

AFRICA AND GLOBALIZATION: RETHINKING THE MORAL PRINCIPLES OF COSMOPOLITANISM IN THE LIGHT OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

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Introduction

The notion of globalization is no longer an imaginary concept. The last few decades of the inevitable interaction among people of different geographical locations and economic potentialities provide positive data demonstrating that globalization is a reality in nearly every local community. Everybody talks about it, but many are unaware of the devastating consequences it has on people who are vulnerable to different social and economic problems. Globalization is a phenomenon that has strong economic, political, social, religious and cultural dimensions, and has indisputably produced a twofold dialectic.¹ The one is a dialectic of *differentiation* whereby we are made increasingly aware of our cultural identity. This seemingly negative dialectic unveils why we are different from other people with respect to our nationality, culture, religion, ethnicity, gender, class, language

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¹See, S. Gregg, "Globalization and Insights of Catholic Social Teaching," *Journal of Markets and Morality*, 4, 1 (2001). See also, B. C. Nwachukwu-Udaku, "From Local Differences to National and Global Obligations: A Caveat to the Nigerian Political Agenda," *The Oracle* 3 (December, 2010) 61-75 at 61.

etc. The other is a dialectic of *interdependence* whereby we become more aware of our need for others irrespective of any natural or conventional difference that may define our relationship with them. The later is positively oriented, hence it constitutes a bridge that brings people together to bring about an enduring cosmopolitanism.

The obvious challenge of all people as *bona fide* members of the global village is how to transform this twofold antithetical dialectic of simultaneous differentiation and interdependence into solidarity with others. For example, how can the African context and hermeneutics contribute in this life asserting and bridge-building mission in our global world today? How will the African mentality open a more flourishing space of quality interaction with the western world without endangering those natural endowments, basic narratives, cultural values, indigenous ethical principles, unsophisticated traditional wisdom, and basic identity that unveils who we are as Africans. Does globalization imply only economic imperialism and manipulation of the strong against the weak?² Does relationship among nations depict and encourage servitude and intimidation or does it encourage healthy competition and mutual solidarity?

In this article, I will first outline the necessary ingredients of African hermeneutics and context as an unparalleled site for cross-cultural discourse on globalization. I will also examine its prospects and effects in relation to the human being as primarily a person who has to act in the real world, struggle to make a living (economics), acquire a minimum of recognition and respect (politics), and search for a meaning of life that transcends sheer contingencies (culture and religion).

In the second instance of this study, I will situate the dialectic of differentiation within the corpus of the post-modern philosophy of difference³ especially in the works of Jacques Derrida (1930-2004). This great scholar of the 20th century incessantly intended to universalize difference and accentuate it so as to denounce naive assumptions of unity, universality and totality. I will situate our author as a dialogue partner with the African worldview and rationality in relation with issues of global interest and perspectives.

²Some of the deleterious consequences of economic globalization within a given context of Asia have inspired an interesting study by an Asian Scholar. See, Y. Wijaya, "Economic Globalization and Asian Contextual Theology," *Theological Studies* 69 (June 2008) 309-320. See also, S. Abraham "What Does Mumbai Have to Do with Rome? Postcolonial Perspectives on Globalization and Theology," *Theological Studies* 69 (June 2008) 376-393.

³Another interesting author of the post-structuralist tradition is Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995). See his seminal book: *Difference and Repetition*, New York: Routledge, 1994.

On the third instance of this investigation, I will establish why it is necessary for us to move from difference to solidarity in our global world today in the light of Catholic social teaching. Those elements that may hinder a healthy relationship and appreciation of human solidarity will be highlighted in juxtaposition with more positive and enduring elements that will keep together and promote transcendence and history, thought and reality, hope and realization, personal and social existence.

1. A Hermeneutics of African Culture and Context: A Locus for Dialogue on the Dialectics of Interdependence

One of the prevalent dialectics of globalization is *interdependence* whereby people from different places can share a common space and be included into a common project. The African hermeneutics or thought pattern, which consists not only of the essentials of African worldview, but also of their horizon of interpretation, indubitably offers a fertile ground in making present and resonating the traditional and classical notions of truth, reason, identity, unity, and objectivity; of the idea of single frameworks, grand narratives, traditional wisdom which leads to a greater interdependence among people.

Some of the features of the African worldview relevant to our discussion and perspectives include: the African worldview of a holistic view of reality, interrelatedness of concepts/ideas and their communitarian way of life. Thus, these essential thought patterns and *Weltanschauung* provide an important starting point of their cosmopolitan ethical discourse. The African worldview originates, motivates, solidifies and provides the basis for moral action and their relationship with others in our global world community.

In the African holistic view of reality, it is evident that human realities such as life, health, religion, culture, morality, sickness, and death are conceived and presented in a holistic fashion. It is absurd to separate the one from the many, the sacred from the secular, the natural from the supernatural, and the individual from the community.

The second significant feature of African worldview and hermeneutics is inter-relatedness of reality. It is inconceivable for the African to deal with realities such as morality, religion, life, sickness, and death as separate entities. For example, it is absurd to deal with the problem of sickness without a closer look at the environment and social context that influences people's state of health.

Thirdly, the communitarian way of life exposes the Africans to appreciate the fact that the individual is not alone. Everyone belongs

to the community and the resources needed to survive during life challenging moments are community owned, community promoted and community protected. In the age of globalization and cosmopolitanism, the individual is projected as a citizen of the world (*nwaoha*) and not simply a member of a tribal enclave.⁴ The concept of life, for example, brings into perspective these fundamental features of the African sociability and relationship. In Africa, human life is a concrete reality that has expressions in the concrete experiences of people. This practical platform makes it imperative for them to perceive life as belonging, sharing, communion, hospitality, celebration, gratitude and participation.⁵ These different outlooks on life explain why they view life as the beginning of whoever one is (identity), of whatever one does (activity, achievement) and of whatever one has (belongings). This is shown, demonstrated and celebrated in different ways through the names that are given to children at birth such as *Nduka* (life is supreme), *Ndudiri* (let there be life), *Ndukwe* (if life permits).⁶ These practical considerations about life are embedded in proverbs, songs, folktales, stories, etc., which the Africans use in their day-to-day life events and ethical formulations. These considerations show that life has a deep social dimension and in order to take care of life, the social conditions that protect and promote life should be assured. This fundamental appreciation of life embedded in the African milieu helps to create a culture of life in our global world community where all and sundry are called upon to defend human life.⁷

⁴This African way of presenting an individual, as bearer of communal and cosmopolitan identity is becoming today a common vision among authors of the western worldview. See, A. M. Stephenson, "Can We Be Wolves? Intersections between Deleuze's Difference and Repetition and Butler's Performativity," in: R. Faber & A. M. Stephenson, *Secrets of Becoming: Negotiating Whitehead, Deleuze, and Butler*, New York: Fordham University Press, 2011, 97.

⁵In a recent study Agbonkhanmeghe Orobator, S.J. has presented the concept of life as intrinsic to African ethics and morality. See, A. E. Orobator, "Caritas in Veritate and Africa's Burden of (under) development," *Theological Studies* 71 (2010) 320-334 at 323. See, also L. Magesa, *African Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life*, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1997; B. Bujo, *African Morality at the Age of Inculturation*, Nairobi: Pauline Publications Africa, 1990.

⁶This holistic and integral way of considering human life enabled me to propose a more positive and humanistic way of conceiving sexuality in the patriarchal context of the Igbos of Nigeria. See, B. C. Nwachukwu-Udaku, "Human Sexuality in the African Context: Towards Holistic Affirmation of a Culture of Life," *Journal of Inculturation Theology* (April 2008) 3-27. See also, B. C. Nwachukwu-Udaku, "La Sexualidad Humana en el Contexto Africano," in J. De La Torre, *Sexo, Sexualidad y Bioetica*, Madrid: Universidad Pontificia Comillas, 2008, 279-298.

⁷See, B. C. Nwachukwu-Udaku, *Sida en Africa: Reflexiones y Propuestas desde el Pueblo Igbo*, Madrid: Universidad Pontificia Comillas, 2009, 56.

The fact that the African worldview is dynamic implies that it projects the importance of togetherness, harmony, and communalism in the life and experience of the African people and consequently offers a lesson for the world community. The relationship between the individual and community is not marked with negative ideals such as marginalization, intimidation, oppression, stifling, and collective egotism, but rather is punctuated with ideals such as mutuality, selflessness, encouragement and solidarity. The holistic and interrelated nature of the African thought pattern shows that there are no dichotomies between the natural and the supernatural, the immanent and the transcendental, the sacred and the profane, the *civitas Dei* (city of God) and *civitas hominis* (city of man), the community and the individual. While these features may maintain a certain sense of autonomy, they are not drastically opposed to each other. The supernatural does not destroy the natural, and the community does not destroy or atrophy the individual. Therefore, the most powerful nations should not consider other nations or places as *terra nulles*, where technological garbage, inhuman practices, unencumbered and individualistic philosophical theories ought to be unstoppably deposited.

2. Engaging the Philosophy of Jacques Derrida: A Locus for Dialogue on the Dialectics of Difference

Today, our global world is dominated by the philosophy, culture, and politics of difference, identity and unity. The holistic worldview prevalent in the African mindset and thought pattern when juxtaposed with the prevailing fragmented post-modern way of thought becomes an apparently unrealizable dream. Grand narratives, foundations, enduring genealogies that define life in traditional societies are considered as *fictio mentis* and inconsequential. The underlined characteristics constitute the *locus classicus* of the philosophy of one of the most celebrated scholars of the 20th century, Jacques Derrida (1930-2004). Our author distanced himself from the various philosophical movements and traditions that preceded him on the French intellectual scene (phenomenology, existentialism, and structuralism). He developed a strategy called “deconstruction” in the mid 1960s. Although not purely negative, deconstruction is primarily concerned with something tantamount to a critique of the Western philosophical tradition. Deconstruction is generally presented via an analysis of specific texts. It seeks to expose, and then to subvert the various binary oppositions that undergird our dominant ways of thinking—presence/absence, speech/writing, and so forth.

In his philosophy of difference, which he termed *differance*, Jacques Derrida conceived and projected the idea that human and cultural identity are sources of temporalizing deferral and spatializing differentiations. *Differance* is the systematic play of difference or the playing movement that produces relations and differences and thus makes meaning, conceptuality, and system in general possible. *Differance* is the 'non-full, non-simple, structured and differentiating origin of differences.'⁸ *Differance* therefore is not itself a concept, a word, an essence, a being, a name, or even Being itself, but the very condition that makes each possible. It is a *conditio sine qua non* for human existence in a determined community and in a global world community (it is important to note that Derrida rejected the concept of community in its traditional sense. Rather, he prefers to refer community as a gathering together of singularities). It is difference that defines us, makes us who we are, it is that which provides the necessary vocabulary for human interaction and that which liberates people from the shackles of unjust political and economic settings. It is by recognizing our differences that the message of liberation and inclusion become meaningful and assessable.

It is his avowal notion of *differance* that seems to solidify Derrida's attempt to deconstruct all claims to identity, unity, universality, community, totality and system. He has insistently subjected all claims to ultimacy in the form of religion, faith, messianism, and justice, to the critique and contamination of negative theology. Deconstruction means to differentiate the identical, complicate the simple, contaminate the pure, destabilize the complacent, and to subvert all reigning totalities and systems by subjecting them to the shock of alterity, the demand of the wholly other, and the trauma of the unexpected.⁹ This Postmodern way of thought depicted in the philosophy of Derrida and others such as Richard Rorty, Jean-Francois Lyotard, and Michel Foucault, constitute a challenge in any discourse on globalization that accentuates unity, solidarity, universality, oneness,¹⁰ etc.

The Postmodern culture and philosophy tend to destroy whatever is local and particular.¹¹ Thus, there is something sinister about the

⁸J. Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982, 11.

⁹A. Min, *The Solidarity of Others in a Divided World: Postmodern Theology after Postmodernism*, New York: T & T Clark International, 2004, 51.

¹⁰Justin Thacker has provided a response to some of the Postmodern critique of Christianity in his book: *Postmodernism and the Ethics of Theological Knowledge*, Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing, 2007.

¹¹J.L. Martínez, *Ciudadanía, migraciones y religión*, Madrid: Universidad Pontificia Comillas, 2007, 222.

postmodern celebration of difference, as a close consideration of the philosophy of difference of Derrida will reveal. In the same footing, Foucault's genealogical exposition of power relations is an avowal extrication of the individuals from their basic narratives¹² as well as Lyotard's announcement of the end of master narratives¹³ or the claims of Simone de Beauvoir that "one is not born a woman, but, rather, becomes one."¹⁴

The differences which postmodern culture and philosophy seem to promote are those stripped from their moral and religious contents. They are differences devoid of any historical and genealogical claims. They seem to extricate the individuals from their basic social location and traditional strategies of survival and well-being. In the same way, economic globalization promoted by this school of thought becomes an intricate and structural aspect of postmodernism, whose ideological effect is to obscure the deep social, historical, and economic inequalities between post liberal consumers of the rich North and the peasants in the South. The difference they proclaim is that which continues to make the poorer nations more vulnerable because the masters are those who speak, direct, control and never listened to the voice of the marginalized. The greatest failure of economic globalization is that it begins with a wrong premise of asking, "what do you want or what do you desire?" before asking, "who are you?" The caveat from Tom Beaudoin is quite illuminating in this context as he says: "there should be a process of integrating who we are with what we buy."¹⁵

A consideration of who people are and the environment that shapes their thoughts and praxis constitute a more solid site of understanding a difference that liberates.¹⁶ Thus, any given community situated in a particular geographical area confers on the individual autonomy and sense of purpose. It is within a given context that people's dignity and rights are better interpreted and respected. When people are taken away from their contexts, basic

¹²M. Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith, Tavistock Press, London 1972; M. Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, trans. G. Burchell, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

¹³J.F. Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. G. Bennington & B. Massumi, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

¹⁴Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. E. M. Parshley, New York: Vintage Press, 1973.

¹⁵T. Beaudoin, *Consuming Faith: Integrating Who We Are with What We Buy*, Lanham: Sheed & Ward, 2003, 21.

¹⁶This argument is central in most of the contextual theologies especially in Theology of Liberation. See, A. Min, *Dialectic of Salvation: Issues in Theology of Liberation*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989.

beliefs and convictions, they may be exposed to greater marginalization and exploitation.¹⁷ For example, an authentic liberation of women in Africa from some gender insensitive practices should be done within their context, and according to the paradigms of life, thought and existence that define the African context.¹⁸

3. Some Pseudo-Fruits of Globalization and Post-Modern Culture against Authentic Development in Africa

In this section of our study, I wish to outline some of the adverse effects of the existing chasm between the two dialectics that define how globalization is being played out in our cosmopolitan world. These consequences are more present among nations who are ill prepared to face the devouring effects of globalization¹⁹ when myopically and selfishly expressed.

3.1. Promotion of Consumeristic Culture

One area of divergence between the dialectic of interdependence promoted by the African hermeneutics and the dialectic of difference championed by our post modern culture is that while the one is built on who a person is or who a particular people are and not on what a person has. The other is motivated primarily by what a person or a nation has. In globalized culture, people find their value not in who they are but in what they have and consume: possession, power, pleasure and prestige. Happiness or success is equated with conspicuous consumption.²⁰

This culture of consumerism is a brainchild of some philosophical traditions like Epicureanism, individualism, Utilitarianism and post

¹⁷B. C. Nwachukwu-Udaku, *Sida en Africa*, 326.

¹⁸Most African women authors have affirmed this basic truth. See, N. Nzegwu, "Recovering Igbo Tradition: A case for Indigenous Women's Organizations in Development," in M.C. Nussbaum & J. Clover (eds.), *Women, Culture, and Development: A Study of Human Capabilities*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995; R. Uchem, *Overcoming Women's Subordination in the Igbo African Culture and in the Catholic Church: Envisioning on Inclusive Theology with Reference to Women*, New York: Dissertation.com, 2001; M. A. Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy*, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1995.

¹⁹Paul Chummar Chittilappilly has insightfully outlined that in the age of globalization, even theological thoughts could be manipulated. He argued that most of the theologies taught in the developed world are recycled instead of authentic inculturation and indigenization. See, P. Chummar, "Which Theological Ethics Should We Teach: Indigenized or Recycled? Some Reflections on an Inculturated Theological Ethical Education," *Asian Horizons* 4, 1 (2010) 128-140.

²⁰M. F. Czerny, "AIDS: Africa's Greatest Threat since the Slave Trade," *La Civiltà Cattolica* 3741 (May 2006) 1-10. See, also K. R. Himes, "Consumerism and Christian Ethics," *Theological Studies* 68 (2007) 132-153.

modernism when negatively applied. In this age of globalization, well being consists in having one's preferences satisfied. Thus, the individual is the best judge of his/her own interests. This way of life promotes and perpetuates the ideas that encourage the individual to experience whatever he or she desires,²¹ own whatever he or she wants and relates intimately with whomever he or she wishes. This way of life causes one to be over-confident in himself or herself even to the danger of not recognizing the place of God in one's life. It could lead to what John Kenneth Galbraith calls a "Culture of Satisfaction."²² In this type of culture what is emphasised is what an individual desires and not what the individual needs.

With the consumerist principle, sexual activity is seen as one's own business, a matter of one's individual liking? and preference. It is seen as eating and drinking, something that takes place for satisfaction and pleasure, something that is essentially recreational.²³ In this environment, the use of condoms is promoted without proper consideration of some of its cultural and social implications. This attitude is antagonistic to African morality where what people have and what they need are placed in context of who they are.

Globalization from the economic perspective is motivated primarily by what a person or a nation has. In globalized culture, people find their value not in who they are but in what they have and consume: possession, power, pleasure and prestige.

3.2. Promotion of The Dependency Syndrome

The second significant attitude promoted by economic globalization is the feeling of dependency. Poor countries are becoming over dependent on the rich countries for survival and so they find it difficult to use the resources available within their context in resolving their problems. This lack of attention to one's social context goes against the spirit of genuine growth and development. It could give rise to a "deprivation of capabilities and a lack of basic freedom."²⁴

²¹See: A. Macintyre, *After Virtue, A Study in Moral Theory*, London: Duckworth 1981, 23.

²²J. K. Galbraith, *La cultura de la satisfacción*, Barcelona: Ariel, 1993.

²³Dr. Shaji George Kochuthara has scholarly denoted the teachings of the Church on the morality of sexual pleasure. See, S. G. Kochuthara, *The Concept of Sexual Pleasure in the Catholic Moral Tradition*, Roma: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2007.

²⁴A. Sen , *Development As Freedom*, New York: Anchor Books, 1999, xii. It is interesting to note that Dr. Charles Irudayam has scholarly studied the capacity theory of Amartya Sen in the Light of Catholic Social Teaching. See, C. Irudayam,

The dependency syndrome is also seen when a people are neither capable of controlling their own destiny nor willing to contribute from their local background the assistance that could improve their growth and sustenance. A dependency syndrome makes the principle of subsidiarity which encourages local self-help project ineffective.

This 'dependency syndrome' is seen both on the micro and macro levels. Today, on the micro or individual level, it is not uncommon to see people who depend on others for survival. Concepts like '*oti-mkpu*' (a kind of sycophancy) are prevalent among the Nigerian youths. On the macro level the dependency syndrome is considered a systemic problem. It is destroying the entire African nation, including the Church structure. Most of the African Churches still depend on foreign assistance for their development. This idea of being a receiving nation or Church raises difficulties about the responsibility and autonomy of the nations and local churches. The dependency syndrome could also become an avenue to disseminate what Prof. Julio Martínez calls "a globalization of fear and vulnerability."²⁵

With the culture of globalization where what is fabricated in the developed World is made available to the developing nations, people tend to lack initiatives and sense of purpose.

3.3. Promotion of the Spirit of Pragmatism

With the definition of the human person in terms of what one has without paying much attention to who a person or a nation is, economic globalization is therefore fashioned in such a way that what is promoted is a pure spirit of pragmatism, characterised by short term and myopic considerations of problems that offer solutions without a sufficient reflective assessment, foresight and vision. However, without in anyway discrediting the merits embedded in a pragmatic way of life, we would state that pure pragmatism that seems to give practical solutions to problems, especially in the 'here' and 'now' time frame, may be in antagonism with the ideals of authentic economic development.

It is on this note that we can affirm that the ideals of economic reform are not in conformity with mere pragmatism and functionalism which the global culture of today has incorporated as its *terminus ad*

Towards an Ethical Framework for Poverty Reduction: A Critical Reflection on Amartya Sen's Capability Theory in the Light of Catholic Social Teaching, Tercentenary Publication, Delhi 2010.

²⁵J.L. Martínez, "Conciencia moral y globalización: tensiones para la ética cristiana," in M. Rubio, V. García, & V. Gómez (eds.), *La ética cristiana hoy: Horizontes de Sentido*, Madrid: Editorial PS, 2003, 486.

quo and *terminus ad quem*. This culture of 'ad hocism' is making the whole world more vulnerable because people are not given enough time to think of better solutions in line with their values when faced with seemingly difficult situations.

The pragmatic approach to problems is militating against some spiritual and moral ideals promoted by some institutions like the Church. For example, with the issue of the use of contraceptives such as a "day after pill" to prevent pregnancy people tend to follow a pragmatic approach where what is sought is an *ad hoc* solution irrespective of the individual, communal and cultural beliefs and perennial human and cultural values of the people. These "wait and take" ideals are being sold and promoted by the new economic globalization.²⁶

In the subsequent pages, let us see how to reconcile the two leading dialectics of our study by considering some ethical principles of globalization in our cosmopolitan world. This final part of our paper will embrace the contributions of the social teachings of Pope John Paul II²⁷ and Pope Benedict XVI in their epoch making encyclicals *Sollicitud Rei Socialis* (1987) and *Caritas in Veritate* (2009) respectively.²⁸

4. Moral Principles of Cosmopolitanism in the Light of Catholic Social Teaching

The fact that we are citizens of the world makes it imperative for us to move from local differences to global obligations, to move from our mini-environmental space to engage a macro and more sustainable space of global responsibility and interdependence. This new way of existence bypasses the limitations of post modernism and all forms of tribal enclaves. Cosmopolitans according to Kwame Anthony Appiah suppose that all cultures have enough overlap in their vocabulary of values to begin a conversation. But they don't suppose like some

²⁶E. M. Katongole "Christian Ethics and AIDS in Africa Today: Exploring the Limits of a Culture of Suspicion and Despair," *Missionalia* 29 (2001) 144-160.

²⁷Uzochukwu Jude Njoku identified solidarity as an important theme of the social encyclicals from *Rerum Novarum* (1891) of Leo XIII to *Centesimus annus* (1991) of John Paul II. See, U. J. Njoku, *Examining the Foundations of Solidarity in the Social Encyclicals of John Paul II*, Frankfurt am Main: European University Studies, Peter Lang, 2006. It is important to note that Pope Benedict's XVI's encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* (2009) is included as a social encyclical. While *Sollicitud Rei Socialis* (1987) is said to be a social encyclical on solidarity, *Caritas in Veritate* (2009) is considered as a social encyclical on globalization.

²⁸That Benedict XVI's third encyclical can be regarded as an encyclical on globalization, see L.S. Cahill, "Caritas in Veritate: Benedict's Global Reorientation," *Theological Studies* 71 (June 2010) 291-319.

Universalists that we could all come to agreement if only we had the same vocabulary.²⁹

The great social gospel of the Church, traditionally called the Catholic Social Teaching, has been at the forefront in reconciling the limitations imposed on humanity by the self-imposing ideologies of postmodernism. The social encyclicals *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* and *Caritas in Veritate* will constitute our *instrumentum laboris* in making the Church and her teaching a site for authentic globalization of solidarity where our differences are considered avenues for humane interdependence in our cosmopolitan world. In *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, Pope John Paul II discusses interdependence as “a system determining relationships in the contemporary world” and solidarity as the “correlative response as a moral and social attitude (SRS, § 38). The Holy Father goes on to define solidarity as a virtue, whereby people firmly commit themselves not to exploit others but to work for their good and even to “lose themselves” for the sake of others. The virtue of solidarity applies analogously to corporations and nations, which must responsibly contribute to the general good of society and of humanity as a whole (SRS, § 38-40).

In *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (§ 39), John Paul II advised that the exercise of solidarity within each society is valid when its members recognize one another as persons. Those who are more influential should feel responsible for the weaker individuals and be ready to share all they possess. Those who are weaker, for their part, in the same spirit of solidarity, should not adopt a purely passive attitude or one that is destructive of the social fabric. The “evil mechanisms” and “structures of sin” promoted by some illusions of post-modern culture can be controlled only through the exercise of the human and Christian solidarity to which the Church calls us and which she tirelessly promotes. Only in this way can such positive energies be fully released for the benefit of development and peace. Solidarity also has many points of contact with charity (SRS § 40), which makes it possible for Christian solidarity to be manifested in total gratuity, forgiveness and reconciliation.

Today, what is needed is a globalization of solidarity in the proper sense of the word; a solidarity that will respect the identity of a person or a community. We need a solidarity that is not built on uniformity or homogenization but that which respects the integrity of diverse traditions and cultures; a solidarity that respects the dignity of individual and their values while also affirming our common

²⁹See. K.A. Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*, New York: Norton, 2006, 57.

humanity as children of one God. In the age of globalization, solidarity among nations on a macro level should lead to the elimination of those barriers that widens the gap between the rich and the poor; between the haves and the have-nots; between the healthy and the sick.

Pope Benedict XVI's encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* provides once again an excellent lens through which the Church understands and appreciates the interdependence of social context, political commitments, ethical responsibilities and theological discourse in our global world. It is pertinent to note that globalization is one of the major themes that Benedict expounded in this his first social encyclical. Inserting the Church's social teaching on globalization into the present context of the 21st century, the Holy Father advocates that economic globalization should avoid all forms of divide that marginalizes the poor and the vulnerable and embrace a somewhat radical alternative of "gratuitousness and communion" (CIV, § 34).³⁰

In this platform, Pope Benedict indicated that market economy should not be regulated merely by the principle of commutative justice, which regulates the relations of giving and receiving between parties to a transaction but rather should incorporate the spirit of distributive justice and social justice. Without the internal forms of solidarity and mutual truth, the market cannot completely fulfil its proper economic function (CIV, § 35). Pope Benedict also highlighted how a renewed understanding of labour, shareholder responsibility, and the structures of society can create a new world order ruled by the love of Christ. Quoting St. Paul, the present pontiff recognized that all these could be possible because "It is Christ's charity that drives us on: "*caritas Christi urget nos*" (2 Cor 5:14). This love of Christ will help us to respond urgently to the invitation to establish an authentic fraternity required by globalization (CIV, no. 20).³¹

Charity in truth, which constitutes the central message of the encyclical, is a force that builds community, it brings all people together (interdependence) without imposing barriers or limits. Thus, the development of peoples depends, above all, on a recognition that

³⁰Although there has been a positive evaluation of *Caritas in Veritate* by a good number of scholars, Agbonkianmeghe E. Orobator has offered a critical assessment of Pope Benedict's *Caritas in Veritate* from an African perspective especially with reference to development and underdevelopment in Africa. See, A.E. Orobator, "Caritas in Veritate and Africa's Burden of (under) development," *Theological Studies* 71 (2010) 320-334.

³¹See also, K. R. Himes, "Globalization with a Human Face: Catholic Social Teaching and Globalization," *Theological Studies* 67 (2008) 269-289, at 281.

the human race is a single family working together in true communion (*CI*, § 53).

In these two encyclicals, *Sollicitudo rei socialis* and *Caritas in Veritate*, we have underlined some ethical principles embedded in the perennial teachings of the Church both ethically and theologically that could aid in our cosmopolitan world and its context marked by unity in diversity. Some of the unprecedented moral principles highlighted include: the need to respect the dignity of the human person as created in the image and likeness of God, ethical principles of solidarity, subsidiarity, integral human development, option for the poor, common good which constitutes the basis for healthy life in our world of strangers as described by the erudite Ghanaian philosopher, Prof. Appiah.³²

To achieve these unprecedented solidarity oriented ideals, the African continent should engage in a communal and strategic, step-by-step fight to eliminate all the structures of underdevelopment. These structures of underdevelopment and deprivation include: unemployment, corruption, inequality, sexism, tribalism, child labour and prostitution among others. Their elimination will imply a reconstruction of other structures that will encourage development. The *Compendium of Catholic Social Doctrine* refers to these structures of development as "structures of solidarity" (no. 193).

One of these 'structures of solidarity' is the establishment of communal-help projects that will offer employment opportunities to young people. It is obvious that reliance on foreign assistance or on Western knowledge cannot be the exclusive way to take care of all problems.³³ Communal help projects should first help the young people to realize who they are as members of a community of solidarity.³⁴ Africans should go back to their pre-colonial traditional knowledge and talents which they received from their ancestors. Going back to their roots in order to discover ways of survival will help in the sustainable development built on who they are and not only on what they have.³⁵

The art of communal-help projects brings to life and puts into practical use the technological knowledge that is innate in the African

³²K.A. Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*.

³³J. M. Ela, "Desarrollo del bricolaje," *Mundo Negro* (February 2003) 36. See also his *African Cry*, Maryknoll New York: Orbis Books, 1986.

³⁴Stanley Hauerwas has pointed out how belonging to a community saves the individual from some social ills. See, S. Hauerwas, *Community of Character: Towards a Constructive Christian Social Ethic*, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983.

³⁵See: B.C. Nwachukwu-Udaku, *Sida en Africa*, 155.

world in general. It is when they put to use the knowledge they have received from their forebears that they can live up to their identity as a 'community of memory'. And the solidarity that is implied in this case is regarded as a memorial or anamnestic solidarity.³⁶ This anamnestic solidarity helps to keep the biographical presence of the ancestors alive. Community oriented activities such as *ibo ama* (cleaning of streets that link one village to another) should be encouraged so that the environment will be preserved from different forms of contamination.

Another example of the structure of solidarity is the establishment of 'Micro-credit Revolving Loan Scheme' by most communities in Africa. This scheme is meant for helping the poor, especially women who are unable to get employment. Many families in Sub-Sahara Africa are living on less than a dollar a day. The scheme is directed towards helping women because they are often responsible for the upbringing of the children and the poverty of the women generally results in the physical and social underdevelopment of their children. This structure of solidarity could help to empower women which will serve as a way of saving them from some of the abuses that their situation as women inexorably places them.³⁷

One of the great benefits of these structures of solidarity is that they empower the Africans to realize who they are by promoting a sense of social confidence.³⁸ They are fashioned in such a way as to reveal to the beneficiaries their basic identity, common humanity, narrative and destiny. Therefore, Africans are advised to ignore ideologies that play down the value of community self-reliance.

³⁶B. Bujo, *Foundations of an African Ethic-Beyond Universal Claims of Western Morality*, Nairobi: Paulines Publication Africa, 2003, 60-67.

³⁷Gender differences constitute the primary reason for the marginalization of women. Scholars such as Judith Butler argue that the 'masculine' and the 'feminine' are not biologically fixed but culturally presupposed. To liberate women these feminists argue against any kind of totalizing framework, logocentricism and masculinist signifying economies in defining the concept of women. See, J. Butler, *Gender Trouble*, New York: Routledge Classics, 1990; L. Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman*, Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1985; C. Keller, *Face of the Deep: A Theology of Becoming*, New York: Routledge 2003; C. Boesel & C. Keller, (eds), *Apophatic Bodies: Negative Theology, Incarnation, and Relationality*, New York: Fordham University Press, 2010.

³⁸To empower the young people to have social confidence, Fr. Innocent Emechete has studied how animal stories from the African cultural setting could offer a positive orientation in this direction: See, I. Emechete, *Animal Stories Daddy Told US*, Indiana: AuthorHouse Publishers, 2010.

Conclusion

In the present study, we have appreciated the global context; its merits and demerits. We have also unveiled how the Catholic social teaching has contributed immensely in giving globalization a human face by insisting in the globalization of solidarity and communion among people of different nations and diverse socio-cultural and political conditions. We have also insisted that people should be allowed to preserve their authentic cultural practices. Developed and more prosperous nations ought to resist the demonizing tendency of cultural imperialism that is destroying our way of being in the global world today.

In the light of the emancipatory values of interdependence as enunciated in *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (§ 38), Africans should participate and utilize the economic values available in the global world because we are *bona fide* members of the cosmopolitan. As members of the cosmos, Africans ought to appreciate their distinctiveness and those cultural indigents and resources that constitute them a 'community of memory' with values that should not be compromised. The fact that Africans are still struggling economically does not mean that every solution offered by the global world should be accepted, especially when those solutions are inimical to the moral fabric of the continent. Thus, we are not bound to accept the pseudo-proposals offered by the economic reforms that are constructed or baked in a sophisticated unencumbered liberal culture where what matters most often, is what we want and not who we are.

In the light of the above, the basic moral principles of Catholic social teaching therefore become an enabling balm to heal the wounds that continue to militate against the positive appreciation and sublime benefits of globalization in our most cosmopolitan world. Catholic Social Teaching and its moral principles in the light of globalization are also a bridge that brings together the two-fold dialectic of interdependence and difference and transform them into complimentary humanistic values.