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DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF TRANSCENDENT HUMANISM

This reflection is dedicated to the memory of Fr. Colm McKeating, MSSC. Fr. Colm had inspired and helped many students at Maryhill School of Theology. Certainly, Fr. Colm was one of the outstanding professors in systematic theology. Fr. Colm's scholarly writings and contributions in the academe surely continue to enflame in our hearts the desire for understanding our faith.

This paper attempts to describe the link between the concept of development and humanism in the encyclical letter Populorum Progressio (1967). It begins with some contemporary events and the consideration of the political along with the economic and social dimensions of development. It shows the relationship between the integral humanism of Jacques Maritain and the transcendent humanism of Pope Paul VI. After a summary of the encyclical, some of its themes are treated in the light of the present context. ¹ We begin by looking at the cold war leading to arms race, urbanization, and colonialism

taking on a new form.

I. ARMS RACE, URBANIZATION, NEO-COLONIALISM

After enormous military spending during the Second World War, victorious and devastated nations alike recover from economic setback. The subsequent Cold War turns to a rivalry primarily between the United States and the Soviet Union, contesting for economic and ideological supremacy. The exploit in the outer space by the two superpowers, for example in the moon in 1961, is motivated by the exploration of natural resources. In Latin America, political ties imply financial aid to poor nations and profit for the rich nation. Since the intervention of rich countries in 1955, Guatemala has been considered as a backyard garden of the US for supplying it with agricultural products. In Vietnam, the US spends $50 billion to cause death and destruction. Yet, Vietnam has the obligation to pay for the cost of the war. When the USSR pursues its economic interests in other countries, it comes into conflict with other interested nations. As the two giant nations race for arms superiority, it prompts France and China among other nations to develop their own weapons of mass destruction. The USSR's testing of its Tsar Bomb not only burns a huge amount of money but also deeply scares the world. The Cuban missile crisis puts the entire world on the brink of a nuclear war.²

² Fidel Castro seeks to defend his island nation from a possible attack by the US and gets nuclear missiles from the USSR. John Kennedy at some point has raised military readiness. The Russians propose to remove the missiles if the US guarantees not to invade Cuba. When the US assures not to invade Cuba, Russia takes back the missiles.

The rich nations support poor countries in dealing with their weak economies. The assistance comes in the form of financial or military aids. Most Latin American nations recognize the US as the overriding and decisive factor in their existence and the Philippines is regarded as a US puppet nation. The US provides loans and grants to the poor countries and, in exchange, lays the terms of trade and repatriation of profit. The diplomatic relations have become a means to block the influence of other ideologies. Most of the Western nations have come to regard totalitarian fascism and communist atheism as threat, more so as Marxism has rapidly developed into more concrete expressions like Marxism-Leninism and Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Marxism-Leninism puts emphasis on Lenin's concept of imperialism as the final stage of capitalism and shifts the focus of struggle from developed to underdeveloped countries. After China and the Soviet Union split in ideology, the Chinese communist party launches a cultural revolution. Chairman Mao serves as the inspiration for changing China and seeks to build a new industrial culture from the old agrarian one. While Marxist ideology postulates a materialistic view, Western capitalism is obsessed with the material factor in a dog-eat-dog competitive economic system.

Urban centers become bigger as the pace of life becomes faster due to rapid industrialization. The modernization of machines and means of production contributes to an increased development. Progress spreads from the West to the rest of the world, including the Third World. Countries cope with the inevitable effects of modernized industrialization. Factories, business enterprises and infrastructure projects boom in the cities. People move from the rural areas to the urban areas in
order to find work, to avail affordable and readily available manufactured products, and to experience higher standard of living. As more people are able to buy beyond what is needed, the society becomes increasingly consumerist.

The huge number of people from different parts of a country gives rise to slum areas. Work now is less to be found. In the slums, many workers not only are uprooted from their normal environment but also have incredibly limited space for living. Workers who leave their families in the rural areas spend more time in work, which often leads to broken relationships and less regard for values. Most of the workers have to battle with reconciling traditional beliefs, ways and culture with more modernized technology and urban living. In this context, what is in danger is the wealth of humanity nurtured through many generations, for example, tradition and beliefs. What has become of value and importance is gradually relegated to the background. More often than not, the older morality and lifestyle give way and in time disappear.

The fast-growing industrial society and urban civilization have, as a consequence, the evolution of a consumer society. Consumer society is characterized by opulence made possible by social legislation, which many workers have profited from: salaried workers now seem less and less to be “the damned of the earth.” However, poverty this time wears a new face: the immigrants and the “fourth world.” The immigrants, who are considered the new slaves of modern times, are at the service of consumer society and the “fourth world,” which is exploited by foreign capitalists and local elites, becomes greater in scope. When industrialization gives way to trade between nations, the rich nations have an edge over the poor nations. While most Western nations form the European Free Trade Association, on the other side of the globe, great famine through the great “leap forward” of Mao leads to the killing of people by the millions. This “leap” seeks to rapidly transform the country from an agrarian economy to a communist society through fast industrialization and collectivization. Many Chinese people have to pay the price of the social revolution.

After decades under foreign control, colonized nations move toward self-rule. Countries in Africa and Asia clamor for autonomy. In the 1960s, seventeen African nations earn their independence. Peoples are recognized by the colonizers and given time to gradually assume government responsibilities. This development effectively affirms the fact that the world is rich in diverse peoples and cultures. This turn of event can be ascribed to the phenomenon “accelerated decolonization” along with the lessening Western influence. Yet accelerated decolonization may only connote the fast increase in number of “free” nations and may not necessarily mean having full responsibility of self-governance and, therefore, the consequent national identity. Some independent nations remain to be profoundly dependent to former colonizers. After colonization national groups continue to experience foreign influence and control. Indeed,

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4 Aubert, Catholic Social Teaching, 227.
5 Aubert, Catholic Social Teaching, 227.
6 This refers to “neo-colonialism.” The rich countries manipulate the economy and politics of poor countries for their own ends. The rich countries offer two alternatives: attract new business and capital

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3 Roger Aubert, Catholic Social Teaching: A Historical Perspective (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2003), 227.
decolonization leaves both positive and negative consequences in the colonized countries. In the case of the Philippines, a US colony from 1898 to 1946, colonization has imprinted in the Filipino society and culture a deep sense of dependence on the North Americans. Before the 10-year Commonwealth Government could allow a smooth transition in governance, much has already been done: a history of feeding the Filipino soul with American spirit. The North Americans have influenced Filipinos in and through education, language, the constitution and laws, technology, food, mentality, way of living, and many more. Quite interesting today is the use of the phrase “little brown Americans” which refers to Filipinos. The description somehow indicates the favorable effects of being colonized, as well as the distortions it brings to the Filipino individual and nation.

The increasing number of independent nations and the growing involvement of African and Asian countries in world-wide affairs have lessened the Christian character of the world. The previously dominant Christian worldview is seen in conjunction with other religious worldviews. This turn of events leads to “deconfessionalization,” a phenomenon which signifies that “old Christian countries become less-and-less Christian in an increasingly limited space in world affairs.” The re-birth of nations brings about the recognition of different cultures, worldviews, and religions.

Modernized and highly-technologized economy makes rich nations become part of the “center” of the world. The Cold War is about the ambition to be the “first” in the center of powerful nations, creating tremendous fear of a nuclear war that can take place anytime. Though it has positive results, decolonization is not observed as a long process towards respect and appreciation of the uniqueness of the formerly colonized nation. These developments only tell one part of the story. The bigger picture of reality shows the growing contrast between the progress in the First World and the massive poverty in the Third World. The widening gap between the rich and the poor nations is seriously scandalous. The inequality clearly confirms that the present model of development is only meant for a few, and not for all.

II. CALL FOR A POLITICAL SOCIAL DOCTRINE

At the background of these events is an ideological clash. The long story of poverty-and-misery-without-solution, at some point, has given communism a chance. Marxism is thought to have the solution to the problems of industrial societies. However, the increasing awareness of the true nature of “Soviet Paradise” leads to the steady decline of Marxist ideology.\(^8\) The “American Dream,” on the other hand, is offered as the real thing. On the part of the Church, the hierarchy wants to find a way in the middle with the hope to offer an ideal model of societal organization to the world. However, formulations from the hierarchy make people realize that it is an illusion to have Christian recipes for the solutions to socioeconomic problems adopted everywhere in the world.\(^9\) Some Church social proclamations seem not applicable to concrete

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\(^8\) Aubert, *Catholic Social Teaching*, 227.
\(^9\) Ibid.
Roger Aubert suggests that, "...instead of juxtaposing a formulated a priori Catholic model with the American and Soviet models, Christians, enlightened by the Gospels, should join with their unbeliever brothers in the world Socialist movement in the pursuit of just solutions, in each country adapted to the real-life situations of social evolution." The Church must necessarily go beyond the outdated ideological clichés and ought to focus on what has been missed all this time, the political dimension. "In particular, the Church's social teachings in the first half of the 20th century were reproached for having given insufficient attention to the reality of the Politician, which is increasingly the true battleground between the exploiters and the exploited." Catholic social thought has to embark into and enrich the political arena.

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10 One concern also is that when it comes to the treatment of social and economic problems, the much needed pioneering thoughts and contemporary studies of different and relevant sciences are not utilized. The hierarchy needs to harness the contributions of other disciplines, particularly those which closely deal with social concerns.

11 Aubert, Catholic Social Teaching, 228.

12 "The greatest danger to peace today ... is not "Communism versus freedom" or "free enterprise versus socialism" ...; it is in the problem of poverty, the problem of the rich and the poor nations, where the fate of the future survival of (hu)mankind resides. Western Christians have been taught, almost to the point of obsession, that the greatest danger to peace is Communism. ... The real danger comes from the egoism, greed, and consequent materialism of the developed nations, both East and West... Here indeed is a revolutionary view of the modern situation and one that will not please many Christians of the right, who see the incarnation of all evil in Communism." Riga, The Church of the Poor, 15.

13 Aubert, Catholic Social Teaching, 228-9.

14 Catholic social teaching has definitely used a more engaging approach towards social issues. Pope John XXIII has published two groundbreaking encyclical letters, marking a new stage in modern Catholic social thought: On Christianity and Social Progress (Mater et Magistra, 1961) and Peace on Earth (Pacem in Terris, 1963). Mater et Magistra particularly moves towards a more integral approach by breaching the mark from the socio-economic to the political level. John XXIII officially opens the door to a collaboration of Catholics with the socialist movement. The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes, 1965) dedicates in Part Two, Chapter III a full discussion on economic and social life. Chapter IV amplifies the recognition of the desire of citizens to assume greater responsibilities in the organization of political life. The Church through Paul VI has fully accepted economic socialism.

III. TRANSCENDENT HUMANISM

We have to consider the humanist theories which have association with the ideologies referred to earlier. Liberalism, for example, implies the existence of a control mechanism of the economy. The capitalistic mechanism that inflates a gigantic project of underdevelopment not only values profit but also promotes individualism. Collectivist communism, on the other hand, can be used to
control and bring people towards exclusion. In the same light, we need to take into account the humanist ideas that may have influenced the writing of the encyclical.

Humanism is a philosophical and ethical position that emphasizes the value and agency of human beings, giving preference to critical thinking and evidence over doctrine of faith. The discussion centering on the human was introduced in 1492 when Pico della Mirandola wrote his Oration on the Dignity of Man, but the theme had its full articulation only in the 19th century. In 1841 Ludwig Feuerbach showed that religion was nothing more than the projection of the noblest aspirations of humans and the proper study of the theologian was man himself. Karl Marx attempted to spell out the implications of Feuerbach’s theory in terms of his philosophy of dialectical materialism in order to promote “Marxist humanism.” Frederick Nietzsche proclaimed the death of God in modern culture. In 1946, Jean Paul Sartre’s form of humanism, existentialism, advocates that “existence precedes essence” and that there is no human nature. A person is what s/he makes of her/himself. The secular humanism of today denies any supernatural realm, relies on empirical science and postulates the Enlightenment values of freedom, social equality, and the values of secular society.15

Positivist, Marxist and Nietzschean humanisms’ strong rejection of God and annihilation of the human evokes varied Christian responses. Karl Barth argues that there is no true humanism outside the imperatives of the Gospel. For Henri de Lubac, an exclusive humanism is inhuman humanism, that is, human beings cannot organize the world for themselves without God; without God, human beings can only organize the world against human beings.16 Jacques Maritain establishes his stance along with the Aristotelian-Thomist position, presenting his notion of an integral humanism, one that is rooted in the Incarnation and the transcendent reality of God.

Maritain postulates an incarnational humanism, so to speak, as opposed to four decades of anthropocentric humanism. Human beings are social and political by nature. The conception of justice is seen in both one-to-one relationship and society-to-individual/individual-to-society relationship. In this light Maritain recognizes that both Christian conscience and communist conscience are displeased with the “man of sin” or the petit-bourgeois man, the man of bourgeois liberalism.17 Maritain affirms that the socialism of the 19th century has loved the poor.18 Socialist humanism, a protest of the human conscience and of its most generous instincts against evils, has glimpsed some truths that Maritain claims to be worth saving and promoting. Integral humanism leads to the transfiguration of humankind, the preference of what is real and substantial, and the affirmation of the dignity and vocation of the human person and work to transform conditions which oppress him, and to bring it about that he can eat his bread with dignity.19 It opens up to other dimensions of life, like human dignity, vocation, transformative work,

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18 Ibid., 88.
19 Ibid., 94.
among others, which make the existence of human beings complete.

The human being is an entity having both material and spiritual dimensions and all human beings in society are participants in a common good. An individual's private good is subordinate to the common good of the community and that a person's "spiritual good" is superior to society, something that all political communities must recognize. Maritain fully captures the philosophical foundation of this theocentric humanism by pointing out that the nature of the human person is "a spiritual and material being - a being that has a relation to God - and morality and social and political institutions must therefore reflect this." And so, the best political order is one which recognizes the sovereignty of God. In line with this contention, on the one hand, Maritain rejects Fascism, communism and secular humanisms for these are dehumanizing religions. On the other hand, Maritain expresses the fact that he likes the American type of democracy, but has no interest in combining it with Christianity.

Integral humanism is anchored to natural law which is immanent in nature and governs all human beings. A person has a human nature, same with all persons. And persons have intelligence and power to determine ends.

This "unwritten law" is an "order or a disposition which human reason can discern and according to which human will must act in order to attune itself to the necessary ends of the human being." The first principles of this law are known con-naturally by "synderesis," the "habitual knowledge of the universal practical principles of moral action." The goal of humanity is to be free, that is, the human person realizing himself or herself in accordance with his or her nature specifically, towards the achievement of moral and spiritual perfection.

Paul VI seems to make use of the ideas of Maritain and looks at their implications to international society development. He speaks about the need for a Christian humanism that regards human dignity as having prime significance. He puts forward a Christian understanding of development as beyond the economic, social and political agenda, envisioning a future of humane relations founded on the transformative possibilities of the present. He grounds the whole encyclical letter on universal human solidarity and fraternity (1, 6, 15, 17, 20, 22, 27-8, 34, 39, 42, 47, 65, 79, 86). This leads to the notion of "complete humanism" (42) or "transcendent humanism" (16). When human beings realize themselves towards moral and spiritual perfection, they move towards their goal: freedom. Humanity, since the beginning, is open to God and the life of God in Christ.

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21 Ibid.
22 Ibid.
Christ is the origin and the end of the unfolding of history and of human activity (80). Sin has entered into reality but never succeeds. Triumph belongs to the Incarnate Word who transforms all creation by his resurrection (13). In the process of transformation Christians participate in the building of the kingdom in history. Christ shows the way of suffering and the cross, the expression of his obedience to God and the love of God to humanity. The same love ushers death to human pride. Humanity is created in the image and likeness of God, having been given the responsibility towards perfection (16-17). Responsibility always entails the guiding action of God. The Lord of history has given value to everything and humanity, giving them a vital role in the economy of creation and redemption (22, 34, 39, 65, 86). Human beings continue the beautiful works of God. In this view Christianity is seen as a “happening.” What is communicated is this historical happening. Before the sin that taints this reality, Christians firmly believe in the resurrection, which brings ultimate victory: freedom.

IV. POPULORUM PROGRESSIO

Paul VI seems to have developed his own transcendent humanism from the integral humanism of Maritain. He writes the encyclical from 1964 to 1967, also making reference to the equally important opinions of Lebret, Chenu, de Lubac, and Larrain, to cite a few. The letter begins with the Church’s duty to explore in depth the complex problem in study and calls for a combined action. It discusses the complete development of persons and humankind. It appeals for a global effort to go against a development model that does not promote peace and solidarity. The following presents a very short summary of the letter.

A. Integral Human Development

The person’s well-rounded development and self-fulfillment are prerequisites towards transcendent humanism which is the highest goal of human self-fulfillment (14-15). The goal is only achieved through human solidarity because it cries against avarice and soul-stifling materialism (17-18). The new humanism can crush less human conditions, those of material and moral poverty. A true human condition speaks of life’s necessities, people’s dignity, common good and peace, the highest values, God, and faith (21). Every person has the right to glean what he or she needs from the earth (22). In the light of this right, the rich ought to give what belongs to the poor, and that private property before the common good is not absolute (23).

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28 Riga, The Church of the Poor, 33.
29 Lebret in particular is known to be the inspiring force behind the encyclical. He has made popular the notion of “participatory research” or Action-Research based method in relation to human development. His Economy and Humanism has the objective to study human and social realities in their complexity and globality, with the concrete proposal to put back the economy at the service of humankind. He claims that “human economy” should aim at “developing the whole person and every person.”
30 The Pontifical Commission of Justice and Peace, created to respond to the call, is to awaken in all Catholics and Christians a full awareness of the mission to further the progress of poorer nations and international social justice, and to help less developed nations to contribute to their own development.
31 For a good summary and commentary, see Hennelly, “Populorum Progressio,” 762-770.
Industrialization is necessary for economic growth and human progress, and decries tyranny or the international imperialism of money (25-26). Created in God's image, a worker is also a creator, making human work as having a task of establishing a supernatural order on earth (27-28). Industrialization must benefit both worker and owner to ensure proper equilibrium (29). If change is needed, reforms are better options than violent means (30).

Humanity designs its own progress and, therefore, calls for the entire humanity to work and organize programs. It is the responsibility of the parents to determine the number of children in the family and drastic remedies should be avoided to control population (37). Modern civilization complicates the approach to God, while true humanism points the way to God (42). The development of humankind goes with the entire human family building a common future.

**B. Humankind Building a Common Future**

1. **The Social Duty of Wealthy Nations**

   It is the duty of the wealthy nations to work for mutual solidarity, social justice, and universal charity (44) and to help uplift nations where hunger and under-nutrition prevail (45). The rich nations need to show generosity, willing sacrifice and diligent effort (48), must learn to share wealth to the poorer nations and turn away from avarice (49), make a world fund from fractions of military expenditures and eradicate senseless rivalries (51), formulate an overall policy of worldwide collaboration and agreements (52), and say "no" to wasteful expenditures, lavish display of wealth and debilitating arms race (53).

2. **Rich and Poor Nations of Equal Dignity**

   Rich and poor nations are of equal dignity and are partners in dialogue (54). There must be equity in trade relations and justice in pricing manufactured products of the rich nation and the raw materials of poor nations (56-57). Trade relations and contracts with workers must be fair (59). Economic competition must be within limits to operate justly and fairly (61). Nationalism with haughty pride and racism must be eradicated. Peoples should become collaborators and artisans of their destiny, and the weaker nations need to assume active part in the construction of a better world (65). There should be brotherhood, hospitality and protection to strangers, especially the young and immigrant workers (67-69).

3. **The Role of Business Owners and Development Experts**

   Industrialists, merchants, leaders or representatives of larger enterprises in new areas of industrialization to avoid inhuman principles of individualism, to become initiators of social progress and of human advancement, and to ensure justice in relations between superiors and subordinates and in the standard contracts with reciprocal obligations (70). This is a call for sensitivity on the part of the rich and affluent.

4. **Building the Human Community**

   Collaboration is sought from the young to join lay missionary groups, official or private organizations to do
service for the sake of the poor (74). People must pray and work for the struggle against underdevelopment, discovering the causes of misery and finding means to combat them (75). Excessive economic, social and cultural inequalities create a danger to peace which implies justice (76). Regional agreements lead to peace (77). The undertaking requires effort and sacrifice, but suffering itself favors the progress of the entire human family and in building the Body of Christ: the assembled people of God (79).

C. Appeal to Work for Development, the New Name for Peace

The lay faithful have to help in the renewal of the temporal order, and the richer Catholics have to actively contribute to an international morality based on justice and equity (81). All Christians and non-Christians have to cooperate in opening the road to a more humane life. The way to peace is in development. Educators are to awaken in persons a love for the poor and the media have to tell stories of the poor's mutual assistance as well as the misery which people tend to forget (83). Government officials must mobilize people to world solidarity, to bring about development and to save the peace. International organizations need to collaborate in order to achieve a responsible and equal development of humankind (84). Persons of reflection and of learning should seek and find paths towards solidarity. Those who have witnessed the cry of suffering peoples are the apostles of a good and genuine development, an economy which is put at the service of peoples and the bread distributed to all, as a source of solidarity and a sign of Providence (86).

V. INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

*Popularum Progressio* is for true development that addresses both personal and social aspects. As it is seen in the vaster relations of nations, development is not exclusive for wealthy individuals and nations who may claim to have labored for it. Development is giving to the "others" their share of wealth and resources, and allowing them to participate in the work for local and global progress. Significantly, it is only when development reaches everyone that the prospect for peace begins. The following are some selected and important themes that need attention and deeper reflection:

Common Duty of Church and State

The pontiff's concept of development may lead to uniting these two realities that have come to be permanently isolated from each other. The Church and the state can work together in pursuit of personal and social well-being. On the part of the Church, the hierarchy and the lay must work together in scrutinizing the signs of the times, interpreting them in the light of the Gospel, and working for it. The state, before a prescribed context, for example, the overwhelming force of liberal capitalism in the economy (7, 26, 34, 52, 54, 59, 63, 70), needs to be conscious of the degree it conforms and the extent it succumbs to rules and norms. The Church from a different perspective may offer guidance to the state and, in turn, the state may extend assistance to the Church in fulfilling its mission. It is never impossible for the Church

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32 Liberal capitalism is the ruling force in the international system of the economy. Riga, *The Church of the Poor*, 39.
and the state to work together for the common good. When the Church and the state promote well-being, then human beings, not economics, are placed at the center of development. Both have a common duty to bring about a more humane world, ensuring that no group makes progress at the expense of the other. It is only in cooperative collaboration between the Church and the state that the sovereign rule of God can be truly displayed.

No Justice No Peace

The Pope insinuates about transforming an exclusive economic system to be more inclusive, offering an alternative that truly addresses socio-economic and political issues. The alternative model must ensure international social justice by virtue of the principle of solidarity of the human family (3, 5, 44, and 48). The new system must get into the root causes of suffering and misery; otherwise, we resort to solutions that create problems as it always happens. For example, if an economic plan ventures into making the rich individual or country richer in order to uplift the condition of the poor, it can be viable for the rich but not necessarily alleviating poverty. Indeed, a reasonable solution can become a cause of suffering for the other.

The existence of massive poverty and of the poor negates the existence of peace. From the logic of the encyclical, the broadening breach between the rich and the poor is a shameful scandal that cannot lead to peace. The encyclical talks about the intricate connection between sincere justice and true peace. Justice implies relationship and deals with how one party becomes a true partner to the other. In this regard, the rich now ought to ask why the other partner is poor. Furthermore, it is not enough to know who my neighbor is ("Who is my neighbor?") for the question to answer is "To whom am I a neighbor?" The affection towards the neighbor becomes mature when we can identify among them those who are in dire need of help, and are motivated to act in their behalf. The First World needs to ask, "To whom am I a neighbor?" An answer may lead to designing a development scheme which is in solidarity with the less fortunate and less privileged. One of the immediate needs is the opportunity for education in order to learn towards full responsibility in achieving the desire of the creator: living life to the fullest. But the new development model must be ethics-based that includes the proper political, as well as religious and cultural parameters to realize it, particularly in view of promoting an international morality based on justice and equity (81). We are used to have poor in our midst and we are conditioned to live with it. But what experience can we have if there is no more suffering and misery? It sounds utopian, but it gives hope and can lead the way to true peace. It is an imperative, therefore, to question those who would not work for peace.

Equality and Equity in Trade

The encyclical aspires for just structures in the international order, claiming that unless the existing machinery is modified, the disparity between rich and poor nations will increase. Trade is one area in which a rich

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33 The Pope envisions moderate or democratic socialism as alternative to capitalism. Hennelly, "Populorum Progressio," 765-6.

country takes advantage of, for example, imposing the terms to ensure own economic interests. The existing trade practices and agreements must be scrutinized and evaluated if they equally serve both trade partners and allow equitable profit sharing. Trading partners must ensure a fair ethics in an agreement. The importing rich country may not cite for its advantage any factor like having the exclusive or rare technology in manufacturing certain products as a reason for buying raw materials in a much lower price from an exporting poor country. Trade partners are of equal dignity regardless of political influence and economic standing. We stand with the truth that God has freely given this precious earth and abundant resources for all persons and nations.

Material Wealth and Power

The Pope contends that before the monstrous poverty and underdevelopment, the life of the poor is a matter of survival. The greed, egoism and consequent materialism of the developed nations (41) reduce the human existence of the poor. Wealth, and the accumulation of it, has become a principal factor in determining power, a fact which history reveals. When new trade routes to China and India needed to be discovered, European countries found out that other countries in Asia were rich in agricultural products and natural resources. Driven by mercantilism, Portugal, Spain, France, Netherlands, and Great Britain contested in trading with, and consequently in conquering, the Asians. The European countries, which also wanted to propagate Christianity, competed in acquiring gold and silver, the measure of glory and power then. At the second part of the so-called Western imperialism, Asia turned to be a good source of raw materials for the booming mechanized production of goods, a good destination of products for more profit, and an excellent place of mission to evangelize pagans and emancipate people from ignorance. Other countries like the USSR, Germany, the US and even Japan would later join the competition. Today, there are significant changes in the way trade and business is done. Even communist China benefits from the means many non-communist states have.35 China’s quest for gas and fish-rich grounds are needed to sustain its economic growth.36 Indeed, the same underlying principle of acquiring more wealth and power undeniably remains. It is against this principle that Paul VI reminds about equitable sharing, that both partners equally benefit. Paul VI quotes St. Ambrose: “You are not making a gift of what is yours to the poor man, but you are giving him back what is his.” In the piece of history above, the pagan and ignorant poor nations could have been

35 China receives from the system which sees the accumulation of wealth as goal. As it enters into the competition for world supremacy, China has to accumulate trillions of US dollars, business enterprises and resources. Its territorial disputes with neighboring countries are undeniably motivated by ensuring supply and surplus. The expansion and extension of territory mean security in food and natural resources; China, once humiliated by Western imperialism, seeks to displace this influence of her hegemony in Southeast Asia. Riga, The Church of the Poor, 39.
36 The international community sees that dialogue between the interested countries can bring about a solution. The Philippines on its part seeks for dialogue and has initiated steps for possible joint exploration projects with China and other countries. In early 2014, Indonesia implemented a ban on its nickel export because it needed time to process nickel ore before exporting. This happened after the Indonesian Industry Minister’s visit to China, claiming that he saw stockpiles of 3 million tons of bauxite and 20 million tons of nickel ore. The minister added that this is what the Indonesians would want to stop.
robbed not only of their due share but also of their opportunity and responsibility towards self-fulfillment.

Aid and Climate Change

When the Philippines was battered by two super typhoons, Haiyan and Ruby, the much needed assistance came immediately from the US, UK, Japan, France, Russia, Korea, among other countries. Compared to poor nations, the rich nations have certain amount of financial or material aid ready for countries which may need it. The wealth of these rich nations determines how much help they can give. It is hoped that giving charity is not relative to the surplus wealth of a country, that having more than what is needed makes it charitable. The social doctrine raises the idea that it is for the donor nation to give aid without terms and conditions, ensuring responsible administration and proper use of it. The essential condition in aid cooperation is equality, without which, aid becomes a form of social imperialism.\textsuperscript{37} It is not a matter of “foreign aid” or “act of charity” but of a duty for the rich nations to turn to the poor nations. One crucial test for these developed countries’ will to recognize poor nations as equals is in taking seriously the agenda on climate change. After several summits in the international level (Copenhagen, Tokyo, Qatar, Warsaw, Lima), there is a reluctance to actively participate in the worldwide cry on the effects of not caring for our common home. By active participation, it means the immediate passing of a comprehensive resolution through the UN on minimizing green-house gas emission which degrades the environment to the point of endangering life forms. It requires discernment because thorough understanding of the issue leads to tough decisions. Eradicating the causes of climate change may not be economically viable nor is it for the benefit of influential nations.

Inclusive Economic Growth

The Philippines today enjoys improvement in the economy.\textsuperscript{38} However, critiques say that the current economic growth is not inclusive. While the country benefits from the toil of Overseas Filipino Workers, the government fails to provide more and better employment opportunities that can lead to a more decent life. Millions of Filipinos continue to dream of working abroad because of better compensation. Indeed, the effects of economic gain can be felt in time. What we are not sure of is whether we gain the most when foreign investors do business in our poor country. The encyclical admonishes the government to choose freely the economic system in which it can really craft an effective national development plan (54). The development design ought to bring human values as more essential than market profit. The labor and effort of each contributor in achieving set objectives and goals must be duly rewarded; thus, income must be redistributive.

\textsuperscript{37} Except for some countries, the aid practice as assistentialism is only palliative because it addresses only the symptoms and not the root causes of massive poverty. See Denis Goulet, Development Ethics: A Guide to Theory and Practice (Apex Press: New York, 1995), 153-67.

\textsuperscript{38} The president’s advocacy of “daang maturid” (straight path) demonstrates his resolve to combat corruption. A five-year term is barely to start quelling anomalous practices which have paralyzed the nation for decades. We can notice that doing away with corruption fosters economic growth. For certain, more poor families are helped. Despite of many controversies, infrastructure projects are everywhere.
Conclusion

The visionary pontifex maximus perceives the social question as exigent, for on it the future of civilization of the world depends. All concerned persons must act, and must act together, against unrestrained liberalism or the "international imperialism of money" that stifles the growth of persons and nations. It is the liberal use of capital that leads to both economic and moral poverty. This liberalism promotes individualism because the "other" does not matter. The current development model may lack good moral principles because it excludes the weak and the poor. To become transformative, a new form of development must include those who are excluded and to be open to changes and modifications for economic, social and political good. The various ethical questions posed by development theory, planning, and practice must be taken seriously in order to foster an economic design that embodies solidarity. Development decision-makers must take into account the expressed needs of people in whose benefit they profess to work, and take the arduous task of closely studying the cross-cultural revisions and challenges of designing a development-for-all. We need to link


micro issues to macro questions and to prioritize needs over preferences. Indeed, development includes economic, social, political, cultural, moral and spiritual components of human well-being.

The Catholic Church has long waged the battle against perpetual underdevelopment. But Jean-Yves Calvez notes that the Catholic social teaching has not taken the necessary step forward, on the one hand. On the other hand, liberalism has been making advances. The Church cannot falter to speak on behalf of the victims: the poor and the creation. Just like Paul VI, the universal moral advocate for the poor of the whole world, the Church must encounter these who really need development. As Dagmang succinctly puts it, “There is probably not much reason for surplus-reasoning when the other needs just a glass of water to drink.” The Church must take a courageous stand for the victims of injustice. Christian praxis can liberate the consciousness of those who

41 Paul VI gives a clearer direction for Catholic social thought, citing concrete plans of actions (Populorum Progressio, 1967), and follows up his appeal, pointing to the role of local Christian communities in establishing a just social order (#4, Octogesima Adveniens, 1971). A Synod in Rome expresses the interdependence between hope for a brighter future and the liberating power of the Gospel (#6, Justitia in Mundo, 1971). John Paul II recognizes that not much has been done in response to Paul VI's call (Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, 1987).


43 Pope Benedict updates and re-echoes Populorum Progressio in its 40th anniversary (Love in Truth, Caritas in Veritate, 2009). Lately, Pope Francis joins the whole world in the cry for the protection and care of our common home (Praise be to You, Laudato Si', 2015).

unconsciously exclude and make people suffer. The same praxis can extend true solidarity and make the few in control to hear the cry of the poor. Vibrant hope can flourish from this praxis that enrones solidarity as a transcendent reality: a sacrament of the liberating love of God.

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45 Bombongan suggests that social exclusion is a new name of poverty in the context of neo-liberal globalization. This way of looking at poverty can lead to a more efficient theologizing. See Bombongan, 9-34.


**Websites**


