with all its failures, is a divine institution.

The study further reveals that a state is a divine institution. In that regard the leadership enjoys a divine mandate to administer the nation-but only for the common good. However, the nature of divine authority is delegated power. The point of emphasis is that a leadership that assumes absolute authority by taking to itself divine rights would no longer be a legitimate government under God. Such leadership may no longer rightly demand the compliance of its citizens. It is important to point out that leadership capability is grounded in the premises of reason which clearly distinguishes human beings from other creatures in the animal kingdom. Therefore, leadership and authority of human beings in the created world is sanctioned by God. The God given authority of human beings is service and responsible stewardship over the universe.

The study recognizes that in Uganda, the higher level leadership has tried to ensure achievement of ecological vision by provision of guidance and regulation by laws. Government organizations such as National Environmental Authority (NEMA) were instituted to implement the realization of the ecological vision by monitoring and evaluation the effect of human activities on the ecosystems. It should be pointed out that the central government adopted decentralization system of governance more than a decade ago. In the context of Uganda, the concept of decentralization is understood as a:

*process by which authority is devolved by the central government to autonomous lower-level units, such as provincial, district, local authorities that are legally constituted as separate governance bodies through devolution, the central government relinquishes certain functions or creates new units of government that are outside its direct control.*²⁸

The characteristics of devolution are fivefold including: (1) local units of government are autonomous, independent and clearly perceived as separate levels of government over which central authorities exercise little or no direct control. (2) The local governments have clear and legally recognized geographical boundaries within which they exercise authority and perform public functions. (3) Local governments have corporate status and the power to secure resources to perform their functions. (4) Devolution implies the need to develop local governments as institutions in the sense that they are perceived by local citizens as organizations providing services that satisfy their needs and as governmental units over which they have some influence. (5) Devolution is an arrangement in which there are reciprocal, mutually beneficial, and coordinate relationships between central and local governments. Therefore, as a result of decentralization, much power has been devolved to the lower levels of leadership.²⁹

Under the decentralized approach the local governments are mandated not only to implement policies from the central government, but also to make decisions affecting the implementation process. The local leaders are knowledgeable of public expectations to deliver good services such as education, health care. Furthermore, the leaders have some resources such as power in order to provide guidance and regulate through laws and by laws the sustainable utilization of the ecological system for sustenance by local communities.

Conclusion and the Way forward

The study concludes that leadership is central in the achievement of ecological vision in Uganda. Leadership is a divine institution. Leaders derive legitimate authority from God to lead and govern the Ugandan

public. The critical ecological issues of great concern which the Uganda leadership has to play an important role in addressing among other things include: (1) meeting human needs, (2) greed for wealth, (3) government public policy on agriculture modernization, (4) population increase, and (5) deforestation. The theoretical frame work informs leaders of how they can promote social transformation and foster economic growth by utilizing sustainable development.

All the issues discussed in this article are driven by the necessity of satisfying human needs. Need satisfaction is compounded by population pressure. Although a large population is viewed by sections of Ugandan as a potential market in the context of consumerism, an expanded poverty stricken population becomes liability than asset. This is because a large population increases demand for land for agriculture, encroachment of gazetted forest and wild life areas, and degradation of wetlands resulting into destruction of ecosystem and biodiversity there in.

The research underscores leadership as the most important factor in the achievement of ecological vision in Uganda. The leadership of a state has the capability to influence citizens' behaviors, attitudes through legislation and formulation and implementation of public policies necessary for the realization of sustainable development.

Recommendation(s) for the Way Forward

The study recommends that:

(1) The government reprioritize it development goals such that issues of ecological concern become integral in all public programs. To boost efforts being made by sections of private sector (youth groups, NGOs) would regulate and implement tree planting by the general public. For example, for every tree cut down, 2 trees have to be planted. National Forest Authority as an agent of government should implement tree planting projects and be able to supervise tree planting in their areas under their jurisdiction.

(2) It is recommended that environmental governance be improved with specific focus on information provision, sensitization and awareness creation, compliance and enforcement as well as the participation of all stakeholders.

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Transforming Society through Religious Education Towards Inclusion and Social Justice for Disabled Persons

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the role Religious Education can play to augment efforts being undertaken, for and by persons with impairment challenges, to enhance their rehabilitation, thereby ensuring an effective realization of the objectives of the Kenya Vision 2030 –through enhanced accessibility to education and assistive technology for disabled persons.

The paper considers Religious Education as key a driver for the transformation of society. It underscores the need for the transformation of society towards inclusion and social justice. If disabled people are to become actively involved in the quest for self-realization and self-reliance (as envisaged in the Kenya Vision 2030 objectives), then the starting point could be the pedagogical reorientation of religious Education. The paper attempts to show that for disabled persons to become actively involved in the implementation of the Kenya Vision 2030, society must undergo some transformation so that the barriers that exclude this category of people from mainstream economic, political and social activities are adequately addressed.

The paper therefore argues that Religious Education has a major role to play in ensuring the realization of the much-needed transformation within the Kenyan society; a transformation that will create an enabling environment for disabled persons, thereby establishing an inclusive society where social justice (for all people, including persons with disability) shall '(flow) like a 'never-failing stream' (Amos 5:24 NIV).

This paper is divided into five sections. The first section deals with a definition of terms. The second part focuses on transformation as society's tactic for self-preservation and perpetuation. The third part examines the role of Religious Education as a key driver for social transformation. In the fourth section, the focus is on an understanding of disability and challenges disabled people encounter in their quest for self-realization and self-determination. The fifth and last section examines the application of Religious Education in transforming society towards inclusion and social justice for disabled persons.

1. Operational definition of key terms

1.1. Assistive Devices

These are also sometimes referred to as orthopedic appliances. These are artificial mobility aids that assist disabled people to restore their functioning like wheelchairs, crutches, callipers, artificial limbs, among others (Malinda, 2005: 162).

1.2. Disabled Persons

The term disabled person connotes anyone who suffers from 'any restriction or lack of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range regarded normal for a human being' (Malinda, 2005:17).

1.3. Religious Education

Religious Education is the process by which systematic instruction is given or received in a formal or informal set-up. The right to education for disabled persons is contained in article 24 of the 2006 UN Convention on the rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNenable, 2006: 24).

1.4. Inclusion

In using the term inclusion, I have in mind a development approach that caters for the interests of all segments of society. Implied in an inclusive society set-up are such ideals as equality of all persons relative to the constitution, equal distribution of the country's resources among its citizens and equal opportunities for self-advancement for all the people.

1.5. Research

According to the Oxford Dictionary, the aim of research (the investigation into or study of materials and sources), is to establish facts and to provide new conclusions.

1.6. Social Justice

In using this term, I am aware of its wider use to represent a social set-up where the interests of all individuals are respected and protected. However, in this context the understanding of the term puts more emphasis on the fact that –in an open democracy system or mindset- the rights

of individuals can only be guaranteed and protected only as far as such rights do not infringe on the rights of others. Social justice to me therefore represents a system whereby the rights of every individual are guaranteed and protected to insofar as such rights do not in any way infringe on other people rights.

1.7. Transforming (the) Society

This is used to infer a shift or change in social structures and institutions. This change may be gradual or sudden. The term transformation, therefore, denotes a paradigm shift.

2. An Overview of the Historical Background for Social Transformation

2.1. Social Transformation as humanity's tactic for self-adjustment

It is useful to examine the place of transformation as a tool for humanity's self-adjustment, self-perpetuation and sustained existence.

Throughout the history of humankind, men and women have had, at certain times, to make crucial changes in their ways of doing things - which adjustment has significantly contributed to their continued existence either as individuals or communities.

The orientation of society particularly in modern sub-Saharan Africa is such that issues of disability and disabled people are virtually neglected. It is society's attitude towards disability that is largely to blame for the deplorable state that is the plight for many a disabled people in this region in general and Kenya in particular.

2.2. Social transformation and disability

Thus to overcome this problem and create a disability-friendly environment, society needs to undergo a transformation, especially in the perception of and response to disability. Religious Education serves more or less as a torchbearer in this quest for social transformation. This was evident particularly during the Church reformation in the 16th century that is said to have been driven largely by an educated or scholarly generation – a generation that will not take 'business as usual' as their preferred option for doing things.

2.3. The Role of Religious Education in historical Transformations within society

Religious Education is also known to have served as an important vehicle in bringing about changes in the political realm, particularly in the transition from feudalism to nationalism; from authoritarianism and dictatorship to open democracy and from colonialism or political oppression to independence or political freedom.

And in the field of economics, Religious Education has been pertinent in the emergency and development of a free-market economy –that is a market solely driven by the forces of demand and supply, as is now practiced in many countries world-over.

It is evident from the foregoing discussion that social transformation has a historical background and appears to be society's major technique for self-adjustment, self-perpetuation and self-preservation. It is also evident that, historically, Religious Education has served as a key catalyst in the process of social transformation.

Religious Educators are indeed poised to play a crucial role –and may actually act as key determinants – for the effective attainment of the Kenya Vision 2030.

3. The Kenya Vision 2030 and Disability

3.1. The three Pillars

The Kenya Vision 2030 is rested on three main pillars: the Social, Economic and Political pillars.

It is important to note the crucial role Religious Education could play as a key driver in all the three pillars

3.2. With reference to disability. Issues touching on disability are directly alluded to in the Vision 2030 manifesto, particularly as regards the need for their integration into mainline activities of society. In fact the word disability and its derivatives appears severally in the document. Besides this explicit coverage, however, most of the disability-related issues are also covered in the manifesto in an implicit manner. Since the ultimate aim of the Kenya Vision 2030 is to create an egalitarian society, it is only fair to deduce that disabled people are also included in that grand plan. However, unless deliberate efforts are put in place, the Kenya Vision 2030 may continue to remain a farfetched dream for members of the disabled community. As is argued in this paper, what is needed is for the Kenyan society to undergo a transformation, particularly in its conception of disability and the kind of treatment it extends towards disabled people.

4. Disabled persons and their specific concerns

4.1. The social model of disability

Disability is widely understood to be a medical as well as a social condition (Malinda 2005: p. 22). In line with these two viewpoints, there are two models of disability - that is the Social and the Medical models. These models consider disability as an offshoot of the medical condition of an individual as well as the social construction of society.

The Social model is an approach to disability that attributes the problem of disability to societal barriers rather than the person's medical condition.

This model sees the removal from society of all such barriers as the only way to tackle the problem of disability.

Thus the social model describes disability in terms of restrictions imposed on disabled people by social organization (Hunt 1966; UPIAS: 1976). Some of these restrictions include inaccessible buildings, information and transport (Malinda 2005:21).

These three factors are particularly significant for successful participation and operation in the socio-economic activities within the community.

4.1.1. Implications for persons with impairment

The Social model of disability explains disability as resulting from any behaviour or barriers that prevent people with impairments from choosing to take part in the life of the society.

By being thus restricted, disabled people find themselves unable to engage in the socio-economic and political activities in a sustainable manner, a situation that can only be reversed through removal of all such restricting factors through structural re-arrangement (transformation) of society.

4.1.2. The Inclusive view of the Social Model

The driving force behind the Social model is an inclusive view of the disabled community. The construction of the Social model defines disability quite simply as the social consequences of having impairment. (Malinda 2005:20)

In his study, Harrahs Ndinda Malinda (2005) considered the Social model of disability an important analytical tool and used it to explain disablement of disabled persons in Kenya as an outcome of the negative traditional beliefs and attitudes towards them by the society and the failure by the society and the government (as well as other public) agencies to provide support services and adapted environment for them to lead normal lives. (Kabue 2003)

4.3. Types of disability

It is not possible to give an exhaustible list of all the types of disability within a given location. This is because some cultural and religious practices still prevent many disabled people, particularly children from public exposure. However, this is a worldwide challenge and occurs even in the developed countries where disability awareness levels are known to be high.

It is important to note that some disabilities can be categorized as mild while others are acute (WHO& WB, 2011). According to the 2011 World Report on Disability jointly prepared by World Health Organization (WHO) and World Bank (WB) (WHO& WB, 2011), in mild disabilities

(such as a deformity involving the pharynges section of one's fingers), the ability of the impaired person is not greatly affected as compared to a person who completely cannot use both his or her legs.

Most common disabilities that are found in the larger Meru (and which form the basis for this analysis), include the following:-

4.3.1. Cerebral Palsy

WHO (2011) defines Cerebral palsy (CP) as a group of bodily disorders that affect a person's ability to move and maintain balance and posture.

Autism. This refers to a developmental disability that significantly affects the verbal and non-verbal communication and social interaction. This condition is mostly prevalent among children aged three years and under.

4.3.2. Deaf – Blindness

This denotes a condition whereby there is a concomitant or simultaneous hearing and visual impairment.

4.3.3. Deafness

This refers to a hearing impairment that prevents a person from processing linguistic information.

4.3.5. Developmental Delay

According to NICHCY (National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities), this condition means a delay in one or more of the following: physical development, cognitive development, communication, social or emotional development, or adaptive [behavioral] development.

4.3.6. Emotional Disturbance

It is a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time (WHO & WB, 2011).

(a) An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors. (b) An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers. (c) Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances. (d) A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression. (e) A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

The term includes schizophrenia and, according to WHO and WB (2001), the term does not apply to children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they have an emotional disturbance.

4.3.7. Intellectual Disability

This term refers to a significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning, that exists concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior. It

is mainly manifested during the child's developmental period. Before the term "Intellectual Disability" was introduced in October 2010, this condition was represented by the term "mental retardation." The change in terminology, however did not affect the definition.

4.3.8. Multiple Disabilities

The term denotes concomitant or simultaneous impairments. Examples include intellectual disability-blindness, intellectual disability-orthopedic impairment, among others). The combination of such impairments usually causes such severe educational needs that affected children cannot be accommodated in a special education program solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blindness.

4.3.9. Orthopedic Impairment

This term includes impairments caused by a congenital anomaly, impairments caused by disease (such as, poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis), and impairments from other causes (such as, cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that cause contractures).

4.3.10. Other Health Impairments

This describes a condition whereby an individual has limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli.

This condition comes about as a result of chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette syndrome.

4.4.11. Speech or Language Impairment

This means a communication disorder such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment.

4.3.12. Traumatic Brain Injury

This term denotes an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both. The term applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech.

The term does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or to brain injuries induced by birth trauma.

4.3.13. Visual Impairment means an impairment in vision and includes both partial sight and blindness.

5. The Role of Religious Education in transforming Society towards inclusion and social justice

5.1. Basis for involvement of Religious Education in Empowering Disabled Persons

Article 24 of the 2006 UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons (of which Kenya is a signatory) states the importance of Education in the rehabilitation process for disabled persons (UN, 2011: 24). Similarly the subject of education and disability is accorded a detailed coverage in the 2011 World Report on Disability – which is a joint publication by World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank (WB) (WHO & WB, 2011: 203). The successful attainment of the Kenya Vision 2030 is largely dependent on the degree to which Kenyans are able to acquire relevant and research-driven knowledge. Some development experts assert that there is a direct correlation between a country's level of education and its extent of economic development. The reason for this, as the experts argue, is that an educated population is able to absorb ideas and skills and utilize them for enhanced participation in economic, social and political activities. This assertion reinforces the view in this paper that Religious Education could serve as an important change agent within society.

The creation of knowledge-based societies is often touted as one of the surest routes to sustainable development in developing countries. Indeed, Religious Education is part of the larger field of education and can, therefore be viewed as a key driver in the three pillars of Kenya Vision 2030.

There are various ways in which Religious Education can serve as a change agent in regard to society's view of and response to disability. Since this discussions pegged on the Kenya vision 2030, I wish to examine the role of Religious Education from within the context of the broad objectives of Vision 2030.

According to the steering committee of Kenya Vision 2030, the overall goal of this vision is to develop a globally competitive and prosperous nation (Kenya) by the year 2030. This will be achieved through three main objectives as expressed through the three pillars (that is economic social and political). The three objectives are:-

i). to drive the economy up the value chain, ii). to invest on the people of Kenya and iii) to move into the future as one nation

This discussion therefore, is based on the view expressed by article 24 of the 2006 UN Convention on the rights of disabled persons and by the World Report on Disability, that disabled people have largely been excluded from the development agenda of most countries and that there

is need to do everything possible to bring an end to this exclusion and drive towards removing all the barriers that perpetuate that exclusion. Hence, the guiding question here is how can Religious Education assist in this process (of removing all the barriers that have for long excluded disabled persons from active participation in mainstream activities of society)? This discussion examines ways in which Religious Education in Kenya could assist in helping disabled people participate in the process of implementing or realizing the Kenya Vision 2030 objectives.

5.2. The need for inclusion and social justice for disabled persons

In Kenya, as is the case with some other parts of Africa and the world at large, there are still numerous barriers that hinder disabled people from full participation in the economic social and political activities of society. These barriers include, but are not limited to, the following.

a) Barriers related to rehabilitation

Most African countries are faced with the problem of limited funding for disability rehabilitation programmes. For this reason, rehabilitation programmes are few and in most cases poorly staffed. Some of the rehabilitation workers are poorly trained to effectively handle their duty assignments. Other areas of concern include rigidity of or inappropriate policies, legislation and service delivery systems as well as misconceptions about disability (WHO & WB, 2011: 103/104).

b) Barriers related to transportation layout

Transportation related barriers arise from lack of a universal design, which leads to confusion as one moves from one region to another. In Kenya, efforts have been made to adopt a universal design, but these are still far from adequate (Malinda, 2005: 24). Another challenge lies in developing and enforcing laws and policies in regard to establishing an all-inclusive transport system. For instance, the issue of continuity in the public transport or travel chain poses connectivity challenges to disabled persons (UN, 2006: 22). This particular set of barriers place a significant obstacle on the mobility of disabled persons and therefore inhibits their ability to seek rehabilitation and other services. This in turn leads to limited participation among disabled people in the economic, social and political life of society (WHO & WB, 2011: 182).

c) Barriers related to information and communication technology

The most disturbing barrier in relation to information is the prevalent use of inappropriate medium of communication. For instance, majority of Religious Education information exists in media that are not disability-friendly (Malinda, 2005:20, UN, 2006: 25). Hence, even as we speak of moving the economy up the value chain, or investing on people or moving into the future as one nation (Kenya Vision 2030), a signifi-

cant number of the disabled people are virtually ignorant of such goals. They are unable to access information that can help them become active rather than passive participants in tackling these issues. Inaccessibility of information also hampers disabled persons' ability to seek and acquire relevant assistive technology. It can also negatively impact on access to education services as well as employment (WHO & WB, 2011: 186).

d) Barriers related to education

Sometimes the stringent enrollment or registration procedures and regulations bar disabled people from successfully navigating their way around the education system. The layout of the physical environment, including roads, pathways and buildings (such as offices and classrooms) are constructed in a manner completely oblivious of special needs among the disabled members of the society. As a result of low levels of accessibility in educational facilities, disabled people have high levels of illiteracy which ultimately acts as a limiting factor for access to gainful employment. This creates a kind of vicious cycle of poverty among disabled persons that keeps them in a perpetual state of underdevelopment.

5.3. Transforming society towards inclusion and social justice for disabled persons

In order to create space and or expand space for effective operation of disabled persons in the economic, social and political life of society, society needs to undergo drastic changes. This is the only way to make it more responsive to the needs of disabled persons. An inclusive and socially just society in which disabled people can enjoy their freedom is only possible if all sectors of society were to embrace change. Religious Education can serve as an agent of such change through the following measures:

a) Fostering a culture of inclusion and social justice

The education system should be geared towards the eradication of such social vices as discrimination, marginalization and stigmatization which tend to create a conducive atmosphere for exclusion of certain segments of society –especially disabled persons – formative involvement in mainstream activities of society. This also means encouraging the inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of a community's political, social, economic and cultural life.

5.2. Inculcating practical skills on personal integrity

Education plays a key role in the process of socialization. It therefore calls for education stakeholders to come up with a well-defined and systematic approach to enculturation that stresses the need to appreciate disability.

5.3. Advocating for a disability-friendly environment within society

Some of the challenges that disabled persons face in society can easily be overcome if disability awareness levels within communities increase. The education system can serve as an appropriate vehicle through which pro-disability advocacy campaigns are mounted to help educate members of society as well as private and public service providers on the need to cater for the needs of disabled persons in such aspects as product design and development, service delivery system or channels, and public installations (such as buildings and transport, communication technology, among others)

5.4. Transforming the Religious Education sectors towards a disability-friendly environment

This is an inward-looking measure whereby the stakeholders of Religious Education, particularly the policy-makers, need to identify aspects within their institutions that inhibit active and full participation among disabled persons and put in place measures that seek to alleviate or eradicate such challenges. This is particularly critical since it heralds the potential to increase school enrolment levels among disabled persons.

In the area of research, deliberate effort needs to be initiated towards innovative ways of conducting research that are disability-friendly, particularly in the area of methodology.

5.5. Enhancement of disability-related research

There is need to conduct research to evaluate the effectiveness of the various approaches for disability rehabilitation with a view to determining and enhancing the efficiency of rehabilitation programmes in this country.

5.6. Promotion of disability participation

Religious Education can transform society's view and response to disability by encouraging disabled persons to participate in Religious Education activities by ensuring the creation of a disability-friendly environment within the service delivery system of these institutions. This is a measure that can lead to a significant increase in both entry and retention levels among disabled persons.

5.7. Conducting research on disability assistive technology

Assistive devices are significant in the life of disabled persons, especially those whose impairment adversely affects their proper functioning or participation within society. In most cases, assistive devices are completely unavailable and, if available, often at a cost too high for most disabled persons to afford or, where affordable, often ill-suited to operate within a particular locality. Innovation is required here, so as to identify or discover assistive devices that are suited for local conditions

and can utilize locally available raw materials thus making them cheaper and readily available and easily affordable for disabled persons.

5.8. Identification of pro-disability policy gaps

Advocating for involvement of disabled persons in policy-making organs that make decisions on issues that may affect them is indeed the role for all and sundry. But Religious Education is poised to play even a greater role in bringing about significant changes within society. It is fascinating to note that some of the disabled organizations (which make important decisions that affect disabled persons) are actually run exclusively by non-disabled people.

5.9. Mounting community conscientization programmes

This is a necessary move since most of the obstacles disabled persons encounter in their bid to achieve self-reliance is related to community's attitudes towards disability. Mounting such awareness creation programmes is therefore necessary if efforts to eradicate stigma and other forms of unfair treatment or social injustice meted against people with disability are to bear the anticipated fruits. The Maua Disability Community Centre – a Church-sponsored disability rehabilitation programme, have a slogan that goes 'empower the community to empower the disabled persons'. Much of the environmental factors that militate against the ability of disabled persons to achieve self-reliance are caused by community members either consciously or unconsciously, knowingly or unknowingly. Hence there is need for community members to be educated on the importance of changing their hostile attitudes towards disabled persons.

In conclusion, it can be said that the role of Religious Education in social transformation towards a disability-friendly set-up can be divided into two broad categories that is curative or reactive and preventive or proactive. In the first category, the role of Religious Education is basically to deal with the effects of pre-transformation period when disabled people operate under unfriendly socio-economic religio-cultural and political conditions. These may include such interventions as creation of a legal framework to cushion them from further mistreatment or misery. In the second category, it is envisaged that a strategic viewpoint will be embraced so that all those factors within society that act as barriers in the way for disabled people's ability to achieve their self-realisation are totally eliminated.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the discussion contained in this paper seeks to highlight the need for members of the Kenyan society to embrace change and move towards accepting disabled persons who live in their midst. It

is important to note that the development of a globally competitive and prosperous society (as envisaged by Vision 2030) cannot truly and fully be realized unless all segments of society are invited to take an active participation. For members of the disabled community, this invitation involves the removal of all barriers that deny them the chance to engage in economic, social and political life of society. As argued in this paper Religious Education serve as a suitable channel through which all the socially generated disabling barriers can be addressed with a view to creating a truly inclusive and socially just Kenyan Nation.

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The Earth is Groaning

Christian awareness towards environmental management

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Introduction: Rationale of the Paper

The environment and its management is a rich and important area for study. The environment is threatened by among other things, human activity. With the adverse effects of climate change experienced the world over it has become evident that the environment has limits in its capacity to sustain human beings. The earth indeed is groaning. To avoid further negative effects on people, there is need to properly manage the environment. This can be achieved from different perspectives. One such perspective is religious. It is human beings however who are capable of being religious. The environment as such can not be religious. At best it can be indifferent. Human beings are the ones who ascribe religiosity into the environment. Consequently they behave in ways that can either destroy or manage the environment. Furthermore, human activity is often informed by how human beings understand reality. That is their worldview, their awareness. Religion in general and the Church in particular determine peoples' worldviews. In so doing, the positive aspects of religion can be harnessed to manage the environment.

Ecology on which environmental management is based has traditionally been associated with natural and not social sciences or humanities. There has been a trend therefore to discredit religion and the study of religion to purely psychological tendencies of human beings. This is the case notwithstanding the fact that religious psychological tendencies actually influence human behaviour which in turn influence natural science and the studies carried out in natural sciences. This erroneous view about a subjective as well as an objective science that religion is can be

corrected. This paper helps lift the study of religion to its rightful place in the world of interdisciplinary studies. This trend is demanded from serious scholars given the complexity that reality is.

The multidisciplinary and complex nature of reality also means that academic studies ought to be approached from as many perspectives as possible so that reality can be grasped more adequately. This understanding is informed by the fact that though truth is one, its conception is often multifaceted. A religious perspective to the truth of environmental management adds to the body of human knowledge on the environment.

A more specific rationale of academic importance, is that the paper adds a lot to ecotheology or the theology of nature, not only as a domain of academic studies but also as an impetus for praxis in human relations to the environment. Christianity has been viewed as a source of negative values towards the environment. Indeed, faulty biblical exegesis has done a lot of harm not only to the environment but even to other areas of human existence. Following in the footsteps of ecotheologists such as St. Francis of Assisi, the paper attempts to rediscover the richness of Christian beliefs and practices.

The significance of indigenous traditions for the development of ecotheology can also not be understated. Traditional local communities like other marginalized people are often left by the more privileged society to fend for themselves. They are neglected and live in the fringes of society at times with extreme want. They do not share in the benefits accrued from humanity's common pool of knowledge and technology. This betrays the basic Christian tenet of being one's brother's or sister's keeper. This scenario is not only manifested in economic indicators such as low income and general poverty among the such communities. It is also shown in the little documented information about them. The paper making reference to a traditional African community therefore has the rationale of attempting to add to the documentation about aspects of the community, and hopefully reduced the void about such people. The paper would then serve to uplift the status of the these peoples and their culture. Consequently this would enable them contribute to the wellbeing of themselves and humanity through their indigenous knowledge, cultural practices and belief patterns of and about the environment.

A Religious Conceptual Framework

A survey of a conceptual framework may help situate awareness of environment management in a religious setting. Mircea Eliade, a Romanian scholar who taught at the University of Chicago from 1957 to 1985 understood religion as an "...experience mediated by the Sacred (Paden 2007)." For Eliade,

Man becomes aware of the sacred because it manifests itself, as something wholly different from the profane. [The] act of manifestation of the sacred... hierophany... expresse... that something sacred shows itself... From the most elementary hierophany – manifestation of the sacred in some ordinary object, a stone or a tree – to the supreme hierophany (which, for a Christian, is the incarnation of Jesus Christ) there is no solution of continuity. In each case we are confronted by the same mysterious act – manifestation of something of a wholly different order, a reality that does not belong to our world, in objects that are an integral part of our natural 'profane' world (Eliade, 1959).

Eliade concept of the “sacred” was influence greatly by Rudolf Otto’s (1929) *Das Heilige (The Sacred)* where Otto instead of studying ideas of God and religion, undertook to analyze the modalities of “the religious experience”. In particular, the feeling, though frightening and irrational, of religious fear before the awe-inspiring *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, the numinous which present itself as the “wholly other”.

This understanding has immense relevance in environmental management. For instance, the biblical conceptual framework that human beings are “Stewards of Nature” finds a clear explanation from Eliades view of the religious experience. The created world that is all forms of flora and fauna as well as inanimate inorganic material, are manifestation of the sacred. In relation to human beings the created therefore invokes a feeling of religious fear in believers. Consequently, these believers will take good care of God’s created reality.

John S. Mbithi’s (1969) conceptual framework that Africans are “Notoriously Religious” and Placide Tempels (1959) concept of the “life-force”, can be explained more clearly from Eliades perspective. The notoriety of Africans is found in their conscious understanding and belief that reality is imbued with the presence of the Supreme Being. For instance mountains, forests and rivers are dwelling places of spirits. According to Tempels they even have a life-force in them. Reality must therefore be respected. All these modes of looking at reality have immense implication to environmental management.

The import of Eliade’s theory is also found in it being non-reductionist. Unlike the functionalist theories of Freud, Durkheim and Marx, which reduces religion to something other than what it is, Eliade propounds the view that religion must always be explained “on its own terms”. The functionalist theories of especially Freud and Marx, misunderstood the role of religion in human life. Freud for instance finds religion to be a neurosis and an illusion. It merely serves to satisfy a guilt conscious in those who are religious (Pals, 1996). Marx on his part sees

religion as opium for the masses. It serves to alienate human beings in a class struggle. For him religion is an illusion, a "... most extreme example of ideology, of a belief system whose chief purpose is simply to provide reasons ... for keeping things in society just the way oppressors like them (Pals, 1996)." These conceptions reduces religion to a psychological feeling instead of it being an objective reality. Eliade's theory on the other hand corrects the Freudian and Marxian reductionist misunderstanding of what religion is and does in human society (Pals, 1996). What Eliade presents is that religion is what it is, and therefore its functions emanates from its being, the awe experience of the other. Eliades theory explains the role of religion in environmental conservation. By bringing in the "sacred" into the realm of human experience and way of life, religion whether Christianity by the Church or traditional religion in the process of inculturation, succeeds in making religious human beings to manage well the environment.

This notwithstanding, Eliade's theory has inherent weaknesses. For one, Eliade presents all that is religious in favourable light, yet experience has shown that religion can and indeed has elements that are not always positive. There are dysfunctional elements of religion. For instance, religion has been used to destroy the environment. From Eliade's understanding this can be argued. The fact that the environment is the complete "other" contra poses it from the self. This may have negative implications where the individual can easily misuse the "other" for the self's selfish end. This is informed by the fact that the "other" is not part of the self. The harmony and respect that emanates form the biblical principle of being one's brother's keeper though can be used to minimise this extreme of the self. The golden rule, do to others what you would like to be done to you, expounds this understanding. The weakness of Eliade's theory means that caution ought to be taken not to apply it uncritically. It also means that this theory ought to be grounded in the positive aspects that Christianity and traditional Religion offer to environmental management. A Christian Liberation theory can also help to ground Eliades understanding.

Liberation theory postulates that liberation:

...is both the undoing of the effects and the elimination of the causes of social oppression. The achievement of human liberation on a global scale will require far-reaching changes at the institutional level and at the level of group and individual interactions. These changes will involve transforming oppressive behavioural patterns and "unlearning" oppressive attitudes and assumptions. Liberation is possible. It is possible to recover the buried memories of our socialization, to share our stories and heal the burts imposed by the conditioning, to act in the present

in a humane and caring manner, to rebuild our human connections and to change our world (Sberove-Marcuse, 2002)

This theory is normally used in situations of oppression especially those of a socio-economic, political and religious nature to advance the understanding that emancipation is possible. Liberation theology is a product of this theory. This theory helps to explain the role that religion plays in liberating people from the bondage that the harsh environment has put them into by they managing the environment. The import of this theory is that it places the onus on the people themselves to better their situation. Being religious, the Christians can use this human resource to manage the world.

Christianity and Environmental Management

Environmental management has become a global issue with immense significance given the adverse effects environmental disasters and calamities have brought to human ecology. Enormous literature is available on the subject. The concern of this paper is on literature on the environment and religion, more specifically on Christianity's understanding of the created reality. The "Forum on Religion and Ecology" an internet site, for instance has a 31 page bibliography on Christianity and ecology. Different aspects of the environment are discussed by different authors. Of particular relevance are those that present biblical, theological and ecclesiological studies on the environment. From these studies one of the most central concepts in religious perspective to environmental management, stewardship is highlighted (Bakken, 2009). This is where human beings are considered to be custodians of the earth and the entire creation. Here the earth and all in it is viewed as belonging to the Lord. Human beings become custodians who must eventually render account for their actions. This concept has positive implications as concerns environmental conservation.

An important Old Testament scholar worth mentioning is Bernhard W. Anderson (1984; 1994). Anderson work gives particular attention to the theology of creation. His two books *From Creation to New Creation: Old Testament Perspectives* and *Creation in the Old Testament* presents Christian understanding of creation with direct implication to environmental protection and care. The first book relates various biblical texts and themes to ecological concerns. For example, Anderson's interpretation of the "primeval history" of Genesis 1-9 (creation through the Noachic flood) is that, though the human-nature relationship is inescapably marred by violence and tragedy, humanity is to serve responsibly as managers of the household of creation—a notion that is grounded in God's universal and ecological covenant with nature and all living things—a notion that is also reflected in God's benevolent rule. The

second book on its part is a collection of texts by Old Testament scholars on the biblical doctrine of creation, ranging from classic treatments by Hermann Gunkel and Gerhard von Rad, to reappraisals by Claus Westermann and H. H. Schmid regarding the significance of creation for ancient Israelite thought, to explorations of the contemporary relevance of creation for human liberation and ecology. Anderson's introduction argues that biblical texts on creation must be read with attention to their mythopoetic form and literary function and he delineates the different dimensions of Israel's creation faith as relating to national identity, order, dependence, origination, and redemption. The two books are important eye openers for anybody who discusses the Old Testament versus the environment. It also contextualizes the drama of the Old Testament to the people of Israel.

Elizabeth Achtemeier's (1992) *Nature, God and Pulpit*, is practical in its own right as it delves into the area of sermon making and delivery. She timely responds to the neglect of the subject of the environment in preaching by providing a comprehensive interpretation of the biblical witness on God's relationship with nature in order to furnish preachers with content for sermons on the subject. Sample sermons and meditations on nature are included as are pointers for using this material in sermons. She presents biblical teachings on: creation and its purpose, the place of human beings in creation, contingency and providence, the corruption of creation, and the redemption of creation. She insists on both the theological importance and value of creation and warns against worshipping the creature rather than the creator. This understanding helps sort out fears as regards liberation theology's exaltation of the battered creation. Indeed the environment ought to be presented not as an end in itself, but being a creature, as a means of glorifying its creator. This understanding helps tone down the excess of liberation theology.

Unlike Anderson and Achtemeier who are Old Testament scholars, Richard Cartwright Austin discusses environmental issues from both the Old and New Testaments but in a holistic manner (Austin, 1990; 1988a; 1988b; 1987). This approach looks at biblical truths from an objective perspective. It draws from biblical theology rather than emphasis on direct scriptural quotations. This approach is more appropriate when handling a context that is removed from actual biblical texts. He immerses his discussion in the context of the American people using their political language to present biblical teachings on the environment. In *Reclaiming America: Restoring Nature to Culture*, Austin (1990) employs language of the American political tradition in order to advocate policies for environmental liberation that are appropriate to both the biblical tradition and contemporary circumstances. Part one of the book underscores the right to "the pursuit of happiness" and the role of independent farmers in a

free society in order to present the emotional and moral requirements for satisfying human work. Part two presents a moral vision for a new agriculture that can meet human needs while also protecting the environment. Part three proposes that we should incorporate the rights of human access to nature and the rights of nature itself into the Constitution and offers a strategy for land reform. Part four suggests four ways—including nature within its worship, mission, service, and spiritual life—the Church can participate in the effort to redeem the Earth.

Austin (1988b) presents a reading of the Bible in terms of “biblical ecology”—a moral perspective on the relationships among and between God, humanity, and the Earth in another of his work, *Hope for the Land: Nature in the Bible*. Here he examines, in turn, several themes including: 1) liberation of oppressed people and lands, 2) God’s creativity and the human vocation to nurture the world’s abundance, 3) a Sabbath ecology of covenantal relationships of rights and duties among all living things and the land, 4) stories of “the fall,” expressing the breaking of these relationships, and 5) ecological visions of hope for their restoration. Austin’s survey includes not only the usual texts—creation narratives, Israel’s history in the land, and eschatological visions—but also the stories of David and Solomon and the ministry of Jesus.

Austin’s (1988a) other book *Beauty of the Lord: Awakening the Senses*, utilizes both intellectual reflection and personal narrative, to help Christians recover a sensuous experience of God and nature through the concept of beauty. He argues that faith derives from the experience of beauty in God and is strengthened by the awakening of one’s senses to beauty in nature. He suggests that such awakened experience can lead to a more creative and integrated personal identity, to the active enjoyment and protection of the Earth, and to an acceptance of death as part of the good creation. In order to achieve this ideal, however, one must first overcome personal projections and religious and social values that have shaped modern attitudes toward nature and bodily awareness.

Finally in *Baptized into Wilderness: A Christian Perspective on John Muir*, Austin (1987) draws a portrait of John Muir (1838–1914) as one whose religious consciousness fused wilderness experiences with scriptural images and then argues that by listening to Muir, American Christians can recover a sense of their relation with nature that fits the gospel. According to Austin, Muir found God in nature (e.g., nature was Christ for Muir). Muir combined a physical engagement, a sensuous openness, and spiritual discernment in his encounters with wilderness, finding intrinsic value in all creatures and viewing nature’s “destructive” processes as part of God’s creative work. He was an evangelist urging urban inhabitants to overcome their alienation from nature and a pro-

phetic advocate of wilderness preservation. Recognizing the limits to preservationism, Austin also tries to think with Muir about the possibilities for productive, interactive relationships between culture and nature.

A theological minefield that offers a completely new and refreshing way of looking at ecotheology are Papers from a 1990 conference in Cuddesdon, England, by contributors who hold that the environmental challenge cannot be “domesticated” by taking the “safe” approach of reinterpreting existing Christian language but rather requires that Christians completely re-think traditional attitudes toward the natural world (Ian Ball & Reader, 1992). Part one examines the underlying character of the environmental issue as involving human identity. Part two critiques the limitations of some of the attempts to reformulate the Christian tradition such as stewardship. Part three provides examples of ways to engage in the search for new answers through open discussion, pilgrimages, community drama and artistic creativity. These are not only enriching concerns, they are also practical approach as concerns environmental management. The critical methodology applied in the conference adds value to these concerns and approaches and offers useful lessons in the Christian’s environmental management awareness.

Karen Baker-Fletcher’s (1988) *Sisters of Dust, Sisters of Spirit: Womanist Wordings on God and Creation*, speaks to a Christian woman’s mind. Baker-Fletcher writes from the heart as a black feminist Christian who values the natural world and is concerned with issues of environmental justice. She notes that humans are both earthly and spiritual creatures and God as Spirit is immanent in them and in all creation. Jesus Christ, as the embodiment of the Spirit in Creation, fully represents our human connectedness to creation. She then asserts that our survival requires realistic visions of a new order within which all people, together with the rest of creation, can flourish in freedom. Although black theologians have not written extensively on ecology, Baker-Fletcher affirms that women of color have a deep appreciation for creation due to their historical connections with the land. Her essays reflect on both her own experiences with nature and the black community’s struggles with issues such as racism and environmental injustice. Mary Catherine Clipson (2000) "Sustainable Living: A Case Study of Nuns and Their Beliefs, Attitudes and Practices" Ph.D. dissertation situates a special group of women in the Roman Catholic tradition as useful mode of evangelizing sustainability of the environment. Nuns or religious women life inspired by monastic life is a form of liberation from the world. This detachment from the things of the world means that one is inspired not to misuse the environment; but rather to respect it in anticipation of the future heavenly world. On a broader understanding, this awareness apportions women a significant role in environmental management.

Liberation theology offers relevant insights for a Christian's efforts towards environmental management. This is the case especially because the focus of this type of theology is highly contextualized. It is localized. Liberation theology however has the weakness at times of romanticizing the poor or the marginalized. It is thus useful to take a more critical and analytical perspective as concerns liberation theologies concerns. The understanding could be that Christians themselves are the contributing factor in environmental degradation and that they have within themselves the capacity to remedy the environmental ills they could have brought to themselves. This notwithstanding Leonardo Boff's liberation theology is useful. Boff (1997), a leading Brazilian theologian in his *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, extends the theology of liberation to include the Earth, which, like oppressed people, is exploited by the rich and powerful. He argues that the dominant paradigm, which sets humankind over things rather than alongside them in cosmic community, must be replaced by a new paradigm of connectedness. Boff describes the new paradigm of the Earth as planetary community and utilizes terms such as cosmogenesis. He then characterizes the ecological crisis as a loss of connectedness and shows the linkages between ecology and liberation theology. Boff gives special attention to the Amazonian region and its people. For the Amazonians God is described in panentheistic (God in all and all in God) terms, the Spirit is described as being immanent in Creation, and Christ is presented as the Cosmic Christ while St. Francis is presented as a model of ecological spirituality.

In another equally relevant work, *Ecology and Liberation: A New Paradigm*, Boff (1995) fuses liberationist, ecological, and mystical perspectives into a new religious paradigm for the post-Cold War era. The first part of the book develops Boff's holistic, trinitarian, panentheistic "ecological paradigm," a paradigm that extends the liberationist "option for the poor" to include other threatened beings and species. He argues that the blame for environmental and social problems lies within a global capitalistic system that serves the interests of the rich. He notes that the solution lies not with forms of environmentalism that reflect those same interests, but with an "ecologico-social democracy" that includes all creatures and seeks both social and ecological justice for all. The second part of the book primarily examines issues of global justice after the collapse of communism. The final section of the book presents Boff's basis for this new social and ethical order through his presentation of the "mental ecology" of mysticism. The concept of mysticism motivated by ecological democracy of all creatures is particularly relevant as it may help develop an authentic "Christian spirituality" of the environment. Such spirituality is possible in a community of believers, the Church. But the Church is human and thus fails to live by what is expected of it.

Richard A. Baer (1966) as early as in the 1960s noticed the human failings in the ecclesiastical institution. He criticizes the Church's failure to respond to the crisis of land abuse in general and deforestation in particular. Baer lays out the theological imperative for engaging the issue. He cites biblical texts affirming nature's value for human beings and its intrinsic value for God, and states that both the worship of and the spoliation of nature are dehumanizing and incompatible with belief in creation. Baer argues that the Church's efforts are needed to overcome public apathy and to confront social power structures with an ethic of land use.

Traditional African Religion and Environmental Management

M. L. Daneel (2001) opens a window into the African value system albeit with a mix of Christianity. The book recounts the history, work, and theological underpinnings of the Traditionalist and Independent Christian Shona earthkeepers of the Masvingo Province in Zimbabwe, who fight 'the war of the trees' against ecological degradation. The first part of the book recounts the history of the earthkeeping mission and the second part deals with the Christian dimension of this work. Being in a typical African setting one finds the useful ingredients for an inculturated awareness for environmental management.

Joseph OY Mante, "Towards an Ecological, Christian Theology of Creation in an African Context." Ph.D. dissertation notes: (1) that Africa south of the Sahara desert has an ecological crisis and African theologians have not adequately responded to it; (2) that the main-line Western theologies that have influenced African theologians have themselves been ecologically bankrupt; (3) that the present trend in thoroughgoing indigenization in contemporary African theologies tend to divert attention from other issues such as ecology; and (4) that there is a need to respond (theologically) to the ecological crisis by attempting an ecological doctrine of creation which will be helpful for the current African context. Mante's ideas opens ones mind to issues of ecotheology in an African setting albeit in a general sense. His insights particularize ecotheology in a specific African community, the Pokot. This is also what David J. Ndegwah (2007) attempted to do in his *Biblical Hermeneutics as a Tool for Inculturation in Africa: A Case Study of the Pökot People of Kenya*. Using John's Gospel text on the Good Shepherd, Ndegwah shows how the Pokot have understood and contextualized the parable of the Good Shepherd. He then comes out with a Pokot Biblical Hermeneutics. Ndegwah's methodology of Pokot biblical hermeneutics helps in understanding and explaining how the Christian values, such as that of stewardship of the environment has been applied by the Pokot.

While briefly discussing traditional African beliefs and practices that has negative impact on the environment, Nahashon W. Ndungu (2005), in a book *Challenges and Prospects of the Church in Africa: Theological*

Reflections of the 21st Century, presents contemporary factors among them an erroneous application of biblical principles in the destruction of the environment. In the same book Adam Chepkwony (2005) delves into the theme of inculturation, a central theme in environmental management. Indeed Chepkwony's assertion that African religion should be the basis on which the gospel of Jesus finds its true expression in Africa can not be overemphasised. This is a wise counsel to be applied in localized awareness of environmental management.

Professor B. E. L. Wishitemi (2008) in an inaugural lecture 'Community-Based Conservation and Tourism Development Adjacent To Protected Areas in Kenya' provided very useful insights to environmental management awareness. His concern is on conservation of biodiversity outside protected areas in Kenya, more particularly in pastoral community rangelands of Kenya. Wishitemi rightly identifies declining land space, increasing human populations, alienation of local people, lack of socio-economic incentives and lack of models to be adopted as hindering conservation of biodiversity. He strongly contends that communities must be brought back to the centre of conservation as the Traditional National Park Model has failed because it concentrates less on local expertise, needs and development. What this means is that the local people must be involved in all aspects of ecological management of their habitat. One significant aspect of the local communities involvement in environmental conservation is their religious inclinations. Pastoral communities are religious. Their religious beliefs and practices contribute immensely in their attitudes and behaviour in relation to the environment. There is need therefore to incorporate this aspect of their way of life if any tangible results are to be expected. Inculturation is the process of effecting this strategy.

A masters thesis by Simon Gisege Omare (2006) *Role of Isukha Religious Beliefs and Practices in the Conservation of Kakamega Forest* also provide useful inculturation perspective. Chapter one of the thesis provides useful bibliography for African religion where scholars such as John S, Mbiti among others are discussed. This help in analysing traditional religion. In chapter three aspects of Isukha traditional religious beliefs and practices such as taboos, totems, rituals, specialists among others are discussed. While chapter four delves into obstacles to and efforts of conservation.

The Case of the Roman Catholic Church

A Universal and Local Mandate:

Christianity in general grapples with new challenges in its mission. It needs to update itself, look for and formulate strategies if it has to achieve its goal of evangelisation. The Roman Catholic Church for example, attempts to address many of the problems facing communities

by helping them cope with the challenges these communities face. Apart from its normal pastoral work, the Church is involved in provision of education, health, development, counselling services as well as offering advocacy in issues of governance and human rights.

Evangelisation is the bringing of Good News to every creature. It is the basic mandate and mission given by the founder of Christianity, Jesus Christ, to his followers, the Christians (k 16:15, 13:10; Matthew 28: 18-19; Luke 24:47; John 20:21.). The Roman Catholic Church in its self-understanding has a universal mission to establish the kingdom of God on earth by proclaiming the Gospel to every creature (Flannery, 1975). This awareness is captured in one of the documents of Vatican Council II, 'Pastoral Constitution on the church in the Modern World'. The document, hailed as one of the most important blueprints of the Church's activities in the world, clearly affirms that the church is in solidarity with the whole human family. It reads:

The joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the men of our time especially of those who are poor or afflicted in any way, are the joy and the hope, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well. ...That is why Christians cherish a feeling of deep solidarity with the human race and its history (Flannery, 1975).

This understanding has motivated the church to involve itself in activities that promote the development of the society.

The involvement of the church in society is spelt out in what is referred to as 'The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church', a document published in 2004 by the Pontifical Council Iustitia et Pax. In it the Church propounds its specific point of view on social matters. Aspects of these social teachings and action spring from the church's understanding of the human person, the family and society. Specifically it propounds issues of ethics and political society such as law, morality, the common good, justice, peace, human rights, war and international relations. It also addresses issues of ethics and Economic society such as labour, property, capital, population, resources and the environment. In particular, Chapter Ten of the Compendium concerns 'Safeguarding of the environment' (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2004; Hervé, 1990; Rodger, 1999).

The environment and its proper management are therefore taking a central place in the mind and mission of the Church. In his 2010 message for World Day of Peace to the world, which is also traditionally celebrated on New Year Day, the head of the Roman Catholic Church, the Pope, Benedict XVI (2010), specifically addressed the issue of environmental management. The document entitled 'If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation', links respect for creation, that is the environment, to

peaceful co-existence of human beings. Earlier, the Pope in his encyclical, 'Charity in Truth', noted that "... development is also closely related to the duties arising from our relationship to the natural environment" (Benedict XVI, 2009). This understanding has implications in the proper management of the environment where it is seen as God's gift to all people, and therefore its use entails a shared "... responsibility towards the poor, towards future generations and towards humanity as a whole" (Benedict XVI, 2009).

Benedict XVI's insights on the environment follow those of his predecessors, among them John Paul II. In 1980, John Paul II Message for the World Day of Peace had the theme, 'Peace with God the Creator, Peace with All Creation. The message of John Paul II emphasised the relationship of human beings to the universe around, all of which are God's creatures. It also noted as quoted by Benedict XVI, that "... ecological awareness, rather than being downplayed, needs to be helped to develop and mature, and find fitting expression in concrete programmes and initiatives (Benedict, 2010)". These programmes and initiatives are seen in what is done by some Catholic communities. For instance, in the Philippines, the most Catholic populous country in the Orient, Catholic Bishops released a pastoral letter in 1988 on the environment. The pastoral letter calls ecological degradation a threat to life and social stability in the Philippines. It reflects on the original beauty of the island's native ecosystems as well as the wounds inflicted by exploitative "progress." The Bishops call Filipinos to be stewards of creation in order to preserve and heal their homeland. They also point to what they see as signs of hope in Filipino culture. The letter also argues that the care for the Earth is nurtured and sustained by various strands of Christian faith, including devotion to the Virgin Mary. Specific actions for individuals, churches, governments, and nongovernmental organizations are also recommended (Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, 1988).

A statement by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2001) argues for dialogue and the common good in public debates about US policy on Global Climate Change. The Bishops in a document entitled *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence and the Common Good*, notes that at its core, global climate change is not about economic theory or political platforms, nor about partisan advantage or interest group pressures but it is about the future of God's creation and the one human family. In the mind of the Bishops, the superpower status of the United States of America means that the United States of America which by extension include the Bishops, bear a special responsibility in the stewardship of God's creation. America must shape responses that serve the entire human family. But their particular vocation in this respect is to argue that the focus of dialogue should be on the needs of the poor, the

weak, and the vulnerable. This insight recalls the Christian doctrine of the option for the poor and being one's brother's keeper. Christians ought to use their influence to make the world a better place, if not for self, for the other. Christians must evaluate their actions in relation to how it affects the environment which in turn affects another person wellbeing.

The 'concrete programmes and initiatives' are also evident in the mind of Kenyan Roman Catholic Bishops (Catholic Justice & Peace Commission, 2008; 2009; 2010). For instance, Lenten Campaigns (carried out during the forty days of prayer, fasting and repentance before Easter) for the years 2008, 2009 and 2010 had issues on the environment. Week 3 of the 5 week programme of creating awareness and practical application on social issues has been dedicated to the environment. Programme for the year 2008 considered climate change, with a call to Christians to be proactive in their thinking in order to reverse the effects of climate change. The year 2009 had meditation on environmental care with Christians being reminded that they have destroyed their forests thus causing immense havoc and climate change. Consequently they were asked to maintain the integrity of creation by planting indigenous trees. The year 2010 proposes care for the environment through the example of an old and bent woman who positively changed the face of a seeming unproductive mountain side by years of planting flowers and trees.

On their part, the Bishops of Eastern Africa who were delegates to The Second Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops held in October 2009 in Rome issued a statement just days before the start of the Synod to the effect that the environment was on their list of important new elements for discussions (Radio Vaticana, 2013). This was a significant step as the *Lineamenta*, a document published in 2006 to help prepare the agenda for the Synod did not mention the environment (Synod of Bishops, 2006). The concern on the environment made the Bishops to make a call to their local churches to guarantee sustainable and responsible care of the earth. The call included among other recommendations: promotion of environmental education and awareness, persuading local and national governments to adopt policies and adhere to legal regulations for the protection of the environment, promotion of alternative and renewable sources of energy, and encouraging everyone to plant trees and treat nature and its resources with respect (Radio Vaticana, 2013).

Inculturation as a Strategy

The relationship between land use and ecology with resultant effects such as environmental degradation, poverty and poor quality of life of the local communities present pastoral challenges to the Church. The Church therefore needs strategies to face such challenges adequately. An incultured awareness to environmental management enriches these

strategies. Sound ecological management involves responsible use of the environment. When Christians “cultivate and care”, (Genesis 2:1), that is, use the environment responsibly, they follow God’s command.

On the other hand, African traditional religion recognizes that a divinity creates, sustains, provides for and rules all created reality (Mbiti, 1991). Traditional African values system emphasizes harmony not only among humans but also between humans and their animal, plant and inanimate environment in their day to day lives. Indigenous African people have numerous cultural beliefs and practices which control all aspects of their lifestyle (Mbiti, 1969). In this respect, the way they perceive the environment, its role and importance in their lives, forms of its utilization and their efforts at managing it for sustainable utilization for themselves and posterity, guides how they relate to the environment. This awareness has implications to the good use of created reality whether flora or fauna.

The effort by the church in environmental management is thus, not a lone ranger affair. The church recognises that it is the responsibility of the entire human family. The words of Pope Benedict XVI while recalling the teaching of Vatican Council II that the goods of creation belong to humanity as a whole is fitting in this respect:

Humanity needs a profound cultural renewal; it needs to rediscover those values which can serve as the solid base for building a brighter future for all. Our present crises – be they economic, food-related, environmental or social are ultimately also moral crises, and all of them are interrelated. They require us to rethink the path which we are travelling together. Specifically, they call for a lifestyle marked by sobriety and solidarity, with rules and forms of engagement, one which focuses confidently and courageously on strategies that actually work, while decisively rejecting those that have failed. Only in this way can the current crisis become an opportunity for discernment and new strategic planning. ... We are all responsible for the protection and care of the environment (Benedict XVI, 2010).

Indeed, this responsibility knows no boundaries. Be they believers or non-believers; Christians, Muslims, Hindus or Traditional African Religious Believers; Catholics or Protestants. All have a responsibility towards the care of the environment.

It is in this respect that Christianity endeavours to adopt aspects of African Traditional Religions to properly manage the environment. The principle of subsidiarity as is that of inculturation, where positive aspects of traditional religious values and practices are incorporated into Christianity, demands this. The Pokot people of Kenya can serve as an example for an inculturated strategy for environmental management. This marginalised people have over the years used their traditional cultural

knowledge, value system and practices to manage the environment. The environment on its part has sustained the Pokot. Ida Wingrup in a graduate thesis underscores the role Pokot 'Indigenous Knowledge' plays in managing forests and forests resources (Wigrup, 2005).

On the same note, Anne Kisaka Nangulu in her doctoral research studied 'coping mechanism' by the Pokot in what she calls a 'harsh environment' (Nangulu, 2001). Indeed, in spite of the many challenges and difficulties, natural ones such as unfavourable climatic conditions and rugged terrain, and human ones such as cattle raiding, Nangulu contends that "... most Pokot have learned, over the years to rely not only on one, but multiple activities, all complementing each other to survive in a harsh environment" (Nangulu, 2001). Of these mechanisms she notes that lending and borrowing of food is based on reciprocity. Reciprocity is a cultural value and virtue that informs Pokot coping mechanism which by extension would help in environmental management. It is in this sense that the environment reciprocates human efforts of managing it by it providing for human sustenance. This could be an African ecological spirituality.

This spirituality in an atmosphere of biblical inculturation is captured clearly with an application of biblical exegesis of the Johannine passage of the Good Shepherd by the Pokot people. In understanding the text in their context, the Pokot can apply the teachings of the bible and consequently of Christianity in their day to day lives. They too can enrich the Christian message of Good News with their positive cultural values and way of life. This is what David J. Ndegwa (2007) rightly indicates.

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to present the awareness of Christianity to its mission to evangelize the environment. The natural environment on which human beings depend for sustenance is groaning due to many factors. Something has to be done to liberate the environment. Human beings are called to be proactive. Through being aware of its responsibility to take care of the environment, Christianity has the task to educate humanity. It does this not only by its own insights based on its theology and the bible, but also through the wisdom of other religious traditions. Through the strategy of inculturation, Christianity courtesy of traditional African religious beliefs and practices brings humanity to the awareness not only of hearing the groans of the earth, but also doing something about it.

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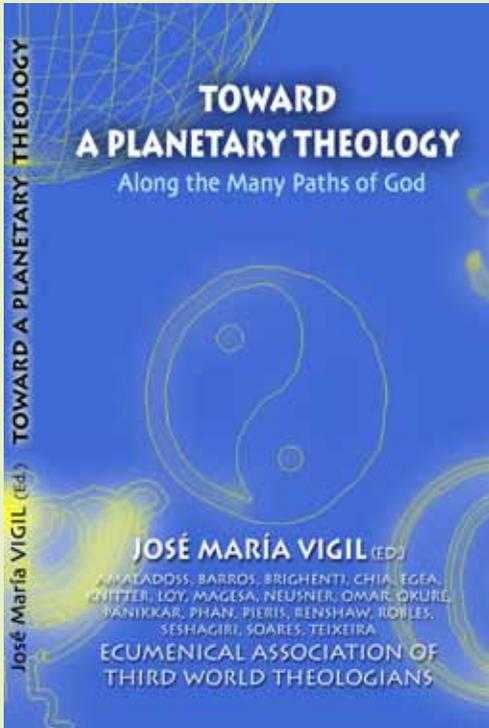


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Ecological Vision in a Groaning World

Environmental sustainability: a theological perspective

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Abstract

The Environment is defined as humans and their relationships with the living and non-living things in the world. The Bible tells us that God created all things in the universe and that all was very good. He entrusted the world to humans whom he gave the gift of intellect to know good and evil. Human beings have used their gift of innovation that is in science and technology; to move from being hunters and gatherers to becoming agriculturists and industrialists. They have managed to make their lives better. But in their development, they have lacked proper planning for all creatures – both living and non-living. They have made the environment dysfunctional, therefore our mother earth is groaning. God's intention was for humans to manage and care for all creatures in the world. The environment is now in a crisis, the future of life on earth is uncertain unless humans start addressing this crisis immediately. There is global warming, desertification, deforestation, pollution, extinct of some species, and other environmental challenges like floods, and feminine. All these are caused by human activity which effect innovations and modifications. The spirit of humans' mastery of all God's creatures has led them to uncontrollable exploitation of the earth's renewable and non-renewable resources in the world.

In Uganda there is an encroachment on the environment in several areas such as clearing of forests for settlement because of lack of control of the growth of population. This destroys the living and non-living creatures that make their habitant in forests and water bodies. There is also encroachment on water bodies, like Lake Victoria in Uganda, which is the second largest fresh water Lake in the world. If the encroachment

on this lake continues at the present rate, it will disappear and the future generation may not find it around. There is great need for Uganda to put in place laws and sensitization programs, seriously aiming at sensitizing the masses on the importance of environmental protection in the country. Encroachment on both the forest lands and water bodies must stop. The government, NGOs and Environmentalists need to work together to overcome this problem before it is too late.

Introduction

In the world today human life on the earth is faced with a lot of environmental problems caused by the idea of human mastery over the real capacity of earth or in other words development or transforming our mother earth into better place to live in. This has come with a cost to all living and non-living creatures on planet earth. Global warming, extinction of species, various kinds of pollution, deforestation, desertification and consequently floods, famine, acid rain, diseases, drought, hunger, and war are some of the environmental challenges and their effects in our life which mostly have accrued from human whim and greed. Tendency for growth and improvement without proper vision, plans, actions, and assessment has led to unwise development. As a result countries all over the world compete over development in ways that might compromise environment and scarce natural resources. When God created the world he entrusted it to human beings to manage and care for it, but they have instead taken advantage of it and made some places inhabitable like a certain place in Russia. Indeed the earth is groaning!

The present generation has come to realize that there is an environmental dysfunction in the world today. This is because they have become aware that there are many changes in the weather and seasons due to the thinning of the ozone layer. There is uncontrollable exploitation of the world's earth resources. For example, a survey made by UNEP (1991) shows that the rate of deforestation in Africa is 4040 ha per year that is 0.6% per year and it is even higher in other place in the world. This just one area, other areas where human beings have not fulfilled their mandate of caring for the environment properly is in land degradation, water pollution and population control.¹ Maybe that is why our mother earth is groaning.

When we read from the Bible in Genesis 1:1-25, after creating everything, God saw how good each creature was and He was happy. Lastly He created human beings and put them in charge of all His creation. He said to them: "Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth."² Many people have interpreted this in different ways. I think that God placed a big

responsibility at the hands of humans entrusting them with the duty of managing and caring for other creatures. If God saw that everything He had created was good then why should human beings disfigure it? In the Compendium of the Social doctrine of the Church, it is said that, “If man intervenes in nature without abusing it or damaging it, then he intervenes not in order to modify nature but to foster its development in its own life, that of creation that God intended it.”³ In this way humans are fulfilling their duty of managing and caring for the earth. In Psalm 8, the Psalmist says that “What are humans that you are mindful of them. You have made them little less than a god... You have given them to rule over the works of your hands, put all things at their feet.”⁴ In fact, it was God’s will that man becomes the king of creation, hence cooperating with the creator by using their intelligence in furthering God’s work of creation. Through science and technology humans have used their God given talents to discover and develop the earth to its present status. Man has come a long way from being a hunter and a gatherer to one who can go to the moon! What has gone wrong why is our mother earth groaning then? Let us start with the situation in Uganda as a micro example.

Environmental Issues in Uganda

Uganda is known as the pearl of Africa because of its natural beauty, the beautiful rolling hills, big mountains, the tropical forests, the savannas, the fresh water lake, and other lakes. Indeed God has endowed this country! How can Ugandans best sustain the environment? If we want to sustain our environment we must find means of passing on to the future generation the resources and knowledge we have today so as to help them in turn to develop themselves. Afuna Adula looks at the environment as having four dimensions: the ecological-biological, social-economic, the social-cultural and the time dimension.⁵ The Ecological-Biological is the relationship between the living and the non-living physical form of the environment, which forms one quarter of it. The non-living includes the rocks, soils, hills and mountains, water bodies, etc.; and the living things are the forests and all plants of every kind plus animals. The second dimension is the socio-economic, this includes the social way of life, social institutions such as church and traditional institutions, and modern ones such as world bank which is involved in money and business, IMF, Cooperate Organizations, the socio-cultural which is involved with spiritualities of the local people their attitudes, names, medicines, social life styles, besides these there is the eco-spirituality and spiritual ecology, and lastly the time dimension, from time immemorial humans have always shared the environment with other creatures. With time humans began taking more than other creatures in name of development.

Sustainable Environmental Development

Afunaduula defines sustainable development as maintaining the delicate balance between the human need to improve life styles and the feeling of well-being on the one hand, and preserving the natural resources and ecosystems on which we and future generations depend.⁶ In addition to this, the WCED's definition agrees with this when it says that sustainable development is that which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs.⁷ Is the present day population of Uganda thinking about the future generation in terms of environmental protection? When we look around our surroundings we find that people do not care, one of the signs is that some do not mind about garbage dumping and collection. They need to be sensitized about this. It is good to remember that sustainable development must have two sides, that is, economic growth should go hand in hand with environment protection, that is, to say that people's economic growth resulting from human activities should not destroy the environment but care for it preparing it for the future generation. This is what God meant when He entrusted the world and all that it contains to human beings. They have the responsibility to make other creatures grow and prosper using their God-given gift of intellect and reasoning capacity which other creature do not possess. Having mastery over other creatures means caring for and making them better, in other words co-creating with God the Creator.

In 1972 the UN held a conference in Stockholm which discussed the causes that have led to the deteriorating trends of the environment in the world. Since then there has been a wide world acceptance of the importance of the environmental conservation. Hence the world conservation strategy and subsequently the report of the world Commission on the environment and development were developed in response to increasingly informed analysis of the link between the environment and development.⁸ This report emphasized the social and economic dimension of sustainability, revealing links for instance between poverty and environmental degradation. It is said that sustainable development encompasses three dimensions: the Economic development, Community development and the Ecological development.⁹ This is supported by Afuna-Adula says that today sustainability is seen as a link between environmentalists and development mentalists. Both agree that there is need to view continuity sustainable economic growth and environmental protection.¹⁰ If people are very poor then they will not care about the environment, but if they have the economic support then they will care for it because they know that what happens to the environment affects them as well. This can be illustrated by two slums in Uganda.

In Uganda there is an encroachment on environment in the slum areas, for example, there are many buildings being constructed in wet lands, like in Bwaise, and Kikoni the Kampala city suburbs, where it is always floods whenever it rains. There is development but always comes with a cost because whenever it floods people lose their properties like household items such as cooking utensils, beddings chairs and the many others, sometimes even lives are lost. Besides this, there is garbage dumping in water channels. In such slums, there is limited latrine and public toilets, severe poor sanitation, high density, dumping of human and animal feces, stagnant water, hence water pollution. When I made a survey in Kikoni and Bwaise this is what I found: I found that there is lack of proper planning of the area. For example, developments in the area are haphazardly planned. Many people came from the village and turned the place into a slum area. This place is divided into two: one part is occupied by the rich, with good residences and the other by the very poor people who live in wetlands. Their situation is exacerbated with ignorance, illiteracy, poverty, low income, high fertility, low security and unskillful people in the area. All these affect people's ability to manage their environment and natural resources. This situation compels these people to destroy those very resources that are necessary to relieve them from hunger, and diseases. The poor people's priority is to satisfy their basic needs such as food, shelter clothing etc., hence sanitation and care of the environment is put aside. In fact to them the interaction between human and the environment and the consumption of natural resources is a matter of survival. I found out that poverty is one of the important causes of environmental challenges in Uganda especially in slum areas.

Sustainability of natural resources in Uganda

Frank Mulamuzi, an environmentalist advocate and executive Director of the National Association of Professional Environmentalist (NAPE) said that "Climate change does not happen in isolation it interacts with the existing problems and challenges of deforestation, soil degradation, declining food security, declining fish stocks and makes them worse."¹¹ This is true because there has been climate change causing changes in the seasons, for example in Mid-Western Uganda, that is former Bunyoro and Tooro we used to have two rainy seasons in March-April and September-October, but today this is unpredictable. We have long dry seasons and the rains come at the time when it is least expected. Sometimes we have earthquakes, floods and dry spells. I think that all these are due to climate change caused by modifications in the world. Where are these modifications taking place in Uganda today? Nahashon W. Ndungu says that the environmental situation in Africa is depicted as a pathetic one. Both humanity and nature are crying for healing. The

majority of Africans live below the poverty line: and the situation worsens when droughts and famines strike.¹² This is happening right now in Karamoja, Uganda people in that area are dying of hunger. The only food they have are leaves of trees, this was shown on WBS TV last week, on 29th July, 2013. Many people were dying because of hunger and thirst there is very little water in the area. Tame animals such as cows and goats were dying as well. Indeed the mother earth is groaning. Some people say that this was caused by lack of rain and overgrazing.

The situation of poverty in Africa is clearly seen when one visits the city and town streets. One finds street kids, men and women and sometimes street families. Ndung'u says that, the street family phenomenon in urban areas has created a class of people with no source of livelihood or shelter and place to call home. Therefore, these people have nowhere to dump their garbage, no place to clean up themselves, and even keep the little property they have. They contribute in polluting the environment. They do not care about the environment their first priority is for survival. These people have no time to attend Environmental sensitization seminars, or even gatherings. They usually hide from the "Keep the City Clean" programs.

Forestation in Uganda

It is estimated that had more than five million hectares of forests in 1990, but by 2005, only three and a half million hectares had remained. Commenting on this the National Environmental Authority (NEMA), said that "If the rate of deforestation continues like this, then by 2050, Uganda will have lost all its forested land."¹³ This was attributed to several things like deforestation, expanding farmlands, rapid population growth and urbanization. I think this is true because population growth has led some people to migrate to other areas of the country. For example the Bakiga from Kabale have migrated to Kibaale District in the former Bunyoro area. They have cut down many forested areas for farmland, but at the same time they have grown enough food for themselves and for sale to Hoima Town and Kampala city. Some people have migrated to Kampala city and town centers looking for jobs and good life but they have been disappointed and many have ended up in slum areas where life is so difficult. Due to migrations from rural to urban centers, areas surrounding Kampala city have already lost more than 78% of their forested land since 1990. It is suggested that NEMA and government are required to find urgent measures to mobilize the population for conservation of the present forest resources through a forestation and reforestation by educating the people about a degraded environment and its consequences.¹⁴

It is estimated that Uganda loses close to 73 hectares of forest cover annually, which according to some experts has been the country's biggest climate threat. It is said that at the center of deforestation is the lucrative charcoal trade. It is estimated that 95% of Ugandans depend on charcoal and wood for cooking. The people who are carrying this trade are making a living from it. Some of them have become rich and bought Lorries to help them carry out the business. Others have hired many workers to carry out the trade they no longer go to the forests but remain at home looking for customers and convincing them to buy more at higher price. This trade is also known as "black gold trade." Unfortunately, this lucrative charcoal trade is not only wreaking havoc on forests alone but also on its famous inhabitants like the rare gorillas which is big tourist attraction. This is an indication that people want quick money instead of thinking and planning for the future generations. People need sensitization about environmental protection for the future generation. NGOs and government need to help people focus more on the environmental preservation for now and the future. When the forests are destroyed, even the other creatures that live there are killed or migrate to other places. For example, the rare gorillas that are, only found in Uganda. In a way it is to our disadvantage because tourists come from all over the world to visit us to see, and watch these rare animals. Ugandans need to think about these things before the extinct of such rare species. In fact there are other creatures that live in forests like small animals such as the colored lizards, the monkeys and all types snakes. Besides this, there are all kinds of herbs which traditional medicine men and women collect from the forest, these are used to cure diseases and many people, especially those who cannot afford or do not like conventional medicine. Some people in Uganda prefer herbal medicine because it has no side effects like the conventional ones.

It is said that Uganda is focusing on what is in Agenda 21, what was decided in the UN Conference on the Environment and Development in 1992, which set out 27 general principles. This is a big document of 40 chapters with detailed recommendations to governments and organizations. These cover different things on the environment, social and economic issues. Regarding the conditions of sustainable development in Uganda, the Agenda 21 calls for the government to enact efforts for sustainable management of the environment and the people of Uganda's desire to have a balance between the conflicting demands of natural environment, social equity, economic development as well as the well being of all people in the community.

Despite the National Progress Assessment Report on the implementation of Agenda 21, yet the pace at which ecosystem and nature are being degraded has not slowed down, hence communities and individu-

als still face many problems.¹⁵ This is clearly seen when one visits the slums in Kampala, especially when it is during a rainy season, the floods are everywhere, the garbage litter the homesteads and paths ways. There are few public toilet facilities in those places, this worsens the situation and makes the inhabitants very vulnerable to different diseases. Indeed our mother earth is groaning at such sites. What can be done to see that every person in Uganda gets the message? Every person is responsible for the protection of our environment. More to this our government, NGOs and religious Leaders also have the mandate to rescue such situations. A human being is whole person, body, soul and mind plus his/her surroundings.

When one visits big forests like Budongo or Bugoma or Kibaale forests in western Uganda, on the surface one finds that these are indeed big with huge trees but this is only along the roadside, inside most of the trees have been harvested by those who need hard timber. It is a well known fact that it takes about one hundred years for such trees like mahogany, to grow to its full maturity. People need to be sensitized to know how to balance between the love for economic growth and respect for nature. No matter how much effort the International Communities and government may put in, if the local people are not convinced and committed to the environmental protection or if they do not see the usefulness of this, everything will be null and void.

There is hope because a group of environmentalists have started using modern technology to reach out to people and sensitize them about the dangers of environmental degradation, especially in the areas of deforestation. Josette reporting on February 24th, 2002 said that, they have been collecting data and creating awareness with the phenomenon growth of mobile technology in the last 10 years. They are now able to reach out to many people in the country's most affected by deforestation.¹⁶ It is said that this successful multi-layered campaign in which many organizations, individual citizens and media outlets in Uganda collaborated. It was the first of its kind and we hope that many more will join the struggle. This is a good example of joined effort to fight deforestation. If many more people are sensitized about proper protection of our environment, then both we today and the future generation will live a better life.

Water Pollution in Uganda

In Uganda we have several water bodies, these include lakes and rivers. To illustrate the extent of how our water has been polluted I will use Lake Victoria locally known as Nalubale. It is said that Lake Victoria is second largest freshwater lake in the world. It is share by three countries

of East Africa, that is, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. It has a mean depth of 40 meters and maximum depth of 80 meters. The lake basin is used by communities and industries as a source of food, energy, water and transport. It is the source of River Nile, which is well known for white water rafting and flows to Egypt through Sudan.¹⁷ It is also said that the causes of rising pollution levels are many and each of the three countries sharing it is culpable. The lake has for a long time been a sink to excessive nutrients and untreated effluent that have led to fish die-offs, algal blooms and the spread of hyacinth, a dangerous water weed. Although most of it has now been cleared but whatever has remained is still causing danger to the lake and all living creatures in the lake.¹⁸

The Environmentalists say that waste management remains a big problem in Uganda. It has caused pollution of the environment including the soil and water. One of them says that pollution has greatly impacted on Lake Victoria. The water of the Lake has turned dark green because of pollution. In fact pollution has put the Lake at a risk of drying up.¹⁹ Long time ago Lake Victoria was surrounded by fertile land and used to receive steady reliable rainfall, but these days the are experiences long spells of heat. Experts say that now Lake Victoria is at great risk of environmental degradation because of unplanned development around it has destroyed the lake's catchment area. In addition to this the wetlands and swamps around the lake have been encroached on, and some wiped out. According to Simon Thuo, a water expert, the biggest urban Centers in the country such as Jinja, Kampala city and Masaka Municipalities are located around the Lake, therefore, releasing effluent into the Lake. The effluent is normally inadequately treated hence causing significant pollution. The pollution is worsened by lack of virgin land around the Lake.²⁰

Another problem that has affected the Lake is human activity. Many people have built around the Lake, big buildings like several Hotels at Munyonyo, and other big houses, plus cutting down of trees, poor methods of farming. All these have denied the Lake enough ability to store fresh water. Experts advise that the Lake need some virgin land so that the water can be able to infiltrate and percolate. Fred Kyosingira says that, water naturally needs to move to the surface flow for it to be come out as sub-surface flow and this is the water that feeds the streams.²¹ It is also said that unchecked destruction of Lake Victoria's catchment area is going to expose the Lake and leave it vulnerable to siltation and possible drying up. In addition to this experts worry that Lake Victoria is not a deep lake therefore, its exposure to siltation and pollution makes it more vulnerable to extinction. Another dark side is that whenever the water becomes less, it also becomes dirty and creates a dirty environment where diseases such as cholera, tuberculosis, fever, diarrhea, anthrax, dysentery and many others emerge.

The dangers of mismanagement of Lake Victoria's catchment area are not only for the future generation but are being experienced even now. For example, the sewer system in Kampala city serves only a small percent of the people living there, just 10% of all sewage generated in the city gets treated. The rest for the slum areas, from Guest Houses and industries is discharged untreated as wastewater into Nakivubo channel which flows into Murchison Bay polluting and depleting the oxygen levels in the Lake. It is estimated that Nakivubo channel carries about 75% of the nitrogen and 85% of phosphorus nutrient load discharged daily into Murchison Bay. Ironically Murchison Bay is home to water treatment plants that supply Kampala city and the neighboring towns. Right now Uganda National Water and Sewerage Corporation (NWSC) is experiencing rising treatment costs because the water from the Lake is dirty and proving expensive to treat.²² This means that many people in Kampala city and the neighboring towns do not have access to clean water. When God created the world He saw that everything was good but now humans have disfigured it, through pollution

Conclusion

When God created the world He saw that all that He had made was very good and entrusted this to human beings. Humans were given the gift of intelligence to help them invent and make modifications to let this world be a better place to live in for all creatures. The idea of humans' mastery over the universe has led to discovery in science and technology, transforming man from a hunter and a gatherer to an agriculturist and an industrialist but at the same times has made the world dysfunctional in some areas and the future of life on earth is in crisis. For example, in Uganda today, the environment protection is minimal because of poverty, greed of the rich, lack of government's good will. The government has put in place laws to protect the environment but the officials implementing them are corrupt so nothing is done or very little. The natural trees from the forests have been harvested and the living and non-living creatures have been denied a chance to live in their habitat, all is done in the name of development. The water bodies have been encroached on and denied their proper existence. For example, Lake Victoria which is the second largest fresh water lake in the world is at the verge of extinct if the encroachment does not stop now. Indeed our mother earth is groaning.

There is hope a group of Environmentalists in Uganda are trying to sensitize the population about environmental protection through radio, TV and CMS. This is the ripe time to do this because some of our people destroy the environment through ignorance others do not care and some due to greed, especially the rich. The government laws are weak and their

implementation is weak. The government Officials like those who work in NEMA need to be encouraged to do their work properly. The masses, especially those engaged in the charcoal trade need to be sensitized and perhaps redirected to engage in alternative jobs so as to save our environment.

Notes

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³ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*. Nairobi, Kenya: Paulines Publications Africa. 2005. P. 249.

⁴ Ibid Victor Zinkurature)

⁵ Afuna-Adula.

⁶ Oweyegha-Afunaduula, *Uganda's present and future environment: some constraints and the way forward*. 2005, www.afuna.o-com p.3 Accessed on 29th July, 2013.

⁷ Ibid, p 3.

⁸ ICLEI. *The local agenda 21 planning guide*. 2nd edition, Canada. International Council for local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) and International Development Research Center, (IDRC), 1996.

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¹⁰ Ibid, (Afuna Aduula).

¹¹ Frank Mulamuzi, *Uganda: Environmentalists point to worrying pace of deforestation*. IRIN News Africa, Kampala: 24 June, 2009. www.irinnews.org/report/84972/Uganda-environmentalists-point-to-worrying-pace-of-deforestation p.1

¹² Nahashon W. Ndung'u &Philomena N. Mwaura (Eds), *Challenges and Prospects of the Church in Africa*. Nairobi, Kenya: Paulines Publications Africa. 2005, p.56

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¹⁴ Ibid, p. 4 (Mulamuzi).

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¹⁷ AIR WATER EARTH (AWE) *Environmental, Civil Engineers and Project Management Consultants. Why Lake Victoria Pollution Levels are Rising-Uganda*. www.awe-engineers.com/lake-pollution.php Accessed on 3rd August, 2013.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Edwin Nuwagaba, *Uganda: The sad story of Lake Victoria-WASH News*. Posted on July 6th 2010 by Westerhof/2 Comments. <http://washaf-rica.wordpress.com/2010/07/06/uganda-the-sad-story-of-lake-victoria/> Accessed on 3rd August, 2013.

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²¹ Ibid (Fred Kyosingira).

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Tulwab Kipsigis:

The Sacred Mountain of Kipsigis People of Kenya

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Introduction

Sacred sites are a worldwide phenomenon. These places are significant for the individuals and community alike. It is here that the individual adherents go to restore their broken relationships with their Supreme Being. Similarly, the sites are symbols of unity and fellowship for the communities concerned. In modern setting, sacred places all over the world have attracted thousands of tourists and pilgrims and consequently have benefited not only the individuals who visit the sites but the economy of the countries concerned.

In Africa, most communities have sacred sites normally used for various religious rites while others mark a significant event in the life of a community. Among the Kipsigis of Kenya, Tulwab Kipsigis (the Mountain of Kipsigis) is such a site. The Mountain is situated opposite Londiani Junction on the Nakuru/Kericho road in Kericho County. It is believed that the Kipsigis people gained their identity as a group here when their Supreme Being, Asis appeared to their ancestors at this spot.

Today, Tulwab Kipsigis stands there unrecognized by many, its myths and stories un-told and its social, cultural and religious potentials un-taped. Sacred sites like Mt. Sinai, Mt. Fuji, River Ganges, the Kaaba among others attracts thousands of tourists annually bringing in the much-needed foreign exchange to the countries concerned. From such cultural tourist attractions, people learn and exchange ideas on culture and religions of the World. Tulwab Kipsigis can be developed to serve similar purpose in Kenya.

This paper therefore unveils the mysteries surrounding this sacred mountain. It suggests that if properly harnessed, the potential of Tulwab Kipsigis can contribute to the study of African Religion and by extension, world religions, cultural heritage and development of religious tourism. The paper further suggests how this site can be developed to serve as both local and foreign tourist attraction in Kenya and at the same time, serve as a strategy to preserve the environment.

The paper is organized in four sections. After introduction, a short history of the origin and migration of the Kalenjin people to their present location is presented. In the second section, the experience of the Kipsigis people at Tulwab Kipsigis is narrated. The third section suggests how Tulwab Kipsigis can be developed as a tourist attraction site for both local and foreign tourism. Finally, some suggestions on how this tourist spot can be managed with the assistance of community participation are proposed.

The Origin and Migration of the Kalenjin People

According to Kipsigis oral tradition, the Kalenjin ancestors are believed to have originated from Misiri, the present day Egypt. As the group migrated downstream along the River Nile, they were known as Miot. The Miot people stopped at a place known as *Burgei* in Southern Sudan (*Burgei* means warm). Another stopping point that is preserved in the tradition is *Too*, which means Visitor. The object of their temporary settlement here was to allow the animals to rest, grow and gather food and possibly to circumcise the youth.

The third stopping point, *Koi tui*, which literary means, the black stone is believed to be a place is in Northern Uganda. Traditions suggest that it was here that women were thought how to make fire by twirling two pieces of wood for the first time. Since fire making was the responsibility of men, the women request was granted and four young men from the Kipnyige age set demonstrated how to make fire in front of the women.

From *Koi tui*, the Miot travelled further south until they reached Mt. Kony or Mt. Elgon. At this point, there is clear indication that the Miot had re-organized themselves into distinct groups comprising of the immediate ancestors of the Kipsigis, Nandi, Elgeyo, Tugen, Marakwet, Pokot and Sabaot. Today they are commonly referred to as the Kalenjin. This is affirmed by J.E.G Sutton who suggests that;

*It was probably in their present territory of the western highlands of Kenya, especially the more northerly parts of the region, which the Kalenjin evolved as a cultural and linguistic group.*¹

A common legend among all the Kalenjin groups explains the development of the seven groups. It is said that the seven sons founded the seven Kalenjin tribes at some point between Koi tui and Mt. Kony. The significance of the legend is that the Kalenjin group is perceived as having a common ancestry. This fact, strengthened by linguistic and cultural similarities, has bound the group together in fellowship to the present day.

Tradition suggests that the Kipsigis and the Nandi were the first group to leave Mt. Kony region. They migrated in a southeasterly direction. They settled near a lake Camos, which is most likely to be the present Lake Baringo. After some time at lake Camos, the two groups decided to move again. Ian Q. Orchardson locates this event towards the end of the eighteenth century. He writes; “By about 1780 the rivers began to fail and the country to dry up, so exploring parties were sent out to find new countries in which to settle”.²

Famine and drought seem to have been the cause of their decision to move as suggested by the above quotation. This is buttressed by the tradition that says that the group was prompted to move by a *reteresiet* (bat). A bat carrying a blade of green grass in the mouth appeared to a group of men who were gathered around a fire one evening. Green grass signifies life and thus the event was seen as a good omen especially that drought and famine had threatened their lives.

The direction from where the bat came from suggested where there was green grass. The group followed the direction where the bat came from until they reached a fertile land. When they reached a place known as Kilombe, near present Eldama Ravine town, the two groups separated. Although some traditions suggest that the Kipsigis and the Nandi separated at Camos, the Kilombe separation seems to receive much support. S.C Langat for example writes; “It is much more likely that the separation which is said to have taken place at Kilombe was a secondary event concerning the Nandi and the Kipsigis”.³

There was no specific reason why the two separated except that the Nandi were content with the area. They later expanded westwards towards Lake Victoria. The Kipsigis moved slightly southwards towards Londiani, where they also moved westwards. The two groups moved parallel to one another only separated by Kipchorian River to their present lands. The Kipsigis thus entered their present territory at a place to be called Tulwab Kipsigis (The Mountain of the Kipsigis).

Tulwab Kipsigis Experience

Tulwab Kipsigis is a dome shaped mountain situated at Chebawor in Kedowa location. It is approximately two kilometers opposite the

Londiani junction on Kericho/Nakuru road. The mountain, which is named M.t Blackett geographically, is a part of the Western Mau forest. It is 8,578 feet above sea level. The base on the leeward side of the hill is inhabited by the Kipsigis community. This mountain is of enormous importance to the Kipsigis for they regard it as their sacred mountain.

The late Senior Chief, arap Tengecha, attempted to have the mountain set aside for the Kipsigis. He met Kenyan political authorities and impressed upon them the value of the mountain to the Kipsigis Community. He argued that the mountain belongs to the Kipsigis people and that it should be respected as a sacred mountain. Similarly the late Sigilai Arap Lelgo, who lives near the mountain, approached the president of Kenya in 1993 on the same issue. He and his delegation suggested that every effort should be made to preserve the mountain. He recommended that the Kipsigis community should occupy the base of the hill all around to ensure its protection.

Another advocate of Tulwab Kipsigis is the late Jacob Chebochok arap Lelgo. He argues that the mountain is an identity of the Kipsigis because this is where they came from. He explained that the mountain is also called *Kipkooyo*, which is an attribute of Asis. According to him, the importance of the mountain would be enhanced if an ecumenical hall of worship for use by all faiths was built there. The importance of the above sentiments can only be comprehended in the light of what took place when the Kipsigis, arrived and settled there.

According to S.C Langat there are two things that seem to have attracted the Kipsigis to settle here in 1650.⁴ First, the land was fertile. Tradition indicates that the Kipsigis grew a lot of wimbi (finger millet) on arrival. Secondly, the mountain proved to be useful for security purposes. From the top of the mountain, one can see a long distance in all directions.

One other reason that attracted the Kipsigis to this Tulwab Kipsigis, and probably the most important, is an experience the people had on the mountain. Shortly after the Kipsigis settled on the mountain, they heard a mysterious voice. It is the experiences encountered at the mountain that seems to have consolidated them as a unique group. To these experiences we now turn.

a) *The mysterious voice*

The Kipsigis tell of experience that took place in Tulwab Kipsigis soon after they settled in the area. One day, it is said, a voice was heard addressing the people. The voice from without instructed them to sleep at the top of the hill but they should not drink the water found at the top. Unfortunately, people violated the instruction and drank the forbid-

den water. At mid-night one of the men discovered that his penis was no longer there. He alerted the rest who surprisingly discovered that the same had happened to all the men.

In the morning when they were still confused and wondering what to do, the voice came again. The voice reminded them of the mistake they had done but gave them fresh instructions. They were instructed to go and sleep that night at the bottom of the mountain and to drink the water found there. They followed the instruction this time and to their amazement and joy, they found out that all the men had their private parts restored that night. For this reason, the mountain is also called Tulwab Monyis (the mountain of the penis). Men or women use this name when alone. It never used in the public of where children are, instead, the term Tulwab Kipsigis is preferred. A more polite name is that of Tulwab Lagok (mountain of the children).

What is the significance of this experience at this site? First, there was no doubt among my respondents that the voice came from Asis. This makes the experience a religious one. What we need to find out is the meaning and significance of the “water “and the “disappearance and “appearance” of the male sexual organs.

When I visited the mountain during my research, we did not find water on the top of Tulwab Kipsigis.⁵ However, I found two sources of water at the base of the mountain. The first source was inside the forest some two kilometers from Keserio forest guard post. There was evidence of animal footmarks that drank from it. I also observed birds drinking from the source with no effect on them. I collected some of the water in a bottle for analysis. Another source of water was where the local people drew their water. Their animals were also watered at the same spot. A sample of water from this source was also collected for analysis.

When I further inquired from the local people whether there was any other source of the water in that area, an old man, Johana Ngeny volunteered some information. He pointed out that on the other side of Tulwab Kipsigis, there is a well but its water is not good for human consumption. He said that neither people nor animal drink out of the well. I requested him to take us to the place. We walked through the forest to the South of the Tulwab Kipsigis for about six kilometers. There we were shown two depressions on the slopes of a ridge that extends from Tulwab Kipsigis.

The two depressions, about two meters in diameter each, were covered with thorny branches to distract people and animals from drinking and falling into it. At first, we could not see anything except the sound of bubbling water. After removing some of the thorny branches, we could see brown bubbling water some one-meter deep. One would think that the water was boiling. When touched, however, the water was cold and

turbid. I collected the water from each depression and with the other samples took them to Moi University for testing.

The local people informed us that the water is poisonous, and that during rainy season, when the water overflow, several wild animals and birds die after drinking the water. When we were drawing the sample water for test, we discovered four dead and decomposing birds in one depression and a green snake in the other. This indicated to us that the water is poisonous as had been suggested.

The department of water, Moi University tested the water from the mountain to determine the levels of PH alkalinity and hardness. It was observed that the water was turbid and had an offensive smell. The general conclusion was that the water from the two depressions were not fit for human consumption. This observation was sufficient for our purposes and therefore no further analysis was done.

The water Officer, Mr. Kandie further recommended that chemical analysis was necessary. His contention is that the birds and the snake found dead was due to a poisonous chemical in the water. He also suspected a poisonous gas that could possibly explain why the water was bubbling. I also consulted a Senior Officer, Mr. Charles Koskei, from the Ministry of Natural Resources who was of the same opinion.

The existence of the poisonous water is an indication that the myth was based on a historical truth. This then can be seen to be a saving act by Asis who ensured that the people did not drink contaminated water. Water on the other hand is a symbol of life. The fact that Asis saved his people is strengthened by the Idea that the mountain and the river that has its source from here are also known as Kipkoiyo. Koiyo mean "encircle" or "protect". *Asis Chebo Kipkoiyo* therefore encircle the Kipsigis as they entered the new territory and gave them life and not death.

b) The circumcision

Sex and sexual organs among the Kipsigis are sacred tools for procreation. To tamper with it is a serious issue since it is tantamount to destroying life. The disappearing of the penis meant that their power to procreate was cut off. Reinstating the same, several hours later meant a restoration of their potency. The act must surely have carried a symbolic meaning meant to communicate some essential information. This is so since to deny one the power to procreate is the worst punishment that could possibly be inflicted on a Kipsigis. For a Kipsigis person, to be impotent is as good as to be dead.

What could this event possibly mean? There are two possible interpretations to this event. First, is that the new comers were being warned of the water which was actually poisonous and could cause the loss of

life. Second, besides the warning, it could be a reminder that they needed to procreate for the time was ripe and the place secure. A large population was necessary for security purposes in those days and more so now that the Nandi had gone their own way and thus reducing their numbers drastically.

In my opinion, both interpretations are likely explanations to this event. The second interpretation, however, seems to carry more weight for the following reasons. First, procreation among the Kipsigis is directly related to circumcision. The immediate reaction by the group after the encounter with the mysterious voice was to institute circumcision ritual. Indeed, this is what the Kipsigis people understand to be the interpretation of the even at that moment.

Therefore, circumcision ceremonies for both boys and girls were ordered. The drinking of water, however, did not seem to have had a direct effect on the women as did the men. To date however, pregnant Kipsigis women who desire a child of a particular sex go to the mountain to pray for it. The only possible link of this believe by women with Tulwab Kipsigis experience is the conviction that if Asis could cause the disappearance and the appearance of the male sex organ, then he can also do the same before the child is born and thus giving the child asked for.

The first initiation ceremony for boys after separation was done on top of Tulwab Kipsigis. The top of this mountain is flat, spacious, save and isolated making it ideal for the occasion. This explains why the mountain is also known to Tulwab Ngetik (The mountain of uncircumcised boys). Before circumcision, the initiates were asked to hold their hands together around the mountain. It is said that the boys encircled the whole mountain and the number was estimated to have been over two hundred candidates. This implies that the group had not performed the ritual for several years prior to this.

Tulwab Kipsigis thus became the site of circumcision for a long time thereafter. The tradition of holding hands around the hill by the initiates also became popular. For several years, this became the measure to know when there were enough boys for circumcision to take place. During such occasions the following song was sang;

Kuku wee kuku	Kuku wee kuku
Kuku wee kuku	Kuku wee Kuku
Kimenye emoni kot ko balak	We shall dwell on his land till exhausted ⁶

The song suggests that the Kipsigis had reached their destination. For according to the song, they intended to inhabit that land for many

years. Circumcision, which is a gateway to procreation, is intended to ensure that their posterity dwell on this land for ever. The importance of Tulwab Kipsigis as the gateway to this new land and settlement cannot therefore be demeaned.

According to the above discussion, circumcision ritual had its basis on this myth. A few respondents were of the opinion that the Kipsigis initiated their youth for the first time ever at this spot. Other respondent argued to the contrary. The evidence in our previous discussion showed that the Miot practiced circumcision throughout their southward migration. However, it is true that after separation with the Miot group, this was properly the first time the Kipsigis, as a consolidated group, initiated their youth.

The contradiction above however, can be explained in that; myths are also often based on existing ritual. John Noss has observed that some societies frequently find themselves following old customs and rituals whose precise meaning now eludes them. In such situations, efforts are made to rationalize the otherwise meaningless rites. Myth in this case provides a binding sanction for the people's customs and beliefs. This is properly the best explanation of the case at hand.

There is symbolic resemblance of the disappearance of the male organs with that of circumcision. The Kipsigis initiates are to a certain extent considered androgynous. They are neither male nor female throughout their seclusion period. In fact, when their sexual organs have to be mentioned, other names are used instead of the actual name. It is as if their sexual organs are temporarily removed only to be given back at graduation with all rights to exploits them for procreation. The event of Tulwab Kipsigis was similarly a symbolic action of death in order to have a rebirth in greater numbers.

Developing Tulwab Kipsigis for Cultural Tourism

Tulwab Kipsigis is strategically situated at the border as one enters the Kipsigis land from the East. It is also mid way between two significant tourist destination towns, Nakuru and Kisumu. After the tourist have viewed the flamingoes at Lake Nakuru and visited Nakuru National Park and other sites of interest, Tulwab Kipsigis is an ideal spot to take a break and to familiarize oneself with the social and cultural heritage of the Kipsigis. Tourist will no doubt enjoy the beautiful scenery of the Kipsigis land including the Mau Forest. A missionary named Hotchkiss, who eventually settled near the present day Kericho Town described the land thus;

The sight that greeted us was at once was magnificent and pathetic. A wonderful country of rolling hills and tumbling streams confronted us, a country capable of supporting a great

*population. Yet what we found was nearly barren landscape with miserable toadstool huts scattered over the face of it.*⁷

Another missionary, Hellen Kellog observed that as Europeans were settling in Kenya, “they encountered a very independent tribe of Africa by name of Kipsigis who lived in a beautiful highland section of the country.”⁸ Today, this land is well known for its vast tea plantations and one of the largest producers of tea in the world.

In this section, I shall outline some ideas on how Tulwab Kipsigis can be developed as a tourist attraction site. The suggestions put forth are not meant to attract foreign tourist only but to encourage local tourism as well. It will also serve to demonstrate the African culture and religion and in particular the religious practices of the Kipsigis people. It is also meant to make the site a center of activities throughout the year for the benefit of both tourists and the local community.

a) Developing the top of Tulwab Kipsigis

The accessibility to the top of Tulwab Kipsigis is currently not very good. There is a difficult path which not everyone to climb. There is need to make it possible for everyone who wishes to climb it to do so with ease. Since the mountain is rather steep, a paved path is necessary especially during rainy seasons. The path could follow where the present route is, starting from the Keserio forest guard station to the top. Other exciting paths could be designed for those who are more adventures like mountain climbers and hikers.

A spiral road could also be constructed to the top of the mountain. This however, will destroy the environment and the beautiful scenery of the mountain. An alternative to this would be high electric car lifts. Though an expensive venture, this would enable the people to enjoy better scenery of the mountain and the surrounding. Besides saving time, this facility will ensure that those who do not prefer or are unable to walk can still reach the top of the mountain.

At the top, several powerful binoculars should be placed in strategic positions. With this facility, tourist can see as far as Mt. Elgon, Menengai Crater, the entire Kalenjin land and Western Mau forest. Indeed, one can trace the movement of the Kipsigis people from Mt. Elgon to the present settlement from the spot.

As suggested by the Kipsigis elders mentioned early, a hall of prayer for all faiths is appropriate here. In accordance to African world view, the hall should be circular with an alter in the center. This should be done without tempering with the environment as much as possible. Sacred symbol, statues and portrait of all religions of the world should be displaced on the walls of the hall. Certain common ethical teaching

that promotes world brother hood and peaceful co-existence of humanity should also be inscribed on its walls. The hall should be used more for individual worship other than collective worship by a particular faith. The surrounding of the entire dome-shaped mountain top should be turned into a beautiful garden with rest places and a few places that sell refreshments and soft drinks.

b) A model of Kalenjin Village

Over the year, the structures of the Kalenjin homesteads have changed. Many houses are now built of stones, bricks and roofed with corrugated iron sheets and tiles. The traditional grass thatched and mud walls huts are disappearing. Yet the homesteads of the people and indeed of all African peoples are rich in symbolism that says much about the families living in them and the culture of the people as a whole.

It is for this reason that I propose that a model village consisting of homesteads of all the Kalenjin people should be constructed at the base of the mountain. Although the Kalenjin share similar language and culture, the way they construct their homes differ. Each model homestead should be complete comprising of a main house, a store, the youth hut and in some cases, the old man's hut and cattle cradle. From these one can learn a lot about social organization and the culture of the Kalenjin.

c) The Kalenjin Gallery

There is a lot of artwork dating as far back as the beginning of the 20th century that are scattered in different places. Moi University library at Eldoret Kenya, for example, has beautiful artwork of the Nandi people displayed on its walls. An art gallery at Tulwab Kipsigis should house all types of artwork done over the years. Artwork by artists that express Kalenjin social and cultural life in the past and at present should be encouraged to do so and to use this gallery to exhibit their works.

The Kalenjin community is also rich in artifacts normally used for religious and other social rituals. Some of the rituals are disappearing fast in the modern setting. This is an ideal time to collect and re-construct such artifacts for preservation. The gallery will also house important documents on the social cultural, political and historical life of the Kalenjin community. One thing that is conspicuously missing in Kalenjin literature is the biography of its past and present heroes, sages and leaders. Such biographies are useful for the upcoming generations that need models of good leadership and morally right individuals to emulate.

d) The Kalenjin Herbal Clinic

In recent times, Kenyans have seen a great interest in alternative medicine as opposed to conventional European medicine. In Nairobi for

example, acupuncture, Chinese and Asian medicine among others are being practised. Similarly, African herbal clinics are now available in cities, towns and in every village in Kenya. Statistics suggests that more than 80% of people in the rural areas use herbal medicines in Africa.

Given this new scenario, it is necessary to encourage herbal practitioners to work together and share their ideas not only among themselves but also with scientist, doctors and research centers that deal with medicine. It is also necessary to encourage African diviners and mediums to perform their professions openly by giving them recognition in such a center. Indeed many diviners are medicine men and women and at the same time medicine men and women work with diviners to identify the problems of their patients. Tulwab Kipsigis is the ideal place to establish an herbal clinic that will accommodate selected re-known herbalist, diviners and mediums from among the Kalenjin people. Such recognition of traditional herbalist will assist in identifying genuine herbalist and eliminate bogus ones who often use peoples ignorance and poverty to exploit them financially.

Tulwab Kipsigis would thus serve as herbal garden. This is more so because in recent times herbalist have found it difficult to secure plants, roots and grasses for their herbs. This is partly due to the fact that with the sub-division of land to individuals, people have cleared the bushes , forests, riverbanks and other sources that are conducive for certain herbal plants. On the other hand, the use of pesticides and chemical for agricultural use has affected medicinal plants often making the herbs poisonous.

It is for this reason that I propose that Tulwab Kipsigis be turned into a herbal mountain. The exotic trees in it can be replaced gradually with indigenous trees with medicinal value. In such a natural forest herbal plants will thrive un-tempered with. This project will serve the local people, the scientist and foreign tourist as well.

A re-construction of Kapkoros

The Kipsigis worshiped their God Asis at special sacred shrine known as Kapkoros. Kapkoros was celebrated annually in any month except August, which was believed to be a bad month. The site of Kapkoros was normally on the hilltops or an isolated area appropriate for worshipping. At first, there was only one Kapkoros site at Tulwab Kipsigis. However, as the numbers of people increased and spread far away from the sacred mountain, other sacred sites were set aside for worship purposes. The reconstruction of Kapkoros would exhibit the rich Kipsigis religious practices now slowly dying away.

The forbidden water site

It would be interesting for geologist first to identify the gas that makes the water bubble. It could be a gas that can be tapped. In any case, this area should be caged such that no birds, snakes or any animal can reach the water. To reach the point, there is a road that needs to be improved. However, for those who would rather walk the approximately six kilometers from the base of Tulwab Kipsigis, a more exciting trail can be prepared.

During my walk to this spot, I noted with great interest that this area is rich with birds. Such a trail can be of a great interest to bird watchers. To attract birds along the trail several things can be done.

1. The trail should be constructed along where it is possible to grow berries and seeds trees eaten by birds are, or even planted.

2. Efforts to create a conducive environment for certain birds like weaver birds, where the birds can establish colonies.

3. Conducive environment for birds to make nest along the trail can be made e.g. making holes in trees for birds that use such holes as nests.

4. Bird feeding troughs and watering points should also be placed in strategic places to attract birds of all types.

5. It may also be possible to introduce other birds not available in this forest to increase the variety for bird watchers.

All these efforts, I believe will make the trip to the forbidden water site exciting and worthwhile for both local and foreign tourist.

Conclusion

The question of whom and how the proposed Tulwab Kipsigis tourist site shall be managed is of significant importance. In recent times many Kenyans have destroyed government forests since they do not see how such protected environment benefit them directly. Tulwab Kipsigis is not exception to this. There is evidence that people have started to encroach on it by cutting the trees for timber, posts and fuel. It is of paramount importance therefore that whatever management strategies are used, community participation as an effective strategy in management be used.

The concept of community participation is now globally recognized as an effective strategy in the management of government development programs. In particular projects that will be implemented in areas where people live. Many studies have shown that projects where community participation in decision making, implementation and in shearing the benefits have succeeded. Much has been written about this policy

strategy and I need not be labour it at this stage. All that is necessary is to recommend that community participation strategy management be applied in the development of Tulwab Kipsigis as a tourist attraction site.

Notes

¹ J.E.G. Sutton, Western Kenya Highlands as quoted in B.E Kipkorir “The Kalenjin phenomenon and the Misri legends” East Africa and the Nile Valley Seminars, paper XII, University of Nairobi, (10th February, 1971),11

² Ian Q. Orchardson, *The Kipsigis* (Nairobi; East Africa Literature Bureau, 1970),

³ S.C Langat “Some Aspects of Kipsigis History Before 1914” in B.G McIntosh ed. *Ngano* (Nairobi; 1970), 74

⁴ S.C Langat, 82.

⁵ I went up and around Tulwab Kipsigis during my Dphil Research which I investigated on the Kipsigis religious practices on 1st and 2nd January 1996.

⁶ The meaning of the word Kuku is difficult to ascertain. Sigilai Arap Ielgo suggested that the word is an expression of something that is very old. In this case it could mean for a very long time or forever.

⁷ John B. Noss, *Man's Religions* (London; Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. 1974, 10.

⁸ W. R. Hotchleiss, *Then and Now in Kenya Colony* (New York: 1937) 98 as quoted in Henry Mwanzi, *A history of the Kipsigis* (Nairobi: East Africa Literature Bureau).



Per i molti cammini di Dio

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Walking in the Garden

Reflections on religion, God and the environment

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Introduction

The twenty first century challenges us with many complexities. This is exemplified by issues like climate change; diseases like HIV and AIDS as well as rampant political upheavals. Apart from rampant spread of diseases, contemporary society is faced by an ecological crisis that threatens to bring the entire creation to its knees.

The discourse on this crisis has involved players from practically all sectors of society and academic disciplines. However, the Church and people of faith in general have been slow in coming to the discussion table. This may be a reflection on what the beliefs and the perceptions believers have especially about the place of God in the environment and in environmental management. It also may be a reflection of what believers perceive to be their own role in the crisis. The Church has been unsure of the nature of its participation in the discourse and indeed whether theology has anything to offer to environmental management. This in part is what this paper is about. Does religion in general and Christian beliefs and perspectives in particular have anything to contribute to a positive understanding of the environment; do the Christian scriptures have anything to say about the environment and its management? What should be the basis for Christian involvement in environmental issues?

The Basis of Engagement

Questions about the environment and the Christian's involvement in it are simple enough. However the answers are not so simple. They get entangled in other socio-economic and political variables that are at play in the discussion. But why should the community of faith be concerned

about the environment? Conversely, why should they not be involved? To use the famous Shakespearean expression, “to be or not to be involved, that is the question” The answer to these questions involves our understanding of creation theology. In other words, what do we understand by creation theology and what is the responsibility of Christians and other communities of faith in relation to creation?

Scholars have responded differently to these questions. In recent times, it is generally agreed that to answer some of these questions scholars must go back the Christian scriptures for a theologically sound answer. In this connection, Gordon Wenham¹ says that we need to understand how Biblical writers regarded the environment and to understand what they describe as the human relationship to nature. He suggests that the seriousness with which we take the Bible will be reflected in the seriousness of our concern for the environment². For the Christian therefore, the Bible therefore is the basis for any serious engagement of theology and the ecological crisis. In taking the Bible as the basis of engagement however we must be careful to distinguish between what it describes and what it prescribes. Often times we tend to take the descriptive as normative and this leads us to wrong conclusions. Thus a specific understanding or interpretation of certain Biblical passages has a definite bearing on the perceived, the envisaged and indeed the experienced relationship between human beings and the environment.

The Nature of the Crisis

The Book of Genesis describes how things were in the formative stages of human existence. They describe life in the Garden of Eden. There was peaceful co existence among all the inhabitants of the garden. God came to walk in the Garden in the cool of the evening. God had fellowship with the creation in the garden. The initial habitat is described as calm and without friction. Each created thing was in its place fulfilling its prescribed duties. But something went wrong with catastrophic consequences for every created thing. Genesis lays the blame on some form of human action. Humanity decided to eat the forbidden fruit. Theologians describe this as the fall. This decision completely changed the situation in the garden. The resultant curse involved the entire creation. Adam and Eve are expelled from Eden; the ground is cursed in such a way that it becomes reluctant to freely provide food for them. Genesis 3: 17-19 graphically describes the situation

Cursed is the ground because of you, in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread.

The serpent too is cursed to move on its belly in constant fear of the human being. Mutual harm and destruction are introduced. With the fall and the resulting curse the plight of the entire creation as it were, is sealed. Processes that eventually culminate in the 21st century ecological crisis are set in motion at this time.

Human beings would no longer exist in peaceful harmony with their non human neighbours and vice versa. Each would from henceforth seek to destroy the other and benefit from that destruction. Adam and Eve become aware of their nakedness and their first action is to destroy something in the environment to cover their nakedness. This was not good enough, so God also destroys something else to cover them more adequately. I believe that the nakedness was not just physical; thus the covering was to become typical in the relationship between human beings and the rest of nature which had become hostile. The hostility of the environment is not lost to anthropologists and sociologists of religion. They see the very essence of religion as the human desire and effort to respond and adapt to a hostile environment. According to Edward Sapir, the environment is not only cold and unfeeling, it is also hostile.³

From this perspective, religion is the constant desire and attempt to live as peaceably and as painlessly as it is possible in this environment. This however is a rather one sided view of the human predicament vis-à-vis the environment. The Bible describes a more holistic picture of the situation. The environment might be hostile, but the human beings have contributed to this predicament; in a sense they are more or less responsible for the situation. The Old Testament depicts these efforts as the search for a new garden of Eden. Human beings are constantly looking forward to a time when the land will be willingly productive and when even the wild animals will have no need to attack humans for food and in self protection. In other words, human beings “look for the restoration of the prosperity of Eden”.⁴

We plough the field, but it has become necessary to use fertilizers to induce production. This however negatively affects the land that in turn requires more and more fertilizer with every cycle of planting and harvesting. And mistakenly, we think that the restoration will be achieved through more and more destruction and the enhancement of hostilities in the created order.

Further, Genesis also describes a relationship between humans and the rest of creation. This relationship has been blamed by some as the real source of the ecological crisis. Humans are not only described as being made in the image of God, they are also mandated to have “dominion” over the rest of creation. This term is a source of theological debate in the context of the ecological crisis.

It has been interpreted to mean that God gave human beings the authority over the rest of creation. Thus they can do what they like with it even if it is destroyed in the process. This view is blamed for being largely responsible for the current crisis. On the other hand, the same term interpreted as responsibility and the mandate to “tend” the environment is used to show the opposite view. Either way, the story clearly shows the impact of human action on the environment. The impact can be both positive and negative, with the bias heavily towards the negative. Thus the nature of the crisis is as complex as the responses necessary from the various players. From the Biblical perspective, the crisis is deeply rooted in human antiquity; it is rooted in the actions of the primordial parents of humanity. Anthropologically and sociologically, it is rooted in the human response to the environment: adaptation and manipulation. Both of these have resulted in destruction and inequitable relationships between humans and the rest of nature.

Environment in Scripture

If the basis of engagement is to be found in scripture then the need to find out what the scriptures have to say about the environment becomes imperative. Eco-theologians in particular, have tried to find and interpret scriptures relevant to the environment and environmental management. Carol Johnston suggests the need to “read the Bible with the added dimensions of the global environmental and social crisis”⁵ for if we do this “our eyes are opened to the fact that God’s special concern for the vulnerable does not stop with human beings, but includes all the creatures”. She systematically shows us that God established the human vocation in the Old Testament and reestablishes it in the New Testament. The vocation is intricately related to the salvation of the cosmos. The New Testament is replete with evidence of the importance of the environment not just for human survival but also for completion of the salvation story. Such scriptures include John 3:17, which links cosmic salvation to the human vocation; Luke 4:18-19 which elaborates on this vocation to include the making right of relationships with the land and with nature; Mark 16:15 which points out that the good news should be preached to the whole of creation. Johnston further surveys the entire New Testament up to the book of Revelation which describes the culmination of the salvation story. Here, she says “the new Jerusalem is established within a restored earth where human communities, God, and nature are reconciled at last”⁶ She concludes that “God’s relationship with nature, and the human relationship with nature, is definitely a recurring biblical theme of great importance”.⁷

The first followers of Jesus recognized his uniqueness through his relationship with nature or natural objects. He was challenged to turn stones into bread, he turned water into wine, he walked on the water and often he healed the sick in what would appear to be contravention of natural processes. Indeed many of the incidences seem to indicate Jesus' authority over nature. Yet it appears the he needed nature and the environment to truly show the disciples who he was. Thus the New Testament in general and the gospels in particular are in some way rooted in the environment. They show us Jesus using and relating to nature and the environment in a positive way. Admittedly there are instances like the cursing of the fig tree (Mark 11: 12-14) and the sending of the pigs to their destruction.(Mark:5:1-20) where Jesus appears to have taken destructive actions.

Apart from this, the incarnation itself does emphasize the importance of the natural human world and life. God becomes human in order to communicate God's love and concern for human beings. However, both the Old and the New Testaments are clear on the fact that salvation is not just for human beings alone. The entire creation suffers because of human folly/fallenness. In Romans 8:22 Paul says that "all creation has been groaning together till now..." The entire creation is in pain and agony because of human action. But in the same way, through the life and sacrifice of another human being (Jesus), the groaning and the pain will come to an end for both human and the entire creation.

The Old Testament is very clear on the importance of nature and the environment and the need for them to be tended and taken care of. It describes a very intimate relationship between human beings, their actions in relation to the land in particular and the results of these actions. The land motif runs all through the Old Testament. The safety of the land as well as its productivity is intricately related to the human being's relationship to God and to the human being's response to the Creators' commandments. The Old Testament is therefore concerned with a relational eco-balance. It gives "guidance on how to live as a community that maintains right relationships with God, neighbours, strangers and the land and its creatures"⁸ In this relationship even the land and the creatures that inhabit it deserve a Sabbath rest, they must be taken into consideration in the year of Jubilee. The land has rights and needs to rest just like the animals and plants. More importantly however is the idea that human disobedience leads to the unproductiveness of the land. (Leviticus 26:20) The land suffers when people are not in right relationship with God. This is the basic or foundational teaching of the Old Testament in so far as the relationship between human beings and their environment is concerned.

Jews and Christians alike understood nature as a form of and also as the context of communication with and from God. In Genesis, God came to fellowship with Adam and Eve in the cool of the evening in their natural habitat. I am reminded of a song much loved by Christians of yesteryears:

*I come to the garden alone, while the dew is still on the roses
And the voice I hear falling on my ear, the son of God is calling,
And he walks with me and he talks with me...⁹*

While nature may not be God, nature may reveal God to human beings. "It would seem that the sacramental communion with God is impossible when the people and the earth are destroyed by injustice".¹⁰

Conclusions

From the brief survey above several conclusions can be made. One, the Bible gives a vivid description of the relationship between God, human beings and nature or environment. The Biblical story seeks to show that human beings are indeed the epitome of God's creation. But with that high status comes great responsibility. They are co-creators with God and as such they are given responsibility over the rest of creation on whose well being their own survival and well being depends. The creation story in the book of genesis exemplifies this awesome responsibility. The whole creation falls as a result of human failure leading to the suffering and groaning and possible destruction of nature. Most of the destruction is a result of direct or indirect human action.

The second conclusion is that the current ecological crisis should encourage people of faith in general and Christians in particular to take up Carol Johnson's challenge and read the scriptures of their faith traditions with the socio-ecological crisis in their minds. This will enable us to get a glimpse at God's perspective on the matter. If God gave human beings dominion over the rest of creation, it was not for them to destroy, rather it was for them to take care of it on God's behalf. The Bible is quite clear on its teaching in this regard. Wanton destruction does not seem to be a mandate given to humans whichever way we read the "dominion" scriptures. Talking about Kathryn Tunner, Kwok Pui-lan says that encourages us to see the past as an open book, rather than a closed canon, that both men and women can selectively use to construct new emancipatory discourses".¹¹ This is not only true in discussions about gender and gender equality, it is true in relation to the emancipation of nature, the ecological crisis and to environmental management in general. People of faith cannot claim to be ignorant of what the Bible says about creation and the relationship between the various aspects of creation. Basic to the biblical story is the idea of broken relationships in creation.

It would appear that the ideal expectation is that human beings treat members of the created community with care and equity and that God demands justice and fair treatment not just for human beings but for every member of the community including land.

The third conclusion is that all is not lost as long as human beings are ready to recognize what God intended for them and other occupants of the environment. Christian eschatology involves the whole of creation. Thus eschatological hope must of necessity include aspects of environmental reclamation and eco-justice. These should indeed be part of the process of realized eschatology even as it is of the expected end of existence as we know it today. Thus we cannot but agree with Letty Russel's assertion that "God desires that the whole of the groaning creation to be saved, liberated and mended".¹²

Notes

¹ Gordon Wenham, "The Bible and the Environment", 1st Annual JRI lecture Retrieved at www.jri.org.uk/brief/bible_wenham.htm on 26th August 2013.

² Wenham, *ibid.*

³ Edward Sapir was a well known anthropologist as well as a linguist. However he also studied and wrote essays on religion and its meaning.

⁴ Wenham.

⁵ Carol Johnston, *And the Leaves of the Tree Are for the Healing of Nations: Biblical and Theological Foundations for Eco-Justice*, 2nd ed, Office of Environmental Justice, Presbyterian Church (USA) 2006, p.3

⁶ *Ibid.* ⁷ *Ibid.* ⁸ Johnston, 13. ⁹ Lyrics by Anne Murray.

¹⁰ Johnston, 23.

¹¹ Kwok Pui-lan *Postcolonial Imagination & Feminist Theology*. Louisville: John Knox, 2005, p. 147.

¹² Letty Russell, *Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church*, Louisville: John Knox, 1993, p. 122.





ALSO:

A Postcolonial-mission-territorial Hermeneutics for a Liberative Shamanic Pneumatology



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*The Spirit is the indwelling of God at the heart
of the process of ongoing creation, empowering and
luring all things into an unforeseeable future.*

Denis Edwards

With the UN drawing attention to the plight of indigenous peoples throughout the world through its declaration of the two decades of Indigenous Peoples (1990-2014), the church local, regional and universal has to generate a hermeneutics that is post-colonial and post mission-territorial. This hermeneutics enable the local churches to make sense of spirit-world that includes the Creator-Spirit, the ancestral spirits and shamanic spirits of nature, including the intermediary role of the shamans and healers. The first section will explain an emergent hermeneutics is post-colonial for reasons that the indigenous peoples around the world are living in nation-states that have gained independence from the North Atlantic colonial powers. At the same time, this hermeneutics is post-mission-territorial as the indigenous peoples who have embraced Christianity have become the members of the local churches. The second section deals with an understanding of the Creative Spirit (*ruah elohim*) through a critical correlational dialogue with indigenous religiosity, Chinese Cosmology, modern science, eastern and western cosmology. This conversation hopes to establish the rightful place of shamanic pneumatology amidst the multivocal discourses. The articulation of an emergent shamanic pneumatology of sacred sustainability will be offered in the final section.

1. Post-Colonial and Mission-territorial Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics involves a manner of interpretation and explanation of the literary texts from the lived-experience of the struggle of the marginalized and vulnerable in the local contexts of contestation of meaning, values and identities as impacted by the significant global trends. This hermeneutical exercise is pivotal in a process of theological reflection that generates a new discourse on an emergent understanding of the pneumatology of the primal religiosity of indigenous peoples. Post-colonialism and post mission-territory are two of such global trends that need to be examined in this section.

Post-colonial discourse requires a concerted effort at countervailing the residual effects of colonialism on peoples, cultures, continents and the living earth itself.¹ The discursive efforts involve “mobilizing the wisdom to identify and transcend the trappings of power and domination that still reap so much havoc in the contemporary world.”² Latent assumptions of the colonial narratives need to be unmasked in order to expose and deconstruct the racist, imperialist and positivist nature of these colonial narratives. In doing so the post-colonial discourses aim to neutralize the hegemonic power of persuasion and coercion of the colonial narratives. In many ways, this post-colonial discourse is also post-Eurocentric as it elevates the civilizational wisdom of the people and the wisdom-figures outside of North Atlantic, especially the wisdom embedded in the local knowledge of the marginal peoples in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

A post-mission-territorial hermeneutics need to emerge out of the local church that is no longer understood as “mission countries” which comes under the curial administration of a sacred congregation of the Holy See known as current Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples.³ This congregation exercises extensive canonical power over rites, appointment of bishops and regulars, marriage and subsidies in practical ways over ‘mission-territories’ subjected to its jurisdiction.⁴

The local church, on the other hand, are churches of particular contexts which realize that “they themselves must become increasingly truly responsible for the incarnation of the life of Christ and the insertion of the meanings and values of the Gospel within the total reality of the life of their people and of the societies whose life ad concerns they share.”⁵ This dynamic movement into the future requires greater “decentralization in the administration of the church” and greater acceptance of “pluriformity ... in liturgy, theology, the organization of Christian communities and their ministries, the training of the clergy, the styles of religious life” leading to “the actualization of an authentic catholicity of the Church.”⁶ The local churches are no longer “the young churches” incapable of making their own prudent decisions” but they are Churches that come of

age through the leading and power of God's Spirit so that they enter into a true Catholic communion of sister-churches all over the world.⁷

The post-mission-territorial hermeneutics presupposes the antecedent presence of God in the "interior and mysterious workings of God's Spirit" "in the great religious and sapiential traditions of East and West."⁸ This pneumatological basis of the cultures and (primal and world) religions enables the Asian Church to state "over the centuries God has been speaking to indigenous peoples through their cultures,"⁹ and second, the "traditional beliefs, rites, myths and symbols of indigenous peoples provide material for developing indigenous theologies and liturgical ceremonies."¹⁰ The evangelizing mission of local churches is a proclamation of the antecedent presence of God and the church's collaboration with God through a threefold process: first, a critical reading of the signs of the times and second an attentive discernment of God's actions in our world and third, announcing pastoral strategies of that collaborates with God's Spirit to bring about the reign of God.

Of related importance is the call to exercise a preferential option for orality. This post-colonial and post-mission-territorial hermeneutics need to privilege the oral traditions and wisdom of the marginal communities, especially of the indigenous peoples. Longkumer posits that "today, the emphasis on written literature/text has sidelined and ignored the oral literature as non-literature or inferior to written literature" to the extent that "people do not regard it as an important literature" and "the missionaries ignored and proscribed the oral literature as heretical literature and listed them as banned books."¹¹ Furthermore Longkumer argues "condemning oral traditions means losing our cultural and religious values" and insists "we need to affirm that oral literature is authoritative literature for the tribals, the source of our culture and origin and also for theologizing process."¹²

Given this preference for orality, this proposed hermeneutics pays discursive attention to the religio-cultural beliefs of the indigenous peoples, especially the centrality of "the spirits as the mediators between God and the world" through whom "God relates to the people and world through the spirits."¹³ These spirits are differentiated as "malevolent and benevolent spirits such that the malevolent spirits were associated with misfortune, calamities, and illness while the benevolent spirits such as the house spirits, fertility spirits and ancestor's spirits were known for blessing people with good health, good crops, healthy relationships between and among people, and a good family and community life."¹⁴

For the indigenous communities of Northeast India, Gine believes that they "are spiritual in their own rites" due to their beliefs that "the spirit of God dwells in every human thought and expression, and word

and action.”¹⁵ The indigenous communities offer sacrifices to appeal to their sacred power, not out of fear as out of reverence and love. Gine adds “they worship every good spirit, which they encounter in their day-to-day life like, the god of the land, the god of harvest, the god of the waters, the god of the animal kingdom.”¹⁶ What is most quintessential is that the spirits are revered and venerated for their sacred power in creating and sustaining the earth and creation.

2. Understanding the Creative Spirit in dialogue with Science and Cosmology

A more comprehensive understanding of the ‘literary position’ and ‘theological potentiality’ of the orality of the indigenous Great Spirit depend on a process of critical and correlational reflection between the indigenous, biblical, eastern and western traditions. This reflection also attempts to establish the affinity between the Great Spirit, *ruah elohim*, *qi*, *energy* and the transpersonal Spirit of modern science.

2.1. The Indigenous Great Spirit

The religio-cultural traditions of the indigenous peoples of Australia, New Zealand, United States, Canada, Latin America, Africa and Asia believes that the “tangible sense of aliveness is foundational evidence for the existence of the Great Spirit.”¹⁷ Furthermore, the indigenous peoples “also intuit that it is that Great Spirit that energizes the aliveness and sustains its dynamic nature, although they do not speculate on how that happens.”¹⁸ This Great Spirit manifests a felt sacred power (even frightening and awesome at time), always mediated in the experience of empowerment.”¹⁹ In a perceptible sense, the indigenous peoples experience the presence of the Spirit as “ultra real, and mediated primarily through the surrounding creation that the consider to be alive, every bit as much as humans are alive.”²⁰ Finally, the Great Spirit is transpersonal yet it permeates all things created and embraces everything authentically human. Hence the religiosity of some indigenous communities, like the Karen of Northern Thailand, believes that each human being has 37 souls/spirits and all these spirits inhabit the land and any act of thievery on the land amounts to stealing the lives of these persons.²¹

In spite of the observable differences in the Great Spirit among these diverse indigenous communities, the foundational beliefs are remarkably similar. As Darmuid O’Murchu²² explains, the Great Spirit is believed to manifest the following features:

- All-pervasive
- Transcendent, yet totally immersed in creation
- Evoking creative potentials in every dimension of creation

- Awesome and at times frightening, yet intimately close to every aspect of life
- Life affirming, but operative in both the process of creation and destruction
 - Close to humans, yet essentially transpersonal in itself
 - Capable of being experienced in all motions of nature (e.g., wind and fire), and not merely in human feeling, emotion, or sentiment
 - Captured in religious concepts like Christian notion of the Holy Spirit, yet predating and transcending all formal religions.

The Great Spirit is ultimately the sacred cosmic and personal energizing and sustaining power that articulate with the biblical *ruah elohim* which will be dealt with in the next section.

2.2. *Ruah Elohim*

The biblical *ruah* is the Spirit power that brings creation into being that comes forth from Yahweh (YHWH) the God-creator-liberator for the Israelites. According to Kwong Lai Kuen, the Jews understand *ruah elohim* at the cosmic level as “wind, breath, air, atmosphere, the great space between the heavens and earth.”²³ Geiko Muller-Fahrenheit explains *ruah* as “the motherly energy of God, the inexhaustible and creative power that is exceedingly tender in the soft breezes and wondrously fierce in the tempest’s blast.”²⁴ *Ruah* brings the world together as a united whole (principle of universal cohesion and unity of the whole universe) and it is the deepest core (interiority) of every being. At the microcosmic level, *ruah* is “the principle of life, the seat of knowledge, sentiments, will and the human character.”²⁵ *Ruah* is the “power” and effective “action of God in history and in the world” that is creative and transformative that enables God to bring about the salvation of humankind and the cosmos.

Ruah elohim remains transpersonal and personal in nature. Hence Kwong Lai Kuen posits that “its rhythmic dynamism, its creative flexibility, its sweetness and its vigor, its unity made up of diversity, and its harmonious diversity allows us to go beyond certain breaks that exist in the dualist and static regime of thinking.”²⁶ This is echoed by Philip Clayton, a scientist and theologian who argues that the “Spirit is set free from any metaphysical parameters and allowed to roam freely, immersing itself fully in the self-creating enterprise which is its natural birthright... Spirit is the creative, artistic impulse that rises on outstretched wings to soar above the objectifying forces of law-like explanation and prediction.”²⁷

The personal and transpersonal nature of *ruah elohim* makes it possible to correlate with the cosmic and personal *qi* of Chinese cosmol-

ogy that are present and active in giving life that sustains the *cosmos*, humans and all being.

2.3. Chinese Cosmology

The Chinese cosmology is inextricably linked to the notion of ‘*qi*’. The idea of *qi* dates back to Mencius, a disciple of Confucius. Mencius does not say *qi* is an overflowing but the outcome of one who is has clear conscience and whose life is ethical²⁸. According to Benoit Vermander, the Chinese term “*qi*” “is the vapor that emerges” like vapor from the rice that is cooking. So *qi* is the vapor, the expiration, the fluid, the overflow... the breaths.”²⁹

Caroline Fu and Richard Bergeon explains that “the ancient Chinese sages believed that cosmic energy-flow (known as Super Cosmic *qi*) affected inspiration, environment, and social interaction.”³⁰ Ancient Chinese sages used the 5,000-year old Tai-Ji (*ying-yan* symbol) which denotes the ‘Great Supreme’ reality. The *ying-yang* flows with each other, “rotate and transform each other – expressing variations of “being” – having no beginning and no ending, affecting Earth as formless Super Cosmic *qi*. Korean theologian Grace Kim Ji-Sun states that *qi* “is a vital dynamic, an original power that permeates the entire universe and leads to ultimate unity.”³¹ The cosmic *qi* interacts with each individual’s personal *qi* and thus amalgamates the personal energy-flow with the universal consciousness. In fact, “*qi* is the nature and consequence of being, energy-flow, and transformation.”³²

At the societal and cosmic dimensions, Vermander believes *qi* is related to two other terms ‘Virtue’ and ‘Way’ whose meaning is related to the water or river that digs its course. Like water, *qi* nurtures and sustains Virtues and the Way, circulates between Heaven and Earth, the human and the cosmos. Just as “water is the manifestation of the primordial energy which can be creative of life or of death”³³ so *qi* is the social energy to be harnessed and use to bring about Virtue and the Way - quest for the way of wisdom through learning and reflection, quest for the virtue of justice that brings about a right relationship with oneself, with fellow humans, with nature and creation or Heaven and Earth.

Qi without Virtues and the Way of wisdom and justice will bring death, destruction, injustices, oppression, unrest and violence in all spheres of life in society (social, cultural, economic, political and religious). The revolutions in China are seen as social energy (like water that breaks the dikes) that great leaders released in the Chinese people/masses to ‘wash away’ political obstacles and then closed to avoid or mitigate any destruction by such a massive release of social energy. Hence, the use of the Chinese terms “*feng*” (to open) and “*shu*” (to close) to denote the

cycle of 'opening' and 'closing' of the social energy at work in society in relation to the cosmic forces of the heaven and earth.³⁴

Commenting on the transpersonal nature, Kwong Lai Kuen adds that *qi* is "a vital overflowing force" like air and water flowing everywhere, linking heaven and earth, the humans and all beings, "affecting many dimensions: cosmic, ethnic, spiritual, social, medical, esthetic, linking matter and spirit, heart and body, physics and metaphysics, emptiness and fullness, nothing and everything."³⁵ Furthermore, "what unifies and makes possible communion between all is the one and only *qi*. Being empty, it receives everything. It reaches the depths of every being and, at the same time, it is large enough to embrace and cover the whole universe."³⁶ As a transpersonal force, the Chinese *qi* "allows us to seize better and more subtly the active and creative presence of the Spirit in the world, the mutual communication between Heaven and Earth."³⁷

This cosmological explanation of *qi* articulates with Kim Ji-Sun's postulation that *qi* as "the Spirit which is part of the universe and permeates all living things as it gives life and energy" and this "same Spirit is bridging all life-force between Creator and creature" to the extent that this selfsame Spirit "is not an energy proceeding from the Father, or from the Son" as "it is a subject from whose activity the Son and the Father receive their glory and their union, as well as their glorification through the whole creation."³⁸

The cosmological explanation of *qi* finds an affinity with the understanding of the Spirit in modern science and cosmology of the west.

2.4. Western Modern Science and Cosmology

Modern science and cosmology in the west acknowledge that the multiverse came into being about 13.7 billion years ago as a result of the sudden bursting forth of energy often described as the big bang or "the great radiance" that resembles a cosmic microwave background radiation.³⁹ Others describe this phenomenon as the "eternal inflation"⁴⁰ which left an "afterglow" with an evolutionary expansion of great velocity.

The cosmos is being presented as a self-directed 'process of complexification' toward an eternal future of infinite openness. The cosmos is indeed an infinite open multiverse⁴¹ caught up in an ongoing forward process of being created out of the creative vacuum, which signifies depths of profundity. The emergence of the multiverse out of such profound depths was never a 'creation out of nothingness' (*creatio ex nihilo*) as an emergence out of the profundity within the chaos (*creation ex profundis*).⁴²

The multiverse is charged with a primordial energy that "moves within self-organizational forms known as fields"⁴³ which are "constellations of energy, with assuredly functional properties and influences, but

also endowed with potentialities,” thriving “on relationships, always pushing forward toward enlarged horizon,”⁴⁴ also known to “flow in patterns (sometimes chaotic), and the patterns seem to have a preferred sense of direction.”⁴⁵ These fields of energy, according to the spirituality of John of Damascus, is identifiable with the energy of God and thus with the energizing Spirit.

Modern science and cosmology offer a more compelling evidence of the energizing Spirit than the spiritual or theological tradition.⁴⁶ Two leading scientists, Isaac Newton and Albert Einstein have engendered two different pneumatologies. Newton coined the term ‘ether’ to denote the “vehicle for the activity of the living Spirit.”⁴⁷ Wolfgang Vondey offers a concise description of the Newtonian Pneumatology:

- (1) Spirit is a necessary component for a philosophy of nature.
- (2) Spirit is an intermediate agent of transcendent God in creation.
- (3) Spirit is a universal principle present in all natural phenomena.
- (4) Spirit is an internal medium of infinite duration (time) and extension (space).
- (5) Spirit is a cohesive and conforming force in nature.”⁴⁸

On the other hand, Einstein believes that the Spirit “is the rationality at work in the cosmic order, endowing the laws of nature with meaning and order, and bestowing an overall sense of unity and coherence in the workings of nature.”⁴⁹ In summary, Einsteinian Pneumatology offers a different explanation:

- (1) Spirit is a necessary component in the scientific endeavor.
- (2) Spirit is the rational order of the universe.
- (3) Spirit is a universal principle present in all natural phenomena.
- (4) Spirit is the symmetry of the space-time continuum.
- (5) Spirit has no physical, material reality.⁵⁰

How do these “scientific” pneumatologies articulate with the biblical understanding of *ruah elohim*? At the onset it must be clear that both Newtonian and Einsteinian pneumatologies fail to link with the personal and embodied identity of the Spirit of Christianity. Their envisaged articulation lies in the transpersonal nature of the Creative Spirit. *Ruah elohim* is arguably the energizing Spirit of God that emerges out of and cocreates within the same foundational energy that has suffused the multiverse with an emergent orientation to “flourish, blossom forth and grow in complexity.”⁵¹

Given the personal yet transpersonal nature of *ruah elohim* that is completely transcendent yet totally immanent in creation, it is best to speak of the Spirit’s divine creativity that suffuses creation with its sacred

power. The Creative Spirit is completely caught up in the mystery of life that “comes forth to thrive and complexify through relationships.”⁵² This is the Creative Spirit that is at the heart of cosmic creativity or the self-creativity of the cosmos that exhibits an ecosystemic capacity for self-organization and “a preferred sense of direction.”⁵³ With unprecedented mystical courage, Teilhard de Chardin extrapolated a pneumatological insight:

Besides the phenomena of heat, light and the rest studied by physics, there is, just as real and natural, the phenomenon of spirit ... [which] has rightly attracted human attention more than any other. We are coincidental with it. We feel it within. It is the very thread of which the other phenomena are woven for us. It is the thing we know best in the world since we are itself, and it is for us everything (Teilhard de Chardin 1969, 93) 54

Teilhard’s insight further the understanding of modern science and cosmology of a multiverse that is evolving, emergent, pervasively infused with patterns and a dynamic sense of direction for reasons that “the cosmos, in this sense, is overflow with spirit because it is interactive, pan-relational, and creative.”⁵⁵

This primordial Spirit enfolds and permeates the entire cosmos with aura of sacredness to the extent that all *anthropos* and the cosmos enjoy their existence through the sustaining presence of the indwelling Spirit whence came its primordial sacredness.⁵⁶ This indwelling Spirit who fulfills that primordial role articulates with the biblical *ruah elohim* who is known to Christian theology as the Holy Spirit.⁵⁷

A primordial sacredness due to the indwelling of the sustaining indwelling of *ruah elohim* articulates with the transpersonal-personal nature of the Great Spirit, the *qi* Chinese cosmology and the Spirit of modern science and cosmology. Essentially these are the mystical-contemplative yet contextual articulation of the ultimate mystery of life. In spite of the observable difference in the diverse systems of explanation, there is an “epistemological affinity” between the different contextualized articulations of the pervasive mystery of life.

Such an interrelated understanding of the sacred mystery that sustains the cosmic web of transpersonal and personal life promotes the discursive legitimacy of the orality and civilizational wisdom of the indigenous peoples that were de-legitimized by the hegemonic colonial power and narratives. Second this critical correlation establishes the “theological potentiality” of the indigenous Great Spirit. Third, the legitimacy and authority conferred on oral narratives and indigenous wisdom in turn elevates the role of the indigenous wo/men shamans, sages, healers and elders as well.

This interrelated and interdisciplinary conversation opens up a discursive space of pluriformity for additional contextual theologies to be generated. Claiming this ecclesial-theological space makes it possible for the emergence of a liberative shamanic pneumatology of sacred sustainability.

3. An Emergent Shamanic Pneumatology of Sacred Sustainability

This section begins with an explanation of sustainability as articulated by the United Nations that becomes the platform for a theological discourse on sacred sustainability.

3.1. Sustainability: An Overview

In a general sense, sustainability bespeaks of humankind's relationship with Mother Earth. Sustainability is understood particularly in relation to responsible stewardship of the earth and management of the planet's human and natural resources. Since March 20, 1987, the Brundtland Commission of the United Nations linked sustainability to the concept of sustainable development which specifies the kind of "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."⁵⁸

The Earth Charter Initiative of 2000 portrays "a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace."⁵⁹ In 2005, the UN World Summit mentions the "three pillars" of sustainability : (a) ending extreme poverty; (b) ensuring that prosperity is shared by all, including women, youth and minorities; and (c) protecting the natural environment. These three goals can be termed the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development, or, more simply, the "triple bottom line" of sustainable development.⁶⁰ The "triple bottom line" is not mutually exclusive as they are mutually reinforcing.⁶¹

This UN definition on sustainability has by no means achieved the intended consensus. The terms sustainability and sustainable development, the goals intended and the manner of achieving these goals remain open to interpretation and debate. To the environmentalists, there can be no sustainable development without the concomitant degradation of the environment, the depletion of resources, and a massive extinction of species.⁶² Others argue that sustainability must have quantifiable limits and intergenerational perspective for all humans and life forms. Most will agree that sustainability embraces a call to action, a task in progress, a political process aimed at the gradual realization of some envisioned goals and values for attaining a sustainable community of life on earth.

3.2. Sustainability: A Pneumatological Insight

Sacred sustainability is a pneumatological insight that emerges out of a dialogue with a few renowned indigenous shamans and a subsequent reflection on the initiatory experience of the sacredness of the mystery of life that pervades all of creation.⁶³ This shamanic pneumatology elevates the civilizational wisdom inherent in the indigenous cosmology of sustainability. Many renowned elders, sages and shamans around the world expound this cosmology of sustainability in relation to the sustainability of life on earth. This emergent insight explains sacred sustainability in relation to the tenet of the omnipresence of God's Creative Spirit in creation.

The insight postulates that the indwelling Creative Spirit pulsates through the whole of creation with the sacred power that makes all things, all life forms, all spaces and all persons sacred. This pulsation of the sacred power of the Creative Spirit sustains life in creation. In other words, the abiding presence of the Creative Spirit is the basis for the possibility of sustainability of life in creation. God's Creative spirit is responsible for making creation sacred (hence socializes creation) so that creation is suffused with the sacredness of God's sacred power. Conversely, when creation is desecrated and violated by greed it is devoid of this sacred power of the Creative Spirit, sustainability of life in creation is no longer tenable and viable.

This shamanic pneumatology of sacred sustainability hinges on three theological extrapolations premised on Scripture. The first presupposes the participation of the shamanic spirits in the sacred power of the Creative Spirit and the second a theological understanding of Yahweh as co-governing and co-sustaining the cosmos with other spirits.

3.2.1. Participation in ruah elohim.

A shamanic pneumatology of sacred sustainability postulates that sustainability of life in God's creation is possible because the shamanic spirits participate in the spirit power of *ruah elohim* (Psalm 139:7). By their intimate participation, the shamanic spirits' indwelling presence in nature makes the trees, the forests, the rivers, the rice grains, the water, the mountains and human beings and creation sacred. Based on this cosmic sacredness, sustainability of life on earth and creation is attainable by the creative power of *ruah elohim*. In Genesis (1:1-2) *ruah elohim* is depicted as hovering over the waters, transforming the primal chaos (*tobu va-vobu*, a description of whence the earth was wild and waste)⁶⁴ into a cosmos that befits all human and bio-species on earth. This is the *ruah elohim* that suffuses creation with God's sacred power and goodness (Gen 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31) and that reflects the grandeur and splendor of God.

3.2.2. *Ruah Elohim as omnipresent.*

The pneumatology of sacred sustainability advocates that sustainability of life with the sacred power of *ruah elohim* is attainable due to the participation of the shamanic spirits in the Omnipresent *ruah* (Jer 23:24). This *ruah* is present in creation, which the biblical authors acknowledged as the imperishable spirit that is in everything (Wis 12:1).⁶⁵ This *ruah* fills the heaven and the earth (1 King 8:27; Amos 9:2-3), indeed the whole world (Wis 1:7). By the act of creation, the uncreated Creator infused in everything, a living soul or living spirit (Wis 15:11) and thus God's *ruah* is acknowledged for its universal and life-giving and sustaining activity (Jb 34:14-15; Ps 104:30) that makes creation sacred.⁶⁶ By participation in the Creative *ruah* that suffuses creation with God's presence and makes it sacred, the host of shamanic spirits, presided over by the Omnipresent *ruah elohim*, enables the sustainability of life in creation and ascertains that sacred sustainability is a realizable possibility. The host of shamanic spirits shares in the task of co-governance with the presiding *ruah elohim*. The co-creation, co-governance and co-sustenance of the Creative Spirit together with the shamanic spirits in God's creation has made possible the sacred sustainability of creation and our planetary home earth with all its life forms.

3.2.3. *Ruah Elohim: Spirit power of the Shamans.*

Since the Omnipresent *ruah elohim* co-creates, co-governs and co-sustains creation with the shamanic spirits, and by virtue of the intimate participation of the shamanic spirits in the sacred power of *ruah elohim*, it is safe to conclude that *ruah elohim* 'instrumentalizes' the shamans for purposes exemplified by the biblical shamanic types.

The intermediary role of the shamans are akin to that of biblical Patriarchs Abraham (Gen 12:7; 15:1; 18:1), Jacob (Gen 28:11-17) and Moses who mediated the spirit power of *ruah elohim* to part the red sea (Ex 14:16), induce water from the rock (Ex 17:5; Nm 20:11) and work "nature miracles" free (Ex 7-11; 15:22-25; 16) to set the oppressed Israelites free (Ex 5ff). Finally, the shamans find a type in the Spirit-possessed and Spirit-driven Jesus (Lk 4:18-19) who identifies himself with the struggle of the populace in early Palestine.

Driven and possessed by *ruah elohim*, the shamans too immerse themselves totally in the daily grind of economic poverty and political marginalization of the indigenous communities. Their shamanic rituals bring healings to the sick, deliver and set free those who are influenced by bad spirits, and recreate sacred space. Their presence, knowledge and wisdom have inspired the communities to share what they have, like the miracles of the fish and loaves (Mk 6:30-44, 8:1-10; Mt 4:13-21; Lk 9:10-

17, Jn 6:1-13), in order to attain a more sustainable livelihood in their ancestral homeland.

Indeed *ruah elohim* is the spirit power of the shamans for harmonizing the cosmic and planetary web of relations, empowering the communities in their struggle for sustainable livelihood and reconciling ruptured interpersonal relations and healing of personal ailment.

3.3. Sustainability: A Pneumatological Response

This pneumatological insight correlates with a spirit-inspired response to God's sacred creation. Sacred sustainability calls forth a conversion of heart with a resultant felt-conviction that sustainability of life on earth and in God's creation is qualitatively possible with an emerging civilization of *profound reverence and respect* for all things, all life forms, all spaces and all persons. This reverence is grounded in God's all-pervasive Creative Spirit that is intuitively and mystically experienced as *sacredly alive* in all of creation. It is this omnipresence of God's Creative Spirit that *sacredly sustains* all of God's creation.

Living in the spirit power of *ruah elohim*, humankind renders to creation a "dialogic reverence" which calls on all humans to reverentially behold and respect all things, all life forms, all spaces and all persons in our planetary home due to the pulsating presence of the sacred power of the Creative Spirit. Every breath is a felt-experience and every perceivable presence of life is notional conviction that God's Creative power is sacralizing and sustaining all human lives and all life forms on earth. In this dialogic reverence for creation, human engagement in agriculture, pottery and weaving is as sacred as human involvement in worship as all these apparently mundane activities are actually ways of expressing and manifesting reverence to the all- pervasive sacred mystery. ⁶⁷

Reverence for the sacredness of creation will dictate an ethical level of human consumption of the earth's resources that is sustainable of life on earth for all life forms. It will be based on a communal ethics of need-to-use rather than greed-for-profit, resembling the "*Sumaj Kawsay*," ⁶⁸ a concept of the indigenous peoples of Bolivia that resonates with the Kari-Oca 2 understanding of "living well" or living in harmony with nature and people, rather than the current focus on producing more goods and stimulating consumption. ⁶⁹ Only a need-based ethos between humankind and the earth will sustain human livelihood with dignity and security, both for current and future generations. Ultimately only a spirit-drive need-based reverential relationship, rooted in the sacredness of creation, ensures the sustainability of life for humankind, all the other life forms and most significantly, planet earth.

This emergent shamanic Pneumatology of sacred sustainability is premised on two presuppositions. First, the established "theological

potentiality” of the Indigenous Great Spirit; second, the intimate participation of the shamanic spirits in the co-creative, co-governing and co-sustaining power of *ruah elohim*. This omnipresence spirit power suffuses all of creation and thus sacralizes the entire *cosmos*, *anthropos* and all life forms in the multiverse. In short, the sacred sustainability of creation is the primordial and ongoing activity of *ruah elohim* within the self-organized patterns, relations and a preferred sense of direction within the multiverse.

3.4. *A Shamanic Pneumatology: A Liberative Discourse*

Sacred sustainability is a liberative pneumatological discourse premised on three shamanic beliefs of the marginalized peoples of the primal religions. These three beliefs (see 4.4.1.-4.4.3. below) echo with the Biblical God who has entered into a covenantal partnership with the poor of history.

3.4.1. *Theological presupposition.*

The Yahweh of the covenant heard the suffering of the people Israel who “groaning in slavery, cried out for help and from the depths of their slavery their cry came up to God.” (Ex 2:23) *Yahweh’s* heart descended with empathy: “I have seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying for help... Yes, I am aware of their sufferings. And I have come down to rescue them from the clutches of the Egyptians and bring them up out of that country...” (Ex 3:7-8). This is *Yahweh* who remembered the covenant with the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and *Yahweh* promised to descend and liberate the people through Moses. Yahweh is the God of righteousness and justice for the aliens, the poor and the slaves (Ex 23:1-9) groaning under the oppression of empires. Yahweh ensures that life is sustained - symbolized by the promised land (Ex 3:8-9)- so that the violated people come under the rule of a non-desecrating and liberating God. Yahweh who liberated the desecrated Israelites does not want a poor destitute global underclass since *Yahweh* has enjoined that “there must, then, be no poor among you” (Dt 15:4). This is the God who descends in aid of the oppressed people upon hearing invocations during rituals to liberate them in their struggles against idolatrous power of domination and slavery.

3.4.2. *Christological presupposition.*

God’s creative *ruah* is the indwelling *ruah* (Jn 1:14) that is the creative-salvific power within Jesus, guiding his ministry of Kin(g)dom liberation for all who are in need of God and God’s salvific liberation. Jesus proclaimed God’s Reign and demonstrated by word and deeds that

it is at hand (Mk 1:15) through the liberation of persons suffering from bodily ailments and poverty, violated and desecrated by the oppressive system of taxation of the Jewish Temple-State and the Roman Empire.⁷⁰ The healing and deliverance by Jesus are manifestations of the supernatural power of the God-with-and-within-us who sets free the human spirit and body from all violence, be it physical or structural or both.

In his ministry in early Palestine, Jesus pronounced the marginalized as heirs of Abraham (Mt 8:29; Lk13:16) because of their inviolable dignity as persons made sacred in God's image and likeness (Gen 1:26). Through his ministry, Jesus defended their inviolable rights to be revered as sacred, not to be violated by any cultural, religious, political or invisible powers. The Christ-event seals God's everlasting covenant (Mk 14:24; Mt 26:28; Lk 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25) with creation. The outpouring of God's Spirit (Acts 2:1-13) is the definitive assurance of God's everlasting and recurrent actions of making sacred (a "divine sacralization") God's creation.

This ever-binding covenant sealed on the cross and soaked in the blood of the Crucified Jesus, ensures that sacred sustainability becomes translated into a praxis of committed disciples through whom the Crucified Lord continues to liberate the global underclass, victims of global capitalism who represent 40 percent of the world's population (see Appendix C). The covenantal blood seals the pact with the global underclass, consecrates them as sacred in God's sight so that liberation brings about the state of sacred sustainability for the marginalized in our world – a desired sustainability of life where there is reverence for the sacredness of persons and the earth. This is the Christological basis of an Asian liberation theology of sacred sustainability.

The God who descends as Immanuel (Mt 1:23) is the God who is a liberator in person whose liberative efforts are being continued by shamans who create space of resistance for their ancestral homeland in the name of sustainable livelihood for the marginalized indigenous communities.

3.4.3. Pneumatological presupposition.

The liberative power of the shamanic spirits who participate in the sacred power of the Creative Spirit finds a home in the Risen Lord, the *ruah-made-flesh-now-liberated* from the death-dealing imperial power of Roman and the Temple-States. This *ruah* is now universalized to become the omnipresent Pentecostal Spirit. This Spirit breaks forth from a mono-cultural to a multi-cultural manifestation as attested to in the multi-glossarial phenomenon of Acts 2: 1-13. God's Spirit is now present and active in many regions outside of Judaism and the Jewish territories

through the early missionary work of the nascent church. The indwelling Spirit acts as the dynamic power within the apostles and disciples (Luke 3:22; 4:1, 18; 10:21; Acts 1:2) who continued Jesus' Kin(g)dom-ministry of liberating peoples from the imperial forces in the Graeco-Roman world who violated the sacredness and dignity of the human persons and God's creation.⁷¹

By virtue of the shamanic spirits participate in the primal *ruah* (see 4.2.1), then the indwelling spirits also participate in the omnipresent Pentecostal Spirit of the Risen Lord. As shamanic spirits that bring healing to sick persons and restore balance to the ruptures between creation and humankind, these spirits are the soma-cosmic liberating spirits of God. Their indwelling as spirits of the mountains, rivers, animals, water-source and forests suffuses nature with a cosmological or eco-sacredness which further reinforces the organic value that God has endowed creation by virtue of being created sacred in God's sight. This value of sacredness commands our human reverence and resolution to realize a sustainable use of the earth's resources as responsible stewards of the earth. The presence of God's Omnipresent Spirit and the indwelling spirits in nature continues to liberate humankind from the greed to exploit earth's resources. The *pneuma* is the liberating power in creation to the cosmos from the relentless and destructive depletion of non-renewable resources that threatens the survival of the earth.

These three theological understanding lays the pneumatological foundation of a liberative pneumatology of sacred sustainability.

3.5. Liberative Praxis for the promotion of Sacred Sustainability

This shamanic pneumatology has its ensuing liberative praxis that calls for the promotion of a sustainable relationship, especially in relation to global capitalism and in the context of Asia. 3.3.1 Liberative Praxis for sustainable relationship.

3.5.1. Liberative Praxis for sustainable relationship

This pneumatological discourse calls for the promotion of a sustainable relationship of space and beings because they are sacred. The space in discussion is inclusive of the space within the human body or "body-space" and space as the entire earth or earth-space, even outer space as in the entire universe. If space is sacred, then the human body, the earth and the universe are all sacred. Similarly the beings in deliberation refer to all organic and non-organic things on earth. Any violation of spaces and beings on the earth, defies the notion of sacred sustainability. Insofar as nature and culture are desecrated, life on earth is at stake and human livelihood in the world can no longer be sustainable. This

discourse advocates sustainability of life on earth for all biospecies and humankind premised on the theological notion that both the indwelling of God's Spirit and the shamanic spirits in everything and everyone make all things and all beings sacred.

3.5.2. Liberative Praxis in relation to global capitalism.

In the light of deplorable desecration by global capitalism, this shamanic pneumatology of sacred sustainability denounces the prevalent system of neo-liberal capitalism for its destructive impact on human civilization, on society and above all, its irreparable damage on the environment. This liberation theology regards the detestable consequences of global capitalism as an affront against God and a hideous crime on humanity. In effect, it has caused a genocidal impact on future generations and mother earth. Humankind and the earth are in need of liberation from such inhumane desecration of human dignity and blatant violence against God's creation.

At the same time, this liberative shamanic pneumatology calls for global solidarity with the God-in-action in the ongoing struggle of the marginalized, liberating them and the world from the idolatry of profit, pleasure and power inherent in the logic of global capitalism.⁷² This solidarity calls for a "dialogic reverence" due to persons and all of creation in their sacredness in order to attain greater sustainability of life for ALL in God's creation. The attainment of greater sacred sustainability is aptly captured in the Johannine metaphor "fullness of life" (John 10:10), a theological vision of the integral salvation for all of God's creation. For the indigenous peoples and the global underclass whom they are a part of, "fullness of life" means rightful access to sufficient natural resources, integral relations with the land, overall balance between nature and culture, intergenerational cultural identity and security that their future generations can truly lead lives with intimate knowledge of their language and practices like dance, song, livelihood crafts, and ritual communication with the Creator and spirits.

In short, it is a personal life with dignity made possible through a community enjoying sustainable livelihood. The biblical notion of "fullness of life" (John 10:10) also enjoins the need for sustained liberation of the marginalized from the systemic oppression inflicted on the majority of the have-nots by global capitalism. A sustained liberation in society is possible with a liberation from an oppressed body-space directed to the conversion of heart, mind and relationship. Only the liberating power of God's saving justice brings humankind to foster a just relationship with God, neighbors of other cultures and faiths (including indigenous shamanism), and the environment.

In addition, this liberative praxis advocates an alternative post-global capitalism discourse that “recognizes the wonderful result of God's creative activity” in nature and the world, and promotes with greater urgency that the earth's resources are “a common good, destined for all” and therefore “the goods of the earth were created by God to be used wisely by all... shared equitably, in accordance with justice and charity,” “while respecting the intrinsic balance of creation.”⁷³

3.5.3. Liberative praxis in relation to Asia

In the plural context of Asia, this liberative praxis is always interreligious, public and global. There is no denial that the “relationship among religions is a matter of public interest in Asia today” (Wilfred 2010, 104). The contestation of space that entails negotiations with the nation-state is carried out for the good of *all* in society. This common concern requires collaboration of the religious leaders of Asia. Local religious leaders need to collaborate and network with regional and global agents of liberation in such movements as the global justice movements, be they anti-war, anti-poverty, human rights, ecological, women/feminists, and Asian/World Social Forum movements. All these liberative movements advocate a world where sustainability is possible because the *cosmos* and *anthropos* are suffused with sacredness, splendor and the grandeur of the Creator.

Yet amidst such possibilities, an increasingly secularized Asia impacted by economic globalization, has moved to the edge of a manifest incapacity to be opened and surprised by the sacred. An Asian liberation theology of sacred sustainability has the urgent task of elevating this indigenous logic of the sacred and the potency of that sacred power. Only such elevation can convince a secularized world to remain open to the promptings of the creative *ruah* already at work in all beings and all spaces through the indwelling Spirit and shamanic spirits.

Such liberative praxis involving negotiation and resistance which is mediated by the shamans, calls for an inclusive collaboration among shamans and religious leaders, both women and men (monks, pastors, Hindu and Catholic priests). Together, they need to ritually celebrate the descent of the power of the Creator, implode the sacred power from within individuals and communities, and concertedly, recreate space, ordain and make sacred everything and everyone in the communal efforts of negotiating social changes. The implosion of the latent power ‘within’ makes possible the promotion of sacred sustainability in the ancestral homeland of indigenous communities and in the *cosmos* as well. The power from “beyond” that descends amongst the marginalized becomes a liberating power from “within” that enables the marginalized communities, both indigenous and otherwise, to negotiate and resist the systemic violence of global capitalism.

This liberative praxis, motivated by the different Asian faith traditions, for the promotion of sacred sustainability in Asia calls for a conviction that “when things are most incredible that *faith* is most required” and “when things are most hopeless that we really need *hope*” and “the impossible love becomes the real love” (Neelankavil 2010, 96). With deep faith, real hope and love in the sacred power of *ruah elohim*, sacred sustainability is attainable based on affective experience that deepens a “felt-presence” and the subsequent en-fleshed conviction of the sacredness of all spaces and beings. With this glow of sacredness within the beings of the *anthropos* that commensurate with the sacredness pervasively present in the cosmos, the attainment of sacred sustainability in our world remains a realizable goal of humankind.

Finally, a liberative shamanic pneumatology of sacred sustainability announces God’s actions behind the inner dynamism oriented towards the liberation of creation. With the free offer of the graces of salvation, the many poor of the many world and primal religions of Asia will be able to collaborate with all theological symbols of liberation to bring about a “new creation” (2 Cor 5:17). This liberation directed at the “new creation” will become a reality at the *eschaton* when the final realization of “a new heaven and a new earth” (Rev. 21:1) takes place.

Conclusion

The UN Declaration of the two decades of indigenous peoples and the UN discourse on sustainability has spurred this need to generate a post-colonial and post-mission-territorial hermeneutics for establishing the “epistemological affinity” between the indigenous Great Spirit, the biblical Creative Spirit, the Chinese perception of *qi*, the Spirit of modern science and cosmology of the west. This hermeneutics privileges the civilizational wisdom and the lived local oral knowledge of indigenous communities that the reputable shamans, healers, elders and sages embodied and practiced. These different epistemological systems lure humankind to a mystical state of awe and wonder that opens up the heart to a gradual realization that the Creative Spirit is unmistakably the ongoing cosmic activity in the complexification process of the eternally open and infinite multiverse.

This hermeneutical effort establishes the “theological potentiality” of the indigenous Great Spirit for an Asian shamanic pneumatology. Through a process of “contextual theologizing” from the lived-experience of the indigenous peoples, this emergent hermeneutics has generated a shamanic pneumatology of sacred sustainability that is context-specific to Asia. This Asian shamanic pneumatology aims to grapple with the crises of sustainability exacerbated by global capitalism and thus draws human-

kind into the very activity within the emerging, flourishing, self-organizing and purpose-directed complexifying process of life in the multiverse.

This liberative shamanic pneumatology calls for an inclusive recognition of the intimate participation of the shamanic spirits of in the spirit power of *ruah elohim* and advocates the shamans and healers as the pneumatological intermediaries of the co-creative, co-governing and co-sustaining *ruah elohim*. At the same time, this liberative shamanic pneumatology claims the discursive space of theological pluriformity to be a rightful local theology within the catholicity of contextual theologies of the Church universal.

May the liberative praxis of this emergent shamanic pneumatology conjoin all believers of the primal and world religions, including all people of goodwill to be open and be lured by the primordial Spirit into the infinite future whence sacred sustainability of the infinite and open multiverse becomes a perennial experience of the eternal activity of the Creative Spirit.

Notes

- ¹ See Mark Hathaway and Leonardo Boff, *The Tao of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009).
- ² Diarmuid O' Murchu, *Christianity's Dangerous Memory: A Rediscovery of the Revolutionary Jesus* (Quezon City: Claretian Publications 2012), 9.
- ³ *Propaganda Fidei* is the Congregation of the Holy See founded on 22nd of June, 1622 by the Bull *Inscrutabili* issued by Pope Gregory XV with the double aim of spreading Christianity in the areas where the Christian message had still not arrived and of defending the patrimony of faith in those places where heresy (Protestantism in terms of Lutheranism, Calvinism and Anglicanism) had caused the genuineness of the faith to be questioned. *Propaganda Fidei* was thereafter, basically the Congregation whose task was to organize all the missionary activities of the Church. Through a provision of the late Pope John Paul II (in order to better define its task), *Propaganda Fidei* has been called the "Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples." See mv.vatican.va/3_EN/pages/x=Scede/METs/METs-Main_06.html Accessed on February 5, 2013.
- ⁴ 'Mission territories' or 'mission countries' that *Propaganda Fidei* oversees consists of dioceses, vicariates, prefectures, simple missions, and colleges administer through its delegates. The Apostolic delegations are established to maintain immediate representatives of the Holy See in places where they seem to be needed by reason of the growth of the Church organization and in numbers. This Congregation is authorized to deal with matters peculiar to the other congregations, when such matters are presented as practical cases, i.e. when they do not raise questions of a technical character, or of general bearing, or are not of a class specifically reserved to some other department of the pontifical administration.
- ⁵ Francisco F. Claver, S.J., *The Making Of A Local Church* (Manila: Claretian Publications and Jesuit Communications, 2009), 219.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, 219-220.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, 220.

- ⁸ See the 34th General Congregation document, Decree 4, *Mission and Culture* which states, "The ministry of dialogue is conducted with a sense that God's action is antecedent to ours." and the 1993 encyclical of John Paul II entitled "Veritatis Splendor," no. 94.
- ⁹ This is part of a statement of a conference in Hua Hin, Thailand, In September 1995, entitled *Evangelization Among The Indigenous Peoples Of Asia*. It was organized by the Office of Evangelization, participated by forty-five participants, bishops, priests, religious and lay people of Asia, all of whom belonged to indigenous groups or were working with them, reflected on the theological significance of the religious heritage of the indigenous peoples. For details, see Franz-Josef Eilers. *For All the Peoples of Asia*. Vol. II. *Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences Documents from 1992 to 1996* (Quezon City, Philippines: Claretian Publications, 1997), 212.
- ¹⁰ The document entitled *The Spirit At Work In Asia Today* is a paper published in 1997 by the FABC Office of Theological Concern in the edition of the *1998 FABC Papers*.
- ¹¹ Limatula Longkumer, "Hermeneutical Issues in Using Traditional Sources – Where do We Draw Our Spiritual Sources for Our Liberation?" *Journal of Tribal Studies* 13, no. 2 (July-December 2008), 39.
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ Yangkahao Vashum, "Jesus Christ as the Ancestor and Elder Brother: Constructing a Relevant Indigenous/Tribal Christology of North East India," *Journal of Tribal Studies* 13, no. 2 (July-December 2008), 27.
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ See Pratap Chandra Gine 2005, "Countering Aggressive Majoritarian Constructs of Nationhood: Dalits and Hindu Religious Fundamentalism in India," *JTCA – The Journal of Theologies and Cultures in Asia*, 4 (2005), 96
- ¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁷ Ibid., 12.
- ¹⁸ Ibid., 11. O' Murchu posits that "the Great Spirit is more foundational to spiritual/religious meaning than the Christian notion of the Trinity, or indeed the theistic constructs of any of the great religions." (2012, 11).
- ¹⁹ Ibid., 197.
- ²⁰ Ibid., 11.
- ²¹ See Prasert Trakansuphakon, "Space of Resistance and Place of Local Knowledge in the Northern Thailand Ecological Movement," Ph.D. Dissertation, Chiangmai University, 2007, 214. This religious belief is sufficient motif to inspire the Karen to stand up and resist the Thai government's attempt to convert the Karen ancestral homeland to a reforestation project and transfer the ownership from the Karen communities to the government.
- ²² Ibid., 85-6.
- ²³ Kwong Lai Kuen, "The Chinese Qi and Christian Anthropology," *Ignis*, Vol. XLII, no. 3 (2012.3), 38. Also see Richard J. Clifford, and Roland E. Murphy, "Genesis," in *The New Jerusalem Biblical Commentary*, Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, Roland E. Murphy, Ed., (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1993), 10.
- ²⁴ Geiko Muller-Fahrenholz, *God's Spirit: Transforming a World in Crisis* (New York: Continuum), 9.
- ²⁵ Kwong Lai Kuen, "The Chinese Qi and Christian Anthropology, 38.

- ²⁶ Ibid., 25.
- ²⁷ Philip Clayton, *Adventures in the Spirit* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008), 153, 248. Also see Darmuid O' Murchu, In *The Beginning Was The Spirit*, 11.
- ²⁸ Benoit Vermander, SJ "Qi (Energy) In Chinese Tradition," *Ignis*, Vol. XLII, no. 3 (2012.3), 26.
- ²⁹ Ibid., 24.
- ³⁰ See Caroline Fu and Robinson Hickman, Caroline Fu and Richard Bergeon, "A Tao Model: Rethinking Modern Leadership for Transformation," in JoAnn Danelo Barbour and Gill *Leadership For Transformation*. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 2011), 17.
- ³¹ See Grace Kim Ji-Sun, "In Search of a Pneumatology: Chi and Spirit" *Feminist Theology* 18 (2009) 122; also see her work, *The Holy Spirit, Chi and the Other* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2011), 121.
- ³² Ibid., 18.
- ³³ Benoit Vermander, SJ "Qi (Energy) In Chinese Tradition," 32.
- ³⁴ Benoit Vermander, SJ, "Qi (Energy) In Chinese Tradition," 34.
- ³⁵ See Kwong Lai Kuen, "The Chinese Qi and Christian Anthropology," 39.
- ³⁶ Ibid. Kwong Lai Kuen also adds (2012, 39) that the Chinese Qi, "insofar as it is finite fineness and unlimited movement, to and fro, of *ganying* (stimulus-resonance, the response "of qi to qi") is at the same time the milieu and the dynamism of mutual interaction and intercommunication and it always present between Heaven and Earth. It is in this way that the Chinese qi, because of its rhythmic dynamism, its creative flexibility, its sweetness and its vigor, its unity made up of diversity, and its harmonious diversity, allows us to go beyond certain breaks that exist in the dualist and static regime of thinking, allows us to seize better and more subtly the active and creative presence of the Spirit in the world, the mutual communication between Heaven and Earth."
- ³⁷ Ibid., 39.
- ³⁸ See Grace Kim Ji-Sun, "In Search of a Pneumatology: Chi and Spirit", 4, 54.
- ³⁹ In 1965, two young astronomers located at the Bell Labs at Holmdel, New Jersey, Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson, discovered the cosmic background radiation. See Marcus Chown, *Quantum Theory Cannot Hurt You* (London: Faber and Faber, 2006), 147. The eternal radiance was extrapolated ed by Michael Dowd. See his work, *Thank God for Evolution* (San Francisco: Council Oak Books, 2009).
- ⁴⁰ Inflation became a more acceptable cosmological explanation in the 1980s due to the research of Alan Guth, Andrei Linde, Paul Steinhardt, and Andy Albrecht and later gained further inroads in the 1990s due to the efforts of Paul Davies and John Gribbin.
- ⁴¹ The insight of British physicist Neil Turok regarding an infinite open universe has recently been developed into the recent Hawking-Turok Instanton Theory (Steinhart and Turok 2007). The multiverse theory of Gribbin postulates the universes are continuously being created and that we engage with billions of galaxies in the multiverse of staggering complexity and profundity. See John Gribbin, *In Search of the Multiverse* (New York: Allen Lane, 2009).
- ⁴² For details on *creatio ex profundis*, see Catherin Keller, *Face of the Deep: A Theology of Becoming* (New York: Routledge, 2003).
- ⁴³ Darmuid O' Murchu, *In The Beginning Was The Spirit: Science, Religion and Indigenous Spirituality* (New York: Orbis Books, 2012), 72.

- ⁴⁴ Ibid., 46.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., 73.
- ⁴⁶ Diarmuid O' Murchu believes that "only the contemplative, mystical gaze can hope to plumb such depths, and today, science rather than religion leads the way" while Andrew Pinsent, a former particle physicist working on the DELPHI experiment at CERN, is now a Catholic diocesan priest of Arundel and Brighton diocese and Research Director of the Ian Ramsey Centre for Science and Technology in the Theology Faculty of Oxford, alludes to the fact that in science "most discoveries today are on the basis of theories formed decades or even centuries ago, and it is not yet clear how to make further progress in many areas." See his article "Jesuits and the 'God Particle'" *Vagdevi* 13, 7 (January 2013), 7. Also see Diarmuid O' Murchu, *In The Beginning Was The Spirit*, 30.
- ⁴⁷ Diarmuid O' Murchu, *In The Beginning Was The Spirit*, 52.
- ⁴⁸ Wolfgang Vondey, "The Holy Spirit And The Physical Universe: The Impact Of Scientific Paradigm Shifts on Contemporary Pneumatology" *Theological Studies* 70, no. 1 (March 2009): 22.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid., 53.
- ⁵⁰ Wolfgang Vondey, "The Holy Spirit And The Physical Universe," 26.
- ⁵¹ Diarmuid O' Murchu, *In The Beginning Was The Spirit*, 40.
- ⁵² Ibid., 72.
- ⁵³ Ibid., 68, 72, 198. Also see Stuart A. Kauffman who argues that "the creativity in nature is God enough... God is our name for the creativity in nature ... Using the word God to mean creativity in nature can help to bring us to the care and reverence that creativity deserves" in his work, *Reinventing the Sacred* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 142, 248.
- ⁵⁴ Emphasis in Italics is mine. See Teilhard de Chardin, *Human Energy* (London, Collins 1969) and *Activation of Energy* (London: Collins 1970).
- ⁵⁵ See Mark Hathaway and Leonardo Boff, *The Tao of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009), 316.
- ⁵⁶ For detail on primordial sacredness, read Thomas Berry, *Evening Thoughts: Reflecting on Earth as Sacred Community* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 2006), 118
- ⁵⁷ Diarmuid O' Murchu, *In The Beginning Was The Spirit*, 26.
- ⁵⁸ See article "sustainability" [Online] Retrieved from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sustainabilitylopedia> [Accessed on Oct 2, 2012]
- ⁵⁹ The Earth Charter Initiative (2000). "The Earth Charter." [Accessed on November 21, 2012]
- ⁶⁰ See article "Sustainable humanity: Need of the Hour," [Online] Retrieved from <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/02/20122195052606548.html> [Accessed on Feb 12, 2012]
- ⁶¹ See United Nations General Assembly (March 20, 1987). *Report of the World Commission on Environment and "Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future*; Transmitted to the General Assembly as an Annex to document A/42/427 - Development and International Co-operation: Environment; Our Common Future, Chapter 2: Towards Sustainable Development; Paragraph 1"United Nations General Assembly [Online]Retrieved from <http://www.un-documents.net/ocf-02.htm> [Accessed on November 21, 2012]
- ⁶² Little wonder, eecological economist Herman Daly asked, "what use is a sawmill without a forest?" See Herman Daly and John Cobb Jr., *The Common Good: Redirecting the*

Economy Toward Community, the Environment, and a Sustainable Future, Boston: Beacon Press, 1989.

- ⁶³ I was initiated by a renowned shaman by the name of Garing Bin Muntalan of the Murut ethnic community of Sabah, East Malaysia, from July 19-21, 2001 in a stream near to his village called Bantul.
- ⁶⁴ See the works of Everett Fox, *The Five Books of Moses* (New York: Schocken, 1983), 11.
- ⁶⁵ Addison G. Wright, in his commentary on the imperishable spirit in Wisdom 12: 1 as "either Wisdom as the agent of God's immanence (Wis 1:7; Wis 7:24; Wis 8:1) or the breadth of life (Jdt 16:14) put in creatures by God (Gen 2:7; Wis 15:11). See Addison G. Wright, "Wisdom" in *The New Jerusalem Biblical Commentary*, Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, Roland E. Murphy, Eds. London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1993: 510-522.
- ⁶⁶ The Badjaos of Southern Philippines subscribe to a pneumatology that describes the absolute creator known as Tuhan who enjoys radical transcendence as a "wind" and therefore Tuhan is everywhere, be it the heavens or the sea or the forest. See Bruno Bottignolo, *Celebrations With The Sun: An Overview of Religious Phenomena Among The Badjaos* (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1995), 38-57.
- ⁶⁷ See Bede Griffiths. *A New Vision of Reality: Western Science, Eastern Mysticism and Christian Faith*, ed. Felicity Edwards, London: HarperCollins Publishers, 279.
- ⁶⁸ The same concept of the Bolivian indigenous peoples is known as *sumak kawsay* in Quechua (Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia) and *Suma qamaña* in Aymara (Bolivia and Peru), thanks to the August 16, 2010 email communication of Xavier Albó sj. [Accessed on August 16, 2010]
- ⁶⁹ Interestingly, the law would give nature legal rights, specifically the rights to life and regeneration, biodiversity, water, clean air, balance, and restoration. Bolivia's law mandates a fundamental ecological reorientation of Bolivia's economy and society, requiring all existing and future laws to adapt to the Mother Earth law and accept the ecological limits set by nature. In practical terms, the law requires the government to transition from non-renewable to renewable energy; to develop new economic indicators that will assess the ecological impact of all economic activity; to carry out ecological audits of all private and state companies; to regulate and reduce greenhouse gas emissions; to develop policies of food and renewable energy sovereignty; to research and invest resources in energy efficiency, ecological practices, and organic agriculture; and to require all companies and individuals to be accountable for environmental contamination with a duty to restore damaged environments. For more information, kindly see "The Law of Mother Earth: Behind Bolivia's Historic Bill," published in *Truthout*, Friday 22 April, 2011. [Online] Retrieved from <http://www.truth-out.org>; accessed on August 20, 2010. [Accessed on November 22, 2011].
- ⁷⁰ For further details, see Peter Garney & Richard Saller, *The Roman Empire: Economy, Society and Culture* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987); Richard A. Horsley, *Sociology and the Jesus Movement* (New York, N.Y.: Crossroad Company, 1989); Gerard Theissen, *Sociology of Early Palestinian Christianity*, trans. John Bowden, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978). For a more feminine critique, see Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, "You Are Not To Be Called Father": Early Christian History in a Feminist Perspective," in *Discipleship of Equals: A Critical Feminist Ekklesia-logy of Liberation* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1994).
- ⁷¹ See Richard J. Dillon, "Acts of the Apostles," in *The New Jerusalem Biblical Commentary*, 731 and William S. Kurz, "The Acts of the Apostles," in Dianne Bergant and Robert J. Karris, Eds., *The Collegeville Bible Commentary* (Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1988), 1039.
- ⁷² For more information on Asian Liberation theology, see Aloysius Pieris, especially the section "The Way Toward Ecclesiological Revolution: The double Baptism in Asian Religion

and Poverty” in his article “Asia’s Non-Semitic Religions and the Mission of the Local Churches,” in *An Asian Theology of Liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 1992), 45-50.

⁷³ See *Compendium of the Catholic Social Doctrine*, nos. 466 and 270.



**PRIX 2012
COMMUNICATION ET SOCIÉTÉ**

L'UTOPIE DE LA SOLIDARITÉ AU QUÉBEC

**Contribution de la
mouvance sociale chrétienne**



**Lise Baroni Michel Beaudin Céline Beaulieu
Yvonne Bergeron Guy Côté**



Hermenéutica poscolonial y posmisional

Hacia una Pneumatología Chamánica de la Liberación



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The Spirit is the indwelling of God at the heart of the process of ongoing creation, empowering and luring all things into an unforeseeable future.

Denis Edwards

Con el llamado de atención de las Naciones Unidas a la difícil situación de los pueblos indígenas en todo el mundo, por medio de la declaración de sus dos "Décadas de los Pueblos Indígenas" (1990-2014), la iglesia local, regional y universal tiene que generar una hermenéutica que sea post-colonial y posmisional. Esta hermenéutica capacita a las iglesias locales para dar al mundo-espíritu un sentido que incluya al Espíritu-Creador, los espíritus ancestrales y los espíritus chamánicos de la naturaleza, incluido el rol intermediario de los chamanes y curanderos. Nuestra primera sección explicará que una hermenéutica emergente es post-colonial porque las personas indígenas en todo el mundo están viviendo en naciones-Estado que han ganado su independencia de los poderes coloniales del Atlántico Norte. Al mismo tiempo, esta hermenéutica es post-misional, porque los pueblos indígenas que han abrazado el cristianismo se han vuelto miembros de las iglesias locales. La segunda sección se ocupa de la comprensión del Espíritu Creador (*ruah elohim*) a través de un diálogo crítico correlativo con la religiosidad indígena, la cosmología china, la ciencia moderna, y la cosmología occidental y oriental. Esta conversación espera establecer el lugar justo de la pneumatología chamánica en medio de los discursos de muchas voces. La articulación de una pneumatología chamánica emergente de la sostenibilidad sagrada se ofrecerá en la sección final.

1. Hermenéutica post-colonial y post-misional

La hermenéutica es una forma de interpretación y explicación de los textos literarios desde una experiencia vivida de la lucha de los mar-

ginados y vulnerables, en un contexto local de discusión de significado, valores e identidades impactadas por significativas corrientes de alcance mundial. Este ejercicio hermenéutico es central en el proceso de la reflexión teológica que genera un nuevo discurso sobre la comprensión emergente de la pneumatología de la religiosidad original de los pueblos indígenas. Post-colonialismo y postmisionalismo son dos de las corrientes mundiales que necesitamos examinar en esta sección.

El discurso postcolonial requiere un esfuerzo concertado para contrarrestar los efectos residuales del colonialismo en las personas, las culturas, los continentes y la misma tierra viva¹. Los esfuerzos discursivos implican “movilizar la sabiduría para identificar y trascender las trampas del poder y la dominación que todavía cosecha tantos estragos en el mundo contemporáneo”². Supuestos latentes de los relatos coloniales necesitan ser desenmascaradas para poder poner de manifiesto y deconstruir el racismo, el imperialismo y la naturaleza positiva de estas narrativas coloniales. Haciendo esto, el discurso post-colonial trata de neutralizar la hegemonía del poder de persuasión y la coerción de los relatos coloniales. De muchas formas, este discurso post-colonial también es post-eurocéntrico, porque ensalza la sabiduría de la cultura popular y las figuras de sabiduría externas al Atlántico Norte, especialmente la sabiduría incrustada en el conocimiento local de los pueblos marginados de Asia, África y América Latina.

Una hermenéutica post-misional tiene que emerger de una iglesia local que ya no se entiende como un “país de misión” que está bajo una administración eclesiástica de una congregación sagrada de la Santa Sede, como la actual Congregación para la Evangelización de los Pueblos³. Esta congregación ejercita un extenso poder canónico sobre los ritos, el nombramiento de los obispos y los curas, el matrimonio... y prácticamente subsidia los “territorios-de-misión” sujetos a su jurisdicción.⁴

La iglesia local, por otro lado, son iglesias con contextos específicos que se dan cuenta de que “ellos mismos se tienen que volver cada vez más realmente responsables de la encarnación de la vida de Cristo y la inserción del significado y los valores del Evangelio dentro de la realidad total de la vida de su gente y de las sociedades cuya vida y preocupaciones comparten”⁵. Este movimiento dinámico hacia el futuro requiere una mayor “descentralización en la administración de la iglesia” y una mayor aceptación del “pluralismo... en la liturgia, la teología, la organización de las comunidades cristianas y sus ministerios, la capacitación de los clérigos y el estilo de la vida religiosa”, de forma que todo ello lleve a “la actualización de una auténtica catolicidad de la iglesia”⁶. Las iglesias locales ya no son “las iglesias jóvenes” incapaces de tomar sus propias decisiones prudentes”, sino que son iglesias que han madurado a través

del liderazgo y el poder del Espíritu de Dios de forma que pueden entrar en una verdadera comunión católica con las iglesias hermanas de todo el mundo⁷.

Esta hermenéutica post-misional presupone la presencia anterior de Dios en “la obra interior y misteriosa del Espíritu de Dios”, “en las grandes tradiciones religiosas y sapienciales de Occidente y Oriente⁸. Esta base pneumatológica de las culturas y de las religiones (primitivas y mundiales) permite declarar a la iglesia Asiática que “Dios, a través de los siglos, ha estado hablando con los pueblos indígenas a través de sus culturas”⁹, y segundo, las “creencias, ritos, mitos y símbolos tradicionales de los pueblos indígenas proveen material para el desarrollo de teología indígena y las ceremonias litúrgicas”¹⁰. La misión evangelizadora de las iglesias locales es una proclamación de la presencia anterior de Dios y de la colaboración de la iglesia con Dios, a través de un triple proceso: primero, una lectura crítica de los signos de los tiempos, segundo un atento discernimiento de la acción de Dios en nuestro mundo, y tercero, anunciando estrategias pastorales de ello, colabora con el Espíritu de Dios para acercar el reino de Dios.

De relativa importancia es el llamado a ejercer una opción preferente por la oralidad. Esta hermenéutica post-colonial y post-misional necesita privilegiar la tradición oral y la sabiduría de las comunidades marginadas, especialmente la de los indígenas¹¹. Longkumer postula que “hoy en día, el énfasis de los textos/literatura escrita han marginado e ignorado la literatura oral como no-literatura, o como inferior a la literatura escrita”, hasta el punto de que “la gente no la ve como una literatura importante”, y “los misioneros ignoran y prohíben la literatura oral por ser literatura herética, y declaran prohibidos sus libros”. Longkumer argumenta que “condenar las tradiciones orales significa perder nuestros valores culturales y religiosos”, e insiste: “necesitamos afirmar que la literatura oral es una literatura autoritativa para las tribus, la fuente de nuestra cultura y origen, y también significativa para un proceso teologizante”¹².

Dada esta preferencia por la oralidad, la hermenéutica propuesta pone una atención discursiva en las creencias religiosas culturales de los indígenas, especialmente la importancia de “los espíritus como mediadores entre Dios y el mundo” a través de los cuales “Dios se relaciona con los pueblos y el mundo a través de los espíritus”¹³. Estos espíritus se diversifican como “espíritus malévolos y benévolos, de forma que los espíritus malévolos se asociaban con la mala suerte, las calamidades y la enfermedad, mientras que los espíritus benévolos, como los espíritus de la casa, los de la fertilidad y los de los ancestros eran conocidos porque bendecían a las personas con buena salud, buenas cosechas, relaciones sanas entre las personas, una buena familia y la vida comunitaria”¹⁴.

Para las comunidades indígenas del nordeste de India, Gine cree que son “espirituales en sus ritos” gracias a sus creencias de que “el espíritu de Dios habita en cada pensamiento y expresión, en palabra y en acción”¹⁵. Las comunidades indígenas ofrecen sacrificios para recurrir a sus poderes sagrados, no por miedo, sino por reverencia y amor. Gine agrega “ellos adoran cada espíritu bueno que encuentran en la vida cotidiana: el dios de la tierra, el dios de la cosecha, el dios del agua, el dios del reino animal”¹⁶. Lo más esencial es que los espíritus son reverenciados y venerados por su sagrado poder para crear y sostener la tierra y la creación.

2. Comprendiendo el Espíritu Creador en diálogo con la ciencia y la cosmología

Una comprensión más profunda de la “posición literaria” y el “potencial teológico” de la oralidad del Gran Espíritu indígena depende del proceso de la reflexión crítica y correlacional entre las tradiciones indígenas, las bíblicas, las occidentales y las orientales. Esta reflexión también intenta establecer la afinidad entre el Gran Espíritu, la ruah elohim, el qi, la energía y el Espíritu transpersonal de la ciencia moderna.

2.1. El Gran Espíritu indígena

Las tradiciones culturales religiosas de los indígenas de Australia, Nueva Zelanda, Estados Unidos, Canadá, Latinoamérica y Asia creen que “el sentido tangible de estar vivo es la evidencia fundamental de la existencia del Gran Espíritu”¹⁷. Además, los pueblos indígenas “también intuyen que el Gran Espíritu es el que energiza la vitalidad y el sostiene su naturaleza dinámica, aunque no especulan sobre cómo pasa”¹⁸. Este Gran Espíritu manifiesta un poder sagrado que se siente (a veces aterrador y asombroso), siempre mediado en la experiencia del empoderamiento”¹⁹. En un sentido perceptible, los pueblos indígenas experimentan la presencia del Espíritu como “ultra real, mediado principalmente a través de la creación circundante que se considera tan viva como los seres humanos”²⁰. Finalmente, el Gran Espíritu es transpersonal, pero permea todas las cosas creadas e incluye todo lo auténticamente humano. Por lo tanto, la religiosidad de las comunidades indígenas –como las de Karen en el Norte de Tailandia– cree que cada ser humano tiene 37 almas/espíritus y que todos estos espíritus habitan la tierra, y que cada acto de depredación contra la tierra produce el robo de las vidas de estas personas”²¹.

A pesar de las diferencias observables en el Gran Espíritu entre las distintas comunidades indígenas, las creencias fundacionales son asombrosamente similares. Como Darmuid O'Murchu²² explica, creen que el Gran Espíritu se manifiesta con las siguientes características:

- todo lo penetra,

- trascendente, y al mismo tiempo totalmente inmerso en la creación,
- evoca potencialidades creativas en cada dimensión de la creación,
- asombroso y algunas veces terrorífico, y sin embargo, inmensamente cercano a todos los aspectos de la vida,
- afirma la vida, pero opera tanto en el proceso de la creación como el de la destrucción,
- cercano al ser humano, pero esencialmente transpersonal,
- capaz de ser experimentado en todas las expresiones de la naturaleza (Por ejemplo el viento y el fuego), y no sólo con los sentidos humanos, las emociones o los sentimientos,
- captado en conceptos religiosos como la noción cristiana del Espíritu Santo, pero precediendo y trascendiendo todas las religiones formales.

El Gran Espíritu, finalmente, es el cosmos sagrado, el vigorizante personal y el poder sostenedor que se articula con la *ruah elohim* bíblica, de la que hablamos en la siguiente sección.

2.2 *Ruah Elohim*

La *ruah* bíblica es el poder del Espíritu que da el ser a la creación, que viene de Yahweh (YHWH), el Dios-creador-liberador de los israelitas. Según Kwong Lai Kuen, los judíos entienden la *ruah elohim* en un nivel cósmico, como “viento, aliento, aire, atmósfera, el gran espacio entre el cielo y la tierra”²³. Geiko Muller-Fahrenheit explica la *ruah* como “la energía materna de Dios, el poder infinito y creador que es excesivamente tierno en la suave brisa y tremendamente fuerte en la tempestad”²⁴. La *ruah* une al mundo como una entidad total (principio universal de cohesión y unidad de todo el universo) y es el corazón más profundo (interioridad) de cada ser. A un nivel microcósmico, *ruah* es “el principio de la vida, el lugar del conocimiento, los sentimientos, la voluntad y el carácter humano”²⁵. La *ruah* es el “poder” y “la acción efectiva de Dios en la historia del mundo”, que es creativa y transformadora y hace posible que Dios traiga la salvación de la humanidad y del cosmos.

Ruah elohim es de naturaleza transpersonal y personal. De ahí que Kwong Lai Kuen afirma que “su dinamismo rítmico, su flexibilidad creativa, su dulzura y su vigor, su unidad hecha de diversidad y su diversidad armoniosa, nos permite ir más allá de ciertas rupturas que existen en el pensamiento dualista y estático”²⁶. Esto se repite en Philip Clayton, un científico y teólogo que argumenta que “el Espíritu es libre de cualquier parámetro metafísico y puede vagar libremente, sumergiéndose totalmen-

te en la tarea auto creadora que es su derecho natural... El Espíritu es el impulso artístico creativo que se levanta con alas abiertas para volar sobre la fuerza objetiva de las explicaciones y predicciones de tipo legal”²⁷.

La naturaleza personal y transpersonal de la *ruah elohim* nos permite relacionarlo con el *qi* cósmico y personal de la cosmología china que están presentes y activos dando la vida que sostiene al cosmos, a los seres humanos y a todos los seres.

2.3. Cosmología China

La cosmología china está inextricablemente unida a la noción del “*qi*”. La idea del *qi* se remonta a Mencius, un discípulo de Confucio. Mencio no dice que el *qi* sea algo que flota por ahí encima, sino más bien algo que consigue el que tiene una conciencia clara y una vida ética²⁸. Según Benoit Vermander, el término chino “*qi*” “es el vapor que emerge” como el vapor del arroz que se está cocinando. Así que *qi* es vapor, expiración, fluido, lo desbordante... el aliento”.²⁹

Caroline Fu y Richard Bergeon explican que “los antiguos sabios chinos creían que el flujo de energía cósmico (conocido como el Super Cósimo *qi*), afectaba la inspiración, el medio ambiente y la interacción social”³⁰. Los antiguos sabios chinos usaban el viejo Taj-Ji (símbolo del *ying-yang*), que tiene 5,000 años, y simboliza la “Grande y Suprema” realidad. El *ying-yang* fluye con cada uno, “rota y transforma a cada uno –expresando las variaciones del “ser”– sin tener principio ni fin, afectando la tierra y el supercósmico *qi* sin forma. El teólogo coreano Grace Kim Ji-Sun afirma que el *qi* “es un poder dinámico y original que permea el universo entero y lleva a la unidad última”³¹. El *qi* cósmico interactúa con cada *qi* individual personal y así amalgama el flujo energético personal con la conciencia universal. De hecho, “el *qi* es la naturaleza y la consecuencia del ser, del flujo energético y de la transformación”³².

En la dimensión social y cósmica, Vermander cree que el *qi* está relacionado con otros dos términos, “virtud” y “camino”, cuyo significado está relacionado con el agua del río que cava su curso. Como el agua, el *qi* nutre y sostiene las Virtudes y el Camino, circula entre el cielo y la tierra, entre el ser humano y el cosmos. Así como “el agua es la manifestación de la energía primordial que puede crear vida o muerte”³³, así el *qi* es la energía social que se utiliza para traer la Virtud y el Camino, la búsqueda de la sabiduría a través del aprendizaje y la reflexión, la búsqueda de la virtud de la justicia que trae la buena relación con uno mismo, con los otros seres humanos, con la naturaleza y con la creación, o el cielo y la tierra.

El *qi* sin las Virtudes y el Camino de sabiduría y de justicia, traerá muerte, destrucción, injusticia, opresión, desasosiego y violencia en todas

las esferas de la vida en sociedad (social, cultural, económica, política y religiosa). Las revoluciones en China son vistas como energía social (como el agua que rompe los diques) que los grandes líderes soltaron en las masas/personas chinas para “lavar” los obstáculos políticos y luego cerraron para evitar o mitigar cualquier destrucción provocada por dicha energía masiva social liberada. Por lo tanto, el uso chino de términos como “*feng*” (abrir) y “*shu*” (cerrar) se refiere al ciclo de “abrir” y “cerrar” la energía social que trabaja en la sociedad, en relación con las fuerzas cósmicas del cielo y la tierra.³⁴

Comentando sobre la naturaleza transpersonal, Kwong Lai Kuen agrega que *qi* es “una fuerza vital desparramada” como el aire y el agua que fluyen dondequiera, uniendo la tierra y el cielo, los seres humanos y todos los seres, “afectando muchas dimensiones: cósmica, étnica, espiritual, social, médica, estética, conectando la materia y el espíritu, el corazón y el cuerpo, lo físico y lo metafísico, la vacuidad y la plenitud, nada con todo³⁵. Además, “lo que unifica y hace posible la comunión entre todo es el único y solo *qi*. Siendo vacío, recibe todo. Alcanza la profundidad de cada ser y, al mismo tiempo, es lo suficientemente grande para abrazar y cubrir a todo el universo”³⁶. Como una fuerza transpersonal, el *qi* chino “nos permite medir mejor y más sutilmente la presencia activa y creativa del Espíritu en el mundo, la comunicación mutua entre el cielo y la tierra”.³⁷

Esta explicación cosmológica del *qi* se articula con los postulados de Kim Ji-Sun de que el *qi* es “el Espíritu que es parte del universo y permea todos los seres vivos porque da vida y energía”, y este “mismo Espíritu unifica todas las fuerzas vitales entre el Creador y la criatura” hasta el punto de que este mismo Espíritu “no es una energía que procede del Padre o del Hijo”, porque “es un sujeto de cuya actividad reciben su gloria y su unión el Hijo y el Padre, así como su glorificación a través del toda la creación”.³⁸

La explicación cosmológica del *qi* encuentra una afinidad con la comprensión del Espíritu en la ciencia moderna y la cosmología occidental.

2.4. Ciencia Moderna y Cosmología Occidental

La ciencia moderna y la cosmología occidental reconocen que el multiverso surgió hace como 13.700 millones de años, como resultado de una fuerte explosión de energía muchas veces descrita como el *big bang* o “la gran radiación”, que parece un fondo de radiación de microondas cósmico³⁹. Otros describen este fenómeno como una “inflación eterna”⁴⁰ que dejó un “resplandor” con una expansión evolutiva de gran velocidad.

El cosmos se presenta como un “proceso de complejización” auto-dirigido hacia un futuro eterno y una apertura infinita. El cosmos es, sin

duda, un multiverso infinito abierto⁴¹, atrapado en un continuo proceso de ser creado a partir de un vacío creativo, que implica una gran profundidad. La emergencia del multiverso a partir de esta profundidad nunca fue una “creación a partir de la nada” (*creatio ex nihilo*), sino más bien el emerger de la profundidad dentro del caos (*creation ex profundis*)⁴².

El multiverso está cargado con una energía primordial que “se mueve dentro de formas auto organizacionales conocidas como campos”⁴³, que son “constelaciones de energía, que aseguran propiedades funcionales e influencias, pero también están dotadas con potencialidad,” floreciendo “en relaciones, siempre empujando hacia adelante, hacia un horizonte amplificado”⁴⁴, que, también sabemos que “fluye en patrones (a veces caóticos) y parece que los patrones tienen una dirección determinada”⁴⁵. Estos campos energéticos, según la espiritualidad de Juan Damasceno, se identifican con la energía de Dios y, por lo tanto, con el Espíritu energizante.

La ciencia moderna y la cosmología ofrecen una evidencia aún más irresistible del Espíritu energizante que la tradición espiritual y teológica⁴⁶. Dos líderes científicos, Isaac Newton y Albert Einstein, han generado dos pneumatologías diferentes. Newton acuñó el término “éter” para describir el “vehículo de la actividad del Espíritu viviente”⁴⁷. Wolfgang Vondey ofrece una descripción concisa de la pneumatología newtoniana:

- 1) El Espíritu es un componente necesario para una filosofía de la naturaleza.
- 2) El Espíritu es un agente intermediario del Dios trascendente en la creación.
- 3) El Espíritu es un principio universal presente en todo fenómeno natural.
- 4) El Espíritu es un medio interno de infinita duración (tiempo) y extensión (espacio).
- 5) En la naturaleza el Espíritu es una fuerza de cohesión y configuradora.⁴⁸

Por otro lado, Einstein creía que el Espíritu “es la racionalidad que trabaja en el orden cósmico, que funda las leyes de la naturaleza con sentido y orden, y otorga un sentido total de unidad y coherencia en el trabajo de la naturaleza”⁴⁹. Resumiendo, la pneumatología einsteiniana ofrece una explicación diferente:

- 1) El Espíritu es un componente necesario en el esfuerzo científico.
- 2) El Espíritu es el orden racional del universo.
- 3) El Espíritu es un principio universal presente en todo fenómeno natural.

- 4) El Espíritu es una simetría del espacio-tiempo continuo.
- 5) El Espíritu no tiene realidad física material.⁵⁰

Estas pneumatologías “científicas” ¿cómo se articulan con la comprensión bíblica de la *ruah elohim*? Para empezar debemos tener claro que tanto la pneumatología de Newton como la de Einstein fallan para unir la identidad personal y encarnada del Espíritu del Cristianismo. Esta articulación concebida se basa en la naturaleza transpersonal del Espíritu Creador. *Ruah elohim* es indiscutiblemente el Espíritu energizante de Dios que emerge y co-crea desde adentro de la misma energía fundacional que ha impregnado al multiverso con una orientación emergente para “florecer y crecer en complejidad”.⁵¹

Dada la naturaleza personal y transpersonal de la *ruah elohim* que es totalmente trascendente y al mismo tiempo totalmente inmanente en la creación, es mejor hablar de la creatividad divina del Espíritu que infunde la creación con su poder sagrado. El Espíritu Creador está completamente atrapado en el misterio de la vida que “aparece para llevar hacia la complejidad a través de las relaciones”⁵². Este es el Espíritu Creador que está en el corazón de la creatividad cósmica o la auto-creatividad del cosmos que exhibe una capacidad ecosistémica a una auto-organización y “un sentido preferido de dirección”⁵³. Con un valor místico sin precedentes, Teilhard de Chardin extrapola una idea pneumatológica:

“Más allá del fenómeno del calor, la luz y el resto de la física estudiada, existe, tan real como natural, el fenómeno del espíritu... (el cual) justamente ha llamado la atención más que cualquier otro. Coincidimos con ello. Lo sentimos adentro. Es el hilo del cual están tejidos los otros fenómenos para nosotros. Es lo que mejor conocemos en el mundo, puesto que eso somos, y para nosotros lo es todo.” (Teilhard de Chardin 1969, 93)⁵⁴.

La intuición de Teilhard va más allá de la comprensión de la ciencia moderna y de la cosmología de un multiverso que evoluciona, emerge, infuso permanentemente con patrones y un sentido dinámico de dirección por razones que “el cosmos, en este sentido, esta rebosante de espíritu porque es interactivo, pan-relacional, y creador”⁵⁵.

El espíritu primordial está envuelto y permea todo el cosmos con un aura de sacralidad al grado que todo *anthropos* y el *cosmos* disfrutan de sus existencia a través de una presencia inmanente del Espíritu, en el que se originó su sacralidad primera. Este Espíritu que habita, que realiza ese rol primordial, se articula con la *ruah elohim* bíblica, que es conocida en la teología cristiana como el Espíritu Santo⁵⁷.

Una sacralidad primordial debida a la presencia del la presencia sostenible de la *ruah elohim* se articula con la naturaleza transpersonal-personal del Gran Espíritu, el *qi* de la cosmología china y al Espíritu de

la ciencia moderna y la cosmología. Esencialmente estas son las explicaciones contextuales, místico-contemplativas del misterio último de la vida. A pesar de la diferencia observable entre los distintos sistemas de explicación, existe una “afinidad epistemológica” entre las distintas articulaciones contextualizadas del permanente misterio de la vida. A pesar de la diferencia observable en los distintos sistemas de explicación, existe una “afinidad epistemológica” entre las diferentes articulaciones contextualizadas del persistente misterio de la vida.

Esta comprensión interrelacionada del misterio sagrado que sostiene la red cósmica de la vida transpersonal y personal, promueve una legitimidad discursiva de la oralidad y la sabiduría cultural de los indígenas que fueron deslegitimizados por un poder colonial hegemónico y sus relatos. Segundo, esta correlación crítica establece “la potencialidad teológica” del Gran Espíritu indígena. Tercero, la legitimidad y la autoridad conferida a los relatos orales y a la sabiduría indígena, a su vez, también eleva el rol de los indígenas mujeres, hombres, chamanes, sabios, curanderos y ancianos.

Esta conversación interrelacionada e interdisciplinaria abre un espacio discursivo pluriforme para generar otras teologías contextuales. El reclamar este espacio teológico eclesial hace posible el surgimiento de una pneumatología chamánica de sostenibilidad sagrada.

3. Una pneumatología emergente chamánica de la sostenibilidad sagrada

Esta sección empieza con una explicación de sostenibilidad definida por Naciones Unidas que se ha convertido en plataforma para un discurso teológico sobre la sostenibilidad sagrada.

3.1. Sostenibilidad: visión de conjunto.

En sentido general, la sostenibilidad habla a favor de la relación humana con la Madre Tierra. La sostenibilidad se entiende especialmente en relación al cuidado responsable de la Tierra y la administración de los recursos humanos y naturales del planeta. Desde el 20 de marzo de 1987, la Comisión Brundtland de Naciones Unidas ligó la sostenibilidad al concepto de desarrollo sostenible que especifica el tipo de “desarrollo que cubre las necesidades del presente sin comprometer la capacidad de las generaciones futuras para cubrir sus propias necesidades”⁵⁸.

La Carta de la Tierra, del 2000, describe “una sociedad global sostenible fundada en el respeto a la naturaleza, los derechos humanos universales, la justicia económica y una cultura de paz”⁵⁹. En 2005, la Cumbre Mundial de Naciones Unidas menciona los “tres pilares” de la sostenibilidad: a) terminar con la pobreza extrema; b) asegurar que la

prosperidad sea compartida por todos, incluidas las mujeres, los jóvenes y las minorías; y c) proteger el medio ambiente. Estas tres metas pueden medir los pilares económicos, sociales y medio ambientales, o, más sencillamente, “el triple fondo” del desarrollo sostenible⁶⁰. El “triple fondo” no es mutuamente exclusivo, sino más bien mutuamente reforzante⁶¹.

Esta definición de sostenibilidad de la ONU, por ningún motivo ha logrado el consenso esperado. Los términos sostenibilidad y desarrollo sostenible, las metas esperadas y la forma de lograr estas metas, quedan abiertas a la interpretación y el debate. Para los ambientalistas, no puede haber un desarrollo sostenible sin una subsecuente degradación del medio ambiente, el agotamiento de los recursos y la extinción masiva de las especies⁶². Otros argumentan que la sostenibilidad tiene que tener límites cuantificables y una perspectiva intergeneracional para todos los seres humanos y todas las formas de vida. Muchos estarán de acuerdo en que la sostenibilidad exige un llamado a la acción, una tarea en progreso, un proceso político dirigido a la realización gradual de algunas metas y valores previstos para poder lograr una comunidad de vida sostenible en la Tierra.

3.2. Sostenibilidad: una intuición pneumatológica.

La sostenibilidad sagrada es una intuición pneumatológica que emerge del diálogo con algunos renombrados chamanes indígenas y una reflexión posterior sobre la experiencia de iniciación de la sacralidad del misterio de la vida que permea toda la creación⁶³. Esta pneumatología chamánica eleva la sabiduría cultural inherente a la cosmología de sostenibilidad indígena. Muchos ancianos renombrados, sabios y chamanes de todo el mundo explican esta cosmología de sostenibilidad en relación con la sostenibilidad de la vida en la Tierra. Esta intuición emergente explica la sostenibilidad sagrada basada en el principio de omnipotencia del Espíritu Creador de Dios en la creación.

La idea postula que el Espíritu Creador interior pulsa a través de toda la creación con el poder sagrado que vuelve sagradas a todas las cosas, a todas las formas de vida, a todos los espacios y a todas las personas. Esta pulsación del poder sagrado del Espíritu Creador sostiene la vida en creación. En otras palabras, la permanente presencia del Espíritu Creador es la base para la posibilidad de la sostenibilidad de la vida en la creación. El Espíritu Creador de Dios es responsable de hacer la creación sagrada (por lo tanto socializa la creación), por lo tanto, toda la creación participa del poder sagrado de Dios. Al contrario, cuando la creación es profanada y violada por la avaricia, se vacía de este poder sagrado del Espíritu Creador, y la sostenibilidad de la vida en la creación no se logra ni es viable.

Esta pneumatología chamánica de la sostenibilidad sagrada cuelga de tres premisas teológicas extra polarizadas en las Escrituras. La primera presupone la participación del espíritu chamánico del poder sagrado del Espíritu Creador, y la segunda, una comprensión teológica de Yahveh como co-gobernador y co-sostenedor del cosmos con otros espíritus.

3.2.1 Participación en la *ruah elohim*.

Una pneumatología chamánica de la sostenibilidad sagrada postula que la sostenibilidad de la vida en la creación de Dios es posible porque el espíritu chamánico participa del poder del espíritu de la *ruah elohim* (Salmo 139,7). Por su íntima participación, el espíritu chamánico presente en la naturaleza sacraliza a los árboles, la foresta, los granos de arroz, el agua, las montañas, los seres humanos y a toda la creación. Basada en esta sacralidad cósmica, la sostenibilidad de la vida en la Tierra y en la creación se logra por el poder creador de la *ruah elohim*. En el Génesis (1,1-2) la *ruah elohim* es descrita volando sobre las aguas, transformado el caos primigenio (*tobu va-vobu*, una descripción de cuando la tierra era salvaje y desperdiciada)⁶⁴ en un cosmos que involucra a todos los seres humanos y las bioespecies de la tierra. Esta es la *ruah elohim* que permea la creación con el poder sagrado de Dios y con bondad (Gen 1,4.10.12.18.21.25.31) y que refleja la grandeza y el esplendor de Dios.

3.2.2. *Ruah Elohim omnipresente*.

La pneumatología de la sostenibilidad sagrada defiende que la sostenibilidad de la vida con el poder sagrado de la *ruah elohim*, se logra gracias a la participación de los espíritus chamánicos en la omnipresente *ruah* (Jer 23,24). Esta *ruah* está presente en la creación, y los autores bíblicos la reconocen como un espíritu imperecedero que está en todo (Sab 12,1)⁶⁵. Esta *ruah* llena el cielo y la tierra (1 Reyes 8,27; Amos 9,2-3) sin duda el mundo entero (Sap 1,7). Por el acto de la creación, el Creador, no creado, fundido en todo, un alma viviente o espíritu viviente (Sap 15,11) y así la *ruah* de Dios se reconoce por su actividad sostenible, universal y dadora de vida (Job 34,14-15; Sal 104,30) que vuelve sagrada la creación⁶⁶. Por la participación en la *ruah* creadora que infunde la creación con la presencia de Dios y la vuelve sagrada, el ejército de espíritus chamánicos, presididos por la Omnipresente *ruah elohim*, capacita la sostenibilidad de la vida en la creación y asegura que la sostenibilidad sagrada es una posibilidad realizable. El ejército de espíritus chamánicos comparte la tarea de co-gobernar con la presencia de la *ruah elohim*. La co-creación, el co-gobierno y el co-sostenimiento del Espíritu Creador juntos con los espíritus chamánicos en la creación divina, han hecho posible la sostenibilidad sagrada de la creación y nuestra casa planetaria, la tierra, con todas sus formas de vida.

3.2.3. *Ruah Elohim: el poder espiritual de los chamanes.*

Puesto que la *ruah elohim* Omnipresente co-crea, co-gobierna y co-sostiene la creación con los espíritus chamánicos, y en virtud de la participación íntima de los espíritus chamánicos en el poder sagrado de la *ruah elohim*, podemos concluir que la *ruah elohim* “instrumentaliza” a los chamanes para propósitos ejemplificados por los tipos chamánicos bíblicos.

El rol de intermediarios de los chamanes son semejantes a aquellos de los Patriarcas bíblicos: Abraham (Gen 12,7; 15,1; 18,1), Jacob (Gen 28, 11-17) y Moisés que medió el poder espiritual de la *ruah elohim* para partir el mar Rojo (Ex 14,16), sacar agua de la roca (Ex 17,5; Num 20,11) y hacer libremente “milagros de la naturaleza” (Ex 7,11; 15,22-25; 16) para liberar a los israelitas oprimidos (Ex 5). Finalmente, los chamanes encuentran un modelo en Jesús poseído por el Espíritu y guiado por el Espíritu (Lucas 4,18-19) quien se identifica con la lucha del pueblo en la Palestina primitiva.

Guiados y poseídos por la *ruah elohim*, los chamanes también están totalmente inmersos en el agobio cotidiano de la pobreza económica y la marginación política de las comunidades indígenas. Sus rituales chamánicos logran sanar a los enfermos, liberar a los poseídos por malos espíritus, y recrear el espacio sagrado. Su presencia, conocimientos y sabiduría han inspirado a comunidades para compartir lo que tienen, como el milagro de los panes y los peces (Marcos 6,30-44; 8, 1-10; Mt 4,13-22; Luc 9,10-17; Jn 6, 1-13) para lograr una vida sostenible mayor en su patria ancestral.

Sin duda, la *ruah elohim* es el poder espiritual de los chamanes para armonizar la red de relaciones cósmicas y planetarias, capacitar a las comunidades en su lucha por una vida sostenible, reconciliar las rupturas en las relaciones interpersonales y curar la enfermedad personal.

3.3. *Sostenibilidad: una respuesta pneumatológica.*

Esta idea pneumatológica se relaciona con una respuesta, inspirada por el espíritu, a la creación sagrada de Dios. La sostenibilidad sagrada exige una conversión del corazón, que provoque la convicción que la sostenibilidad de la vida en la Tierra y en la creación de Dios es cualitativamente posible con una nueva civilización que tenga una profunda reverencia y respeto por todas las cosas, todas las formas de vida, todos los espacios y todas las personas. Esta reverencia se funda en al Espíritu Creador de Dios que permea todo, y se experimenta intuitivamente y místicamente como sagradamente vivo en toda la creación. Es esta omnipresencia del Espíritu Creador de Dios, la que sagradamente sostiene toda la creación de Dios.

Viviendo en el poder del espíritu de la *ruah elohim*, la humanidad rinde a la creación una “veneración dialógica” que llama a todos los seres humanos a respetar y cuidar todas las cosas, todas las formas de vida, todos los espacios y todas las personas de nuestro hogar planetario, gracias a la presencia pulsante del poder sagrado del Espíritu Creador. Cada aliento es una experiencia sentida y cada presencia de vida percibida es una noción convincente de que el Poder Creador de Dios está sacralizando y sosteniendo todas las vidas humanas y todas las formas de vida en la tierra. En esta veneración dialógica hacia la creación, el ser humano se involucra en la agricultura, la cerámica y el tejido, que son tan sagrados como su participación en el rito, porque todas estas actividades, aparentemente mundanas, realmente son formas de expresar y manifestar veneración por el misterio sagrado presente en todo.⁶⁷

La veneración por la sacralidad de la creación dictará el nivel ético del consumo humano de los recursos de la tierra que es sostenible para la vida en la tierra para todas las formas de vida. Estará basado en una ética común de necesidad-de-uso en lugar de avaricia-de-ganancia, recordando el “*Sumaj Kawsay*”⁶⁸, un concepto de los indígenas bolivianos que resuena con el Kari-Oca 2 que entiende el “bien vivir” o vivir en armonía con la naturaleza y las personas, en lugar del enfoque actual en producir más bienes y estimular el consumo⁶⁹. Sólo un *ethos* de la necesidad, entre la humanidad y la tierra, podrá sostener la vida humana con dignidad y seguridad, tanto para las generaciones actuales como las futuras. Finalmente sólo una relación reverencial basada en la necesidad, y guiada por el espíritu, enraizada en la sacralidad de la creación, asegura la sostenibilidad de la vida para la humanidad, para todas las otras formas de vida y, principalmente, el planeta Tierra.

Esta pneumatología emergente chamánica de sostenibilidad sagrada se basa en dos presupuestos. Primero, la “potencialidad teológica” establecida del Gran Espíritu indígena; segundo, la participación íntima de los espíritus chamánicos en el poder co-creador, co-gobernante y co-sustentador de la *ruah elohim*. Este poder espiritual omnipresente infunde toda la creación y así sacraliza todo el cosmos, el *anthropos* y todas las formas de vida en el multiverso. En resumen, la sostenibilidad sagrada de la creación es la actividad primordial de la *ruah elohim* dentro de los patrones autoorganizados, las relaciones y un sentido de dirección preferida dentro del multiverso.

3.4.4. Pneumatología chamánica: un discurso liberador

La sostenibilidad sagrada es un discurso pneumatológico liberador basado en tres creencias chamánicas de los pueblos marginadas de las religiones primitivas. Estas tres creencias (ver 4.4.1-4,4,3, más abajo)

hacen eco al Dios Bíblico que ha entrado en una relación de alianza con los pobres de la historia.

3.4.1. *Presupuesto teológico*

El Yahweh de la Alianza escuchó el sufrimiento del pueblo de Israel que “gemía en la cautividad, lloraba pidiendo ayuda y desde lo más profundo de la esclavitud, sus llantos llegaron a Dios” (Ex 2,23). El corazón de Yahweh se llenó de empatía: “He visto la miseria de mi gente en Egipto. He escuchado su llanto pidiendo ayuda... Sí, soy consciente de sus sufrimientos, y he venido a rescatarlos del yugo de los egipcios para sacarlos de ese país...” (Ex 3,7-8). Este es Yahweh que se acordó de su Alianza con los patriarcas Abraham, Isaac y Jacob, y Yahweh prometió descender y liberar a la gente a través de Moisés. Yahweh es un Dios de justicia con los extranjeros, los pobres y los esclavos (Ex 23,1-9) que sufren bajo la opresión de los imperios. Yahweh asegura que la vida se sostiene, simbolizada por la tierra prometida (Ex 3,8-9) para que las personas abusadas queden bajo el gobierno de un Dios liberador y no profanado. Yahweh que liberó a los israelitas profanados no quiere una clase baja pobre global, puesto que Yahweh ha ordenado que “no deberá haber pobres entre ustedes” (Dt 15,4). Este es el Dios que desciende para ayudar a los oprimidos, después de escuchar sus invocaciones rituales, para ayudarles a liberarse en su lucha en contra del poder idolátrico dominador y esclavizador.

3.4.2. *Presupuesto cristológico*

La *ruah* creadora de Dios es la *ruah* inmanente (Jn 1,14) que es el poder creador salvífico de Jesús, que guía su ministerio del Reino liberador para todos los que necesitan a Dios y su liberación salvífica. Jesús proclama el Reinado de Dios y demuestra, con palabras y hechos, que está al alcance de la mano (Mc 1,15) mediante la liberación de las personas del sufrimiento, de la enfermedad y de la pobreza, abusados y profanados por el sistema opresivo de impuestos del Templo judío, del estado romano y del imperio romano⁷⁰. La curación y liberación de Jesús son manifestaciones del poder sobrenatural de Dios-en-nosotros, que libera el espíritu humano y el cuerpo de toda violencia, sea física, estructural o ambas.

Durante su ministerio en la antigua Palestina, Jesús nombró a los marginados, herederos de Abraham (Mt 8,29; Lc 13,16) por su dignidad inviolable como personas sagradas, hechas a imagen y semejanza de Dios (Gen 1,26). A través de su ministerio, Jesús defendió su derecho inviolable de ser venerados y sagrados, sin ser abusados por ninguna cultura, religión, poder político o poder invisible. El evento Cristo, sella la eterna alianza de Dios con la creación (Mc 14,24; Mt 26,28; Lc 22,20; 1Cor 11,25).

La derrama del Espíritu de Dios (Hch 2,1-3) es la afirmación definitiva de la acción recurrente y eterna de Dios que hace sagrado (una “divina sacralización”) de su creación.

Esta permanente alianza sellada en la cruz y empapada en la sangre de Jesús crucificado, asegura que la sostenibilidad sagrada se traduzca en una praxis de los discípulos comprometidos, a través de los cuales el Señor Crucificado continúa liberando a las clases bajas de todo el mundo, víctimas del capitalismo global que representa el 40 % de la población mundial (ver apéndice C). La sangre de la Alianza sella el pacto con las clase baja global, los consagra como sagrados a los ojos de Dios, para que la liberación traiga un estado de sostenibilidad sagrada para los marginados en nuestro mundo, una sostenibilidad deseada de vida, donde hay respeto por la sacralidad de las personas en la tierra. Esta es la base cristológica de una teología de la liberación asiática de la sostenibilidad sagrada.

El Dios que desciende como Emanuel (Mt 1,23) es el Dios libertador en persona, cuyos esfuerzos liberadores son seguidos por los chamanes que crean un espacio de resistencia para su tierra ancestral, en nombre de una vida sostenible para las comunidades indígenas marginadas.

3.4.3. *Presupuesto pneumatológico*

El poder liberador de los espíritus chamánicos que participan en el poder sagrado del Espíritu Creador, encuentra cobijo en el Señor Resucitado, la *ruah*-hecha-carne-ahora-liberada del poder imperial mortal romano y del Templo-Estado. Esta *ruah* ahora es universalizada para volverse el omnipresente Espíritu de Pentecostés. Este Espíritu va de una manifestación monocultural a una manifestación multicultural como es atestiguado en el brillante fenómeno de Act 2,1-13. El Espíritu de Dios ahora está presente y activo en muchas regiones fuera del judaísmo y del territorio judío, gracias al primitivo esfuerzo misionero de la Iglesia naciente. El Espíritu presente actúa como un poder dinámico entre los apóstoles y los discípulos (Lc 3,22; 4,1.18;10-21; Hch 1,2) que continuaba el ministerio de Jesús para liberar a la gente de las fuerzas imperiales en el mundo greco-romano, que violaba lo sagrado y la dignidad de los seres humanos y la creación de Dios⁷¹.

Gracias a la virtud de los espíritus chamánicos que participan de la *ruah* primera (ver 4.2.1.), los espíritus presentes también participan del Espíritu Pentecostal omnipresente en el Señor resucitado. Los espíritus chamánicos, al proporcionar la curación a las personas enfermas y restaurar el equilibrio entre la creación y la humanidad, son espíritus liberadores del cuerpo-cosmos de Dios. Su presencia como espíritus de las montañas, de los ríos, de los animales, de las fuentes de agua y de la foresta, infunde a la naturaleza con una sacralidad cosmológica y ecoló-

gica que, además, refuerza el valor orgánico que Dios le ha otorgado a la creación, en virtud de que fue creada sagrada a los ojos de Dios. Este valor de sacralidad impone nuestro respeto humano y la determinación de lograr un uso sostenible de los recursos de la tierra como cuidadores responsables de la tierra. La presencia del Espíritu Omnipresente de Dios y de los espíritus presentes en la naturaleza sigue liberando a la humanidad de la voracidad de explotar los recursos de la tierra. El *pneuma* es el poder liberador en la creación del cosmos, de una destrucción imparables de los recursos no renovables que amenaza la sobrevivencia de la tierra.

Estas tres ideas teológicas comprensibles proponen la fundación pneumatológica de una pneumatología liberadora de la sostenibilidad sagrada.

3.5. Praxis liberadora para la promoción de la sostenibilidad sagrada

Esta pneumatología chamánica tiene su consiguiente praxis liberadora que pide la promoción de una relación sostenible, especialmente en relación al capitalismo global y en el contexto asiático.

3.5.1 Praxis liberadora para una relación sostenible

Este discurso pneumatológico incita la promoción de una relación sostenible del espacio y los seres porque son sagrados. El espacio en discusión incluye el espacio interior del cuerpo humano, el “espacio corporal”, y el espacio de toda la tierra, el espacio-tierra, incluido el espacio exterior de todo el universo. Si el espacio es sagrado, entonces el cuerpo humano, la tierra y todo el universo son sagrados. De manera semejante, nos referimos a todos los seres orgánicos e inorgánicos en la tierra. Cualquier violación del espacio o de los seres de la tierra, desafía la noción de sostenibilidad sagrada. Cuando la naturaleza y la cultura son profanadas, la vida en la tierra está en peligro y la vida humana en el mundo no es sostenible. Este discurso defiende la sostenibilidad de la vida en la tierra para todas las bio-especies y la humanidad como premisa de la idea teológica de que tanto el Espíritu de Dios, como los espíritus chamánicos, presentes en todo y en todos, hacen sagrados a todos los seres y todas las cosas.

3.5.2 Praxis liberadora en relación al capitalismo global

A la luz de la deplorable profanación del capitalismo global, esta pneumatología chamánica de la sostenibilidad sagrada, denuncia el sistema dominante del capitalismo neo-liberal por su impacto destructivo en la civilización humana, en la sociedad y, sobre todo, su daño irreparable al medio ambiente. Esta teología de la liberación considera las consecuencias detestables del capitalismo global como una afrenta hacia Dios y un crimen horrible hacia la humanidad. En efecto, ha causado un impacto

genocida en las futuras generaciones y en la madre Tierra. La humanidad y la tierra necesitan la liberación de esta profanación inhumana de la dignidad humana y esta violencia evidente hacia la creación de Dios.

Al mismo tiempo, esta pneumatología chamánica liberadora llama a la solidaridad humana con el Dios-en-acción en la lucha actual de los marginados, liberándolos a ellos y al mundo de la idolatría del lucro, el placer y el poder inherente a la lógica del capitalismo⁷². Esta solidaridad nos llama a una “veneración dialógica” debida a las personas y a toda la creación en su sacralidad, para poder lograr una mayor sostenibilidad de la vida para TODA la creación de Dios. El logro de una mayor sostenibilidad sagrada está captada acertadamente en la metáfora joannea de “plenitud de vida” (Juan 10,10), una visión teológica de la salvación integral para toda la creación de Dios. Para las personas indígenas, y las clases bajas globales de las que son parte, la “plenitud de vida” significa el acceso justo a los suficientes recursos naturales, a una relación integral con la tierra, a un equilibrio total entre naturaleza y cultura, a una identidad cultural intergeneracional y la seguridad de que las futuras generaciones puedan llevar realmente una vida con conocimiento íntimo de su lenguaje y de prácticas como la danza, la música, las artesanías y la comunicación ritual con el Creador y los espíritus.

En breve, posibilitar una vida personal con dignidad, a través de una comunidad que disfruta una vida sostenible. La noción bíblica de “plenitud de vida” (Juan 10,10) también incluye la necesidad de una liberación sostenible de los marginados de un sistema de opresión infligido por el capitalismo global en la mayoría de los que no tienen. Una liberación sustentada en la sociedad es posible con la liberación del espacio corporal oprimido, dirigido a la conversión del corazón, la mente y las relaciones. Sólo el poder liberador de la justicia salvífica divina, lleva a la humanidad a forjar una relación justa con Dios, los vecinos y otras culturas y religiones (incluido el chamanismo indígena) y el medio ambiente.

Además, esta praxis liberadora defiende un discurso alternativo postcapitalismo global, que “reconoce el maravilloso resultado de la actividad creadora de Dios” en la naturaleza y en el mundo, y promueve con mayor urgencia que los recursos de la tierra son “un bien común, destinados a todos” y, por lo tanto, “los bienes de la tierra fueron creados por Dios para ser usados sabiamente por todos... compartidos equitativamente, con justicia y caridad”, “respetando el equilibrio intrínseco de la creación”⁷³.

3.5.3 Praxis liberadora en relación a Asia

En el contexto plural asiático, esta praxis liberadora siempre es interreligiosa, pública y global. No hay duda de que “las relaciones entre

religiones es un tema de interés público en Asia hoy en día” (Wilfred 2010, 104). La lucha por el espacio que implican las negociaciones con la nación Estado, se lleva a cabo por el bien de toda la sociedad. Esta preocupación común requiere la colaboración entre los líderes religiosos de Asia. Los líderes religiosos locales de Asia necesitan colaborar y relacionarse con los agentes de liberación mundiales y regionales como los movimientos de justicia global, tienen que ser personas contra la guerra, contra la pobreza, por los derechos humanos, ecológicos, feministas y los movimientos de Foros Sociales Mundiales. Todos estos movimientos liberadores defienden un mundo donde la sostenibilidad es posible porque el *cosmos* y el *anthropos* están imbuidos de sacralidad y de grandeza del Creador.

A pesar de estas posibilidades, una Asia cada vez más secularizada e impactada por la mundialización económica, se ha movido al límite de una incapacidad manifiesta para mantenerse abierta y sorprendida por lo sagrado. Una teología liberadora asiática de la sostenibilidad sagrada tiene la tarea urgente de elevar esta lógica indígena de lo sagrado y el poder de ese poder sagrado. Sólo una elevación así puede convencer a un mundo secularizado a quedar abierto a los impulsos de la *ruah* creadora que está activo en todos los seres vivos y en todos los lugares a través el Espíritu presente y a los espíritus chamánicos.

Esta praxis liberadora, que incluye negociación y resistencia mediadas por los chamanes, requiere una colaboración incluyente entre los chamanes y los líderes religiosos, tanto mujeres como hombres (monjes, pastores, sacerdotes hindúes y católicos). Juntos, necesitan celebrar ritualmente el descenso del poder del Creador, implosionar el poder sagrado desde los individuos y las comunidades, y concertadamente, recrear el espacio, ordenar y hacer sagrado todo y todos, en un esfuerzo común para negociar los cambios sociales. La implosión del poder latente “interior” hace posible la promoción de una sostenibilidad sagrada en la tierra ancestral de las comunidades indígenas y también del cosmos. El poder del “más allá” que desciende entre los marginados, se vuelve un poder liberador desde “adentro” que capacita a las comunidades marginadas, tanto indígenas como otras, a negociar y a resistir la violencia sistémica del capitalismo mundial.

Esta praxis liberadora, motivada por las distintas tradiciones religiosas asiáticas, para promover una sostenibilidad sagrada en Asia, llama a una convicción de que “cuando las cosas son más increíbles es cuando se requiere más esa fe”, y que “cuando las cosas parecen más desesperadas es cuando verdaderamente necesitamos más esperanza”, y que “el amor imposible se convierte en el verdadero amor” (Neelankavil 2010,96). Con profunda fe, verdadera esperanza y amor en el poder

sagrado de la *ruah elohim*, la sostenibilidad sagrada se logra basada en una experiencia afectiva que profundiza en una “presencia percibida” y en la subsecuente y encarnada convicción de la sacralidad de todos los espacios y todos los seres. Dentro de este brillo sagrado en los seres del *anthropos* que se mide con la sacralidad permanentemente presente en el cosmos, el logro de una sostenibilidad sagrada en nuestro mundo se vuelve una meta alcanzable para la humanidad.

Finalmente, una pneumatología liberadora chamánica de una sostenibilidad sagrada, anuncia la acción de Dios detrás del dinamismo orientado hacia la liberación de la creación. Con la oferta gratuita de la gracia de la salvación, muchos pobres del mundo, y las religiones primitivas asiáticas, podrán colaborar con todos los símbolos teológicos de liberación para traer “una nueva creación” (2 Cor 5,17). Esta liberación dirigida a una “nueva creación” se volverá una realidad en el *eschaton*, cuando tenga lugar la realización final de “un nuevo cielo y una nueva tierra” (Ap 21,1).

Conclusión

La declaración de Naciones Unidas de las dos décadas de los pueblos indígenas y el discurso de la ONU sobre la sostenibilidad han estimulado esta necesidad de generar una hermenéutica post-colonial y post-misional para establecer la “afinidad epistemológica” entre el Gran Espíritu indígena, el Espíritu Creativo bíblico, la percepción china del qi, el Espíritu de la ciencia moderna y la cosmología occidental. Esta hermenéutica privilegia la sabiduría popular y el conocimiento local oral vivo de las comunidades indígenas, que los reconocidos chamanes, curanderos, ancianos y sabios encarnan y practican. Estos diferentes sistemas epistemológicos atraen a la humanidad a un estado místico de asombro y admiración que abre el corazón a un reconocimiento gradual de que el Espíritu Creador es sin duda una actividad cósmica en el proceso de complejidad del multiverso eternamente abierto e infinito.

Este esfuerzo hermenéutico establece la “potencialidad teológica” del Gran Espíritu indígena para una pneumatología chamánica asiática. A través de la “teologización contextual”, desde la experiencia vivida de los indígenas, esta hermenéutica emergente ha generado una pneumatología chamánica de la sostenibilidad sagrada que tiene un contexto específico para Asia. Esta pneumatología chamánica asiática pretende atrapar la crisis de sostenibilidad, exacerbada por el capitalismo global, y así llevar a la humanidad hacia la actividad dentro del emergente, floreciente, auto-organizado, dirigido hacia un propósito, y cada vez más complejo proceso de vida en el multiverso.

Esta pneumatología chamánica liberadora necesita un reconocimiento incluyente de la íntima participación del espíritu chamánico del poder del espíritu de la *ruah elohim* y reconoce a los chamanes y a los

curanderos como intermediarios pneumatológicos de la co-creadora, co-gobernante y co-sostenedora *ruah elohim*. Al mismo tiempo, esta pneumatología chamánica liberadora reclama el espacio discursivo de pluriformidad teológica, como el lugar teológico adecuado dentro del catolicismo de la teología contextual de la Iglesia universal.

Esperamos que la praxis liberadora de esta pneumatología chamánica emergente agrupe a todos los creyentes de las principales religiones del mundo, incluso a todas las personas de buena voluntad para que estén abiertas y se dejen seducir por el Espíritu primordial, hacia un futuro infinito donde la sostenibilidad sagrada del multiverso infinito y abierto se vuelva una experiencia perenne de la actividad eterna del Espíritu Creador.

Notes

- ¹ Ver Mark Hathaway and Leonardo Boff, *The Tao of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009).
- ² Diarmuid O' Murchu, *Christianity's Dangerous Memory: A Rediscovery of the Revolutionary Jesus* (Quezon City: Claretian Publications 2012) 9.
- ³ *Propaganda Fidei* es la Congregación de la Santa Sede fundada el 22 de Junio de 1622 por el Bula Inscrutabili emitida por el papa Gregorio XV con la doble finalidad de difundir el cristianismo en las áreas donde el mensaje cristiano todavía no llegaba y para defender el patrimonio de la fe en aquellos lugares donde la herejía (el protestantismo, luteranismo, calvinismo y anglicanismo) habían puesto en cuestión la pureza de la fe. *Propaganda Fidei* era, por lo tanto, básicamente la Congregación cuya tarea era organizar todas la actividades misioneras de la Iglesia. Por disposición del Papa Juan Pablo II (para poder definir mejor su tarea), *Propaganda Fidei* ha sido llamada la "Congregación para la Evangelización de los Pueblos". Ver mv.vatican.va/3_EN/paginas/x=scede/METs/METs-Main-06.htm Accedido el 5 de febrero 2013.
- ⁴ "Territorios de misión" o "países de misión" que la Propaganda Fidei controla consiste en diócesis, vicarías, prefecturas, misiones sencillas y colegios administrados a través de sus delegados. Las delegaciones apostólicas están establecidas para mantener una representación inmediata de la Santa Sede en lugares donde parece que se necesita por razones del crecimiento de la organización de la iglesia y su número. Esta Congregación está autorizada a manejar con los problemas peculiares de otras congregaciones, cuando esos problemas son presentados como casos prácticos, por ejemplo cuando no surgen preguntas de carácter técnico, o de naturaleza general, o no son de tipo específico reservado a algún otro departamento de la administración pontificia.
- ⁵ Francisco F. Claver sj, *The Making of a Local Church* (Manila: Claretian Publications and Jesuit Communications, 2009) 219.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, 219-220.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, 220.
- ⁸ Ver el documento de la 34ª Congregación General, decreto 4, Misión y Cultura que establece, "El ministerio del diálogo es conducido con el sentido de que la acción de Dios antecede a la nuestra". Y en 1993 la encíclica de Juan Pablo II llamada "Veritatis Splendor" n° 94.
- ⁹ Esta es parte de una declaración de la conferencia de Hua Hin, Tailandia, en septiembre de 1995, titulada La evangelización entre los indígenas de Asia. Fue organizada por la

Oficina de Evangelización, a la cual participaron cuarenta y cinco obispos, sacerdotes, religiosos y laicos en Asia, todos ellos pertenecían a grupos indígenas o trabajaban con ellos, y reflejaron el significado teológico de la herencia religiosa de los indígenas. Para detalles ver Franz-Josef Eilers. *For All the Peoples of Asia*. Vol. II. *Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences Documents from 1992 to 1996* (Quezon City, Philippines: Claretian Publications, 1997), 212.

- 10** El documento titulado *The Spirit At Work In Asia Today* fue publicado en 1997 por el FABC Office of Theological Concern en la edición de *1998 FABC Papers*.
- 11** Limatula Longkumer, "Hermeneutical Issues in Using Traditional Sources – Where do We Draw Our Spiritual Sources for Our Liberation?", *Journal of Tribal Studies* 13, n° 2 (July-December 2008) 39.
- 12** Ibid.
- 13** Yangkahao Vashum, "Jesus Christ as the Ancestor and Elder Brother: Constructing a Relevant Indigenous/Tribal Christology of North East India," *Journal of Tribal Studies* 13, n° 2 (July-December 2008) 27.
- 14** Ibid.
- 15** See Pratap Chandra Gine 2005, "Countering Aggressive Majoritarian Constructs of Nationhood: Dalits and Hindu Religious Fundamentalism in India", JTCA – *The Journal of Theologies and Cultures in Asia*, 4 (2005) 96.
- 16** Ibid.
- 17** Ibid., 12.
- 18** Ibid., 11. O'Murchu afirma que el "gran Espíritu es más fundamental, para el significado espiritual/religioso, que la noción Cristiana de la Trinidad, o, sin duda, de las construcciones teístas de las grandes religiones." (2012, 11).
- 19** Ibid., 197.
- 20** Ibid., 11.
- 21** Ver Prasert Trakansuphakon, "Space of Resistance and Place of Local Knowledge in the Northern Thailand Ecological Movement," Ph.D. Dissertation, Chiangmai University, 2007, 214. Esta creencia religiosa es motive suficiente para inspirar a Karen para sostener y resistir el intento del gobierno tailandés de convertir la tierra ancestral de Karen en un proyecto de reforestación y transferir la propiedad de las comunidades de Karen al gobierno.
- 22** Ibid., 85-6.
- 23** Kwong Lai Kuen, "The Chinese Qi and Christian Anthropology", *Ignis*, vol. XLII, n° 3 (2012.3), 38. Also see Richard J. Clifford, and Roland E. Murphy, "Genesis," in *The New Jerusalem Biblical Commentary*, Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, Roland E. Murphy, Ed., (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1993) 10.
- 24** Geiko Muller-Fahrenholz, *God's Spirit: Transforming a World in Crisis* (New York: Continuum) 9.
- 25** Kwong Lai Kuen, "The Chinese Qi and Christian Anthropology", 38.
- 26** Ibid. 25.
- 27** Philip Clayton, *Adventures in the Spirit* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008) 153, 248. Also see Darmuid O'Murchu, *In The Beginning Was The Spirit*, 11.
- 28** Benoit Vermander sj, "Qi (Energy) In Chinese Tradition," *Ignis*, Vol. XLII, no. 3 (2012.3) 26.
- 29** Ibid.

- ³⁰ Ver Caroline Fu and Robinson Hickman, Caroline Fu and Richard Bergeon, “A Tao Model: Rethinking Modern Leadership for Transformation,” in JoAnn Danelo Barbour and Gill *Leadership For Transformation*. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 2011), 17.
- ³¹ Ver Grace Kim Ji-Sun, “In Search of a Pneumatology: Chi and Spirit” *Feminist Theology* 18 (2009) 122; also see her work, *The Holy Spirit, Chi and the Other* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2011) 121.
- ³² Ibid. 18.
- ³³ Benoit Vermander, SJ “Qi (Energy) In Chinese Tradition”, 32.
- ³⁴ Benoit Vermander, SJ “Qi (Energy) In Chinese Tradition”, 34.
- ³⁵ Ver Kwong Lai Kuen, “The Chinese Qi and Christian Anthropology”, 39.
- ³⁶ Ibid. Kwong Lai Kuen also adds (2012, 39) that the Chinese Qi, “insofar as it is finite fineness and unlimited movement, to and from, of ganying (stimulus-resonance, the response “of qi to qi”) is at the same time the milieu and the dynamism of mutual interaction and intercommunication and it always present between Heaven and Earth. It is in this way that the Chinese qi, because of its rhythmic dynamism, its creative flexibility, its sweetness and its vigor, its unity made up of diversity, and its harmonious diversity, allows us to go beyond certain breaks that exist in the dualist and static regime of thinking, allows us to seize better and more subtly the active and creative presence of the Spirit in the world, the mutual communication between Heaven and Earth”.
- ³⁷ Ibid., 39.
- ³⁸ Ver Grace Kim Ji-Sun, “In Search of a Pneumatology: Chi and Spirit”, 4, 54.
- ³⁹ En 1965 dos jóvenes astrónomos ubicados en el laboratorio Bell de Holmdel, New Jersey, Arno Penzias y Robert Wilson, descubrieron la radiación cósmica de fondo. Ver: Marcus Chown, *Quantum Theory Cannot Hurt You* (London: Faber and Faber, 2006), 147. La radiación eterna fue extrapolada por Michael Dowd. Ver su trabajo *Thank God for Evolution* (San Francisco: Council Oak Books, 2009).
- ⁴⁰ La inflación se volvió una explicación cosmológica más aceptable en 1980 gracias a la investigación de Alan Guth, Andrei Linde, Paul Steinhardt y Andy Albrecht y más adelante ganó más apoyo en los 90' gracias a los esfuerzos de Paul Davis y John Gribbin.
- ⁴¹ La intuición del físico inglés Neil Turok sobre la apertura infinita del universo recientemente se ha desarrollado en la Teoría de Hawking-Turok (Steinhart y Turok 2007). La teoría del multiverso de Gribbin postula que los universos son continuamente creados y que estamos unidos a billones de galaxias en la complejidad asombrosa del multiverso y su profundidad. Ver John Gribbin, *In Search of the Multiverse* (New York: Allen Lane, 2009).
- ⁴² Para detalles sobre la *creatio ex profundis*, see Catherine Keller, *Face of the Deep: A Theology of Becoming* (New York: Routledge, 2003).
- ⁴³ Darmuid O' Murchu, *In The Beginning Was The Spirit: Science, Religion and Indigenous Spirituality* (New York: Orbis Books, 2012) 72.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid. 46.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid. 73
- ⁴⁶ Diarmaud O'Murch cree que “sólo la mirada contemplativa, mística puede esperar caer en estas profundidades, y hoy en día, la ciencia más que la religión, lleva la delantera”, mientras que Andrew Pinsent, un físico de partículas que trabaja en el experimento DELPHI en el CERN, ahora es un sacerdote católico diocesano de Arundel y de la diócesis de Brighton, y Director de Investigación del Centro para la Ciencia y la Tecnología del Centro Ramsey, en la Facultad de teología de Oxford, se refiere al hecho de que en ciencia “la mayoría de los descubrimientos hoy en día, están basadas en teorías formu-

ladas hace décadas, o quizás siglos atrás, y todavía no está claro cómo progresar en muchas áreas.” Ver su artículo “Jesuits and the ‘God Particle’” *Vagdevi* 13, 7 (January 2013) 7. Also see Darmuid O’Murchu, *In The Beginning Was The Spirit*, 30.

- ⁴⁷ Darmuid O’Murchu, *In The Beginning Was The Spirit*, 52.
- ⁴⁸ Wolfgang Vondey, “The Holy Spirit and the Physical Universe: The Impact of Scientific Paradigm Shifts on Contemporary Pneumatology” *Theological Studies* 70, n° 1 (March 2009) 22.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid.
- ⁵⁰ Wolfgang Vondey, “The Holy Spirit And The Physical Universe”, 26.
- ⁵¹ Darmuid O’ Murchu, *In The Beginning Was The Spirit*, 40.
- ⁵² Ibid., 72.
- ⁵³ Ibid., 68,72,198. También ver a Sutart A. Kauffman que argumenta que “la creatividad en la naturaleza es Dios... Dios es nuestra palabra para la creatividad de la naturaleza... Usar la palabra Dios para explicar la creatividad de la naturaleza, puede servir para cuidar y reverenciar esa creatividad como se merece” en su trabajo, *Reinventing the Sacred* (New York: Basic Books, 2008) 142, 248.
- ⁵⁴ El énfasis en cursiva es mío. Ver Teilhard de Chardin, *Human Energy* (London, Collins 1969) and *Activation of Energy* (London: Collins 1970).
- ⁵⁵ Ver Mark Hathaway and Leonardo Boff, *The Tao of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009) 316.
- ⁵⁶ Para detalles en la sacralidad primera, leer Thomas Berry, *Evening Thoughts: Reflecting on Earth as Sacred Community* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 2006) 118.
- ⁵⁷ Darmuid O’Murchu, *In The Beginning Was The Spirit*, 26.
- ⁵⁸ Ver el artículo “sustainability” [Online] Retrieved from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sustainabilitylopedia> [Accessed on Oct 2, 2012].
- ⁵⁹ The Earth Charter Initiative (2000). "The Earth Charter." [Accessed on November 21, 2012].
- ⁶⁰ Ver el artículo “Sustainable humanity: Need of the Hour,” [Online] Retrieved from <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/02/20122195052606548.html> [Accessed on Feb 12, 2012].
- ⁶¹ Ver United Nations General Assembly (March 20, 1987). *Report of the World Commission on Environment and "Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future*; Transmitted to the General Assembly as an Annex to document A/42/427 - Development and International Co-operation: Environment; Our Common Future, Chapter 2: Towards Sustainable Development; Paragraph 1"United Nations General Assembly [Online]Retrieved from <http://www.un-documents.net/ocf-02.htm> [Accessed on November 21, 2012].
- ⁶² Con asombro, el economista ecológico Herman Daly preguntó, "what use is a saw-mill without a forest?". Ver Herman Daly and John Cobb Jr., *The Common Good: Redirecting the Economy Toward Community, the Environment, and a Sustainable Future*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1989.
- ⁶³ Fui iniciado por el renombrado chamán Garing Bin Muntalan de la comunidad étnica de Murut en Sabah, Malasia del Este, desde julio 19-21 de 2001 en el río cerca de su pueblo llamado Batul.
- ⁶⁴ Ver el trabajo de Everett Fox, *The Five Books of Moses* (New York: Schocken, 1983), 11.

- ⁶⁵ Addison G. Wright, in his commentary on the imperishable spirit in Wisdom 12: 1 as “either Wisdom as the agent of God’s immanence (Wis 1:7; Wis 7:24; Wis 8:1) or the breadth of life (Jdt 16:14) put in creatures by God (Gen 2:7; Wis 15:11). See Addison G. Wright, “Wisdom” in *The New Jerusalem Biblical Commentary*, Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, Roland E. Murphy, Eds. London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1993: 510-522.
- ⁶⁶ Los Badjaos del Sur de Filipinas se suscriben a una pneumatología que describe al creador absoluto conocido como Tuhan que goza de una trascendencia radical como “viento” y, por lo tanto Tuhan está en todos lados, tanto en el cielo como en el mar y la foresta. Ver Bruno Bottignolo *Celebrations With The Sun: An Overview of Religious Phenomena Among The Badjaos* (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1995) 38-57.
- ⁶⁷ Ver Bede Griffiths. *A New Vision of Reality: Western Science, Eastern Mysticism and Christian Faith*, ed. Felicity Edwards, London: HarperCollins Publishers, 279.
- ⁶⁸ El mismo concepto de los indígenas bolivianos se conoce como *Sumak Kawsay* en Quechua (Ecuador, Perú y Bolivia) y *Suma Qamaña* en Aymara (Bolivia y Perú), gracias a un correo electrónico de Xavier Albó sj, del 16 de Agosto de 2010.
- ⁶⁹ De forma interesante, la ley daría derecho legal de naturaleza, específicamente el derecho a la vida y regeneración, biodiversidad, agua, aire limpio, equilibrio y restauración. La ley de Bolivia dicta una reorientación ecológica fundamental de la economía y sociedad Bolivariana; así demandando que todas las existentes y futuras leyes se adapten a la ley de la Madre Tierra y acepten los límites ecológicos establecidos por la naturaleza. En términos prácticos la ley exige al gobierno a hacer la transición de energías no renovables a energías renovables; a desarrollar nuevos indicadores económicos que evalúen el impacto ecológico de todas las actividades económicas; llevar a cabo auditorías ecológicas a todas las empresas privadas y públicas; a regular y reducir emisiones de gas de efecto invernadero; desarrollar políticas de soberanía en alimentación y energía; investigar e invertir en energías eficientes, prácticas ecológicas, y agricultura orgánica; y finalmente exigir a todas las empresas e individuos a ser responsables por la contaminación ambiental con el deber de restaurar los daños. Para más información, ver “The Law of Mother Earth: Behind Bolivia’s Historic Bill,” publicada en *Truthout*, Viernes 22 de abril de 2011. [En línea] Encontrada en: <http://www.truth-out.org>; accesada el 20 de agosto de 2010. [Accesada el 22 de noviembre de 2011].
- ⁷⁰ Para más detalle, ver Peter Garney & Richard Saller, *The Roman Empire: Economy, Society and Culture* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987); Richard A. Horsley, *Sociology and the Jesus Movement* (New York, N.Y.: Crossroad Company, 1989); Gerard Theissen, *Sociology of Early Palestinian Christianity*, trans. John Bowden, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978). Para más crítica femenina, ver Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, “You Are Not To Be Called Father”: Early Christian History in a Feminist Perspective,” en *Discipleship of Equals: A Critical Feminist Ekklesia-logy of Liberation* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1994).
- ⁷¹ Ver Richard J. Dillon, “Acts of the Apostles,” en *The New Jerusalem Biblical Commentary*, 731 y William S. Kurz, “The Acts of the Apostles,” en Dianne Bergant y Robert J. Karris, Eds., *The Collegeville Bible Commentary* (Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1988) 1039.
- ⁷² Para mayor información en teología de la Liberación Asiática, ver Aloysius Pieris, especialmente la sección de “The Way Toward Ecclesiological Revolution: The double Baptism in Asian Religion and Poverty” en su artículo “Asia’s Non-Semitic Religions and the Mission of the Local Churches,” en *An Asian Theology of Liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 1992) 45-50.
- ⁷³ Ver *Compendium of the Catholic Social Doctrine*, pág. 466 y 270.

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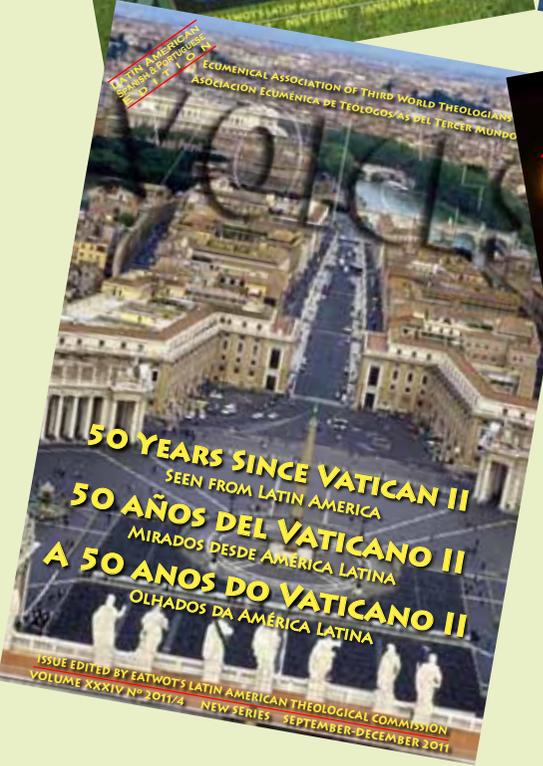
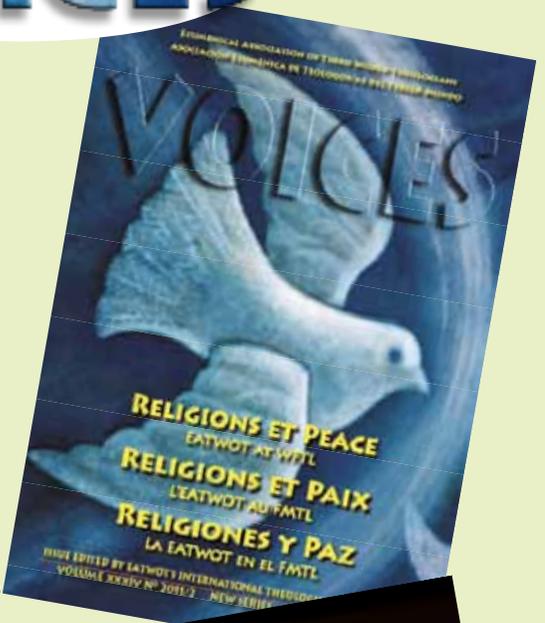
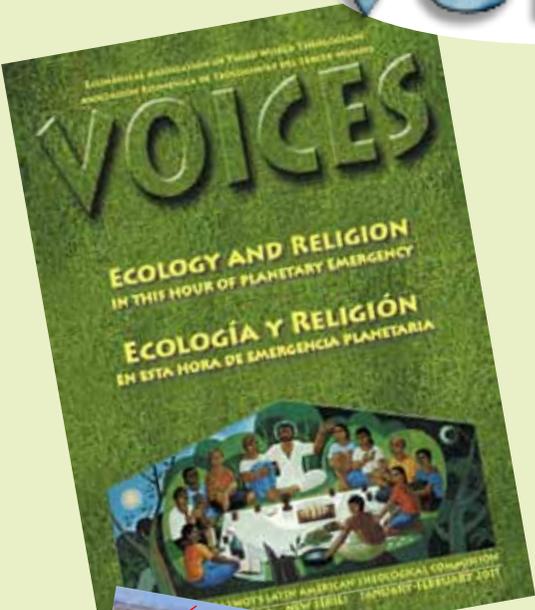
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