LOCATING THE STRUGGLE FOR RECOGNITION IN THE CONCEPT OF THE WORLD CHURCH

Allan A. Basas
University of Santo Tomas, Philippines

The emergence of the World Church is one of the significant developments in the Church in modern times. It emerges from the dialectical tensions or conflicts between a Church widely perceived as monocultural and a world that has witnessed the ascendance and call for recognition of other cultures. The processes of confrontation and, subsequently, rectification have fructified in the sense that it gave way to various expressions of the Church other than its European form. We can now speak of the Church in Asia, the Church in Africa, the Church in Latin America, and even the Church in the Philippines. In this paper, we refer to the dynamics of critical theory, specifically Axel Honneth's theory of recognition, to explain how historical movements create tensions that have profound and lasting effects on institutions such as the Church. The movements in the Church before and after the Second Vatican Council, which saw the emergence of the World Church, reveal the workings of Honneth's emphasis on anchorage in social realities, emancipation from slavery and social injustice, intersubjectivity, and recognition spheres in the processes that paved the way for a significant evolution of the Church's self-understanding.

Keywords: Critical Theory, Culture, Emancipation, Intersubjectivity, Recognition, World-Church

INTRODUCTION

One of the compelling reasons that led to the emergence of the World-Church (WC) was the realization that local churches are contextually and culturally conditioned. This movement responds to the pressing questions that demand the Church's response, such as globalization, modernization, multiculturality, pluralism, and migration, to name a few. The WC struggles against forms of hegemonies or homogenizations because it seeks to facilitate symmetrical relations and interactions between and among local churches. This intersubjectivity hopes to usher in a new way of being a Church that recognizes and integrates the traits, genius, and needs of local churches.

The renowned Jesuit theologian Karl Rahner unfolds his concept of the WC in Volume Twenty of his *Theological Investigations* under the title, "Future of the Church: Basic Theological Interpretations of the Second Vatican Council." Rahner situates the beginnings of the WC in Vatican II, which he claims to be the first significant official event, which launched the Church as a WC, albeit only rudimentarily and hesitatingly (1975, 717). Rahner admits that the movement toward becoming WC was not one magical leap but an internal essential coherence of incidents characterized mainly by the movements in the opposite direction against the exportation of Western canons, centralized bureaucracy, and the imposition of a Europeanized Church that primarily affected the particular churches in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, among others (1975, 717-718). A significant change engendered by Vatican II that overarches all other developments that foster the WC is promoting the Church's world responsibility. This development was a clarion call for all the churches to assume a heightened sense of responsibility for ensuring the growth of the Church in their locale, each according to their unique genius as a people.

Against this backdrop, this paper aims to flesh out the struggle for recognition in the emergence of the concept of the WC. Rahner's assertion that particular churches are bearers of legitimate claims and are themselves accountable can be expounded using Axel Honneth's Theory of Recognition (ToR). Using Honneth's ToR as a lens, this paper deduces that the WC's inception was facilitated, first, by a critical assessment, a diagnosis of the society, if we may say so, that revealed the critical impulses, emancipatory interests, and what some may claim as the wrong state of things. This understanding brings us to the second point, Honneth's emphasis on the need for intersubjectivity or social interaction that is critical for the WC's actualization and flourishing.

The collective leap and the critical impulses of local churches, especially those that come from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, toward achieving what Honneth claims to be the role of autonomy and becoming more accountable emanates from an account of morality that critiques and sublimates individualistic goals, such as modes of imposition and centralization that subordinates or marginalizes certain members of the group. Lastly, from Honneth, having recognition and relation as the end or goal of ToR, the attainment of self-respect, and assuming responsibility for one's well-being apply to the reason for the struggle to realize the WC. The actualization of the WC allows the other group members to see themselves as the bearer of legitimate claims whose self-esteem has been diminished, i.e., by practices of denial (Bin 2022, 138).

In this paper, therefore, we examine how historical movements, particularly those surrounding the Second Vatican Council and its ensuing implementation that led to the actualization of the world Church, demonstrate the dynamics of Honneth's Theory of Recognition and what enduring impacts these movements have on the self-understanding and growth of the Church? To answer this main query, this paper first unfolds the basic features of ToR, then investigates the emergence of the WC, and lastly, employs Honneth's ToR to understand the struggle for recognition in the WC as applied to the Church in the Philippines.

HONNETH'S THEORY OF RECOGNITION

In this opening discussion, we explore the defining features of Honneth's ToR by discussing Honneth's work as a continuation and advancement of the ongoing project of Critical Theory. Then, we show Honneth's sources in his notion of intersubjectivity. We also highlight Honneth's three spheres of recognition to show his contribution to critical theory.

Within the Tradition of Critical Theory

Honneth, being a third-generation member of the Frankfurt School, anchors his critique of society on the dialectics between the realities of life, what he calls pre-theoretical resource, and ideals in life, which he calls quasi-transcendental dimension (Petherbridge 2013, 1; Bolaños 2016, 86). In other words, Honneth is faithful to the fundamental scheme of Critical Theory, which first looks into the empirical resources from which emancipatory instances can be drawn and then undertakes a critical assessment or diagnosis of the society through context-transcending normative horizons. Honneth appraises the potential of Critical Theory to compel changes in a given social order by positing that philosophy has a more radical task than merely disclosing and critiquing social pathologies or what Theodor Adorno refers to as the "wrong state of things."

Honneth recognizes but simultaneously criticizes the pioneering works of his predecessors in the Frankfurt School. In the interest of brevity, we shall cursorily discuss his critical evaluation of the works of Jurgen Habermas, which he opines make up for the inadequacies or weaknesses of the pioneering works of the first-generation members of the Frankfurt School represented mainly by Max Horkheimer and Adorno (Petherbridge 2013, 4). Honneth is indebted to Habermas for his ideas on inter-subjectivity. Honneth concurs with Habermas' contention that the paradigm shift from the "subject-object" to the "subject-subject" model is warranted by a new outlook on social relations and action (Petherbridge 2013, 5).

The intersubjective model of Habermas, according to Honneth, has the potential to engender an account of morality that can very well respond to the moral issues spawned by modernity. The two differ, where Habermas insists on the philosophy of language or discourse in place of modernity's individualistic philosophical anthropology, while Honneth emphasizes the struggle for recognition (Bolaños 2012, 20). Honneth fused his ideas with Habermas' paradigm of intersubjectivity in three ways: first, he agrees that the conditions of social progress can be found in social interaction instead of labor as averred in the classic Marxist tradition; second, he articulates the normative intersubjective conditions that foster emancipation as a result of individual self-realization; and third, he posits that modern society is anchored on the historical shift to recognition relations, whereby all spheres of social life can be organized recognitively, including the organization of social labor (Petherbridge 2013, 7).

The "Jena" Factor

A strong influence of Honneth's ToR is G.W.F. Hegel's notion of recognition, which perceives the structure of reality as characterized by the *exitus* and *reditus* movement. According to Hegel, this means that the Spirit can "make itself other than itself and, from there, return to itself," a process of reflection that orients the self toward absolute self-knowledge (Bin 2022, 142 Bolaños 2016, 96). This movement in Hegel's philosophy explains the struggle or conflicts among subjects for recognition, thus provoking tensions or pressures on the part of institutions, which are duty-bound to ensure that their constituents are emancipated. Hegel posits that the process of moral development of human beings happens in the context of struggle or the disturbance and violation of social relations. Herein, we argue that the struggle for recognition is a primordial characteristic of any social or community life. This idea sheds light on Hegel's emphasis on the shift from self-preservation to societal life guided by moral impulses.

The political writings of Niccolo Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes serve as essential references for Hegel's explanation of the notion of struggle for self-preservation. This notion of self-preservation departs from the classical understanding of man as a political animal, as expounded by Plato, Aristotle, and Thomas Aquinas. In classical politics, inter-subjectivity is engendered in the context of the *polis* and *civitas*, which means that human beings thrive in and through social frameworks. In contrast, Machiavelli and Hobbes believe that human beings are in a constant state of fearful mistrust and are constantly vigilant against attacks or aggressions. The state, therefore, is empowered to regulate this situation and demands the submission of all its members to its power.

Hegel, opposed to the natural law approaches of Machiavelli and Hobbes, which highlight the atomistic tendencies of human beings, proposed intersubjectivity (Honneth 1996, 5). In Hegel's program, he envisions a society composed of free citizens united under a standard ethical system or outlook. This Hegelian notion of budding ethical totality has three main features, namely: first, singularity, where the public life is the opportunity for the fulfillment of every single individual's freedom; second, only customs or mores, not state laws nor moral convictions of the isolated subject, provide sound bases for the exercise of freedom; and third, a system of property and law, which shows that even the market-driven interests of individuals are still under the ethical whole.

In other words, the budding of ethical life occurs when society recognizes and supports the freedom of individual citizens by replacing individualistic approaches or paradigms with those that foster social interactions or linkages between subjects. Herein, Hegel points out that when we move from the state of natural, ethical life to a relationship of ethical totality, we overcome the condition of fearful mistrust with the free expression of ourselves in the context of our communities. Therefore, in Hegel's notion of ethical totality, the "existence of difference" emerges when the ethical life can transcend its initial natural state.

Spheres of Recognition

Honneth posits three types of social relations of recognition: love, law, and achievement, which are bases for his notion of the good and ethical life. Honneth's recognition spheres, patterned after Hegel's threefold elements of ethical life, namely family, civil society, and state, enable individuals to develop in themselves self-confidence, self-respect, and self-esteem, which are necessary for self-realization (Bolaños 2016, 88). Against the backdrop of these spheres of recognition, Honneth develops his understanding of society, which either supports the individual's goal of achieving higher levels of development or suppresses its identity through the domination or colonization of its lifeworld. The recognition concept in Honneth aims to provide a framework for the critical evaluation of social conditions that affect not only individual self-realization but also the development of social relations and institutions. In this sense, the spheres of recognition serve as a yardstick for measuring healthy social relations. The same spheres serve as a backdrop against which pathologies of social life are identified and transformed. In Honneth's approach, we see the link between anthropology, social philosophy, and the diagnoses of social pathologies, which are central to his method of critical social theory (Petherbridge 2013, 17). Very briefly, let us describe each of these spheres:

Love, according to Honneth, "prepares the ground for a type of relation-to-self in which subjects mutually acquire basic confidence in themselves; it is both conceptually and genetically prior to every other form of reciprocal recognition" (Honneth 1995, 107). In speaking of recognition as a constitutive element of love, what is meant is an affirmation of independence that is guided, indeed, supported by care. As the most basic form of recognition, love instills in the individual the idea of intimacy, which grants him the physical and affective self-assurance that will serve as essential guidance in traversing the natural and social world (Bolaños 2012). *Respect* fosters a relationship in which the subject, recognizing his maturity, assumes full ethical responsibility. Herein, the subject respects or abides by normatively sanctioned assumptions out of his capacity to act rationally, i.e., ethically. According to Bolaños (2012, 20), by gaining self-respect, the autonomous subject becomes aware that "he is the author of moral rules, and as such, should be guided by his own rules." *Esteem* brings about self-confidence in the subject and allows him to establish his place in the community. This idea means all community members are recognized as potential contributors according to their attributes or gifts. Self-esteem recognizes that each community member is unique and should be valued for it (Bolaños 2012). In the words of Honneth: "To esteem one another symmetrically means to view each other in the light of those values that allow the abilities and traits of the other to appear significant for shared praxis. Relationships of this sort can be considered cases of solidarity because they inspire not just passive tolerance but felt concern for what is individual and particular about the other person" (Honneth 1995, 129).

Our big takeaway is that Honneth renews Critical Theory's anthropological turn and emancipatory interests. The strong points of Honneth's work are his emphasis on anchorage in the realities of life or empirical resources where social pathologies and emancipatory interests can be located. However, let us note that Honneth doesn't stop

at disclosing or critiquing social pathologies because one of the expressed aims of his ToR is to catalyze social change. We also highlight Honneth's emphasis on social interaction or intersubjectivity, influenced mainly by Habermas's communicative action and Hegel's Jena writings. As aforementioned, from Habermas, the notion of intersubjectivity is characterized by the shift from a "subject-object" to a "subject-subject" relation. It is the intersubjective conditions that foster emancipation. From Hegel, Honneth develops a notion of intersubjectivity highlighted by community ties and the increase in individual freedom, a sign of a "budding ethical life." Finally, in the three spheres of recognition, Honneth asserts that recognitive relations support the individual's goal of achieving higher levels of development. In the final section of this paper, we aim to apply Honneth's ToR in assessing the relationship between local churches and the Universal Church. But before that, we discuss in the next section the emergence of the concept of the WC in the Roman Catholic Church.

EMERGENCE OF THE WC: BUDDING ETHICAL LIFE

We argue in this paper that the emancipatory impulse and struggle for recognition found in Critical Theory are the basic impetuses that led to the emergence of the concept of the WC. But before embarking on this discussion, we first investigate the background against which the notion of the WC came to be. We situate the emergence of the WC in the years leading to and after the Second Vatican Council. Our goal is to highlight the efforts to recognize and integrate local churches' unique identities and contributions to the self-understanding of the Universal Church. In this regard, we expound on the following topics: first, the emergence of the WC; then, we discuss the relationship between Church and culture; and lastly, we expound on contextual theologies as expressions of the WC.

The Notion of the WC

Even before Vatican II, popes and missionaries who were ahead of their time envisioned the WC concept (Dulles 1984). Anchored on the premise that the Holy Spirit is in action everywhere, the emphasis on the need for greater geographic and ethnic inclusivity and sensitivity to the historical dimension of the Church, the faith, and the Christian life were already basic impulses (Schillebeeckx 1994). Avery Dulles points to the following as factors that brought about this epochal shift, namely: the demise of European colonialism, the spread of Christianity in Third World countries, the waning of the classical culture that provided form for European Catholicism, and fourth, the collapse of the Christian culture in Europe (1984). Karl Rahner, renowned for his influential thoughts on the concept of WC, didn't define it. Instead, he highlighted its various manifestations, which could serve as discussion starters. Rahner carefully sketched these manifestations in Volume Twenty of his *Theological Investigations* titled *Future of the Church: Basic Theological Interpretations of the Second Vatican Council*. He published this part of his significant work in 1979 in the journal *Theological Studies*, titled "Towards a Fundamental Theological Interpretation

of Vatican II." Rahner claims that the WC was actualized during the convocation of Vatican II, wherein local churches in various continents acquired a new self-understanding distinct from Europe, which brought them the faith. Local churches had a newfound sense of responsibility to chart their future and contribute according to their experience, abilities, and traits (Dulles 1984, 2). Representatives from developing countries were present during the Council as equal members of the Church with specific roles to perform and not as mere objects of pastoral duties. Moreover, the formulations of the doctrinal decrees of Vatican II, which are no longer clad in the language of Neo-Scholastic theology, respond to actual human concerns such as poverty and social injustice and, hence, made general audiences feel more connected and significant (Rahner 1975, 718-719; Dulles 1984, 2; Schillebeeckx 1967, 50-51). In summary and to propose a propaedeutic understanding, the WC epitomizes a community of the people of God abreast with the spirit of the times, being diverse and globally inclusive, representing particular churches imbued with their unique identity and role, and working collaboratively to contribute to the Church's mission in a manner that resonates and addresses pressing contemporary human issues.

Dialectics Between Church and Culture

The emergence of the WC reveals the relationship between the Church and culture. Edward Schillebeeckx argues that the essence of the Church can never show up other than in historical form (1984). The Church must insert itself into any culture where it is called to establish the kingdom of God. This insertion, called inculturation, is a term that was used for the first time in official Church documents issued by the 1977 International Synod of Bishops (Dulles 1984). To understand the relationship between Church and culture, we borrow three typologies from Dulles, namely, the confrontation model, the synthesis model, and the transformationist model. A brief description of these models is in order (Dulles 1984): We begin with the *confrontation* model, which posits that Christianity and culture cannot be reconciled. As such, this model was to be replaced with a more friendly approach since it is opposed to the ideals of the WC; next is the *synthesis* model, which generally sees culture as inherently good and contributes to the growth of human beings. However, this model is associated with cultural imperialism since it identifies or confines Christianity to a particular culture; lastly, the *transformation* model conforms to the vision of the WC in as much as it corrects or balances the excesses of the previous models. The following points summarize Dulles' position concerning the transformation model: Christianity is above culture; Christianity is always culturally embodied; Culture is broader than Christianity or any religion; and Christianity cannot be confined to a particular culture (Dulles 1984).

In the final analysis, this WC, Dulles avers, "marks the end of the period when Catholicism as a whole would be equated with its expression in the forms of Greco-Roman, Mediterranean, or European Culture" (Dulles 1984, 1). A WC, we are reminded, is simultaneously rooted in tradition and open to possibilities. In this way, a healthy balance is maintained between what is necessary and contingent in the Church: necessary pertains to the visible bonds of communion, while contingent refers to the ever-changing context or locale of the Church. Romano Guardini poignantly describes

this movement as the "awakening of the Church in people's souls" (Ratzinger 1986, 238). Similarly, John XXIII, in his thoughtful remark, articulated the radical shift that Vatican II would undertake: "The Church does not identify herself with any particular culture, not even European and Western culture…the Church is ever ready to recognize, to welcome and indeed encourage all things that honor the human mind and heart even if they have their origin in places of the world that lie outside this Mediterranean basin" (1959, par. 19). The Filipino Jesuit, Catalino Arevalo (2011a, 96) referred to this as "ecclesio-genesis," or "the realization of the Church in a given place, given time, and given people." In this light, the emergence of the WC sets the main agenda for Catholicism in the decades to come.

Contextual Theologies: Decolonization of Lifeworld

In a general way, we can point to the emergence of contextual theologies as an example of the realization of the WC. According to Arevalo, contextual theologies, as theological writing and thinking in Asia during the 70s and 80s, are oriented towards an ecclesiology relevant to the people in each place and time. Let us first acknowledge that renowned Filipino theologians have already contributed to the task of doing contextual theology, most notably Anscar Chupungco's (2004, 10) liturgical inculturation, which focuses on the "dynamic equivalence" between faith and culture; Leonardo Mercado's (1975, 3) indigenous theological method shows that religion and culture are inseparable; Dionisio Miranda's (1987, xi) use of local terms such as *pagpapakatao* (being truly human) *pakikipagkapwa* (being a neighbor or other-centeredness) articulates philosophy and morality; lastly, Arevalo's (2011b, 5-22) theological reflections show that the Church in the Philippines must be sensitive to the real-life situations of the Filipino people.

Robert Schreiter (1997, ix) argues that contextual theologies emerged because European and North American theologies failed to consider or respond to local churches' needs. The newness and dynamism of theological thinking and writing being done in Asia during the decade of the 1980s aimed at engendering an ecclesiology that resounds and responds to the people's experiences, especially poverty and injustice. Arevalo (2011a, 83) provided a sketch of how responsible Church bodies in Asia during this period articulated their reflection on the mission of the Church in Asia. As a cursory observation, the theological associations in this part of the world lamented the so-called "burden of the past" or "petrified status quo," which refers to the Western ecclesiological framework that hinders them from creatively responding to the pastoral needs of their people. Despite the differences in how various Asian theological associations expressed their vision of ecclesiology, what can be discerned as a common underlying desire was to be given more elbow room, so to say, to build a local church where the people's living cultural and religious traditions shine out. Arevalo (2011a, 90) opines that this project warrants a methodology that integrates or takes as its starting point, to say the least, the people's concrete social, political, economic, cultural, and religious experiences. To do so, theologians or pastors would need the help of social scientists or experts in gathering and processing data to cull or formulate responses and discern imperatives

that are appropriate to the pastoral needs of their people. The emergence of contextual theologies reflects the efforts of the Church to respond to the imperative to integrate culture or the total human reality in the scheme of doing local theology. Here, we recall Bühlmann, who "advocates an incarnational ecclesiology, whose vision includes inculturation" and indigenization not as accoutrements but as central, distinguishing features. The problem is how to translate such an ecclesiology into practice, given the historical dominance of centralization, clericalism, and insistence upon uniformity in the Catholic Church" (Fritz 2022, 408).

CONTEXTUALIZING THE STRUGGLE FOR RECOGNITION IN THE WC

In this third and last section, after the just concluded discussions, the task is to show how the local churches' struggle for recognition, located in the emergence of the World Church, contextualizes Honneth's recognition theory. To understand this further, first, we locate emancipatory impulses in the local churches' efforts to incarnate the Gospel in their culture or context; second, we identify context-transcending normative horizons through which we can critique the pathologies in the Church; and third, we show that the Church in the Philippines that emerged from Vatican II is a concrete expression or realization of the WC.

Locating Emancipatory Impulses in the Church

We locate emancipatory impulses among local churches, mainly in their clamor to express their faith according to their culture, context, or situation. This idea is a long-standing sentiment because, for centuries, the standard practice has been imposition, referred to hitherto as the confrontation model. This model, widely practiced during the 15th-century Western colonial expansion, posits that faith and culture are always in conflict. It also shows how the Catholic faith, even in its European form, is imposed or forced upon another culture. We find this sentiment expressed with remarkable clarity in a statement made by the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP II, 10, 7), which briefly but profoundly describes how Christianity came to the Philippines, to wit: "The faith came to us, though not always without an element of duress (PCP II, par. 10)." Historians, implying that the Catholic faith was imposed rather than proposed, generally claim that Christianity came to the Philippines through the cross and the sword. In this mode or outlook, converting to or accepting the Catholic faith meant assuming it, hook-line-and-sinker, i.e., including its European cultural expressions. The pathology of the confrontation model is the subscription or subordination to the "subject-object" mode of relationship, which posits the superiority of the Western culture over other cultures such that whatever deviated from Europeanized Christianity was regarded as an error that needs rectification (Schreiter 2007, 20). Hence, we can identify as an emancipatory impulse the widespread discontent over this approach, widely perceived as hegemonic, thereby motivating a sense of responsibility among local Churches to shape their future. Herein, local churches feel more empowered to integrate their culture's wealth and genius in their

pastoral responses and thus act more charitably by realistically addressing the aspirations of the People of God in their locale.

Intersubjectivity: Context-Transcending Normative Horizon

The pathologies of the confrontation model became more conspicuous with the movement's emergence toward the realization of the WC. It was found to be incongruent with the kind of Church hoped for by the present generation of Catholics who have acquired a heightened sense of self-identity. After identifying the struggle against imposition as the emancipatory impulse of local churches, what is in order is an appraisal of the transformation model wherein local churches are accorded a sense of self-esteem. Here, we gather that the normative horizon against which the imposition model can be critiqued is the desire for greater inclusivity and sensitivity to geographic and ethnic particularities. As Dulles opines, the emergence of the WC is a testimony to the fading paternalistic outlook in the Church, which always turned to the Greco-Roman, Mediterranean, or European culture as the standard against which local churches should be measured. In other words, realized here is the transformation model, which optimistically sees the possibility of expressing Catholicism in other forms but respecting what is necessary and contingent in the Church. As previously mentioned, by necessity, we refer to the visible bonds of communion, while contingent pertains to local churches' constantly evolving context, situation, or culture. In the emergence of the WC, what becomes evident is the tension or the struggle for recognition by local churches and their concomitant "disturbance" and "violation" of relations with the universal Church. By this, we do not mean apostasy. Instead, we emphasize the sublation of the confrontation model's individualistic "subject-object" approach to give way to the transformationist model, which promotes a "subject-subject" mode of relations through intersubjective processes. With the newfound respect for the identity and responsibility of local churches, the Church has become more open to welcoming and encouraging those elements of culture. In other words, the emphasis on social interaction or intersubjectivity, which looks up to local churches as subjects rather than objects, makes local churches' particular gifts or traits significant for shared praxis, thereby setting the desired change in the *status quo*. Therefore, the emergence of the WC necessitates the integration of the total human reality in the process of expressing faith and leading the people of God.

Applying Spheres of Recognition in the WC

Love is a sphere of recognition in the primordial mandate to "bring the power of the Gospel into the very heart of culture." This initial process lays the groundwork for the eventual encounter between the Gospel and culture. The ground is prepared, so to say, in the acknowledgment of diversity, or as Pope John Paul II remarks, "When the Gospel is brought to cultures, it seeks to know cultures and their essential components; it respects their particular values and riches." Therefore, it is never safe to presume that what works for the Church in Latin America can work just as well for the Church in Asia or anywhere else where the Church exists. Herein, the first to be established is

the subjects' confidence in participating in a communicative action. Specifically, the confidence stems from the self-awareness and self-assurance of the local church, which expects to be engaged in a communicative action as a subject, i.e., as an active contributor and not a reified passive recipient of "benevolence." Such a scenario happened blatantly during 15th-century colonial expansion, where the predominant mode of bringing the Gospel to the host culture was imposition. In this flawed context, the religious landscape was seen through the lens of truth and error, and whatever deviated from Christian truth was an error (Schreiter, 2007, 20).

Respect as a constitutive element of recognition can be discerned in the approach known as indigenization, which is also an upshot of the emergence of the notion of the WC. By the middle of the 20th century, especially in the Asian context, the growing sense of nationalism, alongside the so-called decolonization years, fostered the establishment of local hierarchy or grassroots leadership. Herein, it is to the indigenous members that the task of integrating the message of the Gospel into the culture is entrusted. Imbued with renewed pride in their religious and cultural beliefs, the local leadership is responsible for developing their local church's theology, liturgy, and practice of their local church (Schineller, 1990, 18). Indigenization stresses that theology is done by and for a given geographical area by local people for their area rather than by outsiders (Schreiter, 1993, 5). In this sense, respect flourishes where the local church is recognized as possessing the requisite maturity to assume full ethical responsibility.

Lastly, *Esteem* stresses the subject's self-confidence, which allows all the members to establish their place in the community. This recognitive element regards all the community members as subjects, i.e., potential contributors, each according to their attributes and gifts. We can find this tendency in promoting inculturation as an approach to evangelization during the early 1970s. Inculturation refers to the outcome of the dialogue between the Gospel and culture. In this context, it is understood thus: "conversation with the other and learning from each other whatever is possible. It is a form of meeting and communication to bring out a better grasp of the truth and to achieve better human relations" (Javier, 2006, 7). Herein, three aspects of dialogue can be pointed out: first, dialogue is a meeting, an encounter between different individuals (Barnes, 2002, 20); second, dialogue is learning from the other because it brings about the realization that no one possesses the truth perfectly and totally but can walk together with others towards that goal (FABC, 2001, par. 35); and third, dialogue is a relationship because it fosters "critical generosity," which implies an attitude and a spirit of concern, respect, and hospitality towards the other. Esteem, in the context of inculturation, fosters mutual reciprocity because it brings to light and allows the abilities and traits of each community member to appear significant for shared praxis. The meaning of mutual reciprocity here can be summed up by a quote from the encyclical *Redemptoris Missio*: "Thanks to this action within the local churches, the universal Church herself is enriched with forms of expression and values in the various sectors of the Christian life, such as evangelization, worship, theology, and charitable works. She comes to know and express Christ's mystery better while being motivated to continual renewal" (1991, 52).

Locating Recognitive Spheres in the Context of the Church in the Philippines

We argue that the Church in the Philippines contextualizes the notion of the WC. As a local Church, it has reached a level of maturity and identity that empowers it to plot its future for decades; therefore, it is recognized as a subject. This reality is revealed in the following features of the Church in the Philippines as an upshot of PCP II: first, the structural feature reveals its main goal: to respond to the situation of "lights and shadows" that permeate the social, cultural, economic, and religious context of the Philippines; second, the temporal feature shows that PCP II transpired within the context of various pressing societal and ecclesial challenges and questions; and lastly, the symbolic feature, stresses Jesus Christ as the ultimate ground of the Church and Discipleship as the Filipino peoples' response of faith to the call of Christ. Given all these, there is sufficient reason to opine that the movements in the Church in the Philippines can be appraised or analyzed through the lens of Critical Theory. Specifically, we find underlying, basic impulses that resound Critical Theory, to wit: the dialectical tension between historical exigencies and theological constants; the intersubjective enterprise that pushes forward participation and mutuality; and challenging the wrong state of things with the hope of spurring change or social transformation.

Dialectics between History and Theological Constants

The PCP II convened to review and resolve the proper pastoral response, which the Church in the Philippines needed to adopt for the decade of the 1990s (de Achutegui, 2001, 10). The Council was held from January 20 to February 17, 1991, motivated by significant ecclesial and national events, most notably the promulgation of the New Code of Canon Law, the impact of the Second Vatican Council, the changes in the Church in the Philippines after the celebration of the First Plenary Council in 1953; and the changes in the societal condition of the Philippines due to the advent of a new government brought about by a peaceful revolution (PCP II, XVI). Such movements, regarded as "lights and shadows," were viewed as opportunities for a local Church to chart new frontiers. Thus, the path toward renewal and revitalization hopes to usher in a new evangelization that heeds ordinary people's stories and realities. However, even if the leitmotif is to respond to the expediencies of the times, the Church in the Philippines is ever mindful of essential non-negotiables, i.e., theological constants. We can find this in one of the four directional areas of the PCP II, to wit: *Christ as focus.* The insistence on Christ defines the identity of the Church as ultimately grounded and configured to Jesus Christ, lest it reduce itself to a benevolent non-government organization. Given that all the activities of the Church are activated by and identified with Christ, it behooves the Council to locate those possible loci of an encounter between Christ and the Filipino people, specifically, culture and society (Legaspi, 1992, 532).

Challenging the Wrong State of Things

We can point out two ways PCP II challenged and proposed to change the status quo or, more specifically, the wrong state of things: first, by challenging the confrontational model and proposing the shift to the transformationist model. We recall Dulles' confrontation model, which, as he describes, tends to underestimate culture and knows only one way of interacting with culture: imposition. We find this meaningful challenge and hope for change implemented in PCP II's emphasis on *evangelization as spirit.* This directional area calls for new methods and expressions of the Gospel message, given new circumstances and the struggle for a just society. The same principle is implied in the *pastoral orientation* of the Church in the Philippines, which strongly emphasizes the social ministry geared towards social transformation and preferential option for the poor (de Achutegui, 1991, 15). In both directional areas, the Church sees in culture or context a locale for the proclamation of the Gospel message, thus effectively assimilating the transformationist model, which, as we have previously noted, checks or balances the excesses of the confrontational model. Therefore, evangelization and pastoral response cannot but be grounded on and docile to the culture and context of the Filipino people.

Second, we cannot fail to see that PCP II challenges the wrong state of things in Philippine society and proposes to change it. This understanding is expressed explicitly in the preferential option for the poor, patterned after Christ's ministry to those marginalized in society. According to Lode Wostyn, the Council retells the story and evokes the prophetic figure of Jesus Christ, "the memory of the other Jesus who proclaimed the kingdom, who gave testimony of love of preference for the poor, who prayed to his Abba, who clashed with the religious powers of Israel and was crucified as a criminal, this memory is explosive in a society that does not honor its poor, prays to the God of capitalism, and serves the power of guns, goons, and gold" (1993, 29). In other words, there is no symbol or imagery more powerful than Christ, who, by words and actions, exemplified that love is, first of all, seeking the lost and the last in society. The PCP II also challenged the Philippine society, which reeks of corruption, by promoting the concept of Discipleship, which responds to the question: How does one react after encountering Christ? The initial response of conversion leads to an authentic faith. Consequential to this response of faith is the desire to share this faith with others, which leads to building a community of believers configured to Christ (de Achutegui, 1991, 27). This faith comes from Christ and is expressed by loving the poor. This faith grows by loving others: "It is a faith that reaches out through prayer, bearing witness to Christ and service to the gift of life received" (Bacani, 1993, 139). As this faith grows by participating in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, it endows the believer with virtues necessary for confronting personal and structural sins. Overall, Discipleship presents the growth from the personal response of faith to the commitment to participate in the communal witnessing of the life of Christ in the Community of Disciples with preferential option for the poor. This must be interpreted from the discipleship perspective, as it calls for Filipino Catholics to live up to their identity as followers of Jesus Christ amid "lights and shadows" (Co 1991, 36). Propelled by Christ, the Council envisioned Filipino Catholics living their faith as disciples who live in the loving service of others.

Engendering Recognition: Intersubjectivity and Mutuality

True to the overarching agenda of the Council, to wit: "the promotion and renewal of the Filipino Christian life through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ," the Council gathered various sectors representing Filipino Catholics (PCP II, XXIV). In the directional area of *context as Filipino*, the PCP II insists on inculturation, which appraises the culture, context, and contribution of the Filipino people to build up the Church in the Philippines. With the New Evangelization's demand for new fervor, methods, and expressions, the Council insisted on a continuous dialogue between the Filipino culture and the Gospel message to lead the Filipino people. This openness to the "joys and fears, hopes and pains of the Filipino people" paved the way for PCP II's seven-point agenda, namely: Christian life, Religious Concerns, Social Concerns, Church and Society, Laity, Religious, and Clergy, all of which were culled out of a nationwide survey of all sectors representing the Filipino faithful (de Achutegui 1991, 4). The intersubjective processes that underlie the renewal and revitalization of the Church in the Philippines bear the hope of bringing about a notion of the Church that is operative or relevant to the Filipino people. The Church in the Philippines, even if only arguably, is an expression of the WC Rahner describes as the future of the Church. Perhaps the words of Cardinal Charles Maung Bo, SDB, give credence to this claim:

> The Philippine Church is a source of hope in a special way precisely because Christ is in you, our hope of glory among the people of Asia, as both Pope Paul VI in 1970 and John Paul II in 1995 have stated. Many of us come from countries where Christianity is a big challenge. Churches are empty; vocations are dying out. Christianity, they say, is in the twilight zone. Take heart, my brothers and sisters from those countries! Filipinas can turn those twilight zones into an exciting dawn of new Christianity. By showing what it means to have a true Eucharistic fellowship, Christ in you is a reality; that is the hope of glory for the whole Church. We who came from all the corners of the earth go home in hope because your strong faith is bread to be broken to nourish the world (2017, 20).

CONCLUSION

At the onset, we have set out to find out whether Honneth's ToR can serve as a conceptual apparatus allowing us to express and address, albeit briefly, the pathologies and emancipatory interests of the WC. Three topics were posited to answer this question, and we hope to briefly respond to each query here. *First*, in Honneth's ToR, we gather that social interactions are necessary to suppress hegemonic interests and motivate the recognition spheres essential for self-realization and social change. *Second*, in discussing the emergence of the WC, we realize that for a very long time now, there has been a struggle among local churches to reach a level of self-confidence, self-respect, and self-esteem. In this sense, being a Church means transcending cultural homogenizations and taking responsibility for one's future

without necessarily compromising full communion with the universal Church. *Lastly*, by referring to Honneth, we identified emancipatory interests in the World Church. Herein, we posit that local churches' struggle against the Western imposition suppresses their growth or development. All in all, these reflections usher us towards the realization that the WC is the Holy Spirit's work in progress in our time, and we are all called to help bring this good work to its completion and fruition.

REFERENCES

Arevalo, Catalino. G. 2011a. Inculturation and the Church: The Asian context in *Sentire cum Ecclesia*: A Festschrift in Honor of Catalino G. Arevalo, S.J. *Landas,* 25: 83-134.

Arevalo, Catalino. G. 2011b. On the theology of the signs of the times: A Festschrift in Honor of Catalino G. Arevalo, S.J. *Landas,* 25: 5-22.

Bacani, Teodoro. C., Jr. 1991. *Towards the Third Millenium: The PCP II Vision*. Gift of God Publications, Philippines, 1993.

Barnes, Michael. 2002. *Theology and the dialogue of religions.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bin, Lisa. 2022. The role of recognition for relational theories of autonomy. *Redescriptions: Political Thought, Conceptual History and Feminist Theory* 25(2): 137–153. DOI: https://doi. org/10.33134/rds.372.

Cardinal Charles Maung Bo, SDB. 2017. Asia Challenges the World Church. *Worship,* Vol. 19 (January 2017): 13-23.

Bolaños, Paolo. 2016. Between struggle and peaceful dialogue: An overture to Honneth and Ricouer on recognition. *Budhi: A Journal of Ideas and Culture,* 20: 2: 85-117.

Bolaños, Paolo. 2012. The ethics of recognition and the normativity of social relations: Some notes on Axel Honneth's materialist philosophical anthropology. *Suri*, Vol. 1, 1: 15-24.

Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines. 1992. *Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines.* Manila: Secretariat, Second Plenary Council of the Philippines and Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

Co, MA. 1993. The call of Jesus today. In *Journeying with the Spirit*, *Journeying with the Spirit: A Commentary on PCP II*. Edited by Paul Bernier and Manuel G. Gabriel. Quezon City, Philippines: Claretian Publications.

Chupungco, Anschar. 2004. *Liturgy for the Filipino Church: A collection of talks of Anscar J. Chupungco, OSB given at the National Meeting of Diocesan Directors of Liturgy (1986-2004).* Edited by Josefina M. Manabat, SLD. Mendiola, Manila: San Beda College, Graduate School of Liturgy.

De Achutegui, Pedro. 1991. *121 questions and answers on the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines.* Quezon City: Cardinal Bea Institute, Ateneo de Manila University.

De Achutegui, Pedro. 1991. Historical View of the Preparation and Celebration of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines. In *Journeying with the Spirit: A*

Commentary on PCP II. Edited by Paul Bernier and Manuel G. Gabriel. Quezon City, Philippines: Claretian Publications.

Dulles, Avery. 1984. Emerging World Church: A theological reflection. Address at the Catholic Theological Society of America annual Convention. Washington D.C. Retrieved from https://ejournals.bc.edu/index.php/ctsa/article/view/3179.

John XXIII. 1959. *Princeps Pastorum.* Encyclical on the Missions, Native Clergy and Lay Participation. https://www.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals.html

Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences. 2001. *Resource Manual for Catholics in Asia: Dialogue.* Thailand: FABC-OEIA, 2001.

Fritz, Peter Joseph. 2022. Catholicity and Translatability: Renewing Rahner on the World Church. *Theological Studies*, Vol. 83(3) 400–423.

Honneth, Axel. 1995. *The struggle for recognition: The moral grammar of social conflicts*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Honneth, Axel. 1996. *The moral grammar of social conflicts*. Oxford: Polity Press.

Javier, Edgar. 2006. *Dialogue: Our mission today.* Quezon City: Claretian Publication and ICLA Publications.

John Paul II. 1991. *Redemptoris Missio*. On the Permanent Validity of the Church's Missionary Mandate. *https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_07121990_redemptoris-missio.html*

Legaspi, Leonardo. 1992. The *Kairos* of the PCP II Implementation Stage. *Boletin Eclesiastico de Filipinas* LXVIII, nos. 754-755: 527-533.

Levinas, Emmanuel. 1998. *Of God who comes to Mind.* California: Standford University Press.

Mercado, Leonardo. 1975. *Elements of Filipino theology*. Edited by Victoria S. Salazar. Tacloban City, Philippines: Divine Word University Publications.

Miranda, Dionisio. 1987. *Pagkamakatao: Reflections on the theological virtues in the Philippine Context.* Manila: Logos Publications.

Petherbridge, Danielle. 2013. *The critical theory of Axel Honneth.* Maryland, Lexington Books.

Rahner, Karl. 1979. Towards a Fundamental Theological Interpretation of Vatican II. *Theological Studies* 40: 716-727.

Ratzinger, Joseph. 1986. The Ecclesiology of the Second Vatican Council. *Communio* 13, 3: 239-251.

Schillebeeckx, Edward. 1994. *I am a happy theologian.* New York: Crossroad.

Schineller, Peter. 1990. *A handbook on inculturation*. Mahnah, NJ: Paulist Press.

Schreiter, Robert. 1997. *The new Catholicity: Theology between the global and the local.* New York: Orbis Books.

Schreiter, Robert. 2007. The legacy of St. Francis Xavier: Inculturation of the Gospel then and now. *East Asian Pastoral Review*, Vol. 44, 1. http://www.eapi.org.ph/resources/eapr/east-asian-pastoral-review-2007/volume-44-2007-number-1/the-legacy-of-st-francis-xavier-inculturation-of-the-gospel-then-and-now. Retrieved August 30, 2018.

Schreiter, Robert. 1993. *Constructing local theologies.* Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.

Sevilla, Pedro. 1993. Teaching Christology according to the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines. *Landas,* 7: 3-13 http://www.lst.edu/academics/landas-archives/293-teaching-christology-according-to-pcp-ii-p-sevilla-sj.   Retrieved December 20, 2014.

Wostyn, Lode. (1993). The Way of Jesus. In *Journeying with the Spirit*, *Journeying with the Spirit: A Commentary on PCP II*. Edited by Paul Bernier and Manuel G. Gabriel. Quezon City, Philippines: Claretian Publications.