



CHRISTIANITY AS IDEAL PARADIGM OF GLOBALIZATION

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With its varied definitions, globalization evokes both skepticism and optimism. This essay explores how globalization relates to secularization and culture, in particular Christianity. It analyzes major aspects of this relationship: man as a globalizing being, communication and obedience, and the global village in its historic, contemporary, and eschatological dimensions. Christianity has many tools at its disposal that can be used to enhance co-habitation as an enriching experience in a globalizing world. Some of these tools may be found in the traditional rituals of the Christian Church, while others are embedded in Christian doctrines. St. Irenaeus' doctrine of recapitulation is of special relevance for globalization. These tools need to be re-discovered, reassessed, and put to work. The essay proposes a type of globalization that enriches human life and dignity, and that integrates and builds unity and hope.

GLOBALIZATION, SECULARIZATION AND CULTURE

The twenty-first century already has a good number of epithets, labels, and nicknames. Expressions like post-modern, post-industrial, post-religious, but also post-nihilistic, age of disbelief, the abolition of man, are examples of how people feel and think about our age. One could gather a few dozen such labels, analyze and interpret them, and see to what kind of future they might lead. It is in the context of worldviews that these labels regarding globalization as a powerful and complex process are debated. Protest rallies at World Trade Organization meetings, for instance, are one indication of this type of debate. Another indication is the quantity of writing on the topic of globalization. According to Internet resources, every field of life is affected by globalization. Google, for example, gives some 6,560,000 entries for the word. If globalization were perceived as not affecting drastically people's lives, there would be less interest in it. Given its implications for human life at all levels, those happy

with the phenomenon are quick to praise and defend it, whereas those who are unhappy or skeptical are quick to protest, warn, and discourage it.

Globalization has so many definitions already, and is such an obvious phenomenon, that one might be inclined to think that starting a critical reflection on it based on definitions is unwarranted. Yet, sometimes the obvious hides in it things that need one's attention. Hence, critical reflection may be part of an effort to conscientize the issue, and a sign of the need for the Christian Church to get involved in the dialogue that relates to its present and future role in the world. Although globalization has no precise definition (Berca 2003: 15), and while there is no consensus on what it really is (Smith 2006: 2), different thinkers have attempted to define it in different ways. According to the renowned sociologist Peter L. Berger, "globalization is a world wide process, driven by economic and technological forces. It brings with it a multitude of social and political developments, some benign, others anything but benign But globalization has also had massive consequences in the area of culture, including the central cultural phenomenon of religion" (2002: 7). Dennis P. McCann offers a similar definition: "Globalization is a manifold process, driven to a great extent by epoch-making changes in communications and transportation technologies that impact the full range of diverse societies and institutions in complex and unprecedented ways, though with no single center of initiative and control" (2003: 273). Notably, for Abdulaziz Sachedina,

globalization denotes the evolution of a supranational role that Western industrialized nations are going to play under the leadership of the United States in shaping the social, political, and economic future of humankind. Whether imagined or real, this ongoing supranational role of the U.S., and its seminal influence in global politics, is the source of fear in the rest of the world, including the European nations (2002: 21).

These three definitions sum up, and also make us think of, the nature of globalization, its origin and destination, and multilevel consequences. This essay attempts to relate globalization to Christianity, in particular its core values such as human dignity, obedience and communion, and its doctrines such as that of the Holy Trinity and recapitulation. One hopes that in this relationship globalization will not degenerate into a process that excommunicates and destroys, but rather that it may become one that builds unity and generates hope in a world that imperatively needs both. We live in a world in dire need of increased responsibility and accountability based on ethics, values, and a normative "ought" (Gruenwald 1983: 107).

Many who oppose globalization today fear the decline, indeed, the loss of cultural identities to a kind of MacDonald-ized collectivism. The contemporary process of globalization does not start from people's faith in God, but rather from industry and technology. If one considers religious fundamentalism, it is not the source of industrial and technological globalization. The result, though, as in the case of Christianity, is the same: a mentality is created (consumerism), a culture that affects all levels of people's lives, engendering a new way of being in the world. Will it produce that sheep-like, stultifying uniformity that many are afraid of? Most probably not, because, according to Christian doctrine, being created in God's image, man has a "transcendent dignity which cannot be purchased, bartered or taken away" (Gruenwald 2007: 14). If one thinks of it in terms of systems theory, according to which any system has two fundamental dimensions--change and the *status quo*--it is the dimension of change that will have to meet the other fundamental one, the *status quo*. What the result of that meeting might be is not really pre-visible. What is pre-visible is that values with stronger stability will prevail, and these might include such values as truth, justice, and faith.

In brief, skeptics caution, *inter alia*, that the loss of people's traditional national and religious values will lead to their values being replaced by those of the consumer society. Some sociologists, philosophers, and theologians agree that this fear is justified by the fact that we are already partially immersed in this type of society, and see many of its negative consequences such as the replacement of long-term with short-term values, depersonalization, and dehumanization of social relationships. Michael A. Casey notices that: "The problem with globalization as it currently operates is its tendency to foster secularization among peoples and cultures that are not secular and do not want to be secular" (2002: 55). Indeed, globalization seems to be in this sense like a last spasm of an obsolete type of Enlightenment that took Western society on the wrong existential path.

Although collectivism and loss of values could occur at some levels, this fear may be easily dismissed if one looks at the Hellenic, Roman, or Christian globalizations which did not cause cultural identities to disappear. Christianity is an especially relevant example, distinct from Hellenism or Romanization, since it dealt with faith, people's highest value. It has had, and continues to have, a life much longer than that of the two other phenomena. The Christian Church expanded from culture to culture while embedding itself in them, incorporating them without destroying the cultural

and ethnic identities of the peoples that embraced it. It is perhaps useful to note particular social groups in the midst of powerful consumer systems, like the American one, that continue to adhere to their religious, cultural, or ethnic values and identity, such as Orthodox Jews and the Amish. After all, even capitalism, John Mizzone asserts, can fit within a more communitarian model (2004: 109). Optimists also see globalization as a chance to diminish the one-sided focus on individualism generated by the Enlightenment, responsible for many crises that affect Western society. The hope is that globalization may bring nations and people closer to each other and consequently promote the value of communion while people strive to live better economically. In fact, as Gili S. Drori avers, in the current process of globalization, the world can be more and more thought of as an "imagined community" (2006: 70).

Globalization *per se* is not a new phenomenon. Even secularization, which preceded globalization was--to some still is--a globalizing movement. Rooted in the Enlightenment, secularization displaced the Christian Church from the center of society's life and pushed it to the margins, displacing it from the top of the individual's hierarchy of values down to the optional, to the one-among-many status, not even that of *primus inter pares*. Secularization de-mythologized the sacred texts, de-ritualized the divine services, de-traditionalized daily life, and de-sacralized the highest values that gave meaning to people's lives for millennia. At times, it produced a radical reversal of values transforming the abnormal into normal, and vice versa.

Although it seems to have been prevalent and quasi-universal in the Western world, secularization, according to Berger, no longer characterizes our age (2002: 9-10). It exists as a limited phenomenon which has generated the globalization that we are witnessing today. Consequently, there is continuity between the two. Secularization has spread throughout the entire Western hemisphere drastically affecting the Protestant Churches, the Roman Catholic Church, and even the Orthodox Church beyond the Iron Curtain where Marxism, and, in general, materialistic philosophies and ideologies were imposed by force. However, globalization has an even older history. One may find it easily in ancient times. Hellenism, for instance, was one of the most significant globalizing forces in entire history. Its effects are visible up until the present. The Roman Empire was a globalizing system as well that left recognizable marks on all subsequent societies, East and West.

From a cultural point of view, inasmuch as globalization facilitates communion, this value has to be acknowledged. Just as the way a person finds his or her fulfillment in communion with other persons, so it is with cultures. They find their full value and validation in communion with other cultures. In an "open culture," Dumitru Popescu relates, both separatism or exclusivism, on the one hand, and uniformity or collectivism, on the other, are not actual risks (2003: 7). The open culture can preserve its own values through which it identifies itself, while being willing to adopt new ones. The model is unity in diversity, a paradigm provided for centuries by each major branch of Christianity--Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant.

Of course, one might object that this theory is valid only when it comes to culture, and not when the process concerns industry and economics because even though industry and economics are defined and affected by culture, they are perceived as having a visible tendency towards hegemony. And, as Jeronimo Moscardo puts it, as long as globalization manifests itself in hegemonic tendencies it will be looked at with reservation or even hostility (2001: 27). However, the dilemma is whether hegemony will be exercised by force or merely by influence. If by force, it will meet resistance. If by influence, that would offer other nations the option to choose whether to borrow from the hegemonic culture or not.

MAN AS A GLOBALIZING BEING

Globalization represents an inescapable development of the world system. Since any systemic change affects all parts of the system, globalization affects every part of the world. Globalization has two dimensions: one physical, visible, *epidermic*; the other, hidden. One is *epi*, the other is *meta*. It is important to pay attention to its external manifestations (*epi*) because they affect everyone in many ways, but it is at least equally important, if not more, to pay attention to its inner forces and drives (*meta*). This is so because, in Gruenwalds's terms, if there is ultimate meaning to man, it must be metaphysical (1983: 108).

In a love relationship between two people, we see the external manifestations based on which we judge, interpret, and evaluate. It is hard, if not impossible, for us to see the inner workings of the chemistry that is at the basis of that relationship. However, in order to better understand the phenomenon, we need to go into the *meta* of it. But one cannot study metaphysics with the tools used for the study of physics. Just as man cannot

be defined based on external manifestations alone, but on the psychological level as well, so with globalization: the *meta* is the ground and *raison d'être* of the *epi*. In that type of investigation, theology can be of significant help.

When Pico della Mirandola wrote that God placed man in the middle of the world in order to better understand it, he indicated that man was meant to embrace the entire creation of God (1956: 7). To understand means to affect, because understanding generates attitudes. Attitudes are equivalent to actions that one takes toward the subject of one's understanding. Being placed in the middle of creation in order to better understand it, man was indeed destined to be the crown of it all; to be its crown, which is to master it, implies to know it. Indeed, understanding implies a certain degree of knowledge, and knowledge is the ground of power, of mastering. This is consistent with the theological doctrine according to which man was created in the image of God (Gen 1: 27). If we were to define God etymologically, then one can say that God is the Seer. In Greek, *Theos* comes from *theastai*--to see. The more you see, the more you know, and the more you know the more powerful you become. God is the Seer of all, that is why He is all-knowing and Almighty. But man is created in God's image. That means he or she is supposed to see, and from seeing to get knowledge and then power.

This is why God placed man, as Mirandola says, in the middle of the world, in order to help him or her to better see the world. And seeing, knowing, and understanding it, he gets power over it, masters it, and consequently affects it. And that is what man has been doing progressively, by degrees, since the beginning of his existence: to try to control and master the world, the universe, to put his or her imprint on everything he touches. And he wants to touch everything. Indeed, man is a globalizing force. But since power can lead easily to corruption, and man is a corruptible being, living in direct relationship with God, and that implies obedience to Him, will spare man from destroying what he has in his power. In fact, as Dumitru Staniloae intimates, "creation exists in order to feed the dialogue between humankind and God" (2002: 216).

GLOBALIZATION AND CHRISTIANITY

Evidently, at the heart of the globalization process today lies an essential factor: communication, and its explosive development. This is a tool with hidden implications concerning the original and final purpose of

globalization. Etymologically and theologically speaking, the intention of communication is the achievement of a certain type of unity. Moreover, for those who use the word in any of its forms to become one, reach oneness, and purpose, it would seem rather ambitious, if not utopian. In his or her tendency towards unity, communion, man never loses his identity which is incommunicable, ineffable, irrepeatable, and unutterable, as John Crosby remarks (Colosi 2003: 16). Yet, there are some factors to consider here: unity in diversity and oneness in distinction represent the intra-Trinitarian way of being, according to the Bible and the Church's interpretation of it. That is why and where the Christian Church acknowledges one God in three hypostases, of the same Being, *homoousios*, yet different from each other. Then, being created as *imago Dei*, man has this oneness feature wherefrom man cannot be an island, and being reminiscent of it, he longs for it as he longs for salvation and final communion with God.

Communication is related to the word and, in that, to the divine Word, the *Logos*. It is through the *Logos*, through which all things come into being, that God is in all things and that they are all one in God. Communication is God's privilege, and it is only given to man created in God's image so that human communication is a reflection of the divine one, just as the relation implied in communication is. Commenting on Martin Buber's theology, Dumitru Staniloae explains that communication between two people takes place within a "sphere" which the two share, but which extends beyond the particular domain of the one or the other (1980: 61). This means that the relation itself is transcendent in character and originates in the intra-Trinitarian life and love. That is why love is the essence of any communication and of the unity implied in it, and why the "refusal of the divine love leads human beings to be trapped by a total inability to communicate" (Staniloae 2002: 217).

In order, then, for globalization to become a positive factor in the development of human civilization, it has to be *perichoretical* or else it will become a factor of destruction. In the Patristic tradition of the Christian Church, *perichoresis* means mutuality, balance, interpenetration, communion and equality, acting together at once, as in the case of intra-Trinitarian relationships. For St. John of Damascus, *perichoresis* implies a reciprocal interiority. It cannot be understood only as the motion of each person (of the Trinity) around the others, as the etymological meaning of the term indicates, because even among men, where unity is so much weaker, more is involved in personal relations than the mere motion around the other.

There is, in fact, a certain interior presence of the one within the other (Staniloae 1980: 38).

In a *perichoretic* globalization there is no hegemony, there is only interaction based on acknowledged equality, *homoousios*. It does not leave room for abuse or corruption of any kind. Even if this sounds idealistic, it is important for one to have an ideal in order to know where to go, just as God is the Ideal for the religious believer. Deification seems to be a distant target, idealistic, but it continues to be a target nonetheless for the believer. Christianity is a globalizing religion, since its missionary character is a fundamental part of Christ's testament to the apostles: "Go to all nations and preach the Gospel to everyone" (Matt 28: 19). Christ's apostles, Paul first of all, were probably the most dynamic and stubborn globalizers ever. Christianity is meant to go everywhere, to take on different forms of existence, and while keeping and protecting its essential values it inculturates itself borrowing from other cultures--as it did from Hellenism--that which makes it stronger. It incorporated elements from pre-Christian traditions, Roman and Byzantine civilizations, as well as from Latin American, African, and other civilizations where it was spread and developed. It did just as St. Paul said of himself: "I became everything to everyone in order to convert as many as possible" (I Cor 9: 22). This globalizing tendency is clearly expressed even in the name that Christianity attached to itself: catholic, universal. It is part of the Nicene Creed as well: "I believe in the Church that is one, holy, apostolic and universal."

Wherever it took root, the Christian Church generated a process of globalization at the most profound level possible--that of faith, which in turn created a mentality, then a culture, and a way of being. There is nothing inherent in globalization that threatens Christianity. This religion has in itself the necessary resources--even if in some cases they need to be rediscovered and reassumed--in order to adapt itself, assimilate or incorporate a new culture, movement, or process without getting lost in it. The current globalization will be a major challenge for the Christian Church. The Church will be called to do its regular job, to convert and baptize it, as it did successfully with Hellenism, for instance. However, Christianity, or religion in general, is a challenge to globalization as well. Religion, Joshua J. Yates writes, is the most recalcitrant and reactionary force at large in the world today (2002: 69). A similar idea is expressed by Michael Casey who explains that the test that globalization needs to pass consists in proving that it has the capacity to take religion seriously (2002: 29).

When globalization becomes militant and economically hegemonic, and runs the risk of de-humanizing the individual, the Christian Church has a well-acknowledged, powerful tool in defense of human dignity: traditional religious values. Oskar Gruenwald is right to notice that "liberal democracy's major premises and promises are untenable without a theistic and in particular Christian foundation" (2003: 1). Abdulaziz Sachedina remarks in more general terms that: "Globalization of any form of militancy, whether religious or secular, is in need of ethical, universal criteria to prevent it from becoming a source of further destruction to the sanctity of human life and dignity" (2002: 29). This is where the Church will have a chance to, once again, demonstrate its relevance to the world.

THE GLOBAL VILLAGE

In what it is meant to be ideally, globalization will make the world smaller, a real global village. Global: big, but village: small. "Village" is a great concept. Everything starts from there. Village means community, sense of belonging, common values and root, tribe, everyone is tributary to the other, sense of shame, togetherness in growth, sharing. In a sense, that is the way St. Paul described the faith community: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God for us all" (Eph 4: 5). These are faith values that created new villages through Paul's missionary trips where everyone in the new community, small at the beginning, real village, even in the middle of the city, was bound to each other in life and death based on the newly acquired faith and the fundamental values it generated as ultimate guide for this life and the life to come. One of the major characteristics of village life is obedience. Since everyone knows everyone and each is tributary to all, and given the sense of shame coming out of these realities, obedience to God, elders, parents, toward everyone, combined with respect, obedience to the rules, customs, and traditions, is a way of being. It is not an occasional act. This way of being was for a while, and was supposed to be forever, the life in the paradisiacal village. One family, one tribe then, and even one world in the middle of the garden of Eden, just like the original villages in the middle of nature, and obedience to God as the main norm for that way of being. The village is the image of the ideal life because through obedience it incorporates in it, and gives life to, the original paradigm of living.

The parallel and the symmetry between these two villages is completed by the third village, the eschatological one. Life in the Kingdom of God

may be imagined like that in a global village, because there, first of all, obedience to God will be restored in its original dimension. God will be all-in-all, and the sharing will be total and the unity indicated by communion will be taken to its highest level: oneness. This oneness will, in turn, be an expression of the *perichoretical* way of being, based on the Trinitarian paradigm where one's thought and action is everyone's at the same time, since all will be of one mind and one heart, as the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom suggests, while each will be distinct from the others.

Can our world become a global village that has as a prefiguration the primordial village, and, as an ideal to tend toward, the eschatological one? Is there such a potential? Theologically speaking, with God, nothing is impossible, and when we relate human history to God, we make room for God to have His divine interventions in it. In fact, every liturgical communion on Sundays, the day of the Lord and of His Resurrection, is an anticipation of the life to come in the global village of His Kingdom. For those who believe in God, globalization is the echo that reverberates like a cry of the primordial breakout of the original unity of all things in God, and in that, it is the longing for that unity, which is a never-ending tendency towards an ever-existing ultimate fulfillment. This gives globalization an *epektatic* dimension, on one hand, as Gregory of Nyssa who coined the term would say, and, on the other, an *apokatastatic* dimension as well, in that there is hope for such a final redemption or fulfillment despite the fact that the current situation might make one think that this type of transfiguration is simply utopian.

If the globalization that we are witnessing today grows in the direction of the global village, then it has an anti-Babel character. Babel signifies man's arrogance *coram Deo*, his renewed disobedience to God, that produced as a consequence the division of the existing human community into small villages by the mixing of the languages they spoke. The small community or the village life implies a different kind of life. Today's globalization, if it allows religion to do its transformative role in the world, will make people grow towards God and towards each other. Religion could be the new language that brings a new type of communication, communion, and understanding, opposed to the Babel model where people's arrogance towards God made them grow distant from Him and, in fact, from one another. Their separation through the mixture of languages was only an expression and a symbol of how they already grew apart from each other, despite the apparent unity in disobeying God.

Karl Barth was skeptical regarding man's ways of dealing with the world. Chased by the spirit of possession, man's main desire resides in constant acquisition: to get, to have to the point where man had taken even the divine into his possession (1978: 68). That is why Friedrich Nietzsche wrote that man's goal in life is to bring something home everyday (1996: 1). According to Blaise Pascal, it is the spirit of possession that generates man's tragedy (Damian 2002: 1). One reason for this is the fact that man identifies himself with what he or she possesses, which leads to his being's reification. In this equation, *to be* is in competition with *to have*, and to have is the winner. Then, man defines himself quantitatively instead of qualitatively. Buber observed with a note of skepticism that whatever man possesses he destroys. When man himself is a quantity, and identifies himself with his possessions, by destroying them he destroys himself (1958: 105). The spirit of acquisition leads to division, separation, and fragmentation. Division helps in the process of conquering. It becomes a strategy; the best one. That is why the old Latin adage advises: *Divide et impera!* Divide and conquer! However, this only tells about how the world is, not how it is supposed to be. Conquering the world by dividing it, conquering it chased by the desire to possess it is not what the world needs and not what man needs, certainly because the destruction of what he possesses is going to be his own destruction. Man needs to conquer, to master the world in a totally different way, paradoxically, by offering himself or herself to it. Although this seems a distant ideal, it is still worth emphasizing.

Globalization is not where one got the entire world and brought destruction upon it. That is the *epi* attitude or *Weltanschauung*. The real conquering of the world which makes man a master as he was meant to be, but which does not bring about destruction, the real globalization is when man understands the original purpose of the world, and his own vocation in relation to it. Mirandola again: God placed man in the middle of the world in order to better see it and to consequently understand it. If you understand something, you help the thing reach its own fulfillment according to its nature, destiny, and destination. If you go against its nature, you did not understand it. How do we understand? The word itself tells it: to stand under. Not above. To stand above runs two risks: that of superficiality, you just see things from above, you will never get into, you will never know and understand. To see from above is *epi*, to the detriment of *meta*. The second risk of seeing from above is that of arrogance. That will never help me get in communion. Arrogance closes doors. Treated arrogantly, things will resemble a citadel on a rock that never opens its doors to the one who

shows no consideration to it. On the contrary, when I try to understand, I will stand under. That is humility. This is the slide that brings me to the *meta*. Inside the thing is the heart of it. When I am there, beyond appearances, this is when I am in real communion. Of course, when I am allowed or have the chance to enter someone's heart, I have to take my boots off, so that I do not hurt. That is like the holy ground where Moses had to enter without shoes.

The principle of globalization is participation, not imposition. Participation, in turn, makes for authentic communion. If globalization is based on the spirit of possession, it brings about division and destruction. If it is based on mutual obedience and understanding, it creates communion and growth, confers dignity, and helps man to continue to be human "in a world reified by institutions, doomsday weapons, and ideological dogmas" (Gruenwald 1983: 265). In brief, globalization as arrogance is *epi*: surface, appearance, superficiality. In contrast, globalization as humility is *meta*, it is real, profound, healthy, and stable.

GLOBALIZATION AS RECAPITULATION

Paradoxically, one becomes a master by practicing humility. I will allow you to take me when I see that you love me, you want to serve me, you treat me with dignity. That is why it was said that the best master is the one who knows to serve best. God is the perfect Master because He is the perfect servant. That service to humanity culminates in Jesus Christ Messiah Who according to Isaiah and the Jewish prophetic tradition is *Yebed Jahwe*, God's servant, but man's servant at the same time. Christ brought salvation to the entire world by coming to serve it, dying for it, being in communion with it, recapitulating it. St. Irenaeus of Lugdunum (2nd century), one of the most prominent theologians, explained the concept of everyone's recapitulation (*anakephalaiosis*) in Christ. "Jesus," Irenaeus wrote, "came all the way of the universal economy (*oikonomia*) by recapitulating everything in Himself" (1979: 135). In brief, to use our topic's vocabulary, we talk here about Christ's globalizing work for the salvation of the world.

This is the type of globalization that our world needs today, and this is how Irenaeus explains Christ's recapitulative salvific work: by taking on human nature, the Son of God came in direct communion with man. Everyone who accepts Christ comes in communion with Him, participates in His theandric life and Being. When Christ allows everyone to come and parti-

capitate in His theandric life, He recapitulates everyone. He embraces His believers one by one and purifies, saves, and deifies them all. Christ is thus fulfilling his globalizing mission in the world. However, to re-capitulate is to capitulate again. So, recapitulation is based on capitulation, which is to give up, renounce, abandon (Damian 2003: 176). In brief, if you want to win the world, to conquer it in order to save it, you need to capitulate before it. This is the exact paradoxical sense of the Crucifixion, without which there is no Resurrection and no final victory. Capitulation is humility. That is why Christ was called *Yebed Jahwe*, God's servant, and then the servant of the world, of man. By serving God and man, He reconciles God and man. As Paul explains in his letter to Philippians, Christ indeed capitulated in the sense that His *kenosis* was a renunciation of His divine glory and prerogatives. Capitulation means head down, bowed down, humility. It was by humbling Himself to death, even death on the Cross (Phil 2: 8) that He entered the world to its heart, in its unfathomable depth, in order to win man's heart.

One can speak of capitulation even at the creation of the world. God capitulated when He decided to create the world, because that is an act of love and humility. The *Logos* of God, through which everything was created, waits humbly in everything in order for Him to be recognized there, just as God Whose image is in each of us waits humbly to be discovered and recognized as such. Following this paradigm, one can say that if we want a globalization that is beneficial to our world, we need to understand what globalization really is, and how it may be pursued in a way that does no harm. We have to reinvent or rediscover the communion. We need to conquer the world by humility and service, not by arrogance and individualistic profit. In sum, if we want to become agents of globalization in the authentic sense of the term, as René Descartes teaches in his *Discourse on Method*, we need to conquer ourselves first before trying to conquer the world (1998: 14). And this is the most difficult thing to do.

In order to succeed, then, globalization requires humility. It is not like the process itself will give itself what it needs. It is us, even if not the majority, who can give it what it needs. A few people, strong and convinced of their role and mission, can ferment the entire dough. Babel-type arrogance and mentality has to make room for humility. This is the stepping-stone to success. In humility, I recognize myself in others and allow them to recognize themselves in me. Martin Luther King Jr. offers a wonderful metaphor for arrogance and humility. In his *Strength of Love*, King

described arrogance as the mirror in which I like to look at myself (1963: 14). Treating others arrogantly is like using them as my mirror where I want them to be like me, I want them to become my mirror so that I can see myself multiplied in them. Humility is the window. When I treat people humbly, I allow them to grow in my presence to be who they are and, in fact, I become a window through which we can see each other as we really are. Humility changes the mirror into a window, it changes the nature of the mirror because it implies a profound change in one's way of being. That is recapitulation. This is a work that God Himself did as He first decided to create the world and man, that He continued to create through His interventions in human history through the prophets, culminating in Jesus Christ. Christ's recapitulative work is then continued by the Church He established. The Church in its ritual recapitulates Christ's salvific work so that everyone who participates can be incorporated in it.

THE TRINITARIAN PARADIGM

If globalization is something we want and need, and maybe have long been hoping for, we need to define it more clearly to be sure we know what we long for. If religious and spiritual revival is a distinctive mark of the postmodern twenty-first century, as André Malraux predicted, then we must bring God back to the center. That means God's Trinitarian paradigm, unity in diversity, existential communion (*homoousios*), yet distinction and the *perichoretical* way of being in relation, together with the practice of obedience, reflection, and application. This paradigm reminds one that as everything comes from God, everything has the same roots. Therefore, we are all destined for communion, if we want, or globalization, that is, a type of globalization that communion brings about. We need to realize, again, that everything is part of a single system, God's system, and that consequently everything belongs to everything, and what happens to one affects all. Since everything comes from God, and bears the mark of God existentially, then each looks at the other like in a mirror, and recognizes oneself in him or her. In a different metaphor from King's in that particular context, here, the mirror becomes ground for communion, because as I see myself in you, you see yourself in me, and we never harm each other.

There are specific steps the Christian Church can take in order to transform its theological vision into much needed service to the contemporary world. Christianity needs to become engaged and missionary, in the positive sense of the term, and get involved more visibly in the public

square, promote more systematically its traditional values, rediscover the missionary zeal of the first Christians, and make use of it in the process of working towards its goals. As in the Christian Churches' ecumenical movement since the 1940s for world peace and social action, contemporary Christianity needs to get involved in studying, understanding, and influencing globalization by creating strategic plans of action, structures, and constituencies that address relevant aspects of globalization. Certainly, believers need to pray. Christians need to meet interdenominationally in order to share initiatives so that each major denomination--Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant--may be encouraged and stimulated to get involved in what the other does. A new movement could be created similar to the ecumenical movement. In doing so, Christians may witness that their faith is real, not just theoretical, and thus relevant to the present world and its potential for transformation.

The theological message here is clear, and speaks for a globalization that integrates, not one that excommunicates. Ideally, religion should work for a globalization that narrows the gap between rich and poor, and is ground for hope. The opposite of this image renders globalization a desert of despair for the majority. Based on Christ's model, globalization should be able to bring the periphery to the center as He did with the oppressed, rich and poor, sinners all. Based on the Trinitarian model, globalization should thrive with no center because the center is everywhere. This is how globalization can become a process that brings about help, social and economic justice for all, and moral renewal, and thus become a liberating factor that generates unity and hope. That is why we need reconstruction and why we have to reinvent ourselves, our concepts, beliefs, and definitions. In sum, the process of globalization in our time needs to be based on stable values. We need to recapitulate what we had and lost. Religion, the most powerful values generator in the human world, can be of significant help, if taken seriously. Only a globalization that grows out of religious values can promise a better future.

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