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Iberian Globalization and the Rise of Catholic Theology of Religions in the XVI Century[1]

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Abstract

This article provides a synthetic view of the historical and theological components that explain how Catholicism came to understand the great religious systems in Asia as doctrinally inferior during the sixteenth century in response to the discovery/invasion of the "New Worlds" by Iberian Europeans.[2] A strong emphasis on the universal salvific will of God led Catholic theologians to elaborate a doctrine that ultimately altered Catholicism's understanding of non-Christian religions.[3] The article suggests that the predominant Catholic view of non-Christian religions has been shaped by a specific theological vision that was raised in sixteenth century Southern Europe. In order to sustain its points, the article offers some examples from the history of the Roman Catholic Church in India. Similar to other topics of world history, this one is also bound to contain an approximate degree of accuracy.[4]

Introduction

On September 5, 2000, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the Vatican's chief doctrinal officer, now Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, and his Secretary, Archbishop Tarcisio Bertone, then Cardinal Secretary of State, presented a major document emphatically denying that other world religions can offer salvation independent of Christianity and insisting that making converts to Catholicism remains an ―urgent duty." The document, which, according to Bertone, touches core matters of the faith and therefore must be considered ―definitive and irrevocable" in terms of theology of religions, seemed to be written in response to the historically recent notion that dialogue with members of non-Christian religions means to avoid any attempts to convert them.[5] The new document, titled *Dominus Iesus*, or ―The Lord Jesus," firmly rejected this interpretation of dialogue, and insisted that non-Christian religions are in a ―gravely deficient situation" in comparison to Christians, who alone ―have the fullness of the means of salvation." (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2000, Chapter VI). The document focused primarily on Asia and Catholic encounters with Asian religions. *Dominus Iesus* stated that

> *Equality*, which is a presupposition of inter-religious dialogue, refers to the equal personal dignity of the parties in dialogue, not to doctrinal content, nor even less to the position of Jesus Christ—who is God himself made man—in relation to the founders of the other religions. Indeed, the Church, guided by charity and respect for freedom,[6] must be primarily committed to proclaiming to all people the truth definitively revealed by the Lord, and to announcing the necessity of conversion to Jesus Christ and of adherence to the Church through Baptism and the other sacraments, in order to participate fully in communion with God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Thus, the certainty of the universal salvific will of God does not diminish, but rather increases the duty and urgency of the proclamation of salvation and of conversion to the Lord Jesus Christ (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2000, Chapter VI).

While ―equality" refers to the equal personal dignity of the parties in dialogue, the declaration asserted the superiority of Christian doctrinal content and, ultimately, of Christian faith. The declaration triggered an earthquake of response despite the claims of Church officials that the document contained ―nothing new." They were right. Ratzinger (and Pope John Paul II) had previously expressed concern about the tendency of Asian religions to regard God as infinite and any particular revelation of God as incomplete. It seems he was propelled in part by what he considered ―a worrisome influence" of ―the negative theology of Asia" in the West, where ―negative theology" is a technical term for ―describing God (the Absolute) by negation."[7] For much of Catholic history, popes and theologians have held that there was no possibility of salvation outside the church. This position was articulated in the third and fourth centuries by such Church Fathers as Origen and St. Cyprian of Carthage, and formally declared by the fourth Lateran Council in 1215 and by Pope Boniface VIII in *Unum Sanctum* in 1302. However, it was only with the beginning of globalization that this position was specifically applied to Asian religions, and Catholicism came to understand the great religious systems in Asia as doctrinally inferior.

Two Concepts of Globalization

Traditionally, globalization is linked with Modernity. For the sake of this article, Modernity is defined as a specifically European project: emancipation, a Kantian *Ausgang*, or ―way out," from immaturity by means of reason, understood as a critical process that affords humanity the possibility of new achievement (Kant, 1997, p. 83).[8] The temporal and spatial dimensions of this phenomenon were described by Hegel and commented on by Jürgen Habermas in his classic work on modernity. Habermas' narrative, unanimously accepted by contemporary European tradition, posits, ―The key historical events for the creation of the principle of [modern] subjectivity are the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and the French Revolution" (Habermas, 1988, p. 27). This sequence of events in Europe not only represents the starting point of Modernity, they also explain its later development, that is, the diffusion of its project on a global scale. Modernity cast itself as a superior, reason-based civilization, which produces what Max Weber famously called the ―disenchantment of the world," making modern rationality universal and the improvement of the most barbaric, primitive, coarse people a moral obligation.[9] Here is the point of conjunction between the abstract universality of Modernity and the European concrete world hegemony (colonialism).[10] Not surprisingly, globalization acted as a historical convergence of intellectual emancipation and religious expansionism, as Christianity has been intrinsically expansionist from the beginning, commissioning disciples to spread the good news and claiming to have received a revelation that was of universal significance for mankind (Neill, 1986, p. 14). The bottom line is that colonialism and proselytism sustained each other in the emancipating project of Western civilization expansion.

There are a few implications of this connection between globalization (a social science narrative) and Modernity (a philosophical narrative). The most unfortunate of them is that it places Northern Europe as the ―center" of the narrative.[11] The emergence of Protestantism and the sudden ―centrality" of the Atlantic, allowed Nordic-Germanic Europe to become intellectually and economically independent—political independence would come at Westphalia in1648—from Mediterranean Rome. In other words, in a very short period of time (1492-1517), the major events of the discovery of America and the Protestant separation of the Nordic Germanic people from Roman-Mediterranean Christianity freed Nordic Europe from having to depend on the Mediterranean and Rome. This double severance with the Mediterranean world and the Medieval Church is at the foundation of what became modern Europe and its expansion. What came later is quite well known. Galileo (condemned in 1616), Francis Bacon (*Novum Organum*, 1620), and Descartes (*Discourse on Method*, 1636) laid the foundation of the cosmological revolution and the principle of modern subjectivity, while the mercantilist Reformed expansion of Dutch early capitalism was fueled by the new scientific, philosophical, and theological paradigm of Descartes and Spinoza. ―Modernity, as a new paradigm of daily life and of historical, religious, and scientific understanding, emerged at the end of the 15th century in connection with control over the Atlantic," that is, in connection with globalization" (Dussell, 2000, p. 472).

Globalization, and what became modern Europe, lay beyond Southern-Mediterranean Europe and Catholicism's horizon, not because their contributions to globalization are not recognized (of course, Holland, England and France replaced Spain and Portugal as the hegemonic global powers, and the Society of Jesus was at the forefront of Christian expansion in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) but because they belonged—at least in this

perspective—to a pre-modern stage of globalization. The Catholic Church, situated to the South of the continent, was involved in the ~~"C~~atholic Reformation," the reaction of Roman-Mediterranean Christianity to Protestantism, thereby initiating the appearance of ~~"C~~atholicism," and was shutting itself into an institutional and doctrinal fortress, capable of putting up a vigorous, stubborn, and indefectible resistance to all assaults from Modernity. The Catholic Church of Rome was simply too obscurantist to be considered an active part of modern globalization. Modern globalization is presumed to be characterized by individualization, rationalization, and capitalism. While the Atlantic circuit replaced the Mediterranean, subjectivity was taking the place of natural law, the modern *ego cogito* of the abstract logics of Scholasticism, and capitalism of mercantilism. The conquistadores and the historical experience of Cortés (who conquered and took control of the Aztec kingdom), Alvarado (who did the same in Central America), and Pissarro (who conquered the Inca empire), with their irrational behavior and violent praxis and their undisciplined hungriness for conquest and warrior mentality, seemed to have been animated by a senseless passion for destruction and were simply incompatible with Modernity, as was the Inquisition mindset of friars and priests, which landed with them on the sandy beaches in America and Asia. The severance of globalization from the pre-modern South of Europe ultimately purges the former from the irrationality and violence of the latter. This is a narrative of globalization that denies its violent character. In other words, beginning in the fifteen century, Rome and Latin Europe, which, since 1492, had occupied the center of European history, defining other European cultures as peripheral, itself became peripheral to Northern Europe. For the first time in European history, Rome, together with the rest of Catholic Europe, Spain, and Portugal, was left to the side, as was Catholicism, which, in the traditional narrative, had nothing to do with Modernity but was rather concerned with the survival of the Middle Ages. Latin Europe of the fioncerne century, besieged by the Muslim world in the East and surpassed by Protestant Europe in the North, amounted to nothing more than a peripheral, secondary cultural and geographical area situated in the declining, impoverished Southwestern part of the European Continent, which had ceased to be the ~~"c~~enter" of history. This is the fiad concept of globalization.

The second concept links globalization with Catholic theology (a theological narrative). For the sake of this article, ~~"C~~atholic theology" is the new relationship between nature and grace (or between ~~"n~~atural" and ~~"s~~upernatural") that was elaborated by the Church of Rome during the Iberian globalization in the 16th century.[12] At the center of this theology, there was no longer a ~~"M~~editerranean" dispute about the ontological status of the ~~"S~~aracens" and other ~~"b~~arbarians," but rather of the ~~"I~~ndians," the habitants of the ~~"N~~ew Worlds." The superiority of the Catholic faith on non-Christian religions was thus set up theologically and justified by the very fact that the ~~"c~~onquest," which in the eyes of Ginés de Sepúlveda (1489 – 1573), a Spanish theologian, constituted necessary ~~"v~~iolence" that needed to be exercised in order to convert the pagans, because if they were converted, there would no longer be any cause for just war:

> When the pagans are no more than pagans . . . there is no just cause to punish them, nor to attack them with arms: such that, if some cultured, civilized, and humane people are found in the New World, that do not adore idols, but instead the true God . . . war would be unlawful (De Sepúlveda, 1967, p. 85).

In other words, while conversion hung on the Spaniards' and Portuguese' weapons, conquest was justified by a divine (papal) command. Another point of this second concept of globalization is that globalization is not a simple one-way process, i.e., an expanding enterprise from Europe to the other continents. On the contrary, it takes into account the consequences of its own

actions, that is, the reaction of Catholic theology to its encounters with non-Christian religions in Asia and the Americas. From this perspective, globalization is a back-loop process, a planetary phenomenon, to which the ―pagan barbarians" have contributed with their feedback that ultimately altered the Catholic consciousness.

The scholars in the sixteenth century who studied the idea of ―order"—or relation—according to St. Thomas Aquinas' thought noted the twofold character of it: the relationship of creatures with God and with themselves. Aquinas often explicitly asserts this structural duplicity of order (*duplex ordo*). The problem is specified as that of the relationship between the two orders, which is a relationship of similarity without symmetry between immanence and transcendence: the relationship among things is nothing other than the expression of their relationship with the divine end.

> The only content of the transcendent order is the immanent order, but the meaning of the immanent order is nothing other than the relation with the transcendent order . . . . The perfect theocentric edifice of medieval ontology is based on this circle and has no consistency outside of it. The Christian God is this circle, in which the two orders continuously penetrate each other (Agamben, 2011, p. 87).

Aquinas did not see immanence and transcendence as two separated orders; they were meant to be seen in dynamic relationship. He viewed the severance of human nature from the supernatural (or the immanent from the transcendent) as a disorder. However, in the 16th century, Dominican Cardinal Cajetan proposed a different *duplex ordo* in which the hypothetical state of pure nature would have its own natural end, distinct from human being's supernatural end. The natural human state was good, but inadequate for achieving union with God and final happiness. The supernatural gift of grace needed to be added to this. Only when supernatural principles are added to nature does the vision of God become desirable and connatural to human being.

This intervention Cajetan made on Catholic theology seems nothing more than a theoretical detail. However, the suggestion offered by Cajetan—the relationship between nature and grace is severed—turned out to be so basic that the whole theology of religions was affected by it. In fact, insisting on a discontinuity between the two orders, the natural and the supernatural, Cajetan not only preserved God's privilege and liberty in the matter of salvation but also made the action of grace extrinsic to the operations of the human nature. Embracing Cajetan's analysis of nature of grace, Catholicism gradually built a remarkable distinction in its relationship with non-Christian religions: they are nothing more than ―natural religions." Relegated to the status of natural religions, it seemed possible that such religions were deprived of all their secrets, as there would be no mysteries left to seek. By arguing that the natural and the supernatural are severed, Cajetan not only placed non-Christian religions in the position of being in a mere state of nature but also laid the foundations for the notion of a de-spiritualized, de-divinized, non-Christian world in which religious intolerance and physical domination could be at home. In this second concept of globalization, it is not the abstract universality of reason that matters, but the concrete reality of the discoveries of the fifteenth century that quite immediately turned themselves into the ―invasion" of the Americas and Asia by the Iberian nations, thereby placing the Church of Rome (soon to rebrand herself as the Roman Catholic Church after the rise of Reformation) for the first time in history at the practical ―center" of the world system. The management of this ―centrality" generates the new Catholic theology of religions in Asia and the Americas. It is not the superiority of European ―reason" that plays a major role in this concept of globalization, but the superiority of the Catholic faith. The

superiority of the Catholic faith emerged in the sixteenth century in connection with the victory over the Turks in the Mediterranean Sea and the control over the indigenous populations of the Americas and Asia. In other words, the experience of the conquest is crucial to the constitution of the superiority of the Catholic faith.

It is possible to follow the logic of the *duplex ordo* in terms of the historical climate in which it developed. From the emergence of the Christian era, up to the fourth Lateran Council (1215), the Latin Church of Rome (in increasing religious antagonism with the Greek Church of Constantinople) had been considered the ―center" of the Latin-Germanic Europe. This ―center," which was located in Rome, was in political competition with the Germanic Empire and, thanks to Thomas Aquinas and Scholasticism, in intellectual dialogue with Islam. The Crusades can be seen as the first attempt by Europeans—as a military as well as a religious force—to expand beyond Europe. They failed, and Europeans remained in fiery rivalry with the Turkish and Muslim world, which extended its geopolitical domination from the Mediterranean Sea to the India Ocean. With the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453, the safe land passage, the so-called ―Silk Road" to Asia, which was the trade route for valuable goods such as silk, spices, and opiates, became much more difficult and dangerous for Europeans to traverse. Contemporarily, there was a reversal of fortune. Europe might have been a secondary power with regard to the army and centralized bureaucracy of the Ottoman Empire—which took Constantinople and would later threaten the borders of Vienna (1529)—but it was nevertheless able to expel the Muslims from the Iberian peninsula in 1492, turn back the Ottoman expansion from the gates of Vienna, and block the Turks at Malta (1565) and Lepanto (1571) in their attempt to take control of the Mediterranean Sea and invade Europe from the South. A fundamental role in all these events was played by the Iberian Empires. While the fortuitous choice of taking the Atlantic Ocean to reach India produced the discovery of Americas under the auspices of the monarchs of Spain, the obsession of King John II of Portugal to reach Asia by sailing around Africa pushed Portuguese navigators to their limits and ultimately led to the re-discovery of a continent in the orient. In a relatively short period of time, Bartolomeu Dias discovered and passed the Cape of Good Hope (1488), and Christopher Columbus landed in Americas (1492). This was the beginning of globalization. Habsburg Spain was the first global power, Charles V's ―empire on which the sun never sets," with the silver mines of Potosí and Zacatecas (discovered in 1545–46) that allowed the Spaniards to accumulate sufficient monetary wealth to rebuild their fleet after the naval battle at Djerba (1560) and defeat the Turks at Lepanto in 1571.[13]

The spirit of the Holy War against Islam, a mixture of conquest and conversion, was absorbed in the Iberian conscience since the eighth century, and such notion remained in the subconscious minds of the Iberian people for seven centuries, particularly during the long and brutal *Reconquista* (Reconquest) from 722 to 1492, and finally showed itself again in the defeat of the Turks in the Mediterranean Sea and the conquest of Asia and the Americas. Quite inevitably, what became the first great missionary expansion of Mediterranean Christianity after the definitive defeat of paganism in Europe (1386), was associated with the concrete praxis of dominance, massacres, and forced conversion.[14]

> From the world of anti-Islamic Spain and Portugal, the expansion of Christendom is seen as a violent, armed, and warlike necessity. A praxis of total domination is justified by means of a Catholic faith that legitimates the praxis of ―I conquer" (Dussell, 1991, p. 441).

The fundamental question to Catholicism of what makes Christian faith superior to the non-Christian faiths was resolved concretely through domination, imposed as the nature of things, and justified theologically. Once the justification of Catholic expansion was proven to be a salvific task, converting those living in paganism, the rest—armed conquest, brutality, forced conversion, confiscation, broken treaties and massacres, tortures and Inquisition, including the reduction of the great Asian religious systems to the status of mere ―natural religions"—became admissible.[15]

In conclusion, while the first concept of globalization portrays Modernity as exclusively Northern European and Protestant and pursues a construction of the ‗South'' of Europe, which is relegated to the darkness of Middle Ages, the second positions both Iberian Empires and Catholicism at the very center of world history. Moreover, while the traditional occlusion of the event of globalization presents the explanation of the Council of Trent simply as a reaction to the Reformation, the development of the new Catholic theology can be better understood as a new self-understanding of the Catholic Church in the context of Iberian globalization. The new Catholic theology manifested itself at Tordesillas and Trent.

Globalization and Catholic Theology

Conversion and Assimilation

At Tordesillas (7 June 1494), the *Papal Line of Demarcation* (even though the treaty was negotiated without consulting the pope) divided the newly discovered lands outside Europe between Portugal and Spain and provided the Church of Rome the hope of returning to the imperial role it had lost in the late Middle Age. The imperial role is the political task of safeguarding the unity of society. From the time of Constantine, the popes have been assigning themselves ―this primordial political mission of being the world's peacemakers" (Comblin, 2005, p. 103). The mirage of the return to the imperial role and the concrete weakness of the Church of Rome, which needed Iberian support in Italy and the rest of Europe, motivated the pope to assign to loyal monarchs the license to spread Christianity. Under the *patronato* system, in fact, the pope had charged Spanish and Portuguese monarchs with the mission of bringing Christianity to the new colonies. In turn, the monarchs entrusted the mission to the regular clergy.[16] In practice and without direct interference from the Vatican, state authorities controlled all clerical appointments and the management of Church revenues in the new colonies, thereby creating the characteristic and constant intermingling of evangelism and imperialism in the Iberian empires.

The alignment between the Iberian empires and the Vatican maturated in a specific spirit of the Crusade. The war against Islam, specifically represented by the fall of Constantinople and the Iberian Reconquest, together with the constant threat from the sea (the fall of Rhodes in 1521) and land (the fall of Belgrade in the same year), helped to maintain the Crusade, or religious war, as a constituent character of Latin Christianity.[17] The crusading attitude penetrated deeply into the Christian consciousness of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The crusading mentality became so embedded in Latin Christianity that the notion of religious war was applied also to other peoples, religions, and even other Christianities, especially those in the new colonies. For example, the images of the Virgin Mary were associated with the soldiers, and the cross associated with the military symbols, as ―they [the soldiers] do not travel anywhere without priests" (Firth, 1976, p. 51). Latin Christianity appeared to the new colonies not to represent a

message of peace or of godliness but a vehicle of violence. The conquest of Western India by the Portuguese empire was inspired by the crusading spirit, leading to the destruction of mosques and Hindu temples, and forced conversion of the natives for the ~~–s~~ake of the true God." The crusading mentality inspired the policy of *rigor de misericordia* (rigor of mercy) and was instrumental in the enslavement of the natives and other forms of oppression.[18] In 1560, the Inquisition was officially set up in India (Priolkar, 1961, pp. 22-3). The glorious churches of the patristic period also became a target of the crusading spirit. Syrian Christianity, for instance, remained alive during the colonial period in India, although it was reduced to the state of irrelevance. The Synod of Diamper in 1599 brought the whole Indian Christianity fully into the Latin Rite of the Catholic Church (Kuriakose, 1982, pp. 39-43). Consequently, Syrian Christians remained in a state of inferiority, controlled by the center of Latin Christianity for centuries, and unable to safeguard their own identity or play a major part in the most recent development of Latin Christianity. In general, the Southern European invaders promoted a politics of annihilation (in the Americas) and control (in Asia) of the local societies and forced conversion. Thus, the colonial civilization was born, which the Church of Rome adopted and promoted.

Latin Christianity had been European for a thousand years, subsequently becoming global.[19] The first consequence for the Latin Church of the Iberian invasion of non European continents was the re-launch of the missionary spirit of the Early Middle Ages. The Church of Rome adopted and renewed the traditional missionary strategy it had applied after the fall of the Roman Empire, which brought into the religion the people of the ~~–b~~arbarian kingdoms." The strategy consisted of two methods, often used together. The first was to convert the peoples' chiefs. The Church ensured that the chiefs would force all their subjects to adopt Christianity as their religion.[20] In the case of India and other colonies, this enforcement was not difficult to obtain because the chiefs of these people, the European invaders, practiced the same religion. In the early years, most mission work was undertaken by the religious orders. Over time, it was intended that a normal church structure would be established in the mission areas. The friars (Franciscans and Dominicans above all) succeeded in creating local centers of worship adapted to the local culture. They promoted Christian communities where indigenes could play an active role and where they were treated with respect and protected from violence and spoliation. In this context, indigenous populations maintained their identity. The friars, because of their ideal of brotherhood, had the chance to connect with the local people and helped them to learn how to preach and how to worship. However, because of the constraints of the *padronato* and the relative dependence of the pope of Rome on the Iberian monarchs in Europe, the friars lost their momentum and were confined to their convents, where they become indistinguishable from the clergy, leading to the loss of their originality. While it sometimes raised its voice to denounce violence and injustice, the Church of Rome never put at risk the alliance between the clergy and the monarchs, which was forged in Europe and maintained everywhere throughout the colonies.

The *patronato* became a source of conflict within the Latin Church, receiving its source of authority from the Iberian monarchs, who, by the sixteenth century, had acquired both political and religious ascendency in the colonies (Fernando and Gispert-Sauch, 2005, pp. 124-6). The Vatican reacted to the separated structure of governance of the *patronato* by encouraging the development of the Society of Jesus, whose allegiance lay with the hierarchy of their Order. Often referred to as the Jesuits, they were directly responsible to the pope and renewed an old form of mission called inculturation, the second method of the traditional missionary strategy.[21] The original model of inculturation was proposed by Gregory I to Augustine and his monks, who were sent to England to the replace pagan divinities with saints,

so that the converted peoples would continue to practice their old pagan cults with a Christian flavor:

> We must love those whom we seek to save—but we must love Christ more; we must love them because we love Christ, because he loves them, because he gave himself for them. We must strive to win souls, not for ourselves—but for Christ. It is not enough to get people to love us; we must get them to love our Savior, to trust in him, and to commit their lives to him. We must hide ourselves away out of sight. He who is thinking of his own honor as he engages in any Christian service, is not a vessel ready to be used by Christ. We need to take care that no shadows of ourselves, of our pride, our ambition, our self-seeking, fall upon our work for Christ (Bede, 1969, Book I, Chapter 27).[22]

The Jesuits' model assumed the principle that missionaries ~~"m~~must strive to win souls" over rather than constrain or coerce individuals into action. The Jesuits also believe that they ~~"m~~must hide themselves away out of sight" in order to promote the cultural adaptation of the gospel, in which the Christianization of the culture of those to be converted could be substituted by the core of the Christian doctrine (which remained constant), eventually becoming expressed through the local cultures. Jesuit missionaries were often the only force standing in favor of the local people. For this reason, they became controversial in Europe, especially in Spain and Portugal, where they were seen as interfering with the proper colonial enterprises of the royal governments.

In India, Francis Xavier (1506 – 1552) would go about the streets of Goa, the capital of the Portuguese possessions in India, and

> …through all the villages of the coats, calling around me by the sound of a bell as many as I could, children and men. I assembled them twice a day and taught the Christian doctrine: and thus, in a space of a month, the children had it well by heart (Ogilvie, 1915, pp. 437-40).[23]

Nevertheless, he considered himself an insider, constantly maintaining an epistolary dialogue with the king of Portugal, and insisted that the Jesuits give no offense in their dealings with the secular clergy so that work could continue in cooperation with the Portuguese civil authorities (A Son of Francis Xavier, 1878, pp. 7-16).[24] Roberto de Nobili (1577 – 1656) introduced an even more radical form of assimilation, adopting many local customs of India and making some literary attempts to present Christian theology in a form which would be intelligible to the Brahmans of Madurai. He received heated criticisms before being partially approved by Pope Gregory XV (1623).[25] The same pope founded, in 1622, the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide), or simply *Propaganda Fide*. Officially established to arrange missionary work on behalf of the various religious institutions, it soon became the organizational arm of the Church of Rome to secure direct control over the regulation of Catholic ecclesiastical affairs in non-Catholic countries. The process began with the formation of special jurisdictions, known as apostolic prefectures and apostolic vicariates, and eventually graduating to regular diocesan status with the appointment of a local bishop. Within these special jurisdictions, the Vatican sought to establish its autonomy in relation to the religious orders and the *patronato*. Worship and pastoral activities were progressively transferred from the Jesuits' schools and communities to an independent parish church, without spoiling good relations between the Church of Rome and the Iberian monarchs. The establishment of the special jurisdiction created a place where the administrative and pastoral power of the priest is reestablished and meets the customs of non-Christian native. The special jurisdiction is the

foundation of the global Latin Church. It resolved one crisis and provoked another, the generation of a westernized, centralized Church of Rome, (i.e., an un-Indian Church of India). In 1661, a Carmelite missionary, Father Joseph of St. Mary, better known as Joseph Sebastiani, was sent to India with the title of Vicar Apostolic and Administrator in Malabar. He was made a bishop in India *in secret*; he did not have the full authority of a bishop (at least formally) and lay under the direct control of the Vatican but apart from the diocesan organization in place. The intention was to remove the local Christians from Jesuit control and without legal infringement of the Portuguese *patronato*, since he was not formally appointed to an Indian see.[26] The regular clergy and the Curia at the Vatican progressively took control of the Catholics in India and elsewhere, encouraging popular religiosity. This religiosity often consisted of performing catechisms and baptisms, often done perhaps without much preparation (Firth, 1976, p. 123). Finally, the suppression of the Society of Jesus in 1773 put an end to this method of accommodation.

At this point, in order to understand the roots of this emancipator, coercive, even violent praxis of conversion, it might be useful to look at the theological vision that underlies such a praxis.

Displacement and Fulfillment

At Trent, the Latin Church of Rome attempted to respond to Martin Luther and the Reformation, while war and threat of war among the European key players, as well as the Ottoman Turks' onslaught against Christian Europe, turned the Council (1545 – 1563) into a perilous enterprise (O'Malley, 2013). After eighteen years, the Council declined to make a pronouncement on war against infidels (although the Battle of Lepanto was only eight years ahead) or reduce the authority of papacy (despite the ~~–s~~pecter of conciliarism," which was still on the pope's mind). More important, the Council pursued its agenda of reforming the Church while simultaneously asserting Catholic doctrine. At Trent, the Latin Church faced the long awaited and dreaded crisis between clergy and laity. Trent consolidated the structures so heavily criticized earlier and increased the power of the clergy upon the laity and, within the clergy, the power of the pope and the Roman Curia upon the bishops.[27] The pope and the Curia concentrated all the powers of the Church of Rome. Lay people were ignored, and the schism was consummated with the Protestants being treated as heretics and fought with a crusading spirit. The Roman Church made some minimal concessions to internal reformers, but, as Jean-Baptiste Henri-Dominique Lacordaire said three centuries later, *mole sua stat*, its power *is* its inertia (Comblin, 2005, p. 105).[28] The Council of Trent also codified Roman Catholic Church doctrine, which would be retained as the basis for their beliefs until the Vatican Council II.[29] Reacting against Luther's assumption that Scholastic appropriation of Aristotle and Plato (Greek metaphysics) had eclipsed the primitive Christian experience, and rejecting his project to reaffirm the primacy of Scripture on philosophy and purge Christian theology from any trace of Aristotelian reason, the Council reaffirmed the possibility of a speculative access to God.[30]

Spanish Scholasticism, the revival of Thomistic philosophy, arose in the sixteenth century, in part, to counter the Protestant Reformation.[31] Catholic theologians resisted what they perceived as the Protestant doctrine of the total corruption of human nature by original sin and naturalization of the sacraments (the latter may be not so much in theory as it is in practice). They sought to protect the supernatural by separating it conceptually from the natural, or, as de Lubac argues, they ~~–s~~ee salvation only in a complete severance between the natural and the

supernatural" (De Lubac, 1950, p. 166). They also manifested a tendency to ~~–s~~upranaturalize" the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, by emphasizing its mystery and incomprehensibility, along with the entire Roman Catholic Church. This super-naturalist Christianity was considered a *societas perfecta*, that is, an institution in possession of permanent, divine truths in its doctrinal and ethical proclamations.[32] The doctrine claimed that the Church is a self-sufficient or autonomous institution that already has the resources and conditions necessary to achieve its goal of the universal salvation of humankind. Once severed from its natural counterpart, the supernatural was treated by Spanish Scholastics more as a philosophical and linguistic analysis, a self-sustainable conceptual frameworks and systematic presentation of Christian truths, rather than harmonizing fields of knowledge. Spanish theologians suggested an ~~–a~~bove the history" perspective and maintained that history is, ultimately, irrelevant. The theological meaning of the Bible and other fundamental texts comes from tradition in the hermeneutical process. It was interested in defining God by abstract concepts, and an abstraction does not need history. Actually, Spanish scholasticism tended to avoid any connection with historical dimensions of the truths and perceived its ahistorical character as a virtue. The revival of systematic essentialism became the main intellectual bastion for sustaining the defensive mood of the institution in pointed opposition to the criticisms of Protestant theology.[33]

Spanish Scholasticism did not emerge only to counter the Protestant Reformation, however, but also to accommodate to the new reality of globalization. In a brilliant description of the historical context in which Spanish (or Second) Scholasticism arose, Dussel remembers that

> Sixteenth century philosophical production in Spain and Portugal was linked on a daily basis to Atlantic events, with the opening of Europe to the world. The Iberian Peninsula was the European territory which most lived the effervescence of the unexpected discoveries. News arrived constantly from the overseas provinces, from Spanish America and the Philippines to Spain; from Brazil, Africa, and Asia to Portugal. Philosophy professors in universities in Salamanca, Valladolid, Coimbra, or Braga—which, since 1581, functioned as a single university system due to the unity of Spain and Portugal—had students who arrived from or set out for those territories, and the subjects related to those worlds were worrying and well-known to them. No European university north of the Pyrenees had such a *global experience*. So-called ~~–S~~econd Scholasticism" was not a simple repetition of what had already been said in the Latin Middle Ages (Dussell, 2008, p. 166).[34]

The Iberian Peninsula was a world in motion, a society in the middle of a dramatic transformation. The discoveries marked the end of an era in economics as well as theology. Great changes were taking place in Iberian Peninsula, wherein Spain and Portugal were emerging as economic powers, and the spirit of the Christendom was giving way to new attitudes that would lead to the age of Catholicism. Scholars were rethinking their connections to ancient traditions and experimenting with new directions. The alignment between Iberian empires and the Church of Rome became evident at Trent. Due to the obstacles set up by Spanish and Portuguese ~~–p~~atronage," no bishop from the colonies went to Trent. However, thanks to the Iberian colonies, Catholicism could consider itself part of the metropolitan ~~–c~~enter." It was not a *peripheral*, *secondary*, and *isolated religion,* ~~–c~~loistered" and ~~–b~~esieged" by the Muslim world (East and South) and the Lutheran Reformation (North), as it was connected with the discoveries and imperial expansion of the Iberian empires in Africa and Asia. The Roman Church had

interacted with the great cultures of the eastern Mediterranean, but now it entered in contact with the weighty elements of the culture, technology, and economics of the ―New World" (Dussell, 2007).[35] This is when the Latin Church was supposed to become the Catholic (Universal) Church of Rome. In such a context, the transcendent character of the Counter Reformation theology not only addressed Luther's de-Hellenization of Christianity, it was also employed in addressing the reality of the encounter with other religions. Catholic theologians found themselves challenged by Luther's attempt to purge Christian thought of its Greek heritage, especially the concept of the cosmos in the question of being. For Luther, redemption sets humans free from the total corruption of human nature (i.e. by original sin); as such, grace exists in radical opposition to fallen creation. On the other hand, Catholic theologians had to adjust to the new reality of continents inhabited by people who, through no fault of their own, had no knowledge of the gospel. The theologians struggled to maintain the Christian teaching concerning the universality of God's saving grace in the work of the Holy Spirit, while reaffirming the uniqueness of the historical Jesus and the Catholic Church as a universal source of salvation. The core question remained for such theologians how to sustain the message of the Catholic Church that in all of their operations and actions human beings are at root animated by their natural desire for intimacy with God if nature is corrupted (as Luther supposed it was) and human beings may be unaware of God (as the people of the ―New Worlds" appeared to be)? Catholic theologians responded to the double challenge defending the traditional doctrine of creation, the cosmology formed from Greek thought, countering the Lutheran attempt to sever faith from creation, and extending it to the ―New Worlds." On the other side, they proceeded to elaborate the doctrine of ―pure nature," a state of nature with no grace, which was severed from a supernatural state; it was a specific vision of theological anthropology that offered a kind of two-story view of the world, with a self-sufficient ―natural" world at the bottom, and a ―supernatural" world at the top.

Catholic theologians in the sixteenth century envisioned a *duplex ordo*, in which the hypothetical state of pure nature would have its own natural end, distinct from man's supernatural end.[36] The Spanish Scholastic separation of nature and grace made the supernatural order extrinsic to the natural order and constructed an autonomous nature fundamentally unrelated to the order of grace. Ultimately, this became a duality of ends: imperfect ―natural beatitude" in the natural order and supernatural beatitude in the supernatural order.[37] Therefore, beatitude is twofold. The first is ―natural," and the second is ―supernatural." The distinction is explained by de Lubac in this way:

> …the first of these two ―beatitudes," which is ―proportionate to our nature," is not a transcendent beatitude, a final or definitive end of the created spirit in a hypothetical world of ―pure nature." Rather, it is an imperfect ―beatitude," terrestrial and temporal, immanent to the world itself (De Lubac, 2008, p. 603).

A fatal consequence of Spanish scholasticism's doctrine to make the life of grace extrinsic to the operations and actions of human nature was the severance of humans from any intimacy with God, giving humans a nature and an end without any reference to God at all. It was a cosmos, in terms of the Greek cosmology, without a divine fullness. It was a cosmos ready to host brutality and despair. Theologian Willie Jennings points out that this crucial element involves a sort of world that is ―terrestrial and temporal, immanent to the world itself."[38] It is a pagan world, separated from the supernatural world and yet imagined by it, that is, there is a top-down way of imagining. It is a world in which there is

> [t]he relationship between merchants, missionaries, and the military as they together map out the new world and determine the value and place of theological

> reflection in relation to that mapping . . . what happens when you cannot locate biblical designations in the new world where they might have been imagined – no Eden, no hell, no Kingdom of this or that King, no burning center to the world, no place where people walk upside down, or backward, and so forth. What does a doctrine of creation signify in such cases? (Rhodes, 2009).

Ultimately, the transcendent character of Spanish Scholasticism produced the annihilation of the theological importance of place, the displacement of native peoples, and the destruction of space as a theological category.[39] Within this paradigm, natives can be relocated to the *encomiendas*, plantations, and reservations. No longer categorized by place, people now carry their identity in their flesh; a flesh which is categorized into ―salvific possibilities" (Jennings, 2010, p. 35). They became bodies to be controlled, educated, and finally ―Christianized." But in becoming Christian, these black, and brown, and yellow bodies remain enslaved, as they cannot trespass the boundary between nature and super-nature—between nature and grace—because natural desire for the supernatural is not innate. The actual desire for a supernatural end does not arise from man's nature, but only when there is an offer of grace.

Another major consequence of the *duplex ordo*, the distinction between natural and supernatural, is that it opened the doors for another, fundamental distinction between Christianity, on the one hand, and all the other religions, on the other. Non-Christian religions (i.e., Buddhism and Hinduism) are ―natural religions," in that they are the product of ordinary human creativity. Non-Christian religious traditions are not sources of salvation in their own right. In contrast, Christianity is a ―supernatural religion," the result not only of human creativity but also of God's special activity within history (Daniélou, 1962). All salvation is in Christ. Moreover, the religious aspirations of all human beings are fulfilled by Christ, the one savior of the whole world. The other religious traditions are related ―in various ways," according to the Roman Catholic Church, to the great mediation of grace, which is Christ and which has been established historically in the Church. Accordingly, the Catholic Church is the only one to possess truth. All the other religions are immature and must be destroyed (or fulfilled).[40]

This argument is put forward masterfully and with great impact for the first time by Ginés de Sepúlveda (1489 – 1573) in the Valladolid debate, beginning in 1550. At the time promoted by Carlos V (1500 - 1558), the doctrine gave an answer to the question of whether the Native Americans were capable of self-governance. Ginés de Sepúlveda writes:

> It will always be just and in conformity with natural law that such [barbaric] peoples be subjected to the empire of princes and nations that are *more cultured and humane*, so that by their virtues and the prudence of their laws, they abandon barbarism and are subdued by a more humane life and the cult of virtue (De Sepùlveda, 1967, p. 85).

Dussel points out that this is a reworking of Aristotle—the Greek philosopher of slavery in the eastern Mediterranean—but one now situated on the horizon of the Atlantic Ocean, which is to say, one with global significance:

> And if they reject such an empire, *it can be imposed on them by way of arms*, and such a war would be just according to the declarations of natural law . . . . In sum: it is just, convenient, and in conformity with natural law that those honorable, intelligent, virtuous, and human men dominate all those who lack these qualities (De Sepúlveda, 1967, p. 87).

Envisioning the separation between the two orders, the natural and the supernatural, Catholic theologians in the sixteenth century could preserve the Patristic synthesis between the Greek and the Hebraic in term of cosmology (i.e. that the world is dependent on something other than itself). This protected the Aristotelian component from the Lutheran program of severance and offered salvific options to non-Christians while protecting God's privilege in the matter of salvation. They also influenced the understanding of the Catholic Church in the colonies, and ultimately gratified her displacing and violent praxis.

Five years before the Valladolid debate, Xavier wrote a letter from Cochin, in which he described his experience in Travancore and the conditions of converts. He wrote:

> When all are baptized, I order the temples of their false gods to be destroyed and all the idols to be broken in pieces. I can't give you an idea of the joy I feel in seeing this done, witnessing the destruction of the idols by the very people who but lately adore them (A Son of Francis Xavier, 1878, pp. 104-6).

Conclusion

The discovery of the "New Worlds" in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries resulted in a collapse of the medieval worldview, which equated the world with Christendom. Catholicism came to understand non-Christian religions (and even non-Catholic religions) as the result of a particular theological vision that emerged with the discovery/invasion of the "New Worlds" by Iberian Europeans. This article provides a synthetic view of the historical and theological components that led Catholicism to develop this specific vision and explains why it rendered the Catholic Church more involved in forging Christian nations rather than encouraging genuine understanding of non-Christian religions. Although the article mentions the way in which Christian cosmology profoundly altered the advent of discovery, it also points out that the predominant Catholic view of non-Christian religions has been shaped by a specific theological vision that was raised in sixteenth century Southern Europe. Christianity became aware of continents inhabited by people who, through no fault of their own, had no knowledge of the gospel. A strong emphasis on the universal salvific will of God led Catholic theologians to elaborate a doctrine of "pure nature," in which is offered for the salvation of people "whose lack of explicit Christian faith was inculpable" an imperfect "beatitude." Ultimately, the doctrine ended up in a kind of two-story view of the world, with a self-sufficient "natural" world at the bottom and an added "supernatural" world at the top.

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[1] The author thanks the editorial staff of *Journal of International and Global Studies* for providing help and guidelines, and three anonymous reviewers for their gracious and precious comments.

[2] Raimundo Panikkar has suggested that the word "Christian" may be the adjective of Christendom (a civilization), or Christianity (a religion). Christendom was the geopolitical unity achieved by Christian faith during the medieval period; Christianity is the sociological terms for the reified form taken by Christian faith under the impact of the western scholarly enlightenment, in order to distinguish Christian faith from other religious traditions. See Panikkar, R. (1993). La Nova Innocència I, Llampecs Blancs, Barcelona: Llar del llibre, 1991, Italian translation *La Nuova Innocenza I. l Lampi Bianchi*. Milano: CENS, translation in English is my own. "New Worlds" is for non-European continents (Africa, Americas, Asia). In this article, I will say "Western Church" for the Church of Rome that rise when the conquest of the Eastern part of Christendom by Islam shift the center of Christianity from east to west and left the Church of Rome with no possible rival within Christianity. I will say "Roman Catholic Church" or "Catholic Church" or "Catholicism" for the Roman-Mediterranean Church that was born after the emergence of Reformation and Iberian globalization. I will say "Latin Church" or "Latin Church of Rome" for the Roman-Latin character of

the Church of Rome that remained intact through centuries. I will say "Vatican" or "Curia" for the governance of Catholicism. Finally, I will say "Church of Rome" or "Roman Church" for the historical continuity of Roman Christianity.

[3] For this article I am greatly indebted to the conceptual frameworks of Enrique Dussel and Willie Jennings. Both authors investigate the same topic, globalization, specifically the first (Iberian) globalization. Both of them offer a reinterpretation of globalization, specially the early globalization in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as a constitutive moment of a reality of ideological repression (Dussel) and disfigured consciousness that still affects our present times, specifically in the area of decolonization (Dussel) and race (Jennings). The authors share a peripheral position, that is, they adopt a perspective from the "periphery" (the reference to 'center', 'periphery' and the 'world system' is employed with a conscious reference to the other work of Dussel, which I will not discuss further in this article): the perspective of the oppressed (invaded, enslaved, colonized, annihilated, ignored, canceled) people of the "New Worlds." Says Jennings: "Christianity, wherever it went in the modern colonies, inverted its sense of hospitality. It claimed to be the host, the owner of the spaces it entered … and yielded a form of religious life that thwarts its deepest instincts of intimacy." See related bibliography in the following notes. As said, my debts to Dussel and Jennings are countless. Like them, in this article I will identify Iberian globalization as an original moment, and I will link it to the reality of theological misconception that still infects interreligious dialogue in the Roman Catholic Church. While I am personally sympathetic with their peripheral position, in this article I will adopt a more traditional, "eentric" perspective, and consider myself an insider in such a reality of theological misconception. I will accept Dussel's basic premises that Modernity is a sub-product of globalization.

[4] In other words, due to word limits and the necessity to focus on the subject matter of this paper, complexity will sometimes be sacrificed for the sake of clarity. This is particularly true in the case of a sort of ambiguity between the general theological topic, the theology of religions, and its actual application to Asian religions. Although true, this ambiguity is only apparent. In fact, historically, the native people of the Americas did not resist Christianity, only the native people of Asia did. Bottom line, although the theology of religions was elaborated to address the relation between Catholicism and all non-Christian religions, it is relevant today only in Asia.

[5] In Catholic theology of religions, the missionary practice that focuses on converting and teaching others is called religious "exclusivism," while the missionary work that rather respects integrity and focuses on dialogue and example is named "inclusivism." Inclusivism intends to correct two component of the exclusivist approach. One is to regard all non-Christian religions as gross superstitions or aimless speculations. In fact, Catholicism recognizes the genuine spiritual worth that is in them. The other one is the superiority of the Christian religion, which "inclusivism" attempts to minimize. The shift of Catholicism from "exclusivism" to "inclusivism" took shape during the first half of the 20th century (see note no. 40) and was formalized at the Vatican Council II in the Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions *Nostra Aetate* proclaimed by His Holiness Pope Paul VI on October 28, 1965. However, in the *Nostra Aetate* and the theological work that precedes it, the superiority of Christian religion is not dismissed, while the document "Dominus Iesus" aims to reaffirm it. This is the theological continuity mentioned in 2000 by Church officials, who point out that the document "Dominus Iesus" contained "nothing new."

[6] Second Vatican Council, Declaration on Religious Freedom *Dignitatis Humanae* on the Right of the Person and of Communities to Social and Civil Freedom in Matters Religious, Promulgated by His Holiness Pope Paul VI on December 7, 1965, page 1.

[7] Negative theology, also known as apophatic theology or *via negative*, is a long-established theological tradition in Christianity. It sustains that God can be better described by way of denial. Sometimes, it has been considered in contrast with positive theology, or cataphatic theology, which assumes that there are ways to express God. In Hinduism, negative theology is often associated to the claim that God is "neti-neti", neither this, nor that, he is beyond forms and names.

[8] Dussel E. (2000). Europe, Modernity, and Eurocentrism, in *Nepantla. Views from South*, translated by Javier Krauel and Virginia C. Tuma, Duke University I (3), 465-478. According to Kant, "Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self imposed immaturity."

[9] Dussel E. (2000). Europe, Modernity, and Eurocentrism, in *Nepantla. Views from South*, translated by Javier Krauel and Virginia C. Tuma, Duke University I (3), 465-478.

[10] This is the traditional narrative of uniqueness and diffusion, the assumption that Modernity was an European intellectually-based phenomenon, which only later became military and technological in character. This traditional narrative has been recently challenged by scholars like Enrique Dussel, who assumes that Modernity was primarily

military and technological in character (colonialism precedes rationalism), and by scholars like Sebastian Conrad, who sustains that Modernity (Enlightenment) was a world-wide phenomenon. See: Conrad, S. (2012). Enlightenment in Global History: A Historiographical Critique, *The American Historical Review*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 117 (4), 999-1027.

[11] Enrique Dussel is an Argentinian-Mexican philosopher who has been engaged for decades in reversing the sequence between globalization and Modernity. While the hegemonic narrative interprets globalization as an extension of Modernity, Dussel sustains the opposite: Modernity is a consequence of globalization. "The invasion of America - wrongly called "discovery"- placed Europe for the first time in history … in the "center." The management of this "centrality" constitutes the phenomenon of modernity." Of course, the traditional narrative does not consider the Iberian globalization as a constitutive factor of Modernity. Modernity is a product of Northern Europe, beginning in Germany (Lutheran Reformation), moving to Holland and England (Enlightenment), and finally to France (Revolution). By establishing the beginning of Modernity in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Dussel consequently speaks of an "Iberian Modernity," centered in Seville, characteristically mercantilist, focused on missionary expansion of Mediterranean Christianity, and intellectually gravitating on what later became the expressed Catholicism of the Council of Trent. Enrique Dussel's basic assumption is that the genealogy of Modernity cannot occlude "the role of Spain and Portugal in the formation of the modern world system from the late fifteenth to the mid-seventeenth centuries." By reversing the sequence between Modernity and globalization, Dussel also changes the character of Modernity itself: "I think" of Descartes … is simply an ontological formulation that has already been anticipated in the historical reality of Cortés … and the other conquistadores." In other words, power precedes reason. It is power, and not reason, that makes Modernity universal. That shift from reason to power also explains the violent, belligerent, sometimes irrational side of both globalization and Modernity. Source: Dussel, E. (1991). 1492, The Discovery of an Invasion, translated by Gary MacEoin, *Cross Currents*, 437-452. Dussel, E. (2008). Anti-Cartesian Meditations: On The Origin of the Philosophical Anti-Discourse of Modernity, translated by George Ciccariello-Maher, *Tabula Rasa* [online]. n.9, 153-198. Dussel, E. (1993). Eurocentrism and Modernity (Introduction to the Frankfurt Lectures), *Boundary 2*, 20 (3), 65–76.

[12] Henri de Lubac famously addresses this new relationship between natural and supernatural in the Catholic theology of the sixteenth century and then links this dualistic theology with the further developments of modern philosophy. See: De Lubac, H. (1946). *Surnaturel: Études historiques*, Paris: Aubier. This work was never translated into English, but a later, expanded version in two volumes appeared in English: *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, trans. Rosemary Sheed, London: Chapman, 1967; and *Augustinianism and Modern Theology* London: Chapman, 1969. The literature on this topic is massive.

[13] As for the siege of Vienna, the connection with Spain is the Archduke of Austria, Ferdinand I of Habsburg, who was the brother of Charles V, king of Spain. The House of Habsburg achieved its pick by the time of Charles V, the "World Emperor," then in 1521 it split into the junior branch of the Austrian Habsburgs (Ferdinand I) and the senior branch of the Spanish Habsburgs (Charles I of Spain).

[14] The re-conquest of the Iberian Peninsula by the Christians after the conquest of the greater part of Christendom by Islam began in northern Spain in 722 with the Christian victory at Covadonga and ended in 1492 with the conquest of the kingdom of Granada. The baptism of Jagiello, king of the Lithuanians, on 15 February 1386 is considered the end of European paganism as an organized body.

[15] The topic was famously addressed at the Great Debate at Valladolid, Spain, after a royal decree was passed to stop all conquests, expeditions, and exploration until a special group of scholars and royal officials could hear a debate about the morality of Spanish colonization. This Great Debate was held in August 1550 in Valladolid, Spain. For five days, Bartolome de Las Casas and Juan Gines de Sepulveda presented their arguments. Dominican Friar de Las Casas argued that the natives were free men in the natural order and deserved the same treatment as others, according to Catholic theology. Opposing him was fellow Dominican de Sepulveda, who insisted that "in order to uproot crimes that offend nature" the Indians should be punished and therefore reducing them to slavery or serfdom was in accordance with Catholic theology and natural law. In the end, the Council of the Indies never declared a winner in the debate. Both Sepulveda and Las Casas claimed victory. The Great Debate is important because marked the first time issues about the rights of native peoples were raised and seriously discussed.

[16] First Spain acquired the *jus patronatus* guaranteeing her full powers in the Canary Islands (1418). Then Portugal obtained from the Church of Rome a papal bull (*Dum Diversas*) to conquer Saracens and pagans and consign them to "perpetual slavery" and possession of the lands conquered from the Saracens in North Africa (1453). The "Catholic monarchs," Fernando and Isabel, obtained the *Bulls Provisionis nostrae* and *Dum ad illam* (1486) for organizing the final crusade against the kingdom of Granada, which gave the Crown all sorts of powers over the churches that would be set up in Arab lands. This is why the conquest of Granada (1492) and the "patronage"

exercised there, was the precursor of the patronage in the Church in America, which Columbus discovered in the same year. Armed with the further *Bulls Inter coetera* and *Eximiae devotionis* (1493), Fernando of Aragón began organizing what was to become known as the ―patronage" system in the colonies, which gave him the right to ―present" bishops, set the boundaries of dioceses and parishes, send out religious and missionaries, receive Church tithes, supervise synods and councils, delegate these powers to the civil authorities, and so on. King John II of Portugal acted in the same way in Portuguese colonies. See: Dussel, E. (1972). The Appointment of Bishops in the First Century of ―Patronage" in Latin America (1504-1620), translated by Paul Burn, in *Concilium*, no. 773, 113-121.

[17] The spirit of the Crusaders became predominant in Christianity in the 11th century and was displayed not only in the Iberian peninsula and not only against the Muslims. Holy Wars were launched for the suppression of Christian heretics in France and pagans in the Northern Europe (i.e, in Finland in 1155 and in Prussia in 1198-9). Although not technically a Crusader, the date of birth of the practice of conquest and conversion can be identified in the massacre of Verden (782), when in a single day Charlemagne put to death 4,500 Saxons that refused to convert to Christianity. A new phase in Christian-Islam relationship started in May 1291, when the Crusaders lost their last major foothold on the shores of Palestine at the fall of Acre.

[18] The rigor of mercy can be described as follows: ―close adherence to Roman Christianity as found in the West, accompanied, unfortunately, by the threat or use of the force of the Portuguese crown." Boyd, R. (1975). *An Introduction to Indian Christian Theology*. Delhi: ISPCK, 11. See also: Fernando, L. and Gispert-Sauch, G. (2005). *Christianity in India. Two Thousand Years of Faith*. Delhi: Penguin Book, 116-7.

[19] Probably another way to explain the same point is the following: the Renaissance in Rome (the fall of Constantinople indirectly helped fuel the Italian Renaissance. In fact, during the fall of Constantinople, several Greek and non-Greek intellectuals fled the city before and after the siege, migrating particularly to Italy), the discovery of the passage to Asia through Cape Horn by Portuguese navigators, and the discovery of the Americas by an Spanish expedition, placed Southern Europe at the center of the incoming globalization.

[20] This is only partially accurate. Although historians often report the mass baptism of Clovis and his Franks in 496, the conversion of the kingdom of Armenia is the first clear case known to us in which the conversion of a king – Tiridates - was the first step in the conversion of the whole country. Tiridates established Christianity as the religion of his state (301 AC), the aristocracy had to accommodate, and then the common people followed.

[21] Inculturation refers to the adaptation of the way Church teachings are presented to non-Christian cultures, and to the influence of those cultures on the evolution of these teachings. Usually it represents a double movement, in which the acculturation of the Christian message into another culture is matched by the transformation from within of the culture itself.

[22] Pope St. Gregory the Great in a letter to St. Augustine as quoted in the *Historia* of St. Bede, which form the foundation of Bede's narrative. Words are quoted verbatim forming a unique historical record of the pastoral directives Pope St. Gregory sends back in answer to questions St. Augustine has about specific problems faced on the Mission to the Anglo-Saxons. St. Gregory gives a blueprint for what will later be called ‗inculturation'

[23] Francis Xavier's letter to the Society of Jesus (1543). In this letter, written from Cochin and dated January 20, 1548, Xavier asks the king to instruct the Portuguese officials in India to assume direct responsibility for support the work of the missions.

[24] Francis Xavier's letter to the King of Portugal (1548). This letter, describing his work on the Fishery Coast, was written the year after his arrival in India and was written from Cochin. On another note, Xavier famously asked the king of Portugal to establish the Inquisition in Goa (India). See: Francis Xavier's letter to King Joao III (1545). Source: Silva Rego, Documentacao pata a Historia das Missoes do Padronado Portugues do Oriente, Vol III, 351. Cited in Priolkar, *The Goa Inquisition*, 23-4.

[25] A balanced assessment of De Nobili's pioneering form of assimilation can be found in: Boyd, *An Introduction to Indian Christian Theology*, 11-14.

[26] A ‗see' is the authority, jurisdiction, and governmental functions associated with the office of bishop. The conquest of Portuguese territories in Malabar and especially of Cochin in 1663 by the Dutch and the consequent expulsion of Portuguese troops from the territories occupied by the Dutch, dissolved the institution of *patronato* and change the scope of *Propaganda Fide*: how to fostering the spread of Catholicism in an era in which the expansion of colonial administrations was coming to be largely in Dutch and English hands, both Protestant countries intent on spreading these religious doctrines.

[27] The Roman Curia is the administrative apparatus of the Vatican and the central governing body of the entire Catholic Church, together with the pope.

[28] The Latin quote is included only in the Italian version of the article. The translation from Latin is mine own.

[29] Despite the popular claim that the Catholic Church remained intact and uncontaminated by the influences of Modernity (Enlightenment, liberalism, socialism, and so on), some scholars maintain that since the sixteenth century Scholasticism has been corrupted in order to accommodate Descartes and Kant. Etienne Gilson (1884-1978) described the work of Counter Reformation scholastic Cajetan (1469-1534), a remarkable example of a *corruptorium Thomae.* Gilson, E. (1988). *Letters to Henri de Lubac*. San Francisco: Ignatius, 80. Important figures of Catholic theology, including Joseph Ratzinger, believe that Modernity is not an entirely new culture but it is entangled with the Christian heritage. Two Catholic theological giants of the twentieth century clearly expressed this opinion. Hans Urs Von Balthasar sustains that the Spanish Jesuit Francisco Suarez (1548-1617), not Descartes, laid the foundations for the metaphysics of modernity. Henri de Lubac points out that the conception of the autonomous individual was actually invented by Catholic theologians. In other words, Catholicism in the sixteenth century, is intrinsically (even if not consciously) "modern." Source: Von Balthasar, H.U. (1991). *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics V: The Realm of Metaphysics in the Modern Age*. Edimburgh: T&T Clark, 25; De Lubac, H. (1946). *Surnaturel: Études historiques.* Paris: Aubier. This work was never translated into English, but a later, expanded version in two volumes appeared in English: *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, trans. Rosemary Sheed, London: Chapman, 1967; and *Augustinianism and Modern Theology* London: Chapman, 1969.

[30] It is curious that, while Luther attempted to purge Christian theology from Greek philosophy, the Roman Church was trying to incorporate Greek philosophy into Western Europe (Renaissance).

[31] Spanish (or Second) Scholasticism was a theological movement issued from a reaction against the Reformation and to accommodate to the new reality of globalization. It was fostered by the deliberations of the Council of Trent (1563), and it drew its inspiration from the theology of St. Thomas Aquinas, who was declared doctor of the Church by Pope Pius V in 1567. Spanish Scholasticism *interpreted* Aquinas in the light of another age, and therefore must be considered an original and autonomous movement of thought. With its centre in Spain and Portugal, this theological movement extended into Italy. Second Scholasticism has recently been the focus of an increasing interest of scholarship. I am well aware that the theology of postmedieval scholasticism commonly denominated as Second Scholasticism was in reality a "variety" of Scholasticism. See: Heider, D. (2012). The Variety of Second Scholasticism: Introduction, *The Modern Schoolman*, Special Issue: The Variety of Second Scholasticism, 89 (1-2), 3-7. According to Henri de Lubac, Spanish Scholasticism invented a grace/nature dualism in Catholic theology to protect nature from Reformation and grace against Enlightenment humanism, and it is responsible for the genesis of deism and atheism. See: de Lubac, *Surnaturel: Études historiques*. I will follow here the line of thought of de Lubac, Rahner, Lonegan, and Balthasar, who point out that Spanish version of Scholasticism is a corruption of the original one.

[32] The idea of the *societas perfecta* was already present in Scholasticism. Thomas Aquinas – in reference to Aristotle mentions the State ("civitas") as a perfect community ("Communitas perfecta").

[33] Of course, the traditional narrative considers the renewal of Scholasticism part of the Counter Reformation, the Catholic response to Protestant Reformation. The Spanish Scholasticism is sometimes associated with Christendom (see note n. 2) and accused to be the source of the "fortress mentality" embraced by the Catholic Church at the Council of Trent and proof against the assaults of modernity. See for example Comblin, *Experiences of Crisis in the History of Christianity*, 105.

[34] Another good source of information on the economic side of the Iberian globalization in: Grice-Hutchinson, M. (2009). *The School of Salamanca, Readings in Spanish Monetary Theory, 1544-1605*. Oxford, Clarendon University Press.

[35] "New World" means the non-European continents (Africa, Americas, Asia).

[36] Traditionally Christian theology recognizes a "twofold gift" from God of "the first gift of creation and the second, wholly distinct, wholly super-eminent gift—the ontological call to deification which will make of man, if he responds to it, a "new creature.'" The doctrine of a "twofold gift" from God introduces an abiding distinction between nature and grace and consequently the question that concerns the relationship between these two gifts in the concrete order—more technically, the debate concerns the status of what Thomas Aquinas calls the "natural desire for the vision of God. Beginning with the Dominican theologian Cajetan (1469-1534), Spanish Scholasticism introduced a new interpretation of the relation between these two gifts. Born in Spain in 1469 under the name Jaime de Vio, Cajetan was appointed master-general of the Dominican order in 1507 and took part of most in most the central ecclesiastical events of his day. He commissioned the first monks to evangelize the newly discovered Americas, took a prominent place in the events of the fifth Lateran council defending Papal claims against

concilliarism, engaged in theological disputation with Martin Luther at the dawn of the reformation controversy, and was commissioned with the task of studying the annulment request of King Henry VIII of England. Cajetan accepted the premises that human nature desires an ultimate end that is beyond human nature's innate ability to obtain came into conflict with an axiom (derived from a certain reading of Aristotle) that "*naturale desiderium non se extendit ultra naturae facultatem*"(natural desire does not extend beyond the capacity of nature). Cajetan concluded that there is a natural desire for the vision of God only insofar as grace has elevated the desire and finality of nature. Source: Healy, N.J. (2008). Henri De Lubac on Nature and Grace: A Note on Some Recent Contributions to the Debate, *Communio* n. 35, 535-564, 542.

[37] De Lubac called this position a dualism or a "two-tiered" universe. There is the reality of human nature defined by its orientation to a natural end in a state of natural beatitude. This is what Scholastics referred to as the state of pure nature. At a certain stage, if not from the beginning, this state was subsumed into the supernatural destiny revealed to us in the Bible. At the same time, our natural being remained as the foundational level of our existence. This latter level of being, according to this view, is perfectly intelligible in itself without any need of recourse to the supernatural. In such a universe, grace and the supernatural are seen as additions from beyond human nature to a nature perfectly indifferent to them. This is what was called an "extrinsicism," since grace and the supernatural are here understood as realities clearly extrinsic to human nature. Source: Moloney, R., S.J. (2008). De Lubac and Lonergan. On The Supernatural, *Theological Studies*, 69 (3), 509-527, 510.

[38] Willie Jennings is a professor of black church studies and theology at Duke Divinity School, who argues that race is a sub-product of globalization. While the traditional narrative establishes a relationship between Modernity and race, Jennings sustains that we have to understand race as the result of a particular theological vision of the world and of the human being that emerged with the discoveries of the "New Worlds" by Southern Europeans. Jennings specifically identifies a "vulnus" in such a theological vision, and points out that Christian theology from the fourteenth century forward was not able to adequately give an account of the advent of discovery. Consequently, Jennings argues that a deep-seated problem within orthodox thinking has rendered the church ill-equipped and often naïve, and led to our current misconceptions of race. In fact, he points out, very few theologians have given and can give an adequate theological account of the origins of race. Very few theologians can give an adequate account of the ways in which their visions of theological anthropology have been intercepted, shaped, and performed inside of certain racial logics. Source: Jennings, W.J. (2010). *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race*. New Haven CT: Yale University Press.

[39] See note n. 3.

[40] In the twentieth century, thanks to missionaries like Charles de Foucault and theologians like Jean Daniélou, the Catholic attitude to non-Christian religions has changed. As Daniélou points out, "Christ did not come to destroy, but to fulfill," Catholicism offers grace that does not destroy the genuinely human, but brings the human to fulfillment. It is an important evolution, already summarized in note no. 5. However, when the comparative study of religions is done, and the respect to the non-Christian religions has been paid, the latter nevertheless end belonging to the realm of the religious experience, while Christianity to a status of its own: "with the man of the Bible, we enter another domain which is no longer that of religious experience, but that of faith. Faith is something absolutely new." According to Daniélou, the great non-Christian religious systems – Hinduism, Buddhism, etc. – are not considered in themselves, but in relation with the Christian revelation. "What is faith? Essentially, it is adherence to revelation, to the word of God. Faith introduces us into a universe inaccessible to religious experience, into a participation in the life of God and the knowledge of God to which God alone can lead us. Revelation is an act of God. In religion, man seeks God, but God is inaccessible in His innermost being." This is why, in revelation, God comes looking for man, takes him where he is, and raises him up to make him capable, through God's power alone, of attaining what he is incapable of attaining by himself. In this sense, it may be said that revelation achieves the desire of religions, that there is, for the religious man, no better way of being faithful to his religion than to adhere to revelation. This is why conversion to Christianity is never an infidelity for the pagan. This point should be emphasized over and over again. The pagan will keep all the religious values of his paganism, but he will find in Christ the response to all that his desires called for. As St. Paul says, this God for whom he was groping but only through shadows and symbols, this God comes looking for him to give Himself to him, and to reveal to him what He is." Daniélou crafts the uniqueness and superiority of Christianity to other religions as follow: "the criterion in the comparison of religions, is the historical criterion. Religions correspond essentially to successive moments in the revelation of God, and what is demanded of man, as St. Ireneus put it, is to avoid remaining in his infancy when the age for being an adult has arrived. "You had the Law, which was made for children who had need of being ruled

from without; today you are called to the liberty of the sons of God. Why do you remain in the chains of the Law, which was destined only to provide your up-bringing but which, from the moment you were called to become free men, ceases to have any value?" When a man wants to remain too attached to his youth and does not succeed in detaching himself from it, this youth somehow poisons him. In this sense, a man's childhood can be an excessive burden and its encumbrances can prevent him from fulfilling himself. So it is for the history of mankind. We might say that, for mankind, paganism is the fact of wanting to remain in infancy, of thereby failing to accept the new revelation that would make it an adult, the revelation given first in the Old Testament and then in Christ." All in all, non-Christian religions are made for children, Christianity is made for adults. The short quote ―Christ did not come to destroy, but to fulfill," is from: Danielou, J. *The Transcendence of Christianity*. Retrieved on April 7, 2013. http://fmmh.ycdsb.ca/teachers/fmmh_mcmanaman/pages/danielou_christianity_nonchristian_religions.pdf The long quote is from: Danielou, J. *Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions*. Retrieved on April 7, 2013. http://fmmh.ycdsb.ca/teachers/fmmh_mcmanaman/pages/danielou_christianity_nonchristian_religions.pdf

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