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L@s Indocumentad@s: A Feminist Decolonial Analysis of the Anthropological Subject in Roman Catholic Teachings on Gender and Sexuality and Catholic Social Thought

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Abstract

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By Melissa Rubalcaba

This dissertation provides a feminist decolonial analysis of the human person in the Roman Catholic tradition—both in its teachings on gender and sexuality and in Catholic Social Thought (CST)—and argues that the theological anthropological imaginary of the Roman Catholic Church creates and sustains categories of l@s indocumentad@s: individuals that are deemed to not closely enough approximate the norm of humanity due to their sex, gender, sexuality, and/or race. As indocumentad@, these individuals occupy a space at the subontological colonial difference, a space characterized by the omnipresence of violence—epistemic, physical, and sexual. Since the tradition, even the tradition of CST, neglects l@s indocumentad@s in their anthropological constructions, it becomes impotent in actually advocating for justice for these persons. I ultimately argue that if the tradition of CST desires to create a more equal and just global society oriented towards the common good, then it must prioritize the creation of a space of epistemological and anthropological sanctuary for l@s indocumentad@s, a space enacted by authentic recognition and decolonial love, wherein all subjects, not in spite of, but because of their differences, can be included in the human moral community.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Karl Rahner once noted that there is no theology without an accompanying anthropology.[1] He indicated that to speak of theology— and, I would argue, of ethics— one is already speaking of a particular understanding of the human person in relationship to themselves, others, and God. As a feminist Catholic social ethicist, I make similar assumptions as I understand that anthropological frameworks are central to a firm grounding upon which one can cultivate theology and ethics. While one's anthropology does, in fact, ground one's theology and ethics, I broaden this claim and suggest, along with liberationist/feminist thinkers, that the epistemological frameworks one privileges also inherently shape one's underlying anthropology. Thus, when one constructs theology and ethics, one is simultaneously espousing particular epistemological and anthropological frameworks.

My concerns for epistemology and anthropology are themselves ultimately rooted in concerns for social justice. Taken together, epistemologies and anthropologies reinforce specific views and assumptions about what constitutes the nature of human persons. Assumptions related to the nature of the human subject will in turn shape how one understands the dignity of the human subject. Due to the fact that epistemologies and anthropologies articulate a conception of the human person and their dignity, they also shape justice claims for particular persons, because an understanding of the human person informs our claims for what persons, as persons, need in order to live dignified lives.

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[1] See especially Rahner's *Theology and Anthropology*.

As a feminist Catholic social ethicist witnessing a variety of injustices in the world, I wondered what the dominant epistemology or anthropology is within the tradition of the Catholic Church and whether that underlying epistemology and anthropology was actually equipped to make justice claims to uphold the dignity of those persons that are marginalized or oppressed in our societies. Thus, the concerns in this dissertation are two-fold: epistemological and anthropological.[2] To address them I will critically analyze who the human person is in the Roman Catholic Tradition, especially in the teachings on gender and sexuality, and then show how the anthropological frameworks in the tradition have also been assumed within the justice-oriented social tradition.

In terms of its epistemology, Roman Catholic tradition has been unapologetically Eurocentric and androcentric. The social tradition[3] of the Church, too, has shaped its teachings according to Eurocentric theories and principles. As Charles Curran puts it, the Church has "not avoided this problem of a particular perspective claiming to be universal."[4] As feminist/liberationist scholars working in the Roman Catholic tradition have pointed out, these teachings stem from particular androcentric and Eurocentric social locations and cultures that claim to encapsulate the whole of human existence. In

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[2] Epistemology and anthropology taken together shape one's understanding of subjectivity, a term utilized throughout the dissertation. Since the concept of subjectivity is central to my argument, I explain how I am understanding and using it later in this introduction.

[3] The social tradition of the Roman Catholic Church is in broader continuity with the tradition of the Church; however, it finds its distinctiveness in its primary focus on addressing issues related to political, social, and economic injustices through the lens of human dignity. Other aspects of the tradition of the Church focus more heavily upon questions of systematics and doctrine (proper understanding of Christ, Marian devotion, theological anthropology, sacramental ordination, etc.) and not upon issues of social justice. Though these are obviously related, there is much less of an emphasis on the concerns for social justice and human dignity in the broader tradition than there is in the social teachings.

[4] Charles E. Curran. *Catholic Social Teaching 1891-Present: A Historical, Theological, and Ethical Analysis* (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2008), 95.

terms of its androcentrism the Roman Catholic Church has privileged the perspectives and experiences of males and, especially, the experiences represented by an all-male clergy. Over the centuries, the extra-biblical tradition of the Roman Catholic Church has been shaped by patriarchal assumptions wherein the particular perspectives of males are privileged. In terms of its Eurocentrism, liberationist thinkers have drawn attention to the fact that the Roman Catholic Church is an ancient institution of Western Europe. The systematic development of its doctrine has consistently privileged the philosophical and theological traditions stemming from the West neglecting to listen to or incorporate insights from other cultures. This resistance is also seen in the fact that over its long history the Chair of Peter (the papacy) has by and large been occupied by Italians.[5] The androcentrism and eurocentrism is especially troublesome because it elides the fact that when one universalizes particular modes of knowledge, one is simultaneously universalizing particular aspects of being: to privilege some forms of knowledge is also to privilege a knower. Universalizing particular epistemologies means that one is ultimately universalizing the particularity of these knowing subjects and doing so to the exclusion of other particular knowledges and beings. Thus, our epistemological concerns intertwine with our anthropological concerns.

If the epistemology is Eurocentric and androcentric, so too is the anthropology. Feminist scholars working in the Catholic tradition have clearly articulated critiques of the gender complementarity of Roman Catholic theological anthropology. The scholarship of Rosemary Radford Ruether, Lisa S. Cahill, Ada María Isasi-Díaz, María

[5] While the vast majority of the 266 popes have been Italian or come from Western Europe, here have been popes from other geographical locations. There is, of course, the Apostle Peter who the tradition claims to be the first pope. There are others that came from areas like Jerusalem, Syria, Libya (modern day), and Pope Francis from Argentina.

Pilar Aquino, Elizabeth Johnson, and Susan Ross have critiqued this anthropological grounding for the ways in which it places women as subordinate to men in their very nature, ontologizing differences between men and women and for centuries sealing women's subordinate status in Church and society. Feminist thinkers have focused their critique of the Church's theological anthropology as it is expressed in the tradition's teachings on gender and sexuality because the anthropology of gender complementarity in these teachings is so explicit. Since this anthropology of gender is not explicit in the social tradition, feminist thinkers in the Catholic tradition have largely neglected analyzing the human person in Catholic social thought (CST). This is a misstep since the anthropology of gender complementarity found in the teachings on gender and sexuality articulates an understanding of the human person and their dignity that grounds the whole of CST. To neglect a full analysis of the anthropological subject within the social tradition communicates that the human person and their dignity in the tradition of social thought is not problematic. Underlying this omission is a pervasive public/private divide within the broader tradition of Roman Catholicism.

The public/private divide can be placed historically within the broader context of the cultivation of the "modern subject" and liberal philosophy.[6] This subject is seen as an individual who is both fully autonomous and free. Central to this autonomy are clear boundaries drawn around the individual's private life—the self and the family—which separate it from the public/state. The state's role is to protect the freedoms of the individual and families from outside interference. While Roman Catholic anthropology wanted to distance itself both from the liberal private sphere of the individual and the

[6] The modern subject, and specifically, modern subjectivity will be explored more fully later in this chapter.

family, and also from the totalized Marxist model, CST attempted to find a middle way in which the individual can be considered in his or her own right while simultaneously being a part of a larger social body.[7]

The intertwinement between the individual and the socio-political body is in keeping with the traditional Thomistic claim of an intimate relationship between the two. As Jean Bethke Elshtain explains, this interrelationship can be seen in the CST discussions of private rights for individuals, such as private property.

> Thomism's insistence on the essential interrelationship of public and private (are) such that private property rights are not inviolable, (it) preserves a distinction between public and private but insists on the essentially social nature of all human activities and of human identity itself. This means that property is held as a social trust and that rights are not exclusive and absolute to the solitary self. But neither is the individual and such human institutions as the family absorbed within a collective enterprise that negates the dignity of the human person…the innate freedom of individuals is preserved but given a distinctly social cast.[8]

While we are all individuals, with particular identities, we are also social beings by nature, and while the two can be distinguished, they cannot be completely separated. Individual rights, while they must be upheld, are always also connected to the social and political aspects of the human person in their nature.

Yet, while insisting upon the connection between the private and public, Catholic theology maintained a sharp unnamed division. Though the aspects of life considered to be "private" are clearly present within the teachings on gender and sexuality, they are invisible in CST. Sex, gender, and the family have been relegated to this "private" status and rendered invisible within the social tradition. While we do find social encyclicals that speak to the rights of human persons as intimately connected to the rights of the family,

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[7] Jean Bethke Elshtain, "The Relationship of Public and Private," in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought,* Judith A. Dwyer, ed., 796.

[8] Ibid.

we ultimately find that "the relationship between the family and society, the theoretical relationship between them…is finally extrinsic…the two social arrangements remain autonomous in significant ways."[9]

In an effort to keep individuals and the family from being completely absorbed by society, CST upholds a dichotomy of public and private that assumes the anthropologically gendered hierarchy that we find explicit in the teachings on gender and sexuality. Margaret Farley argues that while CST has moved in a direction in which the lines between public and private have become more blurred, CST also "has not yet fundamentally transformed its view of the roles of women and men or of the structure of the family."[10] This is clearly seen when the CST upholds the equal participation of women in society while at the same time emphasizing that such participation must be practiced in a manner that is consistent with "women's dignity." While the anthropology of gender complementarity is not explicit in the tradition of CST, it is assumed within its body of teachings and shapes its justice claims.

Indeed, along with feminist thinkers, Catholic social ethicists have not been explicit as to how the theological anthropology in CST mirrors the theological anthropology in the teachings surrounding gender and sexuality. As a Catholic feminist social ethicist perceiving the connections between the human person, their dignity, and social justice, this project, which analyzes the assumed anthropological subject in CST, becomes essential. While Catholic social ethicists are in agreement that the human person and their dignity grounds the social tradition and shapes its justice claims, outside of

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[9] Margaret Farley, "The Family," in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, Judith A. Dwyer, ed., 374.

[10] Ibid., 378.

generic analyses of the constitutive aspects of the human person—that all persons are social, made in the *imago dei*, and thus have dignity, natural rights and responsibilities, etc.—these ethicists continue to neglect how an understanding of the human person and their dignity is shaped by Eurocentric and anthropocentric logics. In their diligent analysis of issues related to human rights, social, economic, and political justice, social ethicists, like feminists, assume that CST is equally applicable to all persons. However, analyzing the underlying anthropology of the Catholic tradition makes such claims impossible because too many subjects are excluded by the epistemology and anthropology espoused in the tradition. These subjects represent individuals subjugated in both knowledge and being. By privileging those who may be excluded under the current anthropological frameworks, I aim to further the analytical work already completed by feminist/liberationist thinkers working in the tradition. I will deem prior work as work that has been necessary but that ultimately does not adequately penetrate the underlying epistemological and anthropological logics of the tradition, present too in the social tradition of the Catholic Church.

My analysis of the human person in the Catholic tradition utilizes methods typically assumed to be incompatible with it—postcolonial, decolonial, and feminist decolonial theories. The incompatibility between the Catholic tradition and these schools of thought, an argument made by feminist theo-ethicists[11] and some Latin American and Latin@ theologians, is based primarily on an understanding that these theories are an iteration of postmodern theory. Postmodern thought has often been characterized as

[11] See especially Lisa S. Cahill's text, *Sex, Gender, and Christian Ethics* as a prime example of the resistance to incorporate iterations of postmodern/poststructuralist/postcolonial theorizing in the Catholic tradition.

overly "partial, subjective, and without universal value or challenge."[12] If this is the case, one may find it difficult to square postmodern perspectives with a tradition that continues to espouse universal norms for thought and action within the context of a Christian meta-narrative. While these concerns are understandable, they also underestimate the ways that postmodern theoretical trajectories enable the critiques and responses necessary to challenge the status quo both in society and the Church. For Shawn Copeland, a Catholic feminist theologian, addressing the dominant social and theological narratives that enable the oppression and subjugation of the black female body justifies use of postmodern/postcolonial theoretical frameworks:

> Postmodernism offers strategies through which black women may disrupt black humiliation as well as white racist pleasure, and exorcise the ontological overdetermination of the black body. In displacing metanarratives and affirming situated knowledge, contesting *a priori* foundations and recognizing plurality of discourse, disrupting fixed identities and asserting the fluidity of social locations or positionalities, postmodernity may support black women's upending of biased notions of blackness.[13]

Postmodernism's ability to analyze the particularity of knowledge and the fluidity in identity enables it to critique dominant ideologies related to sex, gender, sexuality, and race. While postmodernism is not free from complication, it still offers the theoretical frameworks that are necessary to analyze the tradition's underlying anthropology as well as to enable constructive responses. As these theories privilege the experiences and knowledge of those most marginalized in society, they in fact invite us to consider the ways in which our own epistemology and anthropology advocate or detract from

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[12] Elina Vuola, "The Option for the Poor and the Exclusion of Women: The Challenges of Postmodernism and Feminism to Liberation Theology," in *Opting for the Margins: Postmodernity and Liberation in Christian Theology*, Joerg Rieger, ed. (Oxford Scholarship Online, 2003).

[13] Shawn Copeland, *Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race, and Being* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010), 20.

upholding dignity of all human persons. If, as the tradition of CST would have us believe, it is a tradition aimed at the cultivation of an authentic humanism that itself is grounded in the liberation of all those oppressed from social structures of sin and the securing of their human dignity and rights, then there must be an openness to an analysis and/or critique of the tradition that stems from the experiences of the very individuals about whom they claim to be concerned.

This introduction is a beginning of this process. I begin with particular experiences that have shaped my own worldview, my understanding of terms and concepts central to this dissertation, and explain how these experiences have functioned to shape the hermeneutic of suspicion that I bring to the Roman Catholic Tradition. I argue that postcolonial, decolonial, and feminist decolonial[14] lenses equip me with the necessary resources to critically analyze the anthropological groundings of the tradition, both in the teachings on gender and sexuality and the social teachings. Additionally, these lenses enable me to go beyond many feminist/liberation thinkers who often do not question the underlying logics of the tradition's conception of the human person. Understanding that underlying logic is essential for constructing an anthropology that represents the full totality of human being and its liberation.

Contextualizing the Critique

Of course, no project develops out of a vacuum. The questions I bring to the Catholic tradition, articulated throughout the project, have been forming for years. It was the intersections of my own identities, which I will explore further below, that

[14] The relationship between the postcolonial, decolonial, and feminist decolonial schools of thought will be analyzed in Chapter 2 "Genealogy of Critique."

encouraged me to ask the questions I was asking and to attempt to answer them through the use of postcolonial and feminist decolonial theories.

Questions surrounding identity, and especially identity as it is constructed in "modern" thought have always been at the forefront of postcolonial and decolonial theories and theologies. As iterations of postmodern thought, it is not surprising that postcolonial and decolonial theorists criticize the ways modern thought often utilized dichotomies to categorize being, which were employed in the project of colonization. The constructed categories were often "mutually exclusive" and placed in hierarchical relationship to one another:

> Same/other, spirit/matter, subject/object, inside/outside, pure/impure, rational/chaotic. Human beings could then in the politics of modernity be identified according to corollary logic as: civilized/primitive, Christian/pagan, native/alien, white/black, male/female, rich/poor, whole/disabled. These categories supported a myriad of exclusive and oppressive practices—as well as revolutionary reactions.[15]

As exclusive of one another, individuals are confined to the ideologies related to one side of the dichotomy. This is problematic when a category of identity is understood as subordinate to the other in some way and, under modern dichotomized categories that are hierarchized, one discovers that these rigid categories of being are used to justify devaluation and subjugation.[16]

Aiming to destabilize the static subjects categorized according to "the politics of modernity,"[17] postcolonial and decolonial theorists privilege ambiguous and fluid understandings of identity, in which dynamism is preferred over stasis. Their

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[15] Catherine Keller, Michael Nausner, and Mayra Rivera, "Introduction: Alien/Nation, Liberation, and the Postcolonial Underground," in *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire*, Catherine Keller, Michael Nausner, and Mayra Rivera, eds. (St. Louis, Missouri: Chalice Press, 2004), 11.

[16] More on this later.

[17] Keller, Nausner, Rivera, *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire,* 11.

understanding of subjectivity counters some of the prevalent assumptions. For example, a liberal perspective on moral subjectivity assumes the freedom of the subject for autonomous action, with very little appreciation for the ways that moral subjects may be formed within particular historical contexts that limit the kinds of subjectivit/ies that they can or do enact in the world.

The modern liberal subject also consistently negates the body which is central to a coherent understanding of subjectivity. As Shawn Copeland notes, the body is central to understanding both epistemology and anthropology.

> For the body is no mere object—*already-out-there-now*—with which we are confronted: always the body is with us, inseparable from us, *is* us. But, always, there is a "more" to you, a "more" to me: the body mediates that "more" and makes visible what cannot be seen…the body constitutes a site of divine revelation and, thus, a 'basic human sacrament.' In and through embodiment, we human persons grasp and realize our essential freedom through engagement and communion with other embodied selves.[18]

The negation of the body in modern conceptions of subjectivity is not simply an obscuring of embodiment, but, rather, a sign that certain bodies are privileged while others are ignored. Since "being-in-relation"[19] (to oneself and others) is constitutive of any process of ethical formation, the body remains an important, if not primary, site of analysis. We must privilege the bodies and histories of those on the underside in order to challenge dominant discourses related to subjectivity. To participate in such an act is to participate in what decolonial theorist Walter Mignolo terms "epistemic disobedience."

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[18] M. Shawn Copeland, *Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race, and Being*, 7-8.

[19] "Being-in-relation is a term taken from Audre Lorde.

To be epistemically disobedient means that one attempts to "de-link"[20] oneself from the dominant discourses and challenge liberal iterations of modern subjectivity.

In order to challenge the constructions of modern subjectivity, decolonial theorists claim that the advent of modernity was based within the broader workings of colonialism and coloniality. According to Mignolo, coloniality, a term introduced by Anibal Quijano, names "the underlying logic of the foundation and unfolding of Western civilization from the Renaissance to today, of which historical colonialisms have been a constitutive, although downplayed, dimension."[21] Part of the underlying logics of modernity/coloniality include a shift in epistemology, which "encompasses both science/knowledge and arts/meaning" wherein knowing subjects were only those that resembled the heterosexual, white, European, male subject. This is the coloniality of knowledge, in which subjectivity was limited within certain epistemological frames so that the shift in the "sphere of knowledge" that stemmed from particular bodies enabled "the dispensability (or expendability) of certain bodies from the Industrial Revolution into the twenty-first century."[22] It should not come as a surprise that coded within this epistemological framework were the logics that justify racism, sexism, and heterosexism—all ways of excluding those who were "outside" of the assumed subject. This is why I label the knowing subject of modernity as the heteronormative subject.

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[20] Walter D. Mignolo argues this point of "de-linking" in several of his works. See especially *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options* and his piece "Decolonizing Western Epistemology/Building Decolonial Epistemologies," in the co-edited volume by Ada María Isasi-Díaz and Eduardo Mendieta *Decolonizing Epistemologies: Latina/o Theology and Philosophy.*

[21] Walter D. Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), 2.

[22] Ibid., 6.

While the term "heteronormativity" is used in the work of many feminist scholars, it remains a highly contested one. Many scholars point to the work of feminist philosopher Judith Butler, particularly her text *Gender Trouble*, for a functional understanding of heteronormativity as the product of gender performativity, wherein individuals are socialized to perform sexuality and gender according to the stabilized categories of male/female and masculine/feminine, the result of which is the construction of heterosexuality as the norm of reality. Though Butler's work has certainly been formative for my own understanding of heteronormativity, I also find it necessary to complement her work with the work of other feminist philosophers, and, in particular, feminist philosophers of color working in and around postcolonial and decolonial themes, such as María Lugones and Gloría Anzaldúa.[23] These women attend more fully to the importance of the materiality of bodies, and in particular to the ways in which bodies are texturized not only in terms of sexuality and gender but also in terms of race and ethnicity in the conception of heteronormativity. In addition to Lugones and Anzaldúa, feminist liberation theologian Marcella Althaus-Reid[24] also attends to the formations of subjectivity within the context of a hegemonic heteronormative frame. With reference to the works of Butler, Lugones, Anzaldúa, and Althaus-Reid, I understand heteronormativity as a structuration of subjectivity that normalizes certain modes of

[23] While Gloria Anzaldúa may not formally be recognized as a "feminist decolonial" thinker, she works in and around feminist decolonial themes. Categories assumed in the academy that place thinkers as, for example, "liberationist," "feminist" "postcolonial" are helpful, and I will categorize particular thinkers by schools of thought in this way; however, these categories are never neat. We find especially with feminist theologians of color like Isasi-Díaz and Copeland, and feminist philosophers of color like Lugones and Sandoval, an inability to clearly demarcate their thinking by school of thought; thus we have to be open to categorization around themes as well. My characterization of Anzaldúa as a feminist decolonial thinker is for this reason.

[24] Althaus-Reid is another example of the limits of categories for certain scholars. She is a feminist liberationist scholar, who is also working at the intersections of postcolonial, decolonial, and queer theologies. See especially her work *Indecent Theology: Theological Perversions in Sex, Gender, and Politics*.

being-in-the-world. The modes of being—heterosexual, white, male, European—that are represented in this anthropologically normative subject are historical constructions predicated upon ideologies cultivated in the context of modernity/coloniality that unfortunately assumed ontological meaning. These institutional categories of being came to represent the essence of persons, meaning that historically constructed and hierarchized categories of being are assumed to be ahistorical, written into the very being of subjects. The institutions of gender and sexuality offer two examples. Though understandings of gender and sexuality have both developed and shifted over time, they are assumed, by the tradition of the Catholic Church, to be ontologically fixed.

Heteronormativity involves not only ontologized ideological structures related to sex, gender, and sexuality, but also racial and ethnic valences. The use of a decolonial feminist lens enables one to understand that sex, gender, and sexuality is co-constitutive with race and ethnicity in the project of modernity/coloniality.[25] María Lugones speaks to the point that one cannot theorize sex, gender, or sexuality apart from race and ethnicity.

> This gender system congealed as Europe advanced the colonial project(s). It took shape during the Spanish and Portuguese colonial adventures and became full blown in late modernity. The gender system has a light and dark side. The light side constructs gender and gender relations hegemonically, ordering only the lives of white bourgeois men and women and constituting the modern/colonial meaning of men and women. Sexual purity and passivity are crucial characteristics of the white bourgeois females who reproduce the class and the colonial and racial standing of bourgeois, white men…Weakness of mind and body are important in the reduction and seclusion of white bourgeois women from most domains of life and human existence. The gender system is heterosexualist, as heterosexuality

[25] The decolonial and feminist decolonial lenses will be fully developed in Chapter 2 "Genealogy of Critique," while the full analysis of the anthropology of gender complementarity through feminist decolonial lenses will be the subject of Chapter 3, which takes on exploring who the subject is in the Catholic teachings on gender and sexuality.

> permeates racialized patriarchal control over production, including knowledge production, and over collective authority.[26]

In the above quotation, Lugones illuminates an important point for understanding the co-constitution of race, gender, and sexuality under the logics of modernity/coloniality. It is one that women of color feminists have pointed to over the decades: gender and sexuality are raced. She is drawing upon the fact that white feminist theorists often neglected to understand that patriarchal assumptions related to, say, women's passivity and sexual purity, were representative of assumptions related to the specific subject location of middle-class, white, heterosexual women, not to all women. The "differential construction of gender along racial lines" is most clearly seen through an analysis of the logics of coloniality/modernity because it exposes how the structures of forced labor under colonialisms were enmeshed with the imposition of racialized and gendered categories.[27] In constructing her argument Lugones cites Oyewumí's text, *The Invention of Women*, because it speaks of the gendering of the Yoruba. Prior to the arrival of the colonizers "no gender system was in place," so gender as an overarching "organizing principal" was not relevant to this particular culture but the Western gendered dichotomy was imposed upon them while they were simultaneously raced.[28]

Of course, the tradition of the Roman Catholic Church and CST insists that the tradition has not been influenced by the philosophical constructions of the modern subject, since it specifically criticizes that subject. However, this is not the case. Just as human persons develop within particular historical contexts, so do traditions. The Roman

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[26] Maria Lugones. "Heterosexualism and the Colonial/Modern Gender System," in *Hypatia* vol. 22, no. 1 (Winter 2007); 206.

[27] Ibid., 197.

[28] Ibid., 196.

Catholic tradition cannot claim that it has completely avoided incorporating some aspects of modernity into its tradition. To this point we have already seen evidence of the adoption of certain aspects of the modern subject within the tradition, especially in CST's articulation of human rights in the political, economic, and social realms of life.

Prior to the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) there is an explicit and heavy reliance upon an anthropology rooted in the natural law that claims that all persons are made in the *imago dei*, thus we have an innate dignity that grants us natural rights but also imposes upon us duties, and we are relational beings endowed with the capacity of rationality to know and do the good. Even though CST remains wedded to a Thomistic natural law understanding of the human person after Vatican II, it simultaneously adopts aspects of the Modern subject as well.[29] CST has not, as it claims, managed to completely disavow these constitutive aspects of modernity. Thus, its anthropology is as much modern as it is pre-modern, making it doubly problematic for those who have been "others" throughout these periods.

The questions and concerns surrounding subjectivity reveal numerous tensions within the tradition between freedom of choice and the ability to choose under the powers of social constructions, between the individual ego and the discursive community within which that ego is embedded. To think about subjectivity is to also think about epistemology and anthropology, and ontology as well, all of which underlie my assumptions when I deploy this term. These tensions and assumptions about the relationship between "being" and epistemology as shaping and restricting subjectivities will be a central premise upon which I will build this work.

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[29] This will be of central focus in my argument in Chapter 4 "L@s Indocumentad@s in the Tradition of Catholic Social Thought."

Further, the assumptions I have about identity, epistemology, and subjectivity stem from a specific set of experiences and contexts around which I must be self-reflexive. Such self-reflexivity about one's experiences, about being explicit as to "from where" one speaks and understands reality, has been crucial to the development of liberationist/feminist, postcolonial and decolonial scholarship, as it reveals the limitedness of all theories, theologies and ethics cultivated in our traditions. I aim to be clear about from where I speak because it is revelatory for the reader, both regarding what my commitments are as well as regarding the blind spots that may exist in my scholarship. I continue this introduction, then, by interweaving some of my own personal experiences and explaining how they have functioned to influence some of the central questions, assumptions, terms, and theoretical frameworks in this project.

What Are You?: On Undocumented Subjectivities

I am a diasporic Puerto Rican,[30] a cis-gendered, heterosexual woman from Brooklyn, NY, and a Roman Catholic.[31] I am privileged in many ways including the fact that I am, as are all Puerto Ricans, a US citizen and because I currently live in the United

[30] My grandparents from both sides of my family migrated from Puerto Rico as a part of "The Great Migration" that took place between 1940-60. During this time there was a mass exodus from the island, wherein over 470,000 Puerto Ricans moved to the States, because of vast economic restructuring that left many Puerto Ricans out of work. My grandparents settled and began working in factories in an area where my parents and, later, I would be born—in the Red Hook housing projects of Brooklyn, NY.

[31] As I develop this notion of "undocumented subjectivity," I focus upon my experience as a Puerto Rican on two coasts of the United States. One will find a de-emphasis on my experiences as a Roman Catholic when thinking about "undocumented subjectivity." This is not because these experiences have not been formative to my thought. Quite the contrary; however, and ironically, I am currently (and forever will be) legally obligated to refrain from speaking to these formative experiences in any public platform. The silencing is not unrelated to my thoughts on undocumented subjectivities. It is also important to note that while reading this project it may seem that my audience is meant to be the Catholic hierarchy. While I do hope for shifts in the epistemology and anthropology of the Roman Catholic Church that could then be formally represented in the tradition, the real goal is to speak to Catholics at the local level, grass-roots Catholics that have already begun to do the work required to subvert the logics of dominance inherent in the epistemology and anthropology of the Catholic Church. I hope that in reading this leaders in Catholic communities may come to learn to approach even the social teachings of the Church with a hermeneutic of suspicion and envision new tools in continuing their work of creating spaces of support and radical inclusion for all human persons no matter their sex, gender, sexuality, race or ethnicity.

States, I am enfranchised.[32] I stem from a line of working-class "colonial (im)migrants," a reality that begins to shed light on my postcolonial and decolonial theoretical commitments:

> Puerto Ricans have been dubbed "colonial immigrants" because they are US citizens who can travel freely between the Island and the mainland but are not fully covered by the American constitution on the Island…as Ramón Grosfoguel has argued Puerto Ricans share much with other "colonial subjects"…[such as] their subordinate position in metropolitan areas, largely as a consequence of colonial racism, despite conditions of legal equality.[33]

Navigating identity and attempting to speak from the place of the diasporic colonial migrant, I often found a multitude of tensions and ambiguities. First, I am, but also am not, a part of the United States.[34] Puerto Rico has functioned as any colony does of its colonizing nation—instrumentally.[35] Puerto Ricans on the island, and in the States, continue to function in this manner as we aid the US in the achievement of its own geo-political interests without it actually considering its collective effects on our people.[36]

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[32] Puerto Ricans living in Puerto Rico are not able to participate in voting for general elections. They are allotted a vote in the primaries; however, this is just one of the many ways that Puerto Rico and Puerto Ricans are considered not really to be a part of the US.

[33] Jorge Duany, "The Puerto Rican Diaspora to the United States: A Postcolonial Migration?," 2.

[34] Puerto Rican identification with and in the US is ambiguous. The fact that Puerto Ricans in the United States continue to identify as "Puerto Rican," as opposed to "Puerto Rican American," a move that many who come from different parts of Latin America and the Caribbean have done, is quite interesting in the sense that Puerto Ricans refuse to identify as US American, despite the fact that we are its colony. I am also not really a part of Puerto Rico. Never is this more apparent than when visiting family in Puerto Rico, where they claim I am not, in fact, "Puerto Rican" but "Nuyorican," that is, too displaced from the realities of the island to understand the real struggles that the inhabitants face and so influenced by US American culture that I am a "gringa."

[35] As a part of the 1917 Jones Act, Puerto Ricans were "gifted" (conferred) US citizenship. It would be historically irresponsible not to point out that this was not about Puerto Ricans but about global politics of war. Puerto Ricans could now be in the military of the United States and die for their colonizer while not actually being granted the full benefits of citizenship. Lack of a voting Congressional and House Representative is but one example of this second-class citizenship that allows one to fight in war, but not decide upon leadership or contribute a vote upon whether or not going to war is a wise idea in the first place.

[36] The PROMESA (Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act) is but one recent example. In this context, the good of Puerto Rico is only viewed through the lens of its own imperial

To speak of the colonial relationship of the United States to Puerto Rico, one has to recognize that one is simultaneously speaking of the racialized and gendered discourses produced within the colonial encounter itself. In the encounter with the US, Puerto Ricans were constructed as racially "other," and this racialization process often accompanied discourses related to the hyper-sexuality and backwardness of Puerto Rican family structure.[37] The logics of the colonial relationship between diasporic colonial migrants and the US made impossible a simple understanding of this identity on individual or collective levels.

If this was not complicated enough, I did not remain in Brooklyn where, even if my own identity vis-à-vis the US and Puerto Rico was complicated, at least it was shared amongst a community of similarly situated beings. Instead, my mother decided to move myself and my siblings to California. In California I was not only Boricua, but a Boricua in *Aztlán*.[38] I had been moved outside of the social and political spaces of the Nuyorican, a space where I felt very much at home, to the new social and political site of struggle that was *Aztlán.* Attempting to negotiate one's identity within this new space of consciousness was not a simple thing to do.

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ruler. The actual persons in Puerto Rico are in the majority against a US-appointed committee to oversee and restructure its debt. This is not only infantilizing, but furthers the above claim that Puerto Ricans are not viewed as ends themselves but as a means to further the ends of the agenda of the United States.

[37] How this is central to the Puerto Rican experience on the island and stateside will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2 "Genealogy of Critique."

[38] To put this into numbers: a 2013 Pew research report by Anna Brown and Mark Hugo Lopez on "Mapping the Latino Population by State, County, and City" estimates that Puerto Ricans currently constitute 1% of the Hispanic/Latino population in Los Angeles. This is compared to the 78% of the Hispanic/Latino population held by Mexicans, and 8% held by Salvadoreans. By contrast, Puerto Ricans constitute 28% of the Hispanic/Latino population in New York and New Jersey with the next majority being held by Dominicans at 21%. See http://www.pewhispanic.org/2013/08/29/mapping-the-latino-population-by-state-county-and-city/

"What are you?" This was the pervasive question I received from members of both Latin@ (predominantly Mexican-American and Salvadorean-American communities) and Black communities[39] alike when they wanted *to know* who I was. When explaining that I was a Nuyorican Puerto Rican, a Boricua, that my father and grandfather were black Boricuas, therefore I also identify in this way in terms of my racial background, I was often met with blank stares. "So, you are Puerto Rican? Puerto Rican and (insert any other Latin@ heritage) it's all the same!" Well, no, in fact it is not. It was simply too difficult to navigate the complexities of these identities, thus "it's all the same." Due to such sentiments, it was often not worth the effort to explain this, so I found myself consistently being "placed" into one group or another while individuals who could not handle the totality of my being over (or under)-determined who I was, mainly to keep themselves comfortable that the dominant categories from which they arranged their understandings of human persons were not really threatened by my presence.

These experiences were formative for me in multiple ways, but primarily they inspired me to think more critically about the label of "undocumented," a term that will be used consistently to speak about subject(ivities) in this project. While living in Los Angeles and, especially, by witnessing the serious struggles of friends and family members wherein one or more members faced a constant threat of detainment and deportation, I became aware of the plight of the undocumented. The struggles of the undocumented inhabitants of *Aztlán* were some that, by virtue of our colonial migrant

[39] There was also an assumption in Los Angeles that "black" immediately meant African American. This was largely confusing stemming from an area of New York in which it was widely understood that Latin@s can also be, and often are, also black (Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, etc.) These assumptions have not actually shifted much in today's Los Angeles either.

status, my family did not face.[40] Puerto Ricans, because they are citizens, have been legally "documented" in the United States after being "gifted" citizenship in 1917.[41] However, I could not but help to think that there must be a way to speak coherently about the ambiguities of identity relative to such documentation. Being undocumented involves not only citizenship status, but other aspects of identity that others refuse to understand and/or accept as they are. The lack of documentation for those undocumented under US law extends beyond citizenship, to gender, sexuality, and race. This is crucial for understanding how subjects come to understand themselves, how they are able or restricted in being in the world. It is not simply a question of one aspect of their being, such as legal status, but an experience of living at the intersections of a multitude of their identities.

Subjects actually find themselves to lack documentation both literally and metaphorically: not only in their nationality, but also in the intersections of their nationality, race, ethnicity, sex, gender, sexuality, and class. They find themselves silenced through the workings of broader logics of delimitation and exclusion. Some individuals are not simply undocumented before the state, but before the human community too. Due to the lack of documentation individuals are not only subjected to the threat of deportation, but also left vulnerable to a variety of surveillance and violences. Lack of documentation places individuals in situations where violence becomes not the exception but the norm of their very being.

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[40] In 2013, Cherríe Moraga directed a workshop performance entitled "Undocumented Lives: Stories From a Politic and a People?" This workshop, and its title, had great impact upon me in thinking about broadening the term "undocumented" to incorporate aspects of identity that are not solely about citizenship.

[41] It's one of those gifts that seem wonderful at first, but then, after having it a while one recognizes that there are just too many problems to enjoy it.

Throughout this dissertation I utilize the term *l@s indocumentad@s*[42] to speak to these realities related to subject(ivities) as they manifest in broader social imaginaries and, especially, within the narrower theological imaginary of the Roman Catholic Church and its tradition of CST.

The claim that there are *l@s indocumentad@s* in our social and theological imaginaries stems from the work by Charles Taylor entitled *Modern Social Imaginaries.* In his text, he explains what he means by "social imaginaries."

> By social imaginary, I mean something much broader and deeper than the intellectual schemes people may entertain when they think about social reality in a disengaged mode…rather, [it is] the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations.[43]

According to Taylor, our dominant social imaginaries, and I argue, our theological imaginaries,[44] intimately shape the ways in which we are in relationship to one another, and our expectations for those relationships. They govern the ways of being, which are preconditions for how we even consider or frame relationships. Thus, social and theological imaginaries are heavily laden with dynamics of power in which folks arrange and categorize from within the imaginary an understanding of "where we stand in space

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[42] Since beginning this project, conversations have emerged from persons of color and queer activists inviting persons to use "x" at the end of gendered nouns in place of using "a/o" or "@". The suggestion is that the use of "x," for example, Latinx, is gender inclusive and more adequately subverts the oppressive assumptions related to dichotomously gendered nouns. My choice of the use of "@" in *l@s indocumentad@s* was shaped by the fact that the Latinx conversation was not yet in full development. I used the "@" as an invitation for persons to think the gender binary; however, the use of @ may not sufficiently move us beyond gendered categorizations. In future work, I will consider the use of "x" potentially using *indocumentadx* instead of *indocumentad@s*.

[43] Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), 23.

[44] Nancy Pineda-Madrid also utilizes the framing of the social and theological imaginary in her text *Suffering and Salvation in Cuidad Juarez*, a text that will be crucial to my argument in Chapter 3 when discussing the connections between Roman Catholic anthropological imaginary and the feminicide in Juarez.

and time: our relationships to other nations and peoples…and also where we stand in our history, in the narrative of our becoming…"[45]

The use of the term *l@s indocumentad@s* attempts to theorize the fact that certain aspects of the identity of persons are currently oppressed or suppressed within dominant social and theological imaginaries. If we refuse to recognize particular aspects of being because they deviate from "acceptable" categories, or, if the ways in which these aspects are characterized are destructive of subjectivities, then what we have are relationships based in the exercise of power and dominion over others, not in mutuality. *What are you?* communicates this lack of relationship. The question demonstrates that even though there is the potential to disrupt dominant thought, this is not an easy task. It is the question asked of those characterized as lacking in some way. *What are you?* is the question that l@s indocumentad@s cannot, under the current structures, seem to answer satisfactorily, and it informs the relationship between *being l@ indocumentad@* and *being* subjected to violence, whether physical or sexual.

What I am describing then when speaking of l@s indocumentad@s both within society and the Roman Catholic Church is a group of persons, who have been othered and, as a result of this othering, have had their very humanity questioned. I am not alone in suggesting that *being* subjected to physical or sexual violence begins with such othering and dehumanization. Psychologist Ervin Staub has argued this point for decades. In his 1992 text, *The Roots of Evil: Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence*, he theorizes the moral psychological bases surrounding the legitimization of acts of mass violence. In this, and his other works, he is clear that violence never arises out of

[45] Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries*, 27.

nowhere: by the time individuals are participating in physical and/or sexual violence against others, there has likely already been an extensive history of "othering" and dehumanization that functions as the justificatory grounds for the violence.[46] I quote at length from Staub here, since this aspect of his argument is crucial to understanding my own argument related to the justification of violence against l@s indocumentad@s. He claims:

> This process, and the evolution of increasing hostility and violence, is more likely to occur in groups with certain characteristics. One of them is a history of devaluation of another group; the devalued group is likely to become the scapegoat or ideological enemy…another important process leading to genocide or intense violence in conflict is the evolution of increasing hostility and violence. As actions are taken against the other group or as already hostile actions intensify, individuals and the group change…first, they further devalue the other group. Progressively they exclude members of the other group from the moral realm, so that the usual moral considerations no longer apply to them…second, they use as a justification the 'higher' ideals of ideology, the cause that the group is presumably serving—whether it is racial purity, nationalism, social equality, or something else…as the evolution progresses, many perpetrators…experience a reversal of morality. Killing the other now becomes the right, moral thing to do.[47]

The reality of othering and dehumanization that Staub theorizes will be implicitly referenced throughout this dissertation. If a group has been defined outside of the realm of the human moral community because their very humanity, or constitutive aspects of their humanity, are called into question by underlying epistemological and anthropological frameworks, they become dehumanized or the object of othering by

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[46] Staub contextualizes his theory by pointing to the variety of ways that victims of different genocides have been dehumanized. One primary example he uses is the dehumanization and othering of Jews leading to the Holocaust. Jews were argued to be outside of the human moral community, leading to a lessening of the moral stakes perpetrators felt in enacting the genocide and numbing the consciences of the many individuals that, though not active participants, did nothing to stop it. One cannot help but think about the 2016 US Republican Presidential Candidate, Donald Trump, in this context. His dehumanizing speech about Mexicans as all being "rapists and murderers" and Muslims as "all terrorists," to say nothing of his speech about women, can only be understood as in and of itself violent and has shown its potential in encouraging physical violence against these scapegoated groups.

[47] Ervin Staub, "The Psychology and Morality in Genocide and Violent Conflict: Perpetrators, Passive Bystanders, Rescuers," in *The Social Psychology of Morality*, M. Mikulincer and P. Shaver eds. (Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association Press, 2012).

virtue of their race, sex, gender, or sexuality. Violence against them becomes not the exception but the rule. Indeed, the very act of othering is violent in and of itself.

Decolonial and feminist decolonial thinkers have theorized a similar concept as they aim to demystify the logics that underlie perpetual violence for those I am calling l@s indocumentad@s. They articulate this concept in spatial terms as a place in which l@s indocumentad@s find themselves. This space will be privileged throughout this dissertation, and I will utilize exemplary narratives of those who occupy this space to demonstrate its destructiveness. This is the space of the subontological or ontological colonial difference.[48]

There are two distinct aspects to the subontological colonial difference: one, discussed earlier, encompasses epistemology[49] and is favored by decolonial thinkers like Walter Mignolo. The other aspect encompasses Being.[50] Nelson Maldonado-Torres defines the subontological or ontological colonial difference primarily in terms of Being as he claims "it is the difference between Being and what lies below Being or that which is negatively marked as dispensable as well as a target of rape and murder."[51] He notes that those at the colonial difference, due to the construction of their being as subhuman or a severe perversion of humanity, "confront[…] the reality of its own finitude as a day to day adventure."[52] To articulate the full meaning of the space of the subontological colonial difference Maldonado-Torres includes an analysis of Heidegger's conception of

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[48] Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "On the Coloniality of Being" in *Cultural Studies* 21:2-3 (2007): 254.

[49] Walter D. Mignolo focuses on the colonial difference primarily in epistemological terms, while Nelson Maldonado-Torres and Maria Lugones focus on the colonial difference primarily in terms of being.

[50] Maldonado-Torres, "On the Coloniality of Being," 254.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid., 255.

Dasein or *Being.* He argues that in Heidegger, *Dasein* reaches its full "authenticity" when it confronts its own mortality—an event that ought to be extraordinary for the human subject; however, those occupying the colonial difference are never afforded the privilege of experiencing the reality of their mortality as an unique event—the experience of their mortality is ubiquitous, it wholly characterizes their existence, a reality that Maldonado-Torres characterizes as nothing but a hellish existence.[53] The colonial difference lays bare the workings of the broader logics of coloniality and leads to an understanding that the realities of colonialism persist well beyond the confines of physical colonialism and extend to the coloniality of being.

To further his point, Maldonado-Torres claims that the coloniality of being normalizes extraordinary violence. Now, he says, the extraordinary violence we witness in war has been normalized and consistently deployed against the bodies of those living at the colonial difference. The normalization of such horrific violence and dehumanization of l@s indocumentad@s that occurs through the coloniality of being makes their existence in the space of the colonial difference one of precariousness, one of grief over the consistent promise of loss.[54] Particularly tragic is the fact that too many individuals are forced outside of our dominant social imaginaries, outside of our moral communities, into the space of the colonial difference, whether due to their race, ethnicity, sex, gender, or sexuality.

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[53] Ibid.

[54] Though I indicate that this experience is dismal, it is also not hopeless. In fact, the space of the colonial difference is also one that is theorized as a space where resistance to oppressive logics is born. In fact, while the active subjectivity of those at the colonial difference may be called into question by many, nothing can be further from the truth. One can point to numerous examples where we see such active resistance occurring.

To this point María Lugones theorizes what she terms the coloniality of gender. The coloniality of gender is related to the coloniality of being in that those placed at the subontological difference were not placed only due to race and ethnicity. Indeed, as was indicated earlier, the process of the racialization of the other cannot be understood without the accompanying processes of the gendering of the other. In her cultivation of feminist decolonialism, she claims that the coloniality of gender

> [e] nables me to understand the oppressive imposition as a complex interaction of economic, racializing, and gendering systems in which every person at the colonial encounter can be found, as a live, historical, fully described being.[55]

So the lens of the coloniality of gender fortifies the concept of the coloniality of being by revealing how gender and race are co-constitutive in the colonial encounter and continue to place subjects at the sub-ontological colonial difference. If one is paying attention, the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender and the sub-ontological colonial difference can be perceived throughout our globalized societies. Indeed, there are many examples to which one can point in which the logics of othering and systematic dehumanization of particular persons is at work.

As I will argue throughout this project, the Catholic Church has been explicit that such violence against human persons must be resisted wherever it is found. While I find this to be a noble claim, my feminist decolonial hermeneutic of suspicion informs my sense that the tradition's own theological imaginary, especially as articulated through its anthropological framework, is not only incapable of resisting the violence it speaks against, but actually incites and perpetrates violence.

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[55] María Lugones. "Methodological Notes Toward a Decolonial Feminism," in *Decolonizing Epistemologies*, 77.

Reading the Anthropology of the Roman Catholic Church in a Decolonial Mode

These suspicions lead to a feminist decolonial reading of the human person in the Roman Catholic tradition—both in its teachings on gender and sexuality and in CST. The primary thesis running throughout this dissertation is that the Roman Catholic Church creates and sustains categories of l@s indocumentad@s within their theological anthropological imaginary. As indocumentad@, these individuals occupy a space at the subontological colonial difference, which is characterized by the omnipresence of violence—epistemic, physical, and sexual. Further the documentary heritage of CST, which claims to uphold the dignity of each person and aims to secure social, political, and economic justice and rights of persons to cultivate an authentic humanism grounded in solidarity and the preferential option for the poor, due to its assumption of the human subject found in the tradition's teachings on gender and sexuality, is woefully lacking in the ability to make such claims for *all* persons. They can only make justice claims for those documented in the tradition. Those documented as authentically human in the underlying anthropological frameworks find their dignity upheld; however, l@s indocumentad@s find themselves without the security of rights, and without a human community that is in solidarity with them, or preferentially opting for them, in the pursuit of the construction of an authentic humanism.

Since the tradition neglects l@s indocumentad@s in their anthropological constructions, the tradition also becomes impotent in actually advocating for justice for these persons. If the tradition of CST desires to create a more equal and just global society, they must begin by creating spaces within their own tradition in which all subjects, not in spite of, but because of their differences, can be included in the human

moral community. A space of sanctuary for l@s indocumentad@s must be created. To create such a space of sanctuary we must be willing to meet the other at the colonial difference. It is only from this space that respects the multiplicity of being and refuses to support violence as the norm for relationship with others that we can cultivate a theology and ethics that can be authentically solidaristic and authentically opting for the poor, both of which characteristics are constitutive of the "authentic humanism" so important in CST. Only when this space is built can the tradition of CST live authentically into its own gospel message of liberation for all those oppressed.

This argument will be built within the chapters that follow. Since, as was indicated, there have already been a multitude of scholars working with themes related to epistemology and anthropology, including those working within the tradition of the Roman Catholic Church, the first chapter moves through a genealogy of these critiques. Since this dissertation focuses primarily upon Catholic teachings promulgated after Vatican II, the genealogy of critique begins there with a focus upon the central contributions of Latin American liberationist, North American liberationist and feminist liberationist scholars. Within this chapter I claim that though the anthropological critiques brought to bear on the tradition were necessary, they did not in themselves constitute a significant destabilization of the underlying epistemological and anthropological logics of the Church tradition.

I move forward from this critique to establish the ways that postcolonial, decolonial, and feminist decolonial theories and theologies have the potential to address the underlying colonial logics of the tradition. It is here that I establish the necessity of feminist decolonial lenses that privilege the experiences of those occupying the colonial

difference in order to adequately critique the Catholic tradition's underlying epistemological and anthropological frameworks. The chapters that follow this genealogy of critique move to a decolonial feminist analysis of the anthropological subject both in the Catholic teachings on gender and sexuality and in CST.

Chapter 3, the first of the two critical chapters, addresses the teachings on gender and sexuality, begins with an explanation of the theological anthropology of gender complementarity. As many feminist scholars have indicated, gender complementarity ontologizes two categories of being: male and female. These categories are understood as written into the natural order of creation and are hermetic. I will reflect upon how feminist scholars have critiqued these categories, as they ontologize inequality, especially the relationship between men and women in Church and society, with men assuming the super-ordinate position. Through the use of feminist decolonial lenses informed by María Lugones' concept of the coloniality of gender, I move the critique forward and claim that the anthropology of gender complementarity uplifts the heteronormative subject and creates categories of l@s indocumentad@s in the teachings on gender and sexuality. To substantiate these claims I privilege the experiences of l@s indocumentad@s inhabiting the colonial difference—the women in Juárez and the experiences of the LGBTQI community—as a result of these anthropological constructions. While I make clear that the tradition explicitly denounces violence against women and violence against those in the LGBTQI community, I argue that the underlying anthropology of complementarity not only renders such denouncements baseless but also enables and sanctions the violence meted out against l@s indocumentad@s.

The second of the two critical chapters provides an analysis of the human person in the social tradition. The human person and their dignity constitutes the basis of the Church's social teaching. In CST we do not find the theological anthropology of gender complementarity explicitly referenced. This gap is due to an implicit public/private division, discussed earlier in this chapter, where, in the teachings on gender and sexuality, we have an explicit reference to gender complementarity, which governs intimate relationships and familial structures, yet in CST we have a generalized articulation of the "human person" and their dignity and an emphasis on their social, political, and economic rights. While it is positive to explicitly emphasize the human person, their dignity, and their rights, it also elides the ways that the anthropology of gender complementarity delimits who counts as "authentic persons," and what counts as "authentic dignity." Such delimitation, which is clear when gender complementarity is explicitly referenced, is obfuscated in CST, leading to unsettled questions as to who counts as authentically human persons bearing the authentic dignity that grounds their human rights. If the tradition of CST desires to call for justice for all persons then it is necessary to uncover the constitutive aspects of the human person in CST. My analysis reveals that CST assumes the heteronormative subject we find in the teachings on gender and sexuality. To come to this conclusion, I analyze two primary discourses in CST: discourses on the family and discourses on human rights. I argue that the discourses on the family help to shed light on the fact that the human person we are dealing with in CST is, in fact, the same anthropological subject we find throughout the tradition. As a corollary we have categories of persons in CST who are indocumentad@, thus, the justice claims CST advocates for cannot be extended to those undocumented as authentically

human in the tradition. I use the example of sexual migrants to show how the tradition falls short of being able to call for justice for all persons and claim that in order to do so we must create a space in which the multiplicity of being can be respected.

In the final chapter of this dissertation, I move towards the creation of this space: a space of sanctuary for l@s indocumentad@s within the Roman Catholic Tradition and begin to lay the groundwork for what I term a *decolonialista theology and ethics*. The space of sanctuary for l@s indocumentad@s is one wherein recognition for multiple subjects can occur. It is cultivated from the very space created through the processes of othering and dehumanization that enable violence against l@s indocumentad@s, what decolonial theorists term the subontological colonial difference, and is catalyzed through revolutionary forms of solidaristic practices. I argue that CST's concern over solidarity and the preferential option for the poor, the concerns over securing human rights for all persons, can only be achieved if and when we are willing to recognize the other fully, practice decolonial solidarity, and make decolonial love.

Chapter 2

Genealogy of Critique

Vatican II's call for the Church to be in dialogue with the modern world signaled the start of a new era for the faithful of the Roman Catholic Church, the magisterial hierarchy, and for theologians. By its call, the Church opened itself to the possibility of having a different, dialectical relationship with the world. In the words of liberation theologian Alfred T. Hennelly, as a result of the Second Vatican Council,

> The church finds it necessary to turn to the world, where Christ and his Spirit are continually active in the salvation of all humanity. It could also be maintained that the church should be 'evangelized by the world, with the result that a theology of the church in the world must be complemented by a 'theology of the world in the church.'[56]

Concurrent with the experiences of social and political upheaval in several parts of Latin America and various socio-political movements in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s, the beginnings of a "'process of conscientization' emerged as the poor began to organize themselves in the defense of their right to life, in the struggle for dignity and social justice, and in a commitment to their own liberation."[57]

Likewise theologians began to ask how theology and ethics can speak to the experiences of the people in ways that questioned dominant oppressive systems and regimes, including the oppression found within the Church itself. These theologies challenged the traditional formulations of theological concepts and doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church, specifically how theology and ethics could aid in the liberation of those who have occupied the "underside of history," and, more important, whether

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[56] Alfred T. Hennelly, S.J. *Liberation Theologies: The Global Pursuit of Justice* (Mystic, Connecticut: Twenty-Third Publications, 1997), 24.

[57] Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation,* Revised Edition, Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleton, translators and editors (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988), xxix.

Catholic theologians and ethicists would listen to these individuals in order to cultivate theologies that emphasize liberative and prophetic words and actions to confront the enormity of human suffering.

Broadly, these theologies grounded in a variety of human experiences and contexts have come to be known as "liberation theologies." This chapter provides a brief genealogy of three varieties of liberation theologies most closely related to my project, focusing upon the thinkers, methods, and concepts of each that are most relevant to this study's analyses of the epistemological and anthropological assumptions related to the human person. Specifically, I begin with an overview of the distinctive contributions of Latin American Liberationist, North American and Latina/Hispanic Feminist Liberationist,[58] and Postcolonial Theories and Theologies[59] to the understanding of the subject or subjectivity. Recognizing how generic usage of the term "human person" was actually based upon prior assumptions about a very particular human subject, each school of thought turned to the lived experiences of its primary subjects—the poor, women, and the subaltern—in order to speak to the realities that these are, in fact, human persons that must be acknowledged in their particularity.

I argue that these shifts exemplified a necessary beginning to undermining oppressive epistemological and anthropological frameworks, oppressive understandings of the workings of subjectivity; however, I couple this acknowledgement with the claim that the existing frameworks, particularly those focused upon the poor and women, do not

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[58] The categorizations of "Latin American Liberationist, North American and Latina Feminist Liberationist" are adopted from Alfred T. Hennelly as he utilizes them in *Liberation Theologies: The Global Pursuit of Justice.*

[59] Postcolonial theories and theologies tend to not self-identify as "liberationist." My categorization of these theories and theologies as liberationist stems from these schools of thought having intersecting concerns for freeing those oppressed under current structures of knowledge and being.

sufficiently critique anthropological and epistemological frameworks that undergird the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church—both the Church's teachings on gender and sexuality and the Church's tradition of social thought. This lacuna is less true of postcolonial theologies, though, as I will discuss later, some postcolonial theological methodology ironically relies too heavily upon Eurocentric modes of knowledge production that tend to reinforce coloniality of being rather than subvert it. As a consequence, certain forms of liberation theologies may remain closely bound to the very concepts within Roman Catholicism[60] that they seek and have claimed to challenge. Without sufficient critique of epistemological frameworks they function "in varying degrees to justify the 'coloniality of being'" because they are often "too dependent on emancipatory discourses that emerged at the rise of modernity but in the end…[have the potential to be] totalizing, dangerous, and unfaithful to the Christian message."[61] Postcolonial theories and theologies have moved towards a greater destabilization of epistemological and anthropological categories; however, I will indicate the ways in which they, too, have limitations, especially when one is thinking from specific Latin American/Caribbean contexts, such as Puerto Rico.

After this critical discussion of liberation theologies, I move to justify my own methodological starting point located within decolonial and feminist decolonial theories and claim that it is a necessary trajectory to pursue in order to analyze and critique the anthropological subject in the Church's teachings on gender and sexuality and in Catholic Social Thought. I claim that even with the epistemological disruptions that have occurred,

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[60] Nancy Elizabeth Bedford. "Making Spaces: Latin American and Latina Feminist Theologies on the Cusp of Interculturality," in *Feminist Intercultural Theology: Latina Explorations for a Just World*, María Pilar Aquino and Maria José Rosado-Nunes, Ed.'s, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), 58.

[61] Ibid.

there is a need to challenge further the dominant underlying anthropological frameworks made possible by feminist decolonial lenses, which attend to the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender. As the feminist decolonial option enables us to understand the multiple ways that human persons, in all of their particularities of race, gender, sex, and sexuality, are left *indocumentad@* within some of these liberative frameworks, society, and the epistemology and theological anthropology of the Roman Catholic Church, I argue that these lenses ought to be privileged, and move in this chapter to justify my use of these lenses throughout this project.

Latin American Liberation Theology[62]

> *What we have often called the "major fact" in the life of the Latin American church—the participation of Christians in the process of liberation—is simply an expression of a far-reaching historical event: the irruption of the poor. Our time bears the imprint of the new presence of those who in fact used to be "absent" from our society and from the church. By "absent" I mean: of little or no importance, and without the opportunity to give expression themselves to their sufferings, their camaraderies, their plans, their hopes.*

The above quotation is taken from Gustavo Gutierrez, the "father" of Latin American Liberation Theology, whose seminal work, *A Theology of Liberation,* initially published in 1971,[63] was one of the first to name such an "irruption of the poor."[64] In his text, he explicates a liberation theological methodology, the *locus theologicus* of which is

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[62] As was indicated earlier, this categorization, along with "North American Feminist Liberation Theology" are adopted from Alfred T. Hennelly's text *Liberation Theologies: The Global Pursuit of Justice.* In this text he provides an overview of the main points of emphasis, areas of convergence and divergence for schools of thought that are understood as liberation theologies. What he terms "Hispanic Liberation Theology," I term "Latina Liberation Theologies." While I utilize this framework, my points of emphasis differ from Hennelly's as I aim to draw attention to the dominant epistemology and anthropological subject within each school of thought.

[63] The 1971 publication was in Spanish, entitled *Teología de la liberación, Perspectivas* by CEP, Lima. The volume was translated into English in 1973.

[64] While Gutiérrez is considered the "father" of liberation theology, he was not the first liberation theologian. In fact, many Protestant theologians were at the forefront of liberation theology. For example, Rubem Alves' *A Theology of Human Hope,* preceded the publication of Gutiérrez's *Teología de la liberación,* by two years (see Vuola 2002, Hennelly 1997, and Ellacuría and Sobrino 1993).

the suffering and immense poverty of those in Latin America. The possibility for the particularity of this locus developed alongside broader methodological shifts already at work during the Second Vatican Council, as well as within the Latin American Bishops' statements coming from Medellín, Colombia in 1968.

The Medellín documents in particular offered a broad conceptual framework that supported the possibility for the epistemological rupture of viewing "history from the underside" that first-generation Latin American Liberation theologians introduced into theology and ethics.[65] Part of this broad framework included the bishops' contentions that the impoverishment and particular sufferings of Latin Americans must be viewed from a perspective that appreciates how institutional structures, not just individuals, oppress lives. Though the bishops' structural analysis remains at the "macro" level,[66] in that it deals primarily with general problems related to colonialism and neo-colonialism, such as "the lack of socio-cultural integration,"[67] capitalistic enterprise that benefits small powerful groups, and differing political instabilities, nonetheless their analysis emphasized unjust structures and suggested various social scientific methods by which to undertake such a structural analysis.[68] Most important, the bishops asserted the need for the Christian witness to stand in solidarity with the poor.

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[65] Enrique Dussel, a philosophical liberationist, was also central to this shift.

[66] By this I mean that the Latin American bishops attend primarily to unjust structures as they are related to geographic regions, nations, and/or cultures that have been affected by colonialism. They do not attend to how unjust institutions intersect at more particular levels related to identity, such as we see with the institutions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, etc. It is important to note, as I will discuss later, that Latin American Liberation theologians follow the bishops in this, emphasizing the "macro" levels of the plight of the poor. For more on this, see the work of Elina Vuola.

[67] Latin American Bishops. "Justice," Medellin, Colombia, 1968, I.2

[68] This is again due to the Second Vatican Council's openness to dialogue with the "modern world." Vatican II evidenced an explicit shift towards appreciating the validity of multiple social sciences and the sociology of knowledge as well, both of which were crucial for the methodological developments of Latin American Liberationists.

In an effort to explain the need to be in solidarity with the poor, the Latin American bishops provided an integrated tri-partite definition of "poverty":

> We must distinguish: a) Poverty as a lack of goods of this world necessary to live worthily as men, as itself evil. The prophets denounce it as contrary to the will of the Lord and most of the time as the fruit of the injustice and sin of man; b) Spiritual poverty is the theme of the poor of Yahweh. Spiritual poverty is the attitude of opening up to God, the ready disposition of one who hopes for everything from the Lord…; c) Poverty as a commitment, through which one assumes voluntarily and lovingly the conditions of the needy of this world in order to bear witness to the evil which it represents and to spiritual liberty in the face of material goods, follows the example of Christ who took to himself all the consequences of men's sinful condition and who 'being rich became poor in order to redeem us…in this context a poor church: denounces the unjust lack of this world's goods and the sin that begets it; preaches and lives in spiritual poverty…(and) is herself bound to material poverty.[69]

The bishops are saying that not only does the material poverty of Latin Americans evidence evil in this world, the Church and the world are called to assume a spiritual poverty and commit to being in solidarity with the very victims of this injustice. Indeed, the Latin American Bishops call for all to give "preference to the poorest and most needy sectors and to those segregated for any cause whatsoever, animating and accelerating the initiatives and studies that (are) already being made with that goal in mind."[70] This "preference for the poor" is part of a key concept within Catholic Social Teaching, one that Pope John Paul II uses heavily in his writings, namely the need to maintain a "preferential option for the poor."[71]

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[69] Latin American Bishops, "Poverty of the Church," Medellín, Colombia, 1968, II.4-5.

[70] Ibid., III.9.

[71] As to the historical use of the phrase, "preferential option for the poor," many note Pope John XXIII's September 1962 address prior to the opening of Vatican II in which he states, "in the face of underdeveloped countries, the church is, and wants to be, the church of all and especially the church of the poor" (see Gustavo Gutierréz, *A Theology of Liberation,* xxvi).

The emphasis on the primacy of the poor as subjects is the *locus theologicus* of Latin American liberation theology. Indeed, as Roberto S. Goizueta argues, not to walk in solidarity with, not to know the poor, is not to know God:

> If the margins of society are the privileged locus of God's revelation in history, then *we will not and cannot see or know* that God unless we also make that our own privileged locus. In short, the option for the poor is not merely a consequence or even a concomitant of Christian faith; it is, at bottom, a condition of the possibility of Christian faith.[72]

Goizueta points out that Gustavo Gutierrez and other Latin American liberation theologians' use of the preferential option for the poor is inherently "theocentric." Citing Gutierrez, he writes:

> 'The ultimate basis for the privileged position of the poor is not in the poor themselves but in God, in the gratuitousness and universality of God's *agapeic love.*' Our praxis of solidarity with the poor is not *itself* the foundation of Christian faith; rather, that praxis is a *response* to God's own initiative, a response to God's own gratuitous revelation in our world and in our own lives…before we can 'opt for' God or others, God has already opted for us; we can opt for the poor in a preferential way *because* God has already opted for the poor preferentially. And because the God who has chosen and loved us gratuitously is revealed in Scripture, in tradition, and in history as a God who has chosen and loved the poor preferentially, we are compelled and empowered to love the poor preferentially.[73]

Here Goizueta makes a few important contentions. The first is that, contrary to critiques mounted against liberation theologies, to "opt for the poor" is not to lose sight of God but in fact to be wholly grounded in God's love for the poor and marginalized and in God's call for all peoples to respond to the poor in and out of love. The second contention is

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[72] Roberto S. Goizueta. "Knowing the God of the Poor: The Preferential Option for the Poor," in *Opting for the Margins: Postmodernity and Liberation in Christian Theology,* Joerg Rieger, ed. (Print: Oxford University Press, 2003) (Online: www.oxfordscholarship.com, 2005), 3).

[73] Ibid., 4.

related to the first but is a clear methodological assertion on the necessity of the *praxis*[74] of solidarity. The emphasis on *praxis* embraces a third contention, that the key methodological tool in liberation theologies is the hermeneutical circle.[75]

The "hermeneutical circle" is best represented in the work of Latin American liberation theologian Juan Luis Segundo. Segundo perceives that the content of theology is ultimately lacking if one constructs theology outside of the methodological context of the hermeneutical circle. He states:

> It is most important to realize that without a hermeneutical circle…theology is always a conservative way of thinking and acting. It is not so much because of its content but because in such a case it lacks any *here-and-now* criteria for judging our real situation.[76]

Theology constructed outside of a "here-and-now" frame of reference is primarily focused upon proper theological teaching, doctrine, and theory. This means that *praxis* is, at best, an afterthought, and must align within the confines of orthodoxy. Thus, orthopraxy, which can be defined as right living or action, is dictated by theoretical constrictions that are not based upon the living contexts of the lives of real people.

According to Alfred T. Hennelly, Latin American Liberation theologians were clear that they should challenge the prioritization of orthodoxy at the expense of meaningful *praxis*, and they therefore turned this "emphasis on its head":

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[74] Since there are a variety of uses for the term *praxis,* especially within liberationist thought, it is important to be clear at the outset that most liberationist, feminist, and postcolonial theologians utilize *praxis* in the Marxist sense: "In Marx, praxis refers to 'the free, universal, creative, and self-creative activity through which man creates (makes, produces) and changes (shapes) his historical, human world and himself; an activity specific to man…'" (Vuola 2002). See also, Marx's *Theses on Feuerbach*, where the concept plays an especially important role.

[75] As Alfred T. Hennelly notes, the term "hermeneutic circle" is taken from the work of Juan Luis Segundo, yet he borrowed this term from the work of Rudolf Bultmann.

[76] Juan Luis Segundo, *The Liberation of Theology*, John Drury, trans. (Marknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1976), 9.

> Theology is a reflection—that is, a second act, a turning back, a reflecting, that comes after action. Theology is not first; the commitment is first. Theology is the understanding of the commitment, and the commitment is action. The central action is charity, which involves commitment, while theology arrives later on.[77]

Theology must arise out of concrete realities, out of the minds and bodies of particular subjects and pastoral actions must be taken as a result of these realities. Citing Segundo, Hennelly emphasizes that liberation theologians are clear that theology must always be more concerned with "*being liberative* than in *talking about liberation.*"[78] [79]

In order to evidence such commitment to being liberative, feminist liberationist Elina Vuola notes that Segundo outlines the four steps that have to happen in the hermeneutical circle:

> First, there is our way of experiencing reality, which leads us to ideological suspicion. Second, there is the application of our ideological suspicion to the whole ideological superstructure in general and to theology in particular. Third, there comes a new way of experiencing theological reality that leads us to exegetical suspicion, that is, that the prevailing interpretation of the Bible has not taken important pieces of data into account. Fourth, we have our new hermeneutic, that is, our new way of interpreting the fountainhead of our faith (i.e., Scripture) with the new elements at our disposal.[80]

At its core, this method stresses an inductive approach, contesting the legitimacy of deductive approaches to theology in which doctrines are uniformly applied to particular situations and insisting instead that the primary sources of theology and ethics must be interpreted from particular contexts. For Latin American liberation theologians, the contexts are the lives of the poor. This is precisely what Gutiérrez means when he speaks

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[77] Hennelly, (1997), 12.

[78] Ibid., 27.

[79] On this point see Juan Luis Segundo's *Liberation of Theology*, 9.

[80] Elina Vuola. *Limits of Liberation: Feminist Theology and the Ethics of Poverty and Reproduction*, (New York: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 45.

of the "irruption of the poor" as "the major fact" in the process of liberation. Since Latin American liberation theologies are to arise from the realities of the poor, one is likely to ponder what, or who, constitutes "the poor."

While "the poor" are the primary subjects of Latin American liberation theology, who precisely these subjects are often remains unclear. As Elina Vuola has suggested, the Salvadorean theologian Ignacio Ellacuría has offered the clearest conception of who the poor are in Latin American liberation theology.[81] Ellacuría, she claims, analyzes the meaning of "the poor" according to two main categories: the socioeconomic and the theological, with three subcategories belonging to the theological: Christological, soteriological, and ecclesiological. I will briefly consider each of Ellacuría's categories as they are analyzed by Vuola.

The first way to think of the concept of the poor is in sociological terms. "The poor" is a "socio-economic concept that refers to two thirds of humanity, the so-called Third World."[82] The poor are real people that have been the victims of structural injustices related to colonialism, capitalism, and the dynamics of globalization. This sociological conception envisions the poor as a collective subject suffering under multiple oppressions, but the primary focus of this sociological perspective is that the poor are collectively oppressed by economic injustice.[83]

While having a broad sociological understanding of the poor is necessary, for Latin American liberation theologians it is also necessary to think about the poor within a

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[81] Here she also cites the work of Juan Luis Segundo, especially *Teología de la liberación: Opción por los pobres,* (1988) and *'Opción por los pobres: Síntesis doctrinal,* in José Ma. Vigil, ed. *La opción por los pobres* (1991).

[82] Elina Vuola, (2002), 66.

[83] Ibid., 67.

theological framework. It is this second main category—the *theo-logical*—that, according to Vuola, Ellacuría contends is the core of liberation theologies. This perspective claims that the greatest mystery of God is that God is "a God of the poor."

> The poor are the 'place' (*lugar*), the 'sacrament' and the 'presence' of a crucified and suffering God that is hidden and absent. But at the same time, the poor are also the presence of a liberating God who intervenes actively and salvifically in history. The eschatological tension between the 'not yet' and the 'already' of the Kingdom of God is concretely present in the poor.[84]

This theological perspective on the poor is at the core of Ellacuría's understanding of the poor as crucified peoples, as people suffering under the immense weight of both individual and structural sins of the world. Within this plight they are identified with God, and God identifies with them, and preferentially so. These claims return us to the fact that the *locus theologicus* of Latin American liberation theology is the poor.

Following Gutiérrez, Goizueta argues that this locus is not just an ethical claim, but an epistemological and theological one as well.

> That is, the preferential option for the poor is not only a privileged criterion of Christian orthopraxis (correct practice), calling us to live our faith; it is, more fundamentally, a privileged criterion of orthodoxy itself (correct worship, or *doxa*), calling us to believe in and worship a God who is revealed on the cross, among the crucified peoples of history.[85]

By this he means that we can only be faithful to the Christian message if we understand that God is revealed most fully at these material sites of brokenness. The crucified Christ bears witness to the brokenness of humanity and we must attend to the knowledge and experiences of those similarly situated if we desire to live authentically according to the gospel.

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[84] Ibid.

[85] Goizueta (2003), 3.

The next theological perspective articulated by Ellacuría is Christological. The focus of this Christological perspective is on Jesus' poverty, both materially and spiritually. He lived his life in service to the poor, he "announced the Kingdom of God from the poor and for the poor, and he shared their destiny to its ultimate consequences by dying on the cross, at the hands of the powerful of his time."[86]

The following theological perspective is that the poor are important soteriologically. The poor are the "carriers of the Good News and have a 'special evangelizing ability' by having been elected by God…the poor are a privileged instrument of God's salvific power in history."[87] This perspective is intimately related to the last perspective, that is, a proper understanding of the church must be one in which the church is poor and is "of the poor."[88]

While it may seem rather unthreatening[89] to suggest that Christians ought to be concerned with the poor, even primarily concerned with their particular struggles and destiny, these perspectives on the poor present a great challenge. If we claim the poor to be a privileged focus soteriologically and ecclesiologically, then we cannot claim to be Christian, or be a part of an authentic church community, outside of the context of living in solidarity with the poor.

> If the God of the Scriptures is preferentially present among the marginalized peoples of our societies and if religious faith is, by definition, a knowledge of God, then we *cannot* know the God of the Scriptures unless and until we *place ourselves* in the presence of that God. If the God of Jesus Christ is preferentially

[86] Vuola (2002), 67.

[87] Ibid., 67-8.

[88] Ibid., 68.

[89] Roberto S. Goizueta contends that those doing theology in the first world actually find this perspective on the poor to be the most threatening.

> identified with the poor, then, if we are to be identified with God, we must identify ourselves preferentially with the poor.[90]

Identifying with the poor returns us to the conception of poverty in the Medellín documents. These documents insist that we are called not simply to provide charity to the poor, but to live a life in the practice of solidarity with the poor. Outside of such practices, we cannot claim to know or love God, since we are rejecting the privileged loci of God's revelation. When we neglect to live in solidarity with the poor, we blaspheme, turning away from the sufferings of God on the cross.

> The more profoundly we accompany the poor, the more profoundly we identify with the Christian praxis of the poor and reflect critically on that praxis in the light of God's word, the more we are confronted with a lived faith that takes as its starting point, not human praxis per se…but the gratuitous Word of God, Jesus Christ himself as the foundation of our liberative praxis.[91]

The way forward, the way to live most fully into our vocation as Christians, is to accompany the poor. We must privilege their knowledge and sufferings, we must make their destiny our own, even unto death.[92]

According to Vuola, while both the sociological and theological categories of the poor are helpful, they also lack specificity, and evidence some of the inherent weaknesses of Latin American liberation theology's over-reliance on the collective subject of the poor. The first is that in the sociological sense the marginalization of the poor is defined in primarily economic terms. This is indeed the historical reality. However, as argued by Vuola, the poor are often subjected to multiple oppressions that cannot be reduced to,

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[90] Goizueta (2003), 3.

[91] Ibid., 4.

[92] This is a clear commitment of Latin American liberation theologians. Many, like Ignacio Ellacuría, were killed as a result of their unrelenting commitment to and identification with the poor.

even if intimately related with, economic injustices. At the heart of the issue is the fact that we must instead understand poverty outside of a narrow framework of solely economic processes since there are also "cultural, ethnic, racial, and sexual valences to poverty."[93]

The difficulty of this narrow framework is related to the fact that we always theologize from a particular place. As Otto Maduro claims, "all theologies *are particular and interested*, marked by the specific location of its producers…"[94] Thus, as historical beings we are limited in our knowledge. All theologies represent particular interests, and every theology, like Latin American liberation theology, that means to challenge hegemonic theologies by epistemologically and ethically privileging those who have been ignored historically, will likely contain limitations based upon the place from which the theologian is speaking. In the context of Latin American liberation theology, Otto Maduro claims that we must think about how many of the theologians were priests in the Roman Catholic Church. Additionally, this fact means not only that we have a purely male perspective, since women cannot be ordained in the Church, but also, since priests are supposed to be celibate, that we have at the very least an extremely under-developed appreciation of the role and nature of sex, gender, and sexualit(ies)[95] as constitutive of the human person and as a primary site of oppression.[96]

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[93] Vuola (2002), 68.

[94] Otto Maduro. "Once Again Liberating Theology? Towards a Latin American Liberation Theological Self-Criticism," in *Liberation Theology and Sexuality*, Second Edition, Marcella Althaus Reid, ed., (London: SCM Press, 2009), 20.

[95] In addition to the under-development of sexualities, sex, and gender that occurs when one is speaking from the subject location of a Roman Catholic priest, there were also ethnic valences that were under-developed. For example, the Latin American Liberation Theologians were not speaking from the perspective of indigenous persons or the perspective of Afro-Latinos.

[96] Maduro (2009), 24-7

This is to say that while Latin American liberation theologians claim the epistemological privilege of the poor, that privileging is limited insofar as it continues to favor heterosexual men, thereby not disturbing the foundational epistemological and anthropological frameworks that flourish through the silencing of racial, ethnic, and sexual minorities, as well as women. In line with feminist decolonial theorists, I contend that there is an inherent relationship between racism, ethnocentrism, sexism, and heterosexism, and the logics of colonialism. This helps to frame some of the problems with liberation theologians' attempts to contest the continuing effects of colonization on the general "poor" subject. If not explicitly speaking to these interconnections, their attempts tend to reinforce the very epistemologies and anthropologies upon which colonial practices were predicated. As Elina Vuola contends, opting for the homogenized conception of the poor has also meant "*not* opting" for others.

> This is probably most clear in how poor women *as women* have not been present in most of liberation theology. The bodily, subjective, intimate suffering of women, because of the denial of church(es) and state(s) to take it seriously, is at the heart of the challenges that feminism and postmodernism pose for liberation theology.[97]

Latin American liberation theology has in fact functioned much less as the "irruption of the poor" that might lead to an epistemological *rupture,* and more as an epistemological *disruption*, valuable of course, but seriously limited and ultimately neglectful of the experiences of many insofar as it continues to privilege a (hetero)normative conception of theological anthropology and an extremely "narrow class-based interpretation of praxis and of the poor."[98] Liberation theology in the Latin

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[97] Elina Vuola, "The Option for the Poor and the Exclusion of Women: The Challenges of Postmodernism and Feminism to Liberation Theology," in *Opting for the Margins: Postmodernity and Liberation in Christian Theology,* Joerg Rieger, ed, (Oxford Scholarship Online, 2005), 2.

[98] Ibid.

American vein has ignored the many constitutive features of human embodiment, the many ways that people are crucified.

> By denying and repressing the rich complexity of our subjectivities, our bodies, and our sexualities, we end up reinforcing the internalized structures that sustain authoritarianism, torture, repression, domestic violence and the abuse of the most vulnerable members of our societies. Without wanting, without knowing, without wanting to know.[99]

The denial of particular aspects of our subjectivities by Latin American liberationists meant that the frameworks were limited in their capacity to work to subvert the oppression it denounced. Incorporating greater intersections constitutive of the human subject would be necessary to complete this work.

North American and Latina Feminist Liberation Theologies

Latin American liberation theologians intended to disrupt the assumed subject in theology and ethics by privileging the subject position of the "poor." North American and Latina/Hispanic feminist liberationists were intent on doing the same with women.[100] Decades ago the utilization of "women's experience" was both novel and necessary. Utilizing women's experience as a starting point was a way to challenge the androcentrism, false objectivity, and neutrality of theology. Since the first generation of feminist theologians and ethicists, a plethora of women have brought their experience to bear as they expose, challenge, deconstruct, refine, rebut, and rework theology. "Women's experience" became an authoritative, though highly contested, epistemological source for theo-ethical reflection.

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[99] Maduro, (2009), 25.

[100] Some sought explicitly to redress the omission of women from the collective subject of the "poor" prevalent in Latin American liberation theologies.

In line with other forms of liberation theologies, feminist theologies methodologically privileged the hermeneutical circle of Juan Luis Segundo.[101] Rosemary Radford Ruether's text *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology*, written in the early 1980s, was pioneering in its use of feminist theological method, and particularly in its explanation and deployment of the hermeneutical circle to develop new ways of thinking about theology. In terms of the hermeneutical circle, she writes:

> Human experience is the starting point and the ending point of the hermeneutical circle. Codified tradition both reaches back to roots in experience and is constantly renewed or discarded through the test of experience…if a symbol does not speak authentically to experience, it becomes dead or must be altered to provide new meaning. The uniqueness of feminist theology lies not in its use of the criterion of experience but rather in its use of *women's* experience…[which] explodes as a critical force, exposing classical theology, including its codified traditions, as based on *male* experience rather than on universal human experience. Feminist theology makes the sociology of theological knowledge visible, no longer hidden behind mystifications of objectified divine and universal authority.[102]

"Women's experience" constituted another epistemological disruption as it grated against the established institutionalized norms that either dismissed or ignored the experiences of women.

The way of knowing that is shaped by "women's experience" is itself the product of an interplay of prevalent norms and symbol systems that Ruether argues delimits what can and cannot count as legitimate experience. Thus women have had to occupy the margins of the Christian tradition. Yet, Ruether claims that though prevalent, these symbol systems are not indestructible. Once questioned, they begin to lack coherence and

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[101] Oftentimes Segundo was not explicitly referenced. Over time the hermeneutical circle became the methodological tool of choice for all forms of liberation theologies, without direct reference to the context from which it had arisen.

[102] Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1993), 12-13.

intelligibility to the very communities or societies that once ordered them. As soon as these symbols begin to lose force, they become moot points and are then ripe to undergo transformation to reflect more authentically the lived experiences of particular communities. This is exactly what Ruether, along with other North American feminists, intended to do: to begin with the experiences of women that then challenge theological symbols and doctrines in order to represent more fully the experiences of women.

Though methodologically to perform the hermeneutical circle from the place of women's experience is important, it has similar problems to that of the collective subject of the "poor" in Latin American liberation theologies because it is not clear who these women are in all of their being, in the intersections of all of their identities, not just one, nor is it completely clear what is meant by "experience." In *Sexism and God-Talk,* Ruether delineates her understanding of experience as follows:

> 'Experience' includes experience of the divine, experience of oneself, and experience of the community and the world, in an interacting dialectic. Received symbols, formulas, and laws are either authenticated or not through their ability to illuminate and interpret experience.[103]

She suggests that "women" ought to mine these experiences in order to find their "authentic selves," and clearly states that attention to women's experiences when understood this way can subvert dominant and dominating narratives upheld in the Christian tradition.

Ruether then enacts the hermeneutical circle in her text beginning by tracing the historical depiction of women through the traditional lines of Augustine, Aquinas, and the Reformists.[104] Ruether contends that women were symbolically depicted as less than fully

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[103] Ruether, 1993, 12.

[104] Ruether is in good company here. Most texts written by North American feminist theologians are variations on the theme of beginning with women's experience to reconceptualize theological language,

human and as having a greater proclivity to sin since they were understood to be closer to nature. This symbolic depiction in the Christian traditions had the material effect of marginalizing women. In addition to their marginalization in the traditions, the way in which women were analogically placed alongside nature seemed to justify domination and numerous forms of violence against them—by men. This symbolic ordering is in line with the privileged anthropology of complementarity, in which "patriarchal Christianity" dichotomizes and hermetically seals human nature into two different and distinct categories. These categories are subsequently hierarchically ordered, with men occupying a superordinate position relative to women. Ruether utilizes the Marxian conception of "alienation" to describe how such dichotomization leads women to be in an "alienated" relationship to themselves and to the rest of humanity.

In the Marxian conception of alienation, the proletariat is alienated from their true species being by the oppressive economic mode of production of capitalism. For Marx, the proletariat is unnaturally separated from themselves, and really, from the sociality necessary for the realization of species-being. Ruether constructs a loose parallel to this conception of alienation when she contends that women are alienated from themselves insofar as they are disconnected from the "other" male part of humanity. This alienation is also indicative of a severance of relationality, which she, along with many North American feminists, understands as essential to understanding women's experience. Thus, she argues for "psychic integration" of these two parts of humanity in order that women can become conscious of their truest selves and live into the "fullness of

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doctrine, and practices. See especially Elizabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza's, *In Memory of Her,* and Elizabeth Johnson's, *She Who Is,* for primary examples.

humanity." The authenticity of women's experience is then to be evaluated against its ability to access such a fullness of humanity.

This is problematic, as it situates North American feminists as representative global arbiters of what can count as experience. Further, when "women's experience" is deemed to be authentic, it is imbued with an authority heavily informed by the assumptions of the lucidity of the subject *and* that subject's access to divine revelation. While Ruether does contend that her arguments about experience are situated and, therefore, come from a place of particularity, indicating that it represents the limits of knowledge and knowledge production, it is clear that her text is one among the many of early North American feminists that tend to homogenize and essentialize the experiences of women. Like the collective poor, early North American feminist texts typically understand "women" to be a collective subject, whose oppression is largely characterized according to a few constitutive aspects of their being: sex and gender. The mutually informing intersections of race, gender, ethnicity, class, and sexuality are not explicitly at work in these iterations of North American feminist liberationist theologies. The assumed subject is largely white, middle-class, heterosexual women.

Other groups of North American feminists perceived the limitations of such a collective subject, and further particularized the experiences of "women," especially women of color. One such school of thought to emerge was Latina feminist liberationist theologies, best represented by Ada María Isasi-Díaz's articulation of a *mujerista* theology. The women's experience that Isasi-Díaz draws upon in the construction of her mujerista theology is the everyday experiences of grassroots Latinas in the United States. Isasi-Díaz contends that we must privilege the experiences of Latinas in the U.S. in order

to illuminate the discontinuities between Latina experiences and the ordering of society and the Church. By this she means that Latinas occupy the margins of society both in their sex and gender, as well as in their racial and ethnic identities, both of which are often accompanied by economic oppressions. Problematically, their sufferings as a result of such racism, sexism, and poverty have been muted.

In response, Isasi-Díaz desires to expand the hermeneutical and epistemological privilege of "the poor" and "women" operative in both Latin American liberation theologies as well as North American feminist theologies.[105] She writes:

> *Mujerista* theology is not a disembodied discourse but one that arises from situated subjects, Latina grassroots women, and, yes, even me...A *mujerista* is someone who makes a preferential option for Latina women, for our struggle for liberation…*mujerista* theology, which includes both ethics and systematic theology, is a liberative praxis: reflective action that has as its goal liberation…(it is a) process of enablement for Latina women which insists on the development of a strong sense of moral agency and clarifies the importance and value of who we are, what we think, and what we do. [106]

We must privilege the experiences of Latinas if we want to begin a process of challenging the dominant theological and social order. The value of drawing upon Latinas' experiences, she argues, is that it will lead to the (re)construction of both doctrine and ethical norms that can function to create more just relations.

Though it seems that Isasi-Díaz has situated her subject so particularly that one cannot think of the value outside of those specific communities, she contends that thinking from the experiences of Latinas is not relevant only for Latinas, but for all. The particularity of the Latina experience as useful for all peoples evidences what she terms the usefulness of "situated universals." These universals are not theoretical musings

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[105] Ada Maria Isasi-Díaz, *Mujerista Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996), 30.

[106] Ibid., 30, 61-62.

but catalysts for action that must begin at the small, local level prior to attempting to disrupt the whole social (dis)order. The horizon of these universals is constituted and shaped by what Isasi-Diaz terms *lo cotidiano*—the "everyday" experiences of U.S. Latinas. *Lo cotidiano* is a horizon insofar as it shapes the ways in which Latinas relate to themselves, their communities, and the broader world. *Lo cotidiano* acknowledges that experience is always situated within a particular place, space, and time. Experiences are cultivated over time through the everyday practices that Latinas utilize to resist suffering and oppression. She emphasizes that these practices have been enacted for the very survival of Latinas in the face of incredible odds.

Isasi-Díaz determines that *lo cotidiano* functions in three main ways: descriptively, hermeneutically, and epistemologically. The descriptive function of *lo cotidiano* is that it privileges the narratives of Latinas.

> Taking seriously the descriptive function of *lo cotidiano* makes it possible for new narratives to emerge, narratives created by the poor and oppressed who take charge of reality. In these narratives they find themselves and see themselves as moral subjects who exercise their right and power of self-definition...For the poor and oppressed a new narrative, having continuity with the present but different from the 'normative' one, is an important element in the process of conscientization.[107]

These new narratives empower the oppressed towards self-definition that has the potential to subvert how dominant narratives have defined them. These narratives also have the ability to "prick" the conscience of others, perhaps even those in power, whose hearts may be moved by these narratives "in a way that laws, authoritarian dictates, and arbitrary exigencies do not have."[108]

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[107] Ada Maria Isasi-Díaz, *La Lucha Continues: Mujerista Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004), 98.

[108] Ibid., 98.

Lo cotidiano is also a hermeneutical lens through which to assess the social order from the subject position of Latinas. Isasi-Díaz notes that all U.S. Latinas are similarly situated within a particular "cultural matrix" that distinguishes them from dominant groups. So, in many ways she believes that the experiences of Latinas can be generalized because their horizons of meaning have been sculpted from their similar subject positionings in society. On *lo cotidiano* as a hermeneutic, Isasi-Díaz contends:

> *Lo cotidiano* has a hermeneutical importance because it is marked by subjectivity and because we cannot but see it and understand it except from a singular perspective…(it) is the lens through which we apprehend reality…Hermeneutics deals with context with the use of power and determining who the ones are who mold the shape of daily life…the hermeneutical function of *lo cotidiano* makes visible the day-to-day oppression of grassroot Hispanas/Latinas because it not only points out clearly discriminatory practices but it also unmasks those who benefit from them.[109]

Additionally, the hermeneutical function of *lo cotidiano* makes explicit the inherent connections between "discourse and action," what Isasi-Díaz explains as the "materiality of communications," that highlight how liberating discourses and action are often neglected, subjugated in order to favor discourses that continue to justify the privileged places of those who hold power in society.[110] This is closely related to the third way that *lo cotidiano* functions—as epistemology.

Lo cotidiano as an epistemological function acknowledges all "knowledge as a fragmentary, partisan, conjectural, and provisional reconstruction of reality."[111] In its epistemological functions *lo cotidiano* is meant to indicate that the oppressed actually "understand and face reality in a different way from that of the powerful and

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[109] Ibid., 99.

[110] Ibid.

[111] Ibid., 100.

privileged."[112] In this coming to know reality, there are at least three different dimensions, which align with the three functions of *lo cotidiano* Isasi-Díaz notes: becoming aware of reality (descriptive), taking responsibility for that reality that marks the ethical character of reality (hermeneutics), and transformation of that reality (epistemology). Epistemology then functions as a central part of the descriptive and hermeneutical functions of *lo cotidiano* but is also distinct. The epistemological function of *lo cotidiano* is meant to challenge the status quo by celebrating the ways of knowing and modes of knowledge production of oppressed persons.

> *Lo cotidiano* is the principal horizon of the poor and oppressed who, in order to survive, have to struggle to transform reality. It is the poor and the oppressed, mainly made up of women, who know reality in a unique way because they transform it when they manage to survive by somehow providing shelter, food, clothing, medicine for themselves and their families.[113]

While Isasi-Díaz is clearly asserting that epistemology is not simply a "theory of knowledge" but always stems from the material world, she is not—at least at this point in her scholarly trajectory—fully engaged in a complete critical analysis of the intersections of the identities of the subjects which she speaks of. Returning to her point on the importance of new narratives she claims:

> New narratives break the hegemony established mainly by men from the western and northern hemispheres, a hegemony that has contributed much to produce and maintain prejudices and oppressive structures, such as ethnic prejudice and racism, sexism, compulsive heterosexism, classism and material poverty.[114]

Here, Isasi-Díaz clearly indicates that there are multiple intersections of identities that collectively work to oppress persons. In doing so she reveals that her understanding of

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[112] Ibid.

[113] Ibid., 101.

[114] Isasi-Díaz (2004), 98.

subjectivity is very much informed by a particular understanding of the power and privilege inherent not simply at the site of one identity but at the intersections of many. This, along with some of her later work on the necessity to "decolonize" epistemologies, suggests that she may have begun here to cultivate a *decolonialista* theological sensibility, which is what I aim to do explicitly in this chapter and bring to bear on Catholic Social Teaching. However, though her argument names these intersections of identities, she continues to privilege particular aspects of identity and experience in her work: sex, gender, and race/ethnicity. Naming heterosexism as a site of oppression was important; however, her text is not inclusive of the experiences of those who occupy the margins because of their sexuality. It is this neglect, coupled with problematic usage of grass-roots women's experience, that must be challenged in the work of Isasi-Díaz. Feminist theologian Rebecca Chopp can highlight some of the specific difficulties inherent in utilizing particular forms of women's experience and the neglect of constitutive aspects of one's subjectivity.

Chopp defines the place where language, politics, and subjectivity meet and form an economy as the "social-symbolic order." Her starting point in her text, *The Power to Speak: Feminism, Language, God,* is that the reliance upon "women's experience," including the more particularized experiences of grassroots Latinas, actually undermines women's pursuits for inclusion. This is because feminist theologians have not problematized the very language and discursive traditions within which they operate. This amounts to an assumption that "women's experience," or "grassroots Latina experience" exists outside of the dominant social-symbolic order. By not acknowledging the ways in which the social-symbolic order structures epistemologies, and therefore,

subjectivities, feminist theologians are only operating within accepted norms and categories of this order, instead of actually contesting it.

Chopp contests the notion that "women's experience" directly *represents* the reality of women as subjects. Language is never just *representational*, it is never quite able to capture the "essence" of things in order to represent them in a coherent manner. Language is not just representational of reality—it also "symbolically structures" reality as well.[115] This is precisely what Chopp terms the "symbolic economy" that is present in oft-used concepts such as "God the Father."[116] She contends that to say "God the Father" is not just to use a metaphorical image to depict God, though it is partly that. More importantly, to speak of "God the Father" is to subject oneself and others to the very norms that are suggested within the concept itself. Thus the use of speech-acts functions to order reality in particular ways. This ordering directly affects subjectivities as they can only become intelligible within the frame of the dominant norms that structure them. Simply changing images of God, or calling for the inclusion of women as subjects does not subvert the economy.[117] Chopp suggests that we must start by challenging the social-symbolic order in order to allow women "to speak." Not to begin with this ironically is to silence women further.

In order to make her case, Chopp relies heavily upon "poststructuralist"[118] schools of thought that explicitly question the coherence and stability of the subject, privileging

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[115] Rebecca S. Chopp. *The Power to Speak: Feminism, Language, and God*, (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Co., 1992), 104.

[116] Ibid., 111.

[117] Ibid., 111-14.

[118] For example, Chopp references the works of Derrida, Gadamer, Wittgenstein, and Kristeva, all thinkers that theorize the effects of language on subjectivity.

instead the ways that subjects are multiply constructed from intersections of power within the broader symbolic economy. Postcolonial theorists and theologians, to whom I turn next, attempt to do the same, aiming to speak to the subjectivity of the subaltern.

Postcolonial Theories

Postcolonial theories start from a basic premise that claims that the "three non-western continents (Africa, Asia, and Latin America) are largely in a situation of subordination to Europe and North America, and in a position of economic inequality."[119] Postcolonial theorists aim to uncover, analyze, and resist the power dynamics inherent in the division between the Western and non-Western continents as well as contribute to the political and social activism that postcolonial theory grew from. One of the most crucial moments in the cultivation of postcolonial theory and practice occurred at the Bandung Conference of 1955 when a number of "newly independent African and Asian countries…initiated what became known as the non-aligned movement."[120] As Robert J.C. Young notes, the "non-alignment" movement was coined because these newly independent nations were worldwide understood as "third world" countries, or countries that did not align within the categorizations of "first world" capitalist countries or "second world" socialist countries.[121] They were not aligned with either of these designations because they were newly independent, thus the "third world" was the "postcolonial world."[122] This world constituted by recently decolonized nations desired to

[119] Robert J.C. Young, *Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 4.

[120] Ibid.,17.

[121] Ibid., 16.

[122] Ibid.

bring to the fore the oppressed knowledges of those who have occupied these colonial spaces, thus postcolonialism

> [b]egins from its own knowledges, many of them more recently elaborated during the long course of the anti-colonial movements, and starts from the premise that those in the west, both within and outside of the academy, should take such other knowledges, other perspectives, as seriously as those of the west. Postcolonialism…is a general name for these insurgent knowledges that come from the subaltern, the dispossessed, and seek(s) to change the terms and values under which we all live.[123]

While they stem from specific context of anti-colonial movements,[124] postcolonial theories took hold in a number of academic disciplines including literary, subaltern, diasporic, and cultural studies, as a way to analyze critically the construction in English literature of colonial relationships between the British and their colonies.[125] The three most referenced thinkers within postcolonial studies are Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Spivak, all of whom—like other postcolonial theorists and critical feminist theorists—rely heavily upon the works of French school poststructuralists like Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan, and Julia Kristeva.[126]

There is an inherent tension in using French poststructuralists to articulate a postcolonial theory since it tends towards the solidification of the hegemony of Eurocentric high theory, while attempting to subvert it.[127] Yet it is also not surprising that

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[123] Ibid., 20.

[124] Here Young claims "It was only towards the end of the 19th century, however, that such resistance (to colonial rule) developed into coherent political movements" (2003, 3). According to Young we find prime examples of these anti-colonial movements as they manifested in Latin America, Africa, and Asia (2003, 3).

[125] Catherine Keller, Michael Nausner, and Mayra Rivera, eds. *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire* (St. Louis, Missouri: Chalice Press, 2004), 8.

[126] Ibid., 9.

[127] I will explore this tension more fully later in this chapter when I critique postcolonial theories and theologies and move toward decolonial theories.

postcolonial thinkers turned to "postmodern" theories since they offered tools to deconstruct concepts related to a dominant Western subject, to expose the power dynamics inherent in the creation of colonial subjects, and to debunk the ontological homogeneity that these frameworks supported.

Early postcolonial theorists began to analyze colonialism as an institutional system that contained internal logics that justified the occupation of lands and peoples. One of the primary concerns for postcolonial theorists has been to analyze the particularities that characterize subjectivity within the context of the colonial encounter. With reference to the works of highly influential postcolonial scholars Edward Said and Homi Bhabha, we can find evidence suggesting that many postcolonial theorists have attempted to frame the subjectivity of the subaltern in ways that promote their agency, particularly in an effort to subvert the epistemological frame that informs the colonizer's sole claims to humanity, thereby justifying their use of epistemic, physical, and sexual violence against the colonized subaltern.

Edward Said analyzes issues related to subjectivity and identity in the colonial encounter. His *Orientalism* is heavily influenced by Michel Foucault's discourse theory. Foucault's conception of the subject essentially dismantles the idea of a coherent, individual, autonomous, self-sufficient agent of the Enlightenment. He shifts the focus away from the individual and claims that theorizing subjectivity must be done with an eye to discourse, which means that one considers social dynamics of power that constitute the production of knowledge and the structuring of subjectivities and relationships.[128] His discursive analysis tends to language as well as representations

[128] For more information on Foucault's conception of the subject see his *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings (1972-1977)*, Colin Gordon, ed. (1980).

found in dominant cultural norms and regimes of truth, to illuminate how the individual is always situated within the context of multiple discursive traditions. These traditions provide norms that allow subjects to assume roles that are intelligible to both themselves and others within the community. In other words, individuals are not autonomous free agents, but are significantly constructed and delimited in what they can think, know, and be. One of the central concepts in Foucault's theory is that the "subject" is actually constructed as an "object" and, moreover, as an object to itself within discursive traditions.

Said contends that "Orientalism" is a discursive tradition in the Foucaultian sense so that the "Orient" and the "Oriental" then, must be analyzed from within the rules of "Orientalism's" discursive system.[129] In this discourse the East (the Orient) and the Oriental function as "*ontologically* stable" entities that are placed in contradistinction to the Western Oriental*ist.*[130] The Oriental was the *object* of study for the Orientalist. Furthermore, Said contends that not only was the Oriental the object of Western study, but the concept or frame of Orient/al was actually *created* by the West.[131] Knowledge about the Orient proliferated over the centuries through the work of texts written by scholars and colonialists alike. Said claims that "to know" something is to have a control and authority over it; thus, by increasing the body of knowledge about the Orient and the Oriental, the West was able to create both identities. Within the discourse of Orientalism, Orientals are only intelligible within the context of dominant norms in which individuals

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[129] Edward W. Said. *Orientalism.* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 3.

[130] Ibid., 32.

[131] Ibid., 6.

in the Orient were understood to be sub-human at worst and infantile at best. The subaltern subject was an object constructed and instrumentalized in the name of European ideological and material (colonial) interests.

Said further supports his contentions by noting that the West constructed an "imaginative geography" that drew an analogical demarcation between West/East and Subject/Object.[132] The Oriental was wholly other. The ontological and physical boundaries between the Orientalist and the Oriental were immutable. This is why Said ultimately claims that the discourse of Orientalism is a "closed system." Said explains this closed system of the discourse of Orientalism by comparing the way that the Oriental was written about in the colonizer's literature to the way lions may be written about in literature. This comparison is meant to suggest that if one reads that lions are fierce animals within a text and then subsequently experiences a fierce lion, lions will always be considered fierce, "until lions can talk back."[133]

Here, Said makes a clear point about the potential of subjectivit(ies) when they are constructed through such a closed system regime of truth. The prospects for the subaltern "to speak" and exercise agential action in a way that can subvert or, at least, challenge the discourse, seem dim. Similar to Latin American liberationists, despite the best of intentions, the subaltern in Said's text, like "the poor" in many liberationist texts, is absent and silent.[134] The Oriental, the subaltern, is like the lion: she cannot and does not speak in the text. Unfortunately, in Said's account when one looks for a sign of

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[132] Ibid., 54-5.

[133] Ibid., 95.

[134] This is true to the extent that one does not count Said's own authorial voice in the text.

agency in the subaltern, one finds only lack, negation of being, absence. In *Orientalism* the Oriental cannot seem to escape existence as an object.

Though it can be argued that Said's text is not explicitly about the subjectivity of the subaltern, what one can gather is that *Orientalism,* and other postcolonial texts, provides insights into the effects upon subjectivity within a discursive regime of truth, strengthened over hundreds of years of knowledge production and accumulation about the "Orient." The subject is thus constructed via a process of texturization in which the material marks of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, geographical locations, etc., are ontologized and subsequently used for the justification of the occupation and violence against the "Other." Thus the subaltern is in a stiflingly precarious place to form a human identity and exercise actions that are not always feeble surrenders to the epistemic and physical violence they are forced to sustain.

Homi Bhabha, another postcolonial theorist whose works have had tremendous impact both within cultural studies and other academic disciplines, actually critiques Said on this point. Bhabha's text, *The Location of Culture,* is centrally concerned with subjectivity in the context of the colonial encounter. Yet even though Bhabha laments the "absence" of the subaltern in the work of other postcolonial theorists like Said, the subaltern is equally missing from his own text as he privileges the narratives produced in literature and not narratives stemming from particular bodies.

Bhabha, like Said, is heavily influenced by the Foucaultian notion of the construction of subjects. In addition, he draws heavily from the Derridean notion of *differánce* in order to articulate his understanding of subjectivity produced in the colonial (and other cultural) encounters. For Bhabha, there is a kind of violence, characterized as

both epistemic and physical, that occurs in the colonial encounter. Like Said, he notes that part of the epistemic violence done to individuals is a function of the desire and tendency to place peoples and concepts in dichotomous relationship to one another. Within any dichotomy, the respective identities that occupy either side are understood as fixed. They are hermetic identities. These fixed, hermetic identities bear an ontological truth and, inevitably, are hierarchically ordered. In the process of sealing off identities and establishing a hierarchy among them, we find an erasure of epistemologies as well as of bodies. Bhabha's text explicitly resists the notion of cultural purity that leads to such assumptions about the stability of identity.

Instead, Bhabha emphasizes the fluidity and hybridity that is created in the colonial encounter. His aim, then, is to undermine any notion of "fixity" in identity, a concept that by reference to Franz Fanon he claims leads to "fetishizing" identity.[135] Bhabha defines fixity as the tendency, noted above, for individuals to categorize and represent peoples and concepts as confined within particular identities, like race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, etc., that then function as non-porous essences of being. He claims that by undermining this fixity one can subvert the necessity of dichotomization since both parties in the cultural encounter are now not neatly, rigidly, and coherently defined but instead shrouded in ambiguity. Within the context of the colonial encounter the colonial authorities desired to fix the identities of the colonized in direct contrast to themselves. We saw a similar claim in Said's text in which the Oriental was placed in ontological contradistinction to the Westerner. This move strictly delimits the potential

[135] Homi Bhabha. *The Location of Culture*, (New York: Routledge, 2004), 94.

subjectivities that can be assumed and enacted by the subaltern *as well as* by the colonial authority. Bhabha's notion of "hybridity" attempts to undermine this discursive reality.

Hybridity, as Bhabha defines it, characterizes the encounter between colonizer and colonized in which the encounter moves both parties "beyond" themselves—what he terms the "intimacy" at the "interstices."[136] The encounter between the parties occurs at an "in-between" place, which is best described as a spatio-temporal liminality. This "in-between" space he describes as the "Third-Space."[137] It is within this "Third-Space" of spatio-temporal liminality that Bhabha "locates culture." There are no fixed essences of being, no coherent or self-sufficient forms of identity. Reflecting upon this understanding of identity, Keller et al. claim that every subject-position, every place

> [m]ust be read as an event in-between—between aliens, between places, between times…every identity whatsoever must be read as an event of relationship: A subject *takes place* amidst a dense ecology of interdependence. Relationships are internalized through mimicry as hybridity. Within the imperial condition, then, a human subject is a hybrid event rent by the asymmetries of power.[138]

The being of hybridity is wholly characterized by this kind of "unhomeliness," which is a condition of being that brings together spaces and identities typically constructed as opposites to one another. Bhabha claims that unhomeliness perfectly captures the condition of colonial and postcolonial subjectivity, and that it has direct implications in understanding the exercise of agency for the subaltern. For Bhabha, hybridity is a "subversive strategy" for the subaltern.[139] Since there are no fixed identities in the "Third-Space" an ambiguity of being arises that functions to call into question the

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[136] Ibid., 2.

[137] Ibid., 53-6.

[138] Catherine Keller, et.al., (2004), 14.

[139] Bhabha (2004), 160.

authority of the colonizer. This space works as a site of resistance for the subaltern, as the identity of the colonial authority, the very identity that grounds the claims of this individual to authority over the colonized, is unstable; the authority accumulated from fixed identity is now "displaced."[140]

Though much more can be written on the postcolonial theoretical conception of the subaltern, and subaltern subjectivity, I cannot do so within the confines of this chapter. When taking account of both Said and Bhabha's texts on the subject of the subaltern, we do find several helpful clues about postcolonial subjectivity. First, identity formation is a complex process achieved through the interaction of multiple forces. Second, identity is not ontologically fixed and any purported fixity tends toward justification of epistemic and physical violence. Third, subjectivities are multiple and informed by knowledges, both exposed and subjugated, material and ephemeral. Fourth, the subjectivity of the subaltern, though constructed under colonial conditions, can still be subversive, agential, so there is always room for resistance even within the context of discursive traditions. These insights have traveled into the works of postcolonial theologians who attempt to think about subaltern subjectivit(ies) in light of colonization, and particularly about the relationship between Christian colonizations and the construction of subaltern identities.

Postcolonial Theologies

With reference to postcolonial theories, postcolonial theologians emphasize the deconstruction and reconstruction of Christian systematic doctrines, especially those related to Christology and to the doctrine of God. Postcolonial theologies assume that "even the most sublime religious language has been transcoded for imperial purposes"

[140] Ibid., 162.

and that the use of postcolonial theories can enable an "analysis of the troubling ways that Christianity, born as a movement of a colonized people, could also come to mimic the empire."[141] Postcolonial theologians such as Kwok Pui-Lan, Catherine Keller, Michael Nausner, and Mayra Rivera perceive this as a logical step that is in line with broader critiques of liberationist schools of thought. Further, they find it disturbing that Christian theologies have not paid much attention to the ways that the field has perpetuated domination and dominant ideologies that are central to colonial and imperial projects. Some aspects of the dominant ideologies that postcolonial theologians critique are central to this project: identity and subjectivity.

Keller, Nausner, and Rivera argue that early Christianity assumed ontologically stable categories of being from Greek metaphysics to the point that they became the "foundation for Christian theology."[142]Due to this assumption, Christian categories of being were understood as "changeless self-identity over and against change and difference."[143] Postcolonial theologians commit to deconstructing these supposed static categories of being through the use of postcolonial theories in order to resist continuing the material effects of claiming stasis in identity.

As a doctrine that constructs meaning about who human subjects are, what they can do as made in the *imago* dei, and what their limits are, theological anthropology is one aspect of systematic theology that is ultimately a doctrine that reflects upon the (dominant) constructions of human identity and subjectivity, thus it is targeted for (re)articulation by postcolonial theologians.

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[141] Keller et al. (2004), 8.

[142] Ibid., 9.

[143] Ibid., 9-10.

Theologians utilizing postcolonial theories believe that reimagining theological anthropologies can function as a mode of resistance to the hierarchizing of being that tends to mark traditional theological anthropologies to the exclusion of a variety of subjects.

> They imagine subjectivities that resist the homogenizing and divisive tendencies of racial and ethnic labels, normative appearances, or religious and national identities. Theology can rethink its understanding of the *imago dei* with the help of theories of the split-subject—as the embodiment and internalization of colonizing ideals, but also as the site of *spirited* resistance.[144]

The claim of postcolonial theologians is that they are able to complicate the easy acceptance of hermetic conceptions of identity in its multiple forms. Thinking about the challenge postcolonial theories and theologies present to the assumed stasis of being and its resulting material effects may place it in a privileged position to avoid emphasizing one particular aspect of the human subject witnessed in Latin American Liberation Theologies' emphasis on the "poor" as subject, Feminist and Latin@ Liberationists' emphasis on "women," and "women of color." Part of the problem inherent in these prior discourses, which postcolonial theories and theologies seem to address, is the reality of the colonial encounter and its effect on constructions of identity and subjectivity. A lack of analysis surrounding the effects of the colonial encounter that postcolonial theorists have been keen to deconstruct leaves these schools of thought vulnerable to critique that they have not yet sufficiently penetrated the dominant discourses they aim to deconstruct thereby enabling the continuance of assumed stasis in categories of being, even if unintentionally.

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[144] Ibid., 16-17.

While postcolonial theologies do emphasize the subaltern subject, which privileges an understanding of the construction of identity and subjectivity through the colonial encounter, one finds that there are aspects to their theorizing that must be further developed. This is especially true when one reflects upon the colonial encounter as it was experienced in differing colonialisms.

Beyond "Post" Colonial Theories and Theologies: Grappling with the Colonial Encounter of Latin America and the Caribbean

Michelle Gonzalez, a feminist postcolonial theologian working in the areas of identity, subjectivity, and theological anthropology provides us with one working example that "post" colonial theory and theology cannot be applied neatly to all colonial contexts and, in particular, to the colonial context of Latin America and the Caribbean. An analysis of her work reveals the ways that postcolonial theories and theologies both have and have not taken an adequate account of the differences in colonialisms and the resulting effects on the formation of identity and subjectivity. She argues, along with postcolonial theorists and theologians that, in the context of colonialism, identity is best understood as ambiguous.[145] However, in order to make her argument, she privileges the lived realities of Latinas/os in the United States who have been subject to homogenizing identity categories that do not reflect the diversity of Hispanic populations in the United States.[146] In order to construct a theological anthropology that is meant to reflect the complexity of human subjects, Gonzalez connects Bhabha's notion of hybridity to the

[145] Here Gonzalez is thinking about ambiguity of identity along the lines of Bhabha's notion of hybridity and the "Third-Space."

[146] Such homogenization attempts to define and domesticate cultural and racial differences between and amongst "Hispanic" groups in the United States.

Latina/o feminist, philosophical, and theological conceptions of *mestizaje* and *mulatez.* She claims:

> Far from accepting the unified subject of Western European philosophy and theology, the anthropology underlying Latin American and Latino/a communities is mixed, hybrid, and contentious. At the historical root of this subjectivity is the birth of an "American" colonial subject that resulted from the violent meeting of African, indigenous, and European cultures within the Americas.[147]

The colonial subject is born in the "in-between" space created in the colonial encounter, which suggests that the space is dynamic.

> This challenges the assumption that cultural identity can be a homogenizing force within colonialism…identity is constantly in a state of flux, always unstable, and the notion of a unified self is undermined.[148]

Gonzalez explicitly draws from Chicana feminist Gloria Anzaldúa, whose concept of *mestiza consciousness* speaks to the pluralities and fluidity of identities, best represented as born from within the ambiguous space of the borderland.

> The borderland is a transitional and undetermined space, inhabited by the marginalized, '*Los atravesados* live here: the squint-eyed, the perverse, the queer, the troublesome, the mongrel, the mulatto, the half-breed, in short those who cross over, pass over, or go through the confines of 'normal'.[149]

The inhabitants of this bordered space have been constantly assaulted, violated, restricted in their very *being,* as others have attempted to force them into strictly predetermined categories. The pluralistic identity of the *mestiza* celebrates difference and ambiguities of being.[150]

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[147] Michelle A. Gonzalez. "Who Is Americana/o? Theological Anthropology, Postcoloniality, and the Spanish-Speaking Americas," in *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire,* Catherine Keller, Michael Nausner, and Mayra Rivera, eds. (St. Louis, Missouri: Chalice Press, 2004), 59-60.

[148] Ibid., 62.

[149] Ibid., 70.

[150] Ibid.

Yet, the extent to which the concept of the *mestiza/o* actually does celebrate difference is questionable. As Gonzalez notes, Anzaldúa, and many other feminist scholars and Latino/a theologians, have been questioned on their embrace of *mestiza/o*, since the creation of the concept is a direct result of violent colonialism in Latin America and the Caribbean. Within the context of the violent conquests of land, resources, and people, a variety of classes of people emerge. The Spanish colonizers regularly practiced their occupational tactics on indigenous bodies. They systematically raped indigenous women, which resulted in the birth of this new "hybrid race and culture"—the *mestiza/o*.[151] The embrace of the *mestizo/a* category, born out of Spanish colonization, is unfortunately tenuous[152]since it is based upon the "literal sexual conquest of the native American woman."[153] As a concept that is rooted in physical and sexual violence, it may perpetuate rather than subvert colonial logics. To this point we must remember how Latin American liberationists, in their over-reliance of the "poor" as an economic subject, neglected to consider particularities related to racial, ethnic, and cultural identities, thereby undermining their own capacity to speak fully in favor of the liberation of these subjects at all sites of oppression.

Gonzalez reminds us of Enrique Dussel's warning that the violence through which the *mestizo/a* was created cannot be forgotten.[154] Additionally, because this new "hybrid race" desired to obtain "political power and racial privilege," they often

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[151] Ibid., 66.

[152] Though tenuous, *mestizaje* will be critically retrieved in my discussion of border thinking/consciousness as a central methodological tool for a *decolonialista* theology and ethics.

[153] Miguel De La Torre, "Beyond Machismo: A Cuban Case Study," in *Sexuality and the Sacred: Sources for Theological Reflection,* Marvin M. Ellison and Kelly Brown Douglas, eds. (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), 226.

[154] Also to this point on the dangers inherent in the use of mestizaje see Nestor Medina's *Mestizaje: Remapping Race, Culture, and Faith in Latina/o Catholicism.*

"distanced themselves from their mother's indigenous blood and culture."[155] In order to gain such power and prestige they needed to ensure this distance in identity from the "native," and attempt to approximate the identity of the Spaniard. This identity was certainly racially motivated; they needed to be "white."

> Depending on one's skin tone and ancestry, historically one could fall into different levels of the colonial social hierarchy…In New Spain, at the top of the social hierarchy was the European-born Spaniard. Below them were the *criollo/as…mestizo/as* and *mulato/as* came next, and their skin color often determined their social standing…Blacks, also depending on their skin color, were able to occupy varying social levels, though always submissive to the *criollo/as, mestizo/as, mulato/as,* and Spaniards. The *indios* were the lowest rung of the social ladder. This complex picture of identity is in sharp contrast to the monolithic manner in which Latino/as and Latin Americans are often categorized.[156]

The colonial hierarchy based upon skin tone was indeed complex, but it was further complicated by the notion that particular races were to be identified with a specific "religion, culture, and behavior."[157] So, racial privilege was imbricated with the privileging of other aspects of identity to the detriment of the indigenous. These included an embrace of the Spanish language, and (Roman Catholic) Christianity.[158] Even today, these privileged elements of identity remain deeply entrenched in Latin American and Latin@ consciousness.[159]

Reflecting on the weaknesses of applying postcolonial theories within Latin American contexts, Michelle Gonzalez notes that in *Culture and Imperialism,* Said

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[155] Michelle Gonzalez (2004), 67.

[156] Ibid., 65.

[157] Ibid.

[158] Ibid.

[159] For example, the devaluation of indigenous spiritualities, and the continuing hierarchicalization of the Spanish language relative to the multiple languages and dialects native to Latin America and the Caribbean.

contends that, "the world was in fact, for the most part, decolonized after World War II."[160] She expresses shock and dismay at this, since most of Latin America was already "decolonized by 1826 (with the lone exceptions of Cuba and Puerto Rico)."[161] Postcolonial theorists like Said, Bhabha, and Spivak have understandably focused upon the kinds of colonialisms they, or their countries of origin, experienced. These were the brands of British and French colonialisms of the eighteenth century, which had different economic and social motivations than did the Spanish colonizers of the sixteenth century. The differences in historical time are also significant due to the relative arrival of modernity. For Latin America and the Caribbean, "modernity and coloniality are two sides of the same coin because historically they encountered both of them simultaneously."[162] Most postcolonial theorists are reflecting upon the processes of colonialism that arrived after modernity.[163]

These differences alone ought to have begotten multiple iterations of postcolonial theories; however, postcolonial texts seem to gloss over such particularity. As a corollary to the neglect of particularity and differences in colonialisms, postcolonial theorists do not attend to the cultural differences present between the colonized, nor is there sufficient analysis surrounding how we can even necessarily *be* postcolonial when, in fact, peoples remain colonized, both physically and in their *being.* If one considers these lacunae from an even more specific subject location, for example from the perspective of the Puerto Rican colonial migrant, these absences become ever the more absurd.

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[160] Ibid., 63.

[161] Ibid., 64.

[162] Nancy Elizabeth Bedford, (2007), 57.

[163] Ibid.

The Puerto Rican Colonial Migrant Context

As indicated in the introductory chapter of this project, Puerto Rico continues in its colony status since control over the island was transferred from Spain to the U.S. at the end of the Spanish American War. The experiences of Puerto Ricans, both those who remain on the island and those who are diasporic colonial migrants, is a particular place from which we can begin to think more closely about some of the weaknesses inherent in postcolonial theories and theologies. This is especially true when one considers the multiple ways in which Puerto Rican identity and subjectivity continue to be constructed at multiple intersections of identity related to nationality, race, ethnicity, sex, gender, and sexuality.

Of all the Spanish colonies, Puerto Rico alone has never gained its independence. For the past century, Puerto Rico has been "where the U.S. has worked out its attitudes towards its own expansionism… (especially) broader cultural questions about poverty, nationality, race, and gender."[164]

Puerto Rico has not only been the testing ground[165] for U.S. colonialism, it has also functioned as a sign to the rest of the world about how they should be treated.

> In 1898 Puerto Rico was the 'good' territorial possession (unlike Cuba and the Philippines), where people appreciated the United States and the gifts it had to offer its less fortunate neighbors. Political cartoons from the period depict Puerto Rico as a polite school-child, sometimes female, in contrast to the ruffian boys of Cuba and the Philippines (who were rudely waging guerrilla wars against the U.S.). In the late 1940s and early 1950s, as the Third World became a Cold War

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[164] Laura Briggs. *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), 2.

[165] Puerto Rico has literally been used as testing grounds for a variety of U.S. interests. These include scientific research on contraceptives, sterilization programs, and the occupation of Vieques by the U.S. Navy, who regularly tested bombs on the island. The depleted uranium emitted from these bombs has led to vast environmental harms, including the pollution of the water systems in Vieques. The inhabitants of Vieques now suffer greater instances of cancer and death. To these points see the recent work of Teresa Delgado.

> battleground, Puerto Rico became…a political showcase for the prosperity and democracy promised by close alliance with the United States. Puerto Rico was a proof-text for assertions about the benevolent mission of the United States overseas.[166]

The continuing colonization of Puerto Rico by the U.S. hinged both upon gendered infantilizing ideologies and ideologies related to the intertwinement of race, sexualities, and reproduction. These mutually constructing categories of being seem to be an oft-neglected fact in postcolonial theories. From its earliest days in Puerto Rico, the U.S. had constructed racialized differences between themselves and Puerto Ricans, and these racialized differences were often imbued with an ideological perspective of Puerto Ricans, especially the bodies of Puerto Rican women, as hyper-sexual and diseased.[167] Racialized discourses related to Puerto Rican women's bodies continued through bio-medical research on contraceptive effects on Puerto Rican women, forced sterilization of Puerto Rican women, and the way that diaspora Puerto Ricans, particularly those that landed in New York, have had their sexualities and families over-analyzed[168] to explain poverty and to stand in as a "proxy for race."[169]

Far from being an element of the colonial "past," racism today is the "reproduction and consolidation of the old colonial/racial hierarchies of Europeans/Euro-Americans versus non-Europeans and the hegemony of racist ideologies inside each

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[166] Ibid.

[167] The discourse of "tropical medicine," discussed in Brigg's *Reproducing Empire*, is a case in point.

[168] The infamous Moynihan Report, which blamed lack of economic progress within black and Puerto Rican families upon an inherently dysfunctional familial structure (absent fathers, children born out of wedlock, parents choosing not to marry, etc.) is a primary example of the intertwining of gender, racial, and economic oppressions. See Briggs (2002), 182.

[169] Laura Briggs (2002), 178.

metropolitan center."[170] Racist discourses are pervasive, but they have shifted from predominantly biologically based discourses to culturally based discourses. Puerto Ricans that migrated to, or were born in the States, have been systematically accused of a kind of cultural backwardness that functions as a smoke-screen for racist and sexist discourses.

> By not using the word 'race' in its discourse, cultural racism claims to be nonracist. So, if colonial/racial subjects (like Puerto Ricans) experience higher unemployment rates, higher poverty rates, higher dropout rates…are paid less for the same jobs as white workers…it is because they are 'lazy,' 'unassimilated,' 'uneducated,' have 'bad habits,' 'bad attitudes,' or 'unadapted/inadequate culture.'[171]

These types of assumptions unfortunately shape the destiny of many persons of color in the U.S. While Puerto Ricans were conferred with U.S. citizenship in 1917 as a result of the Jones Act, Puerto Ricans continue to be treated as second-class citizens precisely due to the racist and sexist discourses discussed above. Thus contrary to popular beliefs, Puerto Ricans share more with those occupying "undocumented" political spaces, than with those who enjoy the privileges associated with first-class citizenship. It is precisely these types of continuing unequal colonial relationships, such as between "Euro-Americans and non-European peoples, males and females…[and] ideological and institutional forms of racism and sexism," and the persistent effects on subjects in ideologically structuring subjectivity that postcolonial theorists under-analyze. They underestimate the pervasiveness of what decolonial theorists term the coloniality of being, and therefore miss certain sites of the struggle for decolonization that necessarily

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[170] Ramon Grosfoguel, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, and José David Saldívar, "Latin@s and the 'Euro-American Menace': The Decolonization of the U.S. Empire in the Twenty-First Century," in *Latin@s in the World System: Decolonization Struggles in the 21st Century U.S. Empire,* Grosfoguel, Maldonado-Torres, and Saldivar, eds. (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2005), 11.

[171] Ibid., 13.

includes the "reformation of subjectivity," seeking "alternative knowledges (and) new ways of being human."[172] So, while postcolonial theories and theologies have significantly challenged the epistemological and anthropological assumptions that many liberationists, including feminist liberationists, have not, I contend that they must be coupled with decolonial and feminist decolonial theories because these theories attend more thoroughly to the realities that the world is not yet fully "post"colonial and to how the logics of colonialism are still perpetuated through the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender. Since the goals of this project are to thoroughly analyze and critique the underlying epistemological and anthropological assumptions and categorizations in the Roman Catholic teachings on gender and sexuality and in CST, decolonial, and feminist decolonial theories should be utilized to enhance the effectiveness of postcolonial critique in precisely the areas of weakness indicated above. Collectively, these theories provide us with the analytical tools necessary to uncover the logics underlying the Catholic tradition's epistemology and anthropology. It is to these theories that I now turn.

Decolonial and Feminist Decolonial Theories

While continuing to draw upon postcolonial theories, decolonial theorists (re)contextualize the logics of colonialism as it was enacted upon the persons in Latin America and the Caribbean. Drawing upon the work of Ramón Grosfoguel, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, José David Saldívar, and Walter D. Mignolo, four prominent decolonial theorists, I explain some of the differing assumptions and starting points for decolonial theorists and then draw out the central contours of decolonial feminist theory. While some of the concerns of decolonial theorists overlap with postcolonial theorists,

[172] Ibid., 24.

there are analytical concepts that are distinctive to this school of thought and, since they will constitute the decolonial hermeneutic of suspicion I deploy throughout this work, they will be fully analyzed here. It should be noted that decolonial theories do not abandon the postcolonial project, nor do I. What decolonial theories do is further complicate the primary concerns surrounding identity and power by "relocating" the subjects in question to more explicitly address the multiple sites of oppression and power exercised in (de)colonial contexts.

First, both postcolonial and decolonial theorists understand the processes of decolonization as it was discussed at the Bandung Conference of 1955.[173] Walter Mignolo argues that "although both projects drink from the same fountain they are grounded in a different genealogy of thoughts…by this I mean that geo-historical and bio-graphical genealogies of thought are at the very inception of decolonial thinking."[174] He quotes a prayer from the work of Frantz Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks* to indicate his point: "O my body, makes of me always a man who questions!"[175] What he means to indicate is that for the decolonial thinker, one's body is epistemology. Where your body is located in space and time and the ways that dominant power relations have constructed that body contributes to its distinctive mode of knowledge production.

While most postcolonial thinkers would agree that this is the case, their theories often neglect to fully work out the particular texturizations of the body outside of the stratifications of race and ethnicity. While racial and ethnic hierarchies were, and

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[173] Walter D. Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2011), xxiii.

[174] Ibid.

[175] Ibid.

continue to be a central site of domination, there are many other sites of domination.[176] In order to speak to these realities, decolonial theorist Anibal Quijano introduced what is now known as a central concept for all of decolonial theory: the colonial matrix of power. The colonial matrix of power refers to the persistence of colonial logics and ordering of peoples and societies even after the "juridical-political" decolonization of countries around the globe. Coded within this matrix of power are the continuing presence of "gender/sexual hierarchies…racial/ethnic hierarchies…epistemic hierarchies… [and] religious hierarchies."[177] According to Mignolo, the pervasiveness of the colonial matrix of power in the categories of knowledge and being requires that we think differently about decolonization in the twenty-first century.

> To decolonize…would require an intervention in many spaces of power relations that have been historically colonized by European/Euro-American conceptions of gender, sexual, racial, epistemic, religious, economic, and political power relations.[178]

Quijano initially used the term "the colonial matrix of power" to speak to the continuing effects of colonization after the juridico-political decolonization of Latin America. According to Quijano, the colonial matrix of power contains different axes, all of which were constitutive of modernity/coloniality. Quijano suggests that this coloniality of power began with the questioning of whether natives had souls. Parsed out in Mignolo's work, the coloniality of power is said to have the following axes of power:

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[176] Of course there are many feminist postcolonial theorists like Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Gayatri Spivak, and Chela Sandoval who do explicitly address colonial stratifications of race, gender, and sexuality. This marks their scholarship as distinct from male postcolonial scholarship.

[177] Ramón Grosfoguel, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, and José David Saldívar, 20.

[178] Ibid.

knowledge and subjectivity; race, gender, sexuality; economy and authority.[179] So, the constitutive aspects of colonial matrix of power include oppressive power over knowledge, subjectivity, and authority. Further, it is argued that these modes of domination are mutually constituted by modern ideological understandings of race, gender, and ethnicity.

Importantly, these "spheres of management" in the colonial matrix of power is said to be originally grounded within a "theo-politics of knowledge,"[180] where European, and specifically, Spanish colonizers justified their colonization with reference both to natural law theories that suggested "darker races" and women did not closely enough approximate the norm of humanity (based on the European male), so colonial domination does not pose a significant moral problem, and to theories about the "salvation of souls," wherein colonized persons needed to be violently converted in the name of God.[181]

> The historical foundation of the colonial matrix (and hence of Western civilization) was theological: it was Christian theology that located the distinction between Christians, Moors, and Jews in the 'blood.' Although the quarrel between the three religions of the book has a long history, it has been reconfigured since 1492…simultaneously, the racial configuration between Spanish, Indian, and African began to take shape in the New World. By the eighteenth century, 'blood'

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[179] Walter D. Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options* (Duke University Press: 2011), 9.

[180] It is important to indicate that for decolonial theorists the "theo-politics" of knowledge that helped to create and justify the colonial matrix of power soon changed into the "ego-politics" of knowledge at the time of the Enlightenment. They attack the Enlightenment subject on these grounds; however, as I will argue the Natural law subject endorsed by the Church shares much of the same characteristics as the Enlightenment subject, and the Natural law subject has also been modernized to an extent that similar critiques can be used against this subject (which is the assumed subject in CST). Both constitute a "body politics of knowledge," however the differences must be indicated. The Enlightenment subject upon which the ego-politics of knowledge is based is different, even if similar in some regards, to the Natural law subject that is at the heart of "theo-politics of knowledge."

[181] For more specific information on this see Pope Alexander VI's 1493 Papal Bull "Inter Caetera," (better known as the Doctrine of Discovery) that claimed all land discovered would belong to the Crown and that the Catholic religion be spread throughout the New World and conversion of the barbarians, even if violent, was necessary to live out the mission of Jesus Christ.

> as a marker of race/racism was transferred to the skin. And theology was displaced by secular philosophy and the sciences.[182]

Decolonial theorists contend that the colonization of Latin America and the Caribbean grounded within this "theo-politics" encouraged the conquest of the Americas, the enslavement, rape, and murder of its inhabitants, as well as the slave trade of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. These atrocities were justified within the context of an epistemological frame that established hermetic categories associated with the heteronormative subject. Other forms of knowledge were undermined or destroyed. The people that produced these (subjugated) knowledges were dispensed with in a manner appropriate for those not considered to be human subjects.[183]

If, then, we have a history in which a certain limited conception of the subject was deployed in order to justify such heinous abuses, theologians and ethicists must begin explicitly to address questions of coloniality to the analysis of teachings on gender and sexuality in the Roman Catholic Church and Catholic Social Teaching, especially as these teachings are ultimately rooted within a particular conception of the human subject. Who/what are human persons, and what happens when a person does not closely enough approximate the norm? These are central questions since the colonial hierarchies of being, which include epistemological hierarchies, racial/ethnic hierarchies, and gender/sexual hierarchies have functioned definitively within the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church.

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[182] Walter D. Mignolo. *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*; 8.

[183] See the work of Mignolo, Grosfoguel, Maldonado-Torres, and Lugones, who all speak exactly to this point.

Very few would contest the role that the Catholic Church played in the colonization and violent evangelization in Latin America and the Caribbean. The logics that reduce "decolonization" to the juridico-political colonization of nations we know to be in error. Thus, one must ask whether, at their core, the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church have been similarly decolonized since the colonial period, or at least have modified significantly the Church's conception of the human subject upon which violent "theo-politics" of knowledge were based. Since there has never been explicit questioning and contestation of such assumptions surrounding the stable, dichotomized human subject in the Church teachings, which grounds the social doctrine of the Church, the answer seems clear. As I will discuss further in Chapter 4, even if the Church has moved towards an embrace of an historicized subject in the tradition of CST since Vatican II, we are at best left with a Natural law subject that has been dressed with "modern" rights, which still has traces of both the problematic politics inherent in the Natural Law subject, while adding the problems related to the "modern" Enlightenment subject.

Decolonial theories have the capacity to name and analyze such problematic assumptions because they began the attempt to "de-link" from the epistemological assumptions that have functioned towards triple colonization—material, epistemic, and spiritual.[184] They attempt to resist the logics of Eurocentric production of knowledge and not use them in a manner that reinscribes its hegemonic power. Ada María Isasi-Díaz contends that to approach an analysis from such a perspective does not mean that, "we can claim to be free of 'dominant thinking,' " but that we are making a conscious and

[184] "De-linking" is crucial to the decolonial methodology of Walter D. Mignolo.

consistent effort to resist the categories and logics of dominant thinking.[185] By such de-linking, decolonial theorists begin the process of identifying the politics inherent in the production of knowledge and, importantly, attend to the ways that these violently construct the body as a battlefield.[186] This connection is extremely important, and, I contend, a major point of distinction from traditional liberationist, post-colonial, and, to a certain extent, feminist liberationist theories. It is the connection between epistemology, subjectivity, and anthropology that is always already speaking in particular terms about *bodies*.

In the introduction to this project, I claim that I am privileging the bodies and histories of those on the underside is a part of enacting epistemic disobedience. Enacting "epistemic disobedience," within the context of the Church teachings on gender and sexuality and within the social doctrine, means that one must reveal the workings of the "colonial matrix of power," and, in particular the places where logics of coloniality of being/coloniality of gender may be present especially within the tradition's conception of the human person.

Analyses of the coloniality of being/gender require not only epistemic disobedience, but also the embrace of an alternative mode of consciousness. This alternative mode of consciousness is often conceptualized as privileging a border epistemology. A border epistemology is a way of understanding knowledge and

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[185] Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz, "Mujerista Discourse: A Platform for Latinas' Subjugated Knowledge," in *Decolonizing Epistemologies: Latina/o Theology and Philosophy*, Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz and Eduardo Mendieta, eds. (New York: Fordham University Press: 2012), 45.

[186] Susan Thistlethwaite recently published a text called *Women's Bodies as Battlefields: Christian Theology and the Global War on Women.* When I initially wrote the phrase "body as battlefield" I had not seen this publication; however, I now feel obliged to mention this text.

knowledge production as an ongoing and fluid process. The notion of a "border" will undoubtedly conjure thoughts of divisiveness and will seem to reinforce both the dichotomous thinking and violences meted out in response to transgressions of epistemic, physical, and sexual borders; however, this is not the goal. Instead, the notion of the "border" I use here is similar to Anzaldúa's use of the concept: the border, that is, a definitive way to affirm the importance of space and bodies in relation to that space in the politics of knowledge production. Admittedly, the use of the term "border" does not neatly fit with the Puerto Rican experience, at least, not in the same ways that it does for Chican@s inhabiting *Aztlán*. Indeed, in order to have a "borderland theory" that addresses the Puerto Rican experience, one needs a coherent analysis of maritime borders[187] as epistemological spaces that also bear witness to a variety of violences; however, using the Anzaldúan concept functions metaphorically to depict the very real violence that occurs when predetermined boundaries of being are crossed enables a "border" epistemology to speak to the Puerto Rican experience.

Latin@ philosophers and theologians use such border epistemologies/modes of consciousness. Walter Mignolo, who privileges an understanding of coloniality as the coloniality of knowledge, also speaks of the importance of participation in "border thinking." This type of thinking is also known as thinking from the colonial difference.

> These perspectives (from the colonial difference)…contribute today to rethinking, critically, the limits of the modern world system—the need to conceive it as a modern/colonial world system and to tell stories not only from inside the 'modern' world but from its borders. These are not only counter or different stories; they are forgotten stories that bring forward, at the same time, a new epistemological dimension: an epistemology of and from the border of the modern/colonial world system.[188]

[187] A full maritime border theory should really be developed; however, I cannot do so within the space of this project.

[188] Mignolo (2000), 52.

Thinking from the colonial difference is but one form of knowledge produced by privileging those who have been on the underside of history. Border thinking amounts to a "way of knowing that disrupts dichotomies from *within* a dichotomous situation: 'thinking from dichotomous concepts instead rather than ordering the world in dichotomies.' "[189] This would include "the poor," "women," and "the subaltern." But it would speak to the particularities of their subjectivities structured not just under unbridled capitalism, patriarchal ideology, or colonial ideology, but to all of these interlocking systems of power that function collectively to maintain the coloniality of power through violence against being(s).

Understanding how the coloniality of power is crucial to the constitution of subjectivity and being, it is then necessary to return to an analysis on the two mutually informing aspects of the coloniality of power that create the subontological colonial difference: "coloniality of knowledge" and "coloniality of being."[190]

"Coloniality of knowledge" is another way of speaking to the domination of knowledge production and subjectivity. Quijano, Mignolo, Escobar, and Maldonado-Torres all write of the continuing colonization of knowledge in spite of "decolonization" of the juridico-political kind. The Catholic Church is a part of such "coloniality of knowledge." To this day, those who do not conform to the epistemological assumptions of the Church are deemed to be wrong and in need of conversion.

The coloniality of knowledge, however, cannot be understood alone. Instead one must consider how the coloniality of knowledge is related to the coloniality of being. The

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[189] Nancy Elizabeth Bedford, (2007), 58.

[190] Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "Coloniality of Being," 252.

"coloniality of being" is a way to talk explicitly about the processes of racialization that was concurrent with the processes of colonization. Maldonado-Torres provides us with an excellent example to think about the relationship between epistemology, ontology, and subjectivity. He notes that the Cartesian ego privileges both epistemology (I think) and being (therefore I am), and that internal to the logics of the coloniality of power the Cartesian ego finds justification as the Subject relative to the colonized Object. This formulation is very similar to Said's postcolonial theory of the construction of Subject/Object in dichotomous relation to one another. However, in Said's account, there is not a recognition of the effects of this construction. The formula, contends Maldonado-Torres, becomes "I think (others do not think, or do not think properly) therefore I am (others are not, lack being, should not exist or are dispensable)."[191] This he terms the "sub-ontological or ontological colonial difference," where racialized others are "granted" being insofar as they approximated the (hetero)normative center.

This difference (between "human" and "other" beings) is what decolonial theorists term the "colonial difference." In the introduction to this work, it was indicated that Maldonado-Torres understands the coloniality of being normalizes extraordinary violence, that violence becomes the norm of being for those at the colonial difference.[192] By this he means that the processes that created the colonial difference typically required violence against the colonized in many forms: "the feminization of men, the rapeability of women and men, and the dispensability/killability" of the colonized are as if inscribed

[191] Ibid.

[192] Ibid.

on their bodies.[193] As normalized, the bodies of those at the colonial difference are made to sustain epistemic, physical, and sexual violence.

Latina feminist philosopher María Lugones seeks to complicate the idea of the "coloniality of being" by speaking about how it is intimately related to the "coloniality of gender." Lugones here is cultivating a feminist decolonial lens to analyze the coloniality of power and being along with the concept of gender. For Lugones, a constitutive aspect of the colonial difference is sexual di-morphism and she argues that this hierarchical dichotomy was critical to the "subjectification of the colonized."[194] To become man or woman was to become human since the colonized "other" prior to this subjectification was considered sub-human, even bestial.[195] Lugones draws our attention to gender not only because she wants to argue that it is a colonial imposition, and a patriarchal imposition, but also because that gendering goes hand in hand with the process of racialization. So race and gender, which because the genders are seen as complementary also necessitate heterosexuality, are equally an aspect of the colonial difference and need to be resisted.

The following quotation taken from Lugones clearly articulates what she has in mind when cultivating the feminist decolonial lens:

> Here I begin to provide a way of understanding the oppression of women who have been subalternized through the combined processes of racialization, colonization, capitalist exploitation, and heterosexualism. My intent is to focus upon the subjective-intersubjective springs of colonized women's agency. I call the analysis of racialized, capitalist, gender oppression "the coloniality of

[193] Ibid.

[194] María Lugones, "Notes Towards a Decolonial Feminism," 747.

[195] Ibid.

> gender." I call the possibility of the coloniality of gender "decolonial feminism."[196]

Lugones' lens of the coloniality of gender fits into her overall understanding of the structuring of subjectivity. She has theorized subjectivity and women's agency not as static, but, instead, as a process that is affected by the ways power is deployed over individuals in several aspects of life. She notes that subjectivity is typically restricted by the deployment of power by authorities. The power over these subjects forces a fragmentation of the self:

> The split in self-perception is crucial for the subjectivity/intersubjectivity of the nonwhite subject. She comes to understand herself as without authority. She understands racial difference as establishing a cleavage, a split that cuts through her and through her relations. But the multiplicity of reality is complicated by her inhabitation of her self within collectivities that are despised in the larger construction of the social world, but that reject her as inferior. These collectivities back up meanings that raise enduring critiques and alternative meanings. Thus, she inhabits, at least, a fractured locus.[197]

The fragmentation of the self that occurs as a result of the impositions of the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender is real but not total. Lugones claims that those occupying the space of the colonial difference are "resistant" subjectivities—those that simultaneously sustain and contest the violence done to these subjects. As resistant subjects, these individuals are always more than "what the hegemony" makes of them.[198] While oppressed, these subjects have the capacity to resist and collectively work towards their own liberation.

I understand subjectivity in a manner that resonates with Lugones' contentions since I assume that authoritative power, such as that exercised in the context of the

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[196] Ibid.

[197] Maria Lugones, "Methodological Notes Toward a Decolonial Feminism," in *Decolonizing Epistemologies: Latina/o Theology and Philosophy* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), 70.

[198] Ibid., 76.

Roman Catholic Church, has the ability to affect violently the construction of a subject, forcing fragmentation. However, this fragmentation is not total. The non-white, non-heteronormative subject still exists, and continues to resist simply by existing. These subjects I call *l@s indocumentad@s*--those subjects who in their very being must bear the weight of the status of being epistemologically and ontologically "undocumented," in the Roman Catholic teachings on gender and sexuality and in CST.

My use of the term *l@s indocumentad@s* is intentional and supports the fact that whenever one theorizes subjectivity, one is participating in a political act. If I were to speak of the "undocumented" in the U.S., many would agree that I am not simply characterizing these groups' lack of appropriate, "legal" papers. "Undocumented," is not a politically neutral term. Far from simply eliciting a reflection on U.S. immigration laws, the term "undocumented," creates a whole host of imaginaries and categories within which the actual subjects in question either "fit" in some particular way or, they are forced to the margins. Yet this force does not deem them invisible. Though they lack citizenship, or first-class citizenship, the undocumented remain present, and are a resistance presence at that. Similarly, in the context of the Roman Catholic Church, *l@s indocumentad@s* are forced to occupy spaces outside of the dominant theological imaginary. The ultimate questions surround their very inclusion in humanity, and whether or not the Church can maintain a social tradition that may leave many subjects fractured in their being, "undocumented," and without sanctuary. A sanctuarial space for *l@s indocumentad@s* would be a space wherein they can be recognized as human, free from the dominant ideologies that over-determine or under-determine their being. The sanctuarial space would enable an acceptance of the fluidity and multiplicity of *l@s*

indocumentad@s and honor the fact that at the various intersections of their identities—race, gender, sexuality, etc.—the image of God is reflected therein.

I contend that the cultivation of a *decolonialista* theology and ethics will enable the growth of epistemological sanctuary for *l@s indocumentad@s,* and that the establishment of such a sanctuary has the potential to bring real material changes for *l@s indocumentad@s* in the Roman Catholic Church's teachings on gender and sexuality, and the social doctrine. Such change begins with analysis of relevant documents of the church, which will be undertaken in the next chapters. This analysis requires attention not only to who is epistemologically privileged, but also the ontological constructions stemming from this privilege that leads to hierarchies of being and that leaves persons deemed "non-human" or only perversely human vulnerable to a variety of violences.

To do this requires that we predicate our conception of epistemological sanctuary upon the explicit recognition of the experiences of those occupying the colonial difference and analyzing how they have been subjugated both in knowledge and being. If liberationist veins of theology have taught us anything, it is certainly that we must always keep our theologizing rooted within the lived experiences of actual people, of their laments, of the ways that they suffer within their bodies. So, while I use conceptual frameworks informed by a feminist decolonial hermeneutic of suspicion and the lenses of the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender to analyze Church documents, I also to incorporate exemplary narratives that provide I move forward in the next two chapters to analyze the anthropological subject in the teachings on gender and sexuality and in CST and, importantly analyze the ways in which the epistemological and anthropological .

Chapter 3

L@s Indocumentad@s in Roman Catholic Teachings on Gender and Sexuality

The teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, and those of the theologians and ethicists who reflect upon and contribute to the development of these teachings, reflect a tenuous relationship between the public/private binary, a relationship in which the teachings on gender and sexuality focus primarily on the "private" institutions of gender, sexuality, and the family, while Catholic Social Teaching (CST) tends to focus primarily on "public" institutions related to socio-economic and political order.[199] The tenuousness of the public/private dichotomy reveals a tension within the broader tradition of the Catholic Church, palpable at least since the Second Vatican Council. This tension reflects significant differences in emphases between different methodologies and hermeneutical principles meant to guide the faithful to an understanding of the "nature"[200] of the human person and how this "nature" informs her individual and social activity.

The "private" teachings of the Church, those related to gender and sexuality, are articulated within a classicist natural law framework[201] that takes the stasis and universality of "nature" for granted. The moral teachings governing gender and sexuality are similarly absolute and unchanging and emphasize the immutable ontological structure of "nature" that informs humans equipped with rationality about what human being is,

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[199] For further insights into the public/private divide in the Catholic tradition, see my analysis in Ch. 1 "Introduction."

[200] Though the underlying natural law framework, which the Catholic Church adopts in its own description of nature, tends to understand "nature" as universal and stable. Following theologians Todd A. Salzman and Michael G. Lawler, I place "nature" within quotation marks because this is a highly contested concept.

[201] Todd A. Salzman and Michael G. Lawler, *The Sexual Person: Toward a Renewed Catholic Anthropology.* (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2008), 7-8.

and what absolute moral norms are within the order of creation. Todd A. Salzman and Michael G. Lawler, Roman Catholic theologians working in the specific area of New Natural Law theories on marriage and the family, define this as the "sexual morality" of the Church,[202] where gender and sexuality is acknowledged to be intimately connected to human being in the world, and the expressions of human being is strictly delimited according to a male/female, masculine/feminine gender schematic that has been ontologized.

This is distinct from what Salzman and Lawler term the "social morality" of the Church. For example, the social teachings of the Church emphasize the human person as opposed to human nature; thus they suggest "proposing principles for reflection, provid(ing) criteria for judgment, and giv(ing) guidelines for action."[203] They argue that the emphasis upon the human person highlights the relationality of persons who live within the context of local and global communities, whereas the focus upon human nature within the context of the Church's teachings on gender and sexuality emphasizes the natural telos of human biological structures, particularly the human sex organs. In essence, the social teachings highlight a personalist methodology and human responsibility within that framework, not a physicalist methodology that stresses the immutability of human nature and moral acts.

The emphasis upon a personalist methodology does not indicate a divorce from underlying natural law framework regarding who human persons are. Instead, at Vatican

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[202] Ibid., 8.

[203] Ibid. Salzman and Lawler write about the distinction between the use of human "nature" in the teachings of the Church, and the use of human "person." The latter represents a turn to a personalist understanding of humanity, with an emphasis on the social aspects of human beings, freedom, and responsibility. This former tends to emphasize acts proper to human beings, and not relationships.

II one finds a shift to emphasize those aspects of the human person that are distinct to humans in the created order. The focus is on the ability of humans as rational and relational creatures shaped within particular historical contexts to work towards the common good. This emphasis on the historicity of the human subject then lends credence to the calls within CST to allow pathways forward in addressing pressing social problems to be inductively arrived at through human reason as opposed to deductively applied to any particular historical context. The development of the personalist methodological approach enables the social teachings to have a greater appreciation of particularity, to support current theories of the sociology of knowledge,[204] to focus upon the poor and vulnerable, and to explicitly denounce oppressive institutional structures. Due to these commitments many a progressive or liberal Catholic theologian and ethicist has found a comfortable place to reside within this tradition. By this I mean that it is assumed that the shift from the classicist methodology, which many feminist theologians and ethicists say tends to ontologize oppressive human institutions (such as gender), meant that these oppressive anthropological aspects of the tradition were also somehow not relevant. Catholic social ethicists who reflect upon the documentary heritage of Catholic social thought since the Second Vatican Council often reference the importance of this methodological shift. They indicate how the Council was particularly important, as the documents stemming from it, especially *Gaudium et spes,* showed the Church explicitly

[204] On the embrace of theories of the sociology of knowledge see Salzman and Lawler (2008), pgs. 51-53 and Charles E. Curran (2008), pgs. 75-8.

engaging "the modern world," a stance that was debated heavily prior to the advent of the Council.[205]

The Second Vatican Council in many ways evidenced the Church opening itself to the necessity of reading the "signs of the times," acknowledging particularity in cultures, and how such particularity can challenge some of its own universal assumptions. Catholic social ethicists are clear that the Second Vatican Council evidenced this methodological shift; however, they remain reticent about the lack of a shift within the Church's anthropology, which has been one of the foci of Catholic feminist, womanist, and mujerista theologians.[206] Thus, it is often more comfortable to assume the line between the public/private teachings so as to avoid the kind of cognitive dissonance that will inevitably result when one refuses to analyze how or whether the anthropological assumptions relegated to the "private" sphere of the tradition are articulated in CST.

The next chapter will focus upon the social teachings and show that the anthropology and epistemology of the "private" realm, the theory of who the human person is, is assumed in the public realm, grounds the social teachings, and thus undermines their liberative potential. Despite a shift in methodology, the teachings assume the same anthropological baggage—meaning the heteronormative subject—that mujerista, womanist, feminist, and liberationist theologians have heavily critiqued within the context of the "private" realm.

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[205] See Curran's analysis of these methodological shifts at Vatican II as he explains them in *Catholic Social Teaching 1891-Present: A Historical, Theological, and Ethical Analysis.*

[206] The work of Lisa S. Cahill is a good example of a Catholic social ethicist that does not seriously address the anthropological underpinnings of CST.

The purpose of this chapter is to make clear who the normative anthropological subject is in the "private" realm of the Church's teachings on gender and sexuality. To this end, it focuses upon encyclicals and apostolic letters produced since the Second Vatican Council. Utilizing the conceptual frameworks provided by postcolonial, decolonial, and feminist decolonial theories, in particular the concepts of the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender and the colonial difference, I analyze the anthropological subject within the Church's teachings on gender and sexuality, and argue that these teachings create and sustain a heteronormative body politics of knowledge, creating categories of undocumented subjectivit(ies), whom I call l@s indocumentad@s, that are marginalized relative to the normative discursive construction of human being within the Roman Catholic theological imaginary.[207] This construction promotes epistemic violence and sanctions, even while denouncing the physical and sexual violence against l@s indocumentad@ subjects that the Catholic Church has created.

Roman Catholic Anthropology: Complementarit(ies)

Many feminist theologians have indicated that Roman Catholic anthropology is grounded within gender complementarity. Part of the reason for this is that the notion of gender complementarity does a lot of work within the Catholic tradition. Complementarity represents an anthropology that stringently delineates the appropriate ranges of subjectivit(ies) for men and women in the world. Complementarity grounds the Catholic Church's teachings against the ordination of women to the sacramental priesthood, as well as the teachings surrounding the appropriate vocations of women—

[207] See my discussion of Charles Taylor's *Modern Social Imaginaries* in Ch. 1 "Introduction."

virginity and/or motherhood. Feminist theologians[208] have critiqued how complementarity is an anthropology that sanctions the subjugation of women in both the Church and society. While this is true, it needs to be pushed further. The anthropology of gender complementarity involves more than the subjugation of women: it is the framework within which epistemic, physical, and sexual violence becomes possible.[209] Gender complementarity is the cross upon which the crucifixion of non-heteronormative subjects is justified. These are my contentions, and this chapter provides evidence for the validity of such claims; however, some groundwork must be completed prior to moving deeper into this argument. I begin then, with reference to the work of Todd A. Salzman and Michael G. Lawler, to help provide a clearer portrait of what gender complementarity is within the tradition of the Catholic Church.

The work of Salzman and Lawler is particularly helpful since they note that one can more accurately represent the concept of complementarity if one understands it as a concept constituted through many strands of "complementarity," which ultimately also find a common expression in gender complementarity. In short, there are distinctions that must be made between several complementarities, distinctions that Salzman and Lawler make clear. These distinctions, which are manifest within the tradition, each represent a particular valence of gender complementarity.

Salzman and Lawler provide helpful definitions of distinctions between two main types of complementarity, "biological complementarity," which has the sub-types of heterogenital and reproductive complementarities, and "personal complementarity,"

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[208] See especially the work of Rosemary Radford Ruether, Elizabeth A. Johnson, Elizabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza, and Margaret Farley.

[209] It may also be suggested that such violence not only becomes possible, but necessary.

which has the sub-types of communion, affective, and parental complementarities.[210] The first assumption operative in biological complementarity is that the human species is neatly divided between male and female.[211] Corollaries to this biological assumption are heterogenital and reproductive complementarities, with heterogenital complementarity assuming the "physically functioning male and female sexual organs (penis and vagina)," and that these perfectly functioning sexual organs be considered reproductive as their proper end. Thus the penis and vagina (along with the testes and sperm, ovaries and ova) are used in a manner fit for their end—biological reproduction.[212] Church documents on sexuality emphasize the physical, biological complementarity predicated both upon biblical and natural law traditions.

As Salzman and Lawler indicate, despite the Church's acceptance of historical-critical methodologies of interpretation of Scripture,[213] it persists in interpreting Genesis 1-3 in a "quasi-literal" way.[214] Thus, because God created them "male and female," and

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[210] Salzman and Lawler (2008), 144.

[211] Current scientific research has explicitly debunked the assumption that the human species can be neatly divided into sealed solely into male or female categories. Many members of the human species do not align within this unhelpful dichotomy, and indeed these features need to be understood along a spectrum, making the biological underpinnings of male/female complementarity insecure.

[212] Salzman and Lawler (2008), 144.

[213] Salzman and Lawler note that Pope Pius XII's 1943 encyclical *Divino afflante spiritu* established an important shift towards the acceptance of historical-critical methods of biblical scholarship. It showed not only an openness to new interpretations of Scripture, but an openness to accepting that Scripture is shaped by the historical particularities of its numerous authors. Pius XII's move began what was later consolidated in the methods embraced in the Second Vatican Council's *Gaudium et spes,* in which the Church explicitly placed itself into dialogue with the "modern world." See especially the Second Vatican Council's document, *Dei verbum.*

[214] I adopt this interpretation from the work of Salzman and Lawler who claim that a "quasi-literal interpretation" is deployed for certain aspects of the creation accounts in Gen 1-3, which are not taken literally, but the tradition can be vague. For example, the Catechism of the Catholic Church explicitly states that the Genesis account of the Fall of Humanity uses "figurative" language to express a real "primeval event," and it is acceptable to interpret Adam and Eve as non-historical characters that are more

subsequently ordered them to "be fruitful and multiply," biological complementarity, says the Church, is a vital part of the "natural" order of things. Aquinas defined the natural law as the ability of humans to participate in the divine law. As embedded in the natural order, humans through their rationality can come to understand the order of nature that the Creator intended, and submission to biological complementarity is one concrete way in which humans can participate in the plans of the divine.

This being the case, the Church continues to argue, human sexual acts[215] are strictly delimited between a married man and woman, and according to natural law must be expressed in a way that communicates an "openness to the transmission of life."[216] Thus biological complementarity necessitates not only virility, it also has "spatial requirements," in that "male orgasm must take place inside a woman's vagina in order to be considered good."[217]

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representatives of the human condition in their inclination to sin. At the same time, the creation and Fall narratives are central for the anthropology of the Church.

[215] An important distinction is made in Roman Catholic sexual ethics between sexual "acts" and "orientation," particularly in the context of homosexuality, where homosexual acts are deemed as gravely disordered while homosexual orientation has the potential at least to be a neutral "natural" state, if the homosexual person embraces the call to chastity that God has communicated to them through their sexual orientation.

[216] The "openness to the transmission of human life," is one of the most heavily cited statements from Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Humanae vitae (On the Regulation of Birth)*. The emphasis on the openness to the transmission of human life took on the necessity that *each and every sexual act* must be open to procreation, prohibiting not only artificial methods of contraception, but also all sexual acts that are not completed by men and women; it also insisted that all heterosexual acts must only be vaginal intercourse. Of course, there is a clear tension present in the teachings of the Catholic Church as they uphold both that each and every sex act be judged by its openness to human life, yet simultaneously allow (validly) married heterosexual couples to continue sexual relations with one another while utilizing the rhythm method as a form of contraception, where the intentions of the couple are clearly to avoid procreation. Also, most Catholic theologians and ethicists do not actually ascribe to the views on contraception in *Humanae vitae*, and the statistics that over 90% of Catholic couples across the globe have utilized an artificial method of birth control means that the faithful of the Church also choose to ignore this non-infallible teaching.

[217] Salzman and Lawler (2008), 144. Additionally, it is important to note that the emphasis on biological complementarity manifested in heterogenital and reproductive complementarities, coupled with the spatial requirements for orgasm, function to exclude all non-heterosexual acts and the use of artificial methods of birth control.

The second main type of complementarity, "personal complementarity," broken into the sub-types of "communion complementarity," "affective complementarity," and "parental complementarity"[218] continues along the same lines as biological complementarity noted above. Salzman and Lawler define "communion complementarity" as representing "the two-in-oneness within a heterogenital complementary marital relationship created and sustained by truly human sexual acts."[219] "Affective complementarity" is "the integrated psycho-affective, social, relational, and spiritual elements of the human person grounded in heterogenital complementarity."[220] Considering these complementarities in addition to biological complementarities, it is evident that Salzman and Lawler are drawing from within the procreative/unitive framework, which takes a prominent place in the tradition's discussions on proper sex acts, and the use of birth control, that governs sexual relations within the context of a marriage between a biological male and female. If biological complementarity, as described above, satisfies the "procreative" requirement of heterosexual marital acts, then communion and affective complementarities satisfy the "unitive" requirements of sexual acts. Thinking about complementarity in its personal dimensions may begin to create space for broadening the notion of complementarity[221] to include loving and just mutually

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[218] Ibid.

[219] Ibid., emphasis mine.

[220] Ibid.

[221] Salzman and Lawler do exactly this when they develop what they term "sexual orientation complementarity," which they define as "that innate personal dimension directing a person's sexual desires and energies and drawing him or her into deeper and more sexually intimate male-male, female-female, or male-female relationships, depending on whether the orientation is homosexual, bisexual, or heterosexual—fully integrates genital and personal complementarity," (66-67). With this, Salzman and Lawler are expanding both what can be considered natural sexuality and privileging affective/personal complementarity, thus enabling same-sex couples to be considered as participating in the natural law. Note that they are not deviating from the natural law framework, but, like other Catholic theologians and

committed sexual acts between partners, regardless of sex, gender, or sexuality;[222] however, for the Church such broadening cannot occur because even the personal complementarities are strictly defined as only possible between a heterogenital married couple.

That heterogenital marriage continues to be privileged even within personal complementarities is further evidenced in its third sub-type, which is "parental complementarity," where a heterosexual married couple capable and desiring of reproduction, "fulfill(s) the second dimension of reproductive complementarity, namely, the education of children."[223] This, of course, does not preclude the adoption of children, nor does it preclude the education of children within the context of a larger community. However, these are not emphasized precisely because the goal is to ensure that the "truth" of heterogenital complementarity be espoused.

The "truth" of heterogenital complementarities, which are the constitutive strands of "gender complementarity," is that to participate in what is termed "truly human" relationships, one must first be "truly human." So, what does it mean to be truly human in the Catholic tradition?

"Truly Human" and Gender Complementarity

There are several constitutive features that characterize the human person within Catholic anthropology. I argue that each component encompassing what is normatively

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ethicists, are adopting a revisionist natural law form of argumentation. Lisa Cahill and Margaret Farley tend towards the same forms of argumentation.

[222] See especially Margaret Farley's *Just Love: A Framework for Christian Sexual Ethics,* for a strong argument to attend more closely to the personal dimensions of complementarity absent the heterogenital requirements for "truly human" relationships.

[223] Salzman and Lawler (2008), 144.

human in the Catholic tradition is predicated upon a (hetero)normatively gendered dichotomy. I further contend that this gendered dichotomy delimits more than normative modes of sex, gender, and sexuality; it also creates categories of racialized and infantilized subjects.[224] To make this argument, I begin with the Church's explicit language surrounding the "true" nature of the human person and highlight how the nature of the human person is dichotomized into categories of male/female, masculine/feminine. I point to the ways that this dichotomy supports static conceptions of the human subject and how human dignity is reflected differently between male/female, supporting a hierarchizing of being.

The Church espouses the view that the human person is the "glory of God…come alive,"[225] as the person is the only creature God willed for God's self, is made in God's image and likeness, is inherently good, bears dignity, natural rights, and responsibilities, and has a distinctive capacity to love, and thus to promote the common good. Shawn Copeland summarizes the tenets of theological anthropology as follows: "(1) that human beings, created in the image and likeness of God (*imago dei*), have a distinct capacity for communion with God; (2) that human beings have a unique place in the cosmos God created; and (3) that human beings are made for communion with other living beings."[226] The radical beauty and uniqueness of the human person is informed by the narratives of creation, says the Church. John Paul II claims that in creation,

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[224] This aspect of my argument will become clearer in the next section that explicitly references the intersections of sexing, gendering, infantilizing, and racializing subjects.

[225] Charles E. Curran. *Catholic Social Teaching 1891-Present: A Historical, Theological, and Ethical Analysis*, (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2008), 129.

[226] M. Shawn Copeland, *Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race, and Being,* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010), 24.

> The revealed truth concerning man as 'the image and likeness' of God constitutes the immutable basis of all Christian anthropology. 'God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them' (Gen 1:27). This concise passage contains the fundamental anthropological truths: man is the highpoint of the whole order of creation in the visible world; the human race, which takes its origin from the calling into existence of man and woman, crowns the whole work of creation; both man and woman are human beings to an equal degree, both are created in God's image…What makes man like God is the fact that—unlike the whole world of other living creatures, including those endowed with senses (animalia)—man is also a rational being (animal rationale).[227]

One can immediately discern that John Paul II's description of the human person is based not only on the creation accounts of Genesis, but also on a Thomistic interpretation of the natural law. There are three distinctive levels, or precepts, of the natural law: the first is considered "general," as it applies to all of the created order and is ordered towards survival. As Aquinas notes, even the flower sensing the necessity of the sun for its survival will turn towards the sun in an effort to secure its continued existence. The second precept is also general, but to all animals, what John Paul II refers to as animalia, and is ordered towards procreation and the education of offspring. The third precept of the natural law is the only level that is distinctive to humans, animal rationale, and is ordered towards human reason that is inclined to sustain community, and bring about the common good.

Even within this natural law framework of the Church's teachings on the human person, the precept of the natural law that is argued to be distinctive to humans is not what is emphasized. The two general precepts, ordered towards survival, procreation, and education of offspring, instead claim a prominent role.[228] If one desires to argue from

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[227] John Paul II, *Mulieris dignitatem,* III.6.

[228] Salzman and Lawler make this claim as they critique the Church's tradition of complementarity as it relates to same-sex relationships and the use of birth control.

within the framework of the natural law, one may be inclined to critique that the articulation of the normative human person within the Church's teachings does not fully attend to that which is considered to be distinctively human. I do not wish to participate in this argument. What I do intend to indicate is that the Roman Catholic Church's anthropology claims that the imago dei is *only* reflected within the context of a male/female dichotomy, a dichotomy that is moreover structured within heteronormative assumptions of complementarity. To be "truly human" one must submit to one or other side of the male/female dichotomy that was divinely ordained in the created order. If one is not male or female, one is reduced to the status of an object, a thing, occupying a precarious undocumented space of "itness" in the human community.[229]

Submission to the so-called natural order of things by occupying the male or female binary is not just about sex. It is also about gender since in the anthropology of the Church there is a one-to-one correlation between sex and gender.[230] Thus maleness is directly associated with masculinity, while femaleness is directly associated with femininity. Indeed, masculinity and femininity are manifested as "natural" virtues; there is no other alternative. This helps to explain why "gender complementarity" is meant to indicate the complementary nature of males and females.

Pope Benedict XVI's, then Cardinal Ratzinger's, Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Collaboration of Men and Women in the Church and in the World, functions as a primary example of how the definition of the human person is most

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[229] What I mean by the role of "it," or the space of 'itness" will become clearer later in this chapter.

[230] See especially the work of Rosemary Radford Ruether and Elizabeth Johnson. Both theologians theorize how the male/female dichotomy ultimately prescribes particular gender roles (masculine, feminine).

fully represented in the Catholic anthropology of gender complementarity.[231] This letter, written as a response to the errors associated with feminist fervor, makes a point to reinforce the traditional anthropology of the Church, and, in doing so, re-emphasizes the purportedly appropriate ordering of men and women, masculinity and femininity, in relation to one another.[232]

> In order to avoid the domination of one sex or the other, their differences tend to be denied, viewed as mere effects of historical and cultural conditioning. In this perspective, physical difference, termed sex, is minimized, while the purely cultural element, termed gender, is emphasized to the maximum and held to be primary…this *theory of the human person*, intended to promote prospects for equality of women through liberation from biological determinism, has in reality inspired ideologies which, for example, call into question the family, its natural two-parent structure of mother and father, and make homosexuality and heterosexuality virtually equivalent, in a new model of polymorphous sexuality.[233]

"Theories of the human person," such as those arising from feminists, according to Ratzinger are not only wrong but potentially lead to ideologies that threaten to dismantle the beautiful aspects of *being human* represented only within the male/female heterosexual relationship. Ratzinger then reiterates the traditional conception of the human person as male/female as he notes that, "from the very beginning therefore, humanity is described as articulated in the male-female relationship…this is the humanity, sexually differentiated, which is explicitly declared 'the image of God'."[234]

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[231] This letter, as part of the tradition of the Church, consistently refers to Scripture and encyclicals, such as *Mulieris dignitatum (On the Dignity and Vocation of Women),* to ground its claims.

[232] See also: *Casti connubii; Familiaris consortio; Redemptoris mater; On Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics.*

[233] Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith. *Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Collaboration of Men and Women in the Church and in the World,* 2004, I.2, emphasis mine.

[234] Ibid., II.5.

In attempting to call into question the ontological necessity of maleness/femaleness, many people have cited Galatians, "For all of you who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ…there is neither male nor female" (Galatians 3:27-28). Yet, Ratzinger makes clear that this text does not mean that the "distinction between man and woman, which in other places is referred to the plan of God, has been erased."[235] Instead, Ratzinger argues that it is the "enmity and violence" produced by the first sin that has been overcome, and thus the distinction between men and women "is reaffirmed more than ever."[236] This sexually differentiated character of humanity is an ontological pre-condition to participate in a distinctively human capacity to love: "This capacity to love—reflection and image of God who is Love—is disclosed in the spousal character of the body, in which the masculinity or femininity of the person is expressed."[237]

To experience the "truly human" capacity to love, one must be "truly human," that is—male/masculine or female/feminine. This assumption is important for a few reasons. The first is that the tradition is not only establishing the distinctive normative aspects of being man and woman. Insofar as there is an undeniable—because natural—relationship between masculinity and maleness, femininity and femaleness, and, indeed there is a one-to-one correlation in complementarity, this letter is as much about sex as gender, as much about gender as sexuality. So maleness/masculinity and femaleness/femininity have particular "natural" virtues associated with them, which,

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[235] Ibid., II. 12.

[236] Ibid.

[237] Ibid., II.8.

since embedded in the created order, allegedly cannot be denied. We all know the supposed distinctive virtues of the masculine and feminine. Masculine virtue is authoritative, active, strong-willed, and rational, fit for movement in the public realm. Feminine virtue is an unceasing openness to the other, passive, and emotional, fit for movement within the private realm.[238]

Feminist scholars have discussed at length the fact that sexual di-morphism is not as harmless, or romantic, as many would like it to seem. This binary, arising historically out of pre-modern assumptions that, in the teachings of the Catholic Church were couched within a natural law framework that assumed maleness as the norm of humanity, then took on the characteristics of binaries common to modern thought, which further necessitate a hierarchical ordering between the sexes.[239] These categories are considered to be "discrete and mutually exclusive," and this "politics of modernity…supported a myriad of exclusive and oppressive practices."[240] Postcolonial theorist Gayatri Spivak is clear that such categorical divisiveness tends to point to a "hidden ethico-political agenda that drives the differentiation of the two."[241] This agenda delimits who counts as human, and dictates what kinds of characteristics and actions are reflective of *human being.* To become human according to these categories that lack fluidity and deny multiplicity, one must accept super-ordination or subordination. This binary functions to dictate the whole of humanity; it defines what it means to be human.

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[238] See especially the work of Elizabeth A. Johnson on gender complementarity.

[239] Some examples include: white/non-white, heaven/earth, ability/disability, heterosexual/homosexual, same/other, West/East, rich/poor, etc.

[240] Catherine Keller, Michael Nausner, and Mayra Rivera, eds., *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire* (St. Louis, Missouri: Chalice Press, 2004), 11.

[241] Ibid.

Whosoever, or perhaps more accurately, whatsoever, may fall outside this schematic is relegated to a sub-human status. Pope John Paul II's encyclical letter, *Mulieris dignitatem*, states:

> It has already been said that this description, indeed this definition of the person, corresponds to the fundamental biblical truth about the creation of the human being-man and woman-in the image and likeness of God. This is not a purely theoretical interpretation, nor an abstract definition, for it gives an essential indication of what it means to be human, while emphasizing the value of the gift of the self, the gift of the person.[242]

Benedict XVI adds:

> Male and female are thus revealed as *belonging ontologically to creation* and destined therefore *to outlast the present time,* evidently in a transfigured form. In this way, they characterize the "love that never ends" (*1 Cor* 13:8), although the temporal and earthly expression of sexuality is transient and ordered to a phase of life marked by procreation and death… From the first moment of their creation, man and woman are distinct, and will remain so for all eternity. Placed within Christ's Paschal mystery, they no longer see their difference as a source of discord to be overcome by denial or eradication, but rather as the possibility for collaboration, to be cultivated with mutual respect for their difference. From here, new perspectives open up for a deeper understanding of the dignity of women and their role in human society and in the Church.[243]

The truly human person in these represents one of only two possible categories of being that are metaphysical, not historical. These aspects of truly human persons, ontologically dichotomized but belonging to one another, inform an understanding of the respective differences between the dignity of the male and female.

The dignity of woman is associated with her unique virtues, which feminism has attempted to deny. But, according to the tradition of the Church, there is no denying this

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[242] John Paul II, *Mulieris dignitatem (On the Dignity and Vocation of Women)*, August 1988, VI.18; emphasis original.

[243]Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *A Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church On the Collaboration of Men and Women in the Church and in the World,* (2004), II.12.

special virtue, or that women are perfected only in their submission to their distinctive virtues and their relations to men.

In his Letter to Families, John Paul II, writing about the "primordial duality" of the male and female, explicitly notes that such duality supports "equal dignity"—but that men and women manifest that dignity in and through their distinctive virtues. He claims that "this specific dignity reveals the qualities of the common good of humanity: communion and complementarity," which are the origins of society.[244] Further, "without this truth, the life of the spouses and of the family will not succeed in attaining a fully human meaning."[245] Both men and women as individuals, and as heterosexual couples, must exercise their distinctively gendered virtues to be human. John Paul II makes clear that to do otherwise is errant.

In his discussion on the Mary-Eve dichotomy, John Paull II indicates that it was the first sin that dictated the distinctiveness and relationship between men and women for all time. He notes that the Genesis passage that asserts "he shall rule over you (Gen 3:16)," part of the punishment meted out by God after the first sin, while it can be contested, "must not under any condition lead to the 'masculinization' of women."[246]

> In the name of liberation from male 'domination,' women must not appropriate to themselves male characteristics contrary to their own female 'originality.' There is a well-founded fear that if they take this path, women will not reach fulfillment but instead will deform and lose what constitutes their essential richness.[247]

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[244] John Paul II, *Gratissimam sane (Letter to Families),* 1994, I.6. The idea that complementarity is the foundation of society is extremely important when assessing the social tradition of the Catholic Church. Thus, this concept will be one of the foci in the next chapter.

[245] Ibid., I.9.

[246] JPII, *Mulieris dignitatem,* IV.10.

[247] Ibid., original emphasis.

I contend that this "deformity" refers directly to the "de-humanization" of women, and all subjects who do not align with this frame, precisely because they have "refused" to participate in a divinely created natural order of things. Both the binary and the heteronormativity that this "natural" dichotomous ordering of creation assumes and prescribes are problematic. Heterosexuality becomes the only legitimate expression of human sexuality. The hermetic categories refuse the multiplicity of being and deny that those falling outside this framework can participate in truly human acts, which include the gift of the self. The anthropological frame manifests as a politics of knowledge that is both geographical and bodily.

We find many subjects elided within this anthropological framework. All these elided non-heteronormative beings are indocumentad@, erased by the restrictive normative meanings of "woman" and "humanity." *L@s indocumentad@s*, deemed as occupying a sub-human status, find themselves within a dangerous site of vulnerability. In the introduction to this dissertation, I referenced the work of Ervin Staub, one scholar that claims that the act of dehumanization is in itself violent and is often one of the first steps taken on a pathway to the justification of annihiliation.[248] I further argued that analysis through the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender helps us to understand more about what this means, and to reflect more thoroughly on the implications of such claims because they draw attention to the precarious space of the colonial difference, a space where the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender is enacted. For this reason, the insights of decolonial feminist María Lugones are highly

[248] See relevant literature on the tactics used in war, where soldiers are often trained to think of "enemies" as non-, or sub-human. Relegation to sub-human status means that these individuals are no longer considered to be a part of the human moral community. They do not have rights. It is easier to justify violence and killing when the subjects at stake are not subjects at all, but objects fit for destruction.

relevant when assessing what, or who, the theological anthropology of the Church argues is normatively human.[249]

"Male and Female They Created Them:" Coloniality of Gender and Roman Catholic Anthropology

Lugones' conception of the coloniality of gender allows an in-depth analysis of the anthropology of gender complementarity. Lugones' further reflections on the coloniality of power and being bring gender more explicitly into the purview of decolonial critique. One may recall that the lens of the coloniality of gender reveals that a constitutive aspect of the colonial difference is sexual di-morphism. Lugones argues that this hierarchical dichotomy was critical to the subjectification of the colonized. According to Lugones, the process of the colonized becoming human required first, "Christian baptism" and, second, "submission to the heteronormative gender schematic."[250] The colonized only became full persons and true Christians when they became gendered: to become "man" or "woman" was to become human.[251] She argues that, "the priests and the church overtly presented their mission as transforming the colonized animals into human beings through conversion."[252]

The assignment of male/female, masculine/feminine identities was a central characteristic of the colonization of Latin America and the Caribbean.

> Indigenous peoples of the Americas and enslaved Africans were understood as not human, as animals, as monstrously and aberrantly sexual, wild. The dichotomous gender distinction became a mark of civilization: Only the civilized

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[249] María Lugones. "Methodological Notes Towards a Decolonial Feminism," in *Decolonizing Epistemologies: Latina/o Theology and Philosophy,* 72.

[250] Ibid.

[251] Ibid.

[252] Ibid., 73.

> are men or women. The European bourgeois man is a subject, fit for rule, for the public, a being of civilization, heterosexual, Christian, a being of mind and reason. The European bourgeois woman is not his complement, but the one who reproduces race and capital. This is tightly bound to her sexual purity, passivity, home-boundedness.[253]

Lugones is arguing that for colonizers gender was only relevant in regards to human persons. Since the indigenous and African slaves were deemed to be sub-human and animalistic, they needed to become gendered. However, even once gendered, this did not presuppose an equality between the sexes/genders. The modern heteronormative subject remains the norm of humanity and females exist as the helpmate of the normative center—ensuring that the race continues on.

What becomes apparent is that in the colonial encounter masculine/male and feminine/female the colonizers created them. The politics of the episteme marginalizes along the lines of gender/sexuality/sex as well as race. Indeed, though the colonized men became "men," they were continuously constructed as feminine—sexually passive compared to the virulent masculinity of the colonizers.

> What has been understood as the femininization of colonized men seems rather a gesture of humiliation, attributing sexual passivity to the threat of rape. This tension between hypersexuality and sexual passivity defines one of the domains of masculine subjection of the colonized.[254]

So, while it was understood that the colonized needed to become male and female/masculine and feminine, that is, human, it was also understood that the darker skinned indigenous man could not approximate the masculinity of the European colonizer. As Miguel De La Torre notes, the structures of colonization and patriarchy, aspects of the workings of the colonial matrix of power "projects unto (the) 'darker'

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[253] Ibid.

[254] Ibid., 74.

Other the position occupied by women regardless of the Other's gender…[C]olonization becomes a form of sexism, the domestication of the indigenous male Other as woman."[255] The operative logics construct an understanding of dichotomous human nature as male and female, but with the female/feminine form representing a negation of the totality of being. The very humanity of those who did and do not approximate the (hetero)normative center was, and continues to be, called into question. So long as this question remains alive, the bodily integrity of these subjects is at stake. Akin to beasts, they are violable, exploitable, and dispensable. Their humanity, and their salvation, requires submission to an unceasing epistemological violence that forces the fragmentation of the self.

> The civilizing transformation justified the colonization of memory and this of one's sense of self, intersubjective relations, and the relation to the spirit world, to land, to the very fabric of one's conception of reality, identity, social, ecological, and cosmological organization.[256]

Colonization went beyond the physical aspects of dominion over land. It inherently shifted the ways that individuals understood themselves, their cultures, and their relationships to one another. In other words, in the colonial encounter both knowledge and bodies were subjugated. This meant that whole peoples were forced into a crisis of identity as they experienced the cruel working of the colonizer—the enslavement, the rape, the murder—and the necessity that they undergo erasure to secure their own existence. While of course this story is about gender, it is equally about race. As noted above, Lugones contends that racialization and gendering were equally colonial impositions, placing the "darker" gendered colonized, that is the racially gendered, at the

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[255] Miguel De La Torre, "Beyond Machismo: A Cuban Case Study," in *Sexuality and the Sacred: Sources for Theological Reflection*, Marvin M. Ellison and Kelly Brown Douglas, eds., 2nd Edition, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), 226-227.

[256] Lugones, (2012), 74.

sub-ontological, or colonial difference. Thus, both the assumptions of race and gender, co-constitutive in the colonial matrix of power, must be resisted.

The constitutive elements and assumptions about human being in the world articulated through Roman Catholic anthropology of gender complementarity, are not simply about sex, and gender, but also establish a racialized (hetero)normative subject. The constructions of the Other, whether because of sex, gender, sexuality, or race as inferior continues to play a vital role in maintaining the (hetero)normative subject. The maintenance of the "Other" as other hinges upon continuing dehumanization wherein one does not associate the "Other" as within their own moral community. When such an exclusion from the human moral community occurs, violence in its many forms can easily become acceptable, if not warranted.

A reading of the documents of the tradition through the conceptual frameworks of the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender shows that, even with the "romantic feminism" at work, there is epistemic violence being committed. Such epistemic violence often, leads to or permits physical and sexual violence.

> There are forms of knowledge that, even if they are well intended and appear innocent, continue to maintain an intellectual hierarchy and cognitive inequality…furthermore, we recognize the importance of words; there are words that engender life and words that engender death…[thus] along with other interpretative strategies, the hermeneutics of lament continues to be a liberating key to our bodies…as an epistemological locus, our suffering is important.[257]

The Church's teachings on gender and sexuality consistently deploy words, theories and concepts that engender an understanding of the heteronormative anthropological subject that can be death dealing for women (and any others) who happen to fall outside of this

[257] Maricel Mena-Lopez and Maria Pilar Aquino, "Feminist Intercultural Theology: Religion, Culture, Feminism, and Power, in *Feminist Intercultural Theology: Latina Explorations for a Just World*, Maria Pilar Aquino and Maria Jose Rosado-Nunes, eds. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), xx-xxii.

framework. If their suffering is important, and it is, we must begin to listen to their laments.

Thus we must turn to the true text, that is, the lives and deaths of those who suffer as a result of such ideological constructions, to understand that there are real effects. As Walter Mignolo puts it, one must be "epistemically disobedient," and produce knowledge from the colonial difference. By doing so one can begin to affirm the importance of space, and bodies in relation to that space, in the politics of knowledge production. In essence the spatial metaphor of the "border" describes a particular epistemology and consciousness. Here, I return to the work of Gloria Anzaldúa, whose development of a border consciousness, I contended, affirms the fact that knowledge production can, and should, begin with the hermeneutical laments of the resident bodies of the colonial difference. This means that our analyses of the theological anthropology of the Catholic Church must enable an epistemological privilege to those most marginalized, those undocumented, in the tradition. Privileging the space of the colonial difference it thus an exercise in epistemic humility and an attempt at solidarity with these communities. Some scholars, even if not explicitly framing their work in this way, have already begun to privilege the space of the colonial difference, have already begun to bring their voices to bear on dominant social and theological imaginaries.

The work of Latin@ Catholic theologian Nancy Pineda-Madrid offers us one example. Her works provide a privileged glimpse at some of the realities of maintaining a heteronormative hierarchical theological anthropology, such as gender complementarity.[258] As she reflects upon the pervasive mutilation, rape, and murder of

[258] Nancy Pineda-Madrid does not use the terminology of "colonial difference." This is my use of the term based upon my reading of what she is doing in her text.

girls and women—also known as the "feminicide"— that occurs in Juárez, Pineda-Madrid is careful to indicate that this is not simply a matter that these are women and girls—but that they are *brown women* and *girls,* and that they are also economically destitute.

In her text she tells the story of María Sagrario González Flores, a seventeen-year-old impoverished girl, employed at a maquiladora in Juárez. Pineda-Madrid notes that the poverty of the González family "forced them to live…in a one-room home thrown together with tar paper and wood, a home without running water."[259] In April of 1998, Sagrario did not return home after her shift as she normally would. Her father searched for her, first at the maquiladora plant, then at the downtown jail. While at the jail, her father beseeched the police to begin looking for his missing daughter. Their response was to patronize and scoff at him; the police suggested that his daughter had probably "run off with her boyfriend."[260] Sagrario's father and brother began to search for her themselves, gathering neighbors in the community to help them find her, but to no avail. Pineda-Madrid reports that after several weeks of searching for Sagrario, her family learned that the body of a young woman had been discovered in a desert area. Her mother made the journey to the police station, when it was confirmed to her, through seeing her daughter's body "clothed with a company smock with the name Sagrario embroidered on it…(that) the murdered girl was indeed Sagrario."[261]

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[259] Nancy Pineda-Madrid. *Suffering and Salvation in Cuidad Juárez,* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2011), 13.

[260] Ibid., 14.

[261] Ibid.

Pineda-Madrid describes the circumstances surrounding Sagrario's mutilation and murder:

> She had been stabbed five times and strangled. Police thought that Sagrario had also likely been raped, but her body was too decomposed for them to make a definitive judgment. To add further torment to the González family's anguish, the police claimed that Sagrario was murdered while living a doble vida ('double life'), earning a second salary selling herself as a prostitute to Juárez men…[262]

Of course, the accusations of law enforcement were absurd; however, such accusations are common, and promote a "blame the victim" mentality. The accusation was a way to claim that if Sagrario had been acting as a "decent" woman, she never would have met this gruesome fate. Since she was acting outside of the boundaries of what was decent for women to do, her fate was understandable and justifiable.

Sagrario's is not the only story of its kind. In fact, Pineda-Madrid speaks of the killing of women in Juárez as rampant, systematic, and ritualistic, with bodies being similarly tortured and murdered in a manner only justifiable within a misogynistic cultural context that embraces the (hetero)normative subject. She describes common characteristics of the ritualistic killings of these girls:

> Not only were these girls and young women brutally murdered, but also, several of their bodies revealed a severed right breast and left nipple bitten off. Other bodies were dismembered. Still others revealed a triangle carved into their backs with a knife or other sharp object…in at least one case, a woman's vagina was penetrated with a knife and then cut up into pieces; her mouth was cut up as well, both carved to resemble a 'flower.' Bodies of victims were left in public places as if to make an intentional and politically embarrassing statement.[263]

Some may claim that the Church would clearly denounce any such horrific and tragic acts. This I cannot deny, but it misses the point. The question is not whether the Church would denounce the physical and sexual torture sustained by the women of

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[262] Ibid.

[263] Ibid.

Juárez, but upon what grounds they can denounce such treatment. Can the Church simultaneously uphold sexual di-morphism and cry for justice for these, and any other, women, children, and sexual minorities? I suggest that it cannot. The very episteme is predicated upon a violent male/female, masculine/feminine binary that is also racialized, and prescribes unequal treatment and exercise of power across the dividing line. The Church cannot preach peace and justice for these girls and young women precisely because as brown and women they do not closely enough approximate the normative human person in the anthropological construction of gender complementarity.

These women are indocumentad@ in the tradition, fragmented by the exercise of power at the site of the colonial difference.

> In fact, the various feminicides in Mexico make evident the exercise of power across the social spectrum: the power of the state over civil society; the rich over the poor; the white elite over racialized people; the old over the young; men over women. The feminicides constitute a novel kind of "dirty war," one waged by multiple forces against disposable female bodies. The women targeted in these unprecedented border feminicides represent the "stigmatized bodies," those "marked for death in drug wars and urban violence…" Feminicide in Juárez exposes the reality of overlapping power relations on gendered and racialized bodies as much as it clarifies the degree to which violence against women has been naturalized as a method of social control.[264]

The dirty war over and against these stigmatized bodies finds justification in kyriarchal[265] ideologies that sanction the subjugation of women and sexual minorities. How can the Church begin to cry out for justice when the epistemology and anthropology grounding the tradition's teachings on gender and sexuality is inherently violent and prescriptive of such heinous treatment of them?

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[264] Ibid. Emphasis mine.

[265] I use the term kyriarchy following Nancy Pineda-Madrid's use of the term. Kyriarchy is a term used heavily by Elizabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza. It is meant to broaden the concept of patriarchy to include racial and class oppression in addition to oppression along the lines of sex.

Thus far, I have only implicitly addressed the ways that sexual minorities are affected by such an epistemology and anthropology. Now I must turn to this explicitly. What of those who transgress the borders established by the norms of sexuality and gender? What about the transgendered in the LGBTQI community? Can the Church speak justice for this community, or does it also perpetuate their oppression? The pastoral letter, "On the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons" can begin to give us some insights into whether the anthropology of gender complementarity also inhibits making justice claims for those in the LGBTQI community.

This letter was written specifically to address questions about the nature of homosexual orientation and acts that had arisen since the production of the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith's (CDF's) 1976 Declaration on Certain Questions of Sexual Ethics. In particular, the CDF explicitly wished to address what they determined to be "an overly benign interpretation (that) was given to the homosexual condition itself," and correct those that had gone "so far as to call it (the homosexual condition) neutral, or even good."[266] Due to the orientation/acts distinction so prominent in the Catholic tradition, that speaks to the evil involved in participation in homosexual acts—because not heterosexual, oriented towards procreation, or in the context of marriage— the CDF is invested in clarifying that forgoing participation in homosexual acts does not free the homosexual from participation in evil.

> Although the particular inclination of the homosexual person is not a sin, it is a more or less strong tendency toward an intrinsic moral evil; and thus the inclination itself must be seen as an objective disorder. Therefore special concern and pastoral attention should be directed toward those who have this condition,

[266] Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, *Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church On the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons),* No. 3.

> lest they be led to believe that the living out of this orientation in homosexual activity is a morally acceptable option. It is not.[267]

While having a homosexual orientation does not place one within the same category of evil as one who participates in homosexual acts, it should still be clear that this supposed disorder does position one in such a way that one is more likely to participate in intrinsically evil moral acts (same-sex sexual activity). Since a non-heterosexual orientation leaves one vulnerable to grave moral sin and, since, non-heteronormative persons may "naturally" find it difficult to enact "proper" expressions of subjectivity (meaning those drawn out along the lines of the hegemonic discursive construction of the male/female dichotomy, which in turn construct proper objects for desire), the Church is intent upon offering life advice for non-heteronormative persons:

> Fundamentally (homosexuals) are *called to enact the will of God in their life by joining whatever sufferings and difficulties they experience in virtue of their condition to the sacrifice of the Lord's cross*. That Cross, for the believer, is a fruitful sacrifice since from that death come life and redemption…[This] is easily misunderstood, however, if it is merely seen as a pointless effort at self-denial. The Cross is a denial of self, but in service to the will of God himself who makes life come from death and empowers those who trust him to practice virtue in place of vice…*To refuse to sacrifice one's own will in obedience to the will of the Lord is effectively to prevent salvation*. Just as the Cross was central to the expression of God's redemptive love for us in Jesus, so *the conformity of the self-denial of homosexual men and women with the sacrifice of the Lord will constitute for a them a source of self-giving which will save them from a way of life which constantly threatens to destroy them*. Christians who are homosexual are called, as all of us are, to a chaste life.[268]

Here, the tradition is much less romantic. To refuse to submit to the divine natural order of things is to refuse salvation. Non-heteronormative subjects, it says, are disordered, and

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[267] Ibid.

[268] Ibid., No. 12. Emphasis mine.

must undergo a fragmentation and subjugation of their subjectivity in order to approach the normative, salvific, center.

Shawn Copeland, also reflecting on the above passage with special attention to the fact that homosexual persons are asked to sacrifice their very being in order to align themselves properly within the tradition of the Church, notes that "homosexual acts are deemed contrary to the natural law, and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* declares that such acts 'close the sexual act to the gift of life [and] do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity'."[269] To act according to their desires is to "confirm within themselves a disordered sexual inclination which is essentially self-indulgent…(and is) contrary to the creative wisdom of God."[270] To this point Copeland responds:

> The condition of homosexuality constitutes a transgression that approximates ontological status. Can the (artificial) distinction between orientation and act (really) be upheld? What are gays and lesbians to do with their bodies, their selves?[271]

These desires and bodies are understood as deviant, perverse, "and since their bodies have been conceived of as inherently inferior or violent, they must be constantly subdued or civilized, which requires renewed acts of conquest and colonization.[272] This is what Maldonado-Torres claims are the logics underlying the "death ethics of war,"[273] and

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[269] M. Shawn Copeland, (2010), 74.

[270] CDF, *On the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons,* no. 7.

[271] M. Shawn Copeland, (2010), 75.

[272] Nelson Maldonado-Torres, *Against War: Views from the Underside of Modernity*, (Durham& London: Duke University Press), 219.

[273] Ibid.

the bodies of non-heteronormative beings are the battlefields upon which these wars are enacted. If we look at this ongoing war from the place of the colonial difference, we find:

> An 18-year-old gay man from Texas allegedly slain by a classmate who feared a sexual advance. A 31-year-old transgender woman from Pennsylvania found dead with a pillowcase around her head. A 24-year-old lesbian from Florida purportedly killed by her girlfriend's father, who disapproved of the relationship…[274]

And there are many, many more, such as the April 2010 assault against Colle Carpenter, a transgendered graduate student at California State University of Long Beach, who was approached by a man inside of a campus restroom asking him whether he was, indeed, Colle Carpenter. When Colle affirmed that he was, the assailant "pulled Carpenter's t-shirt over his head, pushed him into the stall and used a sharp object to carve "It" into Carpenter's chest."[275]

Using the lenses of the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender to assess the Church's teachings on gender and sexuality informs us that Colle Carpenter's assailant was not alone in carving "It" onto his chest. The body politics of the Church tradition, grounded as it is in an epistemology and anthropology predicated upon the norms of coloniality, also carves his flesh with "It," and that of other non-heteronormative subjects too. The Roman Catholic theological imaginary only allots space for (hetero)normative subjects. All others are labeled "it" in the name of the divinely created order.

Many may resist my contentions, claiming that surely the tradition of the Church would never advocate for physical and sexual violence against these subjects. And again,

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[274] Lee Romney, "Hate Crimes Against Gay, Transgender People Rise, Report Says," in *The Los Angeles Times*. July 13, 2011.

[275] Philip Zonkel. "Hate Crime Victim Works to Overcome Trauma," in *The Press Telegram,* May 5, 2010.

I concede. In fact, the Church has explicitly denounced such "deplorable acts," and has continued to assert that regardless of sexual orientation, "intrinsic dignity must always be respected."[276]

> It is deplorable that homosexual persons have been and are the object of violent malice in speech or in action. Such treatment deserves condemnation from the Church's pastors wherever it occurs. It reveals a kind of disregard for others which endangers the most fundamental principles of a healthy society. The intrinsic dignity of each person must always be respected in word, in action and in law.

The institutional Church does not *explicitly* support these heinous acts, but its epistemology and anthropology based within the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender *implicitly* does.

> But the proper reaction to crimes committed against homosexual persons should not be to claim that the homosexual condition is not disordered. When such a claim is made and when homosexual activity is consequently condoned, or when civil legislation is introduced to protect behavior to which no one has any conceivable right, neither the Church nor society at large should be surprised when other distorted notions and practices gain ground, and irrational and violent reactions increase.[277]

Notice how this Church document simultaneously denounces the violence, while justifying its existence since non-heteronormative anthropological beings are acting in ways that "no one has any conceivable right to." They have no conceivable right to act this way because it is not a true expression of what it is to be human. In essence, they have dehumanized themselves by their actions and in doing so have relinquished the rights to bodily integrity that only comes through "truly human" human dignity. What

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[276] Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith. "*On the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons."* (October 1986); No. 10.

[277] Ibid.

becomes evident is that the Church is supporting crucial aspects of the colonial matrix of power, particularly in its assertions related to gender and sexuality.

If it is not yet apparent, let me state it more boldly: (hetero)sexuality is necessary for the maintenance of the colonial matrix of power. The matrix of power feeds off heteronormative subjects as well as off the suffering of non-heteronormative beings.

> Empire entices and intimidates *ordinary* subjects, and perhaps especially, its most wretched subjects, to react to gay and lesbian people with panic, loathing, and violence…empire permits its *privileged* subjects to respond with curiosity, experimentation, and tokenism…in empire, self-disclosure and self-disclosive acts by gay and lesbian people are penalized by repression, expulsion, and sometimes death.[278]

So, we must be disgusted by the way that Colle Carpenter's assailant assaulted Colle's body and dignity, because he perceived Colle as deviant and perverse, yet, we should not be surprised that he was assaulted in this way because in the eyes of the Church Colle Carpenter's acts and identity *were* perverse. In the eyes of the Church, what other kind of reality can we expect when these (sub)human beings act outside of the divinely created order of reality?

Citing Stephen J. Pope's observations on the magisterial teachings on homosexuality, Shawn Copeland writes that the teachings,

> (a)t least tacitly, if not explicitly, [are] liable to be used to support exactly the kinds of unjust discrimination that the Church has repeatedly condemned. Describing someone's sexual identity as 'gravely disordered' would seem to arouse suspicion, mistrust, and alienation…One can understand why observers conclude that the magisterium's teaching about homosexuality stands in tension with its affirmation that each gay person is created in the *imago Dei*.[279]

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[278] M. Shawn Copeland, (2010), 74.

[279] Ibid., 77.

I would contend that to describe the church's teachings on homosexuality (and women) as "in tension" with the overall affirmation that all persons are created in the image and likeness of God is too gracious. Human dignity is grounded in this image and likeness, but human dignity is texturized in particular ways. That is, human beings are only understood as such when they conform to the heteronormative subject within the teachings of the Church. Within this epistemological framework, subjects who do not conform can only be perceived as less than human, "(anti)bodies,"[280] as "it."

When the Church is talking about justice for humans subjected to such violent abuse, can it really claim to be speaking for a community that is indocumentad@, because non-heteronormative, in its own documents? Can any community that has implicitly or explicitly supported the coloniality of power and its body politics claim to be authentically resisting the violence perpetuated against women and sexual minorities?

Conclusion

This chapter began with the contention that the "private" teachings on gender and sexuality of the Roman Catholic Church are based within the (hetero)normative subject that is in turn constructed within the Church's anthropology of gender complementarity. I further argued that the epistemology and anthropology that gender complementarity represents aids in the creation of categories of undocumented subjectivit(ies), *l@s indocumentad@s*, that are marginalized relative to the normative discursive construction of human being within the Roman Catholic theological imaginary. *L@s indocumentad@s* occupy a sub-human space at the colonial difference, a space that opens them to, and sanctions, physical and sexual violence. I turned to specific stories of tragedy and violence that directly evidence the real life effects of sustaining the (hetero)normative

[280] Ibid., 76.

anthropological subject, noting that within the theological imaginary of the Roman Catholic Church one can only *be* male/masculine, female/feminine, or "it." Through the lens of the coloniality of gender, I highlighted how complementarity is not only about sex and gender, but also about creating a normative subject that is white, male, heterosexual, class privileged, and older. That is, one either is male *or* female along with the other constitutive features of the (hetero)normative subject or one lacks being, occupying the space of "itness."

I claimed that though the Church would denounce physical and sexual violence against the bodies at the colonial difference, that the anthropology of gender complementarity leaves them no ground within which to stake these claims. This becomes particularly problematic when one considers the tradition of Catholic Social Teachings (CST), the "social morality" of the Church.

I ended this chapter by asking whether any community that has implicitly or explicitly supported the coloniality of power and its body politics can claim to be authentically resisting the violence perpetuated against women and sexual minorities. I contend that the answer is no, they cannot. The next chapter explores how this claim should trouble those working in the tradition of CST, which assumes the (hetero)normative anthropological subject revealed in this chapter. If CST also implicitly supports the coloniality of power through its conception of the human person, can it continue to stake claims for social justice and the securing of human rights for all persons?

Chapter 4

L@s Indocumentad@s in the Tradition of Catholic Social Thought

From this point forward it will be necessary to keep in mind that the main thread, and, in a certain sense… *of all the church's social doctrine, is a correct view of the human person* and of his unique value, inasmuch as 'man…is the only creature on earth which God willed for itself.' God has imprinted his own image and likeness on man (cf. Gen. 1:26), conferring upon him an *incomparable dignity*…(JPII, *Centesimus annus,* no. 11) (Emphasis mine).

Catholic Social Thought (CST) is characterized as a body of teachings that engage with the signs of the times to address pressing social, economic, and political issues of the world today. While faithful to the continuity of the tradition, CST underwent significant shifts in both its theological and ethical methodology at the time of the Second Vatican Council. Prior to Vatican II, CST was better known as Catholic Social Doctrine[281], a collection of church teachings that, while reflecting upon the particularities of the signs of the times, utilized a classicist theo-ethical methodology deeply entrenched in neoscholastic natural law theory where "nature" participates in the eternal, divine law and has the characteristics of "universality and unchangeableness."[282] Methodologically, solutions for modern problems, such as the dignity of work and the natural right to private property, were deduced from the "top-down" based upon an interpretation of

[281] Not every pope since Vatican II has avoided the term "social doctrine." For example, during his papacy, John Paul II's social encyclicals do explicitly reference the social doctrine of the Church and not its social teaching. This was likely a reactionary move on John Paul II's part since the embrace of the term followed the publication of French Dominican Marie-Dominique Chenu's text *The "Social Doctrine" of the Church as Ideology."* In this text Chenu indicated that the change over time in Catholic Social Doctrine evidenced a discontinuity rather than a continuity of the tradition's methodologies in addressing social issues. According to Curran, this led John Paul II to step back from using too much historical consciousness in his encyclicals and "revive the term 'social doctrine'." (Curran, *Catholic Social Teaching: 1891-Present*, pg. 64.)

[282] Charles E. Curran. *Catholic Social Teaching 1891-Present: A Historical, Theological, and Ethical Analysis,* (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 54.

universal principles.[283] Due to the assumed universality of natural law principles, without acknowledgment that the "world for (them) was primarily Eurocentric," and with no regard to the particularities of time, place, or culture, solutions were prescribed for the whole world. The hierarchical documents produced from Pope Leo XIII's promulgation of *Rerum novarum* in 1891 to Pope John XXIII's promulgation of *Pacem in terris*, exemplify this methodological approach in Catholic Social Doctrine.[284]

This chapter will not focus upon documents produced prior to Vatican II. Instead, I focus upon CST since the Second Vatican Council. This focus is due to the fact that the social tradition did evidence a significant methodological shift at the time of the Council in its embrace of personalism.[285] An embrace of personalism meant that CST accepted its key features, which include an emphasis on the "uniqueness of human persons," "an affirmation of the dignity of the person," and stress what human persons deserve as a result of their personhood."[286] Cristina Traina, a feminist ethicist working in the Roman Catholic natural law tradition, claims that personalism in the Roman Catholic tradition was an achievement for the Catholic faith because it seems to bring together two disparate traditions of thought:

> Their achievement was their synthesis of the natural law tradition with the Enlightenment respect for human dignity and human rights, a twentieth century turn to the subject, and a special concern to preserve the integrity of intimate relationships among people from destruction by the state. They rejected rationalist Enlightenment individualism…fascist and Stalinist totalitarian subordination…and Marxist reduction of humans to being pawns of historical

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[283] Ibid., 56.

[284] Ibid., 1.

[285] Speaking of this shift to personalism, see especially the work of Charles Curran, Todd Salzman & Michael Lawler, and Lisa S. Cahill.

[286] Thomas D. William. *Who is my neighbor? : personalism and the foundation of human rights*; (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2005); 118-19.

> forces…but wanting to preserve the Enlightenment's esteem for the dignity and rights of individuals and socialism's penchant for justice and interdependence, they insisted that the subject and criterion for moral philosophy should be the person, considered as 'an indissoluble whole.'[287]

While more will be said[288] about troubling effects of bringing together of core anthropological tenets of the natural law and preserving the assumptions related to the individual and their dignity in the Enlightenment, for now, it will suffice to say that the shift towards personalism reveals a turn to the consciousness of particularity and the necessity of an inductive methodology predicated upon context.[289] In other words, the social teachings after the Council engaged a historically conscious method in its theo-ethical analysis of the economic, political, and social "signs of the times." As Charles E. Curran notes, this shift is important because "Historical consciousness gives more importance to the particular, the contingent, the historical, and the changing (while)…retain(ing) some relationship to past and future and some relationship to other present realities."[290]

With this shift came also a greater emphasis on the "person as subject" whose personality is intimately shaped by the cultural milieu that they are embedded in. Even with this shift in emphasis, the "person as subject" in CST maintains the underlying anthropological assumptions surrounding the human person in the Catholic tradition, which is the focus of this chapter. Since this project questions the theological

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[287] Cristina Traina. *Feminist Ethics and Natural Law: The End of Anathemas*; (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1999), 106.

[288] The implications of the intertwinement of natural law anthropology with some of the constitutive features of the modern subject will constitute a large portion of one of the later sections of this chapter.

[289] Charles E. Curran, (2008), 54.

[290] Ibid.

anthropology underlying CST, the analysis of the human person/person as subject in CST since Vatican II must be completed. The person as subject in CST since Vatican II will inform our analysis of who the human person, and their accompanying dignity, is within the tradition of CST.

While I will utilize the encyclicals, apostolic exhortations, and episcopal letters circulated at and since Vatican II, I will not provide extensive commentary on each document. Instead, I will provide a thematic excursus that indicates that a specific view of the human person constitutes the basis of CST. This notion of the person grounds CST's conception of human dignity, which, in turn grounds notions of justice and the socio-economic and political commitments of the Church in its social teachings. I will explain how this understanding of the human person may affect the ways in which CST engages issues of social, political, and economic injustices, especially when these injustices are meted out due to one's gender, sexuality, race, and ethnicity.

The focus on the centrality of the nature of the person for the CST is neither new nor controversial. There have been many projects that have clearly asserted that the human person is at the base of the social teachings of the Church and that one's perception of the human person will affect one's social, political, and economic commitments. However the primary questions of whether, and to what extent, the current construction of the human subject in CST limits its claims for the liberation of all persons have not been treated at length by any scholar working in the tradition of Catholic social ethics. While these scholars have been clear that the anthropological subject is crucial to the development of CST, they rarely spend more than a few paragraphs discussing who the human person is, or they emphasize a few aspects of the human person (sociality and

freedom are good examples here) and provide an excursus upon how social, political, and economic policies must uphold these aspects of the human person. Further neglected is the relationship between CST's underlying anthropology and epistemology. As was indicated in the introduction of this project, the privileging of epistemological frameworks also privileges particular persons and such privileging is to the detriment of those who are deemed "other," incapable of knowing or of authentic being. This means that scholars have uncritically assumed that the Eurocentrism inherent in the social tradition does not in itself undermine the justice claims CST makes.

Thus most discussions of personhood in CST avoid the textures and particulars of the human person, implying that these are actually represented under the general umbrella of the human person and their dignity. Many know what the Church claims about who/what is human, but they assume that by default all persons in this world fit into these categorizations. I am suggesting they do not but to substantiate such a suggestion, I bring the following questions to be addressed in this chapter: Who is the assumed *truly human* subject in CST? Do the current categorizations of the human subject in CST assume the strict delimitation of who/what is human in the teachings related to gender and sexuality, thereby also sustaining categories of subjects that are *indocumentad@*? And, finally, if there are such subjects in the documentary heritage of CST, who might they be, and can the tradition make justice claims for these subjects?

With reference to hierarchical documents this chapter begins by analyzing the fundamental anthropological principles governing the understanding of the human person as the basis of CST since Vatican II. This will include not only encyclicals, apostolic exhortations, and episcopal letters but also analyses from Catholic social ethicists, which,

I argue, further the point I made above: the conception of the human person in CST neglects a deep analysis that would take account of the particularities of race, ethnicity, sex, gender, and sexuality. One may claim that this is positive since, theoretically, all persons, regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, gender, and sexuality would be included in this broad definition of the human person. In fact, this is precisely what is assumed as individuals claim that the core principles of CST especially the principles of the preferential option for the poor and solidarity with those most vulnerable, are applicable to all persons as general persons. However, I contend that this is not the case. Just because one claims that all are included does not make it true. As I argued in the last chapter the epistemological and anthropological frameworks undergirding the tradition of the Catholic Church actually provide a very specific understanding of the human person and, therefore, human dignity—one that does not allow for all peoples precisely due to their race, ethnicity, sex, gender and sexuality to be included.

Thus, with reference to postcolonial, decolonial, and feminist decolonial theories on the relationship between Eurocentric epistemologies and oppressive anthropologies, I move to explore how the anthropology contained in CST does, in fact, continue to be colored by normative understandings of sex, gender, and race. I structure my analyses with a focus upon what is revealed about the human person within two distinct, though intertwined, discourses in CST: human rights discourses and discourses on the family. Using these analyses, I problematize the conception of the *truly human subject* in CST, inquiring as to whether the anthropological assumptions that currently demarcate who counts as full or authentic human persons, thus who bears *authentically human dignity*, can actually be deserving of the types of justice called for within CST. The concern is

that Catholic social ethicists have assumed the heteronormative subject and family of the Catholic tradition, reinforcing a static and violent framework of the subject, thereby ironically creating categories of subjects that remain *indocumentad@* in the documentary heritage of CST. Finally, working again from the conceptual frameworks of the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender and the place of colonial difference, I will provide a specific example that helps to illuminate how the delimitation of the subject in the Catholic tradition, assumed in CST, has real life social, political, and economic implications.

Core Anthropological Principles in Catholic Social Thought and the Work of Catholic Social Ethicists

At a recent conference, I attended a panel presentation on race and the Roman Catholic Church. The moderator of the panel quipped that when she teaches CST she informs her students that the answer to any questions related to social justice will always be human dignity. All persons, as persons, have dignity and must be treated in kind. This is largely true since "one's understanding of the human person influences, grounds, and directs one's understanding of how human society should function."[291] The church's commentary on social, economic, and political structures is wholly based on the conception of human dignity, which, of course, is itself based in a prior assumption that those bearing authentically human dignity are understood within the tradition to actually be *authentically human.* However, this assumption does not inquire whether the conception of authentic human dignity, depending on the other areas of the tradition that delineate the "proper" understanding of human persons, functions to create and exclude undocumented subjects from bearing the very dignity that is supposed to accord them

[291] Ibid., 127.

basic human rights. Thus we must explore further who the human person is and, therefore, what human dignity is in the context of CST since Vatican II.

Gaudium et spes (GS), was promulgated at the end of the Second Vatican Council in December 1965. It is often considered to be a document that signals the major methodological and theological shifts in emphases in the Catholic Church, which include less explicit references to the natural law theory.[292] It is my starting point because I, too, acknowledge GS as exemplifying a significant shift in the Church's openness to engagement with the modern world, to historical consciousness in its analyses of socio-political injustices, and its turn to the human person, or the subject. It is also often the starting point of Catholic social ethicists aiming to illuminate how the tradition of CST is grounded within a strong conception of the human dignity. Indeed, it is argued that of all the documents of CST, GS has the most systematic theological anthropology, which moves forward to ground the rest of the document.[293]

After the introduction that presents a cursory reading of the "signs of the times," the document shifts to Part 1, and its opening chapter entitled, "The Dignity of the Human Person." In order to clearly articulate what human dignity is, the Church begins, as I do, with an expression of what/who human persons are:

> For sacred Scripture teaches that man [sic] was created 'to the image of God,' is capable of knowing and loving his [sic] Creator, and was appointed by him as master of all earthly creatures…But God did not create man as a solitary, for from the beginning 'male and female he created them' (Gen 1: 27). Their companionship produces the primary form of interpersonal communion. For by

[292] See the work of Charles Curran, Stephen Pope, Lisa S. Cahill, and David Hollenbach.

[293] To this point see especially the co-edited volume *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations* and Charles Curran's text *Catholic Social Teaching 1891-Present.*

> his innermost nature man [sic] is a social being, and unless he relates himself [sic] to others he can neither live nor develop his potential.[294]

Here we are granted some central tenets about what/who human persons are: first, persons are created in the *imago dei*; second, human persons have the capacity for reason that can know and discover God, and God's desires for them; third, human persons are social beings, and; finally, all human persons are sexed (male and female) and gendered (masculine and feminine)— understood as part of the *divine plan* placed within the realm of *natural reality,* we are all either male or female.[295]

One ought to recall that these are the central tenets of the human person expressed in the tradition on gender and sexuality, and, especially expressed in John Paul II's *Mulieris dignitatem* and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith's letter *On the Collaboration of Men and Women in the Church and in the World.* These tenets worked to sustain the ontological dichotomy between male/female, masculine/feminine, and when analyzed through the lenses of the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender were understood to relegate particular persons to an undocumented sub-human status in the tradition. Further, authentically human persons (those whose identity/subjectivity falls easily into one category or the other) in the tradition were said to bear distinctive dignity reflected differently based upon one's "natural" sex and gender. While dignity may be reflected differently, the entwinement of the two, between human persons and human dignity, is inseparable. There is no human dignity or, authentic human dignity, if there is no authentic human being.

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[294] Pope Paul VI, *Gaudium et spes (The Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World),* (December, 1965), Part 1, Ch. 1, No. 12.

[295] See my chapter on gender and sexuality, which explores through the lens of the coloniality of gender the meaning and implications of the male/female binary for many human subjects.

The US Catholic Bishops' 1986 Letter *Economic Justice for All* reiterates these points:

> At the summit of creation stands the creation of man and woman, made in God's image. *As such every human being possesses an inalienable dignity that stamps human existence prior to any division into races or nations and prior to human labor and achievement.*[296]

These aspects of the human person are accompanied by a clear assertion that human persons are "made of body and soul"; thus one cannot "despise the body," as it is a gift from the Creator.[297] Though the tradition has elements within it wherein the body is treated with suspicion, here there is a clear acknowledgement that a constitutive aspect of our humanity is that we are "inspirited bodies."[298]

From this central belief, GS turns to another characteristic of humanity, a central part to understanding theological anthropology—the mark of sin that we all share. We "abused our liberty," and are therefore, "wounded by sin," which creates a difficulty within the will of humanity both to desire and practice the good.[299] Though wounded by sin, the Catholic Church remains committed to the intellect and capacity for reason of the human person, and the prudent use of individual conscience, informed through both the biblical and extra-biblical tradition. Thus, while sin in the world certainly makes it more difficult to know and do good, it is not impossible, for each person that fits into the categorizations of the human person (male/female) has imprinted upon them

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[296] US Catholic Bishops, *Economic Justice for All*, (1986), No. 32. Emphasis original.

[297] Pope Paul VI, *Gaudium et spes,* Part 1, Ch. 1, No. 14.

[298] The term "inspirited bodies" comes from Margaret Farley's text *Just Love.*

[299] Pope Paul VI, *Gaudium et spes*, No's. 13-14. Note here that this is an Augustinian theological anthropology that is intimately shaped by the problem of the human will. Unfortunately, both Augustine and the modern Church have done much damage to the understanding of bodies, since within the body one finds the greatest stirrings of an ill will.

> [a] law which he does not impose upon himself (sic) but holds him (sic) to obedience. Always summoning him (sic) to love good and avoid evil, the voice of conscience when necessary speaks to his (sic) heart: do this, shun that. For man has in his heart a law written by God; to obey it is the very dignity of man (sic); according to it he will be judged. Conscience is the most secret core and sanctuary of a man (sic). There he (sic) is alone with God, whose voice echoes in his (sic) depths.[300]

This passage on conscience is one of the clearest representations of the shift in the theo-ethical methodology of the Church. It is a clear turn to the human person's capacity to discern what they ought to do and how they ought to live, a subjective turn that, while not negating the natural law (since this is from where the right conscience flows), only implicitly calls upon it and allows for flexibility in decision making from particular historical locations, an exercise in induction as opposed to deduction.[301]

Reflecting on conscience as an embrace of inductive reasoning, Stephen J. Pope notes:

> Acknowledging the dignity of the individual conscience encouraged the Church to endorse a more inductive style of moral discernment than was typically found in the methodology of neoscholastic natural law. It accorded greater responsibility for [the laity's] own spiritual development and encouraged greater moral maturity on their part…The laity was thus no longer simply expected to implement directives issued by the hierarchy. On the contrary, "the task of the *entire* People of God (is) to hear, distinguish and interpret the many voices of our age, and to judge them in light of the divine word."[302]

Again, while the turn to the primacy of conscience is an important supporting concept of the Church's turn to the subject, it does not demonstrate a break from basic underlying

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[300] Ibid., No.16.

[301] Charles E. Curran, *Catholic Social Teaching 1891-Present: A Historical, Theological, and Ethical Analysis,* (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2008), 75.

[302] Stephen J. Pope, "Natural Law in Catholic Social Teachings," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, Kenneth R. Himes, Ed. (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2005), 55.

natural law principles. Human persons must exercise their conscience in particular situations; however, they must shape their behavior in such a way that they are in line with "objective norms of morality" and in "full conformity with human nature."[303] In essence, all human persons must exercise their conscience and shape their behavior in a manner that is consistent with their human nature—that is, in a manner that reflects the natural human dignity that all persons are said to bear as made in the image of God.

The further implication embedded within the role of conscience is that human persons are free. A central tenet of the Church's theological anthropology is that we have been endowed with free will and ought to exercise it towards communion with the proper end of humanity—God. Further, any and all social, economic, and political ordering must stem from these central beliefs about the dignity of the human person:

> *The dignity of the human person, realized in community with others, is the criterion against which all aspects of economic life must be measured.* All human beings, therefore, are ends to be served by the institutions that make up the economy, not means to be exploited for narrowly defined goals…wherever our economic arrangements fail to conform to the demands of human dignity lived in a community, they must be questioned and transformed.[304]

Institutional structures must uphold the dignity of persons. To the extent that they do not do so, all persons of good will are called upon to develop more just orderings. In its tradition of CST, the Church claims to be doing precisely this and utilizes its theory of the human person to do so.

The above draws out areas in the tradition of CST since Vatican II where there is an explicit reference to the human person. In these explicit references to anthropology, one finds a significant overlap between the anthropology espoused in the teachings on

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[303] Ibid., Here Stephen Pope is citing GS paragraph nos. 16 and 75.

[304] US Catholic Bishops, *Economic Justice for All*, No. 28. Emphasis original.

gender and sexuality and the teachings of CST. In particular, we find that the humanity in CST remains ontologically dichotomized and their dignity reflects this difference. In the last chapter we indicated that such a theological anthropology creates and sustains categories of l@s indocumentad@s, those human subjects who do not align neatly within this anthropological frame. Further, I argued that because of their undocumented status in the Church and society, they occupy a space at the colonial difference, a space that makes them more vulnerable to violent acts.

At this point it seems that we have initial evidence to claim that CST, too, creates and sustains categories of l@s indocumentad@s in their teachings; however, prior to jumping to this conclusion we must look more closely at other areas where the human person and their dignity are addressed, even if not explicitly. In fact, if one looks at the whole of CST, one finds that the human person and their dignity are primarily indirectly addressed as they are couched within broader discourses. So, to gain a fuller sense of the human person and their dignity, I turn to two common discourses in CST wherein anthropological assumptions are operative. These are: discourses on human rights and discourses on the family. I will treat each of these discourses in turn.

Human Rights Discourses in CST

Prior to the twentieth century, the Roman Catholic Tradition was opposed to the "concept of human rights…(which) were identified with the Enlightenment in the philosophical realm and with the call for democracy in the political realm."[305] This was part of a broader rejection of modern liberal philosophical understandings of human

[305] Curran, (2008), 215.

persons.[306] Enlightenment philosophers grounded their theoretical articulations on human rights within individual autonomy and the absolute freedom of the human person.[307] In short, the concept of human rights stemming from Enlightenment philosophers represented "subjective rights" that were "civil and political" in nature and guaranteed individuals "freedom from" particular actions that would impinge upon their individual freedom.[308] Such an emphasis, Catholic social ethicists claim, contradicts the underlying anthropological theories within Roman Catholicism at large that understand human persons not as "individuals" in the modern sense of the term, but as social beings in constant relationship with self, God, and neighbor.

Further, as Curran notes, given the way CST was embedded in the Thomistic neoscholastic tradition (at least prior to Vatican II), there was no room for subjective rights:

> A right is a claim or something that is due one. In Aquinas, *ius*, the Latin word for right, has an objective sense but not a subjective sense. *Ius* is the just thing or the just ordering. Thus, neoscholasticism rightly appealed to Aquinas against a subjective notion of right as a power or claim of the person…Thomism has no room for championing one's personal rights…all modern freedoms espoused by the Enlightenment—such as freedom of religion, speech, the press, and association—fail to give enough importance to objective reality and to truth itself.[309]

The natural rights that were supported by the Church prior to Vatican II were those that related to the economic and social spheres of life—not civil and political. For example,

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[306] The rejection of modern liberal philosophies understanding of the human subject by CST included a rejection of brands of liberal humanism. They attempted instead to construct what they term an "authentic humanism," which will be of central importance in the next chapter of this project.

[307] Curran, 215.

[308] Ibid.

[309] Ibid., 216-217.

humans have natural "rights to," expressing a freedom to do or have something, but not a "freedom from." In the earliest encyclical of the modern tradition of CST, *Rerum novarum* (1891), it is clear that human beings have a right to work, a right to private property, etc., but no civil or political rights are developed at this time.[310] It is important to note, too, that such objective natural rights for human persons were not assumed to be equally applicable for *all* persons. Thomistic theological anthropology had written within it natural stratifications of persons, such as we find in the case of women and persons understood to be born as natural servants. While Aquinas never questioned whether or not all persons are actual human persons, he did understand that different persons had different capacities for rationality, for virtue, and that certain persons, like women and natural servants, benefit by being in a complementary relationship to persons with greater capacities for rationality. The natural stratifications in Aquinas amounted to assumptions that all natural social and economic rights were not equally due to all persons precisely because of their differing capacities for rationality and virtue.[311] Of course, while the objective natural rights guarded by the social doctrine, such as the right to private property, were meant to uphold this Thomistic neoscholastic tradition, they were equally used to challenge other dominant philosophies of the time. The social doctrine attempted on the one hand to avoid modern liberalism and to avoid what it termed the errors of Marxist articulations of socialism,[312] where the individuality of the human person seems to collapse into society.

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[310] Ibid., 217.

[311] More on this point later.

[312] Just as with their rejection of liberal humanism, the tradition of CST rejected Marxist articulations of humanism in their construction of "authentic humanism."

Of course, during the twentieth century, and especially at the advent of the Second Vatican Council, the Roman Catholic Church did finally embrace modern freedoms and subjective rights like the right to freedom of religion and the right to democratic governance and, with the embrace of these modern freedoms, came to utilize human rights discourses.[313] Yet CST continues to assert that these rights are only properly understood when they are defined in terms of human dignity, in terms of "the human person who is called to live in community and solidarity with other."[314] They are rights that are bestowed by God, natural rights, not "positive rights" granted by civil society, though it is the responsibility of all societies to guarantee that all of these rights are protected for human persons.[315]

Human rights then, are part and parcel of the innate dignity of all human persons made in the image and likeness of God, thus they provide us with insights as to who persons are and what human dignity entails. We can turn again to GS for an example:

> Every day human interdependence grows more tightly drawn and spreads by degrees over the whole world. As a result the common good…today takes on an increasingly universal complexion and consequently involves rights and duties with respect to the whole human race…there is a growing awareness of the exalted dignity proper to the human person, since he [sic] stands above all things, and his [sic] rights and duties are universal and inviolable. Therefore, there must be made available to all men [sic] everything necessary for leading a truly human life, such as food, clothing, and shelter; the right to choose a state of life freely and to found a family; the right to education, to employment, to a good reputation, to respect, to appropriate information, to activity in accord with the upright norm of one's own conscience, to protection of privacy, and to rightful freedom in matters religious too.[316]

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[313] *Pacem in terris* (1963) is the clearest example of an encyclical that embraces human rights discourses, as we find in it a very systematic breakdown of human rights.

[314] Curran, (2008), 219.

[315] Ibid.

[316] *Gaudium et spes,* no. 26.

An additional example is found in the letter *Economic Justice for All* authored by the US Catholic Bishops,[317] as they explain the main themes of the letter:

> Human rights are the minimum conditions for life in community. In Catholic teaching, human rights include not only civil and political rights but also economic rights…'all people have a right to life, food, shelter, clothing, rest, medical care, education and employment…' Society as a whole, acting through public and private institutions, has the moral responsibility to enhance human dignity and protect human rights.[318]

As Curran notes, this turn to human rights does not mean that modern CST has accepted the basic tenets of the Enlightenment. He provides five main reasons as to why this is not the case:

> First, Catholic social teaching cannot accept an approach that absolutizes human freedom and autonomy…Second, Catholic social teaching does not ground these political and civil rights in the freedom and autonomy of the person. God is the ultimate author and giver of these rights…Ultimately these rights are grounded in God's gift and mediately…in the dignity of the person. Third, Catholic social teaching insists on both rights and duties—unlike many liberal approaches. Human rights are important, but they are inextricably connected with duties…Fourth, Catholic social teaching insists on political and civil rights as well as economic and social rights…Fifth, the epistemology of Catholic social teaching differs considerably from the epistemology of liberalism (in that)…Catholic social teaching proposes a comprehensive view of the social order with a very "thick" concept of the good.[319]

In short, while CST did ultimately embrace certain aspects contained in the liberal philosophical tradition, it claims to have done so only within the context of a communal

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[317] This 1986 letter contains the most systematic use of human rights discourse since the 1963 encyclical *Pacem in terris.*

[318] US Catholic Bishops, *Economic Justice for All* (1986), no's. 17 & 18.

[319] Curran (2008), 221.

person made in the image of God, not an individual with absolute rights and unlimited freedoms.[320]

Thus when we look to the rights discourses within CST, we must keep in mind the ways in which they are simultaneously continuous and discontinuous with the Catholic tradition. Although upholding such a distinction makes sense, it is easy to elide some of the common history between Enlightenment theories and medieval natural law theories since "Enlightenment theories about natural rights…[are] built on several centuries of developing Christian ideas of natural rights."[321] I would argue that part of what we see adopted by Enlightenment theories about natural rights was who was eligible for rights. Historically, the natural law tradition has consistently hierarchized being/s. I reiterate my earlier point that, while Aquinas did not go so far as to question whether or not one was human at all, he was clear that there is a natural hierarchy of being—all persons not being equal in the created order logically would not have equal natural rights (thus some persons are born natural servants, some born women, either way these categories of persons do not have the same capacity for rationality nor are they deserving of full natural rights).[322] In Aquinas' natural law theory, like many premodern natural law theories, there is an understanding that each human person has a "proper *telos* and

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[320] Ibid.

[321] Drew Christiansen, "Commentary on *Pacem in terris*," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, Kenneth R. Himes, ed. (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2011), 234.

[322] This point is one that most Catholic social ethicists also gloss over. It is recognized as an unfortunate aspect of the broader history and tradition of natural law reasoning. Thus it is often treated as a negligible fact that is a product of older times, no longer operative within the tradition of the Church, especially not after Vatican II, and certainly not operative within the work of theologians reflecting upon the tradition.

purpose and the rights of each subject reflected their purpose,"[323] especially as that purpose relates to the good of the communities within which they are embedded. On premodern natural law theories Joseph Indaimo argues

> [s]ocial hierarchies [were] found within the great chain of being and the divine cosmos…such communal structures of natural hierarchy organized different social positions, different roles and different rights for individuals…in order to facilitate the teleological end of each subject and the greater community as a whole. Every individual was impressed into a different class/category within the hierarchy of community…and [each had] a different human value.[324]

So, Thomas Aquinas based his conception of natural rights upon a particular conception of the human person, which, in its fusion of the philosophical and theological, ultimately embraced a conception of the human person that was grounded within an assumption of natural stratifications between "persons." In his *Summa* Aquinas agrees with Aristotle that women are defective males and with Augustine that women, though they are made in the image of God, have this image reflected differently in them as the "helpers" of men.[325] Further, men have a higher capacity to reason as their "intellect" was superior to that of women.[326] Not only do we have the tradition of a natural hierarchy of being between men and women, but there are also natural hierarchies of being between individuals assumed to be natural servants and those they served, those who were able-bodied and those disabled (who were deemed "monstrous" persons), and those who were darker raced with those approximating a Western European norm.

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[323] Joseph Indaimo. *The Self, Ethics, and Human Rights*, (New York: Routledge, 2015); 12.

[324] Ibid.

[325] Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologica.* I.92.

[326] Ibid.

These "pre-modern" natural hierarchies of being were then rearticulated and solidified with the beginning of the Enlightenment and the birth of the modern subject. Considering these points, the potential intertwinement between these schools of thought are significant if one begins to explore the epistemological and anthropological implications of both the pre-modern subject, the Enlightenment subject, and their respective rights. Even if we were to concede the fact that the Enlightenment subject could be completely disconnected from the conception of the human person in CST (and I do not intend to concede this), this does not necessarily mean that we are free from problematic epistemological and anthropological assumptions connected to the Enlightenment subject. The implication here is that we must be alert to the ways that both the pre-modern natural law subject and the modern subject of the Enlightenment each present us with categories of persons that are considered to be degenerate or lacking in being in some way so as to justify disparities in treatment or human rights.

In his explanation of how CST did not ultimately capitulate to the modern Enlightenment understanding of the human subject in its embrace of human rights, Curran indicates that the underlying epistemologies of the two traditions (liberal philosophy and CST) remain different. However, I contend that while both traditions do reflect different understandings of the social order, there are still overlapping understandings of the human subject, especially as they relate to gender and race. Both traditions privilege knowers with similar constitutive aspects of being, those related to the heteronormative human subject, which is then used as the norm against which all persons are judged. While the Enlightenment subject can be seen as distinctive from the Natural law subject, it is this overlap of the traditions that is concerning. What we have is the

continuance of the hierarchizing of being from pre-modern natural law argumentation now coupled with, and potentially rigidified by, the modern Enlightenment heteronormative subject. In and through both we have an ontological claim about the human person, their dignity, and therefore, their rights.

If we look closely at the human rights listed in CST, whether they be political, civil, social, or economic, it helps to provide us with a sense of the particularities of the human person and their human dignity. While rights discourses do provide us with greater detail as to what human dignity entails, it is not the only discourse to which we can turn to illuminate what is meant by human persons and human dignity. Discourses on the family in CST also contain clues as to who the human person is and the dignity they bear.

Discourses on the Family[327] *in CST*

Reflections on the family do not constitute a major part of any encyclical of CST.[328] This is likely due to understandings, discussed previously in this project, that the family, like gender and sexuality, are defined within a Western "traditional" hetero-nuclear structure and is often linked a private sphere of life, a sphere that is characterized as a space for women, "subordinate to men's spheres, to the public worlds of church and

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[327] While this section is on the family, I will not make extensive reference to the Church documents whose explicit purpose is to discuss the family. When necessary I will draw from documents like *Familiaris consortio* in order to further particular points; however, the focus here is on the family in the CST documents, and especially how the family helps to reveal certain aspects of authentic human persons and authentic human dignity.

[328] Whether or not the documents on the family in the tradition actually belong within the broader framework of CST seems to be debated. Lisa S. Cahill includes a commentary on *Familiaris consortio* within the text *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, but *Familiaris consortio* is not included in David J. O'Brian's and Thomas A. Shannon's co-edited text, *Catholic Social Thought: The Documentary Heritage*, which is a compilation of all documents in CST since 1891. We can at least assume that the proper placement of the document as an integral part of CST is debatable.

society."[329] Indeed, CST has often distanced itself from explicitly referencing ideas related to human sex, gender, and sexuality. When they do reference these particularities of human persons, they do so only within the broader context of the family, in a cursory manner and, often, only to indicate what rights and protections ought to be upheld when considering the family in what is clearly a hetero-nuclear structure. This means that the "internal structures of the family," structures that are gendered, are not analyzed in depth, but are assumed.[330]

Within CST the family is understood as a "natural institution, anterior to any other human society."[331] As such, the integrity of the family must be protected by the state:

> Economic and social policies as well as the organization of the world should be continually evaluated in light of their impact on the strength and stability of family life. The long-range future of this nation is intimately linked with the well-being of families, for the family is the most basic form of human community…health, education and social service programs should be scrutinized in light of how well they ensure both individual dignity and family integrity.[332]

The Catholic bishops are clear that the well-being of civil society is intertwined with the well-being of the family. One cannot claim to have the best interest in mind for the one and not also the other, since families are at their base.

It is not only familial integrity that is at stake; however, it is also necessary that civil society allow for individual members of the family to have their dignity respected. This is where we begin to see more explicitly gendered language being used to explain the distinctiveness of human dignity between the sexes, and thus we have one of our first

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[329] Margaret Farley, "Family," in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, Judith A. Dwyer, ed. (Cedar Rapids, IA: Liturgical Press, 1994), 374.

[330] Ibid., 377.

[331] Ibid.

[332] US Catholic Bishops, *Economic Justice For All*, no. 93.

indications that to assume that human persons and dignity can be understood as generic, universal and equally applicable, as much of CST would suggest, is not plausible. We can further complicate these concerns when we consider, as we do in the next section of this chapter, how gendered language also articulates particular assumptions related to race and ethnicity. This connection—between gender and race—has been explained by women of color and decolonial feminists and has been affirmed through the lens of the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender. Along these lines of thought: gender is always racialized.

For now, we can continue to analyze the gendered language in the tradition of CST. Consider the following quote taken from GS:

> The family is a kind of school of deeper humanity. But if it is to achieve the full flowering of its life and mission, it needs the kindly communion of minds and the joint deliberation of spouses, as well as the painstaking cooperation of parents in the education of their children. The active presence of the father is highly beneficial to their formation. The children, especially the younger among them need the care of their mother at home. The domestic role of hers must be safely preserved, though the legitimate social progress of women should not be underrated on that account.[333]

Within the context of the "traditional" heterosexual family, individuals can live more fully into their specific dignity, which is demarcated by particular roles in the "natural" structure of the family itself. The internal structure of the family is "basically God-given, discernible as an immutable part of nature, knowable by Christians through reason and revelation."[334] This is familiar because it is the grounds of the anthropology present in the teachings on gender and sexuality. As indicated in GS, roles within the family structure

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[333] *Gaudium et spes*, no. 52.

[334] Farley (1994), 377.

are strictly delineated by sex and gender and are complementary.[335] In her text *Justice, Gender, and the Family*, Susan Moller Okin argues that such sex-differentiation in the context of marriage and the family has historically created and sustained categories of vulnerability for women. She claims:

> Women are vulnerable, both economically and socially, by the interconnected traditions of female responsibility for rearing children and female subordination and dependence, of which both the history and contemporary practices of marriage form a significant part.[336]

In the context of the social teachings that continuously emphasize human rights as well as duties, it is clear that these rights and duties naturally function differently for men and women. Lisa Cahill notes that within the context of CST, "[the] *primary* functions of women are to be wives and mothers; [while] men assume public political and economic roles outside of the home; and the socioeconomic status of women is dependent on that of their male family members, especially their husbands."[337]

Again, familiarity with the theological anthropology of the Roman Catholic Church throughout its teachings on gender and sexuality reveals that the internal structure of the family that is meant to be upheld by civil society is predicated upon an anthropology of gender complementarity. This male-female complementarity is meant to perfectly reflect the *imago dei*, which, as I have indicated, grounds the conception of human dignity. The conception of human dignity is embedded within a notion of complementarity as ontological in its structure: dignity is reflected differently between

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[335] See the last chapter for further analysis on gender complementarity.

[336] Susan Moller Okin, *Justice, Gender, and the Family* (Basic Books, 1989), 139.

[337] Lisa Sowle Cahill, "Commentary on *Familiaris consortio (Apostolic Exhortation on the Family)*, in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, Kenneth R. Himes, ed., (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2011), 373. Emphasis mine.

males and females, however, if one does not closely approximate the definitions of either they are forced into the spaces of "itness," they are left undocumented—erased from the realm of human or "authentic" human being necessary to "qualify" them for justice claims.

If we look at the family as central to understanding the human person and dignity in CST, we begin to see how the dichotomized anthropological subject is assumed in the tradition of CST. Each time terms such as "person," "human being," and "human subject" are used, they represent an underlying anthropological framework that is continuous with the tradition. The discourses on the family in CST are patently grounded within the complementarian framework, assuming the injustices and violence inherent to it.

The evidence becomes more apparent when we look specifically at CST's concern over the role of women in society and over the family. *Octogesima adveniens* (OA) provides an example of this point:

> Similarly, in many countries a charter for women which would *put an end to an actual discrimination* and establish relationships of equality in rights and of respect for their dignity is the object of study…we do not have in mind that *false equality which would deny the distinctions laid down by the Creator himself and which would be in contradiction to women's proper role, which is of such capital importance, at the heart of the family as well as in society*. Development in legislation should on the contrary be directed to protecting her proper vocation and at the same time recognizing her independence as a person, and her equal rights to participate in cultural, economic, social, and political life.[338]

Note that the above passage is actually addressing issues related to discrimination against women; however, the justice that is sought is sought only insofar as that discrimination is *actually* occurring. What I mean is that CST is making claims to justice for women, *only insofar as the women are acting according to the roles the Church claims for them.* If

[338] Pope Paul VI, *Octogesima adveniens: A Call to Action on the Eightieth Anniversary of Rerum novarum,* 1971; No. 13. Emphasis mine.

they are acting outside of these roles, they are no more deserving of justice than are homosexual persons seeking justice and freedom from violence enacted against them as a result of actions they have "no right to" be participating in, such as fighting for marriage equality or publicly expressing affection for their partners without fear of reprisal.[339]

The same is true, too, when the tradition of CST speaks of securing equality for women, but attempts to bring equality into the sacramental priesthood are met with resistance that this is not "inequality" at all, it is simply a misguided understanding of women and men's natures. In short, when persons are acting outside of their delineated roles, and are experiencing perceived injustices as a result of it, there is no real injustice occurring. It is simply an improper understanding of the human person and their inherent dignity that leads to invalid rights and justice claims. Injustices are called such only insofar as there is a perceived direct threat to these predefined roles of women in/and the family.

> In order for the family to fulfill its ecclesial and social obligations, certain conditions are necessary. The pope (Paul VI) realizes that these conditions are sorely lacking in many societies and reiterates several rights of the family…these include the right to marry, the right to have children and to educate them as one sees fit…the right to political and economic security, the right to housing, the right to protection from drugs and pornography, the right to emigrate for a better life, and the right of the elderly to a worthy life and death.[340]

Here Lisa Cahill reflects upon the intertwinement of discourses on the family and human rights discourses; however, she neglects to address the fact that the rights of the family hinge upon whether the individuals in the family are acting towards their proper dignity and whether or not as a unit the family can be considered a family at all.

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[339] See the argument I made in Ch. 2 on gender and sexuality.

[340] Lisa S. Cahill, "Commentary on *Familiaris consortio (Apostolic Exhortation on the Family)*," 372.

Such argumentation like Cahill's is part of what I perceive as a blind spot of many a Catholic social ethicist. Catholic social ethicists understand that a right conception of the human person is at the root of the calls for justice in CST; however, they fail to analyze how having a conception of the human subject as delineated within the Catholic tradition may actually undermine calls for justice for a number of persons. If human rights are mediated through human dignity, they then are ultimately immediately, or directly, based within a prior ontological structure that delineates who is "authentically human." It is precisely at this point that the subject in CST, the subject underlying the tradition's calls for justice predominantly based within human rights discourses, needs to be problematized. There is no indication that the subject underlying CST is distinct from the heteronormative subject underlying the tradition's teachings on gender and sexuality—in fact, that very subject is assumed. The ontological structure of the human person as currently laid out in the tradition simply does not lend itself to the type of malleability that would be necessary to uphold CST's claims for justice and rights for all persons, no matter their gender, sexuality, race, or ethnicity.

The tradition of CST continues to proclaim that its call for the protection of human rights and for justice are universally applicable; however, this is not the case. In short, there can be no human rights or calls to justice if there is no human person. Calls for political, social, and economic justice are only applicable to those that are considered "authentically human." "Authentically human" persons are those who most closely approximate the normative center, which means those that are white (Western European), male, heterosexuals who also enjoy privileges related to class. So, while the tradition of CST may continue to claim that we must work to secure the rights of all human persons,

by preferentially opting for and acting in solidarity with those most vulnerable in our societies, and while they may continue to claim that violence against persons is morally impermissible, they continue to stand behind an anthropological structure that removes the force of these claims and supports the very violences they speak against.

To further this point, I turn to decolonial and feminist decolonial theories. In particular, I analyze how the assumed subject in CST is a specific subject constituted within the logics of the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender and, therefore, the subject is so narrowly defined that the calls for justice and human rights within CST cannot be presumed to be applicable to all persons.

The Church's "Best Kept Secret": Catholic Social Thought and the Coloniality of Being/Coloniality of Gender

It is often suggested that CST is the Roman Catholic Church's "best kept secret." Catholic Christians may well have found themselves proud and inspired by the depth and breadth of CST. Yet I dare to ask: what if what the best kept secret of the Roman Catholic Church is not what is in its social tradition, but what and who is elided, or defined out of, the social tradition itself? What if we peer at the tradition of CST with an eye towards its epistemological and anthropological foundations, as this project aims to do? I argue that what we find challenges the depth and breadth of the tradition, precisely due to its foundations, which are epistemologically and, therefore, anthropologically unstable. In order to show how this may be the case, I turn to decolonial and feminist decolonial analyses.

One of the most basic claims of decolonial theorists is that "Eurocentrism is not a question of geography but of epistemology."[341] It is clear that the tradition of CST, stemming as it does from the Roman Catholic hierarchy, is both Eurocentric and androcentric. Charles Curran indicates:

> The early documents (in CST) were almost completely Eurocentric. The authors and their experience were heavily European, especially in their intellectual and cultural formation…(this) Eurocentric approach still comes through…Furthermore, the male perspective comes through in almost every document of Catholic social teaching. Women tend to be invisible in the earlier documents, except in discussions of the family. Within the family, however, the earlier documents clearly portray and extol the subordinate position of women. Even today the role of women is primarily as mothers and educators of their children in the home.[342]

It is evident that Curran understands the problems inherent in Eurocentric and androcentric approaches to global economic, political, and social problems, and that he understands Eurocentrism not to be a purely geographic problem, but does indicate that this is an epistemological problem.

Other Catholic social ethicists have done the same in naming Eurocentrism as a limitation of CST; however, the limitations are not fully explored, especially as they relate to how a Eurocentric epistemology grounds anthropological assumptions that govern the traditional perspective on the human person and their dignity, Indeed, Eurocentricity as a structure of a "geo-politics of knowledge" is intimately linked to a "body politics of knowledge."[343] This simply means that in and through Eurocentricity there is upheld a normative understanding of right "thinking and doing," that supposes

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[341] Walter D. Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options* (Duke University Press, 2011), 19.

[342] Charles E. Curran (2008), 94.

[343] Mignolo, 2011, xxi.

that there are whole "regions and bodies disqualified (from such) thinking (and doing)."[344] As Mignolo argues, with such a commitment to Eurocentric epistemologies, it becomes possible, if not necessary, to "eliminate and marginalize" those that do not fit into these paradigms.[345] Yet some may contend that the tradition of CST is all inclusive; however, even in its claims to inclusivity, there is still the presumption that there is one that has the power to "include" and one "who is welcomed" and that these two "stand in codified power relations"[346] that are constitutive of the logics of what decolonial theorists term the colonial matrix of power.[347]

As I indicated in Chapter 2, Walter Mignolo, citing Anibal Quijano, claims that the colonial matrix of power has four main domains within which control is asserted over others. These are: the economy, authority, gender and sexuality, and knowledge and subjectivity.[348] Further, these methods of control are ultimately supported by "two 'legs,' that is, the racial and patriarchal foundation of knowledge (the enunciation in which the world order is legitimized."[349] According to Mignolo, historically, the colonial matrix of power was theological but over time, namely in the eighteenth century, it carried over from theology into secular philosophy.

> It was Christian theology that located the distinction between Christians, Moors, and Jews in the 'blood.' Although the quarrel between the three religions of the

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[344] Ibid., xxii.

[345] Ibid., xv.

[346] Ibid.

[347] The term "the colonial matrix of power" was coined by Anibal Quijano, and has been adapted and expanded by decolonial theorist Walter D. Mignolo, whose work I cite heavily in this project, along with that of Nelson Maldonado-Torres, and others.

[348] Ibid., 8.

[349] Ibid.

> book has a long history, it has been reconfigured since 1492, when Christians managed to expel Moors and Jews from the peninsula and enforced conversion on those who wanted to stay. Simultaneously, the racial configuration between Spanish, Indian, and African began to take shape in the New World. By the eighteenth century, 'blood' as a marker of race/racism was transferred to skin. And theology was displaced by secular philosophy and the sciences. The Linnaean system of classification helped the cause. Secular racism came to be based on an ego-politics of knowledge; but it so happened that the agents and institutions that embodied secular ego-politics of knowledge were, like those who embodied theo-politics of knowledge, mostly white European males.[350] [351]

While the colonial matrix of power as a "theo-politics of knowledge" did mutate into a "secular ego-politics of knowledge" the Roman Catholic Church continued to deploy not only the "theo-politics of knowledge," but also adopted some of the "secular ego-politics of knowledge." This is reflected in the earlier discussion on how the hierarchies of being embedded in the natural law theories of the subject (the theo-politics of knowledge) were coupled with the problematic assumptions related who is considered to be the norm of humanity in modern Enlightenment philosophy (the ego-politics of knowledge). Further, simply because the theo-politics of knowledge ended up grounding the ego-politics of secular philosophy does not, in and of itself, mean that the theo-politics of knowledge is no longer relevant,[352] a point overlooked by decolonial theorists who heavily focus upon ego-politics and the Western liberal philosophical tradition while ignoring the importance of religion and theology in the maintenance of the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender. Simply claiming, as many do concerning the CST, that there is no connection between the ego-politics of knowledge that birthed the Enlightenment

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[350] Ibid., 8-9.

[351] This quote was also used in Chapter 2.

[352] See my comments above on the natural law subject.

subject and one's own tradition does not mean that the tradition has not adopted problematic anthropological assumptions related to the Enlightenment subject.

It is true that the Enlightenment subject is conceived of as a subject that is highly individual, absolutely free and rational, and that the construction of this subject was tied to the oppression of others due to race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality; but one cannot neglect to mention the fact that the natural law subject bears the same stratifications of being relative to race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality. Indeed, natural law anthropology, especially as it was articulated during Spanish colonialism, is heavily reliant upon on understanding that there were "differing degrees of humanity," and that practices such as war and enslavement were part and parcel of an understanding of "natural" differences between the indigenous and the Spanish.[353] Justification of a variety of inhumane acts was deeply embedded within the broader epistemological frameworks of the time.[354] Acts could only be considered inhumane, unjust, etc., if we are concerned with equals being treated equally. Differing degrees of humanity lead to differing degrees of human dignity and allowed for the space to justify the colonization of minds and bodies in the Americas and the Caribbean, and they continue to do so in our Church and in our society.

Of course, these theo-politics of knowledge did undergo revision when articulated through Enlightenment philosophers, who were, of course, rejecting the authority of the Church and some of its basic understandings of the natural order. What Enlightenment philosophers did not reject, but re-articulated was this hierarchy of being.

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[353] Nelson Maldonado-Torres, *Against War: Views from the Underside of Modernity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), 216.

[354] To this point, see the text of Willie Jennings, *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Politics of Race.*

The "politics of knowledge," or epistemology, delimits whom the normative human subject is. The anthropological subject that is normative is made in the very image of those that claim sole epistemological power. The ultimate subject that decolonial theorists focus upon is the "modern subject" or some iteration of it that stemmed from colonial logics that deemed white, European, male, heterosexuals as "the model and point of reference" for all others and this was important not only in terms of "racial classification," but also for the maintenance of normative categories related to "sex, gender, and sexuality."[355] As has been indicated throughout, María Lugones speaks of the intertwinement of these categories as the coloniality of gender.[356]

As it did when analyzing the subject in the Church's teachings on gender and sexuality, the lens of the coloniality of gender again becomes extremely important when analyzing the assumed subject in CST. It enables the exploration of how the CST in its upholding of a complementarian anthropology is not simply upholding the oppressive institution of gender but also the institution of race. Feminists of color theorizing intersectionality have constructed the concept of racialized gender.[357] It should come as no surprise that there is an intimate connection between the two institutions, and Lugones' construction of the coloniality of gender is meant to "complicate" one's understanding of racialized gender to shed light upon the fact that imposing gender and

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[355] Mignolo (2011), 17-19.

[356] María Lugones. "Methodological Notes Toward a Decolonial Feminism," in *Decolonizing Epistemologies: Latina/o Theology and Philosophy*, Ada María Isasi-Díaz & Eduardo Mendieta, eds. (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), 72.

[357] Many feminist theorists fall into this category. The work of Kimberlé Crenshaw, Audre Lorde, bell hooks, and Patricia Hill Collins is especially important in theorizing racialized gender. In her construction of a decolonial feminism and the coloniality of gender, Lugones is attempting to theorize what I would call a thicker conception of the intersectionality of identity and subjectivity and the political commitments stemming from them.

racial categories were both central to the project of colonization. Lugones suggests, as I have, that feminist decolonial analyses that privileges the lens of the coloniality of gender will certainly lead to an "important epistemological shift" wherein the assumption that race and gender can be separate and can be understood outside of the context of the coloniality of power and being can no longer be assumed. Decolonizing the coloniality of gender enables one to consider not only the logics co-constitutive in the institutions of race and gender but also the ways that questions related to these institutions always intersect with "questions of labor, education, knowledge, legal practices, religious agency, and theology."[358]

Such a shift in the epistemology is one that has not occurred in the cultivation of the social teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, based as they are in a Eurocentric epistemic frame that delineates a dichotomized anthropological subject. It is this frame that refuses to acknowledge that speaking of gender is also *always* speaking of race and that the generic categories of the human person and human dignity are not equally shared amongst all human persons. Gender is not simply about organizing "social arrangements, including social sexual arrangements," as feminist arguments about gender oppression and patriarchy will suggest, gender is much more than this.[359] She claims

> Understanding these features of the organization of gender in the modern/colonial gender system—the biological dimorphism, the patriarchal and heterosexual organization of relations—is crucial to an understanding of the different gender arrangements along 'racial lines.'[360]

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[358] Ibid., pg. 70.

[359] María Lugones. "Heterosexualism and the Colonial/Modern Gender System," in *Hypatia* vol. 22, no.1 (Winter, 2007); 190.

[360] Ibid.

In essence, Lugones' lens of the coloniality of gender highlights how subjects were gendered through a "gendering-ungendering nexus" wherein white women are "characterized as private, physically weak, [and] sexually passive, [as] opposed to women of color who have been dehumanized through the absence of these characteristics."[361] If by virtue of their sex and gender women bear a different, separate dignity in kind from men, we can only assume that the coloniality of gender, which strongly claims that there is a consistent and "violent co-production" of race and gender in the coloniality of power,[362] informs us that persons of color, especially women of color, (hetero)sexed, gendered, and racialized at the colonial difference, find the totality of their being indocumentad@ in the social tradition of the Church. Due to the fact that there are l@s indocumentad@s in the social tradition, the tradition will find it difficult to continue to ground its claims for securing human rights through the praxis of the preferential option for the poor and most vulnerable in society and Church and acting in solidarity with them. They cannot participate nor encourage such praxis and securing of human rights for persons that they refuse to see as authentic human persons deserving of rights. In the last chapter I argued that while the Church denounces the violence meted out against LGBTQI persons that they ultimately have no way of grounding their denouncements since their own epistemology and anthropology aids in the creation and maintenance of the colonial difference, a space that is characterized in part by the consistent threat of violence against those persons occupying it. The same argument is

[361] Marcelle Maese-Cohen. "Introduction: Toward Planetary Decolonial Feminisms," in *Qui Parle: Critical Humanities and Social Sciences*, vol. 18, no. 2 (Spring/Summer 2010); 10.

[362] Ibid.

valid when assessing CST's ability to challenge acts of dehumanization, human rights violations, and violence in light of its current anthropological framework.

To this point we find a remarkable example in the pastoral letter "Brothers and Sisters to Us" by the USCCB which explicitly denounces racism, makes clear that the institution of race and racism dehumanizes persons, rejecting the fact that all human persons bear the image of God and therefore have dignity. Further, the types of challenges to racism that we have seen as a society and Church have only been at the surface. They claim that what is needed is a proper understanding of the human person and their dignity to work towards structural change and properly challenge the sin of racism.

I quote at length from the document below since its points will function as a prime example of how the current epistemic frame and anthropology is assumed not to undermine the CST's calls for human dignity to be equally respected and human rights secured for all persons.

> Racism is an evil which endures in our society and in our Church. Despite apparent advances and even significant changes in the last two decades, the reality of racism remains. In large part it is only external appearances which have changed…we do not deny that the ugly features of racism which marred our society have in part been eliminated. But neither can it be denied that too often what has happened has only been a covering over, not a fundamental change…Today the sense of urgency has yielded to an apparent acceptance of the status quo…In response to this mood, we wish to call attention to the persistent presence of racism and in particular to the relationship between racial and economic justice. Racism and economic oppression are distinct but interrelated forces which dehumanize our society…as economic pressures tighten, those people who are often black, Hispanic, Native American and Asian—and always poor—slip further into the unending cycle of poverty, deprivation, ignorance, disease, and crime. Racial identity is for them an iron curtain barring the way to a decent life and livelihood…*Racism is a sin: a sin that divides the human family, blots out the image of God among specific members of that family, and violates the fundamental human dignity of those called to be children of the same Father…In order to find the strength to overcome the evil of racism, we must look*

> *to Christ…It is in Christ, then, that the Church finds central cause for its commitment to justice, and to the struggle for the human rights and dignity of all persons.*[363]

In many ways, the bishops' argument has parallels to the argument I construct in this project. We must have a proper understanding of the human person and their accompanying dignity in our struggle to approximate a more just ordering of the world by securing human rights via a praxis of preferentially opting for the poor and acting in solidarity. The bishops are clear that no person ought to be subjected to discrimination as a result of some aspect of their identity. They are also clear that there are intersections in our identities that make us more, or less, vulnerable to unequal treatment. However, they neglect to consider how the anthropology of the Church, predicated as it is in ontologized categories of being (gender), simultaneously ontologizes other aspects of our identities (race/ethnicity, sexuality, etc.), thereby leaving categories of persons undocumented in Church and society. This gap undermines their ability to make these human rights claims for all persons. How can they authentically decry racism[364] while maintaining an anthropology that is representative of the logics of the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender? Until the logics of the Eurocentric episteme and its (hetero)normative anthropological assumptions are undermined, the Catholic Church's stance on these issues will remain disingenuous since we know that the rights of persons the Church seeks to secure are those whom they consider to be "authentic human persons," while all others—l@s indocumentad@s—do not qualify for the same rights and protections. The

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[363] USCCB. "Brothers and Sisters to Us: Pastoral Letter on Racism," (United States Catholic Conference, 1979.) Emphasis mine.

[364] It is also *à propos* to note that the Catholic Church in the United States has an extensive and deeply problematic history with racism. Its participation in keeping and selling slaves to maintaining segregated Churches (now in a *de facto* fashion) are just a few examples of this.

bishops, then, fall subject to the same critique they offer about how persons are simply maintaining the status quo and not actually doing anything to counter the sins of the Church and society. To make this point ever more clear, we turn, as we did in the last chapter, to an exemplary narrative that I claim stems from the colonial difference.

An Example from the Colonial Difference: Sexual Migrants and the US Catholic Church on Immigration and Undocumented Migrants

So long as the tradition of CST maintains its current understanding of the human subject, its claims for justice will be limited. So long as there continues to be a lack of serious engagement with the assumed subject of CST, calls of injustice will continue to be at the very least partially self-indicting. Let us turn to another example to analyze how the justice claims of CST concerning human dignity and rights are undermined when considered from the perspective of the "indocumentad@" subject.

Like the pastoral letter on racism, the issue of immigration in the US has been written about by the USCCB with the aim to offer reflections upon a number of social and political issues utilizing the broader framework of the tradition of CST to make specific suggestions for action to Catholic parishes in the US. In their 2000 letter *Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity*, the US Bishops make a theological argument for the protection of the human right to emigrate/immigrate, the security and safety for the migrant, and the implementation of a variety of measures to welcome undocumented migrants in the US.

In their assessment, the bishops are clear that the reasons behind migration, especially in the Americas and the Caribbean, are often related to the structures of globalization that have, at least in part, led to destabilization of social, economic, and political structures of the "sending" countries. In essence, the migration patterns to the

US have often been influenced by the desire for material survival (economic, social, physical, etc.) The US Bishops claim:

> We must never forget that many immigrants come to this country in desperate circumstances. Some have fled political persecution, war, and economic devastation… Others have wagered on finding a better life in this country in the face of economic desperation at home… Some refugees have enjoyed the sanction and support of the U.S. government, while others have been denied attention and systematically deported, and some have been subjected to humiliating incarceration under deplorable conditions. Both individual lay people and church agencies have worked alongside secular organizations to correct these situations and address the sufferings of those caught up in the complex and bureaucratic U.S. immigration system whose policies often lead to the fragmenting of families, but more needs to be done.[365]

The migratory patterns into the United States, according to the bishops, reflect the desperation that accompanies individuals and families attempting to survive under unbearable conditions that exist in their countries of origin. Due to the fact that these conditions are not in the control of those who migrate, the bishops suggest that more ought to be done. There is a moral imperative to come to the aid of those in this position.

The moral imperative articulated by the bishops is informed by two aspects of the tradition of the Roman Catholic Church—one is based in the Scripture (to care for the alien, the orphan, and the widow), the other is placed within the broader tradition of CST and respect for the innate dignity of human persons:

> In this context of opportunity and challenge that is the new immigration, we bishops of the United States reaffirm the commitment of the Church, in the words of Pope John Paul II, to work "so that *every person's dignity is respected, the immigrant is welcomed as a brother or sister, and all humanity forms a united family which knows how to appreciate with discernment the different cultures which comprise it*" (Message for World Migration Day 2000, no. 5). We call upon all people of good will, but Catholics especially, to welcome the newcomers in their neighborhoods and schools, in their places of work and worship, with

[365] USCCB, *Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity* (United States Catholic Conference, 2000).

> heartfelt hospitality, openness, and eagerness both to help and to learn from our brothers and sisters, of whatever race, religion, ethnicity, or background.[366]

Such a commitment by the US Roman Catholic Church seems to be exemplary; however, what if one is complicate the equation as to which persons migrate and their reasons for migrating? Would the call to "welcome" and respect each person's dignity stand if the human persons in question deviated from the anthropological-ontological assumptions about *authentic human persons* in the tradition of CST?

Looking to a relatively new area of study in the social sciences on sexual migrations may help us to answer this question. Theories of sexual migration provide us with new interpretations on the motivations individuals may have to migrate. Attention to sexual migration moves us past "push-pull interpretations of migratory motives" and towards an understanding that persons may, at times, decide to move based solely upon concerns related to their gender or sexuality.[367]

> Sexual migration occurs when a person's decision to migrate is motivated by the hope of maintaining or establishing an affective, sexual, and committed relationship with a foreign national…or it may be linked to an individual's desire to explore her or his sexuality and identity. Sexual migration may also result from people making a move necessary for avoiding persecution or prosecution in their home country based on sexual behavior or status.[368]

This field of study takes seriously the fact that central to human identity are the notions of sex, gender, and sexuality, and that these aspects of identity are sites where oppression is enacted.

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[366] Ibid. Emphasis mine.

[367] Cymene Howe, "Sexual Borderlands: Lesbian and Gay Migration, Human Rights, and the Metropolitan Community Church," in *Religion at the Corner of Bliss and Nirvana: Politics, Identity, and Faith in New Migrant Communities,* Lois Ann Lorentzen et al., eds. (Durham N.C.: Duke University Press, 2009), 47.

[368] Ibid., 47-48.

The Church is clear that the US must be open to welcoming undocumented migrants regardless of race, ethnicity, or religion. Additionally, they would encourage all persons to resist the sites of oppression where human rights abuses are occurring for migrants; however, one may find it difficult for the Church to expand this call for justice to encompass individuals whose sex, gender, or sexuality is not aligned with prior assumptions about who the human person is. As indicated earlier, human rights are only applicable when an authentic human person is in question. Authentic human persons are those that neatly align within the gendered dichotomy of being and their dignity follows in kind. In short, human rights in the Roman Catholic tradition, even in its CST, are heteronormative human rights—predicated upon an understanding of the human person that creates categories of being/s that are *indocumentad@* in the tradition.

Let us turn to a brief example from the colonial difference, and example of sexual migration, which makes explicit the status of *indocumentad@.* Cymene Howe, Susanna Zaraysky, and Lois Ann Lorentzen conducted an ethnographic study of the motivations of a group of transgender sex workers migrating from Guadalajara, Mexico to San Francisco, California. Of the individuals that participated in interviews for the study many had overlapping motivations as to why they decided to make the dangerous move to the United States. The reasons ranged from the "ability to physically transform one's body"[369] in less dangerous conditions than what was available to them in Guadalajara, where it is common for individuals to have suffered severe bodily damage or death as

[369]Cymene Howe, Susanna Zaraysky, and Lois Ann Lorentzen, "Devotional Crossings: Transgender Sex Workers, Santisima Muerte, and Spiritual Solidarity in Guadalajara and San Francisco," in *Religion at the Corner of Bliss and Nirvana: Politics, Identity, and Faith in New Migrant Communities,* Lois Ann Lorentzen et al., eds. (Durham N.C.: Duke University Press, 2009), 8.

they attempted to change their bodies,[370] to wanting to make more money in order to receive surgeries or just to survive, to wanting to feel less social stigma and fear of violences meted out against them as a result of who they are.[371]

While the economic considerations are important, it is this last reported motivation that is crucial to the point here. These persons are experiencing social stigma and violences that places them in constant danger. We know that the Church advocates for protections for undocumented migrants at least insofar as the undocumented migrate due to economic hardships. We also know that the Church claims that human persons ought to be free from any violence as it is a violation of their human rights, which are grounded in their dignity; however, one must ask how can the Church actually speak out for justice for these transgendered sex workers considering they have an anthropology that defines them outside of the realm of "authentically human" in the first place? The heteronormative anthropology that creates and sustains categories of *indocumentad@s* breeds heteronormative human rights—these persons simply *cannot* qualify for justice and rights claims because they are acting outside of their dignity as authentic human persons.

The Church, on many issues, some already indicated, has been clear that injustice can only be deemed as such when it truly exists, meaning that injustice can only occur when an action or threat thereof actually violates the authentic human dignity of a truly human person. If an individual is experiencing sexual violence and this violence, or

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[370] The ethnographers cite one particularly horrific case in which an unlicensed Guadalajaran woman began performing plastic surgeries for those in the transgendered community. They report that instead of using safe ingredients to perform surgeries that could burn fat or provide breast implants, she would use a mixture of "industrial silicone (for sealing car parts and appliances) and soy oil (a gelatin-like substance)" (9).

[371] Ibid., 8-12.

simply the desire to have greater opportunity to live one's life fully as oneself, leads to migration, those migrants cannot be counted amongst those that deserve sanctuary from all people of good will, in other words they are not deserving of authentically human dignity. The particular textures of their humanness, their sex, gender, and/or sexuality proscribe their participation in human rights claims. Decolonial and feminist decolonial theories make clear that central to the coloniality of power are these epistemological and anthropological acts of war. To return to Ervin Staub's theorizing around the relationship between dehumanization, excision from the human moral community, and physical/sexual violence against these persons, it must be clear that deeming groups of persons as only in-authentically human is the first step to sanctioning violence against them. It is certainly the case that the Church would, again, contend that they do not condone such violence against human persons. They may even go so far as to say that the specific experiences above—transgendered sex workers as sexual migrants—should also be received with open hearts and minds across the United States; however, I will continue to ask: upon what grounds can they claim this?

In the previous chapter I made the argument that the anthropology of the Roman Catholic Church so narrowly defined human persons and their dignity that they have created and sustained categories of undocumented persons. In this chapter the focus has been upon whether the CST, grounded within human dignity, has assumed the human subject of the broader tradition, thereby undermining its justice claims for all persons. For now the answer has to remain in the affirmative: yes, the tradition of CST has assumed the problematic anthropology of the broader tradition of the Church, which means that they cannot speak with the same force or consistency to issues of injustice, especially as

they are related to specific texturizations of being that the Church refuses to recognize as authentically human and deserving of rights. There are, indeed, l@s indocumentad@s in the tradition of CST and this is the best kept secret of the tradition. If the tradition wants to uphold practices like the preferential option for the poor and solidarity in order to secure human rights, if they want to construct an authentic humanism that would necessarily secure human rights for all persons, then we must begin the actual work to do so. It is necessary, then, to think about how we can begin to cultivate a space of sanctuary for l@s indocumentad@s within the tradition. The ultimate conclusion is not new, though I hope its urgency will be: a new anthropology is necessary. It is to this constructive piece that I turn in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Sanctuary for L@s Indocumentad@s: Towards a New Humanism Enacted Through Recognition and Decolonial Love

At this point my argument should be apparent: that the epistemological and anthropological underpinnings that construct a specific understanding of the human subject in the Roman Catholic tradition—underpinnings also assumed in its social tradition that makes justice claims for "all" persons—are actually representative of the logics of the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender that rigidify categories of being. The narrow boundaries of ideological anthropological frameworks, such as the anthropology of complementarity espoused by the Church, permeate both individual and collective imaginations and severely delimit the ways of being that they—in this case, the Roman Catholic Church—acknowledge are legitimate or real. As I have indicated throughout, remaining committed to a colonial epistemology and anthropology (re)inforces a hierarchy of being, such that particular subjects are defined only insofar as they approximate the heteronormative center of being. Since individuals both in society and the Church refuse to accept these oppressed subjects as they are, they are forced into the space of colonial difference, a space where a variety of violences upon them are either rationalized through an easy acceptance of the coloniality of being, or are completely ignored. Additionally, due to their subjugation at the colonial difference, these subjects remain indocumentad@ in the tradition of the Church.

While such violence against certain humans is particularly clear in the Church's teachings on gender and sexuality, I argued that the tradition of the CST assumes this same subject, this same treatment of certain humans, and this reality undermines any truth that the CST argues for equal human rights for all persons. This is so for two

reasons. First, CST's anthropology maintains a premodern natural law understanding of the human person, which had social hierarchies that naturalized inequalities in rights as part of aiding the community reach its proper *telos*. Second, while CST refused to accept all of the constitutive features of the modern subject, in particular, its vile individualism and, while it embraced some aspects of modernity that can be considered good, like a fuller conception of equality and rights, it does not offer significant challenge to the oppressive epistemological and anthropological assumptions related to the modern subject and their rights. The anthropology in CST was found to intertwine two problematic conceptions of the human subject that limits their capacity to make justice claims and protect the dignity of all persons. I offered evidence that the Church cannot make justice claims for particular individuals precisely due to the restrictive delineation of their anthropological claims through exemplary narratives.

These narratives, whether they stem from the feminicide in Juárez, the battery against and murders of trans-gendered persons in the US, or those crossing borders for reasons related to their gender or sexuality, have helped to reveal the fact that in the lives of l@s indocumentad@s epistemic violence and the consistent threat of physical and sexual violence is omnipresent. The bodies of both the living and the dead litter the space of the colonial difference. Thus, it is an ethical imperative to begin to redress these atrocities from where we stand.

As a Catholic, this meant writing this project from within the tradition to reveal how the institutional Catholic Church, even if at times inadvertently, in and through its construction of the human subject contributes to the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender.

I have also indicated throughout that the institutional Church has been clear that where such violence exists, it must be countered. This is especially true within the tradition of CST that has called upon all people of good will to work towards social justice, especially through the practices of solidarity and preferentially opting for the poor, and to create a world in which such violence and structural sin do not characterize the experiences of so many. Unfortunately, it is rarely the case that the Magisterium actually asks how its teachings and doctrines may be contributing to the very violence and structural sin it claims to resist. This would require an epistemic humility that, one may argue, the Church's leadership has only recently begun to embrace.[372] But the time is upon us. We can no longer stand by and allow these epistemological and anthropological groundings upheld in these teachings to write whole groups out of existence. Only if we can acknowledge that the current teachings do not speak for many subjects because those teachings do not consider them to be "authentic persons" can we begin the constructive work necessary to create a space of sanctuary for l@s indocumentad@s within the Roman Catholic Church.

In conversation with the Catholic tradition of CST as well as postcolonial, decolonial, and feminist decolonial theorists this concluding chapter begins a process of redress by establishing some basic contours of how we might begin to construct an epistemological and anthropological sanctuary for l@s indocumentad@s within the Roman Catholic Church. I begin this constructive work by outlining what the space of sanctuary is, then move to explain the practices necessary to enable such a space. In line

[372] I am thinking here of claims that Pope Francis embodies the very kind of epistemic humility necessary for self-critique. As the first Latin American pope that witnessed Argentina's "Dirty Wars," he is likely well aware of the violence at the colonial difference. He continuously calls on the Church and the world to attend to the most vulnerable among us and seems to have insights into what this might mean to an extent that past popes have not.

with María Lugones, Gloria Anzaldúa, and Chela Sandoval I envision this as a space of creative difference in which destructive aspects of the body politics of knowledge—the aspects that contribute to an atmosphere in which subjects are not recognized as human or as human enough—can be undermined so that recognition of l@s indocumentad@s can begin.

This process of recognition assumes that there are aspects of human being/s that are present but elided within the dominant anthropological discourses in both society and the Church's tradition. Utilizing Nelson Maldonado-Torres's constructive work on Fanon's phenomenology of the cry, I argue that we must not only enable a space of sanctuary but join in this space of creative resistance by listening and responding to those who occupy the colonial difference. I argue that the phenomenology of the cry helps to affirm that l@s indocumentad@s are real human persons who collectively constitute a resistant presence to oppressive structures and that this resistance stems from places of both anger and love.

I further argue that to advocate authentically for the human rights of these persons, to opt preferentially for them and act in solidarity with them, we must respond with an ethic of embrace that actively cultivates decolonial love. Cultivating such love is as ethical as it is political[373] and has the potential to defy the destructive body politics inherent in how the Roman Catholic Tradition currently imagines and writes about the human subject. While cultivating such a love that is based in multiplicity and creative difference is in tension with the tradition's current articulation of the human subject, it is

[373] Nelson Maldonado-Torres and Chela Sandoval both claim that there is an intertwinement between the ethical and the political in practices of love, particularly love in the decolonial mode.

not completely out of line with some of the stated commitments of the Church, especially as they are laid out in CST and reflect a pathway forward in this historical moment.

Influenced by the "integral humanism" theorized by Jacques Maritain, Catholic Social Teaching argues that we must give priority to creating a new humanism, one that is grounded in the protection of human dignity and always works towards the common good. This new humanism grounded in protecting human dignity underlies the tradition's understanding of human rights and is what precipitates the praxis of the preferential option for the poor and solidarity. A humanism that respects the rights of all persons and attempts to secure such rights through solidaristic practices can only occur through the creation of a space of sanctuary for l@s indocumentad@s. It is in this space of sanctuary that decolonial practices of love and solidarity not only allow but actively seek authentic recognition and affirmation of the multiplicity of human beings.

Understanding the Space of Sanctuary for L@s Indocumentad@s

The space of colonial difference is one that society has forced l@s indocumentad@s to occupy. Unfortunately, the tradition of the Catholic Church through its epistemological and, therefore, anthropological ideologies that hierarchicalize being/s according to the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender have also forced these subjects into this dangerous space that both denies the authentic humanness of particular aspects of their identity due to the ideological constructions of race, gender, sexuality, etc. and, because of the dehumanization that occurs at the colonial difference, leaves them vulnerable to a variety of violence. We have a moral imperative to create a space in which subjects can find respite from the multiple forces of violence that threaten such subjects at any given moment—a space of sanctuary. Further, the creation of such a space

is not enough in and of itself: we must also meet the other in this sanctuarial space through authentic practices of solidarity.

One need not be an expert in US immigration law to understand what sanctuary means to the undocumented. It is a space in which undocumented migrants may rest, at least for a time, in relative peace, free from the fear that comes via state-sanctioned surveillance and threat of deportation. Sanctuary cities across the US allow undocumented migrants to exist in a sacred space that, at the very least, pauses the ideological forces that define their humanity according to only one socially constructed category of their being: citizenship.[374] In that pause, other humans uplift the humanity of those migrants and treat them with authentic dignity.[375] It is clear that sanctuaries across the US do not constitute permanent solutions for the undocumented. But they are important beginnings, places where migrants can rest while seeking pathways to their full recognition. So the goal of providing a space of sanctuary is to recognize the humanity of the undocumented person through giving them care, resources, and relationship until a more definitive solution, ideally full inclusion into the community, is structured. The space of sanctuary is a space of solidarity, a space where we join with those socially constructed as "the other," a space of resistance.

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[374] Sanctuaries for the undocumented are but one example in which persons can be more at ease due to some aspects of their being that places them in constant danger in broader society. LGBTQ night clubs are but one example of these sacred spaces, a space wherein one's sexuality can be expressed or explored outside of the threat of violence. This is a part of what made the Orlando Pulse Nightclub shooting all the more horrific as it was an invasion into a sacred space where the multiplicity of being is recognized and uplifted. The invasion of this sacred space, too, indicates that what is necessary is not just the creation and maintenance of sanctuarial spaces but that from those spaces the ideological forces that threaten the very lives of those in sanctuary must be resisted until there is no longer a threat that necessitates sanctuary in the first place.

[375] By stating this, I in no way mean to suggest that sanctuaries across the US are fool-proof ways to avoid state surveillance or deportation.

While there is no neat one-to-one correlation between sanctuaries in the US[376] and the epistemological/anthropological sanctuary I envision, I believe the metaphor still holds: sanctuary for l@s indocumentad@s is a space in which dominant ideologies related to particular aspects of identities should not question the humanity, or aspects of the humanity, of particular subjects. Instead, in such places of sanctuary the multiplicity of being can be recognized and embraced, with the broader goal being for us collectively to resist the forces that deny such persons' full incorporation into the human community. While broader society continues to struggle to create these broader spaces of sanctuary, it is imperative that the Roman Catholic tradition move to do so.

In its teachings, the institution of the Catholic Church claims itself to be the bearer of "good news." Part of its evangelical mission of spreading this good news, this gospel, is to enact specific practices aimed at the liberation of all human persons from oppression. Indeed, these practices aimed at subverting structural sins are meant to reflect the workings of God in history. One important way the Church has understood this praxis of liberation has been to encourage all persons to work towards securing and respecting human rights for all persons. This cannot occur until a space is created from which we can resist the logics of the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender in society and in the Church. If the institutional Church indeed bears good news, it ought to be open to the creation of such sanctuaries, spaces in which persons can be honored as full persons, space in which they can move to and from one another in authentic solidarity.

In this sense, the space of sanctuary for l@s indocumentad@s in the Catholic tradition would enable the kinds of movement Anzaldúa envisioned in *Nepantla*, itself a

[376] It is not unimportant to this project to note that sanctuaries across the US are also often churches, which include Catholic Churches.

space that is characterized by the ambiguities of being, in which no single identity, and no imbrication of oppressive identities such as we find in the assumed heteronormative subject of CST, can disproportionately determine one's subjectivity. It is a space in which

> She has discovered that she can't hold concepts or ideas in rigid boundaries. The borders and walls that are supposed to keep the undesirable ideas out are entrenched habits and patterns of behavior; these habits and patterns are the enemy within. *Rigidity means death*…(she) constantly has to shift out of habitual formations; from convergent thinking, analytical reasoning that tends to use rationality to move toward a single goal (a Western mode), to divergent thinking characterized by movement away from set patterns and goals and toward a more whole perspective, one that includes rather than excludes…she copes by developing a tolerance for contradictions, a tolerance for ambiguity.[377]

Such a tolerance for ambiguity in *Nepantla* enables a kind of self-acceptance outside of the ideological frameworks that function to keep l@s indocumentad@s oppressed. *Nepantla* enables this move towards self-acceptance and ultimately encourages liberative action for oneself and for others.

On this point Nancy Elizabeth Bedford argues that the space of *Nepantla* is similar to what decolonial theorist Walter Mignolo calls "border thinking or border gnosis," which is a "way of knowing that disrupts dichotomies from *within* a dichotomous situation… (or) 'thinking from dichotomous concepts rather than ordering the world in dichotomies.'"[378] Bedford further argues that Mignolo, like Anzaldúa, understands that border gnosis is "precisely an epistemology" that

> Avoids being entrapped within the logic of the dominant world view while still being able to make use of critical instruments forged within that world view…such an epistemology can establish a critique of modernity from within

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[377] Gloria Anzaldúa. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, 3rd ed. (San Francisco, CA: Aunt Lute Books, 2007), 101.

[378] Nancy Elizabeth Bedford. "Making Spaces: Latin American and Latina Feminist Theologies on the Cusp of Interculturality," in *Feminist Intercultural Theology: Latina Explorations for a Just World,* Maria Pilar Aquino & Maria José Rosado-Nunes, eds. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), 58.

> modernity itself…but at the same time it marks the 'irreducible difference of border thinking' by its capacity to critique the modern world system also from its 'exterior.'[379]

Thus, a space of sanctuary may be able to provide a way for all persons to meet and resist the dichotomous anthropological framework that delimits justice claims both within and outside of the tradition, from within the Catholic tradition itself.

What I mean by this is that while l@s indocumentad@s have been marginalized by the Roman Catholic tradition, especially by its construction of the human subject, a space of sanctuary can be created from which these dominant discourses can be contested. A space of sanctuary that stems from the realities of those living at the colonial difference could enable the contestation of the death-dealing aspects of the epistemology and anthropology that are masqueraded as ontological structures of being in the teachings on gender and sexuality as well as CST and retrieve central aspects of that very tradition, to the greater end of "*making space* (for) peace and justice" both within the tradition and broader society.[380] [381] Indeed, it can be a space of multiplicity that can disrupt the dichotomous ordering of the human subject, an order that the lens of the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender has revealed bears violent implications for a multitude of gendered, sexed, and raced identities.

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[379] Ibid.

[380] Ibid., 61.

[381] Bedford includes in her analysis that Audre Lorde evidenced "border thinking" too when she spoke of how the master's tools would not dismantle the master's house. She claims that Lorde is "speaking from the awareness of the coloniality of power, and this allows her to see differently, pose different questions, and use the 'master's tools' in unexpected ways" (p. 60). The implication for this project is that the "master tools" that exist in CST are not necessarily useless—we do not have to renounce the whole tradition—but that there is an ethical imperative to re-shape these tools in such a way that they actually function to affirm the humanity of all persons, and especially those currently undocumented in the tradition in order to make broader claims for justice.

If one were successful in creating this space, one would be that much closer to fully embodying a *mestiza consciousness*, a consciousness Anzaldúa characterizes as able to

> Break down the subject-object duality that keeps her prisoner…and to show how duality is transcended…a massive uprooting of dualistic thinking in the individual and collective consciousness is the beginning of a long struggle, but one that could, in our best hopes, bring us to the end of rape, of violence, of war.[382]

It is from this space of consciousness that "new forms of identity, theory, practice, and community become imaginable."[383] As Chela Sandoval suggests, the creation of such spaces is not new, as Third World and US feminists of color have theorized similar spaces for many decades.[384] If this is the space that we want to create and occupy with the other, then we will have to theorize how we might move towards its creation. Decolonial and feminist decolonial thinkers have already begun to lay this groundwork. Thus I turn to some of their voices to introduce some of the features necessary to create a space of sanctuary for l@s indocumentad@s within Roman Catholic tradition.

Recognition and Enacting Decolonial Love: Creating and Occupying the Sanctuarial Space within The Roman Catholic Tradition

The process of liberation for l@s indocumentad@s must begin with their full integration into the human community: they must be recognized as full "authentic" human persons. For recognition, or the lack thereof, is central to the workings of the body

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[382] Anzaldúa, pg. 102.

[383] Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed: Theory Out of Bounds* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 59.

[384] Pages 57-63 of Sandoval's *Methodology of the Oppressed* detail many iterations of this same type of consciousness construction including Anzaldúa's *mestiza consciousness*, Lugones' understanding of "traveling across worlds of meaning" (60), Spivak's theory of " 'shuttling' between meaning systems in order to enact a 'strategic essentialism'" (60), and many other US feminists of color and Third World postcolonial feminist theorists.

politics of knowledge and being, and it is central both to creating a space of sanctuary for l@s indocumentad@s and for committing to definitive action in this space. Political philosophers have theorized recognition as central to the understanding of subjectivity and intersubjectivity. Yet such recognition must resist the theorizing that too easily assumes that authentic intersubjectivity can occur without including an analysis of the coloniality of power. The Hegelian dialectic between master and slave is but one example of theorizing recognition as central to being human that too easily assumes that colonial logics do not weigh upon intersubjective relations. Postcolonial and decolonial thinkers, like Nelson Maldonado-Torres and Frantz Fanon, have problematized the way that Hegel assumes that true intersubjectivity can be attained between master and slave. Frantz Fanon critiques Hegel on this point noting:

> Man (sic) is human only to the extent to which he tries to impose himself on another man in order to be recognized by him. As long as he has not been effectively recognized by the other, it is this other who remains the focus of his actions. His human worth and reality depend on this other and on his recognition by the other. It is in this other that the meaning of his life is condensed. There is no open conflict between White and Black. One day the white master recognized *without a struggle* the black slave. But the former slave wants to *have himself recognized.* There is at the basis of Hegelian dialectic an absolute reciprocity that must be highlighted… '*they recognize themselves as mutually recognizing each other.*"[385]

The assumption in Hegel that there is an authentic reciprocity in recognition is what Fanon is resisting.

In Nelson Maldonado-Torres' interpretation of Fanon's critique of the Hegelian dialectic, he emphasizes how in Fanon's work "black subjects" are not recognized as they are, but only to the extent that they "wear white masks"— meaning that the recognition is

[385] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press), 191-92.

not authentic but is mired in precisely the colonial logics that ensure the supremacy of the white subject.[386] He further claims:

> This movement to the realm of intersubjectivity is vitiated by a desire for perverse identification. (For Fanon) the negro wants to be like the master. The desire to simply become like the master is, of course, the main object of criticism in Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks.* The desire for identification seems to be thus the first pathological movement of subjectivity.[387]

This pathological movement is best understood through the lens of the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender. The intersubjective recognition theorized by Hegel is reminiscent of the ways in which strict categories of being force subjects to approximate more closely the heteronormative center of humanity through a denial of aspects of their identity that have been socially constructed as less human than the center. This is a part of what Lugones, in the cultivation of her decolonial feminism, means when she speaks of the "fragmentation of the self" where "one comes to inhabit a multiple subject position that reveals the imposed quality of inferiority and the revelation between power and that imposition."[388]

Under current structurations of the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender, including the anthropological commitments of the Catholic Church that have been ontologized, there cannot be authentic intersubjective relations, nor can their be true solidarity, because these "colonizers" of different stripes refuse to account for many subject positions—particularly raced, gendered, sexed, ones etc.— *unless they renounce constitutive aspects of their being*, that is, only if through a "pathological movement"

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[386] Nelson Maldonado-Torres, *Against War: Views from the Underside of Modernity*, 131.

[387] Ibid.

[388] María Lugones, "Methodological Notes Toward a Decolonial Feminism," in *Decolonizing Epistemologies: Latina/o Theology and Philosophy*, Ada María Isasi-Díaz and Eduardo Mendieta, eds., 70.

they attempt to approximate the heteronormative center of being. Problematically, such movement is required for these individuals to be documented in the current tradition of CST. Therein lies the "paradox of existence": to come into existence one must first die to one's full self because of "the totalitarian ambitions of a system that transforms reason into murder and interhuman contact into the evisceration of difference."[389] To use an example from the tradition of CST: in order for persons to qualify for the universal human rights for which the Church argues, paradoxically they must renounce who they are as full human persons. As a corollary, we discover that practices meant to help achieve the call towards universal human rights in the Church, specifically practices of preferentially opting for the poor and practices of solidarity, are inauthentic at best since we cannot meet an other in solidarity nor opt for them if we deliberately overlook or refuse to recognize aspects of their being. Thus, it becomes necessary to begin the process of authentic recognition from this paradoxical space in order to begin legitimately practicing our commitments to the other. In order to begin this process, we must, as Maldonado-Torres argues, have the capacity to respond to Fanon's "phenomenology of the cry."

The phenomenology of the cry stems from the existential fact that "subject(s) cannot take (their) recognition as human beings for granted,"[390] thus the cry is ultimately:

> [a] sound uttered as a call for attention, as a demand for immediate action or remedy, or as an expression of pain that points to an injustice committed or to something that is lacking…the cry is the revelation of someone who has been forgotten or wronged…Before the word reaches the horizons of meaning…the cry becomes a call for the recognition of the singularity of the subject as such. The cry indicates the 'return of a living subject' who impertinently announces his (sic)

[389] Maldonado-Torres, 135.

[390] Ibid., 133.

> presence and who by doing so unsettles the established formations of meaning and challenges dominant ideological expressions.[391]

These cries of desperation and anger arise from being placed in terrorizing spaces where difference from dominant epistemological and anthropological frameworks kill.[392] The cries originate from the depths of the soul and communicate a deep longing for connection with the other.

Christians worldwide should have at least a modicum of understanding of what the phenomenology of the cry communicates; even Jesus, at the moment of his crucifixion by the powers and principalities of his time cried out from the depths of his own humanity "my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" His cry carried the echoes of the seemingly insurmountable grief that haunts all persons who have been abandoned unto loneliness. Jesus' grief mirrors that of all afflicted[393] persons who desire relationship at the colonial difference. His cries inform another important aspect to Maldonado-Torres' argument: the cries not only echo anger, grief, and desperation, but another aspect of human being that can be overlooked—love. He claims that Fanon notes that of course the "black man" wants to be recognized as human; however, a constitutive aspect of being "human is to love" and, in "Fanon's cry…there is as much anger as

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[391] Ibid.

[392] Different social movements have attempted to draw attention to these cries. The US Black Lives Matter movement is just one recent example. This becomes especially clear as the movement has mobilized behind the cries uttered by black men and women just prior to their deaths at the hands of police, as a way to communicate the inhumanity and horrors they experienced. A Twitter hashtag entitled "#LastWords provides a running list. A few of them include Eric Garner's "I Can't Breathe," Michael Brown's "I Don't Have a Gun, Stop Shooting," Oscar Grant's "You Shot Me, You Shot Me," Kimani Gray's "Please Don't Let Me Die," Amadou Diallo's "Mom, I'm Going to College," and Sean Bell's "I Love You Too."

[393] Simone Weil theorizes on the differences between those that suffer and those that are afflicted. For Weil, affliction reaches to the depths of our very souls. Those struck by affliction feel completely alone, abandoned unto themselves. Not even God is felt in this space.

love—indeed one can argue that his anger stems out of love."[394] Such love, Maldonado-Torres suggests, is representative of a desire for authentic *inter*subjectivity that is ultimately other—not ego—oriented. The phenomenology of the cry is motivated by deep feelings of love for the other,[395] particularly when facing the "magnitude of the perversity and evil that finds [a] home in this world."[396] The act of love in the face of such oppression in the world does not simply suggest an "emotion" or "feeling" of the desire for intense connection with the other, though it does that; it is also an invitation for action to *be* in relationship with others with the recognition that we embody multiple identities that are not to be hierarchized in our epistemological and anthropological frameworks but are to work collectively towards the subversion of these frameworks.

In this sense, then, through the phenomenology of the cry we are invited to participate in an ethic of embrace, one that may allow us to meet the other, recognize them, provide support and solidarity, but also to acknowledge that the other has his or her own gifts to offer. Maldonado-Torres emphasizes that the phenomenology of the cry indicates that colonized persons have been doubly dehumanized: first, as a result of the fact that they are not recognized as full authentic persons with respect to particular identities that distance them from the heteronormative subject and; second, because they have also not been recognized as *being* able to *give themselves*, to contribute to humanity. In the reduction of their identity they have been robbed of the human activity of

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[394] Maldonado-Torres, 138.

[395] In his analysis of Fanon's phenomenology of the cry, Maldonado-Torres includes insightful analysis of the Levinasian conception of desire. The concept of desire in Levinas, he argues, is in line with the way that Fanon understands desire, that is as "desire for the Other." See *Against War*, especially pp. 153-159.

[396] Maldonado-Torres, 141.

reciprocity, they have been denied the ability to have others consider the "radical gift…of (their) own sel(ves)."[397] Thus Maldonado-Torres argues that "the ultimate telos of the struggle for liberation is the creation of a community wherein people can give themselves completely *as who they are* and others are receptive to this gift."[398] This is both affirming and challenging to the Roman Catholic anthropological assertions to the importance of the "self-gift" as constitutive of human being.

This double recognition is a concept that Lugones, among other decolonial and women of color feminists, have characterized as an "infrapolitical sense of agency," which is "guided by love."[399] Lugones claims that

> This inclination to others is powerfully motivating, inspiring, and energizing as it inclines us to learn from each other in complex histories of interdependence, including betrayal, as we respond to multiple oppressions…(this enables us to go) beyond the coloniality (of being) to a decolonial politics and style of living and relating (that) asks that we become conscious inhabitants of the multiplicity of historically resistant subject positions and this become fluent in the resources that we each bring to a coalitional decolonial solidarity.[400]

For Lugones, central to the constitution of an order that bears the potential to subvert the logics of coloniality—what I am calling the creation of a space of sanctuary for l@s indocumentad@s—we must cultivate a new kind of love and desire for connectedness so that this coalitional decolonial solidarity can be enacted.

Within CST, the concern for the human person, their dignity and rights, calls us to be in solidarity with those who are the most vulnerable in society and our Church. In

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[397] Ibid., 152.

[398] Ibid. Emphasis mine.

[399] María Lugones, *Methodological Notes Toward a Decolonial Feminism*, 72.

[400] Ibid.

nearly every encyclical letter and bishops' statement produced since Vatican II[401] there has been a consistent argument that in order to protect human dignity we must act in solidarity with the poor who are "voiceless victims" marginalized by dominant oppressive structures.[402]

> To make an option for the poor is to commit oneself to resisting the injustice, oppression, exploitation, and marginalization of people that permeate almost every aspect of public life. It is a commitment to transforming society into a place where human rights and the dignity of all are respected. This option, or choice, can be made by individuals or by communities or even by a whole church.[403]

Committing oneself to the poor means that one must act in authentic solidarity with them, one must attempt either to relinquish the power and privilege that one possesses, or to utilize that power and privilege in a manner that may aid the oppressed.

To make these claims requires that we analyze and judge who the "poor" really are, in all of their respective identities, in our societies and in the Church. Yet the Church, even under the papacy of Francis, continuously categorizes the poor primarily as those who are economically destitute.[404] While we can affirm such an assessment and argue for

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[401] These assertions also pre-date Vatican II, but have been more systematically worked out since the Council.

[402] Kenneth R. Himes, "Commentary on *Justitia in mundo (Justice in the World),* in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, Kenneth R. Himes et al., eds. (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2005), 344.

[403] Donald Dorr, "Preferential Option for the Poor," in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, Judith A. Dwyer, ed., 755.

[404] Some have argued that Francis' papacy signals a definitive turning point in the Church. See especially the text *Pope Francis in Postcolonial Reality*, Nicolas Panotto, Ed. Within this text scholars like Panotto and Claudio Carvalhaes suggest that Francis' election will definitely have significant impact in the direction of the institutional Roman Catholic Church especially due to the ways that he has brought liberationist concerns that we must be a Church of and for the poor before the whole of the Catholic Church. He has also caused uproar because he claimed in an interview that if individuals are lesbian or gay, "who am I to judge?" He continues; however, to remain deeply committed to the older schools of liberation theologies that primarily understand the poor as economically marginalized. While he has brought liberation theology to the forefront of Catholic discussions on social justice, he has not actually undermined dominant anthropological frameworks, thus he does not reference sex, gender, sexuality, or race in his

solidarity with the economically marginalized, our current epistemological and anthropological structures are such that we refuse to recognize the (non-economically) "poor" in our midst.[405] Thus, we must extend our concerns over who the "poor" are under the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender, and our response cannot be other than to understand the "poor" more broadly as those inhabiting the colonial difference. Under the current structures, we are opting for the poor and acting in solidarity in name only.

In the Church, we are not able to practice decolonial forms of solidarity because we have not yet decolonized our own anthropological frameworks. L@s indocumentad@s, the subjects that have been at the center of this project, are the most vulnerable in our society and our Church, and since under the current anthropological structures we obscure aspects of their being, we cannot claim to be authentically practicing this principle of the preferential option for the poor, nor the principle of solidarity. If we want our theo-ethics and our social tradition to be grounded in a praxis of solidarity and preferentially opting for the poor, and we do want to enact such a praxis, then we must begin with the praxis of recognition in the decolonial mode. Such a theology and ethics refuses to accept the violence at the colonial difference, it recognizes the destructive epistemology and anthropology of the Church, and it exposes how the oppressive braiding of race, gender, and sexuality inherent in the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender is upheld in the current conceptions of the human person in the Church. Such a theology and ethics calls us to an ethic of embrace of, and for, the

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concerns for the "poor." These categories of being remain undocumented in the tradition, even under the leadership of Pope Francis.

[405] Argentinian queer feminist scholar Marcella Althaus-Reid makes a similar critique in her *Indecent Theology.* She calls to point specifically how particular forms of subjectivity, especially those related to sexuality, are elided in categorizations of the poor.

other, concerned with decolonizing the structures that currently continue to commit, or sanction, violence against those at the colonial difference. This ethic of embrace and process of recognition is also about a deep willingness to fall in love.

The concept of love has been the subject of so much theological and philosophical exploration. Many[406] have offered their understandings of what love is, who is capable of love, and who is deserving of it. Due to the long philosophical history of love, I must be explicit as to the trajectory from which my own understanding of love, in the decolonial mode, stems. Thus I make a brief excursus to explain what Chela Sandoval understands as "decolonial love."

In *Methodology of the Oppressed*, Sandoval brings together Roland Barthes's understanding of love with the work of third world writers, women of color feminists, and decolonial feminists, such as Emma Pérez, Anzaldúa, Cherríe Moraga, Frantz Fanon, and Ché Guevara.[407] Along with these thinkers she claims that social change can only happen when we decide to participate in revolutionary forms of love, which she understands as a "hermeneutic, as a set of practices and procedures" in which one participates in order to break through boundaries and cultivate a solidaristic community.[408] To fall into revolutionary, or decolonial, love she argues that we must be open to a new kind of submission, a submission that occurs outside of ideology:

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[406] Love has really been a preoccupation for philosophers and theologians for quite some time. Plato and Aristotle offered theories about love and the nature of human persons; Augustine and Aquinas offered their conceptions of love as well. Contemporary sources reflecting upon love include Kierkegaard, Weil, Nussbaum, Simone de Beauvoir, Sartre, Max Scheler, and Pope John Paul II. Since the reflections coming from these thinkers have been so varied, one must be clear as to the philosophical trajectory that informs their understandings of love.

[407] Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed*, 139.

[408] Ibid.

> To fall in love means that one must submit, however temporarily, to what is 'intractable,' to a state of being not subject to control or governance. It is at this point that the drifting being is able to pass into another kind of erotics, to the amplitude of Barthes's 'abyss.' It is only in the 'no-place' of the abyss that subjectivity can be freed from ideology as it binds and ties reality; here is where political weapons of consciousness are available in a constant tumult of possibility.[409]

In this way, falling in love is reminiscent of Anzaldúa's *coatlicue* state. In the *coatlicue* state, the self is between worlds in a space in which, suspended for a time from oppressive realities, one can begin to create oneself anew.

Similar to falling in love, the *coatlicue* state is pregnant with dangerous possibilities. Yet even with the dangers inherent in falling in love, one must risk these dangers in order to participate in this distinctively creative act. Falling into decolonial love means that one immerses oneself in the fluidity of being that dominant ideologies seek to oppress. It is both an ethical and a political act that allows one to

> [break] through whatever controls in order to find 'understanding and community': it is described as 'hope' and 'faith' in the potential goodness of some promised land…(it) is a rupturing in one's everyday world that permits crossing over to another; or as a specific moment of shock…the trauma of desire or erotic despair.[410] [411]

This rupturing enables a space, a space of sanctuary, in which there is a "radical affirmation of sociality and interhuman contact…(it) is the *Yes* of love expressed as *non-indifference* toward the Other, primarily toward the Other who is 'below.'"[412] Decolonial love then both enables the space of sanctuary and structures modes of interaction between

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[409] Ibid., 141.2

[410] Sandoval, 139.

[411] I find it very interesting that Sandoval also utilizes theologically loaded language in her description of love, especially in her description of love as "'hope' and 'faith' in the movement towards some promised land" (Sandoval, 139).

[412] Maldonado-Torres, *Against War*, 158. Emphasis original.

subjects that meet in this space. Love in the decolonial mode can move us toward authentically "opting" for the other— a necessary practice both to affirm their human dignity and to secure their human rights.

It is precisely at this point that decolonial love moves us towards the creation of a new humanism that is of primary concern both for decolonial thinkers and in CST. Maldonado-Torres argues that recognition and/in decolonial love offers us a "(re)newed perspective on humanism,[413] which is "grounded on love (and) finds consistent expression in the preferential option for the 'damnés.'"[414] The immediate goal of this humanism is mutual recognition through acts of revolutionary love and this can be achieved by opting— preferentially—for l@s indocumentad@s. Maldonado-Torres agrees with Fanon that under the structures of the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender, we must find ways to cultivate a humanism that is more human.

CST makes similar claims regarding the cultivation of an *authentic humanism* that is more human. Catholic Social Teaching's cultivation of an "authentic humanism" is largely indebted to the work of French social philosopher Jacques Maritain. Within the body of his works Maritain critiques both bourgeois liberal humanisms and Marxist socialist humanism and offers what he terms an *integral* or *authentic humanism* in their stead. His critique of both schools of thought is rooted in anthropological concerns. He claims that these humanistic discourses have a wrong view of the human person, meaning they do not have a Catholic Christian view of the human person wherein persons are

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[413] Here Maldonado-Torres is in conversation with both Fanon and Levinas as he claims that both thinkers would denounce traditional theories of humanism "only because they are not sufficiently human." The act of decolonial love enables what he calls "the activity of humanization," whereby mutual humanization is the immediate telos (158).

[414] Ibid., 158-159.

defined as being made in the *imago dei*, constantly in relation to one another and to God, naturally fallen and sinful but fully capable of having God's grace perfect their nature. Since they do not have a proper understanding of the human person, the authenticity of their humanism is in question.

> On the anthropological errors inherent in liberal humanism, Maritain notes
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> > As regards man, we may remark that in the beginnings of the modern age, with Descartes first and then with Rousseau and Kant, rationalism had raised up a proud and splendid image of the *personality* of man, inviolable, jealous of his immanence and his autonomy and, last of all, good in essence. It was in the very name of rights and autonomy of this personality that the rationalist polemic had condemned any intervention from the outside into this perfect and sacred universe, whether such intervention would come from Revelation and Grace, from a tradition of human wisdom, from the authority of a law of which man is not the author, or from a Sovereign God which solicits his will…[415]

The liberal humanism targeted is directly connected to the philosophy of Rene Descartes, who is said to have given "the broad understanding of humanism its distinctive modern shape by distinguishing two distinct substances: *res extensa*...and *res cogitans*.[416] As indicated by Maritain, humanist thinkers from Descartes and Hume to Kant and Hegel were increasingly committed to a secular society in which human rights could be protected without the "encroachment" of Church authority.[417] As alluded to by Maritain above, during the Enlightenment, theological forms of reasoning were increasingly called into question, if not completely dismissed as evidence of humans misplacing the trust in

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[415] Jacques Maritain, "Need of a New Humanism," in *The Social and Political Philosophy of Jacques Maritain: Selected Readings*, Joseph W. Evans and Leo R. Ward, eds. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), 231-232.

[416] Neil Brown, "Humanism," in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought,* Judith A. Dwyer, ed., 471. Emphasis original.

[417] Ibid., 471-472.

their own capacity to reason or know the truth into the hands of Church authorities and/or God. Instead, Man in the Modern period is crowned as God, an authority unto himself.

Maritain's critique of liberal humanism is then coupled with his critique of socialist humanisms, in particular the socialist humanism of Marx. In Marx, Maritain notes, we have an anthropological problem rooted in the fact that in Marx

> [w]ork is hypostasized into the very essence of man, and in which, by recovering his essence through the transformation of society, man is called to take on the attributes which the religious 'illusion' would confer on God…If then the economic servitude and the inhuman condition of the proletariat are to cease, it is not in the name of the human person…it is in the name of collective man, in order that his collective life and in the free discharge of his collective work he may find an absolute deliverance…and in a word deify within himself the titanism of human nature.[418]

The first anthropological problem Maritain has with Marx is rather obvious: God is the result of "man" misplacing powers inherent to themselves and projecting them upon an illusory being, the existence of which enables the continuing oppression of human being under the economic structures of capitalism. So, the atheism underlying Marxist socialism presents itself as a problem. To be clear, Maritain is actually in agreement with Marx's assessment of the dehumanization occurring under capitalist structures; however, he takes issue with the fact that human persons are assumed to be able to approximate a type of salvation for themselves, outside of God and outside of the recognition that human persons are both individual and social beings. Maritain notes that within Marx's anthropology

> Man is no longer the creature and image of God, a personality which implies free will and is responsible for an eternal destiny, a being which possesses rights…He

[418] Jacques Maritain, "The Roots of Soviet Atheism," in *The Social and Political Philosophy of Jacques Maritain: Selected Readings*, 259-260.

> is a particle of the social whole and lives on the collective consciousness of the whole, and his happiness and liberty lie in serving the work of the whole.[419]

As these anthropological underpinnings are in error, his socialist humanism cannot ultimately advocate for the transformation of dehumanizing structures. When we do have a proper understanding of the human person, we will be empowered to legitimately work for securing human rights and just relations in the material world.

Maritain thus claims that another humanism, which responds to the errors of both of the preceding articulations, becomes necessary.

> After the great disillusionment of 'anthropocentric humanism' and the atrocious experience of the anti-humanism of our day, what the world needs is a new humanism, a 'theocentric' or integral humanism which would consider man (sic) in all his (sic) natural grandeur and weakness, in the entirety of his wounded being inhabited by God, in the full reality of nature, sin, and sainthood…Its main work would be to cause the Gospel leaven and inspiration to penetrate the secular structures of life—a work of sanctification of the temporal order.[420]

It is in this explanation of "integral humanism" in Maritain that one can perceive how the tradition of CST has been vastly influenced by his work. In the conciliar and post-conciliar documents in CST, we find an integral humanism being articulated. In his encyclical letter *Populorum progressio*, Pope Paul VI claims:

> What must be aimed at is complete humanism. And what is that if not the fully rounded development of the whole man (sic) and of all men? A humanism closed in on itself, and not open to the values of the spirit and to God who is their source, could achieve apparent success. True, man can organize the world apart from God but 'without God man can organize it in the end only to man's detriment. An isolated humanism is an inhuman humanism.' There is no true humanism but that which is open to the Absolute and is conscious of a vocation which gives human life its true meaning.[421]

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[419] Jacques Maritain, "Christian Humanism," in *The Social and Political Philosophy of Jacques Maritain: Selected Readings*, 160-61.

[420] Ibid., 165.

[421] Pope Paul VI, *Populorum progressio (On the Development of Peoples)*, Part I, no.3.42.

Paul VI, and other popes reflecting upon the social order since Vatican II, uplift this "authentic humanism" grounded in a holistic understanding of the human person in order to advocate for the individual good of the person, rooted in a "respect for human dignity and for the rights of the human person" and aimed towards "the permeation of the social order and the structures of the common good.[422] It is important to note that the concept of an "authentic humanism" was born of the Church's critique of colonial practices around the globe and a concern over the concept of development. In speaking of an authentic humanism then, CST also speaks about the necessity of authentically human development, wherein economic status of individuals and nations do not constitute the whole idea of development. Instead, CST calls for the development of the whole person in her economic, political, social, and spiritual states of being. Only when we can claim that we are facilitating the development of the human person in all aspects of their being can we suggest that our authentic humanism is really in action.

So the goal of this humanism is continuously to humanize *human being* by establishing and sustaining intersubjective relations grounded in the mutual respect for the dignity of the other. While these relations speak to universal ontological structures, they are activated within specific historical contexts that aim to resist oppressive structures that dehumanize begins. So, they privilege historical practices like solidarity and the preferential option for the poor for the liberation of the poor from oppressive structures of sin, while simultaneously understanding these practices as part of God's

[422] Allan Figueroa Deck, S.J. "Commentary on *Populorum Progressio (On the Development of Peoples)*, in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, Kenneth R. Himes et al., eds. (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2005), 299. Emphasis original. Here, Deck is citing Maritain's 1938 translation of *True Humanism* (see p. 312).

revelation in the world. Here I quote at length from Neil Brown on how prioritizing these practices does not detract from our ultimate telos, but is constitutive of it:

> A new Christian humanism must acknowledge the operation of the material and cultural conditions that underpin all realization of human potential. Faith itself is immersed in this historical process as it attempts to express and live the salvation offered in the gospel. It is not only a hierarchy of values that is important to this task, but also their progressive integration into the creative enterprise of the human assumption of responsibility for the future of the world. The spiritual is a quality of the material world that must be enhanced by the proper exercise of human freedom in union with the Spirit of Christ, if creation is to attain its fulfillment.[423]

He is claiming that one can move towards this authentic Christian humanism by prioritizing practices that aim to undermine death-dealing structures in society.

In the context of a society and Church in which the logics of the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender operate, this means that we must prioritize our practices of solidarity to meet those who are currently undocumented in the tradition. As I have argued, the assumed human subject in CST is the heteronormative subject that currently requires that we ignore the cries stemming from the colonial difference. This means that an authentic humanism can only be cultivated when we recognize fully these particular subjects. Whether due to their race, gender, or sexuality, these individuals are indocumentad@ in the tradition of CST. Such negligence undermines justice-oriented discourses that aim for the creation of this new humanism, such as human rights discourses. If CST in particular, and the Roman Catholic Church in general, is to advocate authentically against economic, physical, and sexual violence against particular subjects, its anthropology must be decolonized, the prerequisite of which is to accept an epistemic humility in assessing how the tradition can structure a space of sanctuary for

[423] Ibid., 473.

l@s indocumentad@s from the space of the colonial difference wherein authentic recognition, solidarity, and decolonial love can be practiced. The Preferential Option for the Poor and Solidarity are crucial principles, but they must be understood and upheld in a decolonial mode. The recognition of human *being*, in all of its multiplicities, through the practice of *decolonial love* actually better reflects what these core principles of CST aim to accomplish and moves us closer to the cultivation of an "authentic humanism" that CST emphasizes in its documents.

Conclusion

In this attempt at providing a constructive response to the colonial logics underlying the theory of the human person in the Roman Catholic teachings on gender and sexuality and in the social tradition, I suggested that an epistemological/anthropological sanctuary must be structured in such a way that it supports those that we have theorized throughout this project as *l@s indocumentad@s* in the tradition. I indicated throughout that as *indocumentad@*, these subjects are precariously placed at the colonial difference, a space that has the paradoxical capacity for death and destruction and life and creation. We have theorized the colonial difference's potential for death as we analyzed the narratives of those bodies occupying it as a result of epistemological and anthropological ideologies that have constructed them as "Other" whether due to their sex, gender, sexuality, race, or ethnicity. The continuum of violences meted out against these "Others" ranges from dehumanization to physical and sexual violence. That it is a continuum only affirms its interminability. I have been clear that, where such violence exists in society, the Roman Catholic Church has attempted to denounce it. Thus in many ways the Church, in its calls for the cessation of

violence against persons, has also, at least implicitly, called for the creation of sanctuarial spaces itself. However, I have also made clear that these denouncements lack integrity since the very epistemological and anthropological structures underlying the tradition's teachings on gender and sexuality and social thought perpetuate the logics of the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender. In this final chapter then, I moved to theorize how from within the tradition, one can begin to create authentic spaces of sanctuary. Such a sanctuary, I argued, would bear both ethical and political valences and would be enacted via a mutual recognition of those at the colonial difference with a respect for their multiple subject positions and an acceptance of the fact that they, too, have gifts to offer in their intersubjective relations. Further, decolonial love, a radical form of love that requires an ethic(s) of embrace, is a central part of the constitution of this sanctuary space that would ultimately represent a place from which the kind of authentic humanism envisioned can come to fruition.

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