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Dialogue and Solidarity in a Time of Globalization*

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LOS ANGELES AS A GLOBAL RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

Forty-two years ago, standing at the base of the Statue of Liberty, President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965, ushering in sweeping changes in the immigration policy of the United States. Johnson wanted to sign the act into law in sight of Ellis Island as a dramatic gesture. However, with no little irony, more of America's new immigrants came through Los Angeles International Airport than past Lady Liberty in New York's harbor. The Immigration and Naturalization Act, conceived during the Kennedy administration and passed by Congress during the Johnson era, ended the old quota system that had restricted immigration from Asia since 1924. The act also had the effect of reversing the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. The effects of this legislation in the Los Angeles region have been dramatic. Hsi Lai Temple, to say nothing of the Chinese community it serves, was made possible by the 1965 act. The same can be said of Wat Thai Temple in the North Hollywood neighborhood, which serves Buddhists from Thailand and their U.S.-born children. The 1965 act, however, does not account for Nishi and Higashi Hongan-ji temples in Little Tokyo. These temples have been part of the cultural fabric of Los Angeles for more than one hundred years.

Diana Eck, of Harvard University's Pluralism Project, has remarked on numerous occasions that Los Angeles is the most complex Buddhist city in the world. Bangkok and Kyoto may be great Buddhist cities, but they cannot boast of the sheer diversity of Buddhist lineages that have come to Los Angeles to establish the *sangha*, preach the *dharmā*, and serve the people. After 1965, immigrants came to Los Angeles not only from Taiwan and Thailand, but also from Sri Lanka, Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and Korea, and they brought their Buddhist faith with them. After 1965, Christians came to Los Angeles as well—not so much from Ireland and Italy, but from the Philippines, Korea, Eritrea,

*This essay is based on a presentation given at Hsi Lai Temple in Los Angeles County as a plenary address for the International Meeting of the Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies on June 7, 2005.

Ethiopia, and Egypt. If Los Angeles is a complex Buddhist city, it is also a complex Christian city. Jains and Hindus came after 1965 as well. Their sacred places can be found in Orange County and the Malibu Hills. Muslims came too, from Indonesia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Iran. All these immigrants have become neighbors, and, in the process, their religions have become neighbors as well. The Jain Temple in Orange County is situated near several Vietnamese Buddhist temples. The Islamic Center of Southern California is around the corner from Vietnamese and Korean Buddhist temples in the Koreatown neighborhood of Los Angeles. Of course, these communities have become neighbors to the Christian communities that have long been established in Southern California.

The arrival of new religious communities brings with it new challenges. Should Sikh students in New York or Michigan be subject to suspension or even arrest for carrying the *kirpan* (ceremonial dagger) to school with them? In North Carolina, should a Muslim be required to swear an oath on the Bible before testifying in court? Can the state legislature of Indiana open its sessions with a prayer to Jesus Christ? Should Muslim women in Alabama be required to remove their *hijab* (head scarf) in order to be photographed for a driver's license? How much input should religious groups have in the development of educational guidelines for teaching about religions? In California, various Hindu groups are objecting to the state's curriculum guidelines for the teaching of Hinduism. The proposed changes were later opposed by a group of scholars headed by Michael Witzel of Harvard University, who claimed that "The proposed revisions are not of a scholarly but of a religious-political nature, and are primarily promoted by Hindutva supporters and non-specialist academics writing about issues far outside their area of expertise." A Jewish group has voiced objections as well, not only in regard to the teaching of Judaism, but the teaching of Christianity. What weight should be given to the proposals of Christian groups critical of Darwinism regarding the teaching of evolution? If the local Catholic church rings its bells before its Sunday services, should the local mosque be allowed to broadcast the *adhan* (call to prayer) at dawn?¹

Questions such as these reflect the fact that religious diversity in the United States has become considerably more complicated than the old Judeo-Christian model can handle. The complexities of Protestant-Catholic and Christian-Jewish relations must make room for Buddhists, Sikhs, Hindus, Jains, Muslims, and more. Diana Eck believes that the United States has become the most religiously diverse country in the world.² Even if this is not the case, Americans need to think again about religious diversity and about the civic virtues necessary for a society where many religious communities need to find ways to live in close proximity to one another. In the United States, religious diversity is nothing new. Recent patterns of immigration since 1965, however, require Americans to recognize that the religious landscape is changing in important ways and will continue to do so. All these reflections suggest that we need to think

about religious diversity and its challenges in light of the recent literature on globalization.

GLOBALIZATION AND DETERRITORIALIZATION

Usually, globalization is thought of as an economic phenomenon having to do with the rise of transnational markets and the economic integration of nations that were once distant.³ Globalization is also said to be about time. “Undergoing globalization” is often associated with “becoming modern,” where “modern” is understood as having to do with cultural performances and technologies that arose in Western Europe after 1500—for example, herdsmen on the Masai Mara talking on cell phones to their wives. Without rejecting these interpretations of globalization, I want to argue that globalization is more about space than time. Globalization leads to the transformation of the meaning of space and the transgression of the boundaries, cultural as well as political, that were originally constructed to separate spaces from each other. I will also argue that this interpretation of globalization brings with it important implications for our understanding of the public role of religion and, therefore, our understanding of interreligious dialogue.

Examples of the alteration of cultural and political space abound today. Many of us, for example, continue to think of Southern California and Baja California as two distinct places. Like it or not, this distinction has begun to blur. From the vantage point of the Space Shuttle, there is but one single metropolitan area, which includes Tijuana and San Diego; one does not see a political boundary separating this metropolis into two different locales. On the ground, one quickly is made aware that Los Angeles has become a major Mexican city. (Of course, Los Angeles is a major Korean city as well.) Globalization has begun to erode the notion of Baja and Southern California as two distinct spaces.

An anecdote about the Islamic Republic of Iran offers a different kind of example of this same phenomenon. On a recent trip, I watched Bart Simpson from *The Simpsons* on the TV monitor at Heathrow airport before boarding a flight to Tehran. After landing, but before exiting the plane, the women on the flight (all Iranian nationals, it would seem) put on the *chador*, in compliance with modesty laws for women in the Islamic Republic. The contrast between the streets of London and the streets of Tehran, as least as far as women’s apparel is concerned, could not be more dramatic. However, after a few days, quite by accident, I caught sight of a clandestine satellite dish (illegal in Iran), and began to think about Bart Simpson once again. Eventually I spoke with a group of young women, asking them if they knew who Bart Simpson was. After some hesitation and whispering in Farsi, one of the women smiled and replied, “Of course we know Bart Simpson. Everyone knows Bart Simpson.” Despite the efforts of the government of Iran to ensure that Tehran and London (to say nothing of Tehran and Los Angeles) remain two different spaces, one Islamic and the other secular,

Iran, like the rest of the world, is becoming part of Bart Simpson's space. Global communication technologies are deconstructing the distinction between secular and religious space despite the efforts of the ayatollahs.⁴ There was a time when the Punjab and California were two distinct spaces as well. For all their differences, California and the Punjab form the space where Sikhs carry their *kirpan*. Certainly, there was a time when China and its Buddhism constituted a space far removed from Los Angeles. Of course, the Yangtze and the Hwang He are still on the far side of the Pacific Ocean. We have to recognize, however, that the Pacific no longer separates China from California as it has in the past. As the thriving community of Hsi Lai Temple attests, Southern California has become part of Chinese Buddhist space.

Social scientists, such as Nestor Garcia Canclini, José Casanova, and Arun Appadurai, have adopted the decidedly inelegant term "deterritorialization" to describe the globalization of space.⁵ The term originates in the work of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari on psychoanalysis, literary criticism, and post-modernist theory,⁶ but quickly became of interest to literary critics and social scientists, especially anthropologists.⁷ This dissemination across disciplines has deprived the term of a single, precise meaning. Literary theorists, especially those interested in postcolonial studies, have focused on deterritorialization as a mode of the production of "minor literatures" as they are being created by colonized and formerly colonized peoples, both in their original territories and in diasporas. Garcia Canclini, an anthropologist interested in the hybridization of culture(s) generated at the United States–Mexico border, understands the deterritorialization of cultural systems as "the loss of the 'natural' relation of culture to geographical and social territories, and, at the same time, certain relative, partial territorial relocations of old and new symbolic reproductions."⁸ Cultural systems are being freed from their connection with space in such a way that the notion of "community" needs to be rethought. We used to assume that territory provided a necessary *locus* for social interaction and the production of culture. The idea of a local culture, indigenous to a particular space and functioning within a more or less self-contained universe of meaning, is no longer tenable as a construct for "community." Cultural systems and their imagined identities increasingly reproduce themselves beyond the borders of traditional homelands. Moreover, in the very process of absolving a cultural system from its ties to territory, globalization also promotes "certain relative, partial territorial relocations of old and new symbolic reproductions" in which space becomes hybridized. The Los Angeles region, with its multiple diasporas, is a case in point.⁹

I wish to make three observations regarding Garcia Canclini's view of "deterritorialization" and the use of this term in the social science literature more generally. First, many observers have noted that global capitalism is eroding the coherence and stability of the nation-state as what Benedict Andersen has famously called "imagined community."¹⁰ In place of territorial integrity (geographic or imaginative), globalization promotes transnational social networks less dependent on territory for coherence. In past centuries, the development of

domestic markets assisted the rise of the nation-state as a social identity. The development of global markets, in contrast, entails the economic integration of consumers and producers across national boundaries. Increasingly, not only consumer goods, but also vital commodities such as energy and water, are supplied by means of market systems that transgress the political space defined by the nation-state. Global capitalism renders the nation-state increasingly less significant as a way to imagine community.

Arun Appadurai notes that the nation-state is a “dying form” too tied to geography to deal successfully with a world where new and old forms of human community are increasingly detached from territory.¹¹ In a similar vein, Casanova casts globalization as a challenge to notions of national sovereignty that arose in early modern Europe. “Globalization limits and relativizes state sovereignty; frees capitalist markets and civil society from its territorial-juridical embeddedness in state and nation; and, as a result, dissolves the particular fusion of nation and state which emerged out of Western modernity and became institutionalized worldwide, at least as a model, after the French Revolution. Globalization does not mean the end of the state or the end of nations and nationalism, but it means the end of their fusion in the sovereign territorial nation-state.”¹² Thus, the erosion of the nation-state can also be seen in such diverse phenomena as the rise of the transnational corporation and NGO, the migration of labor across national borders, and the unrestricted flow of capital around the world. Economic relations, civil society, political activity, and social solidarity are no longer containable within a territorially defined nation-state—neither are they reliant on the nation-state’s territorial integrity.

In tracing the historical roots of this phenomenon, we must go back at least to the sociological model of church and state developed by Max Weber (1864–1920), based on the history of Central Europe after the Protestant Reformation. In Weber’s understanding, the church holds a monopoly on salvation, while the state holds a monopoly on violence. Both of these monopolies are exercised within a territorial locus.¹³ After the Treaty of Westphalia (1648), local Central European states, following the territorial principle (*cuius regio eius religio*) tried to legislate these respective monopolies in order to regulate church-state relations. After the French Revolution, the rise of the liberal-democratic state, with its disestablishmentarian, secular ethos, undermined the church’s monopoly on salvation. Now globalization, to the extent that it promotes the rise of subnational and transnational social networks, relativizes the state’s monopoly as well. For example, human rights universalism, promoted by transnational forms of civil society such as Amnesty International, calls into question the nation-state’s claim to unlimited sovereignty.

The emerging incoherence of the nation-state as imagined community facilitates the rise of alternative social networks: regional, ethnic, and religious. This is my second point. These alternative social networks can be either subnational or transnational. Examples abound. The Quebecois, Chechen, Catalanian, and Basque ethnic movements as well as the rise of Serbian nationalism in “former

Yugoslavia” are examples of resurgent subnational identities. “Kurdistan” (encompassing parts of Turkey, Iraq, and Iran), pan-Islamic revival organizations like the Islamic Brotherhood and Jemaah Islamiyah, and the diasporas of Jews, Jains, Sikhs, and so on, promote alternative visions of social cohesion that are transnational and predate the imposition of the nation-state as a political framework by European colonial powers. Casanova, however, does not suggest that nation-states and national identity based on citizenship will disappear anytime soon.

Globalization facilitates the return of the old civilizations and world religions not only as units of analysis but as significant cultural systems and as imagined communities, overlapping and at times in competition with the imagined national communities. Nations will continue to be, for the foreseeable future, relevant imagined communities and carriers of collective identities within this global space, but local and transnational identities, particularly religious ones, are likely to become ever more prominent.¹⁴

Globalization promotes the rise of new forms of social cohesion and, just as important, the return of traditional identities that compete with national identity. Thus, the notion that the internationalization of markets is producing a global capitalist monoculture based on consumerism is not sufficiently complex as a model for globalization. Global capitalism produces what Barber calls “McWorld” and what Howes calls “Coca-colonization.”¹⁵ Globalization, however, also makes possible the rise of regional-, ethnic-, and religion-based forms of resistance to capitalism’s homogenizing power.¹⁶

My third point has to do with the complex relationship these alternative communities have with space. In his reflections on deterritorialization, Garcia Canclini speaks of this relationship as “natural.” His use of quotation marks indicates his awareness that there is no necessary or automatic relationship between a cultural system and a specific territory. Not only is “community” a product of the imagination, as Benedict Andersen has argued, but “territory” itself is socially constructed as well, be it Eretz Yisra’el, Holy Mother Russia, the Dar al-Islam, or Atzlan. Of course, through out their history, cultural systems have been embedded in space. Saying that the relationship of a cultural system to territory is “natural” must not obfuscate the fact that territory, like community, is a work of the imagination—what Appadurai is fond of calling an *imaginaire* or what Casanova calls a “mental mapping.”¹⁷ Although cultural systems as imagined communities have generally understood themselves in terms of territory, the rise of global communication technologies makes the traditional dependence of cultural systems on territory less important. One no longer needs to live in Iran to feel oneself a part of the Shiite *umma* or in India to grow up a Sikh. Neither does one need to live in China to be a Chinese Buddhist. You can live in Southern California as a member of the Hsi Lai Buddhist Temple.

Casanova sees in this phenomenon a critique of Samuel Huntington’s notion of a “civilization” as territorially determined space.¹⁸ Casanova has no quarrel

with Huntington's prediction of continuing clashes among civilizations. He objects, rather, to Huntington's presumption that the clashes will occur along the borders that separate one civilization from another. Instead of Huntington's "geo-political conception of civilizations as territorial units akin to nation-states,"¹⁹ Casanova notes that the deterritorialization of cultural systems, be they "civilizations" as Huntington would have it, ethnic groups, or religious communities, allows for the hybridization of spaces that once approximated cultural homogeneity.

THE DETERRITORIALIZATION OF RELIGION

These considerations have major implications regarding how we think about religion and the dialogue of religions. Freeing cultural systems from their dependence on territory facilitates the revival of religion as an alternative to national identity. The prolonged violence in France's *banlieux* in November 2005 by youths of North African descent provides a ready example. For hard-line French officials such as Nicolas Sarkozy, these youths may have been "rabble" (*racaille*), but the message being sent by the youths themselves could not have been clearer: "we are not French, we are not accepted as French, we are Muslims." The point is not that these youths have embraced a militant and intolerant form of Islam. The point, rather, is that they do not imagine themselves to be a part of the French nation; that is, they do not think of themselves as proper members of the Fifth Republic. Excluded from full participation in the secular society of the nation-state, they embrace a transnational religious identity as an alternative to being "French." Historically, the boundary between Islam and Christianity has been contested at Tours, Lepanto, and the gates of Vienna. However much the boundary may have shifted over the centuries, Christendom and the Dar-al-Islam were always two different spaces. Today, contrary to Huntington, the clash of civilizations is not taking place on the borders that separate civilizations. As Bart Simpson insinuates himself into the Islamic Republic of Iran via satellite dishes, angry youths in the *banlieux* of France self-identify as Muslims. The boundary between the secular West and the Dar-al-Islam is being deconstructed by globalization. In the process, these two cultural systems are also being deterritorialized.

Globalization not only frees religious communities from their connection with territory, it also threatens this connection. This helps to account for a backlash against globalization that takes the form of militantly territorial assertions of religious identity with the aim of purifying space of cultural hybridity. John Tomlinson comments on this phenomenon first by noting globalization's penchant for weakening the relationship between culture and space.

[G]lobalization promotes much more physical mobility than before, but the key to its cultural impact is in the transformation of localities themselves. It is important to keep to the fore the material conditions of physical embodiment and of political/economic necessity that "keep people in

their place,” and so for me the transformation of culture is not grasped by the trope of travel, but in the idea of *deterritorialization*. What I understand by this ... is that complex connectivity weakens the ties of culture to place.

Tomlinson goes on, however, to note that globalization promotes not only the freeing of cultural systems from their dependence on territory, but in this very process promotes the hybridization of space that was once culturally homogenous. That this aspect of globalization is destabilizing and disjunctive should come as no surprise.

This is in many ways a troubling phenomenon, involving the simultaneous penetration of local worlds by distant forces, and the dislodging of everyday meanings from their “anchors” in the local environment. Embodiment and the forces of material circumstance keep most of us, most of the time, situated, but in places that are changing around us and gradually, subtly, losing their power to define the terms of our existence. This is undoubtedly an uneven and often contradictory business, felt more forcibly in some places than others, and sometimes met by countervailing tendencies to re-establish the power of locality.²⁰

Globalization’s ability to free cultural systems from their ties to place implies that territory as a culturally homogenous “imagined space” is being deconstructed and reconstructed as a hybrid of two or more cultures. The destabilizing effect of the hybridization of space produces movements to reestablish the cultural purity of space. Very often, religion is enlisted as an ideology in support of this attempt to reconstitute what Tomlinson calls the “power of locality.”

Nostalgias for religiously pure territory can be seen in Hindu nationalist movements such as the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and the Vishwa Hindu Panishad and in Buddhist nationalist movements such as the Jathika Hela Urumaya in Sri Lanka. The desire to restore the link between religion and territory takes extreme form in the Koch Party in Israel and the various groups seeking to reestablish an Islamic caliphate. Little is revealed by identifying these movements as “fundamentalist.” This epithet means less and less within Christianity, let alone when it is applied to other religions. The point is that these movements seek to restore what global communication and transportation technologies erode: the cultural purity of space.²¹

Let me quickly note that Americans need not look overseas to find such nostalgias. The United States has its own brand of religious nationalism in the Christian Nationalist Movement, which is not only antisecular, but xenophobic and intolerant of religious diversity as well. Take, for example, the statement released by the Family Research Council regarding the historic prayer offered by Venkatchalapathi Samudrala, a Hindu priest of the Shiva Vishnu Temple in Parma, Ohio, to open the September 14, 2000, session of the United States House of Representatives:

(W)hile it is true that the United States of America was founded on the sacred principle of religious freedom for all, that liberty was never intended to exalt other religions to the level that Christianity holds in our country's heritage. Our Founders expected that Christianity—and no other religion—would receive support from the government as long as that support did not violate peoples' [*sic*] consciences and their right to worship. They would have found utterly incredible the idea that all religions, including paganism, be treated with equal deference. As for our Hindu priest friend, the United States is a nation that has historically honored the one true God. Woe be to us on that day when we relegate him to being merely one among countless other deities in the pantheon of theologies.²²

However, as the example of the Sikh students carrying the *kirpan* in California makes clear, the challenges posed by the deterritorialization of religion cannot be restricted to the problem of religious fanaticism. Globalization is transforming the meaning of religious diversity for secular societies. We not only need to find ways of resisting fanaticism, we also need to embrace new civic virtues that provide a basis for making intelligent compromises in societies in which religious identities play an increasingly public role. In the last part of my essay, I want to reflect on the import of interreligious dialogue in connection with this need for new civic virtues.

THE VIRTUE OF SOLIDARITY

In the last century, much of the dialogue among Buddhists and Christians was motivated by theological and spiritual interests.²³ The groundbreaking work of the Cobb-Abe group provides an obvious example of the theological achievements of Buddhist-Christian dialogue. Meetings on religious practice, like that which took place at the Trappist Abbey at Gethsemani, Kentucky, in 1998 between Buddhists and Catholics, exemplify interreligious dialogue pursued in the name of spiritual enrichment.²⁴ Of course, in these theological and spiritual conversations, concern for social justice and ecological concern has also been evident. I believe that the social context of our dialogue is changing rapidly and that we need to be aware of this change if we are to be responsible religious leaders in this new century. I have tried to suggest some of the major features of this changing context by reporting on certain aspects of the complex phenomenon known as globalization. The remainder of my essay is devoted to a reflection on what our changing context means for our appreciation of the work of dialogue. Interreligious dialogue, now and in the foreseeable future, needs to be recognized as a civic virtue.

We need to recognize that the deterritorialization of religious communities and the revival of the prominence of religious identity that is being propelled by globalization require us to think of about the social import of our dialogue

in a new way. I do not seek to deny the theological and spiritual value of dialogue. I do claim, however, that interreligious dialogue serves a purpose not sufficiently recognized in the theological and spiritual dialogue. Interreligious dialogue needs to be pursued in a way that promotes new forms of social solidarity among religious communities, especially in societies wherein religions have become deterritorialized. In addition to our theological and spiritual concerns, the dialogue of religions needs to be pursued in a way that provides a model of religious diversity and solidarity between religious communities. Certainly we need to promote the dialogue of religions as a form of resistance to the fanaticism of militant religion. Less dramatically, I am proposing that we promote interreligious dialogue in the hope of building new forms of solidarity among religious communities in society today. In this respect, interreligious dialogue should be recognized as a civic virtue very much needed by societies that are religiously and culturally diverse.

My starting point for this inquiry will be to reflect on the notion of "solidarity" in Christian social ethics. I have chosen "solidarity" as an entrance point for the discussion because this theme speaks directly to the question of social cohesion in a time of significant renegotiations of social bonds.²⁵ In Christian social ethics, or at least in Roman Catholic social ethics, the notion of solidarity is used almost without exception in relation to pastoral action in response to political and economic injustice. The term figures prominently in theological discussions of the "preferential option for the poor" for example.²⁶ This is certainly the case in regard to the use of this term in the social writings of John Paul II. The late pope wrote about the need for solidarity in relationship to his understanding of "interdependence" in the world today.

In his social writings, John Paul II refers to the "interdependence" of nations, social classes and peoples primarily in regard to economic relations.²⁷ On fewer occasions, the pope speaks of interdependence in relation to social and cultural matters.²⁸ The prominence of this theme in the writings of John Paul II reflects the growing importance he saw in the way that relationships among human communities were being transformed by economic change and technological innovation. This suggests that the pope's interest in interdependence needs to be seen in relation to the general features of globalization. In fact, I believe that *mutatis mutandis*, "interdependence," is the pope's term for "globalization."

The interdependence of peoples and nations is a fact that is undeniable, but at the same time ambiguous. This ambiguity is rooted in the fact that the interdependence of societies is too often manifest in forms that are coercive, oppressive, and dehumanizing. Moreover, along the lines of John Tomlinson's observation about the ambiguous effects of the deterritorialization of cultural systems discussed above,²⁹ the pope notes that our increased interdependence can lead to anxieties that produce militant responses. The pope also notes, however, that the fact of interdependence must also be recognized as an opportunity for achieving genuinely human community. This point is established in conjunction with the pope's insistence that human dignity cannot be realized apart from our con-

nection with other human beings and with our environment. Several important conclusions stem from this latter point.

First, the fact of interdependence is to be embraced, not escaped. The attempt to escape human interdependence is the futile hope of individualism in its various forms. Neither is interdependence something to be controlled or dominated. The control and domination of our interdependence is the goal of neo-Liberal economics, often driven by what the pope famously called “savage capitalism.”³⁰ Both the impulse to escape interdependence and to dominate it can be related to what liberation theologians such as Jon Sobrino have called the “myth of Western Man,” wherein our humanity is construed, in accordance with eighteenth-century Liberalism, as fundamentally asocial and autonomous.³¹ Instead, the pope calls for interdependence to be embraced as a means to a moral end: the dignity of the human person and the common good of the entire community. For this reason, the embracing of interdependence and the promotion of its humane character must become a guiding moral principle.³²

Second, the pope places this embrace of interdependence within the framework of the Christian practice of the virtues. Embracing our interdependence with this moral end in mind, instead of attempting to control or dominate it, is the “virtue of solidarity.” Given the challenges posed by globalization to social order and the common good, the pope thinks of this virtue as especially apropos to the needs of the world today. In *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, to cite the most prominent passage, the pope summarizes a reflection on the social challenges facing contemporary societies by noting the fact of interdependence and singling out solidarity as a moral response. “It is above all a question of interdependence, sensed as a system determining relationships in the contemporary world, in its economic, cultural, political and religious elements, and accepted as a moral category. When interdependence becomes recognized in this way, the correct response as a moral and social attitude, as a virtue, is solidarity.”³³ Here, contrary to the claims made by some neo-Liberals, the pope is rejecting globalization as a value-neutral fact or economic inevitability that, if it cannot be welcomed with enthusiasm, should be accepted with resignation. Our interdependence must be recognized as a “moral category” that confronts us with moral questions and places moral demands upon us. Recognizing the essentially moral character of our interdependence and the cultivating an ability to respond to its moral demands constitutes a “habit of the heart,” the virtue of solidarity.

Third, implied in the pope’s call to make a virtue of the fact of our interdependence is a theological and philosophical anthropology. The virtue of solidarity is a reflection of the nature of the human person as a “spiritual subject” that becomes itself by means of finite acts of self-transcendence rooted, inexorably, in the spiritual subject’s participation in community.³⁴ Contrary to Liberal views of the human person as asocial, the pope, in his philosophical and theological contributions, strongly defends the fundamentally social character of the human person. Human beings are creatures who require community in order to become the creatures that God has intended us to be. This is because community constitutes

a form of self-transcendence for a human being in which egocentric concerns are forsaken, in selfless love, in favor of the greater good. If social alienation marks the failure of the human person to achieve this self-realization through self-transcendence, then solidarity must be recognized as a virtue that promotes success in this regard. Therefore, the virtue of solidarity must not be reduced to a vague sense of kinship with others. This is because interdependence is not merely a characteristic of our external circumstances, imposed upon us by economics and technologies of transportation and communication that do not affect our essential nature as human beings. Rather, interdependence is the condition within which the dignity of the human person is either honored or abused. In keeping with the citation from *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* above, the correct moral response to this truth of the human condition is to build solidarity. Thus, solidarity is a virtue not only because of the challenges globalization imposes on us currently, but also because of the essentially social nature of the human person.³⁵

Fourth, John Paul never links the virtue of solidarity with a call for tolerance. Instead, solidarity is linked to a call for dialogue.³⁶ In my view, this is not an accident. The pope's hope to humanize our interdependence by practicing the virtue of solidarity requires us to distinguish dialogue from tolerance, even placing the two in opposition. Appeals for tolerance are often heard in response to the challenges posed to modern society by diverse cultures and values. In its "live and let live" form, tolerance can take the form of indifference to the values of another. Tolerance construed as indifference will not be helpful to a society characterized by the deterritorialization of cultural systems. Tolerance can promote, however unintentionally, enclaves of the like-minded, when what is needed is solidarity. To the extent that tolerance fails to take the moral measure of our actual interdependence, the virtue of tolerance will prove insufficient in meeting the social needs of a globalized world. In contrast to tolerance, the virtue of solidarity takes genuine pluralism as its *telos*. Here, "genuine pluralism" is not a matter of merely tolerating differences. Genuine pluralism cannot be merely a matter of tolerating differences. Genuine pluralism is achieved by means of participation in the life of the Other. Achieving this requires a virtue that places more demands on us than tolerance does. Genuine pluralism, as opposed to the peaceful coexistence of tolerant, but separate, communities, calls for a vigorous dialogue among these communities. The task before us, therefore, is to build bonds of solidarity through dialogue. Therefore, I am construing dialogue as a principled commitment to build social solidarity. For this reason, I believe, the pope links solidarity with dialogue and says remarkably little about tolerance.

INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE AS CIVIC VIRTUE

In some parts of the world, the deterritorialization of cultural systems manifests itself as a revival of religious identity. This revival can entangle religious communities in alarming social conflicts. I made mention of religiously oriented na-

tionalist movements in India, Sri Lanka, Israel, and the United States, among others, to bear witness to this fact. This entire phenomenon—our increasing awareness of interdependence, the revival of religious identity, and the need for new forms of solidarity—indicate that there is a need to rethink the social significance of the dialogue of religions. Without diminishing the theological and spiritual value of our dialogues, the praxis of the dialogue of religions needs to be appreciated in light of the need to build new forms of solidarity in societies increasingly affected by the deterritorialization of cultural systems. A dialogue in depth among religious communities contributes to the common good. Leadership in this dialogue should be recognized as a civic virtue. In the remainder of this essay, I wish to reflect on this proposal.

Interreligious dialogue contributes to civic virtue because it offers a practical way to embrace the fact of our interdependence and to respond to the moral challenge that our interdependence poses to us. Our interdependence is to be embraced as a means to a moral end: the honoring of human dignity and the cooperative pursuit of the common good. In making this claim, I do not mean to suggest that all participants in interreligious dialogue need to be motivated by the same goals and values. In fact, based on my own experience of dialogue, I am aware that people sometimes enter into dialogue with Christians such as myself motivated by reasons different than the goals and values that motivate me. I am claiming, however, that religious believers need to take seriously the need for new forms of solidarity in many societies today and to look positively on interreligious dialogue as a way to construct this solidarity. In effect, I am claiming that interreligious dialogue should be seen as a concrete way to put into practice the virtue of solidarity.

If, in addition to the theological and spiritual aspects of interreligious dialogue, we enter into dialogue with the need for social solidarity in mind, we should not be content with dialogues that merely leave us with a vague sense of kinship with one another. The dialogue of religions needs to build solidarity by promoting a genuine pluralism. The dialogue of religions achieves this authentic pluralism when it brings dialogue partners to the realization that our interdependence is not merely a characteristic of our external circumstances, imposed on us by recent developments in economics and technology. Speaking from my own religious perspective, I wish to affirm that human interdependence is rooted in the nature of the human person whose dignity and destiny is no longer recognizable when removed from actual social conditions. Our interdependence is not accidental—not a temporary problem to be overcome—but rather a necessary condition within which the fundamental goodness of our humanity is realized. Therefore, the dialogue of religions can be affirmed as a virtue that promotes human flourishing in the form of a genuine pluralism which is respectful of the *multiple* ways in which the spiritual subject realizes itself in acts of self-transcendence. This is not to suggest that all religions are reflections of the same transcendental source. Rather, the point is that, for all our religious differences, dialogue is a way to create solidarity between religious communities.

Therefore, this genuine pluralism is not based on tolerance, at least not a tolerance that is content with merely putting up with the Other out of political expediency. In societies where cultural systems are becoming deterritorialized, religious tolerance will not be sufficient to address the stresses that conflicts among religious communities impose. Genuine pluralism, which is a fruit of the virtue of solidarity, arises by means of a genuine participation in the life of the Other.

Allow me to give some examples. First, in April 1994, Buddhist swastikas decorating the gates of the Hua Yen Temple on Desoto Avenue in Chatsworth, a suburb of Los Angeles, were vandalized. Before this, there had been complaints made to the Anti-Defamation League about the swastikas and threats of violence against the monks. After the vandalism, Rabbi Roland Stern of Temple Ahavat Shalom in Northridge gathered a group of rabbis together to meet with the monks, to learn about the religious symbolism of the swastika for Buddhists, and to prepare themselves as religious leaders to educate their own congregations about this Buddhist community. The rabbis preached to their congregations. There was no more vandalism. An act of violence against a religious community was transformed by dialogue and leadership into a bond of solidarity—a new kind of solidarity—between Buddhists and Jews in Chatsworth. In this act of civic virtue, Rabbi Stern and his fellow rabbis have been a blessing not only to their Jewish neighbors, but also to society.

Diana Eck offers another example from her hometown, Bozeman, Montana. One December, a rock was thrown through a window displaying a menorah. As an act of solidarity with their Jewish neighbors, Christian households began to display menorahs in their own windows. This act of resistance could never have been organized were it not for the interreligious dialogues that had already occurred through the Bozeman Interfaith Council. In the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles, Jewish instructors work in Catholic schools to teach Holocaust studies. This would not have been possible were it not for the pioneering work of Msgr. Royale Vadikan and Rabbi Alfred Wolf in bringing the Roman Catholic and Jewish communities together in dialogue.

My claim that the ultimate aim of interreligious dialogue is the solidarity of religious communities should not be taken as an implicit denial of the theological and spiritual value of our efforts. Better to say that we need to take notice of the fact that the theological and spiritual value of our dialogues is taking on a meaning many of those involved in the dialogue among Buddhists and Christians have not sufficiently appreciated. The significance of our spiritual and theological exchanges needs to be assessed in light of interreligious dialogue's new social and historical context, which, I have argued in this essay, is established by globalization and its impact on religions today. As globalization continues to promote the deterritorialization of cultural systems, religious diasporas will need to find not only ways to tolerate one another in their new-found proximity. Religious communities will have to find ways to promote human flourishing in a postmodern, postnational environment. This is the emerging global context within which we pursue the work of dialogue. I do not believe that this new

context should be accepted with resignation. Rather, it is incumbent upon us as religious leaders to make a virtue out of the brute fact of our interdependence—the virtue of solidarity.

NOTES

1. For documentation regarding the challenges posed by religious diversity in the United States, see the website of Harvard University's Pluralism Project: <http://www.pluralism.org/>.

2. Diana Eck, *A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation* (San Francisco: Harper, 2002).

3. For two divergent views on the economic dimension of globalization, see Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000), and Joseph Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents* (New York: Norton, 2002).

4. Los Angeles has also become part of Iranian space. The Los Angeles metropolitan region constitutes the largest Iranian community in the United States.

5. Nestor Garcia Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), p. 229. Also, see Casanova's presidential address to the International Society for the Sociology of Religion, "Religion, the New Millennium and Globalization," *Sociology of Religion* 62, no. 4 (2001): 415–441. For Appadurai's use of this term, see *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), pp. 37–39, 49–50.

6. See *inter alia* their *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983) and *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987). For Deleuze and Guattari, "deterritorialization" also has to do with what they call "the plane of immanence" characteristic of the postmodern condition (see *What Is Philosophy?* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1994]), and the production of "minor literatures" (see *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986]).

7. Among anthropologists, see, for example, Arjun Appadurai, "Disjunction and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," in *The Anthropology of Globalization: A Reader*, Jonathan Xavier Inda and Renato Rosaldo eds. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), especially pp. 54–55.

8. Garcia Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, p. 229.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 228–241.

10. The term "imagined community" is from the work of Benedict Andersen on the rise of the nation-state, but is applicable to the nation-state as it undergoes the travails of globalization as well. See Benedict Andersen, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1991).

11. Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, p. 18.

12. Casanova, "Religion, the New Millennium and Globalization," p. 423.

13. See Max Weber, *Economy and Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), pp. 54–56.

14. Casanova, "Religion, the New Millennium and Globalization," p. 430. Arun Appadurai, in contrast, argues that the decline of the nation-state is well advanced. See note 11 above.

15. Benjamin Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld* (New York: Random House, 1995); David Howes, *Cross-Cultural Consumption: Global Markets, Local Realities* (London: Routledge, 1996).

16. For claims about a global monoculture, see the works of media critics such as Herbert Schiller and Robert McChesney and also works of those who take the position

that globalization amounts to "Westernization," such as Serge Latouche. For critiques of this view, see Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), p. 52; and John Tomlinson, *Globalization and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), pp. 81–97.

17. Casanova, "Religion, the New Millennium and Globalization," p. 428. Appadurai defines *imaginaire* as "a constructed landscape of collective aspirations." See Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, p. 32.

18. Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998).

19. Casanova, "Religion, the New Millennium and Globalization," p. 430.

20. John Tomlinson, *Globalization and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), pp. 29–30.

21. For a helpful discussion of religious nationalism, see Mark Juergensmeyer, *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

22. See Family Research Council, "Culture Facts Newsletter," September 21, 2000.

23. Of course, I am using the term "theology" in a generic, nonetymological sense. In using this term in relation to Buddhism, I am following the usage of John Makransky and other Buddhist "theologians." See the collection of essays edited by Makransky, *Buddhist Theology: Critical Reflections by Contemporary Buddhist Scholars* (New York: Curzon, 1999).

24. For a record of this historic meeting, see *The Gethsemani Encounter: A Dialogue on the Spiritual Life by Buddhist and Christian Monastics*, Donald W. Mitchell and James Wiseman, OSB, eds. (New York: Continuum, 1998).

25. I wish to emphasize that I will be pleased if the remarks that follow succeed in raising this issue for wider discussion among Buddhists, Christians, and others. Christians besides myself, without doubt, will have their own comments to add. Buddhists, I suspect, will be able to affirm much of what I have to say from the perspective of their own tradition even as they bring insights unique to their tradition to the conversation.

26. Jon Sobrino, SJ, and Juan Hernandez Pico, *Theology of Christian Solidarity* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1985).

27. See for example, the entire third chapter of *Solicitude Rei Socialis*.

28. See for example the address to the Ambassador of Venezuela, December 15, 1990, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 83 (1991): 730.

29. See note 20 above.

30. *Centesimus annus* no. 8 (French and Italian translations).

31. In interviews, writings, and public lectures in which he is addressing a North American or European audience, Sobrino often refers to the fact that the Western conception of the human person is not normative, but rather the exception. The modern conception of the human being (in affluent societies) as an autonomous and rational being, in pursuit of truth, development, and abundance, is a myth that ignores the fact that the normative experience for the vast bulk of humanity is a daily confrontation with—and struggle against—structures of sin and the reality of immanent death. See Jon Sobrino, *Theology of Christian Solidarity*, p. 9.

32. See Address to the Ambassador of Argentina, November 30, 1989, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 82 (1990): 689.

33. On this, the most basic text is *Solicitude Rei Socialis*, no. 38.

34. For John Paul's basic philosophical anthropology, see Karol Wojtyła, *The Acting Person: A Contribution to Phenomenological Anthropology*, (Boston: Reidel Publishing, 1979).

35. Donal Dorr, "Solidarity and Integral Human Development," in *The Logic of Solidarity*, eds. Gregory Baum and Robert Ellsberg, (New York: Orbis, 1989), p. 148.

36. *Centesimus annus*, no. 22.