

Pasig

The Filipino Nation and its Fabrication: From a Catholic Perspective

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**THE FILIPINO NATION AND ITS FABRICATION:
FROM A CATHOLIC PERSPECTIVE**

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Tyler Chua
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The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism and nationalism, and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs.
--Const., (1987), art. II, §13 (Phil.).

ABSTRACT

This is a synthesis between Filipino History, Thomistic Philosophy, and Catholic Social Teaching. This work seeks to examine (i) the history of Filipino nation building; (ii) Catholic views on nationhood in this particular context, (iii) the ideological aspects of Filipino nationalism, (iv) the situation of the local Catholic Church, (v) Catholic social doctrine and its particular application.

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PREFACE

Readers may know the Filipino National Fabrication (*National Fabrication* for short) by its conversational form: the *Great Fabrication*. It is simply the construction of the Filipino national character and identity: namely, a sense of shared language, culture, etc. Likewise, *Fabrication Theory* is simply the belief in the Filipino National Fabrication. In light of this, I seek to answer two core questions: what the Filipino *National Fabrication* is, and why it matters to Catholics.

I did not come up with Fabrication Theory. My first introduction to organized theory happened when a friend of mine introduced me to *Pillar of Liberty*, a neoreactionary publication, and its Kapampangan founder, *Fellglow Keep*. Keep sent me, free of charge, one of his paywalled articles: “The Empire of Lies and ‘Filipino’ Identity,” which greatly inspired this work. Nevertheless, I do not seek to serve any ideology except for what the Catholic Church teaches. Political ideologies and personality cults, at least to me, are still true religion’s unhappy and insufficient replacements which feed on the people’s hopes with promises of a human savior, a Christ figure without a cross. They overshadow the belief in an invisible God, who only appears now as bread and wine, with that of a visible and tangible human being who speaks and looks like us. I remember a sermon by the SSPX priest, Father Saa, in which he said: “A Christ without a Cross is not a saving Christ, and a Cross without a Christ is not a saving Cross.¹” Here, he was referring to some sects: but in the greater scheme of things this quote applies for anyone whom we may attribute national or international salvation to, especially our favorite leaders.

¹ This was certainly in 2019.

I direct my work towards Catholics of all sorts: and so the following chapters following the introduction and background will concern its consequences from a *Catholic perspective*. This work is split into three or so parts with many topics in each. This paper's purpose is simply to promote the truth and defend legitimate ethnic and national identities: always aiming to propagate Christ's social reign: for He is both *Deus Veritatis*² and Truth Himself.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank God, who leads the work of my hands, along with the Host of Heaven: especially Aquinas and John Paul II; without whom this work would be infinitely harder. I am indebted to those who assisted me in my task: you have all given joy to my work. I especially name Mr. Parkany, Father Matthew, and Reuben for their assistance and work in reviewing the preprint; *Fellglow Keep* for his work and his criticisms, and Daniel Long for his work in proofreading the preprint. I would not be able to grasp this topic in what little capacity I do without those. But I also thank you, the reader, for devoting some time and attention to this work. I hope that this work glorifies God in all things. If it is pleasing to Him, I need nothing else. But if it does not please Him, nothing else will suffice. The Philippines and its many peoples are beautiful, and our native lands are gifts from God.

Et sit splendor Domini Dei nostri super nos, et opera manuum nostrarum dirige super nos, et opus manuum nostrarum dirige.

--Ps. 89 (90):17

² God of Truth.

INTRODUCTION

For a very long time Filipinos have debated on what it means to be Filipino, whether it is the color of their skin, some traits, shared culture, or a shared history. Filipinos take pride in their national identity: for better, or for worse. They look up to their countrymen who make it in the international league: singers, boxers, actors, etc. But in truth, we cannot really define what it means to be Filipino. For centuries, locals only expressed attachment to their ethnic group and their region. But in the nineteenth century, something new brought them together. They struggled together, some even died together. But out of this struggle came something bigger than their local and personal realities. For a while, it no longer mattered that they were different. They already had something in common. Normally, we would call this an alliance or a business deal. But to them, it was a *nation*.

But some ask whether this is what the nation is about. Perhaps nations are based on more than just feelings: they are based on objective realities. This leads to back-and-forth discussions between historians. But for the common man, religion plays an important role in daily life. But while many Filipinos are practicing Catholics: few have asked what Catholic teaching can say about this matter or what insights it may have, or whether they are valuable. They contend that the Catholic Church is not about temporal matters. In addition, the Filipino nation-building process contains problematic elements for Catholics. Many Filipino Catholics try to reconcile their national identity with their Catholic Faith. The Church hierarchy tends to do the same. But some wonder whether this is right. There are three questions to ask here: whether the Filipino nation is a *true* nation, on truth and its nature, and finally, whether truth will live in a world of lies.

We know from *Rerum* and *Quadragesimo* that the Church has many things to say on social issues, so perhaps they have insights on the meaning of nationhood, even in the places where we least expect it. Of course, whether or not this is valuable is up to the reader. The teaching Church (*ecclesia docens*) has the authority to guide souls in the path of redemption. Catholic teachings can shed light on Filipino identity or maybe a lack thereof, and what Catholics can do about it. There are many things which few know about which can present a bigger picture on both.

PART I:
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND SECULAR ANALYSIS

I, 1. Historical Background

Historically, there were two historical applications for the term *Filipino*:

1. Every colonial subject, regardless of ethnic group;
2. Insular Spaniards;

The *Relación de las Islas Filipinas* by Fr. Pedro Chirino, S.J. refers to all natives as Filipino: “The first and last diligence that the Filipinos used in case of illness was, as we have said, to offer some sacrifices to their Anitos, or Diwatas, who were their gods. (*La primera i ultima diligencia que los Filipinos usavan en caso de enfermedad era, como avemos dicho, ofrecer algunos sacrificios a sus Anitos, o Diuatas, que eran sus dioses.*)”³ This does not mean that there was a Filipino identity in 1604: rather, the natives were Filipino by virtue of law (de jure).⁴

But as Spaniards immigrated to the Philippine islands, they fathered children in the Philippines. These children were called Creoles, Insulars, but most of all, *Filipinos*. The administration set apart the Creole from the Peninsular, and so the Creole identity developed. The creole was from the white race but born in local culture: they attached themselves to their land of birth. And so the *ethnic* Filipino was not an Austronesian but a Spaniard. *But we must mention that the Creole class was at some point about social status rather than racial purity.*⁵

³ Pedro Chirino, *Relación De Las Islas Filipinas: I De Lo Qve En Ellas an Trabaiado Los Padres Dæ La compañía De Iesvs: del P. Pedro Chirino* (Rome, Estevan Paulino, 1604), 75.

⁴ Jose Mario Alas, “Clarifying a Misconception on the Definition of ‘Filipino’,” Filipino eScribbles, August 30, 2015.

⁵ Nick Joaquin, *A Question of Heroes* (Published and exclusively distributed by Anvil Publishing, 2018), 64.

Before the late nineteenth century, most rebellions limited themselves to ethnic groups. The Creole rebellions seemed to be the same: they all failed due to their small scale. But in these rebellions, rebels from all walks of life and ethnicities fought and died alongside their Creole leaders.⁶

This was the beginning of a struggle which brought the hearts and minds of many towards a common cause which laid the foundations of identity. The Creole rebellions were the first step: but it had to introduce itself to civil society. Nick Joaquin makes a point about Filipino identity in the story of Fr. Jose Burgos. Burgos was a Creole by birth, two thirds Spaniard and one third Indio. He was a canon lawyer who reviewed parish assignments.⁷ He was, along with Fr. Pedro Pelaez, an activist for the rights of Creole priests. From the outset, this struggle was about Creoles and Peninsulars: but Indio priests soon took it up.⁸ Because the native clergy finally had their common struggle, nationalism's foundations spread out from soldiers to priests, and then to the rest of civil society. Thus, many started to believe that everyone born in the Philippines were Filipino, e.g. Apolinario Mabini and Jose Burgos⁹ We call this view the *national identity*. Its first wave affirmed three needs:

⁶ Ibid., 21.

⁷ Nick Joaquin, *A Question of Heroes*, 8.

⁸ Ibid., 4.

⁹ Rolando M. Gripaldo, *Filipino Philosophy: A Critical Bibliography (1774-1997)*, (De La Salle University Press, 2001), 16, note 1.

1. The need for a universal identity to arouse action;
2. The need to disestablish the friarocracy,
3. The need of the Filipino identity for Spain;

These ideas took *Filipino* out of its Creole context and gave it to all. In the process, national identity started to involve a nation-state and become nationalism: but there were still disagreements about it. Identifiers, now nationalists, agreed that the Filipino identity depended on Spain. But they disagreed on whether this was a good thing. And so they split into the reformists, who wanted to keep the new identity under Spain; and Katipunan, which wanted to leave Spain. The reformists wanted the Filipino nation state to be a liberal province, while the revolutionaries wanted an independent nation state. But because the Katipunan rejected Spain, they rejected the *Philippines* on that ground. Instead, they promoted *Katagalugan*, on the basis that everyone born in the Philippines were *Tagalogs* due to the origin of the word Tagalog from taga-ilog (from the river). Emilio Jacinto's *Cartilla* of the Katipunan mentions: "The objective pursued by this association is noble and worthy; to unite the inner being and thoughts of the tagalogs through binding pledge, so that through this unity they may gain the strength to destroy the dense shroud that benights the mind and to discover the Path of the mind and to discover the Path of Reason and Enlightenment."¹⁰ In a note it mentions: "The word tagalog means all those born in this archipelago; therefore, though visayan, ilocano, pam[p]ango, etc. they are all tagalogs."¹¹ And in Carlos Ronquillo's words:

¹⁰ Milagros C. Guerrero, Emmanuel N. Encarnacion, and Ramon N. Villegas. "In Focus: Andres Bonifacio and the 1896 Revolution," National Commission for Culture and the Arts, May 18, 2015. <https://ncca.gov.ph/about-culture-and-arts/in-focus/andres-bonifacio-and-the-1896-revolution/>.

¹¹ Ibid. Now the question is: Did they mean to uphold Tagalogs as ideal, or was it just a name?

This is what the readers must understand: by what we refer to as tagalog, a term which may be found on almost every page of this account, we do not mean, as some believe, those who were born in Manila, Cavite and Balacan, etc. no, we wish to refer to the Philippines...because, in our opinion, this term should apply to all the children of the Filipino nation. Tagalog, or stated more clearly, the name “tagalog” has no other meaning but “tagailog” (from the river) which, traced directly to its root, refers to those who prefer to settle along rivers, truly a trait, it cannot be denied, of all those born in the Philippines, in whatever island or town.¹²

But Joaquin writes of two revolutions: the Manila and the Cavite Revolution. The Manila Revolution refers to Bonifacio’s Katipunan, and the Cavite Revolution refers to Aguinaldo’s: the Manila Revolutionaries were plebeians while the Cavite Revolutionaries were elites.¹³ *While the Manila Katipunan started it, the Revolution was greater than it.*¹⁴ It seems that the Cavite revolutionary leadership still held reformist ideals. Ambeth Ocampo records Aguinaldo’s 1897 interview with *El Imparcial*, in which he says:

I have heard that you represent El Imparcial of Madrid. I am glad to know it. I ask you to tell: our beloved Queen, His Majesty King Alfonso XIII, the government of Señor Sagasta, Spain, and the entire world of our loyalty to Spain, our unconditional adherence to the royal family, the government and laws of our fatherland...The patriotism I speak of today will be unchangeable. We took the field not because we wished for separation from the mother country, which gave us her laws, her religion, her customs, her language, and her way of thinking, but because we are tired of bearing the material and moral burden of that arch, the keystone of which in our country [are] the friars...It is quite true that the Katipunan instilled in us another desire — that of independence — but that desire was unattainable, and moreover it was in opposition to our sentiments. It served as the banner of Andres Bonifacio, a cruel man whom I ordered shot and with his death the Katipunan disappeared.”¹⁵

¹² Ibid. Carlos Ronquillo was secretary to Emilio Aguinaldo. He was a revolutionary chronicler and so is a primary source.

¹³ Joaquin, *A Question of Heroes*, 102.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ambeth Ocampo, “Aguinaldo’s Controversial Interview,” *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, March 7, 2018.

In short: Although the nationalists shared a common view on societal elements such as the friars, the reformists professed a loyalty to Spain and were committed to a peaceful effort to implement its liberal ideas in the colony, while the Katipunan hated both reforms and Spain: reforms, because they prolonged the system, and Spain, because she represented it. But the Revolution was greater than the Katipunan: it seems that reformist and revolutionary feelings merged in the Cavite Revolution.

But not all natives joined the Revolution as it was a Tagalog affair. Guillermo Gomez Rivera speaks of the cooperation between Visayans and Spain.¹⁶ “The truth of the matter is that the Visayans sided with Spain and went against the Tagalog Katipunan because they saw it as an ally of the invading Americans, through their common Masonic connection.”¹⁷ Pampanga was also loyal to Spain. Fellglow, a Kapampangan, comments on the way some interpret the use of *Katagalugan*:

Hence here begins the motte-and-bailey tactic that the Tagalog-built Establishment uses in carrying out its Entropic policy. Government-backed historians see this paltry goal and jump to the conclusion that since the Katipunan and the Revolutionary government applied “Tagalog” to all Filipinos (whose connotation had shifted from insulares to all people living in *Filipinas* in the late 19th century), all “Filipinos” joined the Revolution for the Spanish called it the Tagalog War. A nonsensical motte-and-bailey statement fit only for a matriarchal race.¹⁸

¹⁶ Guillermo Gomez Rivera, “Why Visayans Got Ready for Independence from Spain,” August 25, 2021. <https://www.facebook.com/guillermo.gomezrivera/posts/pfbid0VHdfE9CkaKYLsz3Uiq4WXsCzHvrytuCjTNZMwGMiL3PsU1mpL1nmFhrjTdGyYdmDI>. Rivera is an Ilonggo historian, poet, and Hispanist. He accuses Americans of distorting the history of the Ilonggo Voluntarios who, according to him, faked a rebellion against Spain to deceive the Americans, who they viewed as a greater threat: “When the voluntaries resisted the American invasion of Iloilo, it was the American admiral Marcus Miller who called them “insurrectus”. This is so because when the Ylongo Voluntarios joined the Aguinaldo army, it was for the purpose of closing ranks with the Tagalogs to fight the Americans who had invaded Iloilo and had deliberately provoked a bloody war against the República de Filipinas headed by Emilio Aguinaldo.”

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Keep, “The Empire of Lies and ‘Filipino’ Identity.”

The Cavite Revolution would become the Philippine Republic, but not for long as the Americans would cut it short. The United States had plans of its own.

I, 1.1. *The American Occupation and Independence*

“There being no Philippine nation, but only a collection of different peoples, there is no general public opinion in the archipelago; but the men of property and education, who alone interest themselves in public affairs, in general recognize as indispensable American authority, guidance, and protection.”¹⁹ The 1899 Philippine Commission observed this before the Philippine-American War. This justified the American annexation of the Philippines: it was her prerogative to unite the peoples and prepare them for self-rule. And so, after its defeat in American hands; the nationalist movement slowed down for a while, only to accelerate after the Jones Act of 1916 and the Tydings-McDuffey act of 1934. Americans knew that the Philippines could not remain a colony forever. Neither the dispossessorist Democrats nor the retentionist Republicans opposed Filipino independence: rather, they disagreed on its specifics. Republicans wanted to keep the Filipinos long enough for them to remain under United States protection, while Democrats wanted to grant full independence.²⁰ Nevertheless, both parties committed to

¹⁹ U.S. Philippine Commission. “Some Conclusions Regarding Government,” in *Report of the Philippine Commission to the President* 1, no. 1 (Washington, DC: gov’t print. off., 1900), 121. If this statement is true, then this could imply that the elites were more homogeneous in thought and in customs than the vernaculars who shared other concerns.

²⁰ Adam D. Burns, “Retentionist in Chief: William Howard Taft and the Question of Philippine Independence, 1912-1916,” in *Philippine Studies: Historical & Ethnographic Viewpoints* 61, no. 2 (2013): 165–6. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42634756>.

building a stable and unified people for their own purposes.

Roosevelt opposed independence, but he knew that the United States could not keep the Philippines forever. And so, in 1907, he started to prepare for independence but without making any promises which might undermine current efforts.²¹ But the Republicans soon lost the presidential election to the Democrats, who quickly promised independence. So now it was the job of the United States to prepare Filipinos for independence. After the 1916 Philippine Autonomy Act and the 1934 Philippine Independence Act,²² the nation building process sped up. Before, the United States opposed Filipino nationalism: but now, they praised it as a virtue. The Philippines was no longer a mere subject, but now a United States partner in Asia, not just as a colony, but as an autonomous *Commonwealth*.

But some felt it was overdue. Aguinaldo claimed that George Dewey promised him independence during the Spanish-American War. After the American occupation, many nationalists distrusted the United States, especially Aguinaldo, who accused them of breaking their promises. Those who valued this new Commonwealth were more forgiving, but there were those who still distrusted the process. Regarding the dynamics between Filipino nationalism and the United States, four people come to mind: Antonio Luna, Manuel Quezon, Emilio Aguinaldo, and Artemio Ricarte.

²¹ Stephen Wertheim, "Reluctant Liberator: Theodore Roosevelt's Philosophy of Self-Government and Preparation for Philippine Independence," in *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (2009): 494–518. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41427376>.

²² The Democrats wrote both of them.

I, 1.1.1. Was the Filipino Identity Necessary?

The Filipino Identity was necessary in order to maintain a strong army, because regionalism and tribalism caused problems at war. Antonio Luna was one who understood this. Coming from a mixed-race Ilocano family in Binondo, he studied the sciences and martial arts. Before the war he wrote for *La Solidaridad* under the pen name Taga-ilog. While he did not participate in the Philippine Revolution, the Spanish still saw fit to exile him, though he came home just in time to involve himself with the Republic. He studied military science in Europe, and so Aguinaldo promoted him as brigadier general and Chief of War Operations.

To quiet him [Luna], Aguinaldo named Luna assistant secretary of War, head of the military college at Malolos and, in quick succession, director of war and supreme chief of the Army, arousing the jealousy of the other generals...He had a few ilustrados on his side. The others had become autonomists, federalists, pacifists and counted more with Aguinaldo, the President and Commander-in-Chief.²³

Antonio Luna suspected the Americans and he made it clear. He then resolved to organize and maintain the new army while he still had time. Since regionalism caused his men to only obey officers from their region, he had to foster national unity. And so, he published *La Independencia*.

Knowing that the Revolution and the infant Republic were a contest for the minds of Filipinos, Antonio Luna turned to his other avocation: journalism. Filipino hearts were stout, impregnable fortresses of courage and fortitude, but their minds needed to be strengthened with the ideas of nationhood and the need to fight a new imperialist enemy. He decided to publish a newspaper, "La Independencia." Manned by the best writers, the four-page daily was filled with articles, short stories, patriotic songs and poems.²⁴

²³ Carmen Guerrero Nakpil, "A Plot to Kill a General," *Philippine Star*, October 27, 2008. <https://www.philstar.com/lifestyle/arts-and-culture/2008/10/27/410218/plot-kill-general>. Elite Theory postulates that societal change is often in the hands of elites and counter-elites. We wonder if Luna had the capacity to prevail against the ilustrado elite if not for his death in 1899.

²⁴ Ibid. Just as collective struggle had created a sense of identity, now, this sense of identity had to sustain the collective struggle. But this gives rise to another question: Can collective struggle survive without identity? Luna probably thought not, or maybe he did not want to know: nevertheless he fostered nationalism and identity in his target audience's hearts.

We see the clash between nation and region best in Luna's dealings with Caviteños. Luna struggled with his Caviteño colleagues, such as Aguinaldo and Tomas Mascardo. Other battalions under his command also challenged him, especially the Kawit Battalion, which, opting to take orders from Aguinaldo alone, refused to help the Filipinos fighting in Caloocan. The Filipinos retreated, and Luna blamed the Kawit Battalion for their defeat and disarmed them. This played a part in his death at their hands, which, along with the Republic's collapse, vindicated Luna's national identity to many. But after Luna's death in 1899 and the Republic's collapse in 1901, the Philippines became a United States partner in the Far East. The nationalists split into two factions: those that trusted the American process, and those that would not settle for less.

I, 1.1.2. Quezon's Linguistic Game

Many came to power in the Philippine Commonwealth, including Manuel Quezon. He, a law student, did not join the 1896 Revolution, but served as Emilio Aguinaldo's aide during the Philippine-American War. Afterwards, he became Resident Commissioner in 1907 and a senator in 1916, until becoming the Commonwealth's president in 1935.²⁵ He forgave the United States, pledged allegiance to their flag, and took government positions. He was President when Japan launched its invasion in 1941. He joined the Allied Forces in Bataan and, following their defeat, went into exile in the United States, where he died of tuberculosis.²⁶

²⁵ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. "Manuel Quezon," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, August 15, 2021. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Manuel-Quezon>.

²⁶ Ibid.

Quezon did something apropos to our main topic: he formed the Institute of National Language (INL) in 1937. The INL declared Tagalog to be the national language in the same year. Up to this point, many considered Spanish as a lingua franca among Filipinos. In the Revolution there were mentions of Tagalog as an *official*, but not necessarily a *national* language. Article VIII of the 1897 Constitution states: “Ang wikang tagalog ay siyang mananatiling wika ng Republika.”²⁷ But in the 1899 Constitution the linguistic issue was revisited in Article 93. “El empleo de las lenguas usadas en Filipinas es potestativo. No puede regularse sino por la ley y solamente para los actos de la autoridad pública y los asuntos judiciales. Para estos actos se usará por ahora la lengua castellana.”²⁸

There was no new constitution until 1935, but at this point the 1899 Constitution was no longer in force. But Spanish remained a lingua franca alongside English, with Spanish sometimes being more prominent.²⁹ Nonetheless, English and Spanish were the *linguae francae* in the Philippines during the American period. However, both English and Spanish did not satisfy some nationalists who viewed them as colonialism’s vestiges. There were efforts even before 1935 to promote Tagalog as the National Language.

We discussed an earlier split between reformists and revolutionaries: reformists loved Spain: which by that time was liberal and modern, in contrast to the Philippines which was still conservative. They wrote in her language, and spoke about her beauty and customs: they simply disliked the friars and their roles. Katipuneros on the other hand hated Spain, her customs, and

²⁷ Const., (1897), art. VIII (Phil.). Tagalog shall be the official language of the Republic. Translated by Isabelo Artacho and Felix Ferrer. <https://thecorpusjuris.com/constitutions/1897-constitution.php>

²⁸ Const., (1899), art. XCII (Phil.). The use of the languages spoken in the Philippines shall not be compulsory. It cannot be regulated except by virtue of law and only for acts of public authority and judicial affairs. On such occasions, the Spanish language shall temporarily be used. Translated by the Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/constitutions/the-1899-malolos-constitution/>.

²⁹ Fellgloow Keep, *The Empire of Lies and "Filipino" Identity*.

her laws. They did not want a liberal colony: they wanted full independence and self determination. This clash of ideals was also about linguistics. Rizal's *El Filibusterismo* documents this split in fiction. We met the Academy of the Spanish Language (*Akademya ng Wikang Kastila, AWK*): idealist academics who desired reforms. They disliked the friars but were still willing to work with the government to achieve a peaceful goal. After Sandoval's rousing speech in Spain's favor, we read:

The enthusiasm of his hearers broke all bounds. Isagani embraced him, the others following his example. They talked of the fatherland, of union, of fraternity, of fidelity. The Filipinos declared that if there were only Sandovals in Spain all would be Sandovals in the Philippines. His eyes glistened, and it might well be believed that if at that moment any kind of gauntlet had been flung at him he would have leaped upon any kind of horse to ride to death for the Philippines...³⁰

We contrast this with Simoun's views on language. Simoun, in the past, was also a reformist. Following his so-called death in the previous novel (*Noli Me Tangere*); he became an accelerationist revolutionary.³¹ We see Simoun express his views on the AWK and Filipino hispanism:

"A gross error! ...Spanish will never be the general language of the country, the people will never talk it, because the conceptions of their brains and the feelings of their hearts cannot be expressed in that language—each people has its own tongue, as it has its own way of thinking! ...One and all you forget that while a people preserves its language, it preserves the marks of its liberty, as a man preserves his independence while he holds to his own way of thinking. Language is the thought of the peoples. Luckily, your independence is assured; human passions are looking out for that!"³²

³⁰ Jose Rizal, "In the House of the Students," in *El Filibusterismo* (1891), trans. Charles Derbyshire (Manila, Philippine Education Company, 1912), 135. <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/10676/10676-h/10676-h.htm#d0e1410>

³¹ Acceleration is an ideology that believes that bad systems should be amplified to cause unrest.

³² Rizal, "Simoun," in *El Filibusterismo*, trans. Derbyshire, 61. This is not the Rizalian view of language. The book shows Simoun to be in the wrong in both his actions and his reform-aversion. Rizal was clearly opposed to

The loyal reformists were Hispanists, while the revolutionaries were *Indigenists*. While the reformists died with Rizal, the revolutionaries hung on. Soon there were efforts to create, introduce, and declare a national language fit for all. But there was yet another split within the indigenists: there were promoters of Tagalog as national language: such as Lope K. Santos and Hermenegildo Cruz. On the other hand, there were those who preferred an inclusive language based on Tagalog, such as the Akademya ng Wikang Pilipino (AWP). In 1915 the AWP proposed a proto-language with similar aims as modern Filipino. These aims were made clear in the lexicon Filipino-English Vocabulary by Eusebio Daluz, the AWP's Actual Secretary. In the Introduction it states:

This vocabulary is intended mostly to meet the demands of those who want to establish a common Filipino language, the aim and purpose of the Akademiya ng Wikang Filipino...It contains words used in everyday life and is very practical. It is a mixture of the different Philippine dialects with the Tagalog as basis. Most of the words, of course, are Tagalog, but a large number also are taken from the Bisayan, Ilokano, Bikol, Pampangan and other native dialects, all of which are Tagalized... The work consists of two parts[:] Part 1, which is the present book, is an attempt to present the essentials of Filipino Grammar in such a form that without stating any grammatical definitions and rules it is practically a combination of vocabulary and grammar based upon the Tagalog language...In this work [the Vocabulary] the copiousness and great importance of Lakan-Dula's tongue have been demonstrated in order that it may be the foundation of a national speech rich and vigorous.³³

premature independence: he maintained contact with the Katipunan but never supported the movement. So what did Rizal really think about language? Well, he wrote in Castilian Spanish for starters.

³³ Eusebio T. Daluz, "Introduction," in *Filipino-English Vocabulary: with practical example of Filipino and English grammars* (1915). Of course it was still Tagalog in structure and by its own admission contained a majority Tagalog syntax. But when we compare it to our current iteration it is very inclusive in comparison.

Some refer to this as “Filipino language that might have been,”³⁴ for the national language declared in 1937 was not this constructed language but rather a purer Tagalog. Comparable with the linguistic provisions of previous constitutions, the 1935 Constitution provides guidelines about the National Language. “The National Assembly shall take steps toward the development and adoption of a common national language based on one of the existing native languages. Until otherwise provided by law, English and Spanish shall continue as official languages.”³⁵

And so in 1937 the Commonwealth established the Institute of National Language to undertake this goal. The chairman was Waray-waray, and the six members were one from each major language group: Ilocano, Cebuano, Ilonggo, Tagalog, Moro, and Bicolano. In the same year, the Institute declared Tagalog as the national language. However, English remained the mode of instruction until the Second World War; when the Japanese administration promoted the national language. Many provincial folk did not receive Tagalog (Pilipino since 1959) well.³⁶ But even within the Tagalistas³⁷ there were disagreements on the nature of the language. There were the purists who rejected words which were not in the Tagalog lexicon, opting instead to create new words with pure Tagalog syntax. On the other hand, there were universalists who wanted to

³⁴ Paul Morrow, “The Filipino Language That Might Have Been,” *Pilipino Express*, 2010. <https://www.pilipino-express.com/history-a-culture/in-other-words/911-the-filipino-language-that-might-have-been.html> Morrow is a Canadian author and an enthusiast of Filipino culture, history, etc. especially the Tagalog language and Baybayin.

³⁵ Const., (1935), art. VI (Phil.). An official language is practically a lingua franca, as opposed to a national language which is part of the national character. We know from the Ford Report that Spanish was widespread during the early stages of American colonization, even up to the 1910s.

³⁶ Paz M. Belvez, “Development of Filipino, the National Language of the Philippines,” National Commission for Culture and the Arts, June 2, 2015, <https://ncca.gov.ph/about-ncca-3/subcommissions/subcommission-on-cultural-disseminationscd/language-and-translation/development-of-filipino-the-national-language-of-the-philippines/#>; Andrew Gonzalez, “The Language Planning Situation in the Philippines,” *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, (Manila, De la Salle University, 2010), 114-5.

³⁷ Those who uphold Tagalog ideas as paramount, especially Tagalog as a national language. Pejorative.

include words from other languages, both national and foreign. Gonzales writes about the ‘National Language Wars’ which “ended temporarily only when the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the national language agency.”³⁸ Purists promoted the ABAKADA alphabet which was ‘more faithful’ to Baybayin.

But speakers of other languages who did not share a similar pronunciation or alphabet contested this: and so in 1971 the universalist approach prevailed: the national language would use foreign syntaxes and “phonological units” and the name *Filipino* would replace *Pilipino*.³⁹ In Gonzales’ words:

...a compromise solution was a ‘universalist’ approach to the national language, to be called Filipino (with an /f/ rather than a /p/, to represent those Philippine languages with the voiceless labiodental fricative — the Northern group of languages on the island of Luzon, as well as the ‘universalist’ rather than ‘purist’ approach of accepting phonological units and other features from other Philippine languages and from second or foreign languages, in this case, Spanish and English).⁴⁰

This compromise solution was ratified in the 1987 Constitution which states: “The national language of the Philippines is Filipino. As it evolves, it shall be further developed and enriched on the basis of existing Philippine and other languages.”⁴¹ Many dispute whether the state has implemented this provision well. Yet what we know is that the current iteration of Filipino is still majorly Tagalog, and there has also been a growing trend of code-switching between Filipino

³⁸ Gonzalez, “The Language Planning Situation in the Philippines,” 115. The national language agency ruled in favor of the purists.

³⁹ Ibid.; Belvez, “Development of Filipino, the National Language of the Philippines.” So the language commission took one-eighty, so to speak, and promoted something in the spirit of the AWP’s aim, but not to such an extent as the AWP model.

⁴⁰ Gonzalez, “The Language Planning Situation in the Philippines,” 115.

⁴¹ Const., (1987), art. XIV, §6 (Phil.).

and English or the local vernacular. Quezon was not alone in his linguistic views; but throughout the thirties English remained the mode of instruction: it would take another world power to implement the National Language.

I, 1.1.3. The Costs of Nation Building

Whenever we think of collaborators in Philippine history - we often think of the Japanese occupation: Laurel, Vargas, Ramos, Ricarte, Aguinaldo, etc. But collaborators are simply those who work with an occupying force: many people we view as heroes played the same role, such as Manuel Quezon. Quezon fought against the Americans in 1899, but soon he found himself working for Uncle Sam. But society does not view this collaboration as treason, for he worked to obtain independence within the process. This was acceptable for many, but not to Katipuneros such as Artemio Ricarte and to some extent, Aguinaldo.⁴² Aguinaldo also had his own personal feuds with Quezon and the U.S., but he pledged allegiance to the United States: he still participated in the system; he ran for and lost the 1935 presidential election against Quezon. Still, he desired immediate Filipino independence, and perhaps he wanted it in the most convenient way.

But the irreconcilable Artemio Ricarte did not associate himself with Americans: he went into exile in Hong Kong from 1910-1915 where he wrote revolutionary literature. In 1915, he moved to Japan; where he established himself as a restaurateur and teacher. He and his wife both established themselves in Japanese and expatriate society. Nevertheless they both committed themselves to immediate Filipino independence and they doubted the Commonwealth's

⁴² Satoshi Ara, "Emilio Aguinaldo under American and Japanese Rule: Submission for Independence?," in *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints*, 63, 169. Perhaps Aguinaldo's feelings towards the Americans were based on his feelings of betrayal and his perception of broken promises and lies. If America did not occupy the Philippines, would Aguinaldo have been so supportive of Japanese interests?

processes. But we must say that Ricarte viewed Aguinaldo as an opportunist: always working to further his interests with the dominant power.⁴³ Aside from his perception of U.S. betrayal in the Spanish-American War, he resented the Americans for their support of Quezon.⁴⁴ Ara writes that Aguinaldo held a grudge against Quezon, which, along with political ambition, also caused some of the actions we will elaborate on later.⁴⁵

While the Empire of Japan did not involve themselves in the last century's revolutions, Japanese nationals were involved in many. In this case, Pan-Asianists such as Dr. Yaroku Nakamura aided the revolutionaries in the 1896 and 1899 struggles, such as when the steamer Nunobiki Maru tried to transport supplies to them. Japanese Pan-Asianism was in the best interests of both expansionists as well as honest idealists: they wanted *Asia for the Asians*, which we now associate with the Greater East Asia co-Prosperity Sphere. The Philippine-American War also saw the direct involvement of Japanese nationals in the struggle. Tei Hara and his volunteers fought alongside Aguinaldo until the Republic's collapse. So Aguinaldo and Ricarte had their reasons to trust the Japanese pan-Asianists at face value, because Japanese idealists had taken up their struggle as their own. Aside from this, they both wanted to one-up the Americans: Aguinaldo especially wanted to settle scores with Quezon despite their formal reconciliation.⁴⁶ This trust was seemingly verified when the occupation quickly proclaimed Philippine Independence and created a new Filipino State, satisfying many veterans and nationalists. Jose P. Laurel; son of Malolos signatory Sotero Laurel y Remoquillo, would lead the Republic, with the

⁴³ Ibid., 166-7. Aguinaldo involved himself in the American process.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 169.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

support of Ricarte and Aguinaldo, also cooperated with the Japanese occupation in many ways.⁴⁷ Japanese intellectuals generally held a positive view on Aguinaldo before the war⁴⁸ due to his armed resistance against Western powers; believing that Americans invented his negative image.⁴⁹ The Empire considered Ricarte as a potential asset, hoping that a national hero could influence public opinion in their favor.⁵⁰ But many had already forgotten about him, and many who remembered him suspected him for his militant and radical views.⁵¹ Aguinaldo also played the propagandist's role, both in his speeches where he implored Allied to surrender⁵² and in his involvement with the Japanese Propaganda Corps.⁵³ he also participated in the Council of State.⁵⁴ But Ara writes that Aguinaldo possibly lost some enthusiasm for the Japanese occupation upon realizing its nature as yet another oppression.⁵⁵ Time would catch up with Aguinaldo, and

⁴⁷ We also make an honorary mention to Bishop Cesar Maria Guererro, son of revolutionary Leon Guererro. Bishop Guererro reportedly supported the Japanese administration in a radio address, in which he supposedly said that God has “decreed that our country [the Philippines] be passed into the hands of a sister Oriental nation [Japan].” We read this in Alfredo G. Parpan, “The Japanese and the Philippine Church, 1942-45,” in *Philippine Studies* 37, no. 4 (1989): 1. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42633149>.

⁴⁸ Takamichi Serizawa, “Japanese Solidarity Discourse on the Philippines during the Second World War,” in *Philippine Studies: Historical & Ethnographic Viewpoints*, 63, no. 1 (2015): 81-84. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24672308>.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 81.

⁵⁰ Grant K. Goodman, “General Artemio Ricarte and Japan,” *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 7, no. 2 (1966): 59-60. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20067571>.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Ara, “Emilio Aguinaldo under American and Japanese Rule: Submission for Independence?” 172-4.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 181.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 171.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 170.

the Allied forces would arrest him and charge him after the collapse of the occupation. But they vindicated him,⁵⁶ and he died in 1964. On the other hand; Ricarte's role in the war was much more tragic than Aguinaldo's. He was also a propagandist who gave radio broadcasts and campaigned around the countryside on the administration's behalf,⁵⁷ though he held no position except as a member of the Advisory Council on National Language.⁵⁸ But Ricarte would never see the ultimate Japanese defeat: Refusing to leave his country, he retreated to the hinterlands of the Cordilleras along with the Japanese during the Battle of Bessang Pass. There, along with many Japanese soldiers, the 78 year old Ricarte succumbed to dysentery on the 31st of July, 1945.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 185. Ara writes in the same source that Aguinaldo was never tried.

⁵⁷ Goodman, "General Artemio Ricarte and Japan." 60.

⁵⁸ Ibid.



Fig 1. One of the many propaganda slogans made during the Laurel administration. It is the Tagalog words for "One Banner, One Nation, One Language". Photograph from Reader's Digest, 18 June 2013, Kasaysayan: Story of the Filipino People Volume 7.

We read about the bitterness which Aguinaldo and Ricarte felt which led them to collaborate with Japan, along with the vindication of their efforts and sacrifices. But aside from the prospect of independence, perhaps there was something which the Japanese administration offered that the Americans failed to do: an "authentic" Filipino identity. They promoted the Tagalog language heavily: President Laurel was the first President to take the Oath of Office in

Tagalog.⁵⁹ Jose writes that many of his speeches “were delivered in Tagalog; several of his speeches called for Tagalog as the national language.”⁶⁰ The Second Republic was one where old conquering heroes of the nineteenth and early twentieth century came back in the spotlight: marching with an armed entourage not into exile, but into glory. His dreams vindicated, Ricarte collaborated with Japan not because of coercion, but because he saw the fulfillment of an independent republic, only if by name. As for Aguinaldo, his role is unclear: he said that he acted under duress; but Ara writes that he “could not deny that he had an inclination toward Japan, which had been nurtured since the late nineteenth century and had definitely led to his collaboration with the Japanese.”⁶¹ Although there were also many Katipuneros who opposed the Japanese occupation: Teresa Magbanua being a noteworthy example,⁶² The fact remains that the Second Philippine Republic satisfied many Revolutionaries: not only because of independence, but because in their eyes, it was authentic. Many lives were lost to obtain this, and many suffered: but this was nothing new to the vindicated generals. It has always been the efficient cause of *Katagalugan*: namely, *dugo at pawis*.⁶³

⁵⁹ Ricardo T. Jose, “Dr. Jose P. Laurel as President of the Second Philippine Republic,” (Manila, Malacanang Palace). <https://web.archive.org/web/20190715193859/http://malacanang.gov.ph/5237-dr-jose-p-laurel-as-president-of-the-second-philippine-republic/>

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ara, “Emilio Aguinaldo under American and Japanese Rule: Submission for Independence?” 185.

⁶² Henry F. Funtecha, “Nay Isa, the bravest woman fighter of Iloilo.” *The News Today*, October 20, 2006.

⁶³ Blood and sweat.

I, 2. Secular Analysis

Now that we are up to speed on the historical background, it is time to analyze these facts.

The Historical Background covered three important things:

- firstly, the Filipino Identity first applied to Insular Spaniards, although the specifics varied at that time
- secondly, the nationalist movement was not truly united: it consisted of many ideological splits concerning the new identity's nature and even language;
- and finally, Filipino identitarianism was born from practical necessity:

But before we continue we must define terms. The *nation*, *national character*, and *national identity* are connected but fundamentally distinct. The nation is a group of people with a shared nationality. The national character is the nation's objective realities which one may identify with. The national identity is the feelings based on a perceived national character. So when Rothbard states that the nation is a complex of subjective feelings based on objective realities,⁶⁴ he means that the nation is a combination of identity and character.

I, 2.1. *The Civic Nation*

I, 2.1.1. Was the Filipino Nation A Civic Nation?

There are two types of nations: the ethnic nation, and the civic nation. Ethnic nations are nations which usually begin from an ethnicity, while civic nations are those that begin with shared politics. Usually; in an ethnic nation, the identity is discovered, while in the civic nation,

⁶⁴ Rothbard, "Nations by Consent."

the identity is made. Sometimes, an civic nation can be an ethnic nation, i.e. congruent with an ethnic group, but in many cases it is not. In the historical background we read that the Creole rebellions planted the first seeds of *collective struggle* within the people, i.e. Creoles, ethnic Chinese, and the various Indio ethnicities. This was further amplified by the secularization movement.⁶⁵ We read how many became sympathetic to the view that everyone born in the Philippines were Filipino regardless of ethnicity or race. This is the textbook definition of the civic nation, and so the Filipino nation is a civic nation.

I, 2.1.2. Is the Filipino Nation Fabricated?

In many cases people from multiple nationalities, guided by shared political beliefs, form a civic nation and then develop a national identity. Many civic nations are not *ethnic nations*: but different groups from the same race can become a nation if a national character forms in the process.⁶⁶ Most of the time it will be fabricated, but may become real. The Filipino civic nation is still under construction, which the Philippine Constitution admits: “The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in *nation-building* and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism and nationalism, and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs.”⁶⁷ Quezon also implicitly admitted this: not necessarily in words, but in deeds. There was no national language, so he had to make one. And to this day, those in charge still work to form a national character. In

⁶⁵ Joaquin, *A Question of Heroes*, 4.

⁶⁶ This almost always happens with minority diasporas: the African American community for example has formed one national character despite tracing their ancestries from different ethnic groups.

⁶⁷ Const., (1987), art. II, §13 (Phil.). We see the words ‘nation-building’ in many more sections.

their eyes; Filipinos have a shared national language: Filipino, a Tagalog-based constructed language which tries to include other syntaxes.⁶⁸ They now have *Filipino traits* as well: *bayanihan*,⁶⁹ *crab mentality*,⁷⁰ *colonial mentality*,⁷¹ *Filipino Time*,⁷² *tingas-kogon*⁷³, etc. These are often a source of pride or shame among Filipinos. The very word *nation building* implies some degree of fabrication and invention. This is the crux of Fabrication Theory.

I, 2.1.3. Is the Philippines an Empire?

Civic nationalists often paint ethnonationalists in a negative light: fascist, xenophobic, racist, etc. They portray civic nationalism as inclusive, tolerant, and fair. A civic nationalist would say, for instance: “Black, White, Hispanic, Native...we are all Americans!” Ethnonationalists, due to their emphasis on ethnic differences, are then division’s fosterers and provokers: they stand in the way of “national unity.” But is this really true? Many civic nations, as we will see, are essentially empires. We will review the imperial nature of some civic nations. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* defines an empire as a “major political unit in which the metropolis, or single sovereign authority, exercises control over territory of great extent or a

⁶⁸ Of course in practice it is still essentially Tagalog, but that is beyond the point: this is the national language. It has come to a point when singing the National Anthem in a regional language is punishable by imprisonment: this has not stopped the Cebuano local government from using Cebuano Visayan, leading to violent reactions among civic nationalists.

⁶⁹ A sense of community. We often picture this as a village carrying a resident’s house, as nipa huts are generally portable.

⁷⁰ The penchant to bring more successful compatriots down out of a sense of envy, we refer to it this way due to an anecdote about crabs in a bucket pulling each other down lest one escapes.

⁷¹ A penchant to prefer the foreign over the local, or lighter skin over the dark.

⁷² The penchant for tardiness supposedly unique to Filipinos.

⁷³ The penchant to leave enterprises unfinished.

number of territories or peoples through formal annexations or various forms of informal domination.”⁷⁴ Empires are naturally multi-national, and they also require a political and sometimes cultural hegemony: one nation above the rest. For example: the Spanish Empire introduced western clothing and Christian religion to their subjects. In the Filipino nation’s spirit, The Philippine nation state exercises a cultural hegemony which many do not ignore. It blatantly promotes the Tagalog people, not only in language, but also in traits. Filipino affairs are centered around the National Capital Region or Metro Manila, the *metropolis* of the Philippine nation state, which controls other regions and ethnic groups through various means. Many call this *Imperial Manila*, and even those in the highest offices of government use it. The Philippine nation-state exercises these defining characteristics of an empire:

- a centralized metropolis;
- multiple nationalities and subordinate territories;
- preference of a specific nation;
- political, economic, and cultural hegemony.

And so, we can appropriately call the Philippine nation state the *Philippine Empire*. In Part II we will support this claim by defining what the nation is in light of Catholic social doctrine.

⁷⁴ Daniel I. O’Neill, "empire." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Invalid Date.
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/empire-political-science>.

Conclusion

The Filipino National Identity was born out of a fleshed-out struggle which could make one forget about differences for a while. Luna understood that the multiple wars involving the Filipino nation-state can only solidify it. Quezon understood the importance of keeping this spirit alive through national symbols. However, Aguinaldo and Ricarte fully understood the costs of this spirit. They both suffered exile, defeat, and suffering. They both gave up the lives of many soldiers; only to find that it had all been for nothing. So when they saw the opportunity that they have been dying for present itself; they took it. After all, Japan was just another empire. But at least they fulfilled their promises.

PART II

CATHOLIC ETHNOLOGICAL AND ESSENTIAL ANALYSIS

Some wonder whether one can apply Catholic teaching to ethnology. From its genesis, Catholic thinkers have thought about social issues, including society's units: especially during the Middle Ages and the revolutionary periods of the nineteenth century. This Catholic perspective will encompass Biblical, Medieval, Modern, and twenty-first century teachings, showing continuity between all.

II, 1. Introduction to Catholic Ethnology

As a community, nations often consist of smaller units: families, clans, and polities (in ascending order). The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that the family is the basic unit of society:

The family is the original cell of social life. It is the natural society in which husband and wife are called to give themselves in love and in the gift of life. Authority, stability, and a life of relationships within the family constitute the foundations for freedom, security, and fraternity within society. The family is the community in which, from childhood, one can learn moral values, begin to honor God, and make good use of freedom. Family life is an initiation into life in society.⁷⁵

In the Philippines, this sentiment is normal: Tagalog culture for example is very family-oriented. Nevertheless, the *family unit* varies according to factors: but almost always shares relations with other families. When families unite; they form a clan which usually shares a common ancestor and sometimes surname and domain, e.g. the Cojuangcos and their properties. Clan members

⁷⁵ Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 2000), 2207.

rarely know each other on a personal basis. Oftentimes they meet up in large family reunions and are often big enough to wage private wars against other clans, e.g. Hatfields and McCoys.

Political communities are organized structures which maintain order between social groups. They serve as our political and social realities: *bubbles* where we interact. Examples of political communities include: tribes, federal states, local government units, countries, empires, schools, religious organizations, and villages. There can be many political communities within each other. For instance a university which per se is a political community, but subsists in smaller polities: colleges, faculties, etc. Normally the political community applies to a State: which, like the family, is natural.⁷⁶

Nations, according to St. John Paul II, are similar to families.⁷⁷ They differ from a nation state, which is a polity congruent with a nation. Murray Rothbard defined the nations as “a complex of subjective feelings of nationality based on objective realities.”⁷⁸ there are two ways people view the nation:

- The ethnic group, which has “similar institutions, culture, and language,”⁷⁹ e.g. the Tagalogs who share common dialects; culture, and institutions. This is the *ethnic nation*;

⁷⁶ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1882.

⁷⁷ John Paul II, *Memory and Identity: Personal Reflections*, (London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005), 77.

⁷⁸ Murray Newton Rothbard, “Nations By Consent: Decomposing the Nation-State.” (2017), 2. Many polities are congruent with a nation; melting pots of many nationalities; or do not completely envelop a nation but are homogenous. But as we said: we should not conflate the nation with the nation state, both are separate concepts. Neither are nations countries: the nation is simply a group of people with a shared ethnos.

⁷⁹ Fellglow Keep, *The Empire of Lies and "Filipino" Identity*, Pillar of Liberty, April 19, 2022. <https://pillarofliberty.substack.com/p/the-empire-of-lies-and-filipino-identity?s=r>.

- The imagined community, which upon realizing a national identity, creates its own objective realities.⁸⁰ This is the civic nation;

But the Catholic Church teaches that nations are cultural, natural, and racial. St. John Paul II defines a nation in this way:

The term ‘nation’ designates a community based in a given territory and distinguished from other nations by its culture. Catholic Social doctrine holds that the family and nation are both natural societies, not the product of mere convention. Therefore, in human society they cannot be replaced by anything else. For example, the nation cannot be replaced by the State, even though the nation tends naturally to establish itself as a state...Still less is it possible to identify the nation with so-called democratic society, since here it is a case of two distinct, albeit interconnected orders.⁸¹

And so John Paul II rejects the modern view of nations, i.e. that the nation is an *imagined community* which can be made out of nothing (*mere convention*) or identified with democratic (civic) society. He goes on to write: “Did not the twentieth century witness a widespread tendency to move towards supranational structures, even internationalism? And does this tendency not prove that small nations, in order to survive, have to allow themselves to be absorbed into larger political structures? Yet it still seems that the nation and native land, like the family, are permanent realities.”⁸² Nevertheless, new nations can develop from older ones if these new nations begin to share the commonalities which the next chapter will mention. The same chapter will show that John Paul II’s views on nationhood are continuous with ancient and medieval views.

⁸⁰ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London, Verso, 1983).

⁸¹ John Paul II, *Memory and Identity*, 77.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 74-5.

II, 1.1. *Medieval and Contemporary Views on Nationhood*

The Greek Historian Herodotus defines nationhood as sharing *similar languages, customs, race, and culture*:

For there are many great reasons why we should not do this, even if we so desired; first and foremost, the burning and destruction of the adornments and temples of our gods, whom we are constrained to avenge to the utmost rather than make pacts with the perpetrator of these things, and next the kinship of all Greeks in blood and speech, and the shrines of gods and the sacrifices that we have in common, and the likeness of our way of life, to all of which it would not befit the Athenians to be false.⁸³

Culture in Herodotus' context takes on the religious sense, i.e. cultus. In medieval Europe, the nations shared the same *religion* with different expressions (culti). But *culture* can be generalized as encompassing customs and behaviors. Regino of Prüm, O.S.B., in a letter to Hatto, the Archbishop of Mainz; observes differences among nations - including their local religious practices:

Likewise it should be observed, that, just like how the diverse nations of the people differ among themselves in race, behavior, language, laws, in this way the holy universal [Catholic] church is spread from the whole world, although bound together in unity of faith, yet ecclesiastical customs differ from each other. (*Nec non et illud sciendum, quod, sicut diversae nationes populorum inter se discrepant genere moribus lingua legibus, ita sancta universalis [e]cclesia toto orbe terrarum diffusa, quamvis in unitate fidei coniungatur, tamen consuetudinibus [e]cclesiasticis ab invicem differt.*)⁸⁴

It is possible that this view was a given for most thinkers and churchmen. Bernard, the Bishop of St. David's, writes to Innocent II⁸⁵ about the nationhood of the Welsh:

⁸³ Herodotus, *The Histories*, viii, 144, 2, translated by A. D. Godley, (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1920).

⁸⁴ Regino of Prüm, *Epistula Regionis: ad Hathonem archiepiscopum missa*, ed. Friedrich Kurze, *Reginonis Abbatis Prumiensis Chronicon, Monumenta Germaniae historica, Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi* (Hanover, Hannoverae Impensis Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1890), xix – xx.

⁸⁵ Robert Bartlett, "Medieval and Modern Concepts of Race and Ethnicity," in *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31, no. 1 (2001): 47. muse.jhu.edu/article/16476.

But you will undoubtedly recognize our province of Kent and London to lie between the provinces with eight counties, and that the people of our province differ in their nation,⁸⁶ language, laws and customs, and judgments and conventions. (*No[v]eritis autem proculdubio inter pro[v]incias, nostram quidem et Cantuarieusem Londonie pro[v]inciam cum viii comitatibus interiacere, et populos nostre pro[v]incie, natione, lingua, legibus et raoribus, iudiciis et consuetudinibus discrepare.*)⁸⁷

This implicates the Catholic hierarchy's acceptance towards the ancient definition of nationhood, i.e. that it consisted of race, culture and language. This can explain why Bernard had recourse to such criteria, if it was not an accepted view otherwise. In his address to UNESCO, John Paul II connects at least three distinct universals with the nation: culture, genealogy, and education:

*[T]he law of the Nation must be set along the same line: it, too, must be placed at the basis of culture and education... The Nation is, in fact, the great community of men who are united by various ties, but above all, precisely by culture. The Nation exists "through" culture and "for" culture, and it is therefore the great educator of men in order that they may "be more" in the community. It is this community which possesses a history that goes beyond the history of the individual and the family. It is also in this community, with respect to which every family educates, that the family begins its work of education with what is the most simple thing, language, thus enabling man who is at the very beginning to learn to speak in order to become a member of the community of his family and of his Nation.*⁸⁸

II, 1.1.1. Elements of Culture

In *Memory and Identity* he elaborates on *essential cultural elements*: history, knowledge, and beauty:

Like individuals, then, nations are endowed with historical memory. So it is understandable that they should seek to record in writing what they remember...[a]nd the histories of nations, objectified and recorded in writing, are among the essential elements

⁸⁶ Latin *natione* can be understood as 'race' in some contexts.

⁸⁷ Gerald of Wales, *Invectiones 2.7*; edited by W. S. Davies, *Y Cymmrodor 30* (London, Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, 1920): 142.

⁸⁸ John Paul II, "Address of John Paul II to the United Nations Organization for Education, Science, and Culture (UNESCO)," Paris, June 2, 1980.

of culture - the element which determines the nation's identity in the temporal dimension.⁸⁹

A shared history is often what activates or solidifies national consciousness. Without making a judgment on the Filipino *nation*, we read in the Historical Background that the Filipino National Identity was born out of the secularization movement and sustained by its many wars. The knowledge of history is based on the fundamental definition of universal human culture:

Keeping in mind this brief sketch of man's original state, we will now return to the first chapter of the Book of Genesis, where we read that God created man in his image and likeness and said: 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea' (Gen. 1:28). These words are the earliest and most complete definition of human culture. To subdue and have dominion over the earth means to discover and confirm the truth about being human, about the humanity that belongs equally to man and to woman...Of course human culture depends not only on our knowledge of the outside world, but also on our knowledge of ourselves, including our twofold gender...Deeply ingrained in our human culture is the element of beauty...This is what lies at the very heart of the culture that is expressed in works of art...Every nation draws life from the works of its own culture.⁹⁰

The culture of nations is a particularized form of universal culture. For example, ethnic groups share commonalities with each other: Tagalogs share commonalities with Visayans, who both share commonalities with other Austronesians, so on and so forth. This is why *language* and *history* serve to further specify the nations. The Filipinos have shared history, but their poems and songs are completely different. To this day the various ethnic groups and regions have their own folk music, languages, expressions, etc.

⁸⁹ John Paul II, *Memory and Identity*, 83-4.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 89-94.

Genealogy

John Paul II distinguishes between the genealogy of blood and that of religion. John

Paul II states:

[I]t is good to turn once again to Sacred Scripture: here we find the very elements of the elements of an authentic theology of the nation. This is especially true for Israel. The Old Testament describes the genealogy of this nation, chosen by the Lord as his own people. The term ‘genealogy’ usually refers to biological ancestors. Yet we can also speak of genealogy, perhaps even more validly, in a spiritual sense.⁹¹

He emphasizes that Christians partake in this spiritual genealogy, which we will talk about in part III.⁹² But in the national context, he speaks about the baptism of Poland: “When we speak of Poland’s baptism, we are not simply referring to the sacrament of Christian initiation received by the first historical sovereign of Poland, but also to the event which was decisive for the birth of the nation and the formation of its Christian identity...Poland as a nation emerges from its pre-history at that moment and begins to exist in history.”⁹³

II, 1.1.2. Education and Language

In his address to UNESCO, he defines the nation as “the great educator of men in order that they may “be more” in the community.”⁹⁴ He goes on to write:

It is this community which possesses a history that goes beyond the history of the individual and the family. It is also in this community, with respect to which every family educates, that the family begins its work of education with what is the most simple thing,

⁹¹ John Paul II, *Memory and Identity*, 78.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 87.

⁹⁴ John Paul II, “Address of John Paul II to the United Nations Organization for Education, Science, and Culture (UNESCO).”

language, thus enabling man who is at the very beginning to learn to speak in order to become a member of the community of his family and of his Nation.⁹⁵

Education is the vehicle between a man and his culture. One of the striking bridges between education and culture is language, which the Pope mentioned in his address. In the Philippines, there are multiple languages and dialects which often define many nations. Indeed, out of all the shared elements of culture among the Philippine ethnic groups, language separates them in the most distinctive way. In his Address to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations, he states that “every nation also enjoys the right to its own language and culture, through which a people expresses and promotes that which I would call its fundamental spiritual ‘sovereignty’.”⁹⁶ He also applies this same principle to minority groups in the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church.⁹⁷ Catholic Social doctrine implies that language and culture are equally important, language being both distinguished from and considered an aspect of culture.⁹⁸ And so, in principle John Paul II’s ethnography is consistent with medieval thought.

II, 1.1.3. Ethnographic Groups

There are some distinctions to be made between *ethnic groups*, which are nations *proper*, and ethnographic groups, which can be called sub-ethnic groups. Ethnographic groups share the

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ John Paul II, “Address to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations,” (New York, United Nations Headquarters, October 5, 1995), quoted in Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, (London, England: Burns & Oates, 2006), 157.

⁹⁷ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, (London, England: Burns & Oates, 2006), 387.

⁹⁸ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 387.

same characteristics as their ethnic group but they possess subcultures, which include dialects - without being completely different. An ethnographic group can be one of two things:

1. A nation which, by accident of history, shares a national character with another and merges to form a greater nation;
2. Groups within an ethnic group which have adapted themselves to the local environment;

Bartlett states that the English monk and historian William of Malmesbury writes of multiple identities which exist within a nation: these we refer to as ethnographic groups or subethnic groups:

William of Malmesbury's usage sometimes suggests that there may be *gentes* of more than one kind, specifically that one *gens* may be a subdivision of a larger *gens*. He is willing to call the Northumbrians, Mercians, East Anglians, and men of Kent *gentes*, but also refers continually to the *gens Anglorum*. A member of the "Kentish nation" (*gens Cantuariorum*) was also presumably a member of the "English nation," hence having more than one ethnic identity simultaneously.⁹⁹

Nevertheless, we know that these ethnographic groups spoke one language, Old English, in multiple dialects. They were more specific than the general 'gens Anglorum' which encompassed these traits. In the Philippines, there is the Tagalog *ethnic group*; but Batangueño Tagalogs are distinct from Marinduque Tagalogs in their subculture, i.e. dialects. Nonetheless they retain enough commonalities to remain under a greater nation. John Paul II states that the Polish *nation* incorporated Polish ethnic groups along with Pomeranians and Silesians, the last of which now have their own distinct identities - and these tribes became Polish by baptism.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Robert Bartlett, "Medieval and Modern Concepts of Race and Ethnicity," 43-44

¹⁰⁰ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 87.

While the Polish ethnic groups and Silesians shared common culture and language with the other Polish tribes (and so became a nation), Silesia became its own unique ethnos after Germanic tribes conquered it.¹⁰¹ Pomerania was a more significant outlier; which is a clear nation with their own ethnographic groups.

II. 1.2. *Thomistic Causality for the Nation*

Thomism is the historical patrimony of thought for the Latin Church, and is a safe way to explain Catholic thought. We can apply the Aristotelian-Thomistic four causes for nationhood, i.e. the national character. As nations are immaterial, the term *matter* is a metaphor:

- the *material cause* is the objective realities: culture, race, and language;
- the formal cause is a shared trait;
- the efficient cause is the societal units;
- the final cause is for one to identify with;

So the national identity properly causes the people to conform to the national character to realize a community. But as long as the efficient agent does not actualize the matter, neither will exist.¹⁰²

The process of actualization, or the middle ground between potentiality and actuality is *motion*.¹⁰³ This is normally a straightforward process: a group of people will realize that they share similar attributes, and so they identify with it. Then, as they foster community, they

¹⁰¹The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Silesia." *Encyclopedia Britannica*.
<https://www.britannica.com/place/Silesia>.

¹⁰² One who makes material actual, such as a carpenter to a table or a bricklayer to a house.

¹⁰³ Ralph McInerny, *A First Glance at St. Thomas Aquinas: A Handbook for Peeping Thomists* (Indiana, University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), 97-100.

actualize a nation. We will focus on the nation's formal (abstract) cause, the *national character* or nationhood.

II, 1.2.1. Is the National Character an Idea?

The National Character does not exist materially and is not concrete: we cannot see it or hear it. We know that it is, just like *redness* and *family*, an abstract universal concept which we associate with the idea. However, ideas in Thomistic thought are those which stem from the Divine intellect. Aquinas quotes Augustine's definition of (divine) ideas:

[C]ertain principal forms or conceptions of things (*formae vel rationes*), stable and unchangeable. For they themselves are not formed, and because of this they are eternal and always remain the same, since they are contained in God's understanding. But even though they themselves have no beginning and no end, it is according to them that everything that can have a beginning and an end, and everything that does have a beginning and an end, is said to be formed.¹⁰⁴

Nevertheless the same can also apply to human *intellectual concepts* which we also call ideas.

Aquinas states: "However, if we jointly call an idea *likeness* or *reason*, the idea can thus also correctly pertain to speculative thoughts. (*Sed tamen si ideam communiter appellemus similitudinem vel rationem, sic idea etiam ad speculativam cognitionem pure pertinere potest.*)"¹⁰⁵ The Catholic Encyclopedia likewise states:

Such being the varying signification of the term in the history of philosophy, we may now return to consider more closely its adopted meaning among Catholic philosophers. The term idea, and especially universal idea, being generally accepted by them as equivalent to universal concept, it is the product of the intellect, or understanding, as distinguished from the sensuous faculties. It is an act of the mind which corresponds to a general term in ordinary speech. Thus, in the sentence, "water is composed of oxygen and

¹⁰⁴ Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, translated by Alfred J. Freddoso (University of Notre Dame, 2022), I, q. 15, a. 2.

¹⁰⁵ Aquinas, *Quaestiones Disputatae de Veritate*, edited by Ricardo M. Roman (Buenos Aires, 1998), q. 3 a. 5.

hydrogen", the three words water, oxygen, and hydrogen stand for any genuine samples of these substances. The names have a definite yet universal meaning. The mental act by which that universal meaning is realized is the universal idea... This possesses stability. It is unchangeable, and it is universal. It refers with equal truth to every possible specimen of the class. Herein lies the difference between thought and sensuous feeling, between spiritual and organic activity.¹⁰⁶

The Encyclopedia differentiates between ideas and imaginations.

It [the idea] is a quite distinct thing from the particular sensation or image of the imagination, more or less vivid, which may accompany the intellectual act. The image may be distinct or confused, lively or feeble. It probably varies from moment to moment. It is felt to be of a subjective, contingent, and accidental character, differing considerably from the corresponding image in other persons' minds. It is, however, always an individualistic concrete entity, referring to a single object. Not so, however, with the intellectual idea.¹⁰⁷

So the statement "nations consist of shared culture, genanology, and language" is an idea. And so the National Character is an *idea*, or more correctly, an intellectual concept.

II, 1.2.2. Is the National Character Unchangeable?

The Catholic Encyclopedia states that "[e]very essence, however, is immutable in this, that it cannot be changed or broken up into its constituent parts and yet remain the same essence."¹⁰⁸ Aquinas writes:

Forms are called invariable because they themselves cannot be the subject of a variation. Yet they are subject to variation in the sense that their subjects are variable with respect to them. Hence, it is clear that they vary in a sense that accords with what they are. For they are called beings not because they themselves are the subject of being, but because something exists by virtue of them. The attribute is transcendental and is applied to essence precisely as it is essence. Thus, while the essence of any given man may be

¹⁰⁶ Michael Mahre, "Idea," in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* 7, (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910.) <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07630a.htm>>.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Aveling, Francis. "Essence and Existence." *The Catholic Encyclopedia* 5. (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1909). <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05543b.htm>

broken up into body and soul, animality and rationality, man as man and humanity as humanity is changeless.¹⁰⁹

Aquinas asserts that abstractions such as manhood and humanity are unchangeable. The *Catholic Encyclopedia* writes that “in the sentence, "water is composed of oxygen and hydrogen", the three words water, oxygen, and hydrogen stand for any genuine samples of these substances. The names have a definite yet universal meaning.”¹¹⁰ The samples of oxygen and hydrogen may vary, but never the idea that water consists of hydrogen and oxygen. The same applies for the national character, which is in itself a form and as a form, it is an intellectual concept or an *idea* in the modern sense. Intellectual universal concepts, also known as *ideas*, are unchangeable, and so, the National Character *is unchangeable*.

II, 1.2.3. Was Lowland Nationhood False?

So how do we know if a nation is a nation? To do so, we must determine whether the objective realities make up a national character. In order to do so they must have the same culture, language, and race. The Christian lowlanders were the first iteration of Filipino national identity. Fellglow once told me that at the time of the Philippine Revolution, they shared two common and objective realities:¹¹¹ the first being the Catholic Religion, and the second being a Spanish facade posted on Austronesian customs. The masses within an ethnic group, i.e. *nation*, were noticeably distinct from both their elite counterparts and other ethnic groups, especially at

¹⁰⁹ Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Freddoso, I, q. 9 a. 2.

¹¹⁰ Michael Mahre, "Idea."

¹¹¹ Christian lowlanders, which as we stated earlier is the conservative definition of the Filipino, which is palatable to Hispanists and traditional Catholics. But the logical arguments in this section can apply all the more to the “official” Filipino nation etc.

the local level. They spoke completely different native languages which were not mutually intelligible. And while they shared the same race and religion, they differed and still differ in many customs, only sharing what Spain introduced. Cultural advocate Reuben Sapuay once illustrated some differences in vernacular customs: *Tagalogs are fond of honorifics and poetry. They look towards the supernatural and the preternatural. But Ilocanos are more pragmatic and frugal; often looking towards the natural.*¹¹² While the Spanish implemented a similar administrative structure, it related to the local situation. Even religious devotion remained at a local and ethnic level: one can observe this in local patrons and Marian devotions, as well as liturgy such as the *Misa Pastorela* and the *Pabasa*.

The lowlander objective realities depended on being shared for its existence: this is met, and so they are not absolutely false. But as a national character, it lacked proper matter: the masses differed in culture and language. The extant objective realities were not enough to be a national character:¹¹³ and furthermore, society perceived it to be a national character; even when it was not.¹¹⁴ With this in mind, the putative national character was, *relatively speaking*, false - both in quality and in perception.

II, 2.2.2. Was the Lowland Concrete Nation False?

So now we have shown that the Filipino nation's form, i.e. the national character was false: not absolutely, but relatively; both in quality and in perception. But the community which identified with it still existed, but was it a nation? In traditional thought; the societal units go

¹¹² Not a direct quote. Vestiges of this still exist.

¹¹³ Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Freddoso, I, q. 17, a. 1.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

before the national character, which goes before the nation. And so the answer is simple: a thing without an object's form cannot exist as that object. A so-called triangle without a triangle's shape cannot be a triangle: it can be something, surely, but not a triangle. Aquinas states that "[a]rtifacts are called false absolutely speaking and in themselves insofar as they are defective in relation to the form of the relevant craft."¹¹⁵ The relevant craft was national development: and as long as the national character did not exist, it always fell short of the relevant form. Therefore, *absolutely speaking*, the concrete lowlander nation was a false nation.

II, 1.2.4. Natural and Artificial National Development

It is inevitable that nations will develop out of sub-ethnic groups by accident of history. I mentioned in the past how the Polish nation was made out of small nations which happened to share their national character by the time of their baptism, which then finalized their ethnogenesis. But Polish characteristics were not necessarily imposed upon the peoples by a state, as they already shared the same linguistic and cultural generalities with their fellow groups.¹¹⁶ In short, the Polish national character existed before their union, and was finalized by baptism. This is in line with the natural view of ethnogenesis, that is, *essence precedes individual existence*. In contrast, the Philippines imagined the nation without any national idea, with neither shared language nor culture. Filipino *nationhood*, i.e. the national character, did not develop organically before union, but it was imposed upon the many peoples of the Philippines by the State. John

¹¹⁵ Ibid., I, q. 17, a. 1.

¹¹⁶ Eugenia Sojka, "Decolonizing Upper Silesia: Reclaiming and Validating a Hybrid Culture in Scholarly and Literary Discourses," in *Cultural Change in East-Central European and Eurasian Spaces* 22, no. 1 (2021): 101. Sojka writes that Polish society is non-ethnic (Ibid., 100-1) but concedes that the ethnic and cultural aspects of the nation made it easier for the Polans to conquer the Silesians. John Paul II states that this union among tribes was the beginning of the Polish *nation*. Silesian culture that is separate from Poland did not exist until the fragmentation of Poland in the fourteenth century.

Paul II writes that “the nation cannot be replaced by the State, even though the nation tends naturally to establish itself as a state...”¹¹⁷ But in the Philippines, the civic *Philippines* seeks to replace and subsume the ethnic identity in many things - the imposition of a Tagalog, a foreign language to other ethnic groups, being the most visible outward sign.

II, 1.2.5. Is the Filipino Community a Nation Now?

It is getting harder to determine whether the Philippines has sufficiently homogenized in order to become a nation. But as long as the ethnic groups retain their national character, it could be that the Philippines has not yet fully become a nation in itself. Homogeneity is what makes a nation: this comes from the Greek *homo* (same) and *genos* (race), which can also apply to nation (ethnos), which it does in its Latinization. Without a doubt, the Philippines is homogenizing: there is an accepted *national language*, accepted *Filipino traits*, and other national symbols. Yet one can observe the relational differences at the local level: the multiple *ethnic groups*, i.e. nations within the Philippines, still retain their languages and their peculiarities in a noticeable way. And so, the Filipino community cannot yet be called a nation. This is implied in the use of the word *nation-building* in the Philippine Constitution.¹¹⁸

Conclusion

Catholic ethnology teaches that culture is the essential element of national expression. Culture consists of race, customs, religion, and language. With Thomistic metaphysics; we can determine that at some point the putative Filipino nation was false and that it remains false as

¹¹⁷ John Paul II, *Memory and Identity*, 77.

¹¹⁸ Const., (1987), art. II, §13 (Phil.).

long as the Philippines has not yet fully homogenized. This ends our essential analysis of the Filipino national identity.

PART III
IDEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

The first and second parts discussed the essential features of the Filipino national identity: history, ethnology, and applied metaphysics. But now we must look at some of its extrinsic features and make an ideological analysis. Filipino nationalism connects itself to liberalism and leftism, both of which we will explore.

III, 1. Liberalism and Liberal Nationalism

The Catholic Encyclopedia defines liberalism as a “free way of thinking and acting in private and public life.”¹¹⁹ The Encyclopedia writes of a new type of liberalism which emerged in the eighteenth century:

Since the end of the eighteenth century, however, the word has been applied more and more to certain tendencies in the intellectual, religious, political, and economical life, which implied a partial or total emancipation of man from the supernatural, moral, and Divine order. Usually, the principles of 1789, that is of the French Revolution, are considered as the Magna Charta of this new form of Liberalism. The most fundamental principle asserts an absolute and unrestrained freedom of thought, religion, conscience, creed, speech, press, and politics...A fundamental principle of Liberalism is the proposition: "It is contrary to the natural, innate, and inalienable right and liberty and dignity of man, to subject himself to an authority, the root, rule, measure, and sanction of which is not in himself". This principle implies the denial of all true authority; for authority necessarily presupposes a power outside and above man to bind him morally.¹²⁰

This eighteenth century iteration is what we call modern liberalism, which existed from this point up until the mid-20th century. Fr. Felix Sarda y Salvany defines it in his own terms:

Hence we find Liberalism laying down as the basis of its propaganda the following principles: ...The absolute sovereignty of the individual in his entire independence of

¹¹⁹ William Fanning, “Liberalism,” in *the Catholic Encyclopedia*, transcribed for New Advent by Joseph P. Thomas, (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1908). <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09212a.htm>.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

God and God's authority...The absolute sovereignty of society in its entire independence of everything which does not proceed from itself. (18) ...Absolute civil sovereignty in the implied right of the people to make their own laws in entire independence and utter disregard of any other criterion than the popular will...Absolute freedom of thought in politics, morals, or in religion. The unrestrained liberty of the press. Such are the radical principles of Liberalism. In the assumption of the absolute sovereignty of the individual, that is, his entire independence of God, we find the common source of all the others.¹²¹

Liberal thought is subjective; meaning that man defines for himself the objective standard. It is also congruent with modernism in that regard. Daniel J. Mahoney defines this way of thinking as “humanitarianism,” which is the basis for his book *The Idol of Our Age*.¹²² As a general rule, liberals, (humanitarians and modernists) emphasize and oftentimes solely rely on inductive reasoning to understand truths,¹²³ in contrast with traditionalists who prefer deduction. This is not to say that traditionalists do not use inductive reasoning: they use it whenever it is appropriate or in order to make a deduction.

We covered the Filipino Identity in the first part and how it was both a civic nation (I, 2.1.1), fabricated (I, 2.1.2), and an empire (I, 2.1.3). But there is an interesting link between liberalism and civic nationalism which prevails even in the twenty-first century. Civic nationalism for all intents and purposes is called *liberal nationalism* because inductive liberal thinking is fleshed out in the ‘ethnogenesis.’ For example: Rothbard's statement that the nation is “a complex of subjective feelings of nationality based on objective realities.”¹²⁴ In this statement,

¹²¹ Felix Sarda y Salvany, “What Liberalism Is,” in *Liberalism is a Sin*, trans. Conde B. Pallen, (St Louis, B. Herder, 1899). <http://www.liberalismisasin.com/chapter2.htm>

¹²² David J. Mahoney, *Idol of Our Age*, (New York, Encounter Books, 2018).

¹²³ This also rings true in other faculties. As a most important example: in the Catholic Church, modernists promoted the historical-critical method of exegesis which used concrete human situations to reinterpret Scripture. Saint Pius X denounced the historical-critical method in the encyclical *Pascendi*. The word “modernist” has resurged in light of criticisms towards the Second Vatican Council and the Mass of Paul VI.

¹²⁴ Rothbard, “Nations by Consent.”

traditionalists emphasize objective realities (character) while modernists emphasize subjective feelings (identity).¹²⁵ And so the civic nationalist is also a *liberal* nationalist, or in academia, simply a *modernist*.¹²⁶ The Filipino nation is a civic nation, it was founded not necessarily on an objective ethnic identity as it was on shared political values. In addition to its inductive genesis, the shared political values were in themselves liberal. Lisandro Claudio writes:

Filipino nationalism was founded on liberalism. In the late nineteenth century, the first generation of Filipino nationalists...who inspired the anti-Spanish revolution of 1896—articulated their critique of Spanish colonialism through the language of liberalism...Rizal advocated liberal reforms in the colony such as a free press, freedom of association, freedom from arbitrary arrest, and respect for individual property rights...The militant *Katipunan*...drew largely from the thinking of Rizal and the *ilustrados*. They were advocates of a free, liberal republic in Asia and in this regard, the Filipino nation can be seen as founded on liberalism. Nevertheless, the revolutionary project of the 1890s was to be still born, cut short by the violent American occupation...However, certain American politicians and policymakers cultivated and supported liberal intellectuals in order to attract support for the colonial regime...Liberalism therefore became the key state-building ideology of twentieth-century Philippines.¹²⁷

Liberalism was a reaction against Catholic social prescriptions. In the Philippines, its first stages were against the friarocracy, presumably in favor of secular priests: but over time even they would become liberalism's new targets.

Modern Liberalism was the stage of liberalism present in the nineteenth and mid-twentieth century. It was associated with Freemasonry and other secret societies. But postmodern liberalism, in contrast, is the stage of liberalism from the Sexual Revolution onwards. It is the

¹²⁵ This is obviously a gross oversimplification but it is sufficient to continue.

¹²⁶ This is not necessarily "nationalism," i.e. the belief that nations should be congruent to nation-states: but civic nationalism often requires a nation state.

¹²⁷ Lisandro Claudio, "The Erosion of Liberalism and the Rise of Duterte in the Philippines," in *Competing Integrations in Southeast Asia*, 2. <https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-03151036>

global trend of liberalism in the twenty-first century: it consists of the outright rejection or significant distortion of old standards. Examples of this are the following:

- Acceptance and promotion of sexual and moral taboos;
- Rejection of the gender binary;
- Rejection of all colonial influences.

This is in no specific order, but I will make a concrete example.

1. Postmodern liberals view the Filipino Church as a colonial stumbling block;
2. They glorify the precolonial period for their acceptance of homosexuality and matriarchy: viewing it as one of social advancement in contrast to the “repression” of the Catholic Church;
3. They often bring this up in order to discredit Catholic views on sexuality so that they can promote social and moral taboos, e.g. nonbinary gender;

One of the major victories for postmodern liberalism was during the passage of the Reproductive Health Bill. Postmodern liberals are generally not associated with Masonic organizations, instead being prevalent in nongovernmental organizations and education.

III, 1.1. *Elites, the Revolution, and Postmodern Liberalism*

In the year 2020, the pro-abortion advocacy group *Amarela* hosted a webinar which caused a stir among many Catholics. This, along with some personal observations I made outside and at home, caused me to make several key observations on elites and progressive beliefs:

- Many members of progressive organizations are significantly above the poverty line: they have access to Western resources;

- Progressive organizations tend to make platitudes about the poor in their advocacy;
- Elites are conditioned in their youth to view poverty in a certain way;

With these observations came a hypothesis: *The higher one is in the social caste, the more susceptible one is to progressivist ideologies, vice versa.* We will discuss a possible link between social status and progressive ideas. This is not an argument against progressivism in itself, but it is an analysis into its features and possible motives.

III, 1.1.1. Some History

Before the Second World War, elites and commoners both lived in the same neighborhoods and towns, highlighting stark differences in their way of life:

1. Filipino elites from the colonial period onwards were the same in many ways. They shared similar customs which transcended ethnic boundaries, unlike the masses.
2. During the colonial periods, elites were the first to benefit from what colonizers brought. This was true in the past; and it is still true now, e.g. elites usually have the means to study abroad, they can afford expensive products, participate greatly in international trends, etc.

Elites and counter-elites, according to Neema Parvini, are the catalysts of social change: revolutions only occur when ruling elites fail to maintain control and counter-elites can fill the vacuum.¹²⁸ The same is true in the Philippines, where the intellectual elite spearheaded reformist and revolutionary movements. Rizal's Ibarra was an elite: his father had the title of *Don Rafael*.

¹²⁸ Neema Parvini, *The Populist Delusion*, (Perth, Imperium Press, 2022), 7-8.

Rizal himself was an elite: and so were many of his fellow intellectuals. Claudio observes that many of liberalism's promoters were from the intellectual elite: Rizal, Luna, del Pilar, etc. They acquainted themselves with new Western ideals which were completely foreign to both pre-colonial society and colonial society.¹²⁹ It was in Spain where they joined the Masonic lodges.¹³⁰ Nick Joaquin writes of the "Revolution of the Ilustrados" in *A Question of Heroes*: he distinguishes the peasant Katipuneros from the middle-class Caviteños.¹³¹ He backs this up by presenting Aguinaldo as a reformist mind: prudent, not bold.¹³² Aguinaldo became the first President of the Philippines: Joaquin attributes his success to "bourgeois good sense," comparing it with Bonifacio's rash proletarian boldness.¹³³ But while Aguinaldo created a functioning Republic; it was the intellectuals who fueled the machine; many of whom studied abroad.

The Propaganda Movement acquired and formed their liberalism in the West, and we can see the same happening now. In the year 2020 some Filipino-Americans coined the term *filipinx*¹³⁴ to express a gender-neutral identity. This term received backlash and ridicule in the mainland, even in progressive outlets.¹³⁵ But the *filipinx* sheds light upon a possibility which is already a reality: because the *filipinx* was a fruit of American cultural influence on the Filipino

¹²⁹ Tyler Chua, "The White Man's Burden: The Rise of Social Liberalism and the New Cultural Imperialism in the Philippines," January 10, 2022.

¹³⁰ Rome S. Momo, "Philippine Freemasonry: A Continuing Legacy of Brotherhood and Service," ABS-CBN News Channel, December 21, 2018.

¹³¹ Nick Joaquin, *A Question of Heroes*, 102.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 110.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 111

¹³⁴ Derived from latinx.

¹³⁵ John Toledo, "Filipino or Filipinx," RAPPLER, September 15, 2020.
<https://www.rappler.com/voices/ispeak/opinion-filipino-or-filipinx/>

diaspora; the reverse could also be true. Many Filipinos¹³⁶ take up their studies in the United States and Canada; and the prevalent culture exposes them to new ideas: just like how Europe exposed the ilustrados to modern liberalism. We see some of its consequences now: many Filipinos, trained in the United States, come back to the mainland: taking up civic positions, especially in education. This is why international schools and universities play a role in postmodern liberalism's spread among elites; while public and local schools are more conservative.¹³⁷ But not everyone had to go abroad to become a liberal: liberalism spread via literature, art, entertainment, etc., and it is through these avenues that it still spreads in the twenty-first century. These mediums showcase a new ideal targeted towards Filipino youth and elites, and which may soon affect the rest of mass society. But what makes elites more receptive to these ideas?

III, 1.1.2. Progressivism as Conscience Placation?

In *Libido Dominandi*, Eugene Michael Jones makes a link between sexual immorality and social activism. “The only way to deal with guilt among those who refuse to repent is the palliation that comes from social activism. Involvement in social movements like the civil-rights, abortion- rights, and gay-rights movements became a way of calming troubled consciences.”¹³⁸ But this guilt does not confine itself to sexual immorality: other sources of guilt can suffice. This is when the *Amarela* story fits in.

¹³⁶ Especially elites.

¹³⁷ Simply the preservation of the status quo: we will define this further later.

¹³⁸ E. Michael Jones, *Libido Dominandi: Sexual Liberation and Political Control* (South Bend: St. Augustine's Press, 2005), quoted in Keep, *The Empire of Lies and "Filipino" Identity*.

Upon viewing their Facebook page, I noticed that they used platitudes about the “poor” in their advocacy, e.g. poor teenage single mothers, in order to promote birth control and abortion rights. From the start, I sensed that *Amarela* was composed of elites: their English proficiency, their art style, and from a hunch. I shared my suspicions and received confirmation from those who knew *Amarela* members: they were, indeed, part of the elite. This was when I made my first connection between elites and progressivism.¹³⁹ But the question still remained on why elites are more susceptible to such things than those in blue-collar backgrounds. This is because elite children are conditioned to feel guilt for their social status.

III, 1.1.3. The Source of Intersectionality Is Guilt

Young elites often feel pity for the poor. Many feel that they themselves perpetuate injustice: this represents a clash between youthful innocence and social awareness. This stage of awareness is when they begin to question the efficacy of social norms and the intentions of elites.¹⁴⁰ Because they perceive injustice, they become angry: oftentimes, they resent their social status and they internalize their self-hatred. This can be true in both sympathetic and cynical home environments.¹⁴¹ Sympathetic home environments can enable money guilt with active encouragement; they can foster an idealistic sense of justice. In contrast, cynical home environments can provoke money guilt with espoused views such as “poor people are poor because they are lazy.” These home environments can verify sentiments towards elites in this

¹³⁹ I was fourteen at that time. I am about to present an opinion that is subjective and inductive. I, by no means, present this as truth.

¹⁴⁰ For example: they begin to snub the quote “poor people are poor because they are lazy,” or the efficacy of hard work in turning a profit.

¹⁴¹ A sympathetic family environment is one which is vocal about perceived injustices towards the marginalized poor. A cynical family environment looks down upon the marginalized poor.

stage of social awareness. This creates a need to palliate the conscience, which can be achieved in two ways:

1. Distracting oneself from one's privilege by identifying with an oppressed diaspora (intersectionality);
2. A servile attitude.

I will provide concrete examples.

A white American woman has *white privilege*. Upon acknowledging her privilege, there is a sensation of guilt which needs to be counterbalanced. To do this, she *may* emphasize her womanhood and fight for female empowerment. If she is a lesbian, she may also identify with the sexual minorities. If she is nonbinary, she may identify as a gender minority. The more she identifies with *oppressed* diasporas, the less guilt she feels about her white privilege because she also becomes *oppressed*. She may also undertake a servile attitude towards the *oppressed*, in this case, African Americans: although this is likelier among those who are simultaneously *straight, male, cisgender, and white*. Intersectionality is preferable as it is empowering, which is an aspect servility does not have.

In the Philippines, race is replaced with financial status. A native woman from a well-off managerial family could palliate her guilt by anticolonialism and feminism. This is why local progressive groups tend to amplify the Church's colonial past and the precolonial patriarchy in Tagalog and Visayan society. Progressivism turns the disadvantaged into leverage and takes advantage of the basic desire to palliate guilt. Therefore, the elite motivation to adopt progressive ideology could very well be centered on the self. Christ saw through those who made platitudes

about the poor to project or placate their conscience,¹⁴² and those that did good to seek praise.¹⁴³ Because liberal thought is usually man-centered, the idea that progressivist advocacies stem from self-centeredness could warrant further study.

III, 1.2. Liberals, Leftists, and Nationalists: Past and Present

Progressivists tend to glorify pre colonial history. There is nothing wrong with that in itself: but many, including progressivists, tend to view pre colonial society as a homogenous whole, e.g. “pre colonial Philippines.” In this line of thought, a sin against a certain region or tribe is equivalent to a sin against the entire Filipino people. This prevents many from seeing the historical nuances, e.g. that Magellan died for Cebu, not just for Spain.¹⁴⁴ This homogenous view of pre colonial history bases itself on nationalism and civic identitarianism.

III, 1.2.1. Presentism and Nationalism

Jose Mathew Luga writes in a Rappler article: “Let us not forget that nationalism, at least in Asia, developed primarily as a response against colonial oppression and not as a tool for assimilating cultural minorities which is what, others may argue, it has become today. Hence, to judge a movie set in a colonial context from today’s post-colonial issues is a sin of

¹⁴² Matt. 26:7-12; John 12:4-6. John singles out Judas as the instigator and claims that he was projecting his own avarice.

¹⁴³ Matt. 6:2.

¹⁴⁴ According to Resil Mojares, Lapu-lapu was willing to accept Spain but not Humabon, we can find this in Max Limpag, “Lapulapu Was Ready to Submit to the King of Spain Just Not to Humabon: Historian,” (MyCebu.ph: Re/Discover Cebu, November 2, 2020.) <https://mycebu.ph/article/lapulapu-resil-mojares/>.

Presentism.”¹⁴⁵ But ironically the Katipunan also implies historical presentism in their view of “pre-colonial Katagalugan” and the friars, which we can see in an instance of their initiation rites:

There is also a pen, some ink and the questions, pared down to only three: “What was the condition of Katagalugan in early times?” (“¿Ano ang kalagayan nitong Katagalugan ng unang panahun?”); “What is its condition now?” (“¿Ano ang kalagayan sa ngayon?”); and “What will be its condition in the time to come?” (“¿Ano ang magiging kalagayan sa darating na panahun?”)¹⁴⁶ Having been coached beforehand, says De los Reyes, the initiate was expected to answer the first question to the effect that the Filipinos had their own civilization before the Spaniards arrived. They had artillery; wore clothes of silk; enjoyed political liberty; maintained diplomatic and commercial relations with their Asian neighbors; and had their own religion and alphabet. To the second question, the answer should affirm that the Spaniards, specifically the friars, had done nothing to advance the civilization of the Filipinos; indeed they saw civilization and enlightenment as incompatible with their own interests. They taught the catechism, but offered the people no spiritual depth. They lavishly celebrated religious festivals, but expected the people to bear the cost. They abused their power and privileges; they were oppressors. To the third question, about the future, the initiate should confidently predict that with faith, courage and perseverance all the country’s evils would be overcome.¹⁴⁷

Katagalugan applied to all Filipinos, and so it seems that they generalized some particulars: firstly, they overly generalized some advanced polities with the entire country, and secondly, they made rash assumptions on the relationship between friar and civilization, which we will tackle in the next article. James LeRoy states that within the coasts of Western Luzon and parts of the Visayas there was a well-developed feudal and political system, a system of laws and customs, belief in a Supreme Being, a system of phonetic alphabet, amount of literacy, and trade

¹⁴⁵ Jose Mathew P. Luga, “The Problem with the Lack of Nationalism,” RAPPLER, September 24, 2015, <https://www.rappler.com/moveph/106921-problem-lack-nationalism/>. But one thing to consider is that many of its earliest proponents; even those in the highest echelons, participated in the assimilation of cultural minorities: it may have not been an expressed intention perhaps, but the Revolution was Tagalogcentric in its genesis. We read more about this in the Historical Background.

¹⁴⁶ The source reads: “A photograph of one of the printed slips bearing these questions may be seen in Teodoro A. Agoncillo, *The Revolt of the Masses: the story of Bonifacio and the Katipunan* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1956), 57.”

¹⁴⁷ “Initiation Rites, c.1896,” Katipunan: Documents and Studies, accessed June 26, 2022, <http://www.kasaysayan-kkk.info/membership-documents/initiation-rites-c-1896>.

networks.¹⁴⁸ But even LeRoy limits this to those two geographical areas: namely, “the central islands and Luzon's western coasts.”¹⁴⁹ Hardly the entire Philippines, which the Katipuneros called their Katagalugan. But he admits:

Discarding exaggerations and matters in doubt, we know that polygamy was then practiced by Filipinos of sufficient status to maintain more than one wife; that the morality of the women left much to be desired, under the standard then obtaining, publicly at least, in European society; that gambling was by no means learned from the Spaniards, though new ways of gambling were; that the petty chiefs were frequently at strife with one another, these tribal wars not contributing to the progress or the happiness of the people; that agriculture and such arts as weaving, making pottery, etc., were in a primitive state, as indeed they still are.¹⁵⁰

The Katipuneros generalized Western Luzon and the Visayas with the entire Philippines: claiming that what was true for a large part was true for all. This gave credence to the nationalist ideal: that there really was a pre-colonial Katagalugan. This presentism bleeds out whenever anticolonialists forego nuances with blanket statements such as “the Spanish colonized the Philippines.” This is why many Filipinos tag certain ethnic groups as *dugong-aso*, for they aided the Spaniards instead of their ‘fellow Filipinos’ - failing to see that they prioritized their own national identity.

III, 1.2.2. Leftism

But between nationalism and progressivism, we can find a better bridge in the Filipino leftist. Many leftist groups share the same thought process as liberals and they often work hand

¹⁴⁸ LeRoy, James A. “The Friars in the Philippines.” *Political Science Quarterly* 18, no. 4 (1903), 658-9. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2140780>

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

in hand in social issues; if not economic ones.¹⁵¹ In fact, the first homosexual wedding in the Philippines was between two communist guerillas.¹⁵² Liberals and leftists tend to promote the Filipino National Identity and nation building: in fact, socialists like Hermenegildo Cruz and Lope K. Santos openly glorified Bonifacio and his Katipunan: perhaps because of the proletarian nature of his revolution and also promoted the Tagalog language's implementation. Many Katipuneros eventually identified themselves with socialism and vice versa, e.g. Aguinaldo ran under the National Socialist Party during the 1935 election. This National Socialist Party consisted of the following:

- Sakdalistas
- Labor groups
- Fascists
- Communists¹⁵³

Nationalism became a leftist virtue, best expressed in National Socialism.¹⁵⁴ National Socialism was a big-tent movement which promoted “immediate and genuine independence, the elimination of high salaries, waste and graft from the government, the reduction of taxes, and economic reforms drastic enough to end the poverty over which they were the victim.”¹⁵⁵ In fact,

¹⁵¹ As an example, Amarela collaborates with Akbayan! Youth as well as other advocacy groups.

¹⁵² LeiLani Dowell, “New Peoples Army recognizes same-sex marriage,” accessed June 25, 2022, https://www.workers.org/world/2005/npa_0224/.

¹⁵³ GovPH, “News Summary, Philippine Magazine: June 17 – July 16, 1935,” *Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines*, August 1, 1935, <https://mirror.officialgazette.gov.ph/1935/08/01/news-summary-philippine-magazine-june-17-july-16-1935-2/>.

¹⁵⁴ Not in the German sense per se.

¹⁵⁵ Joseph Ralston Hayden, *The Philippines: A Study in National Development*. (New York, Macmillan Co., 1942), 363, quoted in Patricio N. Abinales, American Rule and the Formation of Filipino "Colonial Nationalism" (<Special Issue>State Formation in Comparative Perspectives). *東南アジア研究* 2002, 39(4): 616.

Aguinaldo and the Sakdalist movement would both work with the Japanese occupation in the Second World War for reasons we mentioned in Part I. But this was not limited to Aguinaldo: there was one nationalist group who dallied with leftist ideologies: the Philippine Independent Church, founded by former Catholic priest Gregorio Aglipay and labor organizer Isabelo de los Reyes. Aglipay played a little-known role in leftist efforts: but this time, it was international. He mustered support for the Spanish Republic during the Spanish Civil War:¹⁵⁶ In fact, a number sent him letters asking to fight for the Republic.¹⁵⁷ But De los Reyes, in contrast, was a known socialist: his first taste of socialism was in a Barcelona prison: there, he acquainted himself with socialist exponents and literature, many of which he brought to the Philippines.¹⁵⁸ This solidified the link with the Aglipayan Church and the leftist movement, which still exists today in many areas. Filipino nationalism united liberals and leftists, and in this day and age the Independent Church has expressed vocal support for contraception and LGBT affirmation,¹⁵⁹ while multiple bishops have participated in social advocacies often associated with the left wing.¹⁶⁰

Conclusion

¹⁵⁶ Wilson Lee Flores, “Is a Socialist ‘Ghost’ to Be Feared?,” Philstar.com (Philstar.com, May 26, 2016), <https://www.philstar.com/lifestyle/sunday-life/2016/05/22/1585521/socialist-ghost-be-feared>.

¹⁵⁷ Nancy and Len Tsou, “The Asian Volunteers in the Spanish Civil War: A Report.” *Science & Society* 68, no. 3 (2004): 343. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40404192>.

¹⁵⁸ Senate of the Philippines, “Isabelo de los Reyes,” accessed June 25, 2022, https://legacy.senate.gov.ph/senators/former_senators/isabelo_delos_reyes.htm.

¹⁵⁹ E. H Bernaldes, Stand of Other Religious Groups, abstract, *Population forum: monthly newsletter of the Commission on Population* 6, no. 3 (1980): 12–13. PMID: 12337598. “The Philippine Independent Church strongly favors the different forms of birth control and has several family planning clinics operating in the Philippines.”; OutrageMag.com Staff, “Iglesia Filipina Independiente Asks Forgiveness from LGBT Community, Extends Hand with pro-Equality Statement,” (Outrage Magazine, January 3, 2022).

¹⁶⁰ A notable example is the late Alberto Ramento, who was stabbed to death in his house.

In this part we discussed liberalism in relation to elites, nationalism, and leftism. We can split our discussion into these key points;

1. Liberalism is man-centered and it consists of the subjective creating the objective;
2. Civic nationalism is a form of liberalism which seeks to create a nation out of subjective feelings;
3. Filipino nationalism is the offspring of both liberalism and civic nationalism;
4. Postmodern liberalism, i.e. progressivism is the complete rejection of standards;
5. Progressivism is based on the need to palliate guilt via intersectionality;
6. Progressives and Filipino liberal nationalists share apathy towards the church and presentist hermeneutics, and are best connected with leftism;

This ends our nonessential analysis of Filipino identity.

PART IV
THE ECCLESIAL SITUATION IN THE PHILIPPINES

IV, 1. Dynamics with Liberalism

Fr. Jose Arcilla, S.J., writes on the role of the priest in colonial Philippines: “It was the priest, the missionary, the lone Spanish resident in the towns who initiated the Filipino people into an inchoate political entity. It was also the priest, as *Revolutionary Clergy* shows, whose support consolidated or prolonged local resistance to the Spanish colonial forces and, later, the more deadly American weapons.”¹⁶¹ It is safe to say that priests held a major role in colonial society. The Revolution was irreversibly anti-clerical. Katipunan Initiation Rites detail several charges against the friars:

1. They have done nothing to advance civilization or enlightenment as both were against their interests;
2. They were superficial and mediocre in their instruction of the faith;
3. “They lavishly celebrated religious festivals, but expected the people to bear the cost”;
4. They were oppressors who “abused their power and privileges”;¹⁶²

We will answer these charges in the Appendix. Although the Revolution in itself was anticlerical, *it is important to note an important historical nuance*. It is true that the Tagalog Revolution, which was its center, was rabidly anti-friar. But other regions had varying degrees of feelings towards the friars. The Revolution in Bicol had no anticlerical sentiment: instead, there was

¹⁶¹ Jose Arcilla, S.J., Review of *Revolutionary Clergy*, by John N. Schumacher, in *Philippine Studies* 31, no. 1 (1983): 110. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42632655>.

¹⁶² “Initiation Rites, c.1896,” Katipunan: Documents and Studies. Cited for all items.

mutual respect and cooperation between the friars and the local revolutionaries.¹⁶³ The Bicolanos and the Tagalog Central differed in their treatments of friars.¹⁶⁴ They based their nationalism and civic identity on genuine religious devotion and patriotism.¹⁶⁵ This prompted Fr. Schumacher to condemn the conflation between nationalism and anticlerical sentiment as simplistic.¹⁶⁶ It is simplistic: but the nationalist central government surely did not have such respect for the friars; or the Catholic Church in general. We cannot reverse the association between Filipino Nationalism and anti-clericalism as this was, as Schumacher admits; Malolos central policy,¹⁶⁷ which had little regard for local outliers; so despite their respect for the Church and their general goodwill, Bicolano revolutionaries still participated in a revolution which was irreversibly anticlerical.

IV, 1.1. *The Secular Clergy and Nationalism*

The friar question pertained also to internal church matters: especially concerning the role of secular priests. The role of missionaries is to build a self-sustaining local church: the missionaries would be replaced by local secular priests in their parochial duties. In fact,

¹⁶³ John N. Schumacher, "Religious Aspects of the Revolution in Bikol," in *Philippine Studies* 39, no. 2 (1991): 232-4. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42633247>.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 235-7.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 238-40.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 238.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 238-40.

secularization was attempted back in the eighteenth century with unfavorable results.¹⁶⁸ Secular priests were mass-produced; ill-trained; and poorly esteemed for their low moral and intellectual character.¹⁶⁹ This led to the friar's opinions on native priests being set in stone, and secular priests were found wanting.¹⁷⁰ This prejudice against secular priests caused them to gain and lose several assignments.¹⁷¹ This led some secular priests to support the nationalist movement. In the first part, I mentioned how the secularization movement gave birth to Filipino identity. But there was some hesitation on part of the average native priest to fully support the nationalist movement.

Fr. Arcilla writes:

There is no clear evidence that the clergy were involved in the propaganda movement, although it is not improbable that they showed sympathy for it. Their houses became centers of dissemination of copies of *La Solidaridad* and its ideas. In 1884, some priests in Pangasinan and Nueva Ecija were arrested, their houses were searched, and they were charged with possession of subversive literature and membership in the masonic lodges. But because of the anticlerical posture of most of the propagandists, the Filipino clergy must have had second thoughts before lending their full support to a movement likely to boomerang on them.¹⁷²

One wonders whether these suspicions were valid. The majority of secular priests were generally loyal to Rome, despite their initial refusal to Filipinize the Church. Anyhow, the friars were soon

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 143-4; Jose Arcilla, "The Enlightenment and the Philippine Revolution," in *Philippine Studies* 39, no. 3 (1991): 366. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42633263>.

¹⁶⁹ Vicente R. Pilapil, "Nineteenth-Century Philippines and the Friar-Problem," in *The Americas* 18, no. 2 (1961): 139; 143-4. <https://doi.org/10.2307/979040>.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 143-5.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 145.

¹⁷² Jose Arcilla, S.J. Review of *Revolutionary Clergy*, 111.

gone, which worsened an enduring priest shortage.¹⁷³ To make matters worse, by this point, the Establishment was firmly anticlerical. Yet, as Arcilla notes, the clergy remained useful:

With the establishment of the Philippine Republic...the native priests could no longer remain indifferent. Just as formerly, the Church...had worked closely with the Spanish colonial government, so now as a matter of course, they expected to play a major role in the new republic. This time, however, leadership had shifted to the educated laymen, most of whom were either anti-Catholic or anticlerical. Chief of them was Mabini who had become Aguinaldo's top adviser. Still, regardless of their personal attitudes toward the clergy, the revolutionary leaders saw that the Filipino priests could provide the religious and spiritual services in place of the friars...It also became quickly apparent that the priests could be used to drum up support, financial or otherwise, for the new government.¹⁷⁴

The weakened ecclesial institution was finally vulnerable. In the past, the nationalists had limited their overt anti-clericalism to the Peninsular orders: but now, they had the chance to subsume the entire Church. The secular priests soon found themselves between a rock and a hard place:

The situation, however, presented dilemmas of conscience for the native clergy...Where there had been none, the problem was how or where to get the legitimate authorization to minister to the people...As pointed out (p. 69), for the "Filipino priests to appeal for jurisdiction now to the [Spanish] bishops who were considered enemies of the Revolutionary Government was obviously a delicate matter." To resolve this quandary Aguinaldo, most probably at Mabini's suggestion, named Aglipay as Military Vicar General. Neither unacquainted with Aguinaldo nor unsympathetic to his plans, Fr. Aglipay caught the eye of Mabini when, against a group of priests and laymen, he espoused the insertion of a clause on civil marriage in the Ordenanzas de la Revolucion after the Republic was proclaimed in June 1898. From this time on, the two worked closely together: Mabini, wanting a loyal clergy but under his control; Aglipay, aiming at a native church, even to the extent of throwing off the authority of Rome. That was the difficulty, namely, how to remain obedient to the Church and still be loyal to a government that did not hesitate to repudiate that Church.¹⁷⁵

In light of this, Fr. Arcilla lists three prevailing attitudes among the Filipino secular clergy: loyalists, who refrained from supporting the nationalists until further instruction, nationalists,

¹⁷³ Ibid., 112.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 111.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 111-2.

who repudiated the Roman Church, and loyalist-nationalists, who tried to reconcile both.¹⁷⁶

However, it became clear that the Establishment favored a break from Rome. In Jaro, clergy

began to entertain schismatic attitudes following the appointment of an American bishop;¹⁷⁷

while in Ilocos Norte, Aglipay and de los Reyes founded the Philippine Independent Church. Fr.

Arcilla notes:

But Fr. Schurnacher gives additional data that provide new insights into that episode. Before the advent of Isabelo de los Reyes who authored many of the dogmatic tenets of the new church, it was Mabini who was behind the actuations of Aglipay. To Roman Catholics, of course, therein lies the tragedy, for in collaborating with the "sublime paralytic," Fr. Aglipay helped neither the Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines nor himself.¹⁷⁸

Here we see that the liberal Filipino Republic de-established the Catholic Church in the

Revolution: which they did in two ways:

- Expelling the friars, the bulk of the Philippine Church: parishes were now in the hands of unprepared coadjutors; who, aside from their inexperience, were also spread too thin: leading to a priest shortage. In addition, universities were at the hands of the liberal State;
- Influencing disgruntled secular priests to schism: this happened in Ilocos and in Jaro. Some report that in Ilocos Norte only three priests remained Roman Catholic - while in Panay they all defected;¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 116.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 114.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 115.

¹⁷⁹ Frank Charles Laubach, *The people of the Philippines, their religious progress and preparation for spiritual leadership in the Far East*, (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1925), 144. The Catholic Church lost a great amount of members and property and had to reclaim many churches in protracted legal affairs.

But Arcilla notes that the Aglipayan movement soon lost steam - *the native clergy were alienated by Aglipay's support for civil marriage; and the laity due to his excommunication.*¹⁸⁰ In addition, the Catholic Church recovered most of its properties thanks to the American occupation: but nonetheless it still remained “on the wrong side of history.” To survive in an independent Philippines, loyalism soon gave way to the loyalist-nationalism. But in turn the Church ended up balancing between Rome and country. In 1956 the state enacted Republic Act No. 1425¹⁸¹ which required the reading of Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* in secondary schools - the Church greatly opposed this; but soon they reached a compromise in which students would read censored versions of both.

IV, 1.1.1. Argumentum ad Damasum: The Loyalist-Nationalist Consequence

In September 2010, during the reproductive health controversy; a bald man in a bowler hat and a suit went to the Manila Cathedral during an ecumenical meeting holding a placard with a certain name on it: DAMASO. Authorities promptly arrested the man, Carlos Celdran: and charged him with “offending religious feelings.”¹⁸² Indeed, religious feelings were offended, because Padre Damaso represents something in the national subconscious: the Church's “hypocritical” and “unjust” political role. This tactic is used by those that wish to discredit the Church's moral ascendancy: hence, the *appeal to Damaso* (argumentum ad Damasum.)

Postmodern society often conflates ideas with people. For instance, one can hear the statements *George Washington owned slaves - how can he talk about freedom?* or *Churchill was*

¹⁸⁰ Arcilla, Review of *Revolutionary Clergy*, 112.

¹⁸¹ The Rizal Law.

¹⁸² Celdran, who died in 2019, was protesting the Church's efforts to politically oppose the RH bill.

a racist, he did not protect the free world! These premises are not wrong, but suppose if Churchill espoused a certain idea, some may resort to the above to discredit him. This is not a defense of both: but rather, an exposition of a clear logical flaw in the way that many people evaluate opinions. In logic we call this “tu quoque,” in English it is the appeal to hypocrisy or *whataboutism*. We should not confuse this with the maxim “by their fruits you shall know them:” its proper application pertains to analysis of person and character, e.g. *It is not prudent that I marry a triple divorcee*; or ideas and consequences, e.g. *this economic theory when applied has bankrupted whole countries*.

Take the case of the Catholic Church. In reaction to the Church’s opposition to certain persons or ideas, people have made whataboutisms to discredit the Church, e.g. Damaso.¹⁸³ For example: *The Church has no right to talk about sexual morality when many priests abuse children!* or: *The Church has no right to talk about the dignity of human life when they propagated the Inquisition!* This might seem convincing, but it is logically flawed: it does nothing to combat the Church’s talking points themselves. So why do many always appeal to hypocrisy in judging ideas? Because tu quoque is a subset of the red herring: put simply; a ***distraction tactic***.¹⁸⁴ But nevertheless, appeals to hypocrisy would not be used if they were ineffective.

¹⁸³ I once saw a Trevor Noah meme which mocked the Catholic Church for opposing transgenderism because God made man and woman to reproduce. Trevor Noah responded that transgender people *can* reproduce, and then mocked the Church for caring: as the Catholic Church does not even allow nuns to reproduce while also citing the inability of priests to impregnate boys. Red herring. As an addendum, I do not know if he represented the Catholic position correctly.

¹⁸⁴ Of course Catholic apologists are not immune to this: they should not use the fallacious arguments of their opponents (like the appeal to Damaso) to discredit their advocacies: apologists should avoid saying: “because our opponents use logical fallacies, their advocacy is moot.”

Why Is It So Effective?

The Damaso Appeal is based on truth: the Church is a vestige of the colonial era - they opposed independence until they had no choice. This is why it has the power to silence many Catholics. We know that the Catholic Church has already come to terms with the Revolution: many Catholics have reconciled themselves towards Filipino nationalism. Even during the Rizal Controversy, Cardinal Rufino Santos carefully expressed his respect for Rizal in the *Statement of the Philippine Hierarchy*; stating that he is “our greatest patriot and greatest national hero,”¹⁸⁵ and that faithful Catholics “wish to be second to none in love and veneration for our national hero, Dr. Jose Rizal, whose patriotism remains for us a noble inspiration.”¹⁸⁶ This statement did not condemn Rizal as a person or the nationalist ideals he stood for: rather, it condemned the anti-religious content in *Noli* and *Fili* while emphasizing on his retraction, stating that the Rizal Bill would disregard Rizal’s last wishes, and that doing so is “far from revering his memory, [but] bringing it into contempt.”¹⁸⁷

In this day and age, the Church still hesitates to oppose Filipino nationalism, and Catholics still emphasize greatly on Rizal’s devotions as well as his final retraction - they hesitate to condemn him outright, perhaps to avoid being called unpatriotic. This could be why Cardinal Santos was careful to honor Rizal’s memory: because the Church is between Rome and Country, and cannot betray either. By the 1950s, the Church had adopted loyalist-nationalism, which required it to prove its patriotism to itself.

¹⁸⁵ Rufino Santos, *Statement of the Philippine Hierarchy on the Novels of Dr. Jose Rizal*, (Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, Manila, April 21, 1956). <https://cbcponline.net/statement-of-the-philippine-hierarchy-on-the-novels-of-dr-jose-rizal/>

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

IV, 1.2. Examination of the Clerical Mainstream

In the present day, the Filipino Church is highly influenced by the Second Vatican Council, especially in its pastoral activities. It widely consists of the Clerical Mainstream, i.e. the clergy who are influenced by the papacy of John Paul II (1978-2005); traditional Catholics, progressivists, charismatics, and the Opus Dei. We normally associate the Clerical Mainstream with the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines and the Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines.¹⁸⁸

IV, 1.2.1. Doctrine

The Clerical Mainstream shares the “official Vatican perspective” on doctrinal issues, e.g. abortion, euthanasia, contraception, etc. They also oppose the death penalty in continuity with John Paul II and Pope Francis to varying degrees. They support ecumenism and interreligious dialogue, although they remain solid when it comes to the doctrinal questions itself. They also engage in apologetics in conjunction with their ecumenical dialogue groups such as the Catholic Faith Defenders often engage members and ministers of other churches and sects. They hold to the hermeneutic of continuity regarding the relationship between the Second Vatican Council and traditional teachings and doctrines.

¹⁸⁸ Also known as the Conference of Major Religious in the Philippines.

IV, 1.2.2. Liturgy

The Clerical Mainstream supports the 1970 edition of the Roman Missal, which many call the *Novus Ordo Missae*.¹⁸⁹ They do not hold an enthusiastic view about the Traditional Latin Mass (TLM), although their pastoral policies for traditional Catholics vary. However, they do support liturgical Latin in the 1970 Missal, and they sometimes apply it. In fact, even the harshest critics of the TLM celebrate Mass in Latin on occasion, and bishops often intone the Gloria according to the *Missa VII de Angelis*. Their vestment choice varies, although the fiddleback chasuble is rare, except in some dioceses. Amices are also rare except in the Opus Dei, and so are maniples, etc. Chashu-albs¹⁹⁰ are common, worn often with overlay stoles. White cassocks are a standard, although clerical shirts are a common alternative.

IV, 1.2.3. Social Thought and Practice

The Clerical Mainstream's social theory and practice is influenced by the thoughts of Oscar Romero, Jaime Sin, and to a great extent, Pope Francis and John Paul II. Their social thought consists of the following:

- Preferential option for the poor;
- Rejection of unbridled capitalism (and most of the time, communism);
- Environmentalism;
- People Power (acceptance of liberal democracy);
- Opposition to the death penalty;

¹⁸⁹ New Order of Mass, concise form Novus Ordo, New Mass, etc.

¹⁹⁰ A chasuble with closed sides.

Prominent figures of this iteration of Social Thought and Practice include Cardinal †Jaime Sin, Archbishop Socrates Villegas, Archbishop †Oscar Cruz, Bishop Broderick Pabillo, Bishop Pablo David, Bishop †Antonio Fortich, and Bishop Deogracias Iniguez, Jr., among many others. The Clerical Mainstream tends to reject the status quo and are very outspoken against many establishment politicians, yet they are friendly towards the post-Marcosian establishment per se, in the sense that they are hesitant towards charter change and federalism.¹⁹¹ Nuns and to some extent priests and seminarians such as Frs. Robert Reyes and Amando Picardal participate in social activism, playing a major role in the EDSA Revolution and often showing up to public demonstrations.¹⁹² Many bishops, religious, and clergy supported Leni Robredo during the 2022 presidential elections. There are many outliers, but mostly in liturgy and sometimes social thought: charismatic groups, Latin Mass Societies, and the Opus Dei.

IV, 1.2.4. Progressivism

Progressivism is not too widespread among the clergy as it is among laity and some nuns. It is more prevalent in the Aglipayan Church. A notable example of a progressive nun is Mary John Mananzan, O.S.B., who was among the founders of the feminist GABRIELA movement and a supporter of the RH and SOGIE bills.¹⁹³ They also promote *People Power* democracy, environmentalism, and oppose capitalism and the death penalty. They stand out for their

¹⁹¹ Angel Lagdameo, “On Charter Change and the Common Good,” (Jaro, Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines, September 14, 2006); Cielito Almazan, O.F.M., and Regina Kuizon, R.G.S., “AMRSP’s Statement on Federalism and Charter Change,” (Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines, January 31, 2018).

¹⁹² Simone Orendain, “Philippine Nuns, Priests Say Role in Revolution Affected Their Faith,” *National Catholic Register - Global Sisters Report*, February 22, 2016; Delfin T. Mallari Jr, “Role of Nuns, Priests in Rallies Seen to Get Bigger,” *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, September 25, 2017.

¹⁹³ The former provides ease of contraceptive access and obliges health providers to provide contraception on pain of imprisonment and fine. The latter supports LGBTQ civil rights.

promotion of liberation and feminist theology. There is suspicion among the government and some mainstream clergy that a number of progressivist clergy and religious are affiliated with communist movements such as *Christians for National Liberation*.

IV, 1.2.5. Societies of St. Pius X and Sede-Vacantists

Societies of Saint Pius X (SsSPX) refer to two organizations: the Priestly Fraternity of St. Pius X (FSSPX or SSPX) and the SSPX - Marian Corps (MCSPX). They, along with sede-vacantists, are known for their rejection of the Second Vatican Council and the Novus Ordo Missae in full or in part. Their social theory and praxis is largely based on Leo XXIII's encyclicals. They suspect liberal democracy and are not involved with environmentalism. The Clerical Mainstream suspects all three groups; although one bishop has associated himself with the FSSPX.

IV, 1.3. Present-Day Dynamics

Loyalist-nationalism has evolved from its state in the Rizal Controversy. The Church no longer expresses opposition to Rizal's two novels, nevertheless, it is still used against them. The mainstream Church has fully and unconditionally accepted the Filipino national identity, in contrast to the Societies of Saint Pius X and the sede-vacantist groups which reject it on grounds of its Masonic association. The Catholic Church continues to have a rocky relationship with liberalism. Cardinal Jaime Sin cooperated with Liberal Party during the EDSA Revolution and solidified his relationship with the democratic establishment. In the twenty-first century, some hierarchs grew closer to that establishment: opposing constitutional reform; working with the

ruling elite to topple Joseph Estrada, and then supporting Antonio Trillanes in the Manila Peninsula Siege. And yet, the Church has lost major ground in the Reproductive Health Bill, the 2016 presidential elections; and most recently, the 2022 presidential elections. Many in society view the Church as all bark but no bite: both loud in its opposition yet tamed by the establishment. This observation has led Orion Perez Dumdum, a traditional Catholic, to describe the Catholic Church as “half-enlightened elites:”

Another example is the half-enlightened status of the Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines. Any policy presented that goes counter to any of the tenets of the Roman Catholic Church is always in danger of being [anathematized] by the “Philippine Inquisition.” The enlightened ones who bravely propose such measures often risk political alienation and social exclusion, which is tantamount to *excommunication*. In this case, a solution to a problem cannot be easily pursued because one unenlightened sector of the Élite has decided to block the moves of the enlightened sector.¹⁹⁴

This is not an attack on the Catholic Religion, but rather a warning on entropy and its nature. Entropy, according to Fellglow, is “not chaos, it is equilibrium.”¹⁹⁵ It is a state of objective staticity. The local Church remains afloat and is running, but it is in a state of political and social disorder. It has lost much ground since the Revolution while postmodern liberals challenge its remaining grip on core moral issues: the matter of marriage, the immorality of abortion, etc. Liberalism’s postmodern iteration has infected many Protestant churches in the world and the Catholic Church in Germany, where the Synodal Way seeks to redefine priesthood and marriage; causing fears of schism.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁴ Orion Perez Dumdum, “Eight Points in Enlightening the Élite,” The CoRECT™ Movement Website, April 28, 2013, https://correctphilippines.org/enlightening_the_elite/. Would the “Philippine Inquisition” be so bad if the Catholic Church supported CoRECT™ ideas?

¹⁹⁵ Fellglow Keep, *Entropy and Its Fruits*, (Pillar of Liberty, March 10, 2022), <https://pillarofliberty.substack.com/p/entropy-and-its-fruits>.

¹⁹⁶ CNA Staff, “Pope Francis: We Don't Need 2 Evangelical Churches in Germany,” (Catholic News Agency, June 17, 2022). <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/251537/pope-francis-told-bishop-batzing-we-don-t-need-two-evangelical-churches-in-germany>.

In contrast, the Filipino Church has not yet succumbed to liberalism, but it is constantly a target. Many hope to see the Church lose its last vestiges of power along with its relevance. In relation to the Catholic Church, liberalism has two cyclical stages:

- The overt stage - forcible control of the Church and her properties, e.g. control of church universities, provocation of schism, Rizal Law, passage of the RH Bill.
- The covert stage - pacification and manipulation of the Church while allowing it some wiggle room, e.g. secularization controversy, involvement of the Church in *People Power*.

Postmodern liberals are normally overt, which normally happens once covert pacification has been made. The State is still in its late covert stage with some overt actions made by progressive lawmakers which sometimes gets through.

Conclusion

Auron Macintyre loves to say: “Progressivism will hollow out your religion and wear its skin like a trophy.”¹⁹⁷ The liberal revolutionaries had a covert-overt dynamic with the local church. They obtained the trust of the Tagalog secular clergy by using them to destroy trust in the friarocracy. Once they expelled the friars and controlled their institutions, they then attempted to destroy the Catholic Church via schism. As of 2020, Philippine Liberal Establishment is still in its late covert phase: this leads some to observe that the Catholic Church is *declawed and neutered*:¹⁹⁸ But just as a tamed lion has the innate power to overpower its handler, handler, the church still retains its inherent political power. Only time can tell whether the Church will reject liberalism.

¹⁹⁷ Auron Macintyre, Twitter post, June 20, 2022, 11:34 a.m., <https://mobile.twitter.com/AuronMacintyre/status/1538726921520939011>.

¹⁹⁸ Fellglow Keep, “An Ideological Analysis of Philippine Politics,” *Pillar of Liberty*, Nov. 24, 2021.

PART V

CHRIST'S SOCIAL REIGN - CATHOLIC ETHNOLOGY APPLIED

V, 1. Quis Est Veritas?

Some question the relevance of Fabrication Theory in daily life. They contend that it is an unimportant topic to discuss in light of current events. But I respond that the social reign of Christ is the reign of truth in society. In the Thomistic Analysis we went over truth and its nature. But we do not simply ask “what is truth (*quid est veritas?*),” but also; “who is Truth (*quis est veritas?*)” Christ says: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.”¹⁹⁹

Aquinas explains that truth is “found in a thing insofar as it has *esse* [existence] that is conformable to an intellect.”²⁰⁰ He writes that because God is absolutely simple, his *esse* is “not only conformed to His intellect, but is His very act of understanding; and His act of understanding is the measure and cause of all other *esse* and of every other intellect. And He Himself is His own *esse* and His own act of understanding.”²⁰¹ And so “it follows not only that truth exists in Him, but that He Himself is the first and highest truth.”²⁰² And so God is truth itself, both as Ultimate Truth and the first source of all truths: thus, the reign of truth is the reign of Christ, who is both God and man and mediator between. Just as Christ’s reign in our hearts depends on our free will, Christ’s effective rule depends on society’s receptiveness to truth, love, and justice. Christ’s Social Reign comes both externally, from the way the government promotes it, and internally, in what we think, say, and act. Aquinas goes on to state that “all the intellect’s

¹⁹⁹ John 14:6 (Douay-Rheims Bible)

²⁰⁰ Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Freddoso, I, q. 16, a. 1.

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² Ibid.

apprehensions are from God.”²⁰³ Nationhood is an apprehension of the intellect which we call an *idea* (II, 3.1.1). And so, it comes from God.

The Catholic Church safeguards the Deposit of Faith, which holds all Truths revealed by God: namely, scripture and Tradition. The National Fabrication essentially opposes true nationhood, because it promotes a false nation; and it happens to oppose the Deposit of Faith inasmuch as it opposes the Catholic Church. Because it is opposed to truth, it is also opposed to Christ’s social reign. And so, it matters to every Catholic who wishes to propagate Christ’s social reign. But the question remains on how Catholics can propagate this in light of the National Fabrication.

V, 1.1. *The Rights of Nations*

The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church lists out a list of rights proper to nations - independence, its own language and culture,

The Magisterium points out that international law “rests upon the principle of equal respect for States, for each people's right to self-determination and for their free cooperation in view of the higher common good of humanity” ...Peace is founded not only on respect for human rights but also on respect for the rights of peoples, in particular the right to independence...The rights of nations are nothing but “‘human rights' fostered at the specific level of community life” ...A nation has a “fundamental right to existence”, to “its own language and culture, through which a people expresses and promotes ... its fundamental spiritual ‘sovereignty’”, to “shape its life according to its own traditions, excluding, of course, every abuse of basic human rights and in particular the oppression of minorities”, to “build its future by providing an appropriate education for the younger generation”.[330] The international order requires a *balance between particularity and universality*, which all nations are called to bring about, for their primary duty is to live in a posture of peace, respect and solidarity with other nations.²⁰⁴

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 157.

This also applies to states which contain more than one nation. John Paul II states various ways in which a nation can exercise its sovereignty without becoming an independent nation-state:

This fundamental right to existence does not necessarily call for sovereignty as a state, since various forms of juridical aggregation between different nations are possible, as for example occurs in Federal States, in Confederations or in States characterized by broad regional autonomies. There can be historical circumstances in which aggregations different from single state sovereignty can even prove advisable, but only on condition that this takes place in a climate of true freedom, guaranteed by the exercise of the self-determination of the peoples concerned.²⁰⁵

Even in multinational states, which includes empires, the customs and laws of the respective nations are to be respected.

V, 1.1.1. Jus Civile and Jus Gentium

Ancient Rome, and by extension, the Catholic Church, recognized two forms of positive law, i.e. law made by human convention - the civil law (*jus civilis*) and the law of nations (*ius gentium*). Aquinas states:

First of all, as was explained above (a. 2), it is part of the definition of human law that human law stems from the law of nature. Accordingly, positive law (*ius positivum*) is divided into the law of nations (*ius gentium*) and civil law (*ius civile*), in keeping with the two modes, explained above (a. 2), in which something stems from the law of nature. For things that belong to the law of nations stem from the law of nature as conclusions from principles—e.g., justice in buying and selling, etc., in the absence of which men would be unable to live together with one another. This belongs to the natural law, since as *Politics* 1 shows, man is by nature a social animal. On the other hand, things that stem from the law of nature in the manner of particular specifications belong to civil law, according to which each community determines what is fitting for itself.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁵ John Paul II, “Address of His Holiness John Paul II,” (New York, United Nations Headquarters, October 5, 1995), par. 8. https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1995/october/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_05101995_address-to-uno.html

²⁰⁶ Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Freddoso, I-II, q. 95 a. 2.

Many understand *jus gentium* to be the precursor to modern international law, and civil law to be the law of a particular country or nation-state. But historically, *jus civile* was understood in relation to peoples, not states. The Ancient Roman State, for example, applied *jus civile* to Roman citizens only and *jus gentium* to the various nations and tribes within their dominion.²⁰⁷ In the Philippines, the local polities retained their particular customs and laws. An example of *jus civile* in Philippine history is the concept of *polo y servicio* or mandatory conscripted labor, and military conscription. Some people believe that *polo y servicio* was a Spanish form of slavery, but conscripted labor was prevalent in pre-Hispanic Western Luzon and the Visayas among the *timawa* class.²⁰⁸ In fact, the Spanish colonial administration respected the existing local laws to such an extent that it was exploitable, as Scott notes:

The unenfranchised and disfranchised of the Third Estate were called *alipin*, a term all Spanish sources translate as slave. The Academia defines *esclavo* as "one who lacks liberty because of being under the control of another," so the term does not necessarily connote chattel or captive. In the Philippines, the majority of them were actually serfs, peons, bondsmen, debtors, or dependents - or what Filipinos called "householders," *alipin namamahay*. Those who could be legally sold were called "hearth slaves," *alipin sa gigilid*, and the distinction was often deliberately blurred by oppressive creditors haling them before a Spanish judge who was ignorant of Philippine social structure.²⁰⁹

This is an unfortunate case when ignorance led to problems in applying the *jus civile*.

Nevertheless, this is more than enough to showcase medieval (in this case, early modern) attitudes towards the rights of nations as a whole.

²⁰⁷ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, "jus gentium," Encyclopaedia Britannica, 12 Apr. 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/jus-gentium-Roman-law>.

²⁰⁸ William Henry Scott, "Filipino Class Structure in the Sixteenth Century," in *Philippine Studies* 28, no. 2 (1980): 151-2.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 147.

V, 1.1.2. Subsidiarity and the Permanence of Nations

In addition, the Church believes that the nation is naturally permanent - it opposes any and all efforts to destroy legitimate national identities. John Paul II wrote that the state cannot replace the nation, i.e. the civic cannot replace the ethnic.²¹⁰ As there exists a legitimate Philippine State, there exists many legitimate Philippine *nations*. This Church's view on the treatment of nations is based on the principle of subsidiarity inasmuch as it refers to multinational states or even international law. The principle of subsidiarity is that everything must be dealt with at the most local level. Pius IX writes in his encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*:

Just as it is gravely wrong to take from individuals what they can accomplish by their own initiative and industry and give it to the community, so also it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do. For every social activity ought of its very nature to furnish help to the members of the body social, and never destroy and absorb them.²¹¹

And so multinational states have the responsibility to preserve the ethnic identities of its constituent members. This includes respecting their rights to sovereignty: both its spiritual or *essential* sovereignty, as well as its political sovereignty. In light of this, the Philippines could adopt a system which recognizes its ethnic groups' sovereignty - both in the way they pass down their traditions, language, and culture. There should be no concept of a 'national language' which presumes to replace the existing national languages, or *ethnic* languages. Civic national symbols should not be universalized, but the political communities which correspond to these nations should decide for themselves how best to express their heritage and sovereignty. This can be achieved with federalism, which falls under the principle of subsidiarity.

²¹⁰ John Paul II, *Memory and Identity*, 77.

²¹¹ Pius IX, *Quadragesimo Anno*, (Rome, St. Peter's Basilica, May 15, 1931), 79.

V, 1.2. *The Responsibilities of Nations*

Nevertheless, the Church also speaks of the various responsibilities of nations: “The international order requires a *balance between particularity and universality*, which all nations are called to bring about, for their primary duty is to live in a posture of peace, respect and solidarity with other nations.”²¹² The Church is normally uncomfortable with the word *nationalist*, often equating it with national chauvinism. In his book *Memory and Identity*, John Paul II puts *healthy nationalism*, i.e. the national identity, under the umbrella of *patriotism*, which he defines as “a sense of attachment to the nation and the native land.”²¹³ The pope briefly summarizes his views on *unhealthy nationalism* in his October 1995 address to the United Nations:

In this context, we need to clarify the essential difference between an unhealthy form of *nationalism*, which teaches contempt for other nations or cultures, and *patriotism*, which is a proper love of one's country. True patriotism never seeks to advance the well-being of one's own nation at the expense of others. For in the end this would harm one's own nation as well: doing wrong damages both aggressor and victim. Nationalism, particularly in its most radical forms, is thus the antithesis of true patriotism, and today we must ensure that extreme nationalism does not continue to give rise to new forms of the aberrations of totalitarianism. This is a commitment which also holds true, obviously, in cases where religion itself is made the basis of nationalism, as unfortunately happens in certain manifestations of so-called "fundamentalism".²¹⁴

John Paul II often thinks of national chauvinism when talking about *nationalism*: but this is a matter of word choice.

²¹² Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 157.

²¹³ John Paul II, *Memory and Identity*, 69.

²¹⁴ John Paul II, “Address of His Holiness John Paul II,” par. 9.

The Church has more nuance in relation to nationalism in its traditional definition, i.e. that every nation must have a nation state. The pope writes that “...the nation tends to establish itself as a State, as we see from the history of individual European nations including Poland. In his work *Wyzwolenie* (Liberation), Stanisław Wyspiański wrote: ‘The nation must exist as a State...’²¹⁵ The *Compendium* mentions the right to self-determination and independence.²¹⁶ Nevertheless, John Paul II mentions that nations can exist as parts of another state, provided that their rights are respected.²¹⁷ Separatism is usually a messy process which can often lead to bloodshed. In recent years Pope Francis has made a few comments on separatism on an interview with a Catalan newspaper:

When asked about the Catalan situation in Spain, Pope Francis said “All division concerns me.” The Holy Father distinguished between “independence for emancipation” and “independence for secession,” giving the former Yugoslavia as an example of the former “where there are peoples and cultures so diverse that they are completely unconnected.” As for the situations in Catalonia, northern Italy, and Scotland, Pope Francis said “they should be studied on a case-by-case basis.” “There will be some cases that are just and some that are unjust, but the secession of a nation that hasn’t been previously forced together is an issue that must be taken up with tweezers,” he said.²¹⁸

And so the Church does not put a band-aid teaching on separatism. Nevertheless, separatism is not necessary to obtain national sovereignty. The Philippine State could ensure that civic identity does not subsume ethnic identity, such as in the case of Malaysia and Indonesia, both federal

²¹⁵ John Paul II, *Memory and Identity*, 78.

²¹⁶ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 157.

²¹⁷ John Paul II, “Address of His Holiness John Paul II,” (New York, United Nations Headquarters, October 5, 1995), par. 8. https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1995/october/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_05101995_address-to-uno.html

²¹⁸ “Pope Francis Speaks to Catalan Newspaper about Pius XII, European Secession Movements,” Vatican Radio, June 13, 2014. http://www.archivioradiovaticana.va/storico/2014/06/13/pope_francois_speaks_to_catalonian_newspaper_about_pius_xii_/en-1101739

states. It is the prime responsibility of nations, as is all local communities, to bring about a “*balance between particularity and universality*.”²¹⁹ This means that just as nations should preserve their own identities, they should be open to legitimate change. Pope Francis in *Fratelli Tutti* warns of a “local narcissism” which can stifle true cultural development:

There is a kind of “local” narcissism unrelated to a healthy love of one’s own people and culture. It is born of a certain insecurity and fear of the other that leads to rejection and the desire to erect walls for self-defence. Yet it is impossible to be “local” in a healthy way without being sincerely open to the universal, without feeling challenged by what is happening in other places, without openness to enrichment by other cultures, and without solidarity and concern for the tragedies affecting other peoples. A “local narcissism” instead frets over a limited number of ideas, customs and forms of security; incapable of admiring the vast potential and beauty offered by the larger world, it lacks an authentic and generous spirit of solidarity. Life on the local level thus becomes less and less welcoming, people less open to complementarity. Its possibilities for development narrow; it grows weary and infirm. A healthy culture, on the other hand, is open and welcoming by its very nature; indeed, “a culture without universal values is not truly a culture”.²²⁰

Part of this solidarity which is expected of nations is based on the general principle of charity. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that “[r]ich nations have a grave moral responsibility toward those which are unable to ensure the means of their development by themselves or have been prevented from doing so by tragic historical events. It is a duty in solidarity and charity; it is also an obligation in justice if the prosperity of the rich nations has come from resources that have not been paid for fairly.”²²¹ In short, the nation has the responsibility to look out for other nations and to unite with them in solidarity.

²¹⁹ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 157.

²²⁰ Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, (Assisi, October 3, 2020), 146.

²²¹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2439.

V, 1.2.1. Jagiellonian-ism and True Patriotism

John Paul II writes of a 'pure' Polish spirit which existed during the Piast dynasty, and a separate 'Jagiellonian' spirit which came about with the Polish-Luthanian union.²²² He writes:

Historically, the Polish spirit has had a very interesting evolution. Probably no other European nation has evolved in quite the same way. From the outset, at the time when the Polonian, Vistulian, and other tribes were merging, it was the Polish spirit of the Piast dynasty that provided the unifying element...the 'pure' Polish spirit. Later, the Polish spirit of the Jagiellonian era prevailed...This made possible the emergence of a Republic embracing many nations...All Poles bear within themselves a sense of this religious and national diversity.²²³

Poland in this day and age contains many minority groups, either as immigrants, refugees, or as a result of the shifting of borders. John Paul II singles out the Jews, who he notes expressed a great display of Polish patriotism.²²⁴ In the Philippines, ethnic Hokkien Chinese, like Jews, are immigrants - nevertheless, many of these *Sangley* are attached to their native land and not to their ancestral land. It is expected that immigrants participate in the patriotic spirit of their new nation or land. The Catechism states:

The more prosperous nations are obliged, to the extent they are able, to welcome the foreigner in search of the security and the means of livelihood which he cannot find in his country of origin. Public authorities should see to it that the natural right is respected that places a guest under the protection of those who receive him. Political authorities, for the sake of the common good for which they are responsible, may make the exercise of the right to immigrate subject to various juridical conditions, especially with regard to the immigrants' duties toward their country of adoption. Immigrants are obliged to respect with gratitude the material and spiritual heritage of the country that receives them, to obey its laws and to assist in carrying civic burdens.²²⁵

²²² John Paul II, *Memory and Identity*, 99.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2241.

So immigrants, including Jews and in the Philippines, ethnic Chinese, are expected to show patriotism to the many nations which they reside in. Patriotism, strictly speaking, is not the national identity, in the sense that patriotism consists of attachment to the native land and its spirit, and the national identity, to the nation and its essence. One can be truly patriotic for the Philippines as a country without believing in the Filipino national identity: in fact, in order to truly love the Philippines, one must also love the truths which relate to it.

V, 2. Virtus In Medio Stat

So we have discussed what society at large could do in light of the national fabrication. But the question remains what one can do about the same on a personal level. For reasons I will expound on later, the virtue which is in direct conflict with the national fabrication is the theological virtue of prudence. Aquinas defines it as “wisdom in human affairs, but not wisdom absolutely speaking, since it does not have to do with the highest cause absolutely speaking.”²²⁶ It is practical wisdom, meaning that it is only “with respect to things that can be done.”²²⁷ Fellglow writes that prudence “involves how man must act regarding his affairs taking into account all available information, and whatever uncertainty exists.”²²⁸ The phrase *virtus in medio stat* (virtue stands in the middle) is the best motto for Prudence: Aquinas translated this in a certain way from Aristotle’s Greek; quoting *Ethics II* in saying that “[a] moral virtue consists in a

²²⁶ Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Freddoso, II-II, q. 47, a. 2.

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Fellglow Keep, “The Thomistic Virtue of Prudence”, *Pillar of Liberty*, June 2, 2022. <https://pillarofliberty.substack.com/p/the-thomistic-virtue-of-prudence?s=r>

mean that is relative to us, and it is determined by reason (*virtus moralis in medio consistit quoad nos determinata ratione*).”²²⁹ Fellglow goes on to write that “Thomistic Ethics posits the mean as some point between (not necessarily balancing) two extremes. Becoming Prudent is like an algorithm that attempts one outcome, fails, learns from the error, and continues.”²³⁰

V, 2.1. Nuanced Thinking

An important aspect of prudent thought is nuanced thinking. Nuanced thinking is the ability to think in the third person. In other words, thinking objectively. Many people tend to think in two ways: either viewing everything as a black and white matter or rejecting black and whites entirely. Nuanced thinking is neither totally absolutist or relativist, we can illustrate their differences in the Catholic Church’s way of viewing morality.

V, 2.1.1. Nuanced Thinking Is Not Relativistic

The Catholic Church views mortal sin as a sin which separates one from God eternally. It is one which brings eternal death or hell. The Catechism states that “[m]ortal sin is sin whose object is grave matter and which is also committed with full knowledge and deliberate consent.”²³¹ We can apply the Aristotelian-Thomistic four causes here as well:

- The matter is something which is grave;
- The form is the action, word, thought, or omission;

²²⁹ Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans, Freddoso, I-II, q. 64, a. 2. I present a simpler translation: A moral virtue consists in the middle relative to us; with a limited understanding.

²³⁰ Fellglow Keep, “The Thomistic Virtue of Prudence”, *Pillar of Liberty*, June 2, 2022.

²³¹ Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1857.

- The efficient cause is the person with full knowledge;
- And the purpose is to act with deliberate consent.

Catholics hold that culpability can be remitted if there is no deliberate consent or if there is no full knowledge of a sin, even if the matter itself remains absolutely grave. Let us use a practical example: suppose a man who, forgetting that today is a Friday, eats meat and breaks the Church's precept: is he still guilty of mortal sin? Relativists hold that the matter itself can be made non-grave, or can even be good depending on the circumstances: so either he did not break the Church's precept, or that his breaking of the Church's precept was not a grave matter. But there are those who might deny the diminishment of guilt or invincible ignorance: to them, he is just as good as one who ate meat with full knowledge and deliberate consent. Of course the Catholic Church does not think these ways: instead, it holds that while the man still broke the Church's precept; his guilt is diminished or nonexistent due to his circumstances. In short, the Church views there to be moral absolutes with subjective applications. Aquinas writes that the specifics of absolute laws, such as the Ten Commandments can change according to specifics:

So, then, the precepts of the Decalogue are immutable with respect to the character of justice that they embody. However, regarding the specification of the precepts as applied to singular acts—that is, as regards whether this or that act is or is not homicide or theft or adultery—there is indeed mutability, sometimes by God's authority alone, viz., in those things that have been instituted by God alone (e.g., matrimony and other things of this sort), and sometimes also by human authority, as in those matters that have been entrusted to the jurisdiction of men. With respect to those matters, but not with respect to all matters, men act in the place of God.²³²

So this is an example of nuanced thinking in a moral context. When we apply nuanced thinking, we do not reject dichotomies, but only its abuse. There are legitimate dichotomies, either *per se* or *per accidens*: an example would be moral goods vs. moral evils. Relativists make their own

²³² Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Freddoso, I-II, q. 100, a. 8.

goods and evils in the name of nuance: they overemphasize on the particulars, while polarized thinking tends to overemphasize on the dichotomous without regard for the particulars. Nuanced thinking is prudential in nature: it accepts the dichotomies while keeping in mind the many exceptions to the rule. But nuanced thinking has its own practical application in the Philippines, where nuanced thinking is hard to come by.

V, 2.1.1. Nuanced Thinking in the Philippines

The Philippines was born of collective struggle, including war. There was little else uniting the disparate units except that. In a war, soldiers are often conditioned to view their enemy as black vs. white. As long as there was a collective struggle, not much else was needed to keep the nation going. In return, the nationalist spirit kept the struggle going: the farmer planted the vine which gave him drink. But as soon as the threat was over, the leaders of the new nation had to keep it going, lest it fall into chaos like others before it. The Latin American states for instance had multiple violent revolutions, class struggles, civil wars, and assassinations, because of the failure to maintain unity. The government still had to inculcate a tangible sense of national unity in order to keep the boat going: and so, they made a national language, they created national symbols and traits, and most of all, they demonized regionalism as the cause of the nation's problems. We see in Jerrold Tarrog's film *Heneral Luna* that the titular character had one favorite word to describe regionalists and dissenters: *traydor*. This was the black and white mentality which kept people in line: either fight for this nation in collective struggle or die. Nothing less would be tolerated as regionalism became the mortal sin of Philippine history.

Future generations drilled this wartime mindset into the minds of young Filipinos. They coined the term *colonial mentality* for those who preferred foreign imports or foreign culture to

“Filipino” culture. Everyone had to support the Philippines or risk becoming unpatriotic. What was colonial was bad and un-Filipino. Of course, these kept the nationalist spirit going: but few dare to question the Filipino nation itself lest they become unpatriotic. Can the Filipino Nation not stand up to scrutiny? Is this why Cardinal Santos refrained from condemning Rizal’s ideals, lest the Church become unpatriotic? I do not know. But this dichotomous mindset has bled out in many of society's other sectors: politicians, personalities, etc. During the 2022 presidential elections, many supporters of Bongbong Marcos and Leni Robredo were quick to demonize one another and polarize their worldviews.²³³ Robredo supporters were ‘sanctimonious elites’ while Marcos supporters were from the ‘gullible, uneducated, masses.’ We see Marcos supporters promoting “Tallano Gold,”²³⁴ which, in itself, is based on a presentist and nationalistic interpretation of precolonial history. But even liberals are affected by this thinking: being influenced by the West, they participate in Western polarizations: cancel culture, credentialism,²³⁵ and the same black-and-white thinking which they also showed during the election. Some Robredo supporters broke friendships and even family ties based on political differences.²³⁶ They are critical of vloggers, yet they promote both partisan and mass media, both nationwide and abroad. This illustrates the extent of the polarized thinking which sustained the nationalist spirit and thus became a mental norm. The Filipino Nationalist spirit forewent nuanced thinking. In addition, the nationalist leadership flagrantly violated Prudence in their

²³³ Of course, this does not apply to the whole: but it was noticeable enough among many.

²³⁴ Secret gold reserve owned by the Taguean Tallano family who were the supposed pre colonial rulers of the Philippines.

²³⁵ An unhealthy emphasis on academic credentials as proof of valid opinion.

²³⁶ Lorenzo Legarda Leviste, “An Open Letter of Grief from Loren Legarda's Son,” Rappler, May 5, 2022, <https://www.rappler.com/voices/imho/opinion-open-letter-grief-loren-legarda-son/>.

personal, political, and military decisions. They were disposed to duels and womanizing, grave strategic and human losses, and the willingness of some to work with Japan to uphold their lofty ideals. A spirit of prudence, especially in thought and decision, is the best antidote to the Filipino national fabrication. Prudence, in addition to its use against the national fabrication, can also lead a soul closer to Christ.

V, 2.1.2. True Filipino Identity

This is taken from an old essay.

Filipino in its most conservative sense refers to Christian lowlanders. They were the subject of our essential analysis due to them sharing legitimate similarities, although not as a nation. In our essential analysis we focused on what divided them. But now, it is time to look at what unites them: Catholic Christianity. In 1521, the Castilians introduced the Catholic faith to the various nations in the Philippines. Rajah Humabon of Cebu was first to embrace our faith in 1521. Ferdinand Magellan, claimed the islands for Spain and for Philip II, the king of the Castilians. In 1565, King Philip II began the conquest of the archipelago, until finally, in 1570 the city of Manila was conquered for the Castilians. But, before the indigents were conquered, there was not at all any semblance of unity or identity, because they were divided into small polities, with various datus, kings, raja, queens, and so on. But Christianity gave them one, unique, religious identity. Everywhere in the country, one can find a church. In Cebu and Pandacan, there is great respect for the *Sto. Nino*. In Quiapo, the crowd joined the Santacruzian procession. There is an image of the Blessed Virgin on the wall or outside the houses, whether in Cagayan or Davao. The many nations of the Philippines rally around the Catholic Faith to

achieve unity in their diversity. This is the true Filipino identity - not as a nation, but as a group of believers, unique among the Austronesians. This is where we end our final part.

Conclusion

We see that Christ's social reign is one of truth. This, in many ways, requires Filipinos to think twice about their identity. The Catholic Church teaches that the ethnic groups in the Philippines, which are *nations* in the strictest sense, have many rights such as self-determination, especially regarding its own culture and language. The State cannot replace the nation, and the nation is not *democratic society*. In light of this, Filipino civic identity cannot subsume ethnic identities. Filipino nationalism forgoes nuanced thinking and the virtue of prudence, and it is through prudence that a particular person can oppose the Great Fabrication while glowing closer to Christ. But most importantly, the peoples in the Philippines must focus on their true identity - the belief in Christ the King.

CONCLUSION

Firstly, the Filipino National Identity was born out of a fleshed-out struggle which could make one forget about differences for a while. The nationalists believed that they could make a nation before the people shared their culture. However, Catholic ethnology teaches that culture is the essential element of national expression. Filipino nationhood was false and that it remains false as long as the Philippines has not yet fully homogenized. Civic nationalism is a form of liberalism which seeks to create a nation out of subjective feelings. The Church teaches that the ethnic groups in the Philippines, which are *nations* in the strictest sense, have many rights such as self-determination, especially regarding its own culture and language. The homogenization of the Filipino nation has been attempted with government mandates and even the Constitution itself. But in the process, it could undermine or even destroy ethnic identities which are considered inferior to the *Filipino* nation. However, the State cannot replace the nation - therefore, civic identity cannot subsume ethnic identities.

Secondly, Filipino nationalism and progressivism are linked by their presentist hermeneutics: their apathy towards the Church and leftism. Auron Macintyre often says: “Progressivism will hollow out your religion and wear its skin like a trophy.”²³⁷ In light of this, the liberal revolutionaries had a covert-overt dynamic with the local church. They obtained the trust of the Tagalog secular clergy by using them to destroy trust in the friarocracy. Once they expelled the friars and controlled their institutions, they then attempted to destroy the Catholic Church via schism. In fact, the Aglipayan schism was started by a known socialist; and even in

²³⁷ Auron Macintyre, Twitter post, June 20, 2022, 11:34 a.m., <https://mobile.twitter.com/AuronMacintyre/status/1538726921520939011>.

the 21st century, leftist groups still work in tandem with progressivists to promote their social ideals. Since the Philippine Liberal Establishment is still in its late covert phase, some observe that the Catholic Church is *declawed and neutered*²³⁸ - but just as a tamed lion has the innate power to overpower its handler, the church still retains its inherent political power. Only time can tell whether the Church will reject liberalism. Progressivism and nationalism both forgo nuanced thinking and the virtue of prudence. In fact, intersectionality is a possible coping mechanism which attempts to palliate guilt through identification with other *oppressed* diaspora or a servile attitude towards them. So we see clearly that prudence is necessary to oppose liberalism, including Filipino nationalism, all the while growing closer to Christ.

Christ's social reign is one of truth. This, in many ways, requires Filipinos to think twice about their identity. Filipino nationalism opposes both true nationhood with civic nationalism and Catholic teachings with liberalism. Although John Paul II recognized particular civic nations, he remained true to the timeless principles of Catholic Social doctrine. In the *Compendium* we read:

[T]he Church's social doctrine does not depend on the different cultures, ideologies or opinions; it is a constant teaching that "remains identical in its fundamental inspiration, in its 'principles of reflection', in its 'criteria of judgment', in its basic 'directives for action', and above all in its vital link with the Gospel of the Lord" ... This is the foundational and permanent nucleus of the Church's social doctrine, by which it moves through history without being conditioned by history or running the risk of fading away.²³⁹

The Church's doctrine on nationhood remains constant - it is the product of Roman law and medieval understanding of race and ethnicity. But despite not being a nation, the peoples in the Philippines are united through Christ. It is in Christ that true unity and true identity may be

²³⁸ Fellglow Keep, "An Ideological Analysis of Philippine Politics," *Pillar of Liberty*, Nov. 24, 2021.

²³⁹ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 85.

understood. And as Christ is Truth Himself; it is through accepting the truth about Filipino identity that the peoples may be united as one.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Quezon's Metanoia

A great number of revolutionaries, reformists, and even counter-revolutionaries were Freemasons, either as a token of social status or in the ideological sense. Manuel Quezon was no exception: he was a 33rd degree Mason and a known opponent of the Catholic Church. He did not just oppose political Catholicism, but he disbelieved in many of her doctrines. Nonetheless he befriended Archbishop O'Doherty, who would influence his metanoia.²⁴⁰

My friendship with Archbishop O'Doherty really developed after he had become the Archbishop of Manila and, I must add, a good many years prior to my rejoining the Catholic Church, the faith of my fathers. I was Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands and elected to the 33rd degree of the Scottish Rite Masonry, the highest rank to which a Mason can aspire, when our relations became very friendly.²⁴¹

Unlike Rizal, del Pilar, and de los Reyes, Quezon did not revert from a deathbed or a jail cell, but he publicly mentioned and admitted the fact. Historians often question the conversions of Rizal, etc., but admit that Quezon died within the Catholic Church. But his conversion was doctrinal:

²⁴⁰ Frederic S. Marquardt, "Quezon and the Church," *The Philippine Free Press Online*, August 19, 1954. Metanoia is a fancy word for repentance, i.e. an amendment of life following a religious conversion.

²⁴¹ Manuel Quezon, "Speech of President Quezon in Honor of Archbishop Michael J. O'Doherty," transcript of speech delivered at Malacañan Palace, Manila, September 4, 1936. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1936/09/04/speech-of-president-quezon-in-honor-of-archbishop-michael-j-odoherty-september-4-1936/>

and so he did not completely abandon the ideals which nationalism and Freemasonry instilled upon him.

Appendix B: In Defense of the Friars

My first serious exposure to church history was when a certain priest invited me to join his seminary course on Church history. Before that, my only exposure was when, as a child, I read about the role of the friars in Philippine history - despite not understanding completely what a friar really was. The only description I knew was that they were Spanish and that they probably wore some brown robes. What I read was that the Spanish priests were enemies of the Filipinos: hypocrites, just like how President Duterte describes the priests of our time. But history lessons outside school textbooks provided a starkly different view on the friars. In *Philippine Studies* I read Arcilla's review of "Revolutionary Clergy," which was about the role secular priests had in mediating between the Church and the Revolution - I will write about this later: but most of all, I learned about the role of the friars in improving civilization. The seminary course I attended introduced me to the modus operandi of the colonial Church, which painted a starkly different view of the friars. James LeRoy writes about the exaggerations which both clericalist and anti-clericalist writers made on the state of the indigents before the Spanish advent:

Of late years, particularly in the heat of controversy from 1863 to 1898, there has been a tendency on the part of friar and pro-friar writers to depreciate the Filipinos in every way. In the loose state of knowledge about the pre-Conquest natives, it has been easy to make exaggerated charges as to savagery and degradation being prevalent before the Spaniards came. On the other hand, various Filipino zealots of the past decade or so, emulating Jose Rizal in his effort to give his people their just place in history, but lacking his intelligence and scholarship, have gone to ridiculous extremes in claiming for their race before the

Conquest a civilization equal to that then prevailing in Europe, and charging that the friars stifled it.²⁴²

The Katipuneros promoted the second extreme:

To the second question, the answer should affirm that the Spaniards, specifically the friars, had done nothing to advance the civilization of the Filipinos; indeed they saw civilization and enlightenment as incompatible with their own interests. They taught the catechism, but offered the people no spiritual depth. They lavishly celebrated religious festivals, but expected the people to bear the cost. They abused their power and privileges; they were oppressors. To the third question, about the future, the initiate should confidently predict that with faith, courage and perseverance all the country's evils would be overcome.²⁴³

These charges clearly applied to the present, but also implied the situation of the early colonial period. LeRoy, himself no friar-lover, contradicts this sentiment: he admits that the friars were “particularly desirous of bettering the ways of communication through tropical forests or overgrown country between the villages forming his mission, and hence roads were opened. The friars set to work also to improve agricultural methods and products.”²⁴⁴ They were also responsible for defending their communities from Moros, although they employed forced labor.²⁴⁵ But LeRoy clarifies that although the friars built institutions of higher education, they were not meant for the Indios: but rather; for the Creoles.²⁴⁶ He also acknowledges the work the

²⁴² LeRoy, “The Friars in the Philippines,” 658.

²⁴³ “Initiation Rites, c.1896,” Katipunan: Documents and Studies, accessed June 26, 2022, <http://www.kasaysayan-kkk.info/membership-documents/initiation-rites-c-1896>.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., 661.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ LeRoy, “The Friars in the Philippines,” 662.

friars put in learning and documenting native languages, although he is critical of their methods of documentation.²⁴⁷

Stephen Bonsal in contrast takes a much more detailed (and positive) view on early friar contributions. He states that every staple crop in the Philippines²⁴⁸ which “adds to the wealth of their inhabitants was either introduced by the friars, or that its valuable qualities were made known by them to the natives.”²⁴⁹ He explains further:

Practically cut off for so many generations from communication with the outside world, and often involved in the famines which were in a great measure due to the improvidence of the islanders, the friars found it was not sufficient to preach tropical agriculture from their pulpits; it was necessary to work in a more practical way. With this purpose, lands were taken up by them and model farms or plantations established in many districts; and in these schools the natives learned what they know today of tilling the soil. This was the genesis of the monastic estates.²⁵⁰

Of course, Bonsal was sympathetic to the friars: but enough has been said to disprove the notion that the friars contributed nothing to civilization and only served to stifle it. Now for the second accusation that the friars “taught the catechism, but offered the people no spiritual depth.”²⁵¹

LeRoy blatantly rejects this accusation, stating:

The early missionaries were teachers before they could be preachers. Though their instruction was confined to the catechism and the little learning incidental to this, no unprejudiced person can fail to render tribute to their labors in mastering the dialects and in patiently instilling knowledge which, though presented in what we should to-day call a

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 663.

²⁴⁸ Except tobacco.

²⁴⁹ Stephen Bonsal, “The Work of the Friars,” in *The North American Review* 175, no. 551 (1902): 453. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25119310>.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

narrow manner, was nevertheless bound to have an enlightening and uplifting influence upon that people.²⁵²

The religious situation in the Philippines probably nauseated the Katipuneros; we can see that Rizal often portrayed Filipino Catholics as superstitious yet superficial: in *El Filibusterismo* we can read of Juli who prayed fervently, but in vain, to alleviate a bad monetary situation.²⁵³ In the same book, a nun, who believed in the healing power of holy water and its inability to transmit illness.²⁵⁴ The same believed that Basillo was imprisoned due to his belief that holy water could transmit illness, and was not above spreading it.²⁵⁵ Even now we can sometimes observe the superficiality of many Catholics.

The nationalists observed the superficiality of faith in superstition and religious hypocrisy. They blame this on the inability of the friars to provide deep spiritual roots in the people. Mulder observes that the ideas of sin, repentance, and atonement were not deeply rooted in Filipino culture.²⁵⁶ He contends that Catholic Christianity underwent a process of *localization*, which he defines as when local receivers shape foreign cultural elements in their own image.²⁵⁷ He explains that Catholicism in the Philippines is grafted upon the way Austronesians esteem the family²⁵⁸ and the direct participation of the supernatural in nature.²⁵⁹ Most lowland nations were

²⁵² LeRoy, "The Friars in the Philippines," 662.

²⁵³ Rizal, "Cabesang Tales," in *El Filibusterismo*, trans. Derbyshire, 36-7.

²⁵⁴ Rizal, "Juli," in *El Filibusterismo*, trans. Derbyshire, 289-90; 41.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Niels Mulder, "Localization and Philippine Catholicism," in *Philippine Studies* 40, no. 2 (1992): 241. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42633312>.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 240-8

matriarchal: Mulder rejects feminist historiography which claims that the woman's role as mother was a result of attempts by friars to "Maria-Clarify" the woman.²⁶⁰ Instead, he states that "the position of woman as mother in the Philippines was very similar to what it is in other cultures of Southeast Asia, such as the Javanese and the Thai."²⁶¹ So whatever undesirable qualities the Katipuneros saw in local Catholicism reflected on local culture itself; which tends to graft foreign cultural elements, i.e. localization. Meaning, that the lack of spiritual depth is probably part of the local condition.

To their credit, the catechisms before the American period were rather basic. Traditional Catholics these days prefer the *Baltimore Catechism* over the *Doctrina Christiana*. Nevertheless, the friars spent a great deal of time and effort in propagating the catechism and providing basic religious activities. They faced immense obstacles such as a lack of roads and bridges, warring polities, language barriers, etc., so they were not mediocre missionaries. It was not that they offered the people "no spiritual depth" but rather, they faced countless depths and pitfalls in their efforts. But the view in question probably had some basis in some places where the friars were inexcusably mediocre, although, as we will read later, the friars also shouldered some of their own burdens.²⁶²

We know that religious festivals and other religious activities are not cheap. Religious festivals, both then and now, both require a large amount of coordination, real estate, and other

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 249-51.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 240.

²⁶¹ Ibid., 240-1.; Mulder, "Holy Mother, Mother Dear...or, How Would You Like To Be a Mother in Thailand," in *Review of Women's Studies 1*, no. 2 (1991): 68-72.

²⁶² Pilapil, "Nineteenth-Century Philippines and the Friar-Problem," 127-48. I boldly say that Pilapil's work can already provide a nuanced perspective on the friarocracy. It gives detailed answers on all four charges.

elements. This is true almost everywhere, but even more so in the Philippines where the many meanings of *feast* become one. We can observe dances, processions, and music: there is indeed no expense spared when it comes to these festivals. But at the end of the day, the people had to pay for it. But is there more than what meets the eye?

Vincente Pilapil wrote that the Philippines, unlike the Americas, was a high-expense and low-reward colony.²⁶³ By this he means that “[i]n terms of financial reward Spain got nothing out of her Far Eastern colony.”²⁶⁴ This, he said, was no problem at first: Spain would just get some money from Mexico and use that to sustain the Philippines: “[w]ell and good while that system lasted.”²⁶⁵ But Pilapil writes:

However, Spain lost Mexico, and the Philippine administrators, particularly the religious enterprisers, were forced to support themselves. For this the friars adopted the common ecclesiastical practice of collecting contributions from the faithful and asking fees for religious services. For the first time in three centuries the Filipinos were obliged to support the Church which formerly had cost them nothing. They could not comprehend the situation. They were reluctant to pay. But, on the other hand, the friars were forced by circumstances to collect these fees.²⁶⁶

He quotes the official commissioner’s report, in which he wrote:

One of the acts to which the curas now see themselves obliged, and which robs them of great prestige, is the collection of the parochial fees at marriages and burials... These scenes are very unpleasant to the religious, and yet, they can do no less than show themselves hard, for if they did otherwise they would be unable to collect any of the fees which belong to them and form the greater part of their income.²⁶⁷

²⁶³ Ibid., 139.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ Sinibaldo de Mas, "Character And Influence of the Friars," in *Internal Political Condition of the Philippines*, quoted in *The Philippine Islands* 52, edited by Emma Blair and Alexander Robertson, 57., quoted in Pilapil, "Nineteenth-Century Philippines and the Friar-Problem," in *The Americas* 18, no. 2 (1961): 139-40.

So it was understandable that the friars charged stipends for their activities, although Pilapil notes that this led to a great loss of respect for the friars who previously provided their services for free. He writes: “[h]erefrom stemmed the accusations that the friars exploited the people by religious means, being unrelenting in the exaction of the exorbitant fees for religious services.”²⁶⁸ It was not that the friars were being greedy as it was them being forced by circumstances. For the final charge that the friars abused their power and privileges: this, as Pilapil observes, is based on two things:

- The major civic role the friars had, in addition to their religious duties;
- Their role in hacienda ownership and rent.

The second one particularly disturbed the nationalists; and we can see in Rizal’s *El Filibusterismo* the damages it caused to a family.²⁶⁹ Pilapil writes:

Along with this matter and perhaps more serious was the burning question regarding the landed property of the Orders. Some religious Orders owned large haciendas, or tracts of land, in the better parts of the country. At first small purchases and then donations from the government and from the faithful had enabled them to accumulate these possessions. It was estimated that the total amount of lands owned by the three landed Orders, the Augustinian Hermits, the Recollects, and the Dominicans, came up to approximately 403,000 acres in the Tagalog territory...It is true that the revenues the friars obtained from the lease of these lands were not really enormous and it is proven that a good part of the income was spent towards improvements and other ameliorations in the lands which had been leased to Filipino tenants...It is equally true that some abuses were committed in connection with the administration of these haciendas. As early as 1743 the tenants in the various friar estates formally complained of such matters. The appointed investigating committee found truth in the complaints of the tenants.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁸ Pilapil, “Nineteenth-Century Philippines and the Friar-Problem,” 140.

²⁶⁹ Rizal, “Cabesang Tales,” in *El Filibusterismo*, trans. Derbyshire, 30-41.

²⁷⁰ Pilapil, “Nineteenth-Century Philippines and the Friar-Problem,” 140.

Nevertheless, in the nineteenth century it was only in Calamba where the tenants made loud complaints.²⁷¹ Pilapil notes that aside from the angry tenants with “legitimate complaints,” the friar properties became a liability in which the religious corporations “became vulnerable to the selfish interests of not just a few.”²⁷² Indeed, there were abuses: but they were not as widespread as some allege. Nevertheless, there is one thing which was indeed widespread: the major role the friars had in politics and civic activities. Pilapil writes that the parish priest had at least twenty civic duties.²⁷³ He notes that Archbishop Basilio Sancho de Santa Justa of Manila counseled his clergy to limit themselves to spiritual and interpersonal matters only.²⁷⁴ This is commendable advice: but in reality, as Pilapil points out, the friars had no choice but to assume these duties.²⁷⁵ He writes that the friar “disliked his innumerable political duties, but his assumption of a civil role was necessitated by force of circumstances.”²⁷⁶ To conclude, the friars were also bound by circumstances.

²⁷¹ Ibid., 148.

²⁷² Ibid., 141.

²⁷³ Ibid., 141-2.

²⁷⁴ Ibid, 142.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

Appendix C: Horseshoe Theory for the Post-Conciliar Church

Horseshoe theory applies for both sede-vacantists and conciliar Catholics concerning their ecclesiology and views on doctrine. To expound further, sede-vacantists and conciliar Catholics both share these sentiments:

- Official papal documents *cannot* contain heresy;
- Popes *cannot* be both pope and heretic;

They differ in their reactions to suspect documents: for conciliar Catholics, who tend to make defenses and clear doubts; and for sedevacantists, who declare the seat vacant. To this end they find it unacceptable that a pope may be called a heretic: either because he is not a heretic or because he is not Pope.

Horseshoe theory applies to groups like the SsSPX and progressives, who tend to accept that popes can promote things contrary to doctrine while remaining Pope, e.g. some of the SSPX do not hesitate to call popes "material heretics" such as in the case of Pope Francis and the death penalty, while progressives believe that the Pope can (and should) oppose dogmas. It is in this sense that they share two positions:

- Official papal documents *can* contain heresy;
- Popes *can* be both pope and heretic;

With this information I make this schematic, partly inspired by one sent to me by Fellglow Keep (Pillar of Liberty):

- Popes *can* be heretics, post-Vat II leanings: *progressivists*
- Popes *cannot* be heretics, post-Vat II leanings: *mainstream Catholics*

- Popes *can* be heretics, pre-Vat II leanings: *SsSPX*²⁷⁷
- Popes *cannot* be heretics, pre-Vat II leanings: *sede-vacantists*

In conclusion, there are similarities between mainstream Catholics and sede-vacantists, and the SSPX and progressives.

Appendix D: Pornography As Civil Placation

Seduction can be a psychological operation used to placate, manipulate, etc. the target audience, whether an individual or a collective. The Bible documents that the Palestinians used seduction as a tool to bring the judge Samson to his knees.²⁷⁸ The Israeli Army was also accused of broadcasting pornography on Palestinian TV stations in order to dampen resistance.²⁷⁹ During the Martial Law era, specifically 1982, the Manila Film Center was completed. During this time there was already widespread disaffection among sectors of Manila society which would soon culminate in a series of mass demonstrations. The Manila Film Center, besides the gruesome nature of its construction, was also known for its screening of softcore pornographic films, greenlit by none other than the Marcos family, officially in order to make it more profitable. Presidential Decree no. 1986 provided to the Film Center many exemptions from stringent censorship laws which pertain to pornographic content.²⁸⁰ The Manila Film Center therefore

²⁷⁷ The SSPX makes a formal - material distinction for heresies which counters the sede thesis.

²⁷⁸ Judg. 16:15-7

²⁷⁹ Agence France-Presse, "Porn Run on Seized TV Channels, Say Residents," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, April 1, 2002.

²⁸⁰ Ferdinand E. Marcos and Juan Tuvera, "Presidential Decree No. 1986," (Manila, Malacañang, October 5, 1985); Nicai de Guzman, "The Mysterious Curse of the Manila Film Center," *Esquire Magazine*, November 7, 2019.

became known as a glorified porn cinema. Noting the social climate and tension among Manilenos at that time, it would not be surprising if the allowance of pornography in the Manila Film Center could have been used in an attempt to placate the growing Manila unrest. *Now the Manila Film Center remains a hollow and broken shell destroyed by the ravages of fire, parallel to one who has become a slave to the burning passions of lust.*

Appendix E: Argumentum ad Damasum Revisited: Hypocrisy

Aquinas equates good with being.²⁸¹ He states that “[g]ood and being are the same in reality and differ only conceptually.”²⁸² He believes that every being is good, and is only bad if it “lacks some sort of being.”²⁸³ He states that “a man is called bad insofar as he lacks the being of virtue, and an eye is called bad insofar as it lacks keenness of sight.”²⁸⁴ He believes that good consists of mode, species, and order,²⁸⁵ and divides good into three particulars: the noble, the useful, and the pleasant.²⁸⁶ This is the crux of our understanding of hypocrisy. Aquinas now understands that evil is caused by good in two senses:

²⁸¹ Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Freddoso, I, q. 5, a. 1.

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ Ibid., I, q. 5, a. 3.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., I, q. 5, a. 5.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., I, q. 5, a. 6.

1. Evil is a deficiency (*privation*) of good.²⁸⁷ A defect can only be caused by the thing which it defects. And every evil has a cause, every cause is a being, and every being is good: therefore, the cause of every evil is good;²⁸⁸
2. To obtain a good, there might be an evil done. For example, “the fire’s goodness causes what is bad for the water [e.g. evaporation]”: but “the fire does not aim at depriving the water of its form, but instead aims at inducing its own proper form—and yet in doing the latter, it also does the former incidentally (*per accidens*).”²⁸⁹ In the human condition, a man might rape: he does this to obtain sexual pleasure (an intrinsic good), but ends up violating another (an evil).

In the previous article we have examined the liberal’s use of the Damaso Appeal. Padre Damaso; in society’s eyes, represents everything wrong with the Catholic Church: hypocrisy, lechery, aversion to change, oppression, repression, etc. We know that the Damaso Appeal is fallacious: but nevertheless, it can teach us something about our relationship with God.

The Catholic Church is outspoken on important matters, it still exercises spiritual functions and still promotes orthodox moral theology. Due to this, many view the Catholic Church as a stumbling block to progress. To its enemies this represents the continuation of the Damaso Spirit: aversion to internal change, medieval standards, hypocrisy, et cetera; not only in the Philippines, but within Saint Peter’s walls themselves. In light of this, Rodrigo Duterte has called the Church

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 1, q. 49, a. 1.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

the “most hypocritical institution in the Philippines.”²⁹⁰ But are these charges true? Many Catholics tend to shy away from this discussion or deny these charges. And why should they not? That statement was a blatant attack on the institution they hold dear. But what if Catholics readily accepted these charges?

Hypocrisy happens when morals fight with desires, or in other words, when an objective good fights with a subjective good. Catholics have always held on to universal moral standards, yet they often fail to reconcile these objective standards with their human condition. Their morals fight with their desires, and so they are predisposed to hypocrisy. The conflict between objective and subjective goods comes from the Thomistic definition of good and the principle that all evil comes from a good. Aquinas understands that evil is caused by good in two senses: As a deficiency of, and as a means to obtain a good.²⁹¹ Hypocrisy applies to the second way. Aquinas divides good into three particulars: the noble, the useful, and the pleasant.²⁹²

Out of the three, nobility is objective while utility and pleasence is subjective. Hypocrites understand nobility, and find it useful to profess it. This in itself can be pleasurable and it is not hypocritical. But when they are drawn to a useful or pleasant good which they may obtain by un-noble deeds, nobility’s practice becomes inconvenient, and so they become hypocrites. In this light, we are all inclined to hypocrisy. Still, many genuinely believe in the noble good and profess it, despite failing to apply it in their day-to-day life. In this sense, the Catholic Church is

²⁹⁰ Pia Gutierrez, “‘Most Hypocritical Institution’: Duterte Blasts Church Anew,” (ABS-CBN News, August 14, 2018).

²⁹¹ Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1, q. 49, a. 1.

²⁹² *Ibid.*, 1, q. 5, a. 6.

a “fraternity of hypocrites”:²⁹³ a fraternity of those who profess universal moral codes yet fail to practice them in everything. Admitting this does not injure the faith: it magnifies the need for grace and human frailty. Christ’s social reign is one of truth: it requires a clear examination on not just the country, but also on the church: not only on the clergy, but on one’s own life. And it is only in acknowledging this that Catholics can grow as persons and as Church.

Appendix F: Short Author Review - Fellglow Keep

Fellglow Keep is the pen name of an author who seeks to remain anonymous.²⁹⁴ I can only divulge two details in respect to this: firstly, he is a statistician, computational scientist, and mathematician, and secondly, he is a Pampanga native.²⁹⁵ He is a traditional Catholic, a non-Thomistic Aristotelian, and a neoreactionary thinker. Keep, as I mentioned earlier, is the lead editor of the *Sandalan na ning Katimawan*, better known as the *Pillar of Liberty*. Keep subscribes to neoreactionary caste analysis and Elite Theory. I have discussed some aspects of Elite Theory in II, 2.2.: but his contribution to Elite Theory is in line with Curtis Yarvin’s BDH-OV conflict.²⁹⁶ He has a special interest in the professional-managerial elite, specifically, the “Manila Managerial Elite” which takes up most of his writings. He defines the professional-managerial class as “work jobs that require middling theoretical knowledge, with what little

²⁹³ Melo M. Acuna, “New Palawan Bishop Welcomed into the 'Fraternity of Hypocrites!,'” (CBCP News, February 14, 2017).

²⁹⁴ Name comes from Skyrim.

²⁹⁵ Fellglow Keep, “About the Writers,” *A Gentle Introduction to Pillar of Liberty*, (Philippines, Pillar of Liberty, September 28, 2018).

²⁹⁶ Fellglow Keep, “Neoreactionary Caste Analysis for the Philippines,” *Pillar of Liberty*, November 24, 2021.

existing justifying standards, ethics, codes of conduct, and other regulated rules. They are neither proficient in the bigger picture nor the ground level, and are instead very self-centered and competitive.”²⁹⁷ This will serve as the crux for many of his works.

Keep’s most important work on Fabrication Theory is “The Empire of Lies and ‘Filipino’ Identity.” It serves as this paper’s inspiration and a major source. I, 1.2.3. introduces readers to the term *Empire of Lies*, which Keep defines as:

...the neoliberal,²⁹⁸ globalist, and socially progressive order that America began by suppressing the Confederacy. American commitment crystalized in 1913, when the Federal Reserve began, when the income tax was set in, and when popular election of state senators became [the] norm. The Old Right faded, with the Republican Party cementing its New Right shift with the Southern Strategy and resulting neoconservatism. The Empire of Lies saw that America lose[s] its small-town and localist values in favor of liberal mass society.²⁹⁹

Keep examines liberalism, nationalism, globalism, and social progressivism all in light of the *Empire*. In “The Empire of Lies” he starts off with a strongly worded statement: “Many Filipinos have this idiotic notion that a nation is a population and their territory with administering government. These types who don’t know their basic political science are also the type to spout idiotic political opinions on social media, so we doubt that they would lay eyes on this paywalled article in the first place.”³⁰⁰ He then defines the nation as “simply a group of people with common identity, which we call the *national* identity.”³⁰¹ But he does not go as far as to equate nationality with the *ethnos* of Herodotus. He also introduces us to two theories of

²⁹⁷ Keep, *A Gentle Introduction to Pillar of Liberty*, 6.1.

²⁹⁸ Free-market economic policy.

²⁹⁹ Fellglow Keep, “The Empire of Lies and “Filipino” Identity.”

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, ch. 1

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*

statehood: the declarative theory and the *control of violence*. The former is technically what Keep claims many Filipinos attribute to the “nation,” while the control of violence means that the state becomes an effective coercive force. He also differentiates between Westphalian sovereignty and absolutism, i.e. sovereignty at the hands of a single entity; and the early and High Medieval model of sovereignty belonging to “political community as a whole instead of a single entity.”³⁰² After he introduces statehood and sovereignty, he further explains fabricated national identities: “[T]he Leviathan State³⁰³ saw an artificial *ethnos* come up from the *civitas*, which subsumed all peoples under the Leviathan’s wing. Hence civic nationalism overrode ethnic nationalism, and even worse these two concepts have been intermixed as national identity overrode ethnic ones.”³⁰⁴ He views the National Fabrication as an act of Tagalog expansionism. He quotes Jacinto’s *Cartilla* and Ronquillo’s writings to showcase the *Tagalog goal* of “subsuming all other Austronesian *ethnoi* under its belt.”³⁰⁵ Referring to those two sources; he writes:

Hence here begins the motte-and-bailey tactic that the Tagalog-built Establishment uses in carrying out its Entropic policy. Government-backed historians see this paltry goal and jump to the conclusion that since the Katipunan and the Revolutionary government applied “Tagalog” to all Filipinos (whose connotation had shifted from insulares to all people living in *Filipinas* in the late 19th century), all “Filipinos” joined the Revolution for the Spanish called it the Tagalog War. A nonsensical motte-and-bailey statement fit only for a matriarchal race.³⁰⁶

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ Put simply, it is an absolutist state.

³⁰⁴ Ibid. “National identity overrode ethnic ones.” What does he mean?

³⁰⁵ Keep, “The Empire of Lies and ‘Filipino’ Identity,” ch. 3

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

He then lists some shared Austronesian traits, and then mentions some outliers; citing the Maori who “abandoned circumcision and matriarchy after landing on New Zealand” and the Kapampangans who “followed the same lines as the Maori.”³⁰⁷ He compares the Indonesian and Malaysian commitment to diversity to the Philippines, where the *artificial ethnos* and civic identity subsumed the ethnic identities. He correctly states that “uniting disparate peoples with almost nothing in common happens only when one culture trumps all others.”³⁰⁸

This Westphalian poison of blurring the lines between *ethnos* [nation] and *civitas* [state] bears its intended fruits today: national identity is important to the liberalist professional-managerial class, and atomization resulted in the Leviathan State grabbing power. We have discussed at length the Revolution of Mass and Scale brought by Westphalian poison, and how the liberal Establishment demands that Filipinos put their so-called nation above their homes and their communities. Indeed, the Philippines’ case is sheer proof of Elite Theory’s validity.³⁰⁹

He links nation-building and Elite Theory and makes a very important claim: *culture flows downstream from politics*.³¹⁰ He writes that “[s]trong, centralized states use nation-building out of necessity, for this allows efficiency and sheer application instead of thinking and prudence.”³¹¹

This is where he connects neoreactionary caste analysis with Fabrication Theory: *mass society* and homogenization. He introduces us to managerial capitalism; a fruit of the Industrial Revolution: mass production, the preference of mass formulas, and one-size fits all regulations.

He also shines light upon the links between managerial capitalism and hedonism: mass

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ Ibid.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ Keep, “The Empire of Lies and ‘Filipino’ Identity,” ch. 4.

³¹¹ Ibid.

production requires both homogenous products and consumers, as Samuel Francis writes, and that this requires on their end the rejection of delayed gratification in favor of pleasure and hedonism.³¹² He then connects managerial capitalism and nation-building, observing that nation-building is a managerial practice and that civic nationalism is oftentimes a mass effort by elites:

Nation-building is the manager's most important tool, for consumption-based identity allows state powers to increase. The liberal professional-managerial class indulges in popular media and sloganeering. No better slogan better describes the Philippines' current state than the Tagalog *Isang Bansa, Isang Diwa*: "One Nation, One Spirit". Similar patterns emerge in history, not just in Ukraine or the Philippines but even Europe and the United States. French, a dialect of the *langues-d'oïl* from Ile-de-France, and Italian, a Tuscan Romance variety, came from minority languages to "national" ones out of managerial assent. These were elite initiatives, and not popular ones: the French [Revolutionaries] imposed a top-bottom reenvisioning of France as nation-state, and Italy unified from Savoyan Freemasons who wanted to unite the Italian peninsula under their rule. We see that Bretons...and so on had their peoples, communities, and families subsumed under one civic identity transforming into a new *ethnos*.³¹³

He observes that liberal democracy is an aspect of the absolutist *Leviathan State* and summarizes his contribution to Fabrication theory like this:

Liberal Democracy as the god that failed sees homogenization as a must. Managerial liberalism sees that man, unchained from his home and heritage, must be further freed from material need by joining the hivemind...Hence the Manila Establishment demands one nation, one spirit: mass society, mass uniformity, and mass homogeneity. Democratic Revolution from the Center took the god that failed [liberal democracy] and made it [the] wellspring of this project. The Empire of Lies found willing puppets in Malacanang to impose its globalist agenda on the Filipinos, and its movement will not be stopped.³¹⁴

³¹² Samuel Francis, *Leviathan and Its Enemies*, quoted in Keep, "The Empire of Lies and 'Filipino' Identity," ch. 4.

³¹³ Keep, "The Empire of Lies and 'Filipino' Identity," ch. 4.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

In light of this, Keep rejects both the Marcosian and post-Marcos establishment; believing that the establishment itself remained unchanged after the EDSA Revolution.³¹⁵ In “Ideological Analysis of Philippine Politics” he writes:

One common trend in Philippine politics is the small role that ideology plays. Truly, all political parties pander to no bigger idea than vague platitudes about the “people”. What attracts little attention, however, is that all parties *do* subscribe to an ideology. This specific one, however, has fallen into obscurity since its main proponent and founder has fallen out of the establishment’s favor.³¹⁶

He writes that Marcos spearheaded a “New Society” based on liberal ideas (the god that failed): “In the 1970s, president Ferdinand Marcos justified his New Society on the basis of Democratic Revolution from the Center. This ideology’s main thrust is to use the government as [an] instrument of social change.”³¹⁷ He quotes Marcos’ *The Democratic Revolution in the Philippines* in explaining how Marcos rejected communist thinking in his writings: “I can see and appreciate the social and economic good of communism. But I find it difficult to understand how its political society can be called democratic when a single party, the Communist party, or a group of men who control it, has a monopoly of political power. ‘The party knows best,’ is the simplified dictum of the communist political order.”³¹⁸ Keep writes that Marcos was instead a managerial liberal: “[a]s an alternative, Marcos bases his Revolution off Liberal Revolutionary ideas – a constitutional state admits more people and groups into the establishment, establishes egalitarian ideas, and unites a state under one nation and one spirit. The New Society was the

³¹⁵ Fellglow Keep, “An Ideological Analysis of Philippine Politics.”

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*

³¹⁸ Ferdinand E. Marcos, *The Democratic Revolution in the Philippines*, (New Jersey, Prentice-Hall International, 1974), 54, quoted in Keep, “An Ideological Analysis of Philippine Politics.”

first manifestation of this ideal.”³¹⁹ He describes the New Society’s features: “wide representation from all societal sectors,” the nationalization of business and industry, mandatory and standardized education, Filipino nationalism, and the *Pilipino* language - all aspects of managerial liberalism.³²⁰ He writes that the Marcos regime was vigilant of communist guerillas, Moro separatists, and right-wing military coups: nevertheless, Marcos’ New Society ended in failure; as his efforts against the Moro rebellion failed in the long run and as his economic policies led to economic collapse.³²¹

But he does not support the post-Marcosian establishment, viewing it as a rebranded continuation:

However, many of Marcos’s innovations remained. His political system returned under new names – the only exception being the lack of a prime minister. The national language changed nothing but its first letter, remaining the Manila dialect of Tagalog. The government still exercised its intervention into the Economy, freeing enterprise only for those who could satisfy its countless requirements. The government still tries to incorporate all people under one nation, one spirit, if not under a New Society then under whatever administration rules the country. No doubt, the establishment remains exactly as it was in the Marcos regime. Paranoia against both right and left-wing subversives remains a hallmark of the Philippine government... Compare Cory Aquino’s institutionalization of dynastic politics in Philippine municipalities, cities, and provinces to Marcos’s cartelization of the Philippine Economy. Compare Fidel Ramos relinquishing control of public utilities to sanctioned monopolies to Marcos’s installation of cronies in the exact same companies. We find that the Philippine Establishment looks out only for itself – its political games serve powerful families which have existed since the Philippine Revolution. Elections see contenders with no ideological differences for only one ideology has remained dominant since the Marcos regime. Thus we see welfare subsidies and high taxes – Marcos was a fan of the Scandinavian model. Thus we see little business creation till recently. Thus we see platitudes about integrating social welfare and the market every election. Thus we see each president rattle endlessly about “the people” despite living in comfort and security for all their lives. Liberal, Nacionalista, Marcos, Duterte, Aquino, Arroyo, these labels comprise one motion with a

³¹⁹ Keep, “An Ideological Analysis of Philippine Politics.”

³²⁰ Ibid.

³²¹ Ibid.

unified *telos* – Democratic Revolution from the Center. The accidents differ, yet the essence remains.³²²

In conclusion, Keep opposes the Filipino nation’s construction: both because it is a false nation, but also because nation-building is intertwined with managerial liberalism. He writes that Marcos started the “Democratic Revolution from the Center” with principles of managerial liberalism: and that this Democratic Revolution is still ongoing, perpetuated by the next administrations ad infinitum. I agree with Keep on managerial elites, liberal democracy, the Leviathan State, and Fabrication Theory. However, in relation to *nationhood*, I prefer the ethnos, i.e. National Character, over Keep’s *shared identity*. Nevertheless, Keep’s views are sound and logical. And so we end our review of Keep’s political views and his contribution to Fabrication Theory.

THOMISTIC GLOSSARY

Per Se and Per Accidens

Per se refers to something which is essential to a thing *by* or *in itself*. *Per accidens* is something which is not essential to a thing, literally *by accident* or *by chance*. Suppose the statement: *He is a man in himself* (*vir est per se*). Contrast this to *by chance, he is in the market* (*in foro est per accidens*).

³²² Ibid.

The Four Causes

There are four causes of change, the whys to existence: material cause, formal cause, efficient cause, and final cause.

- The material cause is what something is made of. Matter is a potentiality: suppose the bricks and the building. The bricks are a building's material cause.
- The formal cause is the design and attributes which make something what it is. Form is an actuality: once matter conforms to the form, the form exists. So if we lay out the bricks in a certain form, the matter becomes the building.
- The efficient cause brings matter towards a form. Someone still needs to make the building with the bricks: be it God, a bricklayer, an architect, etc.

The final cause is the object's purpose: to live in, work in, etc. This is why a church is different from a schoolhouse, the former's purpose is worship, the latter's is education.

Truth and Falsity

Aquinas defines truth as “a correspondence between the intellect and the thing (adaequatio rei et intellectus.)”³²³ Truth cannot be found in things, but only in the intellect.³²⁴

Aquinas writes:

Now the relation that the thing that is understood bears to an intellect can be either *per se* or *per accidens*. It bears a *per se* relation to an intellect on which it depends for its own *esse*³²⁵, whereas it has a *per accidens* relation to an intellect insofar it is knowable by that intellect. For example, we say that a house is related *per se* to the craftsman's intellect, whereas it is related *per accidens* to an intellect on which it does not

³²³ Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Freddoso, I, q. 16, a. 1.

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Act of being.

depend for its *esse*. But a judgment about a thing derives not from what exists in it *per accidens*, but rather from what exists in it *per se*. Hence, each thing is called true absolutely speaking according to the relation it has to an intellect on which it depends for its *esse*. Thus, artifacts are called true in relation to our intellect. For a house is called a true house when it attains a likeness of the form that exists in the mind of the craftsman; and a spoken sentence is called true insofar as it is a sign of a true understanding. Similarly, natural things are called true to the extent that they attain a likeness of the species that exist in God's mind. For instance, a rock is called a true rock when it attains the proper nature of a rock as this is preconceived by God's intellect. So, then, truth exists primarily in the intellect, but secondarily in the things insofar as they are related to an intellect as their principle.³²⁶

Aquinas states that truth “exists properly in the intellect alone, whereas things are called true in a sense that derives from the truth that exists in an intellect.”³²⁷ So natural things are *true* when they relate to God's intellect, and artificial things are *true* when they relate to the artisan's.

Falsity, unlike truth, exists in things,³²⁸ senses,³²⁹ and the intellect.³³⁰ Aquinas defines falsity in two ways: simple falsehood and relative falsehood. He defines absolute falsehood as such:

And since each thing is named absolutely speaking in light of what belongs to it *per se*, whereas it is named only in a derivative way in light of what belongs to it *per accidens*, a thing can be called false absolutely speaking because of its relation to an intellect on which it depends [for its *esse*] and to which it is related *per se*, whereas in relation to other intellects to which it is related *per accidens* it can be called false only in a derivative way. Now natural things depend on God's intellect in the way that artifacts depend on a human intellect. Artifacts are called false absolutely speaking and in themselves insofar as they are defective in relation to the form of the relevant craft; thus,

³²⁶ Ibid.

³²⁷ Ibid., I, q. 16, a. 8. Confer with Article 1.

³²⁸ Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Freddoso, I, q. 17, a. 1.

³²⁹ Ibid., I, q. 17, a. 2.

³³⁰ Ibid., I, q. 17, a. 3.

a craftsman is said to fashion a false work when that work is defective in relation to the operation associated with the craft.³³¹

So absolute falsehood is formal. He describes absolute falsehood as something which relates to God's intellect in natural things and its source's intellect for artificial things.³³² Aquinas also provides two ways a thing can be *relatively* false, i.e. in relation to our intellect: by quality and perception. He explains qualitative falsehood:

In one way, things are called false because of the nature of the thing signified, so that what is signified or represented by a false assertion or conception is said to be false in the things. In this sense, each thing can be said to be false with respect to what does not exist in it—as, for instance, if we were to call a diameter a false commensurable, as the Philosopher does in *Metaphysics* 5, or, as Augustine says in *Soliloquia*, “The tragic actor is a false Hector.” On the other hand, each thing can also be called true with respect to that which belongs to it.³³³

Earlier, he summarizes this in his Response to the First Objection: “In relation to an intellect, a thing is called true with respect to what it is and false with respect to what it is not. Hence, as *Soliloquia* 2 says, ‘The true tragic actor is a false Hector [apostrophes mine].’ So to the extent that a sort of non-being is found in things which exist, so too a certain type of falsity is found in things that exist.”³³⁴ Qualitative falsehood applies to material things, i.e. things which are not pure acts.³³⁵ So in this case a fish is a false whale, a man is a false dog, etc. But there is a different type of relative falsehood, *perceptive falsehood*:

In the second way, things are called false in the manner of a cause. A thing is called false in this sense when it is prone to cause a false belief about itself. Since it is

³³¹ *Ibid.*, I, q. 17, a. 1.

³³² *Ibid.*

³³³ *Ibid.*

³³⁴ *Ibid.*

³³⁵ That is, things which are not God.

natural for us to judge things by their exterior appearances, given that our cognition begins with the senses, which have to do *per se* and primarily with exterior accidents, it follows that things which resemble other things in their exterior accidents are said to be false with respect to those other things. For instance, gall is false honey, and tin is false silver. Accordingly, in *Soliloquia* Augustine says, “We call things false when we apprehend them as very similar.” And in *Metaphysics* 5 the Philosopher says, “If a thing is prone to appear such as it is not, or to appear as what it is not, then it is called false.” In this sense a man can be called false to the extent that he is enamored with false opinions and assertions—not, however, because he is able to formulate false opinions and assertions, since in that case, as *Metaphysics* 5 says, even those who are wise and knowledgeable would be called false.³³⁶

Acts, Potencies, Esse, and Ens

Thomists believe that things can only exist in two ways: as pure acts (God), and as acts and potencies (everything else). The act and potency distinction is simple:

- an **act** is what something already is;
- and a **potency** is what something can be:

For example; a boy is actually a boy and potentially a man. Or, to connect with the four causes; bricks are actually bricks: together, they are a potential building. *Esse* is the active infinitive of “be,” and so it translates to *to be*. In short, it is *existence*. This is in contrast to *ens*, which is *essence*. To existence (*esse*) is strictly actual, while essence can refer to both actuality and potentiality. Aquinas believes that essence and existence is like act and potency, especially in which precedes which:

In the order of generation, potency is prior in time to act...A thing is engendered from a being in potency. Hence, in the order of generation, i.e., in the order of material cause, potency is prior in time to act, for a thing is engendered [caused] in as much as it is reduced from potency to act...Act, strictly speaking, is prior to potency...Act is prior to potency in its formal aspect, for potency is defined by act...Act is prior to potency in perfection, for act is the perfection of potency...Act is prior to potency in the order of efficient causality, for a being in potency can be reduced to act only by a being in act.³³⁷

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ Henri Grenier, *Thomistic Philosophy 2*, (Charlottetown, St. Dunstan’s University, 1948), 75.

And so, essence precedes existence in time, but existence, strictly speaking, is prior to existence: because essence is defined by existence. For example, an instance of an apple must exist before it can be defined (essentially). In the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Mihael Mahre states that the Scholastic doctrine of universal forms “distinguished *universalia ante res, in rebus, et post res*. The universal exists in the Divine Mind only as an idea, model, or prototype of a plurality of creatures *before* the individual is realized. Genus or species cannot in order of time precede the individual.”³³⁸ Mahre expounds:

The universal exists in the individual only potentially or fundamentally, not actually or formally as universal. That is, in each of the individuals of the same species there is a similar nature which the mind, exercising its abstractive activity, can represent by a concept or idea as separate, or apart, from its individualizing notes. The nature, or essence, so conceived is capable of being realized in an indefinite number of individuals, and therefore was justly described as "potentially universal". Finally, by a subsequent reflective generalizing act, the mind considers this concept, or idea, as representative of a plurality of such individuals, and thereby constitutes it a formally universal concept, or idea. In fact, it is only in the concept, or idea, that true universality is possible, for only in the vital mental act is there really reference of the one to the many. Even a common name, or any other general symbol, viewed as an entity, is merely an individual. It is its meaning, or significant reference, that gives it universality. But the fact that in the external world individual beings of the same species, e.g., men, oak trees, gold, iron, etc., have perfectly similar natures, affords an objective foundation for our subjective universal ideas and thereby makes physical science possible.³³⁹

In short, the *idea* precedes individual existence.

³³⁸ Michael Mahre, "Idea."

³³⁹ Ibid.

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